

FÉLIX LOPE DE VEGA Y CARPIO

THE WIDOW OF VALENCIA

Translated by the UCLA Working Group on the *Comedia* in Translation and Performance:

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Pronunciation Key

Each vowel in Spanish has just one sound:

a - AH
e - EH
i - EE
o - OH
u - OO

The underlined syllable in each word is the accented one.

LUCENCIO: LOO-SEHN-SEE-OH
LEONARDA: LEH-OH-NAHR-DAH
JULIA: HOO-LEE-AH
URBÁN: OOR-BAHN
CAMILO: CAH-MEE-LOH
FLORO: FLOH-ROH
CELIA: SEH-LEE-AH
OTON: OH-TOHN
VALERIO: VAH-LEH-REE-OH
LEANDRO: LEH-AHN-DROH
ROSANO: ROH-SAHN-NOH

VALENCIA: VAH-LEHN-SEE-AH
FRIAR LUIS: LOO-EES
SAN JUAN: SAHN HOO-AHN
REAL: REH-AHL
REALES: REH-AHL-EHS
DOBLON: DOH-BLOHN
SHEPHERD OF FÍLIDA: FEE-LEE-DAH
GÁLVEZ MONTALVO: GAHL-VEHS MOHN-TAHL-VOH
GALATEA: GAH-LAH-TEH-AH
MIGUEL DE CERVANTES: MEE-GEHL DEH SEHR-VAHN-TEHS
ESPINEL: EHS-PEE-NEHL
JULIO: HOO-LEE-OH
GUZMÁN: GOOS-MAHN
CARRANZA: CAH-RAHN-SAH
ERCINO: EHR-SEE-NOH
ZAIDÍA: SAH-EE-DEE-AH
CLARA: CLAH-RAH

Dedicated to the Lady Marcia Leonarda¹

When I found out that your grace had become a widow at such a young age that, although your husband might well deserve to be mourned, your youth might excuse you from doing so—for, as the proverb has it, the wise will seek what they lack rather than what they have lost—I decided to dedicate this play, whose title is *The Widow of Valencia*, to you. I do not do so maliciously, for it would be a grave fault to offer your grace such an unworthy example. My Leonarda was discreet (as are you, who share her name) in finding a remedy for her solitude without harm to her reputation. Just as the trick when swimming is knowing how to keep one's clothes dry, so it is with following desire while maintaining one's good name. It is best not to surrender your honor, but since your youth, beauty, spirit, and cleverness may fall prey to some idle flatterer, it may not be a bad thing to have read this fable. For in fencing, one does not consider it a wound when another is pierced, nor do we deem the unskilled strummer a musician. Many will be against such a pretty sermon—and pardon me the use of this overused term, *pretty*,² but Fernando de Herrera, pride of the Castilian language and its first Columbus, never scorned or failed to praise this word, as is clear in his *Comentos*.³ But since you do not care about him or his prologues or me or even this comedy, let us return to my advice. For those who are green should follow that of their ripe elders, or they'll never give good advice themselves. Noblemen are too high for secret pleasures, while equals are unseemly so soon, even for marriage. Confer with your intimates, unless you would eschew intimacy. This is where *The*

¹ Marcia Leonarda was one of Lope's literary names for his lover Marta de Nevares, who was recently widowed when the play, written 1599–1600, was first published in 1620. This dedication emphasizes the similarities between the two widows in their common need to fulfill their desires without damaging their reputations.

² *Linda* in the original Spanish.

³ Fernando de Herrera (1534–1597): 16th-century Spanish poet known for his commentaries on the first and most famous of the Spanish Petrarchan poets, Garcilaso de la Vega (1501–1536).

Widow of Valencia comes in, a mirror in which you may adjust your mantle more clearly than in any Venetian glass, and then you will think of me, as I dedicate it to you. My play is not entirely made up; it may not have occurred in so many words, but I have just added some touches to the basic story to make it more convincing, like women putting on make-up.

I am writing you and wondering whether you can see yourself, with those green eyes, full, dark brows and lashes, thick, abundant curled locks, a mouth that stirs anyone who watches it laugh, white hands, a shapely figure, and liberty of conscience where restraint is concerned. For Lady Death, like in a friar of the Order of Mercy, rescued you from Constantinople and the *bagnio*⁴ of a man who was hairy from head to toe. I've heard it said that your late husband's mother was from Osuna or that when she conceived, she could think only of money in a chest.⁵ And so her imaginings came true—let us not doubt the philosophers, who favor impressions on the spirit over common heritage—those were your husband's graces, to which one might add the basest intellect of any jealous fool who was always in the way and yet never indulged you as he should. People sometimes say, when they pity the unfortunate, “So-and-so is haunted by an ill shadow.” Well, no wife has ever had a worse shadow than him, not since there's been a sun in the sky, and it dismayed many to see you, beautiful as the sun, with such a shadow. Oh, welcome Death! What medicine could not fix, Death achieved in five days, with a belated purge, two premature bloodlettings, and a doctor more inclined to your freedom than to your husband's life. Your husband surely took his revenge on us all by leaving just the slightest doubt of whether he

⁴ Death is compared to a Mercedarian friar. The order redeemed captives from Muslim territories, including North Africa and the Ottoman empire, of which Constantinople was the capital. A *bagnio* is a prison for captives.

⁵ Lope's double joke here refers to the hairiness and miserliness of Nevares's deceased husband. The Andalusian town of Osuna was ostensibly named for its bears (“osos”). Aristotle (“the philosophers”) believed in the theory of maternal impressions: a mother's thoughts or experiences during pregnancy, especially at conception, would determine the nature of her child. Hence a mother who thought about money stowed away would give birth to a miser.

would die or live on. So strong was the desire to see him go, not because he would then be lacking—he was always lacking—but because having once imagined him gone, it would have driven us to despair to see him again.

Your grace should know well how far I am from opposing your wishes, and you must believe I wish only for your benefit, untainted by self-interest. For who could not love such poise, such beauty, and such a celestial temperament? When you write verse, Laura Terracina, Ana Bins the German, Sappho the Greek, Valeria the Roman, and Argentaria the Spaniard all bow to you.⁵ When you play music, your divine voice and incomparable skill astonish Vicente Espinel.⁶ When you put pen to paper, you make the Spanish language the rival of any tongue; the purity of courtly language is infused with bravery, mere cleverness becomes gravity, and serious tones become sweet. When you dance, all eyes follow your every move; your skill takes the breath away, and everyone worships the ground your chopines⁷ tread upon. How could I then be so bold as to put a beauty mark on such a miracle and, like a bad painter, betray the original with my imperfect portrait? Consider my desires, which speak louder than words, and which you can confirm in the looking-glass. Forgive my pen, for in my soul lies the most vivid portrait of your mind and heart. God be with your grace.

Your chaplain,⁸ and affectionate servant,
Lope de Vega Carpio

⁵ Renowned female poets: Laura Terracina, 16th-century poet from Naples; Ana Bins, 16th-century poet from Antwerp; Sappho, Greek poet of antiquity; Valeria Proba, possibly a fourth-century Christian poet referred to by the Dutch Renaissance humanist Erasmus; and Argentaria, wife of the Classical Roman poet Lucan, who reportedly assisted with his *Pharsalia*.

⁶ Spanish musician and poet of Lope's era, renowned for supposedly being the one to add a fifth string to the guitar.

⁷ Elaborate platform shoes with cork soles, chopines or chapins were luxury footwear for women in the period.

⁸ Lope had taken religious orders in 1614, making him a *capellán*, or chaplain.

The Widow of Valencia

Characters

LUCENCIO, *old man*
LEONARDA, *young widow*
JULIA, *her servant*
URBÁN, *young squire*
CAMILO, *suitor*
FLORO, *his servant*
CELIA, *lady*
OTÓN, *suitor*
VALERIO, *suitor*
LISANDRO, *suitor*
ROSANO, *courtier*
A SCRIBE
A SHERIFF
SERVANTS

ACT I

SCENE 1

[A room in LEONARDA's house]

Enter the widow LEONARDA, with a book, and her servant JULIA

LEONARDA Celia! Julia! Can you not hear me?

JULIA My lady . . .

LEONARDA You fool—what are you up to?

JULIA I am at your service.

LEONARDA Save me from that Friar Luis.⁹ 5

JULIA When I see the state you're in,
I can tell you've never even come close
to becoming a nun.
When you spoke of that Friar Luis
as I came in, 10
I wondered where you'd put him.

LEONARDA You fool, these matters are not
for your silly head.

JULIA How poorly have I covered
the faults that nature gave me! 15
Ugly as I am,
and with no wit to boot!

LEONARDA All women need is good sense,
and an honest demeanor, Julia,
for those who think they're sharp, 20
routinely miss the mark
and risk falling, too.
As for me, ever since I lost my Camilo,
whom God now holds in his bosom,
and whom He now supplants in my soul, 25
I have decided not to remarry.
I read for entertainment,

⁹ Friar Luis de León (1523-1591) was a Spanish poet and theologian. His 1583 treatise, *The Perfect Wife*, describes what he considers the attributes and duties of an exemplary wife.

	<p>not to be a learned woman or to get my degree in wit. For one whose good reputation encloses her in such silence as this can find no harm in books. Any wise book offers pleasant conversation: when it becomes tiresome, it conveniently falls quiet. It's a friend who secretly advises and reproaches. And when I read one and consider proper piety I discipline my wild imaginings.</p>	<p>25</p> <p>30</p> <p>35</p>
JULIA	And what were you reading?	
LEONARDA	Books of devotion.	
JULIA	<p>Who would not delight in a lady so lovely and so pious? See how the whole city speaks of your seclusion, your good sense and intelligence, your fame, honor, and honesty. They say you've ushered in a Golden Age, made Valencia into a new Rome,¹⁰ and the past into the present. You embody all the goodness on this earth! You're an angel from heaven in your beauty and behavior. The young men are in such a state they dare not even look upon you. since you so elevate their thoughts.</p>	<p>40</p> <p>45</p> <p>50</p>
LEONARDA	<p>Let God be served in all things, dear Julia. Reputation is the spark, and the tinder catches so readily— I'd rather die than burn.¹¹ I don't want to be renowned, nor, like Artemisia,¹²</p>	<p>55</p>

¹⁰ Reference to the virtue of Roman matrons (widows, among them), now embodied by Leonarda.

¹¹ Leonarda is referencing 1 Corinthians 7:9: "If they cannot exercise self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion." Instead of marrying, however, Leonarda would rather die.

¹² According to myth, saddened by the death of her husband, Artemisia had a potion prepared of his ashes and minced bones.

	to feed on the cold ashes that death leaves underfoot, nor, like that Roman matron, to die because I renounce my desire to look upon a monster in the street, ¹³ nor to paint a silhouette of the dearly departed, and love it as though it were a man. ¹⁴ I just want to be a woman who deserves the name of widow, for I need no one at all.	60 65 70
JULIA	So you will not wed again?	
LEONARDA	Jesus! Julia, don't say that word. Men disgust me. Don't ever mention them to me. Bring me the image I bought for you from that painter.	75
JULIA	For your devotions? See, you are tempted already.	
LEONARDA	Hush, you fool. I just want to see it.	80
JULIA	Then why did you pay so much for it?	
LEONARDA	For its marvelous strokes. The seller assured me it was painted at court, by a famous Catalan. ¹⁵	85
JULIA	I'm off, then.	

¹³ The wife of the Roman consul, Fulvius Torquatus, who was so honorable that she never showed her face in public. When the Romans brought an Egyptian monster back to their city, Torquatus's wife longed to see the beast. Yet she refused to look at it from her window, and died from her frustrated desire.

¹⁴ In his *Natural History* (79 A.D.), the Roman author Pliny the Elder held that paintings were first made by tracing the outline of a man's shadow. He also includes the story of a young woman who traced the shadow of her lover's face on a wall before his departure, and suggests the classical associations between shadows, death, and the human soul.

¹⁵ Francisco de Ribalta (1565-1628), a Catalan Baroque painter who worked in Madrid and later in Valencia. He is among the first Spanish followers of Caravaggio.

JULIA *exits*

LEONARDA	There's nothing to discuss, except how best to serve God.	90
	That is a good purpose in life, once you realize how short it is.	
	It seems outrageous, in this day and age, for one so pursued to keep faith with a dead man,	
	to hold love so true,	95
	that I should live that truth and a life of chastity.	
	But glory lies in what is hard to do, and victory in resisting one's desires.	
	Leave me now, my thoughts.	100
	That's quite enough.	
	I shall not wed again.	

SCENE 2

Enter JULIA

JULIA	I couldn't find it.	
LEONARDA	<i>(Aside)</i> Resist, oh my chaste convictions.	
JULIA	Ah, here it is.	105
LEONARDA	<i>(Aside)</i> May the vanities I renounce be swiftly forgotten.	

Julia hands her a mirror

	<i>(Aloud)</i> What is this, you fool? A mirror, instead of the painting? Take it away.	110
JULIA	Just look at yourself. Use it or lose it, they say. You'll weep for it some day if you let it go to waste.	
LEONARDA	Just put it over there.	115

SCENE 3

[illegible]

JULIA (*Aside to LEONARDA*) Did I see him come in?

