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THE DECAMERON

Produced by Alberto Grimaldi, directed by Pier Paolo Pasolini.

Director	Pier Paolo Pasolini
Screen Adaptation	Pier Paolo Pasolini
Director of Photography	Tonino Delli Colli
Production Designer	Dante Ferretti
Production Manager	Mario di Biase
Assistant Director	Umberto Angelucci
Collaborator for the Direction	Sergio Citti
Costume Designer	Danilo Donati
Make-up	Alessandro Jacoponi
Sound Editor	Pietro Spadoni
Camera Operator	Giovanni Ciarlo
Assistant Camera Operator	Carlo Tafani
Continuity	Beatrice Rossellini

Distributed by United Artists Corporation Ltd.

CAST LIST^{x)}

Ciappelletto	Franco Citti
Andreuccio di Perugia	Ninetto Davoli
Peronella	Angela Luce
Giotto	Pier Paolo Pasolini

^{x)} Note: In casting THE DECAMERON, it was Pasolini's intention to avoid the use of "known" actors completely. Indeed, with the exception of Franco Citti, Ninetto Davoli and of course himself, none of the people he chose for THE DECAMERON had ever before appeared on the screen. The vast majority of the fifty-four actors seen in the movie aren't actors at all, but ordinary people cast from the streets of Naples.

THE STORY

In choosing from the one hundred tales of THE DECAMERON, Pier Paolo Pasolini at first wanted to use only the stories set in Naples. In fact, the original working title of the film was NEAPOLITAN STORIES FROM THE DECAMERON. Later he decided to add the Ciappelletto episode set in an unspecified northern country (shot in Bolzano near the Swiss border), so it was decided in the end to retain the more general title.

It was never Pasolini's intention to merely present a small anthology of tales drawn from Boccaccio. Divising his own screenplay from the original (as he did in the case of THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW and OEDIPUS) he chose rather to let the stories flow into one another in such a way that the film attains greater unity. Some of the characters - Andreuccio of Perugia, Ciappelletto, the painter Giotto - reappear constantly in the stream of action, an extra device aimed at giving unity to what otherwise might be merely an episodic film.

The introduction of Giotto (a contemporary of Boccaccio's and indeed a figure in one of his shorter stories) is Pasolini's chief means of imposing an overall view on the teeming fourteenth-century world that he so vividly reinterprets. If some of the minor characters in THE DECAMERON reappear like threads in a tapestry, the particular function of Giotto is to frame the entire work.

The stories Pasolini picked are varied and fascinating. They involve the fortunes of those who attain some desired thing arduously or find what they have lost; the disasters of love; the wiles of women, the tricks they play on men and that men play on them.

Here follows, in capsule form, a synopsis of the principal tales that receive treatment in Pasolini's DECAMERON:

ANDREUCCIO OF PERUGIA: goes on a business mission to Naples, where he falls into the clutches of a wily Sicilian woman who convinces him that she is his long-lost sister and at length succeeds in relieving him of all his money - leaving him half buried at the bottom of a latrine. Friendless, penniless and covered from head to foot with offal, Andreuccio now runs into two thieves who force him to participate in pillaging the tomb of a Cardinal who died the day before. Once inside the stately sarcophagus, Andreuccio slips the Cardinal's ring onto his own hand, passing out only the vestments to the thieves. When he tells them that there is no ring, they slam down the sarcophagus lid and leave him entombed inside. Fortunately for Andreuc-

cio, a local priest has had the same idea as the two thieves. When the pries, the following morning, raises the lid and steps inside, Andreuccio bites his leg and send him fleeing. The lid now ajar, Andreuccio is once again free, the precious ring safely on his finger.

MUSETTO AND THE NUNS: Pretending to be deaf, dumb and mentally retarded (and therefore hardly a threat to the nun's vow of chastity) young Musetto succeeds in getting himself hired as gardener at a convent. Soon enough two of the nuns - overcome by temptation and curiosity, and confident that Musetto's muteness makes it all quite safe - decide to try the young man out. Their subsequent reports of Musetto's exceptional talents run the rounds of the convent, and in no time at all each of the nuns is having her sport with him. When Musetto, already taxed to the limit servicing the rest of the convent, is pressed into action by the insatiable mother superior, it is too much; he suddenly breaks his silence and blurts out that he's had enough and wants to leave. In order to keep him there, the cunning nun hits on a plan. Crying out that Musetto's faculty for speech has been miraculously restored by God, she makes him into a kind of saint. All is suddenly easy for Musetto; he neither has to work nor keep up the pretence of being deaf and dumb. His sole function from now on is to keep the nuns satisfied.

LISABETTA AND LORENZO. Three Sicilian brothers kill their sister's lover because he is of low birth. The murdered youth, called Lorenzo, appears to the girl in a vision and tells her where he is buried. She finds his body, but unable to carry it away she cuts off the boy's head and puts it at the bottom of a vase of sweet basil in order to keep it close to her forever. The brothers discover the vase and throw it out. The girl dies of grief.

CATERINA, daughter of Lizio di Valbona, is in love with Riccardo, the young Duke of Mantua. In order to engineer an assignation, she tells her parents that her room is hot and stuffy and that she'd like to sleep out on the terrace where she could hear the nightingale sing. Thus the young man is able to climb up on the terrace and make love to her. When the father discovers them he is enraged, but the fact that the young man is a Duke leads him to forgive him as long as he agrees to marry his daughter. He does, so the two remain in bed together.

PERONELLA is at home with her lover when her husband suddenly arrives earlier than usual. She tells the lover to hide in the bottom of a huge Jeroboam used for storing oil or wine. The husband has returned early, he says, because he has found someone who'll buy that old Jeroboam for five soldi - enough money to buy bread for a month. Thinking fast, the clever Peronella says that she's found someone who'll pay seven soldi, and that he's examining it now. She says this

loud enough so that the lover will hear and play along with the trick. Thus they dupe the husband and cuckoldry wins the day.

TINGOCCIO AND MEUCCIO are two young Neapolitan rakes who devote themselves entirely to lovemaking in spite of their morbid fears of dying in sin and suffering eternal damnation. The two make a pact: whichever one dies first will return to earth to tell the other what faces him on the other side. Tingoccio, exhausted by non-stop lovemaking over a period of weeks, shortly dies and reappears to Meuccio in the night. He says that he hasn't yet been judged, but he thinks his sentence is going to be a severe one. One thing is sure though; he has been assured that lovemaking is no sin. We last see Meuccio rushing off to the house of a blonde who first caught his eye at the onset of the story.

COMPAR PIETRO, DONNA GEMMATA AND DON GIANNI. A cunning priest (Don Gianni) convinces a simple couple (Compar Pietro and Donna Gemmata) that he can transform a woman into a horse and vice-versa. Thrilled, the wife implores the priest to do it to hear. He explains that the whole thing is a delicate process and that if either one of them speaks while he is effecting the transformation, the spell will be broken and he can never again turn her into a horse. Open-mouthed, the couple agree. Don Gianni commands the woman to strip and puts her down on her hands and knees. Fondling each part of her body in turn, he tells her "this is the horses mane, these are the horse's legs" etc., until he reaches her rear end. Telling her that she lacks a horses tail, he suddenly whips out his erect member and plunges it in to her. When the husband cries out in protest, it is already too late; the priest has sated his lust, and moreover screams at the couple that they have ruined the incantation by speaking out.