GUILLEN DE CASTRO

UNHAPPLY MARRIED IN VALENCIA

Translated and with an introduction by Laura Munoz and Veronica Wilson
Pronunciation Key

Each vowel in Spanish has just one sound. They are pronounced as follows:

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

The underlined syllable in each word is the accented one.

DON ÁLVARO: DON AHL-VAH-ROH
IPÓLITA: EE-POH-LEE-TAH
VALERIÁN: VAH-LEH-REEAN
EUGENIA: EH-OO-HEH-NEEAH
ANTONIO: AHN-TOH-NEE-OH
LEONARDO: LEH-O-NAR-DOH
ELVIRA: EHL-VEE-RAH
GALÍNDEZ: GAH-LEEN-DEHS
PIERRES: PEE-EHR (as in the French, “Pierre”)
TWO GABACHOS: GAH-BAH-CHOHS
Characters

DON ÁLVARO
IPÓLITA, his wife
VALERIÁN, gentleman
EUGENIA, his wife
LEONARDO, gentleman, IPÓLITA’s brother
ELVIRA, lady
GALÍNDEZ, squire
PIERRES, lackey
TWO PAGES
A BAILIFF and some CONSTABLES
TWO GABACHOS
ACT I

SCENE I

A room in IPÓLITA and DON ÁLVARO’s house

Enter VALERIÁN and IPÓLITA

VALERIÁN Listen to me:
My love for you is infinite.

IPÓLITA That’s rich . . .
Does the man who trusts you with his estate
deserve such an indecent proposal? 5
You overstep your limits.
Instead of looking after his household,
you set your sights on his wife.
Restrain yourself,
or leave at once. 10
Absence should make a friend more loyal.
Don’t you see, you snake,
that even in his absence the man who put his trust in you
is not only honorable,
but your friend and my husband? 15
Can’t you see that this is a crazy whim
even as your lust blinds you?

VALERIÁN Why does any of that matter,
when I’ve seen the way you look at me?
Those fiery eyes of yours 20
stopped me in my tracks.
They speared my heart,
as soon as you shot a look at me.
If my breast is aflame,
and I’m a slave to my desires, 25
what else can I do?

IPÓLITA Take it to the grave!
Such a long friendship
your unkind heart so easily forgets!
You’d give it up in one moment
for the thrill of the hunt.
Leave, there’s no question
you’re acting like the worst kind of traitor.

VALERIÁN The greater my betrayal,
the more it shows my love.

IPÓLITA How’s that?

VALERIÁN Wait! Listen!

IPÓLITA Listen to what?

VALERIÁN My many fine qualities,
so you can see I’m madly in love.
Am I not a nobleman?

IPÓLITA Yes.

VALERIÁN Do I not owe your husband friendship?

IPÓLITA Yes.

VALERIÁN Well then think about who I am,
look upon me,
and let your heart melt
at the size of my love
and the barriers it has overcome.
Don’t you see how you flatter me
the more you call me a traitor,
since it makes it all the more notable
that I love you as I do?

IPÓLITA Let go!

VALERIÁN Happy traitor that I am!
IPÓLITA And I an unfortunate wretch! 55

VALERIÁN My betrayal proves just how fine my love is.

Enter GALÍNDEZ, an old squire

GALÍNDEZ Today your pining ends.

IPÓLITA What?

GALÍNDEZ I saw— 60

IPÓLITA Who?

GALÍNDEZ Hush.

IPÓLITA Out with it. Just tell me.

GALÍNDEZ My lord Don Álvaro is in Valencia. 65

IPÓLITA Finally! And about time!

GALÍNDEZ He’ll be here soon.

IPÓLITA You’ve seen him, then?

GALÍNDEZ Yes, my lady. 70

VALERIÁN And he’s home?

GALÍNDEZ Yes, my lord.

VALERIÁN The game is up.

IPÓLITA Come.
VALERIÁN Careful that he doesn’t find out . . .

IPÓLITA Hush, you fool.
I care for him too much
to put him in this situation.
A woman who can
defend her own honor,
without involving her husband,
makes an honorable wife.

GALÍNDEZ You won’t have time
to make it down the stairs.

IPÓLITA I would run out into the street
to embrace him.

SCENE 2

Room in IPÓLITA and DON ÁLVARO’s house

Enter DON ÁLVARO dressed in riding clothes and boots, and ELVIRA dressed as a page

ELVIRA You’re married?

DON ÁLVARO Regretfully.
Just play along.

ELVIRA Just kill me now.

DON ÁLVARO Any liberties I have taken
are due to your love.
Forgive me.

IPÓLITA My lord!

DON ÁLVARO My lady!

IPÓLITA Thank heavens you’ve returned.
ELVIRA  \((Aside)\) And now I’m dying of jealousy.

VALERIÁN  \((Aside)\) Envy consumes me.

DON ÁLVARO  Forgive me
for not embracing you first.

VALERIÁN  It’s good to have you back.
Now I await your embrace.

DON ÁLVARO  Take my arms.
You should be grateful
I tear them from my wife’s neck
to give them to you.

VALERIÁN  \((Aside)\) It’s a lucky man who gets to enjoy her.
\((Aloud)\) Well, Álvaro?

IPÓLITA  \((Aside)\) Oh, traitor!

VALERIÁN  How was your journey?

DON ÁLVARO  Better than I could have imagined.

VALERIÁN  Zaragoza is heavenly.

ELVIRA  \((Aside)\) My beloved homeland!

DON ÁLVARO  It’s a beautiful place.

VALERIÁN  Renowned.

DON ÁLVARO  I cried when I had to leave
Coso Street.\(^1\)

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\(^1\) One of the oldest and best known streets in Zaragoza, since its route corresponds to the cursus, a road which bordered the wall in Roman times, and from which it derives its name.
VALERIÁN  And what happened to you there?