LUCENCIO Surely you'll defer
to the grey hairs of an old man. 125

LUCENCIO	The fuss you make over nothing at all!	135
	Is it wrong for a woman, in putting herself together, to check whether mantle or pins are where they should be?	
	Who better to tell her if it looks good or not than this bit of glass?	140

LUCENCIO I might, if you were one of those
who hang a mirror by their window 145
and when it seems they address
their poor gallant below,
it's all just for show:
they're really just looking
at themselves in the glass— 150

	<p>how they speak, how they move. The poor fool below thinks it's all about him, yet it's all for the mirror, and the image therein.</p>	155
	<p>You're not one of those full of present devotion, who brings a mirror to mass for a quick glimpse in the glass, every time that she stands.</p>	160
	<p>Nor do you drink with your lips in a bow, so the color will stay where you placed it just so.</p>	165
	<p>I can't tell you how wrong it seems to an old man, yet it's practiced by all, the dainty and the ugly both.</p>	170
	<p>Look at yourself, and God keep you. And since I am here to see you, consider what you have seen there, and let me speak to you alone.</p>	
LEONARDA	<p>Uncle, if this is about marriage, do not speak of it or even mention it.</p>	175
LUCENCIO	<p>How can you be at once so clever and so stubborn? Do I not deserve your attention? Who has ever heard of an old man, and an honorable one at that, who is not heeded by all?</p>	180
LEONARDA	<p><i>(Aside)</i> This is where I lose my resolve. <i>(Aloud)</i> When I know how much you love me, how can I let you go on in vain?</p>	
LUCENCIO	<p>Will you carry on like all those other women? Why so obstinate? Do you think that with this you'll secure your good repute? You'll destroy it instead.</p>	185
	<p>Since you're so very set, do tell how you plan to keep yourself in this fine state you're in,</p>	190

Tell me, Lucencio,
 should I risk sinfulness
 for your sake? 235
 Would you want that for me,
 when all the authorities agree
 in condemning remarriage?
 Isn't prudent and chaste widowhood
 universally praised? 240
 Even jealous slander
 cannot last for long.
 The truth soon comes out,
 and a good name rises,
 like a phoenix¹⁸ from the flames, 245
 to welcome a new day.
 Who, I ask you, would want
 one of those candy-coated dandies,
 in a rakish hat,
 short feathers, new sashes, 250
 shirt open just so,
 and Italian linen—
 nice and clean on the outside,
 old and grimy on the inside.
 Boots so tight they won't come off, 255
 not for months at a time,
 baggy stockings down below,
 and a mustache out to here,
 with toupees and pomade,
 fake necklaces to impress with, 260
 soft scented gloves—
 a great one for sonnets and love letters.
 With those immaculate hands
 he'll snatch at three thousand a year,
 ready to take his ease 265
 between sheets of the finest silk.
 Before a week's out,
 he'll be off to find other women,
 or return to old loves,
 and so forsake mine. 270
 He will come home late,
 I will be jealous.
 He'll throw my money around,
 and then we will argue
 about what he has and has not done. 275
 I'll hide it and he'll give it away,
 taking on debts in my name.

¹⁸ Mythological bird that was reborn from its own ashes.

	<p>The police will come knocking, there will be yelling and screaming. Day and night, he'll stir up the house. "Give me that dowry letter!" "Release those funds—they're mine!" "Sign this deed!" "I won't!" "Is that so? You won't?" I'll make you, you scoundrel, if you keep this up!" And the more I give in, the more he'll grant me such fine and noble titles as Countess Kicked-and-Slappedinthe face. I have said quite enough.</p>	<p>280</p> <p>285</p> <p>290</p>
LUCENCIO	Ipsa dixit! ¹⁹ She has spoken.	
LEONARDA	<p>The end may have been Latin, but the rest was in our common tongue. This is what I resolved the day he died, and were I manly enough, I would eat hot coals to consume my cold soul.²⁰</p>	<p>295</p>
LUCENCIO	<p>Niece, that's it, then. From this day forth I'll scatter to the winds all those marriages I'd sought, or were proposed to me, including three I'd brought today, for you to think upon. I'll only ask, then, that we refrain from feeding all that gossip so vain about your tender age or mine. Watch yourself, since you remain all too free, and so very young. It's a stretch to say you'll live secure with so many years ahead of you. When in that mirror there you spy both your beauty and your youth, never forget that they lie— their advice is far from the truth. May God keep you at long last</p>	<p>300</p> <p>305</p> <p>310</p> <p>315</p>

¹⁹ Latin expression that refers to a dogmatic and unproven statement.

²⁰ Reference to Portia Catonis, second wife of Marcus Junius Brutus, one of Caesar's assassins, who committed suicide by swallowing hot coals. Here, Leonarda threatens to emulate Portia's suicide.

in your penance and your fast.

LEONARDA *(Aside)* What an importunate old fool!

LUCENCIO (*Aside*) What an arrogant woman!

Exeunt

SCENE 4

[On the street]

Enter LISANDRO, suitor

LISANDRO The river breaks the hardest rock at last,
tumbling it down in a current full strong.
Both haughty pine and wrinkled olive long
to yield humbly before the peasant's axe.
The lofty palm to the African throng 325
grants the orient fruit that they would win.
The ox to the yoke, the snake to the song
of the enchanter must at last give in.
The sculptor soon makes a figure appear 330
from hardest marble or frozen stone,
thus giving shape to what before had none.
Yet the harder that I try to come near
that woman, delicate and appealing,
the fiercer and harsher is her dealing.

SCENE 5

[On the street, where LISANDRO was]

Enter VALERIO, suitor

VALERIO Down the mountain swift water comes tumbling, 335
splashing from rock to rock with curious mirth,
its crystal laugh turned now to dark mumbling,
as it sinks by and by into the earth.
My pain grows all the more at any boon,
consuming whatever had once been good, 340
while hope entertains hope, as well hope should,
foolishly glad to think that it might bloom.
Love sees me die and is full satisfied.

Time and works prove unequal to the task:
 like waves that break and rise again, they mask 345
 the ill until at last all good has died.
 It's over just as soon as it is born:
 hope fades not long after the breaking morn.

SCENE 6

[On the street, where LISANDRO and VALERIO were]

Enter OTÓN, suitor

OTÓN With tears and pleas the pilgrim secures
 the right to pass among barbarians rude— 350
 a guide through mountains, fire to keep him warm,
 in Libya's harsh deserts water most pure.
 Savages offer him safe passage then:
 Arabia yields him bread, and Persia wine,
 peace among Arabs in Africa he finds. 355
 Tears and joy often vie with each other:
 in his Moorish captor the captive at times
 finds pity among harsh chains and bars.
 Yet this asp, born of the hardest stones,
 will never once heed the echo, no, 360
 of these my exhausted tears and moans.

VALERIO Lisandro!

LISANDRO Valerio!

VALERIO Otón!

OTÓN Gentlemen! 365

VALERIO Love has conspired
 to bring us all here.

LISANDRO It takes one to know one.
 Put your hats back on!
 You can speak of love 370
 with your heads covered—
 it's not like being in Mass.

OTÓN I must warn you,
 this is the only fashion

	in which to hear this out. For love's whims are such that when you begin to deal with its vexations you need a clear head, sharp eyes, your wits about you. Not because love seeks the truth— it'd much rather avoid it— but because you need eyes wide open to take in such an agreeable lie.	375 380 385
LISANDRO	I give you Otón, clearly falling apart with thoughts of that lovely widow.	
OTÓN	And you? Who could deny she burns you up, and wears you thin? Why, otherwise, would you rend the gauzy veils of heaven, in which astrologers shroud it, to see what the stars portend?	390
VALERIO	This is jealousy, let it be noted. It is for me to intervene and put an end to this unpleasantness, cutting it short.	395
LISANDRO	You're the one who will be cut short if you seek remedy in that flame that lies therein. For oh, in Otón and me, the soul in love is a fluttering moth that will surely die within.	400 405
VALERIO	I, for Leonarda?	
LISANDRO	You, indeed. Do you think something so obvious could possibly be kept secret?	
OTÓN	In short, all three of us love the very same lady.	410
VALERIO	Given who she is,	

	I see no harm in confessing, for it's true I have indeed given some thought to this marriage.	415
LISANDRO	What a woman!	
OTÓN	She has no equal.	
LISANDRO	My suit is Valerio's.	
OTÓN	And I seek the same.	
VALERIO	If you attempt what I attempt, either I must offend you in taking it from you, or I must be offended if you take it from me. What shall we do?	420
OTÓN	Rivalry and good intentions seldom dine together. Yet it shall be so for that best serves everyone— unless someone here has been shown greater favor?	425
VALERIO	I will not say that it was me, although I'm not afraid to tell what favor she has shown me, as long as you give me your word you will also tell your part.	430
LISANDRO	I agree.	435
OTÓN	So do I.	
VALERIO	Listen, and you can deduce how my love is rewarded from the favor shown.	
OTÓN.	Tell us, Valerio. What favor was that?	440
VALERIO	Here goes.	
LISANDRO	Go on.	
VALERIO	Listen: I saw this fine widow	

with her tigress soul 445
looking like an angel
in her coach one afternoon.
As the sun was setting,
her new sun was rising
although the curtain insisted 450
on making an eclipse.
I bowed and she,
though she wouldn't look at me,
leaned out the side
with her swan-like breasts. 455
Thinking I could seize this favor,
I spent the night under her window,
playing my guitar,
until dawn surprised me there.
I was moved to poetry, 460
though I would come to regret it.
I started singing more gently
than Pyramus sang to Thisbe:
"Give water to this my flame"
was the first thing I said . . . 465
and also the last.
Be careful what you wish for.
Whether the water was clean or murky—
only Dioscorides²¹ would know.
Let's just say I spent all night 470
laughing and cleaning myself up.

LISANDRO Here is mine, better than Valerio's,
since it was actually a favor,
while his was a fiasco.

OTÓN Go ahead then, tell us your story. 475

LISANDRO I will begin, in the name of love:
on this happy street
where unhappy lovers roam
on their long wake for a dead man's spoils,
on a dark night, a couple of thieves, 480
were spiriting away
some fine wine in its skin.
As those low-lives passed by
the widow's marble doors
—softer than the widow herself— 485

²¹ *Pyramus and Thisbe*: legendary lovers, separated by a wall, whose story ends in tragedy. *Dioscorides*: Greek doctor and naturalist of the first century CE.

	they used them as a hiding place. The authorities, tipsy with excitement, couldn't see where they had gone. Since I was watching from afar, hidden in a corner,	490
	I quickly moved closer, swift as the wind. Once I reached that beloved door, I glimpsed a dark shape, with its cape and its sword, addressing someone inside.	495
	I moved in, pulled my hat down over my face, and said: "You, gentleman!", throwing my cape over my shoulder.	500
	Since he won't answer I quickly pull out my dagger, and stab him to the hilt. Blood spurts all over me, so I race home,	505
	and hold my sleeve up to the light, but it smells to high heaven. So I take the lantern, and return to the scene, only to find spilled wine,	510
	and the wine-skin sprawled out on the ground. ²²	
OTÓN	If those are your favors, then I renounce all faith in love.	
VALERIO	Come on, Otón. Tell us of yours.	
OTÓN	Ah Cicero, where are you when I require your eloquence? As the roosters here first crowed, with their coarse calls at dawn, soon to be answered by their country brethren, I paced up and down our widow's street, monitoring her window, and measuring my steps like clockwork.	515 520
	The sky was darker than a Portuguese in a cloak, so I mistook her window by a good two floors— a shoemaker lived in the one I chose.	525

²² Lisandro's confuses the wine-skin hidden by the thieves with a rival for Leonarda's affections.

I carefully peered up to the house
where, I thought, all my cares lay.
I saw a white figure on the balcony, 530
and believing it to be the widow,
wooed her with these words:
“Oh my Angel: your every garment
is sacred to me, a slave to your love.”
Gentlemen, no sooner had I spoken, 535
when the good shoemaker,
who was sitting outside in his shirt,
grabbed a brick and said:
“Are you flirting with my wife?
You rascal! 540
Come back by day,
if you dare!”
If I hadn’t ducked,
he would have splattered my brains
across the brick like porridge. 545

VALERIO Truly, equal favors for all!
 But in the end, to speak seriously,
 and setting all jokes aside,
 don't you see that our fantasies
 can lead to no good? 550

OTÓN If I may give you some advice . . .

LISANDRO Yes?

OTÓN We must deal with this quarrel
by not dealing with each other.

VALERIO Should we stop speaking to one another? 555

OTÓN I will not speak to either of you,
 wherever I might see you.

LISANDRO I'm off, then.

OTÓN Oh Leonarda, lovely and silent!

LISANDRO Oh, most beautiful widow! 560

VALERIO Oh, most fierce and lovely creature!

Exeunt

²⁴ Mythical snake-like creature that could kill by looking at its victims.

	which you defended to the heavens, a mirror of chastity for your old uncle's sake? What of your coy refusal to even look at yourself in the glass?	600
LEONARDA	You're quite the preacher.	
JULIA	Hush now, don't get upset. Will this be a passing fever, or a permanent condition?	605
LEONARDA	My understanding is no match for my will.	
JULIA	You're forgetting memory. ²⁵ Purge him out, and good riddance.	
LEONARDA	See what you do to me, Love!	610
JULIA	Who in Valencia do you love so? What happened to that cold, cloistered, saintly woman?	
LEONARDA	Don't ever speak to me again, you fool. Say no more! None of this will matter if I'm fated to fall.	615
JULIA	And what shall I do with your books and your chapel. What would Friar Luis say? What of those lofty ideals?	620
LEONARDA	Oh women, how weak you are when tested! My icy resolve was unmatched, fair youth, before I set eyes on you! Yet I am not scared of death. I will not marry, no matter what the world thinks.	625
JULIA	I have a solution for you, my lady.	
LEONARDA	Have I not told you to keep quiet?	

²⁵ A learned joke: Saint Augustine identified three faculties in the human soul: memory, understanding, and will. Since Leonarda has named two, Julia provides the third.

Had I not raised you, 630
I would slap you silly.
You see me burning, you beast,
and yet you mock my pain!
I will find satisfaction
without losing my honor and good name, 635
and so put out this cruel flame.

JULIA Anything's possible.

SCENE 8

[On the street]

Enter URBÁN, young squire

URBÁN Oh, thank God I found you!
How much longer were you going to pray?
Were you planning to stay 640
for Midnight Mass?
I would not want to serve you
during the holidays.

LEONARDA Must we leave so quickly
on such a sunny day? 645

URBÁN You don't usually say that—
you hate the heat.

LEONARDA Now I want some sun.

URBÁN So go get it, then.

JULIA (*Aside to URBÁN*) Leave her, she is not herself. 650

URBÁN (*Aside to JULIA*) Why? Oh God!

