



LUDOVICO : You will have to have patience with me. Particularly since in science everything is different from what plain common sense tells one. You take for example that funny tube they're selling in Amsterdam. I examined it closely. Just a casing of green leather and two lenses, one like that *indicates by gesture a concave lens-and* one like that *indicates a convex lens*. I hear that one enlarges and the other diminishes. Any sensible person would think that they'd cancel each other out. Wrong. One sees everything five times as large through the thing. That's your science for you.

GALILEO: What does one see five times as large?

LUDOVICO : Church spires, doves; everything that's far away.

GALILEO: Have you yourself seen church spires enlarged like that?

LUDOVICO: Yes, signer. GALILEO: And the tube had two lenses? *He makes a sketch on a piece of paper*. Did it look like that?

*Ludovico nods*. How old is this discovery?

LUDOVICO: I don't think it was more than a few days old when I left Holland; in any case it hadn't been longer on the market.

GALILEO *almost friendly*: And why must it be physics? Why not horse-breeding?

*Enter Signora Sarti, unnoticed by Galileo.*

LUDOVICO : My mother thinks that a little science is necessary. All the world takes a drop of science with their wine nowadays, you know.

GALILEO: You could just as well choose a dead language or theology. That's easier.

*He sees Signora Sarti.* All right, come on Tuesday morning.

*Exit Ludovico.*

GALILEO: Don't look at me like that. I've accepted him.

SIGNORA SARTI : Because you saw me at the right moment. The Curator of the University is outside.

GALILEO : Bring him in, he's important. It may mean five hundred scudi. Then I won't need any pupils.

**GALILEO PRESENTS THE REPUBLIC OF VENICE  
WITH A NEW DISCOVERY**

**The Great Arsenal of Venice, by the Harbour**

*Senators, at their head the Doge. To one side, Galileo's friend Sagredo and fifteen-year-old Virginia Galileo with velvet cushion on which lies a telescope which is about two foot long and covered with crimson leather. On a dais, Galileo. Behind him the stand for the telescope, attended by Federzoni, the lens-grinder.*

GALILEO: Your Excellency, noble Signoria! As a teacher of mathematics at your University of Padua and director of your great arsenal here in Venice, I have always regarded it as my day not only to fulfil my high responsibility of teaching, but also to provide especial benefits for the Republic of Venice by means of practical discoveries. With deep pleasure and all due humility I am able to display and present to you here today a completely new instrument, my distance-glass or telescope, produced in your world-famous Great Arsenal according to the highest scientific and Christian principles, the fruit of seventeen years patient research by your obedient servant.

*Galileo leaves the dais and takes up position beside Sagredo.*

*Clapping. Galileo bows.*

GALILEO *softly to Sagredo*: Waste of time!

SAGREDO *softly*: You'll be able to pay your butcher, my friend.

GALILEO: Yes, it will bring them in money. *He bows again.*

THE CURATOR *stepping on to the dais*: Excellency, noble Signoria! Once again a page of fame in the great book of the arts is embellished with Venetian characters. *Polite applause.* A scholar of world repute here presents to you, and you alone, a highly saleable cylinder to manufacture and put on the market in any way you please. *Stronger applause.* And has it occurred to you that in war-time by means of this instrument we shall be able to distinguish the build and number of an enemy's ships a full two hours earlier than he can descry ours, so that we, knowing his strength, can decide whether to pursue in order to give battle or to fly? *Very loud applause.* And now, Your Excellency, noble Signoria, Signor Galilei begs you to receive this instrument of his own inventing, this testimony to his intuition, from the hands of his charming daughter.

*Music. Virginia advances, bows, and presents the telescope to the Curator, who passes it on to Federzoni. Federzoni places it on the stand and adjusts it. The Doge and senators climb on to the dais and peer through the telescope.*

GALILEO *softly*: I can't promise you that I shall be able to last out this carnival. These people here think that they're getting a profitable toy; but it's far more. I pointed the tube at the moon last night.

SAGREDO: What did you see?

GALILEO: It has no light of its own.

SAGREDO: What?

SENATORS : I can see the fortifications of Santa Rosita, Signor Galilei! -On that boat over there they're having their midday meal. Grilled fish. It makes my mouth water.

GALILEO: I tell you, astronomy has stood still for a thousand years because they had no telescope.

SENATOR: Signor Galilei!

SAGREDO : They're speaking to you.

SENATOR: One sees too well with that thing. I'll have to tell my womankind that bathing on the roof won't do any more.