DON ÁLVARO  Strange things, certainly.
            I’ll tell you all about them
            in a better place and time.

VALERIÁN  Until then.

DON ÁLVARO  You’re leaving?

VALERIÁN  I’ll come back later
            with my wife.

DON ÁLVARO  I look forward to it.

VALERIÁN  I’m sure she will too.

IPÓLITA  The more the merrier!

VALERIÁN  *(Aside)* I’m dying inside.

ELVIRA  *(Aside)* I’m furious!

IPÓLITA  *(Aside)* Thank God he’s leaving.

*Exit VALERIÁN*

SCENE 3

DON ÁLVARO  And why so sad?

IPÓLITA  On your account:
            you cried when you had to come home
            so you must have left something behind.
            There are many ladies . . .

ELVIRA  *(Aside)* Oh God!
IPÓLITA . . . in Zaragoza.

ELVIRA (Aside) Here we go!

IPÓLITA And I fear more than one
must have been your lady-friend.
What a fine time you must have had
with them!

DON ÁLVARO None that could equal
the pleasure I have with you.

ELVIRA (Aside) You’re a master of deception.
What am I doing here?

IPÓLITA So what!
Haven’t you betrayed me before?

ELVIRA (Aside) What a tantrum!

IPÓLITA Swear to me.

DON ÁLVARO I swear on your beauty.

IPÓLITA Swear again. More.

DON ÁLVARO I swear on your life.

IPÓLITA Swear on your own life, too.

DON ÁLVARO Isn’t your life my own?

IPÓLITA Yes, my love.

DON ÁLVARO Well, light of my life,
have faith in me.

IPÓLITA Listen . . .
even with all that, I don’t believe you.
A young man and in Zaragoza—
there must have been some chance
to give into your desires.
What did you do?

DON ÁLVARO I conducted business.  

IPÓLITA And was it all business?

DON ÁLVARO I also visited a few places.

IPÓLITA And courted ladies?

DON ÁLVARO No.

IPÓLITA You didn’t even speak to them?

DON ÁLVARO I didn’t even speak to them.

IPÓLITA You must have at least looked
at a few of them.

DON ÁLVARO No, I swear.

IPÓLITA I doubt that.

DON ÁLVARO Yet I know that it is so.

IPÓLITA Not one, really?

DON ÁLVARO No, by God!
Now leave me alone. For heaven’s sake!
I’m fed up with so many questions,
one after the other—
enough of this constant jealousy!
I just got here.

IPÓLITA Now you’re upset?
DON ÁLVARO Could you at least let me . . . 185

IPÓLITA Such savage sorrow!

DON ÁLVARO . . . take off
my spurs and boots?
Antonio, take off my spurs.

IPÓLITA You do that,
and I’ll spur my heart
to leave here. 190

ELVIRA Let me help you.

IPÓLITA I’ll go away,
so as not to annoy you any longer. 195
(Aside) My heart is heavy with sorrow.

Exit IPÓLITA

SCENE 4

DON ÁLVARO Go and good riddance.
Look at her weep. Oh holy matrimony!
What a heavy yoke!
If it weren’t a sacrament,
I’d say it was the work of the devil. 200

ELVIRA You’re one to talk.
Do you think, you hypocrite,
that you have behaved
like a gentleman? 205

DON ÁLVARO Yes and no:
o, because I’ve had my pleasure through lies,
yes, because it’s no sin to lie
when you’re in love.
ELVIRA  Lying is always dishonorable, you boor.

DON ÁLVARO  Look, there’s no dishonor in a lie when it deceives a woman: her beauty provides the excuse.

ELVIRA  Oh that’s rich! You pour salt in the wound! Though you were married, you traitor, you led me on, offered me marriage, tainted my honor, and brought me, despicable man, to where I scream, cry, and suffer . . . all effects of that poison I took in through my eyes. Was that the right thing to do? And then you told me this house—oh, I’m about to explode!—was your cousin’s, you ingrate!

DON ÁLVARO  I spoke the truth.

ELVIRA  How can I resist my own fury?

DON ÁLVARO  The woman you saw is both my cousin and my wife.

ELVIRA  My fury is so great, I will shout it to the heavens!

DON ÁLVARO  If you’ll just be quiet, I’ll kiss the ground you walk on. Calm down.

ELVIRA  Has there ever been a betrayal like this?
DON ÁLVARO  Listen: I haven’t been true, but it was only because your beauty made me do it. Forgive yourself and forgive me, too, for being married is harder on me than anyone else. The pain is so great—I can’t stand it. I bear my marriage like a noose around my neck. Since your love compelled me to accept your tender mercies, free me from this knot, if you can, and I’ll be the lucky one. I hope you’ll keep up the disguise, my love, if you care about me.

ELVIRA  You do have a way with words, you silver-tongued devil! Your words have taken me in reaching deep into my soul, and left me for dead. They fooled me once, and will surely fool me again.

DON ÁLVARO  I’ll make it worth your while . . . Ah, here are Valerián and his wife.

ELVIRA  What else am I to do, if I can’t help loving you?

SCENE 5

*Drawing room in IPÓLITA and DON ÁLVARO’s house*

*Enter VALERIÁN and EUGENIA*

EUGENIA  (*Aside*) I’m trembling from head to toe
at the thought of seeing the one I adore.
(Aloud) Welcome back, and forgive me.
I’m nearly deadrom climbing the stairs.

VALERIÁN You certainly look it.

DON ÁLVARO Rest, please.

EUGENIA (Aside) If only I could rest
in your arms.

DON ÁLVARO Would you care for anything?

EUGENIA My lady Ipólita,
where is she?

DON ÁLVARO I will let her know you’re here.
She’s weeping at the moment.

VALERIÁN What is it? Is it jealousy?

DON ÁLVARO She’s unbearable.

