



## **NORMA'S CONDO**

### **A comic act on hearing voices**

**Actors :**

**Norma, Francesco, Umberto, Marina, Laura, Roberta,  
Silvia, Alessio, Nadine, Mara, Giacomo.**

#### FIRST SCENE

F. sitting, reading a book.

Enters U. – Good morning! –

F. doesn't answer

U. - Good morning!

F. doesn't meet

U. – Good morning! –

F. – `morning. –

U. – it's a good day, isn't it?

F. – It is quite –

U. – At least this week is finished. I'm just arrived from Genova; I've passed my exam at University. It also went well. And now I can enjoy myself

F. – I'm happy for you.-

U. – I don't understand something. I'm not often here at my parent's, I know few people and those who I meet never say hello, nearly nobody says hello to me.

You are one of the few who talks to me. Why is this happening? What do you think?

F. – maybe...but I don't think it's up to you.-

U – Ok, I don't wanna think about it, I want to go out on my bike. Do you like cycling?

F. - yes, a little.-

U. - I've got a running bike with gears that help on the way up. What about you?

F. - I've got a mountain bike to cross countries.

U. - I don't like crossing countries.

F. - I like them.

U. - If you like we could go together: I know a beautiful tour to San Bartolomeo

Mountain, there's a wonderful view and if we are lucky we could find flowering, this is flowering season in the mountains.

F. – It's not a bad idea

U. - Ok, we can do it. In two hours we can be there.

Alessio and Silvia enter (a married couple). They sit. She holds a calendar.

S. – So Alessio it's all clear. My dad pays for our holidays. We have only to decide where to go.

A. - Where?

S. - Where it's already a fact: we go to Cuba

A. - To Cuba?

S. – Sure, to Cuba

A. doesn't seem happy

S. - why that face!? Cuba is wonderful! Sea, relax. Music!

Enters Roberta singing

R. – you bastards! What are you up to?

S. - what happiness, what's going on?

R. – I've just left my husband or better he's left me

S. – and you are so happy?

R. - sure! He's gone, it was about time, and I was pissed off.

S. - oh well, if you think so!

R. - and you? What are you doing?

S. – we are planning our holidays. My dad is paying and we go to Cuba.

R. – Cuba! Great!

S. – yes but he doesn't want

R. - why not?

S. - he wants to go to Spain, to Balearics!

R. – to Balearics? To do what?

S. – He thinks Cuba is far away, and we can also swim in Spain, and maybe he would meet Valentino Rossi.

R. - Who is Valentino Rossi? A friend?

S. - No. Don't you know him?

A. – So I can meet him

S. – Don't make me laugh!

R. - If he is not, I come to Cuba

S. – Good idea! No doubt it would be better than going with this one

Enters Marina

She brings to Silvia some brochures about Cuba and other destinations

M. – here are the brochures you wanted!

S. - thank you, we decided to go to Cuba

M. - good choice!

R. - and when do you leave?

S. - the whole of next month.

R. - excellent! By the way this month I've not seen Norma to do my hair yet. Usually she rings and asks me when I'm available to have my hair done, but this month I've not seen her yet. Has she gone on holidays without saying?

S. - I don't know, Norma never goes on holidays, at least I've never knew she took any holiday. Maybe she is busy...

R. – busy? And with whom?

S. – well, I don't know, but I saw a blond tall bloke up the stairs. A good looking bloke. Maybe he was going to Norma's.

R. – a blue eyed blond, tall bloke? A great guy? Who is him? I'm interested! I would love a new boyfriend!

S. – I don't know why you don't ask them two. They are always there doing nothing, maybe they know who he is and where he's going

R. – I'm going to ask them. Sorry could you help me?

F. – if we could...

U. – what's up?

R. - Do you know a blue eyed tall blond man who comes here in our block?

F. - I've seen him several times, but I don't know him and even where he was going.

R. - Didn't you see where he was going? If he went to see Norma?

F. - I don't know. I've only seen him coming in from the main door.

R. – you are kidding me! Is it possible that nobody can help me!

F. – sorry we have to go

R. – where?

U. – for a bike ride

R. – I'm coming too

U. - I'm sorry but it's a difficult ride, I don't believe you are trained enough! We'll call you as soon as we go for an easier ride.