LEONARDA Go see if the coach is ready.

URBÁN Yes, my lady, I'll see to it.

LEONARDA Come back, you fool. Where are you going?

URBÁN I was going to find the chariot of the sun, 655
so we can get you some.

SCENE 9

[On the street]

Enter CAMILO, a gentleman, and FLORO, his servant

CAMILO A fine message, indeed!
Tell her not to write me again.

FLORO Don't tear it up,
for old time's sake. 660

CAMILO It's done now.

FLORO It meant nothing to you?

CAMILO It was a mere whim.

LEONARDA *(Aside to URBÁN)* Urbán, do you see that young man?

URBÁN Yes, I do. 665

LEONARDA Come closer.

She whispers in his ear

URBÁN His name and address? Got it.

FLORO Your disdain
is not news to me.
You've always been harsh
to this woman. 670

LEONARDA Let's go, Julia.

JULIA Come on, then.

LEONARDA *(Aside)* I'm dying!
Will I ever see you again? 675

Exeunt LEONARDA and JULIA

SCENE 10

[On the street]

URBÁN	(<i>Aside</i>) By my faith, to charge me with finding out this gentleman's name and address!	
CAMILO	I want neither love nor cares. Let Celia stay in her house, and favor whomever she wants. Let her keep company, if she pleases, with any who come and go. Let her find a green young man to drive mad with jealousy, for I'm beyond all that, and feel only pity for him.	680 685
URBÁN	(<i>Aside</i>) I didn't even bring my inkwell and my quills. (<i>Aloud</i>) Excuse me, gentleman! I'd like . . .	 690
CAMILO	Speak up, what do you want?	
URBÁN	To see if you'll be joining the procession for the Jubilee. ²⁶	
CAMILO	I'd like to, good man. What contribution do you expect?	 695
URBÁN	It's just one <i>real</i> . ²⁷	
CAMILO	Here you are. Two <i>reales</i> for the two of us.	
URBÁN	May God thank you for it. Your name and address?	 700
CAMILO	Camilo, and I live near San Juan parish.	
URBÁN	Are you a nobleman?	
CAMILO	Noble enough.	

²⁶ For Catholics, a jubilee year is a time for the remission of sins and universal pardon. The year 1600 was a jubilee.

²⁷ Pronounced *reh-ahl*.

URBÁN	I need to write that down here. And your good name, sir?	705
FLORO	Me? Floro.	
URBÁN	That'll do. I'll get back to the church.	
CAMILO	May God be with you.	
URBÁN	<i>exits</i>	
CAMILO	Now we are both in the procession.	
FLORO	Will you pray?	710
CAMILO	I will start today. Wait! Oh God, I gave the man a <i>doblón</i> ²⁸ instead of two <i>reales</i> !	
FLORO	Now you notice? There's no redeeming it now.	715
CAMILO	Get in there. There must be something we can do.	
FLORO	That's why he said you were a nobleman.	
CAMILO	Damn it! This procession doesn't come cheap!	720

Exeunt

SCENE 11

[LEONARDA's house]

Enter LEONARDA, JULIA, *and* URBÁN

LEONARDA	Well done, Urbán!
URBÁN	What can I say? I am one in a million.

²⁸ A *doblón* (*doh-blohn*) was worth twenty *reales*.

LEONARDA	How clever to get their names and addresses on paper! So his name is Camilo? In that, too, he is like the deceased? ²⁹	725
URBÁN	There's no doubt he's noble, though we've never heard of him. After all, didn't he give me a <i>doblon</i> when a <i>real</i> would have done?	730
JULIA	He must be generous. It was a noble gesture, indeed.	
LEONARDA	Tell me, Julia, what could one lack, whom nature grants such gifts?	735
URBÁN	About those gifts . . . I swear I've never seen a finer looking man since the day I was born. What a face, what elegance! What a neatly kept beard! Such generous hands! They looked like pure snow. What a figure, what a well-turned leg! What charm, what cleverness! What an elegant way with a <i>doblon</i> ! And how I swooned when I saw it gleaming!	740 745 750
LEONARDA	I can no longer bear this unbearable flame— it is killing me. My dear friends, this may seem like a great weakness on my part, but my heart trusts in your love and loyalty. You have served this house since my parents' time. I know how much you love me. Since I don't intend to marry,	755 760

²⁹ Camilo was the name of Leonarda's late husband. It is also a reference to Saint Camillus, the patron saint of the sick.

	<p>nor to become engaged, today you must find my remedy, today I entrust you with my life. My reputation is in your hands.</p>	765
URBÁN	<p>Is it your fear or your love that makes you doubt us now? By God, they'd never get a word out of me: not if they put me on the rack,³⁰ not if they tried to buy me off with gold! Trust Julia and me, and tell us what to do.</p>	770
LEONARDA	<p>You, Urbán, must be my remedy. Listen carefully.</p>	775
URBÁN	<p>I'm listening.</p>	
LEONARDA	<p>You see how Valencia is all a riot at Carnival, with masks and costumes everywhere.</p>	
URBÁN	<p>That's right.</p>	780
LEONARDA	<p>Well, if anything goes, then put on a costume and a mask, go find this gentleman and let on, Urbán, that a certain lady favors him, that she loves him dearly, and that he could have her if he waits for you tonight on this side of the Palace Bridge. If he agrees, you will fetch him there tonight.</p>	785 790
URBÁN	<p>Shall he see me and where you live?</p>	
LEONARDA	<p>No. You will wear a mask, you'll place a hood over his head,³¹ and bring him thus to the house. We'll keep him in the dark, and when it's time for him to go,</p>	795

³⁰ Early modern form of torture.

³¹ In production, if blindfolding the actor seems preferable, this line can be changed.

	he must wear the hood again. Whom could he know that way? ³²	800
URBÁN	A well thought out plan, indeed! He'll yield like a tame falcon. ³³ What am I waiting for? I'm off.	
URBÁN	<i>exits</i>	
LEONARDA	Don't be long.	805
URBÁN	I won't.	
JULIA	Whose idea was this?	
LEONARDA	It was Love, who has the wise at its feet.	
JULIA	I think someone is at the door.	810
LEONARDA	Go and see who it is.	
JULIA	<i>exits</i>	
LEONARDA	(<i>Aside</i>) What won't a determined woman do for the sake of her pleasure? What torment could change her resolution? What flame, what noose, what sharp sword? What more daring giant reaches for the heavens? What more daring Hercules attempts the descent to hell? That powerful boy ³⁴ has melted my frozen heart with his love and vanquished my devotion to my first husband. I've been like a dammed up river that only now runs wild. I have been, in short, a woman.	815 820

SCENE 12

³² Pun on carnal knowledge.

³³ In falconry, hoods are used to train the birds and keep them calm.

³⁴ *Giant*: mythological creature who defied the Olympian gods and tried to reach the heavens. *Hercules*: for his final labor, the mythological hero descends into hell to capture Cerberus, the three-headed guard-dog of the underworld. *Powerful boy*: Cupid, god of love.

Enter JULIA

JULIA	There is someone here selling books and etchings.	825
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LEONARDA	What does he want, if he's in costume?
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JULIA	He doesn't have a mask.
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LEONARDA	We must keep up appearances. I am still pious. Let him in, and let's see what he wants, or if there is something we can buy.	830
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SCENE 13

[At LEONARDA's front door]

Enter OTÓN, in foreign or French clothes with four books in a basket

OTÓN	May God keep you, and give you a fine husband.
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LEONARDA	He's been very merciful in not wishing one on me.	835
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OTÓN	Why, when you are so beautiful?
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LEONARDA	Show me what books you are selling.
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OTÓN	I have one here that you can have for a reasonable price. But it's all my story, and might be too much for you.	840
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LEONARDA	<i>(Aside to JULIA)</i> How irresistible! I told you so, Julia. <i>(Aloud, pointing at a page)</i> Who is this?	845
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OTÓN	That is the romance of <i>The Shepherd of Filida</i> . ³⁵
------	--

LEONARDA	I know.
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³⁵ The love-themed pastoral novel was popular among female readers of the time.

OTÓN	Gálvez Montalvo was its great author. He died at sea as a Knight of San Juan, ³⁶ while I drown in a deeper and much rougher sea.	850
LEONARDA	Are you a bookseller or a suitor?	
OTÓN	I couldn't say. Here's another romance, of cruel <i>Galatea</i> . If you want a fine book, then look no further. It's by Miguel de Cervantes, who lost a hand fighting at sea, while I lose . . . ³⁷	855 860
LEONARDA	(<i>Aside to JULIA</i>) Hush, Julia, calm down. (<i>Aloud</i>) What have you got to lose?	
OTÓN	. . . my soul and my life, for another Galatea, one more cruel than Medea, ³⁸ and less obliging.	865
LEONARDA	Who is this?	
OTÓN	Espinel, a brave poet. ³⁹	
LEONARDA	What is it about?	
OTÓN	It's just sonnets, but it has some nice lines, and some serious poetry, too. He loved until death, though he did not die of it, unlike me.	870
LEONARDA	So are you a suitor or a bookseller?	875
OTÓN	I couldn't say. Here you have a songbook, full of nonsense.	

³⁶ The Catholic military order of the Knights of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem.

³⁷ Cervantes was wounded at the naval battle of Lepanto, in 1571.

³⁸ In Greek mythology, the distraught princess Medea killed her children to punish her husband, Jason, for abandoning her.

³⁹ Vicente Gómez Martínez Espinel (1550-1624) was a Spanish priest, writer, and musician.

LEONARDA	Don't deal in bad imprints.	
OTÓN	It's better imprinted in me . . .	880
LEONARDA	What?	
OTÓN	Eternal servitude, and love, and suffering!	
LEONARDA	Is this wooing or selling?	
OTÓN	I couldn't say.	885
SCENE 14		
<i>Enter VALERIO, dressed as merchant, with prints</i>		
JULIA	Now the printseller is in the house.	
VALERIO	Prints, prints, get your fine prints!	
LEONARDA	<i>(Aside)</i> Either I am missing something, or this peddling is a set-up, for both these suitors, who came up with this ploy, took off their Carnival masks as they came into the house. Julia, is this appropriate, in my seclusion?	890 895
JULIA	<i>(Aside to LEONARDA)</i> I think there's something fishy here.	
LEONARDA	<i>(Aside)</i> I can see that. So many men in my house!	
VALERIO	<i>(Aside)</i> Otón got here first?	900
OTÓN	<i>(Aside)</i> Valerio is here, too?	
LEONARDA	What is it that you're selling, exactly?	
VALERIO	Can't you see? I offer you my heart.	

LEONARDA	Let me see, what is this print?	905
VALERIO	The beautiful <i>Adonis</i> , painted by Titian with divine strokes. Oh to be loved as he was! I die in despair, while he died in his lover's arms. This one, on my word, so fine and delicate, is the work of Raphael, and superbly engraved. And this one is Flemish, and that one Italian. ⁴⁰	910 915
LEONARDA	These are hardly suitable for me. Do you have any religious images?	
VALERIO	Yes, here. Look at this, an exquisite print on marriage.	920
LEONARDA	Which I hope never to see.	
VALERIO	You are not impressed, yet, why not? Thousands await your "I do," and there might even be a certain gentleman nearby who is in love with you. I am Valerio, although I am in disguise now.	925 930
OTÓN	Since we are naming names, you have Otón at your service. I am rich and of noble birth, and madly in love with you.	
LEONARDA	Is there no one here who can buy you off? You there!	935

SCENE 15

⁴⁰ References to famous Renaissance painters, including Titian (1488-1576) and Raphael (1583-1520).

Enter two servants

SERVANT 1º	My lady . . .	
LEONARDA	Show the bookseller and the printseller out . . .	940
OTÓN	My lady, is it wrong to ask for what you owe us?	
LEONARDA	Servants, what are you waiting for?	
VALERIO	Hold on, there is no need to get upset.	
LEONARDA	You take liberties, and then want to charge me? Fine books indeed! Come now, throw them out!	945
VALERIO	That won't be necessary, we will find our way out.	950
OTÓN	We won't stand for this.	
SERVANT 2º	The nerve of those foreigners!	
SERVANT 1º	There is another one at the door with creams and perfumes.	
SERVANT 2º	Well then! Down you go.	955
VALERIO	You're back to your cruel ways!	
LEONARDA	Close the door, that will keep this insolence out.	
VALERIO	<i>(Aside)</i> Julia, are we still friends?	
JULIA	<i>(Aside)</i> Hush, my lady will hear us.	960

Exeunt

SCENE 16

[On the street]

Enter CAMILO and URBÁN, disguised with a mask

CAMILO By God, masked man,
 this is quite a risk I am taking,
 when I don't even know who you are.

URBÁN Camilo, this will be
 our little secret. 965

CAMILO Shouldn't that lady trust me
 with her reputation,
 when she offers me her soul?
 Could I not serve her, talk to her,
 see her, hear her, and know her name? 970

URBÁN Let's not talk about it.
 If you try to find out too much,
 all will be lost.

CAMILO I swear by my faith as a gentleman,
 you'll make me lose my mind. 975
 As God is my witness,
 had I enemies out there,
 I would suspect a trap,
 but no man is more beloved,
 nor has more friends in this town. 980
 I am glad you said
 at least I could come armed
 and carry my pistol,
 to this secluded love nest.

URBÁN Bring one, bring a hundred. 985
 If you don't let curiosity
 get in the way of your skill,
 your valor, your good taste,
 and your will,
 you'll enjoy the finest 990
 this city has to offer.

CAMILO What does it matter how beautiful she is,
 if I must enjoy her in the dark?
 I assume she is ugly.

URBÁN When you speak to her and touch her, 995
 a light will shine upon you.

If she does not please or bores you,
you need not come back.