VALERIÁN Is that why she retired?

DON ÁLVARO It’s terrible!
You know the state she gets into.

VALERIÁN And Doña Eugenia is quite exhausted . . .

DON ÁLVARO Would you get her, then?

VALERIÁN (Aside) I will, I’m dying to see her.

Exit VALERIÁN

EUGENIA (Aside) Good riddance.
How can I get you alone?
(Aloud) Could I have some water?
DON ÁLVARO  (To ELVIRA) Go and bring some immediately.

ELVIRA  I’m like the wind.

Exit ELVIRA

EUGENIA  (Aside) I must seize the moment!  295

DON ÁLVARO  Well, my lady, are you better now?

EUGENIA  No, not exactly. Feel my pulse and you’ll see. It’s racing. Come, feel it.  300

DON ÁLVARO  I can see it racing freely from here. It seems to be a little wild.

EUGENIA  Oh my God! . . . give me your hand and you’ll see I’m burning up.  305

DON ÁLVARO  What! This is going too far! You are sick, but not like that.

EUGENIA  Press harder, unless my burning heat consumes you.

DON ÁLVARO  That’s what I’m afraid of. Are you still carrying on?  310

EUGENIA  Come here . . .

DON ÁLVARO  It’s not right.

EUGENIA  . . . and touch my heart.
DON ÁLVARO I can see it in your eyes. 315

EUGENIA You’ve discovered what ails me. Why are you taking so long if the remedy is in your hands? 315

DON ÁLVARO That’s what this is about? 320

EUGENIA You are cruel. 320

DON ÁLVARO I’m a man of honor. I’ve told you a thousand times, it’s inappropriate. Why do you persist? 325

EUGENIA I’d like to find one yes among a thousand no’s, and so find my good fortune, like the one who gets the lucky ace among the thousand who don’t. 325

DON ÁLVARO Well, there’s no point in trying. I tell you, I am your husband’s friend and have never been a traitor. I must warn you, put an end to your antics. You seek fortune in a bad hand. 330

EUGENIA How well you treat me. 330

DON ÁLVARO As my station requires. 330

EUGENIA Are you sure? 330

DON ÁLVARO I am. 340

EUGENIA How is it possible, ingrate, that you, fickle as can be,
throw all sense away,
follow any woman you see,
and catch all those you follow,
without leaving one scrap
when the chance comes up.
From the haughty lady
to the humble maid,

your nature bids you do,
and yet you steel your heart
against me alone?

DON ÁLVARO  Though it’s true,
I do follow my desires,
I only do so where
I owe nothing to a friend.
For that would not be fair dealing—
it would be shameful indeed
to betray a good friend.
Where honor rules,
pleasure has no sway.
One must keep faith with one’s friends:
he who betrays a friend
must know he breaks his word.
A man who does such a thing
is an enemy of the faith,
for whosoever betrays a friend,
would betray his God, too.

EUGENIA  Bravo, my friend!
Come and let me bury
my sorrows in your chest,
and then you too can be
a heretic to your faith.
I renege from it a thousand times,
since it only does me harm. I’m crazy for you!

DON ÁLVARO  Here comes the water.
EUGENIA  It’s hardly enough
to put out such a fire.

Enter ELVIRA with a glass of water and some sweets

ELVIRA  I ordered some sweets.
That’s why it took me so long.

380

EUGENIA  (Aside) The later the better.
(Aloud) Do you trust this pageboy?²

ELVIRA  I am happy that he trusted me
to serve you, my lady.

385

EUGENIA  A pretty face and pretty words.

DON ÁLVARO  Aren’t you hungry?

EUGENIA  I’ve already eaten.

ELVIRA  Goodness! You’re flushed.

EUGENIA  I have regained the color I lost
in climbing the stairs.

390

EUGENIA drinks the water

ELVIRA  How fortunate . . .
Oh my, what will I do!

EUGENIA  What did you say?

ELVIRA  How lucky you are
to regain what you had lost.

395

EUGENIA  Well said.

² Eugenia’s question is also meant to denote surprise and displeasure at Don Álvaro allowing Elvira/Antonio, a servant, to interrupt their private conversation.
DON ÁLVARO He's an educated lad.

ELVIRA With honors, no less.

EUGENIA He seems a great fool, with a woman's voice and face.

ELVIRA *(Aside)* Oh Fortune, look what you've brought me to!

*Exit ELVIRA*

EUGENIA If you loved me . . .

DON ÁLVARO Must you insist?

EUGENIA Though you want nothing of it, I must insist. *Ay, Don Álvaro!*

DON ÁLVARO I'll always be honorable.

EUGENIA I'll let the whole world hear my pain, if you won't give up your faith for a new idol.

DON ÁLVARO You know how this works. Surely you're sane enough to see you'll be ruined. Leave me be.

EUGENIA Let me be ruined.

DON ÁLVARO What are you trying to do?

EUGENIA My darling, love you.

DON ÁLVARO This madness has crossed the line.
EUGENIA     This will be the end of me!  420

SCENE 6

Enter VALERIÁN and IPÓLITA without seeing the others

IPÓLITA     Stop, on your life.

VALERIÁN    My love won’t let me.

DON ÁLVARO  Let go.

EUGENIA     Wait.

DON ÁLVARO  Who says so?  425

VALERIÁN    I’m crazy for you.

DON ÁLVARO  You’re not yourself.

IPÓLITA     If you insist,
            I will let the whole world know.

EUGENIA     My lord!  430

IPÓLITA     (Aside) Oh, heavens!

They all see each other

DON ÁLVARO  Look who’s here.

EUGENIA     (Aside) Ay, I’m cursed!

DON ÁLVARO  (Aside) Compose yourself.
            Why is this taking so long?  435

IPÓLITA     (Aside) What a moment!
            Did he hear you?
VALENIÁN What was that about?