Enters Giacomo, chef

G. – good morning

A. - how do you do?

G. – Well, well even if I'm always very busy.

A. - Always busy at the Restaurant?

G. – yes always!

M. - have you changed restaurant?

G. - no it is always the same, but it's changed inside. It's as if it were another...

S. - why? What have you done?

G. - my boss is a special guy: every six months he changes all the furniture

R. – all the furniture?

A. – every six months?

M. – and how did you change it this time?

G. – this time it is Baroque and of those things are amazing!

R. – wow! Isn't that great!

G. – The only things is... whenever we change furniture we must also change the menu, because it must be in style with the furniture!

A. - so with Baroque what do you serve?

G.- sandwiches and salads unobtainable, grandmother's recipes, I mean great great grandmother's

S. - and it will be even more expensive!

G. - tradition with high tech!

M. - have you got also take aways?

G. – nooo!

S. - and why hi tech?

G. - we are already thinking for the furniture for the next six months

Chorus – and then?

G. – it will be futurist, based on fire

Chorus – futurist fire? What does it mean?

G.- it will be a great surprise!

S. while G. is talking, stands up saying – According to me they are all lies, futurist fire! I can't believe this.

SECOND SCENE

There is a knock, Laura enters

N. - hi!

L. - hi!

N. - was the door open? I was waiting for you.

L. - How are you? What about you?

N. - I'm a little sleepy, I feel tired. So, what shall we do with your hair?

L. - I want curls

N - Curls, ok. We cut them last time, didn't we?

She begins to work

N. - I'm really tired today

L. - what's wrong, what's the matter with you?

N. - Never mind, I don't sleep at night. Well you want your hair curled don't you?

L. - yes. Tell me something about you.

N. - at night until one, three o'clock, I can't sleep so I'm tired and a little nervous

L. - maybe it's the weather

N. - it's not the weather

L. - Have you fallen in love? Are you engaged?

N. - but what fallen in love, but what engaged! Engaged!!!

L. - I feel there is something wrong with you

L. - something in the air?

N. - I don't feel well, it seems like I'm forgetting things. Sometimes I go out and it seems to me to have to have forgotten the gas on.

L. - also my granny does it, you don't have to worry about it, and they are trivial.

N. - hey! I'm not ninety, I'm thirty eight.

L. - it happens also to me and I'm twenty five

N. - and then other strange things happens: the other day I was going to cut nails to a lady. I go to cut her nails every week. I was there, at the door, I forgot the gas on, again the same story. I went downstairs again to check out: the gas was off. Upstairs again. Damn! I forgot the light on. I went back home: the light was off. Back and forth, back and forth. The appointment was at three o'clock: guess what time I arrived!

L. - at five?

N. - At six! And her nails grew and grew I'm fed up!

L. - You have to take something, a relaxing chamomile!

N. - but what a relaxing chamomile

L. - go to bed early at night

N. I hear strange things, but now let me put these curlers. It will take two hours for this hairstyle. Now I leave you and come back later, I run up to the fifth floor for another customer.

L. - ok

Nadine is already in scene

N. - so what we do to your hair?

NA. - I want a trendy haircut, American type, maybe a beautiful ridge

N. - a beautiful ridge...

NA. - Maybe pink or fuchsia, purple, green...

N. - I have to wash your hair before? Haven't I?

NA. - Yes

N. - then pull your head down, pull your head down, and pull your head down, still a little. Ehhh how tired I am! (nearly crying)

NA. - What's wrong with you?

N. - sorry! Now I have some strange reactions. You are only the second customer today; I know that today I have finished working. I used to have ten customers a day

NA. - What's wrong?

N. sorry, I splashed you now I dry your hair.

NA. - But how are you really?

N. - I'm not well, I've already told to Laura on the third floor. I don't sleep, I don't work I cannot do anything! It is so...

NA. - can I help you in some way?

N. - how could you help me? I'm worried, really! You know...it's a problem, I hear something strange

NA. - Something strange

N. - No, no I don't want to talk about it, maybe it's better not to talk about these things. I don't know what it is.

NA. - Maybe you can open your heart. There is always a remedy, perhaps I have one

N. - how can you have a remedy for my problems? You don't even know what the problem is!

NA. - There is no cure and remedy; there are special problems that need special remedies.