URBÁN	You'll be happy if you go.	
CAMILO	You will find me on the bridge at the agreed upon hour.	1035
URBÁN	And what a night you'll have with that angel!	
CAMILO	Enchanted, to say the least.	
URBÁN	She'll be expecting you. Goodbye.	1040
CAMILO	I am eager for your return.	
URBÁN	It will not be long.	
CAMILO	I shall find out what this is, if it costs me my life.	1045

ACT II

SCENE 1

[On the bridge]

Enter CAMILO

CAMILO	Be brave, my thoughts, in your reckless endeavour! We've come to that pass where your boldness would have me conquer though I'm conquered.	1050
	Torn between fear and desire, I set off in fits and starts, and no longer know if I'm coming or going.	1055
	Could it be that someone, envious of my nobility, has double-crossed me? Will this come to clubs or swords?	1060
	Shall I bravely bend my neck, like a little lamb who can't tell it's already been sold, and is headed straight for the slaughter? I never meant to offend anyone.	1065
	I must be mistaken. He who has not offended need not watch his back. And the one who told me of this affair said I was welcome to come armed . . .	1070
	but that was to make me afraid, for fear is always on guard. Even if I go as I am, what danger could I avoid when he will cover my eyes?	1075
	Blind, I will be easy to catch. Who ever heard of such a thing, that a beautiful woman, wanting a man so badly, should not let him see her?	1080
	How cautious she is with her reputation! What if I think I am embracing a beautiful angel, while I'm actually taking	

a demon in my arms, one who flies around at night, too ugly to show its face? What if she is an old woman, without eyelashes or eyebrows, and a mouth full of fake teeth, whose spells render me as meek as a sheep?	1085 1090
Or what if she is a wretch, all pocked with the French pox, ⁴¹ who would give me years of suffering for the sake of one hour's pleasure? But there are people coming.	 1095

SCENE 2

Enter URBAN, wearing a mask and carrying a hood

URBÁN	There is a man standing by himself. Who goes there?	
CAMILO	Are you by chance that friend of mine?	
URBÁN	At your service.	
CAMILO	<i>(Aside)</i> How could any sane man be doing this?	1100
URBÁN	Can anyone see us?	
CAMILO	The moon and the stars.	
URBÁN	Let them not shine upon us. Oh, what a lovely angel awaits you! You are a lucky man.	1105
CAMILO	No doubt, but whether she be ugly or beautiful, loathsome or lovely, what difference does it make, if I am to enjoy her in the dark?	1110
URBÁN	What difference? What do you mean? Is it not better to feel a plump and perfect body, than to caress a skeleton, the very image of death?	

⁴¹ Syphilis.

	Beauty is like a fine scent, a natural quality that you know, see, and smell for the soft breath it exhales.	1115
CAMILO	Am I a doctor or a healer? Why should I care about scents? Pleasure comes through the eyes, the very act of seeing, knowing, and conversing with a lady, is what makes love desirable. A blind man, on the contrary, such as I will be with this lady, takes his pleasure like a beast.	1120 1125
URBÁN	I don't agree, for the blind man can only imagine a face, but if you're awake and look carefully, you'll see the real thing. Certain eyes shine like fire at such a moment. Won't four of them together see heaven and earth?	1130 1135
CAMILO	While others may just as well be dead. Is she young?	
URBÁN	You won't see her.	1140
CAMILO	Is she married, or a dubious maid? Or perhaps a widow instead?	
URBÁN	It depends. Sometimes she is married, sometimes a maid, and other times a widow. She is neither married nor a maid, nor a widow, nor dishonored and abandoned.	1145
CAMILO	Has she been wrapped in tissue paper? Some lady you have, if I follow you! (<i>Aside</i>) There must be a trick.	1150

What if it's a man,
and not a woman? 1155
Am I so pretty, then?
Oh, how I'd like
to pull off his mask,
though it might cost me the lady
who has cost me so little!

1160
But I am all ablaze now
with desire.

(*Aloud*) My friend,
let's go see this obscure lady.
I've never seen the like of her. 1165

URBÁN Put on your hood.

CAMILO Everyone will think
I'm crazy.

URBÁN Not at all.

CAMILO Sack cloth? 1170
Could you not at least have made it silk?

URBÁN *puts the hood on* CAMILO

Is it a long walk?

URBÁN Very long, yes.

CAMILO Now you'll take me to the river,
and throw me in to put out my fire. 1175

URBÁN You must trust me.
There is no need to be angry, my lord.

SCENE 3

[On the street, on their way to LEONARDA's house]

Enter OTÓN and CAMILO holding onto URBÁN's belt

OTÓN Oh starry night,
you who guide my steps and my life,
on my way to the grave, 1180

turn black and dark
so I might ask a favor of you.
For though I've come out to these fields,
whose calm should temper
my blind ardor, 1185
it blazes all the more
in the face of her disdain today.

URBÁN (Aside to CAMILO) There is a man over there.
Stay close.

OTÓN Halt! Who is that? Who goes there? 1190

CAMILO (Aside) Here I am, fully armed,
and playing blind man's bluff.

OTÓN No answer?

CAMILO (Aside) This is good.
What if he shoots now? 1195

URBÁN I am in disguise.

OTÓN A fine fool!

URBÁN We had a little to drink,
and we were walking it off.
(To CAMILO) Come this way, sir. 1200

CAMILO Oh, may the saints help me!

Exeunt URBÁN and CAMILO

OTÓN How wine changes men!
And love, too,
for this ungrateful widow. 1205
Can it be that she is
so chaste and honest,
an Artemisia of fidelity,
and gives so many gentlemen
that same "no" as an answer?
It cannot be—there's something amiss. 1210
I suspect the saintliness
of her life is feigned,
for saintliness usually
looks pale and wan.
But for a coddled widow 1215

who easily eats up
 three or four thousand in rent
 to spend the cold nights
 alone like a girl!
 What does it matter 1220
 if she is locked up in her room,
 and they all think she is praying,
 when her steward gets her what she needs?
 Now, I won't sleep,
 not in a hundred nights, 1225
 I'll spend them all
 on her street and at her door,
 and if someone wakes her,
 by God, he must die!
 Neither snow nor rain— 1230
 though it rarely snows here—
 or lack of sleep shall stop me.
 I will be a stone at her doorstep,
 and freeze anyone who faces me,
 just like Medusa.⁴² 1235

OTÓN *exits*

SCENE 4

[In LEONARDA's house]

Enter LEONARDA in elegant clothing, and JULIA

LEONARDA	Are the hangings and velvets all in their proper places?	
JULIA	They are perfect, my lady. Turn around and look at them.	
LEONARDA	Is that tapestry right for that sitting room?	1240
JULIA	It is fit for a viceroy, and even for the king.	
LEONARDA	And what a suitable story! It tells the loves of Jacob. ⁴³	1245

⁴² Mythological monster who turned to stone anyone she looked in the eye.

⁴³ Biblical son of Isaac, who labored fourteen years to marry his beloved Rachel.

JULIA	Unlike your own swift glory, so quick to come. Jacob waited fourteen years for what you will have in an hour's time.	
LEONARDA	Pray to God that my good fortune not leave me now! What is taking Urbán so long? What should we do?	1250
JULIA	You can play a little.	
LEONARDA	He must not have liked the idea! I'm so wretched!	1255
JULIA	Don't make a scene. That would make no sense for such a strapping young man.	
LEONARDA	Maybe there is something womanish about his beauty! And what Roland, ⁴⁴ what knight, would agree to have his head covered to come here in the dark?	1260
JULIA	He is a noble gentleman, a manly, handsome youth, not like those namby-pambies. Next to him, Achilles himself would seem a low coward! Didn't Leander ⁴⁵ swim the gulf a thousand times for the sake of love?	1265 1270
LEONARDA	Don't you know that's just a story? And that was after they had seen each other, and spoken! And up in that tower, away from the wind, a single light was always lit, while here he won't have one, even inside the bedroom. Say instead he is like that Roman, who leapt into the pit, ⁴⁶	1275

⁴⁴ Medieval knight, hero of the French *Song of Roland* and of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*.

⁴⁵ *Achilles*: great warrior of Greek mythology. *Leander*: famous lover of Greek myth, who swam across the Hellespont every night to be with his beloved.

	or the one who charged a bridge, ⁴⁷ or the one who burnt his hand, ⁴⁸ those I might believe.	1280
JULIA	I deserve a reward.	
LEONARDA	I don't think so.	
JULIA	I'm waiting!	1285
LEONARDA	You may have the long cloak, Julia, the one I was wearing yesterday.	
JULIA	The purple and gold one?	
LEONARDA	Hurry, give me my mask, and take yours.	1290

SCENE 5

[In LEONARDA's house]

Enter URBÁN, and CAMILO

URBÁN	We are here, Camilo.	
CAMILO	Since I came up the stairs, I must be in the bedroom.	
LEONARDA	Have him sit down.	
URBÁN	Sit.	1295
CAMILO	Where?	
URBÁN	Here.	
CAMILO	Who was that who spoke?	

⁴⁶ Marcus Curtius, a young roman soldier who, in order to save Rome, leapt into the chasm that had opened in the Roman forum after an earthquake.

⁴⁷ Horatius Cocles, a Roman who charged against the Etruscan army at the Sublicius bridge, ultimately destroying it to impede their passage.

⁴⁸ Gaius Mucius Scaevola, who set fire to his own right hand for being unable to assassinate the Etruscan king, Porsena.

[illegible]

	put in enough light to see it by. I'm a gentleman, and if I can talk to you face to face, I am sure that my honorable ways will delight you twice over. This much you must grant me. Give me your hand!	1340
LEONARDA	My hand? Here.	
CAMILO	At last!	
JULIA	(<i>Aside to URBÁN</i>) I'll say, this man's no fool.	1345
URBÁN	He's got a way with words.	
JULIA	(<i>Aside</i>) Such pretty talk.	
LEONARDA	Well, on Camilo's life . . .	
CAMILO	That's my name, my lady.	
LEONARDA	. . . to give you my hand so soon was no small mercy.	1350
CAMILO	I swear it is a supreme gift. I swear I am going mad.	
LEONARDA	Tell me, do you like it? Don't squeeze it. Goodness!	1355
CAMILO	The hand might well be Esau's, ⁴⁹ and the voice, I know not whose.	
LEONARDA	Bring just enough light.	
JULIA	<i>exits</i>	
URBÁN	We'll shine some light on this now.	
CAMILO	This is to request light while sitting next to the sun. Alas, Apollo is eclipsed. ⁵⁰	1360

⁴⁹ Biblical figure, son of Isaac. His brother Jacob tricked him out of his father's blessing by covering his hands in goat's fur.

⁵⁰ Greek god of the sun.

JULIA *enters*

	<p>If you uncover the falcon and let him see his prey, the end is certain, and that heart will be his. But here, no sooner has he spotted her, he is stripped of the freedom to fly. And not only that, but in this house of veils, the partridge is hooded while the falcon can see. By God, my lady! Can it be that you'll allow me to hear you, but not see you?</p>	<p>1400</p> <p>1405</p> <p>1410</p>
LEONARDA	<p>Now, now. Fetch him some food to temper his heart.</p>	1415
<i>JULIA exits to bring refreshments</i>		
CAMILO	<p>Food, by God? How can I eat when that same heart is on fire? I've had enough of this house! Am I not to see a single face? How am I to trust that the food you bring is not poisoned?</p>	<p>1420</p> <p>1425</p>
LEONARDA	<p>Trust the heart in my breast, which has fallen for you.</p>	
CAMILO	<p>That will not do. If you wore that hood to the shops, no one would give you credit, no matter how much bosom you showed. I am the shopkeeper here, and you, that woman in a veil. Why should I grant you life, when I'm not allowed to see you?</p>	<p>1430</p> <p>1435</p>
LEONARDA	<p>Camilo, don't be so put out that I should veil myself this way, for there are things about me, sir,</p>	

	of which you are unaware.	
	I saw you,	1440
	and fell for you,	
	so that I couldn't resist this satisfaction.	
	This is the remedy I sought,	
	so that you could be here with me	
	without being able to tell anyone	1445
	who I am or where you've been.	
	If you think this means	
	that I do not trust you,	
	let there be no doubt	
	about my intentions.	1450
	I shall give you jewels	
	worth two thousand ducats.	
CAMILO	Fine jewels?	
LEONARDA	You there! Bring me those chains	
	and that charm, the Cupid one.	1455
	Bring them here . . .	
CAMILO	No. Don't do that.	
	It will only upset me further.	
	For I desire your eyes	
	more than any jewels you could offer.	1460
	If you gave me those sapphires,	
	or the rubies and pearls ⁵¹	
	of your mouth,	
	I could give you so much more,	
	if only I could see them.	1465
	Know that I, too, have gold in my house.	
	Thank God, I'm not a poor man.	
LEONARDA	I wish you more than	
	what the Orient sends to Spain.	
	But take this ring as a token of my love.	1470
	Your hand will set it off.	
CAMILO	And yours is perfect for this one.	
	Please allow that white hand	
	to wear it in my name.	

JULIA *enters, with refreshments*

JULIA	Here are the refreshments.	1475
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⁵¹ Camilo is referring to Leonarda's eyes, lips, and teeth.

CAMILO	There's no point. By my faith, I will not eat a thing.	
LEONARDA	You can't refuse, just one bite. I am an honest woman.	1480
CAMILO	Do you mean because of the poison?	
LEONARDA	Yes. I swear on my life, you must try it!	
CAMILO	If you swear, then let a thousand deaths befall us. I will consume the poison as Alexander took his doctor's. ⁵² Where trust abounds, no harm can be done.	1485 1490
URBÁN	<i>(Aside)</i> He certainly knows his history!	
JULIA	<i>(Aside)</i> He is very well read.	
URBÁN	<i>(Aside)</i> Don't think he's such a gem, he is just pretentious. <i>(Aloud)</i> I will fetch the drinks.	1495
URBÁN	<i>exits</i>	
CAMILO	<i>(Aside)</i> She's witty, that's for sure. <i>(Aloud)</i> Let's make a deal.	
LEONARDA	<i>(Aside)</i> He is as smart as he is wily.	
CAMILO	If this is how you carry on, you and your servants, how can you call to them without using their names? Let me give you false ones, so I can make sense of things.	1500
URBÁN	<i>enters with drinks</i>	

⁵² Alexander the Great, having been told that his doctor was seeking to poison him, showed his trust by consuming the medicine his doctor had prepared.