EUGENIA Wait.

IPÓLITA Wait.

IPÓLITA *runs off stage*

VALENIÁN What’s going on, Don Álvaro?

DON ÁLVARO I would like to drag her out by the hair.
This refusing to come out . . .

VALENIÁN Listen.

DON ÁLVARO . . . Ipólita . . .

IPÓLITA *returns*

VALENIÁN She was on her way.

DON ÁLVARO . . . is so rude,
and with such poor manners.

EUGENIA (*Aside*) I’m exhausted by this effort—
this is not right.

VALENIÁN (*Aside*) I was a dead man there for a moment.

IPÓLITA (*Aside*) I’m so unlucky,
I thought things might end up even worse.

VALENIÁN (*Aside*) I feared a greater misfortune.

EUGENIA (*Aside*) I was very lucky this time.

DON ÁLVARO (*Aside*) It could have been worse.
VALERIÁN  I’m glad I was helpful in getting her to open her bedroom door.  460

DON ÁLVARO  Such nonsense to shut herself in her room when you are visiting.

IPÓLITA  I know. Better manners are to be expected from a woman like me. Forgive me, my lady.  465

EUGENIA  Fine. Now you must shake hands, and anyone who refuses must face me instead. My sword always finds its mark, even though that last battle has left me all worn out.  470

VALERIÁN  Well said. I’ll vouch for that.  475

DON ÁLVARO  I’ll second it.  475

VALERIÁN  Come, give me your hand.

IPÓLITA  You should marry us again. It is better without a doubt to start anew when something can’t be fixed.  480

DON ÁLVARO  A mistake won’t fix a mistake, and it would add insult to injury. You can’t redo what wasn’t undone.

IPÓLITA  Do you want it undone?

DON ÁLVARO  (Aside) Would that it could be!  485
SCENE 7

Enter ELVIRA, running, and GALÍNDEZ chasing her

ELVIRA Antonio!

GALÍNDEZ I will stick this dagger in his belly.

DON ÁLVARO Halt!

ELVIRA Crazy old man.

490

GALÍNDEZ Rascal.

VALERIÁN This is good.

GALÍNDEZ He has no shame!

ELVIRA Look at the face on you!

GALÍNDEZ He disrespects me even in your presence. Oh, Saint George!

495

ELVIRA He won’t even spare the saints.

DON ÁLVARO Galindez, be polite!

500

GALÍNDEZ My lord.

ELVIRA I was coming out with the water and sweets when he snatched the treats away from me.

505

GALÍNDEZ I did that? You liar!
ELVIRA Having eaten them . . .

DON ÁLVARO Calm down.

GALÍNDEZ My lord, he’s lying.

ELVIRA . . . he drank the water, and then said it was hot, and then . . .

GALÍNDEZ A thousand lies!

ELVIRA I was sure I could get away from him, so I hit the jug as he held it to his mouth. I’m only sorry there wasn’t more water.

EUGENIA So feisty.

ELVIRA And I came running to you to save myself.

GALÍNDEZ Oh, traitor!
My lord, only that last thing was true.
He’s an incredible rascal.

VALERIÁN It’s a great story.

GALÍNDEZ He has made a real mess of my poor nose, and if you . . .

DON ÁLVARO Don’t get all worked up. Antonio, is that any way to behave? I’ll make them whip you a hundred times over.

GALÍNDEZ I will happily take care of it.

DON ÁLVARO All in good time.
EUGENIA  How entertaining.

ELVIRA  (Aside) The nonsense I must put up with, just to hide the truth!

DON ÁLVARO  Now, let’s find some way to while away the afternoon.

VALERIÁN  Good idea!

IPÓLITA  Let’s sit.

EUGENIA  Do not be sad, my lady, if God is with you.

IPÓLITA  I’m at your service. I’ll be all right somehow.

DON ÁLVARO  I’ll kiss your hand.

IPÓLITA  Yes, of course.

ELVIRA  (Aside) I’m so miserable.

VALERIÁN  (Aside) This jealousy . . .!

EUGENIA  (Aside) This fire . . .

VALERIÁN  (Aside) . . . undoes me!

EUGENIA  (Aside) . . . consumes me!

DON ÁLVARO  What game shall we play?

VALERIÁN  Make one up.

DON ÁLVARO  The game of letters would suit such a learned company.
VALERIÁN But we need more people to play. 555

DON ÁLVARO So be it.

EUGENIA Perhaps Galíndez can play.

IPÓLITA Will he know how?

DON ÁLVARO And young Tony.

GALÍNDEZ I’m not sure I should, I don’t know . . . 560

DON ÁLVARO We’ll see what he comes up with.

VALERIÁN If you want a good laugh, bring in one of those *gabacho* servants.3

DON ÁLVARO You mean Pierres?

VALERIÁN Besides being a drunk, he’s a little crazy. 565

DON ÁLVARO Have him come then. Go call him, Antonio.

ELVIRA And in his native tongue.
M’sieur Pierres!

*Exit ELVIRA*

VALERIÁN That page isn’t half bad. 570

DON ÁLVARO He’s a devil.

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3 As a general term, it denotes someone of foreign origin, although in the seventeenth century it was often used to describe someone from the lower Pyrenees region who moved into the city to do manual labor. See Introduction.
GALÍNDEZ That he is.

DON ÁLVARO Pick a letter.⁴

EUGENIA I’ll pick the first, A. 575

DON ÁLVARO And I choose E, the second of the vowels.

VALEIRIÁN I pick the third, which is I.

EUGENIA Won’t you choose?

IPÓLITA Which one, oh God! 580
The A you picked was rightly mine.

EUGENIA Take it, then.

IPÓLITA I don’t want it. It’s not important. I’ll pick something else. 585

EUGENIA Since it’s the first, I just thought of it first.

IPÓLITA C isn’t bad.