N. - well do you know somebody? Somebody who can help me?

NA. - Sure, I know someone who can help you

N. - no, because...listen. I trust you now

NA. - Ok

N. - listen, can I really confide in you?

NA. - Sure, I'll be as silent as a grave

N. - I have been hearing voices for five, six nights, voices, voices. I don't understand what they are saying, but they are continuous, continuous. Now I hear them during the day too.

NA. - Too?

N. - I am desperate!

NA. - But what do these noises tell you?

N. - they say me something, I'm confused, they are terrible, terrible and all day long, all day long

NA. - do they scare you? Terrify you?

N. - I feel bad. I'm afraid, afraid to do some strange act. I can't take it anymore

NA. - I can help you

N. - how?

NA. - I've a friend, he is a Sioux Indian, is a descendant of the Sioux, a shaman. He is like a Spanish curandero.

N- ah! Those riding horses with feathers on head?

NA. - Sure he is!

N. but didn't they die a long time ago?

NA. - No they are their descendants

N. - damn! and what does that guy do to me? How can he know my problems?

NA. - He's got remedies for all the problems

N. - I was told they are sensitive. And what are these remedies?

NA. - Herbs, peculiar ones

N. - herbs to make cigarettes NO!

NA. - No, other kinds of herbs. Listen to me. You need some colored pebbles and make a circle with them!

N. - and how have I to make this circle? Round? Square?

NA. – square?  
 N. – round!  
 NA. – Round! and then you go inside and dance  
 N. – all night long?  
 NA. – You have to dance at midnight.  
 N. – at midnight?  
 NA. – While you are dancing you have to say something, but only the shaman knows. You have to talk with him  
 N. how can I talk with him? Using a pigeon?  
 NA. – Through me  
 N. through you? What do you mean?  
 NA. – You give me a message and I bring it to him and he gives me the answer.  
 N. – so you are my pigeon. I see. This story does not convince me so much. Listen, now I have to go downstairs to finish the permanent hair. I'll come back in a moment.

THIRD SCENE
-------------

The flat owners of the condo meet. Marina and Laura enter:  
 All – how do you do?  
 M. - Fairly well  
 L. -What do you have there?  
 S. my dad brought the suitcases to try  
 A. I think they are too big. They don't fit!  
 S. - now he begin to make controversy. He should go into the politics.  
 R. – As fas as I'm concerned, I'm happy with a couple of weeks.  
 S.- Two weeks? No way, a month!  
 R. - Are we leaving for a month?  
 M. – a month? Such a long time?  
 A. – Don't you realize it's a bit too long?  
 S - a month is fine! And these are the suitcases for me and Alessio.  
 R. - sorry didn't we decide to leave alone?  
 S. – now he has made up his mind and perhaps he is coming too to Cuba. If you want to come with us I'll manage to find a suitcase for you, too.  
 R.- but if he is coming how could we enjoy ourselves?  
 S. – don't worry, my dad knows somebody there  
 A. – don't worry, I will leave your free time.  
 S.R. - oh thanks!  
 G. - Alessio can I give you a hint?  
 A. – come on, I'm listening!  
 G. -make Silvia understand you need just the essential. Don't need a suitcase so big.  
 M. - have you seen Norma recently?  
 S. – she skipped the appointment with me.  
 M. - and you? Have you seen her?  
 L. – she made my hair  
 A. – I've seen her, she looked weird  
 R. - she seemed weird to me too. She went here and there.  
 S. - but come on! Has she fallen in love? Maybe she has a flirt out of the condo  
 R. - Maybe with the blond hair bloke  
 L. – She's gone to Nadine too, to do her hair

S.R. - how did you find her? What did she tell you?  
NA. - But...  
S. R. - what are you hiding Nadine? Tell us the truth  
NA. – I can't tell  
S. – come on! Has she fallen in love?  
NA. – No  
R. - is she flirting with that blond haired, blue eyed bloke?  
NA. - I didn't see any blond, blue eyed bloke  
R. - then what's the matter with her?  
M. - what secret are you hiding?  
NA. - I can't tell you, it's personal.  
R. - but, is she ok?  
NA. - Well let's say so and so.  
R. but she went out of her mind to make you such an hairstyle, it's not normal