URBÁN	Drink.	1505
CAMILO	I shall drink later.	
URBÁN	Have something to drink.	
JULIA	(<i>Aside</i>) They're amused.	
URBÁN	(<i>Aside</i>) These sugar-coated youths, all syrupy sweet, drive me mad. Not even a nymph is so very particular. (<i>Aloud</i>) Drink.	1510
CAMILO	Give here, I will drink.	
URBÁN	(<i>Aside</i>) What a tiny, cautious sip! (<i>Aloud</i>) Tell me, did that do you any harm?	1515
CAMILO	How can I hesitate with all this fine silver? I have had enough, my lady.	
URBÁN	(<i>Aside</i>) So coy now, and later he'll polish off a whole wine-skin. (<i>Aloud</i>) Here's to my lady, and here's to you, Camilo. And finally, Julia, here's to us both, for he who drinks well, loves well.	1520
JULIA	(<i>Aside to URBÁN</i>) Listen up or get out of here. He wants to give us names, so he can call for us.	1525
URBÁN	(<i>Aside</i>) I am listening. Here's to me.	
LEONARDA	What will you call me?	
CAMILO	You, I will call Diana, ⁵³ for obvious reasons.	1530
LEONARDA	And what are those?	
CAMILO	Isn't she the moon? Does her light not shine?	

⁵³ In Roman mythology, Diana was the goddess of the hunt, the moon, and nature.

LEONARDA	Yes.	
CAMILO	Does she not darken and fade?	1535
URBÁN	(<i>Aside</i>) Oh, that is good!	
JULIA	Take note.	
URBÁN	(<i>Aside</i>) I am. Here's to me.	
CAMILO	I shall call you Iris, Diana's messenger, and you, Mercury. ⁵⁴	1540
LEONARDA	Could anyone find us better names?	
URBÁN	(<i>Aside</i>) Me Mercury? Oh well. Wouldn't Bacchus ⁵⁵ be better?	1545
JULIA	That's enough out of you!	
URBÁN	(<i>Aside</i>) I am listening. And here's to me.	
LEONARDA	It's late. You should be going. All this talk... The night has flown, hasn't it?	1550
CAMILO	So you won't take off your mask?	
LEONARDA	This won't be our last night together, Camilo. This is enough for now. You must leave the way you came in. (<i>To URBÁN</i>) Escort him to where you found him.	1555
URBÁN	All right, let's get that hood on.	
CAMILO	May I not embrace you before I go?	
LEONARDA	Why, yes.	
CAMILO	A fleeting pleasure.	
URBÁN <i>tries to put the hood over CAMILO's head</i>		

⁵⁴ *Iris* and *Mercury*: female and male messengers of the gods, respectively.

⁵⁵ Roman god of wine, theater, and fertility.

	(<i>To URBÁN</i>) Careful!	1560
URBÁN	Your neck is really long.	
LEONARDA	You fool, you're going to hurt him!	
URBÁN	They'll never get a decent chord out of you. God bless a good bass, that lasts and lasts! Grab on tight to my waist.	1565
CAMILO	Farewell, lady Diana.	
LEONARDA	Oh, how I long for tomorrow! Off with this mask!	
JULIA	Yes, me too. It's time to retire for the night.	1570
<i>Exeunt LEONARDA and JULIA</i>		
CAMILO	What a state I'm in! Oh, blind love!	
URBÁN	Am I any better off? This is the sick leading the blind.	
SCENE 6		
[On the street, next to LEONARDA's door]		
<i>They exit and VALERIO enters, dressed in evening attire</i>		
VALERIO	Oh, suspicion! You, who have driven even the sanest mad, and drawn up in the finest minds scenes more unlikely than those ever painted on a new-fangled stage, or drafted by an inspired bard.	1575 1580
	Where are you taking me and my mad imagination, as I roam the streets while everyone sleeps? Even Ursa Major and its starry wagon have retired for the night, the six Pleiades ⁵⁶ have started their descent,	1585

⁵⁶ Conglomeration of stars, visible to the naked eye.

as has their seventh sister, who rarely shows her face.
 And I, suspicion, hounded by you,
 burn not as stars do, no,
 but with the fire of the eternal abyss,
 through whose gaping mouth 1590
 it blazes incessantly.
 I hate to say it, but I can't shake the thought
 that this Leonarda,
 with all her pictures and books,
 has one in particular that she adores. 1600
 Night, if some man be in there,
 let dawn break to drive him out.
 Yet how will I spot him,
 when this house is like Thebes,
 with its hundred looming gates?⁵⁷ 1605
 People are coming!
 I'll take this side of the portico,
 and see where they are headed.

SCENE 7

[On the street, next to LEONARDA's door and window]

OTÓN *enters, dressed in evening attire, and VALERIO hides to one side*

OTÓN A private matter—friends and family—
 kept me from arriving sooner. 1610
 Forgive me, street,
 and you, too, oh fortunate window,
 if I am late to greet you.
 What sighs of love
 fly into you, window! 1615
 More than April has flowers,
 more than morning pearls of dew!
 If only I knew what sighs fly out!
 How many suitors, like Iphis before them,
 hang from these gates, 1620
 by a single one of her hairs,
 begging the heavens to turn
 that hard-hearted woman to stone?⁵⁸
 And you, door . . . But what's this?
 Can this be? 1625

⁵⁷ In the *Iliad*, Homer describes Thebes as the city of the hundred gates.

⁵⁸ In Greek myth, the shepherd Iphis killed himself for love of Anaxarete, who spurned him. When she was still unmoved, Aphrodite, goddess of love, turned her to stone.

What shade is this, or what new column?
 My heart did not mislead me,
 when it brought me here tonight.
 Could this be that fortunate man,
 who enjoys the widow now? 1630
 What am I to say or do to him?
 Oh heavens! I'll balance out the façade,
 and flank the door on the other side.

SCENE 8

[On the street, next to LEONARDA's house]

Enter LISANDRO, dressed in evening attire, and OTÓN hides on the opposite side

LISANDRO Widow, may God ever keep you thus!
 While you stand fetchingly at that window, 1635
 from now until the dawn!
 I'd like a word with you.
 That "I do" that you deny
 to your suitors one and all,
 what would it take to hear you call? 1640
 Young yet pure, happy and sad—
 I hate to see you a maiden once more.
 You are so cutting and sharp,
 even fools now think
 you must have a secret lover. 1645
 You lock yourself in your house,
 in order to deny it,
 yet what difference does it make,
 when you come and go to the village
 as easy as you please? 1650
 These empty fields,
 these orchards and gardens,
 may not open for Matins,⁵⁹
 but they are open for love.
 No one believes, good widow, 1655
 that your heart has gone unclaimed.
 You look so sad,
 when you're not half bad-looking.
 I cannot believe that a woman,
 when she is young and rich, 1660
 or, indeed, any woman
 who, like you, is free,

⁵⁹ Prayers ending at dawn.

would not give herself over
entirely to pleasure.
Although you may say 1665
you run from a second marriage
like Angelica from the knights,
I vow, I'll join a convent
if you aren't actually in love!
Oh! I've spoken too soon, 1670
without realizing I'd be heard
by these living shadows!
Alas, dear wall, of course you have ears.
Oh, such a mighty house!
Giants prop up your doors, 1675
your columns are girded.
You have guards here for the night.
And where there are so many guards,
there must be a treasure to be had.
If they are your support, 1680
let us all buttress you up.
Leaving is out of the question:
make room, I'll get in the middle.

SCENE 9

[On the street, in front of LEONARDA's house]

LISANDRO *stands between VALERIO and OTÓN, and a SHERIFF enters with a lantern, and servants, and a scribe*

SHERIFF	Quite a take in that card game!	
SCRIBE	And a nice pot, to boot!	1685
SHERIFF	This house has many secrets. They always hand out food, and there are women going in and out. I'll charge them with something to flush them out. There are people by that door. Who goes there? Stop in the name of the King!	1690
OTÓN	We're not moving! Get that lantern out of our faces.	
SHERIFF	Come closer, hoods off, so I can take a good look at you.	1695

VALERIO	Look here, we are gentlemen.	
SHERIFF	I believe you, but I need to see you with my own eyes. People like to play tricks on us. So come over here . . .	1700
LISANDRO	Please, can we do this somewhere else?	
SHERIFF	No, we will do it right here. By God, show yourselves! My lord Otón, Lisandro, and you, Valerio! Could you not just have told me your names?	1705
OTÓN	I would rather not have.	
LISANDRO	Nor I. But I am glad to have the truth out.	
VALERIO	As am I. I now confirm my worst suspicions.	1710
SHERIFF	So, I can rest assured, I haven't inconvenienced you?	
LISANDRO	Not in the least. We're much obliged.	
SHERIFF	It is my pleasure. Gentlemen, shall I escort you anywhere?	1715
OTÓN	We'll stay here.	
SHERIFF	All right, then. Goodbye. Let's go.	

The SHERIFF exits

SCENE 10

[On the street, in front of LEONARDA's house]

LISANDRO	We're always running into each other!	
VALERIO	Otón is quite the architect.	1720

OTÓN	What about Valerio?	
LISANDRO	With such a huge gate, the three of us did all we could. But I had the upper hand.	
VALERIO	Of course: you were in the middle.	1725
OTÓN	If the sheriff hadn't shown up, we would have sliced each other up.	
LISANDRO	I feel better knowing that we all acted a bit foolishly.	
OTÓN	That's not the right word for this lunacy. But aside from that, you were the biggest fool of all, to get between two men.	1730
LISANDRO	I'd get among a hundred, though they were all Rodamonts. ⁶⁰	1735
OTÓN	Look out for the lion!	
LISANDRO	I'm not kidding. I can crush trees and mountains just as Roland did. ⁶¹ But the height of idiocy was that stunt you pulled when you went in there to sell books, and Valerio to sell prints.	1740
OTÓN	So what? Didn't our disguises get us in the door?	1745
VALERIO	Hold on. I wasn't the only one who made a fool of myself. He dressed up as a peddler with a thousand rosaries, and couldn't get them to open the door.	1750

⁶⁰ Fearsome Saracen fighter in *Orlando Innamorato* and *Orlando Furioso*.

⁶¹ In *Orlando Furioso*, Roland goes on a mad rampage when he discovers that his beloved Angelica has married Medoro.

OTÓN	Is that right? Well, let me congratulate him then.	
LISANDRO	If all is revealed now, then our game is up. Let us change our tune, and figure out who's the lucky one. That will give us something to talk about.	1755
OTÓN	If that's the case, then I shall say why I, Otón, came here tonight.	1760
VALERIO	Was it to find out for whom this door would open?	
OTÓN	That's exactly why I came.	1765
LISANDRO	I am quite certain, since that's why I came, too.	
VALERIO	As for me, what could it be, but to answer that same question, and cast myself in this jealous abyss?	1770
OTÓN	Now that we've each spoken let us affirm our friendship against the fierce cruelty of that cold ungrateful heart. We must see to her dishonor, and the loss of her reputation.	1775
LISANDRO	Well said, Oton! How shall we take revenge? Do you know what has occurred to me, and yet I dare not say?	1780
VALERIO	What?	
LISANDRO	I think this widow has a lover hidden in her house. Why else would she refuse to look outside, if she didn't already have	1785

	<p>what she needs on the inside? A woman alone, free and rich, who has denied so many, must have some manservant she keeps by her side at night. Among her servants, Urbán, who is a quick-witted scoundrel, is the one I suspect of serving her best: he never leaves her side, goes around well-dressed, always a little too cheeky, and whispering to her.</p>	<p>1790</p> <p>1795</p>
OTÓN	<p>By God! Now I see her wicked game so clearly! I'll slash his face or I'm no gentleman. Who could doubt it's all exactly as you say!</p>	1800
VALERIO	<p>I agree completely, for I have seen him do some things which have made me suspect as much. I swear on my honor, I'll leave my mark on him.</p>	1805
LISANDRO	<p>Leave something, if you please, for the one who revealed the secret. For I too shall give him a slash between your two.</p>	1810
OTÓN	<p>Dawn has come. By God, how sweet it is to take her down! Let's go, and we can speak of this later.</p>	1815
VALERIO	<p>I swear I will kill him.</p>	
LISANDRO	<p>I will cut off his nose!</p>	
OTÓN	<p>What a slashing I'll give him!</p>	

Exeunt

SCENE 11

Enter LUCENCIO, with a letter, and ROSANO, a foreigner

LUCENCIO That will be up to her.

⁶⁵ Lope himself served as secretary to the powerful Duke of Sessa from 1607.

She is more private than she is famous. 1850
 Although you may be sorry to hear it,
 you should know she is as tough and stubborn
 as any wild creature,
 despite her wit and beauty.
 It's been a month since I visited 1855
 to encourage her to wed,
 and with this I've spared us
 hurt feelings and harsher words.
 If I were to bring this gentleman's case,
 I suspect it would all be in vain, 1860
 for if she will not marry here in Valencia,
 much less will she leave for Madrid.
 That being said, we will do our best.

ROSANO I am much disheartened by your news, sir,
 but we must certainly try it, 1865
 so I can at least say I made the attempt.

LUCENCIO I will make arrangements
 for us to speak with her today,
 for I have always been beholden to Ercino. . .

ROSANO Go on, I beg you! 1870

LUCENCIO People are coming. They mustn't hear of this.

Exeunt

SCENE 12

[On the street]

Enter CAMILO and FLORO

CAMILO As I was saying, Floro,
 after that first night
 when I was hooded like a hawk,
 and had to follow blindly, 1875
 came another six or seven nights
 in the same manner,
 until finally I enjoyed her,
 only by the light of our eyes.
 I envy those birds 1880
 that fly by night,

and might see in the dark
what I adore by touch alone.
I have become fond of her
without seeing more than I can sense 1885
by touch, as blind men do.
It's a strange business.
I have done things to see her
—don't think I have not tried!—
that would have softened 1890
any savage barbarian, any monster:
now pretending mortal pains
with moans and sighs,
now swearing never to see her again
with vows and promises. 1895
But neither sweet words,
nor fury, nor anger
would persuade her to show herself.
And so, I am left
enchanted and obsessed. 1900

FLORO Of course you are! What a story!
Why not take your own light?