GALÍNDEZ See, I know some things . . .

VALEIRIÁN I see what you’re up to. 590

GALÍNDEZ . . . that start with this letter, some very bad ones.⁵

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⁴ The last half of Act I is dedicated to this word game, through which everyone makes their desires known. See Introduction.
⁵ The play on “C words” here probably refers to marriage (casamiento) in the Spanish, but could easily refer to cuckoldry in the English.
DON ÁLVARO  Some which are forced upon us.

VALERIÁN  Galíndez has good taste.

           Pick a letter.  595

GALÍNDEZ  I choose . . .

DON ÁLVARO  Is Pierres coming?

GALÍNDEZ  T.

VALERIÁN  T?

GALÍNDEZ  T.  600

SCENE 8

Enter ELVIRA and PIERRES

VALERIÁN  Just in time.

ELVIRA  Pierres is here.

PIERRES  At your servicio, monsieur.

VALERIÁN  Come here, do you know how to read?

PIERRES  I have some.  605

VALERIÁN  You have to pick a letter.

PIERRES  What for?

VALERIÁN  Pick one,

                       and you’ll see later what to do with it.

                       It’s a game.  610

PIERRES  All right.
Give me R.

DON ÁLVARO  You’ll have your work cut out for you.  
Now young Tony picks.

ELVIRA  If I think about it, I’ll choose worse.  
I’ll take D.

DON ÁLVARO  Play the game, my lady.

EUGENIA  I’m first.

DON ÁLVARO  Go ahead, my lady.

IPÓLITA  That’s not right.

EUGENIA  Well, I started from Aragon.

VALENIÁN  Now you must forfeit something, your choice.

EUGENIA  Why?

VALENIÁN  Because you’ve made a mistake.  
Aragon is not a town,  
it’s a kingdom.

DON ÁLVARO  Without a doubt.

IPÓLITA  Give a ribbon for the forfeit.

EUGENIA  I just did.  
To continue: I arrived at Almeria,  
where I stayed the night.  
My host’s name was Antonio  
and his lady was Ana,  
and then there was a suitor, Don Álvaro,  
who followed me on my way.

VALENIÁN  Fine.
DON ÁLVARO  It wasn’t me.

VALERIÁN  Oh God, that makes me so jealous.

IPÓLITA  I feel the same.

VALERIÁN  I’ll have my revenge on you both.

EUGENIA  We sat down to dinner, and we started with . . . oh, God! Who will help me? Artichokes. Then, for an entrée, Andalusian duck, for dessert, I suppose, Almonds. And now I’ve gotten to the hardest part.

DON ÁLVARO  And what did you say to that handsome man?

EUGENIA  I don’t know what to say, how sad! . . . That he was as lovely as the Air.

VALERIÁN  Is air lovely?

EUGENIA  It’s clear, which is the greatest beauty.

ELVIRA  It’s better felt than seen.

IPÓLITA  Well said.

DON ÁLVARO  He’s just a young lad. Go ahead.

EUGENIA  I’m calm now.

DON ÁLVARO  What did you tell him?

EUGENIA  I told him he was the Apple of my eye.
GALÍNDEZ: Good, by George.

IPÓLITA: That works?
   You know a lot about this game.

EUGENIA: Are you making fun?
   (Aside) I know more about the love
   that sets my soul afire.

VALERIÁN: My turn.

DON ÁLVARO: We’re going clockwise.

VALERIÁN: I went from Ita
   to Illescas, where I stayed
   the night at Icarus’s Inn.

EUGENIA: Come on, forfeit. You’ve made a mistake.

VALERIÁN: How?

EUGENIA: There’s no saint by that name.

DON ÁLVARO: That’s right.

VALERIÁN: Take this garter.

EUGENIA: The glove is fine. I’ll take the glove.

PIERRES: Notre dama is the very diabla.

EUGENIA: Hush, fool.

VALERIÁN: As I was saying,
   the host was Inés.
   And the lady’s name:
   Ipólita.
DON ÁLVARO Good word play, by God.

VALERIÁN Surely it cannot surprise you if I want your wife, since mine wants you.

GALÍNDEZ Nice jab.

DON ÁLVARO Extremely.

IPÓLITA Extremely unlikely.

VALERIÁN But necessary.

EUGENIA More like witty.

ELVIRA And cliché.

PIERRES By Jove.

DON ÁLVARO You’re doing well.

VALERIÁN They’re very witty.

DON ÁLVARO What a game.

IPÓLITA (Aside) Oh, traitor! (Aloud) Let’s hear what’s for dinner.

DON ÁLVARO Since you are the host, of course you’re worried about it.

EUGENIA That’s funny.

DON ÁLVARO (To IPÓLITA) You’re always so very . . .

EUGENIA Don’t say she’s greedy, instead tell her she’s very . . . faithful.
DON ÁLVARO  This is not about the truth.

IPÓLITA  What I said was also a joke. 
What did we have for dinner, 
Valerián?

EUGENIA  Good. 710

VALERIÁN  I’ll continue: 
first there were iced shrimp. 
What more should I say? 
. . . and then some Eel.

DON ÁLVARO  You’ve made a mistake. 715

VALERIÁN  How?

DON ÁLVARO  That’s E, not I.

VALERIÁN  Details, details.

DON ÁLVARO  Eel starts with E.

VALERIÁN  You’re right, 
although it sounds the same. 720

DON ÁLVARO  I’ll let it pass, keep going.

VALERIÁN  Wait.

EUGENIA  You have to have dessert.

VALERIÁN  What would I have for dessert? 725 
How about Ice cream.

IPÓLITA  I can’t stand it.

GALÍNDEZ  I could eat it.
IPÓLITA That’s a fine offer.

EUGENIA Very fine.  730

GALÍNDEZ I’ll eat soft, mushy things.  
For a mouth with no molars,  
everything mushy is good.