All insist on the subject:

S. what is there in that pouch?  
NA. – Some remedies  
CHORUS – remedies? What are you talking about?  
NA. – There is some stuff.  
CHORUS – some stuff! Make an example.  
NA. – I have to bring them to her  
R. - to do what? What are they for?  
NA. They serve to perform a native dance!  
L. – belly dancing  
M. - Then she has to conquer a man  
NA. – Wrong!  
R. - but what is happening to you too? Isn't it something you smoke?  
NA. - No, no I've been at a Sioux Indian shaman.  
CHORUS – oh but those are herbs  
NA. – Yes, lavender and chamomile  
R. – I got it! She has to make a nice salad  
NA. – No she has to make an infuse, drink it and do a dance at midnight.  
CHORUS – at midnight?  
NA. - Yes  
R. - and if she does it before midnight?  
A. - but what is wrong with Norma?  
NA. - Her problem is...it seems she hears voices  
CHORUS – does she hear voices?  
S. – Nadine, it's an old story that of hearing voices. Think that where we lived before there was a mother with her daughter that every night was singing a lullaby to the cat.  
CHORUS- to the cat?  
R. - are you freaking out too?  
S. - Every night, Alessio and I heard singing a lullaby to the cat, but one day we realized that there were not children in that house.  
R. No idea!  
S. and then my dentist said to me that in the flat below his own lived a woman imitating her husband's voice, but her husband was dead and buried.  
M. - you are lying  
R. - do you believe these things? I do not believe it

G. – if a dog is always barking, with no reason, even if no one is around, maybe is hearing voices him too?  
R. – Just shut up you too!  
F. - Who can say? Who can exclude?  
U. - I think Norma should be seen by a psychiatrist.  
R. - even by a vet  
A. -or by a physiotherapist  
R. she should take the anti depressants, Nadine your pebbles are useless  
NA. The shaman assured me that it works!  
R. – who assured you?  
M. – I think it is a serious situation  
U. then she’s mad.  
S. – what mad!  
A. - maybe she’s dangerous  
S. - come on Alessio  
G. - I’m afraid! If she’s wrong and cut me a finger instead of nails  
L. – are you meaning that we can no longer trust her?  
S. – oh, come on. She is stressed, we should instead in helping her  
L. – let me know how  
NA. I bring the herbs and then we see.

Everyone leaves the scene.

#### FOURTH SCENE

Silvia, Roberta and Laura are going to Norma’s

S. – So what’s the matter?  
N. – I can’t sleep anymore  
R. – what’s happening to you?  
N. - I am desperate  
S. – maybe it’s the stress  
N. – I’m afraid  
L. – What of?  
N. - I’m afraid there is something wrong with me...  
S. – come on Norma, you are stressed  
L. – you are stressed  
N. – am I stressed?  
R. - but what happened, we heard about something strange, but we don’t believe it  
N. – I feel presences around me.  
S. - is your house haunted?  
N. – I don’t know  
R. – and what are they saying?  
N. – terrible things  
R. - like?  
N. - I don’t know, I don’t want to talk about it  
L. – come on! We’ll find a solution  
N. - why did you come?  
CHORUS – to bear you company

N. - thanks  
R. – and also for another reason  
N. – What for?  
R. – the condo’s manager came  
L. - neither the place nor the time  
S. – don’t you see she isn’t well?  
N. cries  
R. – yes but he makes a nuisance of me. He told me that you aren’t paying bills for three months  
N. crying louder  
R. – monthly expenses, electricity bills...but what?  
N. - give me those bills  
L. - the manager could evict her, she could worry  
N. give me those bills  
R. what do we have to do? We must pay for you?  
N. Never mind, for this month I know how to manage.  
R. - but if you aren’t well you can’t even work  
S. – listen Norma, Alessio is coming to do his hair so you earn something  
N. - ok, ok.  
S. - If you need a hand, my mother is a good psychologist  
N. – no I do not even want to hear. Now I’m trying to rest, I’m taking tranquilizers, and I’m managing to do something.