CAMILO To dare such a thing, Floro,
could cost me my life.
When Psyche looked upon Cupid
while taking pleasure in the dark,
she lost that glorious love,
and caused her own sorrow.⁶⁶

1905

FLORO What will you do,
under the spell of such blind love? 1910

CAMILO I'll imitate Cupid,
who loves without seeing.⁶⁷

FLORO Can't you take some chalk with you,
 to mark the door?

CAMILO Her man has such tricks
 that I lose my bearings.
 I could be outside the gate
 and he'll tell me I'm inside.

1915

⁶⁶ In Apuleius's *The Golden Ass*, Psyche forever forsakes the god Cupid's love when she lights a lamp to see him.

⁶⁷ Cupid is often depicted as blindfolded, symbolizing that love is blind.

Enter LEONARDA and JULIA, with capes

CAMILO And from it descends, 1920
 a beautiful widow.

FLORO The maid's not bad either.

LEONARDA What a wonderful orchard.

JULIA It's lovely in all seasons.

LEONARDA (*Aside to JULIA*) Julia, that's Camilo! 1925

JULIA I saw him, too, my lady!

CAMILO I am at your service, ladies.

LEONARDA *(Aside to JULIA)* Should I speak to him?

JULIA	Do it.	
	The fields are deserted.	1930

LEONARDA (To CAMILO) You're too kind.

CAMILO	You deserve nothing less. You are like Apollo's own light. I invoke light, you see, for that is what I most desire, of all the things I see, though I do not see my love so clearly. In any case, light is the only thing the heavens have given earth that might match your beauty.	1935 1940
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LEONARDA You're very fond of light
for a man who is not blind.

CAMILO It comes from a certain lack,
but I mustn't go on.

LEONARDA I understand: you mean love. 1945

CAMILO And would you believe

	that my lady herself is like a radiant sun?	
LEONARDA	Surely you exaggerate.	
CAMILO	No, for she is Diana, so powerful and divine, that I see her not, but feel her everywhere.	1950
LEONARDA	Diana? Like the moon?	
CAMILO	The very same.	
LEONARDA	That's a shame. For a thousand look upon her, yet none can touch her.	1955
CAMILO	Yet I touch her without seeing her!	
LEONARDA	No doubt you must be mad.	
CAMILO	Truly, for I have touched her in the dark, and I have fallen in love.	1960
LEONARDA	And this moon, does she see you?	
CAMILO	She claims she does, and swears she sees me every day. Yet I never see her, by God!	1965
LEONARDA	If she sees you, there can be no doubt: she must be in love.	
CAMILO	I think she likes me.	
LEONARDA	That is plain to see. Would you leave her for any other woman?	1970
CAMILO	I am insulted that your lips could so doubt my devotion. I would not leave her for an angel of beauty or a worthy Roman maiden.	1975

LEONARDA	If you saw her, disillusion might change your mind.	
CAMILO	I need not worry about that, for I have felt her with these hands: her brow is high, and her nose, the foundation of a beautiful face, is flawless.	1980 1985
	Her eyes are . . . pronounced, a sign of their loveliness. Her neck, her breast, everything else is pure perfection. Her wit and intelligence need no explanation: to witness both is enough to make you lose your mind. A very Iris is her handmaiden, and Mercury her ambassador!	1990 1995
	The world melts away when she sends them down for me.	
LEONARDA	You are quite the odd suitor. I've never heard the like.	
CAMILO	Nor have I ever seen anyone endure the darkness they inflict upon me. And though my happiness is somewhat clouded by this cruelty, I love those shadows of mine more than others value the light.	2000 2005
LEONARDA	And what is your name?	
CAMILO	Camilo.	
LEONARDA	It's good to know the name of such an Amadís in love. ⁶⁸ May you enjoy your Diana for many years.	2010
CAMILO	Do not doubt it, if her tricks do not kill me first.	
LEONARDA	God be with you, dark suitor.	

⁶⁸ The hugely popular chivalric romance *Amadís de Gaula* (1508) famously involves secret assignments.

CAMILO May he give you a wealthy husband. 2015

FLORO (*Aside to JULIA*) Tell me: may I speak to you
tonight in the courtyard?

JULIA I live all the way over by Zaidía.⁶⁹
You wouldn't want a lady so far away.

Exeunt LEONARDA and JULIA

SCENE 13

FLORO You carried on like old folks: 2020
"Nice weather we're having! What a fine day!"
Why did you not court her?
She is a beautiful widow—
a thousand men die for her love.

CAMILO You read my mind! 2025
But my love is steadfast.
I would not fall in love with her,
or even one more beautiful,
although she might fall for me.
She is not worth two cents, 2030
nor anyone else you might name,
for that would be to compare
a queen with a slave.
I tell you, mine is an angel,
there can be no doubt. 2035

FLORO You thought the widow was that bad?

CAMILO So-so. She would do.

FLORO Well, she seemed fine to me.

CAMILO Oh, Floro, if you could see my lady,
you would sing her praises instead! 2040

FLORO I would take the widow.

⁶⁹ Known today as Saïdia, this Valencian district is located north of Ciutat Vella (the Old City, today's city center).

SCENE 14

[On the street]

Enter URBÁN, with his sword out, backing away from OTÓN, LISANDRO, and VALERIO

URBÁN Three men against one!

OTÓN Let the dog die!

URBÁN Will you not tell me how I have offended you?

VALERIO Die! 2045

CAMILO Stop, gentlemen, hold off! That's enough!
Surely my presence here should make you observe
the rules of courtesy.
I am Camilo, a friend to all.

FLORO Get behind us. 2050

URBÁN If they came at me one by one . . .

OTÓN He found a good second in you, Camilo,
though he's a vile and shameless lackey.

CAMILO No more of this, on my life.
If you're lucky, he won't have recognized you. 2055

VALERIO As you wish.

LISANDRO We are at your service.

CAMILO I am much obliged.

OTÓN Let's go.

Exeunt OTÓN, LISANDRO, and VALERIO

SCENE 15

CAMILO Tell me, you devil, what did you do
to those gentlemen? 2060

URBÁN Good Camilo,

	I throw myself at your feet. I swear that neither in deed, word, nor thought did I ever offend them.	2065
CAMILO	Gentlemen would never gang up on a lone man with no provocation. That's impossible	
URBÁN	That's true. They may have been confused, and took me for another man.	2070
CAMILO	That must be it.	
FLORO	They picked a nice deserted spot to let you have it.	
CAMILO	Let's see him to his house, Floro.	
URBÁN	The city gate is far enough.	2075
FLORO	You really owe my master, now.	
URBÁN	<i>(Aside)</i> If I owe him, I have paid him well.	

ACT III

SCENE 1

[On the street]

Enter CAMILO and CELIA, lady, wearing a cape

CAMILO Shut up, and leave me alone.

CELIA What do you mean, shut up?

CAMILO I'll come later. 2080

CELIA There is no later.

CAMILO Have you lost your mind, Celia?
Don't you realize that you're in the street?

CELIA In the street or wherever I may be,
it is only fitting 2085
that all should know of your betrayal.

CAMILO Calm down and be patient.
Let's talk here, quietly,
so no one will hear us.
And let go of me. 2090

CELIA What tokens of love
have I received from you?
Bad nights, bad days,
words, rages, and jealousies.
What worries me most 2095
is that you're no longer hurting me.
How could I love you, wicked as you are!
Look at me now, you traitor!

CAMILO Let's go over there.
Celia, go home and wait. 2100
There is much we need to discuss.
You shouldn't be out here in the street.
Besides, people are looking at me,
and I have business to attend to.

CELIA You, at my house? 2105
You haven't been there in two months!

	And yet somehow you think I'm so crazy I would believe the words of a heart so false! No, my friend, once that heart gets away, I will be left to chase the wind.	2110
CAMILO	By God, be careful with your hands! You've torn my cloak.	
CELIA	I was after your heart, where such cruelty lies.	2115
CAMILO	It was soft for you once, and like wax to your will, but some men would rather not share the goods, you know. Look out, they can see us!	2120
CELIA	He's afraid of being seen! Hush now, don't make a fuss. Just let a new lady fall for him, if she hasn't already, the new apple of his eye— the first time they fight over petty jealousies, then she'll see what he's about.	2125
CAMILO	You want to drive me crazy.	
CELIA	No doubt he will tell her too: "This woman is chasing me, but I cannot stand the sight of her, on your life and mine, there is no reason for you to worry, I will kiss your foot in front of her."	2130 2135
CAMILO	Would you stop this and leave me alone? Were we not over?	

SCENE 2

[On the street. The stage is divided in two, on one side LEONARDA and JULIA, and on the other CAMILO and CELIA]

JULIA (*Aside to LEONARDA*) It's very late for you to be out on your own.

LEONARDA As late as it is, 2140
 Urbán still has not come.

JULIA He has taken a long time.
But why did you not bring
Clara's squire along?⁷⁰

LEONARDA So I wouldn't have to see 2145
that long sad face of his.

LEONARDA *sees CAMILO and CELIA*

Oh, Julia, but my fate is even sadder!

JULIA My lady! What is the matter?

LEONARDA Oh, Julia!

JULIA You look like death warmed over! 2150

LEONARDA How could I not, when I'm at death's door?

JULIA Be careful, it's not yet very dark.
 Hush, or cover up your face.
 We could have avoided all this,
 if you had come by coach. 2155

JULIA *also sees* CAMILO *and* CELIA

Oh, you poor woman,
now I see which way the wind blows!

LEONARDA This is what I deserve
 for my mad desire.
 I wish I didn't know you,
 just as you don't know me.

2160

Then I could enjoy you without seeing you,
just as you don't see me.
This is what you get when you trust in oaths,
in words, and vows! 2165
They are but scraps of paper

⁷⁰ Leonarda refers here to a servant who never appears in the play.

	<p>in the wind. To think he claimed to love no other woman in the world!</p>	
JULIA	<p>And it is true, for he said that by night, and he loves her by day. Look, my lady, you won't keep the one you love, if you won't let him look at you . . . Love is born of sight, and touch alone won't do.</p>	<p>2170 2175</p>
LEONARDA	<p>What about hearing?</p>	
JULIA	<p>That may do for the lover who is all talk. Some men will follow a voice hidden inside a cloak, and when they find an ugly woman, they say, "To the devil with her."</p>	<p>2180</p>
CAMILO	<p>Tell me, what is it I owe you? I will do right by you.</p>	<p>2185</p>
CELIA	<p>First, the great faith I put in you, which is a novel thing with us. Second, my loyalty in not seeking pleasure elsewhere, and always matching my desires to yours. A thousand icy nights, spent waiting for you by my window, while an old woman scolded me— and—oh, my poor arms, my poor hair!— and, in sum, never to have denied you anything you wanted.</p>	<p>2190 2195</p>
CAMILO	<p>I've made up for all that and more by keeping you in fine style. You cost me a pretty penny, not to speak of the clothes.</p>	<p>2200</p>
CELIA	<p>That's a nice speech coming from a gentleman! I want nothing of yours. Let Floro come, and I'll give him back in gold</p>	<p>2205</p>

	<p>anything I've had from you. Fine clothes those were! A sad little skirt with two miserable sashes, a wretched little petticoat . . .</p>	2210
	<p>What strings of pearls you've decked me with! What chains you've hung about my neck! What rich tapestries, the best in Flanders!</p>	
	<p>What a house you have built me, with its garden, its gate, its balcony! Even those who are but the dirt beneath my feet have more than I do.</p>	2215
	<p>Given how you ignore me, I should have spent time with another— I might have had fewer complaints, at least, if not anything to gain.</p>	2220
	<p>Was I so very poor, so wretched, so despised, when I let you in my house?</p>	2225
LEONARDA	<p>Do you see how riled up she is? If only I could hear what they are saying!</p>	
JULIA	<p>Would it not have been better to go home than to hope that no one will recognize you as they pass you on the street? Besides, it's getting dark.</p>	2230
LEONARDA	<p>That and my mantle means no one will see me.</p>	
JULIA	<p>I do believe you're jealous. I never would have imagined that a lady who enjoys such affairs in the dark would light up with jealousy.</p>	2235
CELIA	<p>What, me?</p>	
CAMILO	<p>Yes, you, Celia. Now you know where I stand. Leave me.</p>	2240
CELIA	<p>Consider yourself left. Jesus, such treachery! Jesus!</p>	

CAMILO You can cross yourself a thousand times over . . . 2245

CELIA You leave me with these protestations?
Goodbye. No more accusations.

CELIA *exits*

CAMILO The facts are clear . . .

SCENE 3

[On the street, LEONARDA and CAMILO meet and talk]

CAMILO Where has she gone?

LEONARDA (*Aside*) What do I say? 2250

CAMILO Are these veiled ladies speaking to me?

LEONARDA We're not quite as shameless
as that fool over there.
Is she that Diana
you mentioned in the orchard? 2255

CAMILO (*Aside*) This little widow is dying
to play loose with me.
(*Aloud*) Uncover yourselves,
so you won't resemble her, either.