VALERIÁN I told my lady that she was beautiful as the divine Iris,  
and that I loved her.  735

EUGENIA You loved her like who?

VALERIÁN Like I Imagine.

ELVIRA How do you explain that?

DON ÁLVARO Oh, lad!  740

GALÍNDEZ It was a good question.

VALERIÁN What I want exists only in my Imagination.

GALÍNDEZ That was a clever answer.

DON ÁLVARO Very well said.  745

EUGENIA My husband is very clever.

ELVIRA Well said, if he doesn’t lie,  
for you know . . .

DON ÁLVARO Will you be quiet?

ELVIRA . . . in matters of love,  
the glib usually lie the most.  750
EUGENIA A fool fit for a king.

VALERIÁN You’re right.

IPÓLITA Have you ever been in love? 755

DON ÁLVARO Scoundrel.

PIERRES Nail on the head.

GALÍNDEZ Take a look at the village idiot.

DON ÁLVARO Tell us, my lady.

IPÓLITA I left Zaragoza.6 760

ELVIRA What a shame!

IPÓLITA I arrived in Cartagena. My host there was Cain.

DON ÁLVARO Strange name. 765

IPÓLITA I always prefer hosts who can kill the mood.

EUGENIA A man’s a man.

VALERIÁN Good point.

DON ÁLVARO Back to the topic, and a good one at that. And your hostess?

---

6 One of the variant spellings of Zaragoza still in use in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Ipólita is bending the rules of the game slightly, although either no one catches it or they simply do not call her on it.
IPÓLITA  She was called Catalina.
        And there was Cosme as my enemy.

DON ÁLVARO  That’s my middle name.  775

IPÓLITA  Who else but you
        would I dine with in this world?

DON ÁLVARO  Is that why you chose that letter?

IPÓLITA  I picked what was left of you,
        because all I get from you
        are the leftovers.  780

VALERIÁN  Oh, very good!

GALÍNDEZ  Precious.

EUGENIA  You’re just perfect.

ELVIRA  You’re honest and clever,
        a recipe for jealousy.  785

DON ÁLVARO  Quiet, by God, my life depends on it!
        If you praise her for being jealous,
        it will be the death of me.
        What did you start with?  790

IPÓLITA  Crab Cakes.

DON ÁLVARO  Good start.

IPÓLITA  I’ll go on:
        when you’re angry,
        you make a tempest in a teacup,
        and then call me the crabby one,
        when I want to ask you something.
        So I’d like to return the favor.
VALERIÁN  Good show.

IPÓLITA  And then Chopped liver.  800

GALÍNDEZ  This also brings up some history.

IPÓLITA  It’s written on the lines of my face.

VALERIÁN  Isn’t she funny?

EUGENIA  Infinitely.

DON ÁLVARO  May God keep her in his infinite glory.  805

IPÓLITA  To save you from suffering . . .

ELVIRA  Now that’s malice.

IPÓLITA  . . . and no trick.

DON ÁLVARO  God save you for a long time.

EUGENIA  Do tell, what did you have for dessert?  810

IPÓLITA  It was Cynicism.

DON ÁLVARO  Good Heavens, isn’t that the truth! There’s never been a meal at my table without cynical jealousy.  815

VALERIÁN  Eating is better when you add a little spice.

EUGENIA  What did you say to that suitor?

IPÓLITA  I told him he was as beautiful as Cupid.
DON ÁLVARO  How effusive!  820

IPÓLITA  Not at all,  
for I love in him  
what he hates most in me.

DON ÁLVARO  And what is that?  

IPÓLITA  Character.  825

EUGENIA  Well, you’re all figured out.

ELVIRA  Quarrels between spouses  
are just the storm before the calm.  
This is what souls long for.

DON ÁLVARO  Antonio,  
that’s just the price of marriage.  830

IPÓLITA  And a high price to pay.

DON ÁLVARO  Now I’ll start.  
$É$ is my letter:  
leaving from Écija, this is hard,  
to Emaús.  835

IPÓLITA  You are in the wrong.

DON ÁLVARO  Am I?  

VALERIÁN  She’s right. You arrived at Emaús,  
which is a castle,  
not a town.  840

IPÓLITA  Luckily,  
I caught you.

DON ÁLVARO  I was in the wrong. Enough.
GALÍNDEZ  
  A rolling stone gathers no moss.  

DON ÁLVARO  
  I’ve been a fool in rolling along.

IPÓLITA  
  As in so many other things.

DON ÁLVARO  
  Like you and your mood.

IPÓLITA  
  Come on, you must forfeit something.

DON ÁLVARO  
  Everything I have
  and you could want is yours.
  Name it.

IPÓLITA  
  Your hat will do.

DON ÁLVARO  
  The host was
  Esteban.

EUGENIA  
  The hostess?

DON ÁLVARO  
  Wait . . .
  Eufemia.

IPÓLITA  
  And now the lady.

DON ÁLVARO  
  $E$ will give me a chance for revenge.

VALERIÁN  
  Just as the $I$ did for me.

DON ÁLVARO  
  And yet, I don’t want
  what belongs to a friend—
  whom I respect—even in jest.

IPÓLITA  
  God save you for me.

DON ÁLVARO  
  Instead,
  I’ll say her name was Elvira.
ELVIRA (Aside) He remembered my name! It’s the least he could do.

EUGENIA (Aside) He’ll do anything not to name me.

IPÓLITA Elvira! A novel name. Is she a foreigner? Do tell.

GALÍNDEZ A daughter of the Cid\(^7\) was named Elvira.

VALERIÁN You know so much history.

PIERRES Beaucoup, he’s always reading!

GALÍNDEZ Hush, wino.

ELVIRA Surely you were his squire, and that’s why you remember.

GALÍNDEZ Am I as old as that, boy?

PIERRES Les dames call you goiter.