Giacomo, Umberto, Francesco Alessio enter. They give Norma three presents

N. - is there a meeting condo at my home?  
U. - Francesco is here too. We came to see you.  
N. - what have you brought me? Something nice?  
U. - a book I liked. I would like you to read it in your spare time  
F. – I bought this for you. (New vanity-case)  
N. - where is the third Wise Man?  
G. – a book with my restaurant’s recipes  
N. – it seems to me it’s Xmas  
R. – do you know at the restaurant they have the futurist fire?  
S. – no one knows what it is.  
L. – but it burns torta pasqualina (Easter pie)  
N. - what?  
G. – No, I mean... The boss called me to talk to a customer and I forgot the pies in the oven: I burned twenty-four of them  
N. – okay, thank you, sorry but now I have to work. I thank you for everything

They stand up and leave

R. - don’t forget the bills!  
N. – hey but someone had to stop and cut anything?  
G. – me to have my hair done. (He begins again to talk about the Easter pie)  
N. – For me, I have an administrator who makes my life impossible!  
G. – why? What does he do?  
N. – he is a nuisance from morning to night. He is a bit special  
G. – a bit special? What do you mean?  
N. - he doesn’t exist, he isn’t in and isn’t out and not even around. He is just a voice!  
A. – a voice?

N. - I finished with your hair  
G. - what do you mean a voice?  
N. – what do I have to cut for you?  
G. - just my nails!  
N. - Just your nails!  
G. –Just nails!  
N. – look! What beautiful hands you have, look! Don't tremble; if you tremble maybe I'll cut something else, not your nails.  
G. – no, now it's late, I've to run to the restaurant, I'll come again tomorrow  
N. – but your nails are too long  
G. Never mind. I'll come back tomorrow.

FIFTH SCENE
-------------

Norma is reading at home, there's a knock, Mara enters

N. - hi  
MA. – Hi  
N. – it's been a long time since I haven't seen you!  
MA. – You are right,  
N. - anyway I find you well  
MA. - Thanks  
N. – So what we do today?  
MA. – Eyebrows  
N. well, eyebrows come on!  
MA. What's wrong? I don't find you well  
N. – Oh, you know. I'm having a bad time...  
MA. What's happening?  
N. I don't want to talk about it again, but it's a bad time  
MA. - What?  
N. – I can't sleep, I miss my appointments, I have to pay bills and I have an administrator who is always speaking to me, day and night!  
MA. What? An administrator always speaking to you?  
N. – no, in short I'm hearing a voice, all the time.  
MA. Ah! you are hearing a voice?  
N. – yes  
MA. - And what is it saying?  
N. - it is annoying me  
MA. - It annoys you  
N. - yes  
MA. – What does it say?  
N. – it haunts me  
MA. – It haunts you  
N. yes  
MA. – What does it say?  
N. it says me a terrible thing  
MA. – What?  
N. – it tells me: "it won't finish, it won't finish". And what has to finish? I don't know  
MA. – It repeats just "it won't finish"

N.- yes it goes on saying it won't finish, it won't finish all day and all night long it won't finish, it won't finish, it won't finish. I can't understand what has to finish in the end. I can't take it anymore. I can't lift it up of my mind and I can't do anything else.

MA. What about asking somebody's help?

N. – yes but to whom? They suggested me a shaman, a boyfriend, that I'm stressed, to pay bills but it didn't do anything, the voice is always here.

MA. – I was thinking about other kinds of doctors

N. – what?

MA did you ever think to a homeopath?

N. – who is him?

MA. – To a naturopath

N. – No what does he do? He cures with nature?

MA. - Do you ever heard about an auropath?

N. – Auropath? What is an auropath?

MA. – He deals with the energy of the person.

N. – of what?

MA. – Of energies. Of spiritual energies

N. – of spirits? No I don't do those things, also because when you sit around a table and call the spirits, you know who you are calling, but you don't know who will come to knock on your door. No, I don't make séances, and nevertheless look who's arrived at home!

MA. – Anyway I think you are working too much

N. - really now I'm working too little

MA. I see, but before you were. And you are always doing the same things, conducting the same life

N. – come on, what's wrong with working?

MA. – Nothing, but you don't even take a moment of leisure, you don't go out with friends

N. it's not true. My friends of the condo have just come and see me. I was pleased. They also brought me the bills!

MA. – These are the neighbors, maybe they are also friends, I don't know, anyway you stay too long on your own!