LEONARDA I'm glad to see that you hate
what you loved so recently. 2260

CAMILO Those goddesses
are just fantasies now.
They are like nights without days,
and lies made of truth. 2265

They are dubious pleasures,
and bland delicacies,
a confusing masquerade,
and waking dreams. 2270
They make one sneak
through gardens at night,
pretending to see
what remains unseen,

	counting and taking money in the dark.	2275
	If you will love me, we'll just let Diana sleep, for she is a night with no dawn, and much too fond of herself. She wants to be loved on faith alone, as if she were heaven itself. Yet she is nothing but a sound, heard but not seen.	2280
LEONARDA	You must have seen her and lost your illusions.	2285
CAMILO	It's because I haven't seen her that I want no more of this arrangement. If I could see her as I see you, and if she were as beautiful, no doubt I would love her.	2290
LEONARDA	Truly?	
CAMILO	By God, yes! Because you're a pearl, and soon enough I'll tire of being a slave to a lady, who will not let me see her. Why should I waste my youth taxed with the burden of safeguarding her modesty, just because she feels like it? If she is afraid of being exposed and defamed by the common people as other women are, if she values her reputation so dearly, let her post a giant by her door.	2295 2300 2305
LEONARDA	That's very well said. But you must be off now, sir— people are coming.	
CAMILO	So scornful so quickly? You dismiss me because you think I'm fickle.	2310
LEONARDA	Did you not hear me? Go.	

CAMILO I'm leaving, you intractable little widow.

CAMILO *exits*

SCENE 4

LEONARDA Ah, traitor!
As if insulting me were not enough,
he also wanted to woo me? 2315

JULIA Now you know.
The sermon was not bad
if you know how to take it.

LEONARDA	He couldn't have said it better if he'd known the truth. He left me speechless! I did not know what to say!	2320
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JULIA It was a lofty sermon.

LEONARDA A shock like that
 overcomes all the senses.
 Tonight and no more!
 You'll see how I dismiss him
 for his good sense.

2325

JULIA And what will you say to him about this? 2330

LEONARDA Why would I bring it up?
 What fine nonsense!

Enter URBÁN

URBÁN There is not a place in the city
I have not looked.
I have been home twice,
hoping to find you there.

2335

LEONARDA You were nowhere to be found
on the one day I went out on foot.
Tonight you must summon
that suitor from the bridge. 2340

URBÁN	I will, right away.	
LEONARDA	Julia, you will see to the side door.	
URBÁN	Your uncle awaits you at home.	
LEONARDA	Wonderful! That's the icing on the cake!	2345
URBÁN	A stranger from Madrid is with him.	
LEONARDA	What brings him here?	
URBÁN	I don't know.	2350
LEONARDA	Lord, let me just make it through tonight.	

Exeunt

SCENE 5

[On the street, next to LEONARDA's house]

Enter LISANDRO and OTÓN, by night

LISANDRO	Now that the night will finally allow us to act, Otón, why are you so sad?	2355
OTÓN	My sorrow speaks for itself. That's explanation enough. What pain compares to mine, when my fury has brought me to this pass?	2360
LISANDRO	What do you mean?	
OTÓN	She favors my rival.	
LISANDRO	My patience is wearing thin with this talk of jealousy and insults. We agreed on a truce.	2365

	A wise man must persevere calmly.	
OTÓN	That's not what bothers me. But why should Urbán deny such dashing young men as ourselves a reward well deserved? I am a brave man, and even if a hundred Camilos were to come to his defense, he would be bloodied once the knives were out. And Camilo, who is he to be running the show? It's good to show a man respect, but I swear I regretted it afterward.	2370 2375
LISANDRO	Don't let it weigh on you. No matter how dark the night, this door will never see a man pass through without getting his face slashed open. Here comes someone who looks like Valerio.	2380 2385
OTÓN	It's about time for him to get his sword.	
<i>Enter VALERIO</i>		
VALERIO	Just let him try to enter this street!	
OTÓN	A fitting response. No Gradasso, no Roland, ⁷¹ would guard the entrance as you two do.	2390
LISANDRO	Sit.	
OTÓN	Where?	
LISANDRO	Just on the ground, sit on your cape with your shield to the side.	2395
VALERIO	There is not much light From the moon tonight.	

⁷¹ Two knights in Boiardo's *Orlando Innamorato* and Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*.

OTÓN	It's veiled like the widow, surrounded by clouds. The storm is about to break.	2400
LISANDRO	If only we had a bearded witch in this city!	
VALERIO	What for?	2405
LISANDRO	So that she could make the widow pine for thirty men. ⁷²	
OTÓN	As long as she forgets that one traitor whose face awaits its just reward.	2410
VALERIO	Let's write a little song about it.	
OTÓN	By God, what splendid villainy! Rest assured, we will shame her.	
LISANDRO	Shouldn't we be ashamed, noblemen that we are?	2415
OTÓN	I always say, "If you can't say anything nice . . ." Such pointed satire would be a low blow, and unworthy of us.	2420
VALERIO	You're right, brother, and yet it's so good to criticize that all rules go out the window. It's like a good fire in winter, or a cool room in summer. We'd better sing their praises instead, or improvise a song for the lovers.	2425
LISANDRO	Do you have any rhymes for me?	
OTÓN	Let's work the refrain.	2430

⁷² Lisandro is invoking a figure like Celestina, the famous matchmaker and sorceress in the eponymous text, who specialized in love-spells.

VALERIO	Oh, aren't you a song-book!	
LISANDRO	Let's hear it.	
OTÓN	How about this: "the widow and her squire."	
VALERIO	Oh, that's good!	2435
LISANDRO	I will start: Gentlemen, in these loves, and our fierce rivalry, Angelica and her suitors inhabit our fair city. Roland are you, you, the brave Sacripante. I, Ferragut, the Moor. But Angelica and Medore . . . ⁷³ ah, the widow and her squire!	2440 2445
VALERIO	Most honorable squire Spain ever could yield, you have taken as yours a most burnished shield, adorned with your arms. I'd like to enhance it, so it comes to no harm with the finest medallion, in gold as bright as fire, ah, the widow and her squire!	2450 2455
OTÓN	There sits shining Gemini in the heights of heaven. Two figures form this sign: a man and a woman, their flesh intertwined. The stars I can't decipher, but, by God, in my mind, every night they conspire just like in that sign: ah, the widow and her squire!	2460 2465
VALERIO	Look! They've opened the door, and Urbán is coming out, with his hood up.	

⁷³ Sacripante and Ferragut are additional Saracen knights in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*. Angelica spurns Orlando and the other knights who pursue her to marry Medoro.

LEONARDA	Have a servant light the way for my uncle.	2485
JULIA	Rodulfo is bringing one now.	
LUCENCIO	Is that necessary?	
LEONARDA	Of course, my lord. And I'll have another servant escort you as well, with a sword.	2490
LUCENCIO	Who would want to hurt me?	
LEONARDA	I know you're loved by all.	
LUCENCIO	I'm pleased about that fellow, and he leaves well served.	
LEONARDA	I admit, uncle, I'm happy to make this marriage. I've been unkind to so many of our own, I hope I'll find forgiveness in loving a man from elsewhere.	2495
LUCENCIO	He's been fortunate. He'll be richly rewarded when he gets to Madrid.	2500
LEONARDA	Tell them to begin the preparations.	
JULIA	They have waited so long.	
LUCENCIO	God keep you.	2505
LEONARDA	May He go with you.	
LUCENCIO	<i>exits</i>	
JULIA	I was getting worried. There was someone at the side door. Who it was, I do not know.	

SCENE 8

Enter URBÁN

LEONARDA	Urbán, my friend, why are you alone with your mask in your hand?	2510
URBÁN	Everything has gone wrong.	
LEONARDA	What, my brother? Tell me what happened?	2515
URBÁN	I got to the bridge at ten. Camilo graciously awaited me, listening to the water's murmur. I approached him at once, and he turned from the rail.	2520
	Once I covered his eyes, I was the lad, and he the blind man. We walked through the city contemplating and praising, me, your beauty and fame, he, his love and desires.	2525
	I asked him if there was another in Valencia who pleased him by day more than your dark chambers.	2530
	And he is telling me a story about a jealous woman who chased and hounded him in streets, plazas, and churches, when a sheriff arrives and wants to know who we are. Camilo takes off Love's blindfold at once. He approaches, and says who he is, leaving the sheriff satisfied, but he never asked	2535
	that I be allowed to keep on my mask. So they take off my mask. Camilo and the rest see me, and though they let me go free, I might as well be their prisoner.	2540
	Camilo, upon seeing my face, smiles and says: "Friend, let's forget these games and continue on, unmasked." Then like the hounded deer running through the hills,	2545
		2550

	<p>swift as the wind, I leave Camilo behind and, by empty streets, return exposed and ashamed, to tell you of this sad turn.</p>	2555
LEONARDA	<p>No! Behind one misfortune, a greater one follows! What will I do?</p>	
JULIA	<p>This is not the time to forget who you are. Now is when courage counts.</p>	2560
LEONARDA	<p>There is no courage amid such grief, for heaven's wrath cuts through steel and diamonds. Any weakness will be noted in someone like me. But I think I can muster a clever way out. Urbán, for a few days, you'll serve my cousin, and make your way through Valencia, never coming near me. That way, when Camilo follows you, he'll believe it's for her sake that he comes and goes.</p>	2565 2570 2575
JULIA	<p>This is no small thing, what honor requires of you.</p>	
URBÁN	<p>So let's see: you'll dishonor your cousin? Is that not a mad idea?</p>	
LEONARDA	<p>Urbán, for the sake of my honor, all must be forgiven. Let this stain fall on my cousin, as long as my reputation shines.</p>	2580
URBÁN	<p>Don't you see this is an outrage?</p>	
LEONARDA	<p>That's reputation for you. You push another man forward when you're threatened with a knife, and let him take the blow that was meant for you. Just as your hand flies up</p>	2585

	to defend your face, which is the nobler part, surely there is nothing inhuman in this. Go rest, and tomorrow, you'll go with her to mass at the Church of the Miracle.	2590 2595
URBÁN	You'll make your own miracle with this Grecian plot. ⁷⁴ But tell me, who will go, tomorrow, to fetch your beau?	
LEONARDA	Julia, in disguise, Urbán. She will dress as a man.	2600
JULIA	And if I run into trouble?	
LEONARDA	Your blind man will defend you.	
JULIA	He's the one I'm afraid of.	
LEONARDA	What?	2605
JULIA	He's all fired up— he'll know tinder when he sees it.	

Exeunt

SCENE 9

[The next morning, in front of LISANDRO's house]

Enter OTÓN and VALERIO

VALERIO	They say he's getting up now.	
OTÓN	He sleeps like a log, and the time it takes him to dress, Valerio, is something to behold.	2610
VALERIO	He must have gone to bed early. He didn't make many rounds last night.	

⁷⁴ Ancient Greeks had a reputation as tricksters, in part because of the Trojan horse, the treacherous gift that led to the fall of Troy.

Enter LISANDRO

LISANDRO	On the contrary, I was up all night with the squire and the surgeon.	2615
OTÓN	You're still buttoning up?	
VALERIO	The surgeon kept you up? Great joke! But I'll believe it.	
OTÓN	Enough. Was there anyone, you think, who might have recognized us?	2620
LISANDRO	The street was deserted.	
VALERIO	You gave it to him good!	
OTÓN	It was unbelievable! Did you get him in the head or the face?	
LISANDRO	I think I got it all, because the slashes I give run all the way to the neck.	2625
OTÓN	Good God!	
VALERIO	Amen.	
OTÓN	That's what they say about Roland. Look out! Here comes Urbán.	2630
VALERIO	Who?	
OTÓN	Urbán.	
LISANDRO	What? Who did you say?	
OTÓN	Indeed! It's Urbán, and he's the picture of health.	2635
LISANDRO	Take a good look at him.	
OTÓN	What is there to see? You must have had a soft touch last night.	
VALERIO	"The slashes I give	2640

run all the way to the neck.”

OTÓN Head and face both—
he’s split from head to toe!

SCENE 10

URBÁN *has entered*

LISANDRO I’m ready to give it to him now.

OTÓN Stop. 2645

VALERIO Urbán, where are you going?

URBÁN I’m in a hurry and full of worry.
My lady is off to mass.

OTÓN Who? Leonarda?

URBÁN I’ve been at her cousin’s house 2650
for a long time now,
and I come and go with her.

VALERIO (*Aside to LISANDRO*) Not likely to get him, then!

LISANDRO (*Aside to VALERIO*) There must be 2655
some wounded foreigner or servant around.

OTÓN Then, please,
be on your way.

LISANDRO But wait.

URBÁN Anything else? I’m in a hurry.

OTÓN Tell us something about your lady. 2660

URBÁN She is a Portia⁷⁵ by reputation.

LISANDRO Come here.

URBÁN The bells are ringing for Mass.

⁷⁵ Roman model of female virtue. Portia, Brutus’s wife, injured herself to test her courage.

VALERIO	He's gone, the scoundrel.	
OTÓN	If he's not there, then Leonarda must be alone.	2665
LISANDRO	Oh, such empty gossip! If he were her gallant, she would not spare him for an hour.	
VALERIO	That's how love is.	2670
LISANDRO	So whom did we honor with our affection last night? And not with the flat of the knife, but with the blade!	
VALERIO	The Roman Fabricious ⁷⁶ could not have done it better. It's no use asking who he was, for he is no longer.	2675

He draws his sword

LISANDRO	I need to know.	
OTÓN	Blood will out.	2680
LISANDRO	There's blood all over. Is that not enough?	
VALERIO	I believe it, Lisandro.	
OTÓN	Where shall we go now?	
VALERIO	To the cathedral.	
LISANDRO	No, we should go to San Juan, instead.	2685

Exeunt

SCENE 11

⁷⁶ Gaius Fabricius Luscinus Monocularis was an ancient Roman magistrate from the third century BCE, praised as an example of integrity and virtue.