EUGENIA The spitting image!

GALÍNDEZ My actions speak louder than words.

Everyone laughs

IPÓLITA This is good. What did you dine on?

DON ÁLVARO I can’t think of anything, as a starter, Endives, and then . . . I’m fed up with this.

\(^{7}\) Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, the great hero of Spanish medieval epic.
VALERIÁN  You’re losing it now.

DON ÁLVARO  Just you wait.  
We had, yes, I say, an Eggplant, 
and for dessert, Elderberries.

IPÓLITA  I already fear her beauty. 
How did you describe her?

DON ÁLVARO  I praised her Excellence.  

IPÓLITA  Did you love her?

DON ÁLVARO  Extremely.

IPÓLITA  You always go to extremes.

DON ÁLVARO  I erred but once, 
it could have been worse.  

ELVIRA  I’ll speak now, 
if you’re finished.

DON ÁLVARO  Go ahead.

ELVIRA  I started out from my Desire.

DON ÁLVARO  Instead of from a place?

ELVIRA  It had towers and walls, 
but I abandoned them 
on the way to my Damage.

VALERIÁN  You speak in allegories.

EUGENIA  Very fine ones!

ELVIRA  The host was Disappointment, 
and the hostess was Delay,
a bad woman.

EUGENIA No doubt.

ELVIRA She delays in order to kill
any happiness that might come.
My lady was Dejection herself—
the way the suitor liked it.

IPÓLITA What did they have for dinner?

ELVIRA We will eat in bed,
a dash of Discouragement,
with a dollop of Desolation,
and for dessert, Dissatisfaction,
the end of a poor, Despondent Devil.

EUGENIA Isn’t he amusing?

IPÓLITA Extremely.

EUGENIA And to this dangerous dame
you said . . . ?

ELVIRA That she looked beautiful
as a Damsel in Distress.

VALERIÁN What a witty boy, by God.

ELVIRA Then, on her life and mine,
I swore I loved her.

VALERIÁN How?

ELVIRA As Destiny Demands.

DON ÁLVARO He’s a devil.

GALÍNDEZ I’ll start with decorum,
if I may.

DON ÁLVARO Go ahead.

GALÍNDEZ I left Toledo, and from Toledo I came to Toro.

VALERIÁN There’s good wine there.

GALÍNDEZ Isn’t all wine good to a worn-out traveler?

DON ÁLVARO Extremely.

GALÍNDEZ Am I doing all right?

IPÓLITA Very well, keep going. What was the name of the host?

GALÍNDEZ You want me to name the host? Terence.  

EUGENIA What a perfect name for you to say! And the hostess?

GALÍNDEZ Teresa.

ELVIRA She’d be pretty ancient.  

GALÍNDEZ Then there was my Trotting dame.  

IPÓLITA Galindo, what dame is this?

GALÍNDEZ You people will drive me mad!

---

8 Terence (Publius Terentius), one of the most famous Roman playwrights, is known for his clear and direct language.
9 Reference to prostitutes.
This much is clear:
if this dame didn’t trot,
she could never keep up with me.

DON ÁLVARO  Good one.

GALÍNDEZ  And it’s clear,
and I’ll say it clearly,
that those who trot first,
will gallop later.

DON ÁLVARO  That’s good.

GALÍNDEZ  And to my lady,
I gave some Truffled balls.\(^\text{10}\)

VALERIÁN  Good to eat.
That’s all you should have given her.

GALÍNDEZ  They paired well,
if you’ll pardon the expression.

DON ÁLVARO  Galíndez!

IPÓLITA  Say, what else did you give?

GALÍNDEZ  We had Tenderloin.

VALERIÁN  Very good.
What were the desserts?

GALÍNDEZ  Turrón.\(^\text{11}\)

ELVIRA  Were you able to eat it?

GALÍNDEZ  Why do you ask?

\(^{10}\) In Spanish *turmas* can refer either to testicles or truffles.
\(^{11}\) *Turrón* or *torrone* is a confection popular in Spain and Italy, often made of almond nougat.
ELVIRA    Well, without teeth,  
           how could you chew?

EUGENIA   Especially the kind from Alicante.12

GALÍNDEZ This lad gets into everything. 985

ELVIRA   Why not, old man?

GALÍNDEZ I’ll give you . . .

VALERIÁN Forget him, and keep going.  
           What did you say to your lady?

GALÍNDEZ That she was beautiful . . . What a moment! 990  
           What shall I say, when my thoughts go every which way?  
           I’ll say that . . .

ELVIRA   That’s not a bad solution.  
           Clearly it helps you. 995  
           You keep hitting yourself on the head,  
           and I’ll take a stick to you.

GALÍNDEZ How can I come up with anything  
           when this rascal keeps interrupting?

DON ÁLVARO Leave it for now,  
           and afterwards, I’ll have him whipped for you. 1000

GALÍNDEZ She was pretty, like . . .  
           I can’t think of the word . . .  
           like . . . oh, the devil take it . . .  
           like a Turk! 1005

VALERIÁN Nice!

12 City in southern Valencia which continues to be famous for its turron, which is especially hard.
DON ÁLVARO: That’s good!

EUGENIA: How do you love her?

GALÍNDEZ: I adore her like . . .
What’s this, is there more? 1010
Like a Tigress.

IPÓLITA: Like a tigress?
What nonsense!

GALÍNDEZ: They have a certain reputation.

EUGENIA: How so? 1015

GALÍNDEZ: There is no lady
who does not become fierce
when a man falls for her.
And so what I’m telling her
is that I love her more than myself. 1020

DON ÁLVARO: Good argument.

VALERIÁN: And proven.
—Ah, Pierres! Are you asleep, gabacho?

PIERRES: My noggin hurts.

VALERIÁN: You’re drunk. 1025

PIERRES: Not from any vino you gave me.