N. – Alone! But if I am always amongst people

MA. – have you ever had a boyfriend?

N. - no, not until now. You know, you have to find the right one, serious, head neck, a good guy, maybe a nice one.

MA. - Have you ever dated a man?

N. - how can I do it? the work, there's never time, and I'm tired in the evening, then, sometimes I go to attend my customers later, after dinner. When did you quit?

MA. Think what you like, I'll come back in a few days and I will make you a surprise

N. - a surprise?

MA. – Sure, trust me, see you

SIXTH SCENE
-------------

The neighbors met

U. – we had a nice ride today

F. – and we had fun

U. - some crossing and some footing, very nice!

F. - we didn't reach the lake

U. – we'll try again next time

F. - what about Saturday?

U. - yes, I think so.

L. (standing below G who is sitting, she hugs him) – what are you writing?

G. - Saturday's menu

L. – what are you preparing?

G. - ravioli stuffed with seafood

The others enter

L. – So what?

G. – ham and melon, melted cheese dumplings, granny's pancake, rabbit in spicy sauce, braised in Barolo wine, roasted boar. Then mushrooms

R. what are you writing?

G. Saturday's menu. Are you coming at the restaurant for dinner?

S. M. R. – no we are leaving for Cuba!

L. – are you all leaving together?

S. yes holydays for us all in Cuba

U. – How did you have this idea?

R. - I go to have fun

M. - I've always booked others journeys but I've never been there

N. – I go there because there are talented shamans

M. – maybe we'll find some nice Cubans. I'll have a nice salsa dance class

U. - you should buy a nice car. Those Americans from the Fifties'

G. – but you are all women with only a guy!

CHORUS – we are satisfied

S. - we should buy straw hats

A. - I don't buy it and don't put it on

R. he is always doing the a-social person, how boring he is!

R. – will you come with us?

L. no thanks I'm invited at the restaurant

They exit singing "un'estate al mare"

## SEVENTH SCENE

Mara, disguised as man, comes to Norma's.

N. – how are you tanned? May I do something for you?

MA. – No, now you have to do absolutely nothing, yes, no, that is, dress up yourself, we go out.

N – What are you meaning?

MA. – We go out! Relax, enjoyment, NO work!

N. - No work!

MA. Right, no work. I offer! Put on something, quickly

N. – It isn't that simple! Does it fit? (She brings a great scarf)

MA. – Yes it does. Anything goes as long as we go!

N. – so where are we going?

MA. – To the cinema

N. - to the cinema? It will be twenty years since I went to the cinema!

MA. – Now you should go back, come on!

N. – I've never gone to the cinema with a man. To say the truth even now! By the way why are you tanned so?

MA. – I did it for you.

N. – for me?

MA. – Yes for you. If you went out with a man really, since you would have never done, you'd be too tight and full of qualms and you will have no fun at all. This evening is time for fun!

N. – so you masquerade for me. To make me laugh!

MA. I didn't want you to laugh, that is, yes, in short as you like.

N. – but people will look at us strange, tanned like that!

MA. – Sure, but we don't care; rather we can laugh for what they say.

N. – Well, then. How lucky I am. I found a boyfriend without even trying to find one. Nothing better than that

Tell me one thing: the film is a comic or a drama?

MA. – We'll decide at the moment, even if I prefer something to laugh.

N. – Comic, that's good. Listen Mara one thing more...

MA. – Tell me, but then let's go!

N. – maybe I'm seeing double, but...are there some people in front of us?

MA. – You are not seeing double, there are people.

N. - and what are they doing?

MA. They came to see the theater

N. they're come to see the theater and now we are going to the cinema?

MA. – Yes

N. – are they coming with us? All of them? So they could see how it ends

MA. - No, not really, they stay here.

N. - then say hello to them.

MA. – Ok, say hello.

N. – good evening, good evening to everybody. You were nice to come here, but now we have to go. See you another time, or if some of you want to wait, maybe we come back, maybe not. It's your choice. Good evening.

MA. Good evening

They exit