[On the street]

Enter CAMILO and FLORO

FLORO	Why are you crossing yourself so much?	
CAMILO	What do you expect, now that the truth has undone the spell?	
FLORO	Could you make that man out last night?	2690
CAMILO	I saw him, Floro, as clear as I see you now. And I stared at him without blinking, memorizing his visage. I laid awake, contemplating his features, etched in stone in my memory till sleep got hold of me at dawn. I could paint his portrait on this table, as they say Apelles did. ⁷⁷	2695
FLORO	And you say you saw him with his mistress today?	2700
CAMILO	That's the end of my illusions, Floro. I saw his face last night, today I saw him with this good matron, and now I'm miserable.	
FLORO	Tell me the whole thing, so I may get the picture.	2705
CAMILO	Then listen: I was leaving the Church of the Miracle, mulling over last night— for that was truly something— when, going down the steps, all at once, I see the squire, his pace calm and slow, his face modest, his stance upright. He led by the hand a fair maid —as they say in old books— sixty if she was a day. I wouldn't want more points	2710 2715

⁷⁷ Famous Greek painter from the fourth century BCE. On one occasion Apelles drew a portrait on a wall, making the subject recognizable to everyone after just a few strokes.

in a game of cards than this goddess
had wrinkles on her face. 2720
For if she was ancient as a goddess,
she was uglier than the devil,
her color somewhere
between pale and dun.
A low and hairy brow, 2725
a few white hairs,
eyebrows smudged with soot
to make up for the hair she lacked.
Eyes that shone in the dark
like those of a dead nag, 2730
a nose like a lump of chalk,
and a beard to boot.
Her head was on crooked, Floro,
she had no neck to speak of,
waddling like a goose, 2735
bow-legged and sluggish.
I felt like pushing her,
and throwing her to the ground,
but I came to my senses,
and retreated in my shame. 2740

FLORO These were the dangers you faced, sir?
For this you risked eternal shame?
If only you had followed my advice
to tear a peephole in your hood,
or made good use of your sword! 2745
No one would have killed or offended you.
You fell for a rough bed
covered with damask and fine linen,
velvets and brocade!
But what are you going to do now? 2750

CAMILO I'll get ink and paper at the nearest tavern,
and I'll tell her what's what,
and what I think of her.
I'll give her a good tongue lashing.
Tongues can be harsh, you know, 2755
all the more when she realizes
she has been found out,
and has lost the tender lad she tricked.

FLORO Didn't you tell me that you touched her,
that she was young and spirited and fit, 2760
that she spoke with elegance and wit?

CAMILO Don't shame me, or blame me: I couldn't see.
 Urbán is with her now, at Mass.
 Give him this message I'm writing now,
 so he can give it to her. 2765

FLORO A fine lady you've enjoyed!

CAMILO This is no time for jokes, Floro.

FLORO Oh, what a beautiful girl!

CAMILO Like a gem.

Exeunt

SCENE 12

[In LEONARDA's house]

Enter LEONARDA *and* JULIA

JULIA So you've made up your mind 2770
 to love a foreigner at last?

LEONARDA Jealousy, Julia, has brought me to this pass,
that traitor for whom I die,
and my honor, which I cherish.

JULIA And will you leave Valencia? 2775

[illegible]

JULIA It was a fine way
to take your pleasure,
and leave your honor unstained.

2785

LEONARDA A woman in love

	unmakes any law.	
JULIA	Yet if the secretary lives up to what those letters promise, he'll easily rival Camilo.	2790
LEONARDA	I'm sure he'll be his equal, but the bird in hand was good.	
JULIA	What an uproar there'll be throughout the city, when they see you've married in another kingdom!	2795
LEONARDA	It won't matter. I'll be gone.	
<i>Enter URBÁN</i>		
URBÁN	(<i>To LEONARDA</i>) Me, doing your bidding? Priceless.	2800
LEONARDA	Why the rush, Urbán?	
URBÁN	Now that gentleman has seen me walk your cousin to Mass.	
LEONARDA	And? How did he react?	
URBÁN	With a candle in each hand, he rushed up to see us, then crossed himself a thousand times, which proves that your plan worked. When we left, his servant gave me this sealed letter to hand to your cousin, as if she had anything at all to do with this.	2805 2810
LEONARDA	We've played him well. Show me, let's see what it says.	2815
URBÁN	No doubt he'll tell her to stay away from him.	
LEONARDA	He'll say he's angry, and complain he has been tricked.	

She reads

	"You old bag from hell, in love at seventy, and enjoying lusty lads, whom you entice with spells, by pretending to be a tender young girl. Today I saw your ancient face, your sooty brows, your grey hairs, your crooked nose, your dentures too, your hands like mortars through and through. Then I came to my senses and said, full of shame: "Farewell, oh Circe." If you were to play instead Lancelot's ⁷⁸ aged maid, you might look young, in truth. Just fool another as you fooled me, and make him wear that hood, you'll be crowned as a witch soon enough." ⁷⁹	2820 2825 2830 2835
URBÁN	He breathes fire, but it's all smoke.	
LEONARDA	I've brought this upon myself. His every word burns me, because I take it to heart.	2840
URBÁN	No woman can stand being called ugly. Are you ashamed?	
LEONARDA	Not for a moment.	
JULIA	Can there be any worse insult?	2845
URBÁN	What insult? He thinks your old cousin is the one who tricked him!	
LEONARDA	Fortunately love inspires me to come to my own defense. Camilo is being a fool.	2850

⁷⁸ *Circe*: in Homer's *Odyssey*, the sorceress Circe detains the hero and turns his men to beasts. *Lancelot*: in Arthurian legend, Lancelot was one of the Knights of the Round Table.

⁷⁹ A pointed hood was placed on the head of convicted heretics or witches, to mark their infamy.

He felt how tender I was,
and now calls me a tough old bird.

URBÁN We should right this wrong at once,
but talking won't do the trick. 2855
What do you propose?

LEONARDA You'll go to his inn tonight,
for I have a better trick
to show him what's what.

URBÁN You'll be the one tricked instead. 2860

Exeunt

SCENE 13

[In CAMILO's house]

Enter CAMILO and FLORO

CAMILO Really, Floro?

FLORO I knew you would not like it, my lord,
and God knows how painful
it is to let my mouth
speak such shameful words. 2865
Ever since this morning,
when you gave me the message
to hand to the squire,
I've been trying to tell you,
though I could not find the words. 2870
I know I was wrong, sir,
but someone so reasonable,
and who has read so much,
should know that the effects of love
must always be excused. 2875

CAMILO I know, Floro.
I do not blame you for that.

FLORO When I saw you had rejected Celia, my lord,
and that she was so helpless,
I went to visit and comfort her. 2880
Love descended upon me then,

	and I promised to marry her, as long as you agreed and gave permission. She, with no hope of seeing you again, and flattered by the talk of marriage, gave me her word and her oath. I pray you tell her that you agree to repay my services with such a favor. My parents raised you, you know, and I've been your slave since the start.	2885 2890
CAMILO	Floro, I would never resent your marrying Celia because she was mine, or because I'm jealous, or I wished things had ended otherwise. No, it was only my love for you that made me want to find you a better match. If this is your wish, I will not contradict you. If this is God's will, man should not interfere. Fetch Celia at her house, and I will talk to her.	2895
FLORO	She's closer than that, sir.	2900
CAMILO	What?	
FLORO	She's here. In my room.	
CAMILO	Go fetch her.	
FLORO <i>goes to fetch her</i>		
CAMILO	What strange things blind love does! It drives me crazy for an old woman, while Floro marries my old flame. But that's just fine, you see: at least she won't chase after me.	2905
FLORO <i>enters again, and CELIA</i>		
FLORO	Here is Celia, and your slave (<i>pointing to himself</i>).	2910
CELIA	Heaven knows, sir, that I am mortified to come to you. But I hope for your blessing for such a fitting end.	2915

CAMILO Celia, heaven has smiled on you
by giving you such a gift as Floro,
who is not my servant, but my friend.
I will be like a father to you,
and on the day you marry, Celia, 2920
beyond dresses and jewels,
I'll give you a thousand ducats.
Take her back to your room, Floro.

CELIA May God give you a long life.

FLORO Let me kiss your feet, sir. 2925

CAMILO Get up.

CELIA There's no prince like him.

FLORO No one can compare.

Exeunt FLORO and CELIA

CAMILO Happy Floro, who saw clearly what he wanted,
not like the great fool, 2930
who took his pleasure in the dark.

SCENE 14

Enter FLORO

FLORO It's not even dark yet,
and that masked man of yours is at the door.
He gave me this message for you to read.

CAMILO Will these masks never leave me alone? 2935
Is that old woman still after me?

FLORO Read it. Let's see what she says.

He reads

CAMILO "It's madness to believe so readily,
and leads to your own harm.
This is no trick, be not alarmed, 2940
for no deceit can last so steadily.

Come, Camilo, witness my faith so true.
You'll find the truth this very night.
At least, before you propose to fight,
take the full measure of what you do. 2945
I'm not who you think I am, and so,
though I must protect my reputation,
I propose to you a revelation:
in truth, your choice was not so bad, no.
Your beloved was no magic Circe, 2950
but rather like you, if a bit more gutsy."
Have you ever heard anything like it?
Either I've lost my mind, or she's a witch.
Is she at it again?
Does she want to bewitch me anew? 2955
In for a penny, in for a pound.
Get me a horse.

FLORO I'm going.

CAMILO Hurry.
She wants to protect her reputation? 2960
Tonight I'll carry a light even if they kill me.
Put a candle in a lantern for me.

FLORO Unlit?

CAMILO Lit, you idiot, but covered.
With luck they won't see me carrying it. 2965
That hag still wants to pretend she's a beauty!

Exeunt

SCENE 15

[At LEONARDA's house]

Enter LUCENCIO, LEONARDA, and JULIA

LUCENCIO I hadn't learned of this
until today, niece,
and now I'm beside myself.

LEONARDA How badly have they injured him? 2970

LUCENCIO What do you mean, injured?

Had he not been in Valencia,
he would not have survived.
We have the best doctors here,
so he should be fine. 2975
A fine reward he got that night
when he left us
with the letters we wrote!

LEONARDA He must have done something to deserve it.

LUCENCIO He swears he spoke to no one, 2980
nor does he know why they attacked him.

LEONARDA And he does not know who they were?

LUCENCIO I would give half my wealth to know.

LEONARDA Are you taking care of him?

LUCENCIO I shall take him home, 2985
and make sure no one finds out,
as your honor demands.
Is there ink and paper here?
I must let his noble master know.

LEONARDA You there! 2990
Light some candles in my room.

LUCENCIO Right away.

Exeunt JULIA and LUCENCIO

LEONARDA I cannot get rid of this old man tonight!
I am to see Camilo, 2995
yet my uncle hangs around like a shadow.
They should not run into each other, though.
I'll find a way to hide him.

SCENE 16

Enter JULIA

JULIA The old man is writing away.

LEONARDA Urbán must be back by now.

Enter URBÁN *and* CAMILO

URBÁN You cannot say
I didn't bring you your blind man.

3000

LEONARDA Just seeing him offends me.

CAMILO Can I take this off now?

LEONARDA Take these lights away.

CAMILO Still with this dark lady business? 3005
I will not put up with it.
Here, I am taking this off.
Why should I remain blind,
if everything shall be revealed?

LEONARDA Then I will hide from you, 3010
as I am who I am.

But you shall not leave here tonight
without knowing the truth.

You have greatly offended me
for thinking such things. 3015

You were mad not to notice
that the lady you enjoyed
was not so very tough and awful.

A man is not so blind
as to let his hands deceive him, 3020

and then to vainly suppose
he has happened on the truth.
But you are inexperienced, it seems,
and quite sure of yourself.

And so you have proved yourself unwise
in word and in deed.

Yet I want to forgive you,
if only because I love you.

CAMILO If I was wrong,
 I hope to excuse myself
 but if there is no light,
 how can we see the truth?
 She who put on that show
 will try many others.

3030

LEONARDA Light is out of the question. 3035

CAMILO	That's that, then?	
LEONARDA	Though I may lose you, you will not enjoy me in the light.	
CAMILO	Well, neither is it just, my lady, to deceive a gentleman. I have unfortunate news for you: I have a light, and I will see you.	3040

He uncovers the light

	Jesus! Are you not the widow I have seen so many times?	
LEONARDA	Oh no!	3045
CAMILO	At last my luck has changed.	
LEONARDA	Is this how a gentleman behaves?	
CAMILO	Move your hand away from your face.	
LEONARDA	How could you be so cruel?	

SCENE 17

Enter LUCENCIO

LUCENCIO	Leonarda, I came as soon as I heard your voice. What's this? A man here, a man with a naked sword!	3050
CAMILO	It was covered until now. It is only naked because of you.	
LUCENCIO	Get a light, call the others.	3055

JULIA gets a torch

LEONARDA	Sir, this is done now. Discretion is the better part of valor. This gentleman is Camilo, whom you know so well.	
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He cares for me,
and I for him.
And if he is willing,
I want to be his wife. 3060

LUCENCIO If you both agree,
I'll be glad to make it so. 3065
Go easy, fearsome warrior,
I knew you when you were this tall.

CAMILO You are my father and my master.
Please, do as requested of you.

LUCENCIO Go, Urbán, and call some witnesses. 3070

URBÁN I will go as fast as I can.

Exeunt CAMILO and URBÁN

LUCENCIO What is this?
While I am home, my dear niece,
you bring enemies into the house?
Why did you have me write a letter,
if this is what you were up to? 3075

SCENE 18

Enter URBÁN, OTÓN, LISANDRO, VALERIO and FLORO

LEONARDA You might as well
have brought the whole city!

URBÁN They were almost at the door.

LUCENCIO A good choice! 3080
These are honorable gentleman.
Now you can witness the betrothal
of Camilo and Leonarda,
who swear to marry each other.

VALERIO As well they should, 3085
noble as he is, and beautiful as she is.
May God in heaven
give you many good years,
and shower you with treasure.

FLORO	You and I are both married, my lord, on the very same day.	3090
LISANDRO	Such an honorable marriage makes me forget my own love. Instead of leaving for distant lands, you can stay here, to relish what you have, and so enjoy one another for many years to come.	3095
URBÁN	Won't you give Julia to me?	
LEONARDA	From now on she will be your wife.	3100
OTÓN	I've ended up a witness, although I was a suitor. I confess he is my better— you have chosen well. And so enjoy one another for many years to come.	3105
LISANDRO	When is the wedding?	
LUCENCIO	Tomorrow.	
VALERIO	So soon?	
LUCENCIO	It is best that way.	3110
CAMILO	And with that, I say, ends <i>The Widow of Valencia</i> .	