VALERIÁN: What letter did you have?

PIERRES: R.

VALERIÁN: Have you figured out the game?
PIERRES  Yes.  1030

VALERIÁN  Well then, go ahead, start.

PIERRES  I left from who knows where,  1035
          I left from, um, Roussillon.

DON ÁLVARO  Where did you go?

PIERRES  To Ruzafa.\textsuperscript{13}  1035

GALÍNDEZ  How well the jughead speaks!

PIERRES  Très bien, better than the old fart.

ELVIRA  Enough of that.

EUGENIA  The host, what was his name?

PIERRES  How? Roland.  1040

ELVIRA  Is he French?

PIERRES  Sans sainthood.\textsuperscript{14}

VALERIÁN  A famous name at that.

PIERRES  Of course!

IPÓLITA  And the hostess,  1045
          what was her name?

PIERRES  I don’t know, mon dieu.  
          Her name was Roma.

\textsuperscript{13} A neighborhood in the city of Valencia.
\textsuperscript{14} A reference to the Song of Roland, which for the French functions as an epic story of Christian knights fighting the Moorish invasion. On the Spanish side, the same episode involves the hero Bernardo del Carpio allying with the Moors to defend Spain from the French.
ELVIRA Did she have a Roman nose?15

EUGENIA Good Lord!

VALERIÁN What a drunk.

GALÍNDEZ He should forfeit something.

DON ÁLVARO This one plays to make mistakes.

EUGENIA What was the lady’s name, Pierres?

PIERRES Oh, j’adore!
I’m embarrassed, but I’ll say it.

IPÓLITA What was her name?

PIERRES Rafela.

IPÓLITA My maid’s name!

DON ÁLVARO Even this drunk knew which letter to pick?

EUGENIA Love reaches all.

VALERIÁN Love teaches all.
And what did you eat? Tell us.

PIERRES Rue.

DON ÁLVARO Good food.

IPÓLITA Funny.
And then?

---

15 This reference jokes with the association of Rome with prostitution, where the “Roman nose” was a term for snub noses or complete loss of the nose due to syphilis.
PIERRES I’m not sure what to say. 1070

GALÍNDEZ Good Lord, he’s sweating.

VALERIÁN He can’t put two and two together. See how he frets.

GALÍNDEZ Don’t rattle him.

PIERRES No, mon dieu. 1075

ELVIRA Well, what?

PIERRES A Rat.

VALERIÁN A rat? Truly you’re drunk! And for dessert?

PIERRES Je ne sais pas. I say, Radishes.

GALÍNDEZ Very good.

ELVIRA You eat it, you share it.

EUGENIA Now tell us how pretty your lady was. 1085

GALÍNDEZ And call on Cupid.

PIERRES Like a Rabbit.

IPÓLITA Of course.

EUGENIA How silly.

VALERIÁN Now more nonsense. How did you love her? 1090
PIERRES  Like Regurgitation.

DON ÁLVARO  A release?

ELVIRA  Of radishes and wine.

VALERIÁN  It sounds like a good meal. 1095

IPÓLITA  We’ve certainly enjoyed it.

EUGENIA  Well, the game is over, we must receive our penance. 1096

IPÓLITA  Who will give it out?

EUGENIA  I say it should be you. 1100

IPÓLITA  Me, I couldn’t.

VALERIÁN  Whoever caught the mistake, decides the punishment.

DON ÁLVARO  Good idea. 1105

EUGENIA  Well, I was first to make a mistake. I want to pay the first penalty.

VALERIÁN  I’ll give you your penalty: you’ll say sweet nothings to Don Álvaro at once, since you chose him as the suitor in your story. 1110

EUGENIA  You’re so amusing.

VALERIÁN  That’s your penalty.
EUGENIA  Ipólita can teach me, and I’ll learn from her.

IPÓLITA  Given this penalty I command that he scorn you.

GALÍNDEZ  That’s the spirit.

DON ÁLVARO  That’s fair. I accept.

EUGENIA  Do I really have to do this?

VALERIÁN  On your knees, Eugenia.

EUGENIA  On my knees? My scornful lord, don’t look like that, when I say you’re as beautiful as the sky above.

DON ÁLVARO  What’s this you say?

VALERIÁN  Not bad.

DON ÁLVARO  I won’t listen to a word of it.

IPÓLITA  He’s so good at scorn.

EUGENIA  Rejection stokes my flame. Don’t be so cruel. Let me return to my senses. Look at me, my darling, I’m yours, and I’d die for you. There’s no call for such scorn.

DON ÁLVARO  And I am, as is right, a friend to my desires, but loyal to my friend.
EUGENIA  Will that do, judge?

VALERIÁN  Anyone would think
          this has happened before.
          Such repartee
          seems to have been rehearsed.  1145

IPÓLITA  Doña Eugenia
          was something to see.

DON ÁLVARO  This is true.

IPÓLITA  Even in jest,
          it’s hard to believe you could be loyal.  1150

DON ÁLVARO  If all women belonged to my friend,
            I wouldn’t offend you with any of them.

EUGENIA  (Aside) Here’s my chance to get what I want.
          I will have my revenge,
          since this is the day of reckoning.  1155
          (Aloud) Now Valerián,
          you say sweet nothings to Ipólita.
          Here, take your glove.

DON ÁLVARO  Are you taking vengeance on me, too?

IPÓLITA  Don’t think that I won’t get you.  1160

VALERIÁN  (To DON ÁLVARO) I know I do you wrong.

DON ÁLVARO  Not to worry. It’s just a game.

VALERIÁN  (Aside) My heart is all aflame,
          like my immortal shame.
          (Aloud) I say, lady, that I love you—
          no, truly, I adore you,
          I weep for you and die for you,
          and you should not scorn me,
since it’s not your penalty.

IPÓLITA What can be more powerful in a noble breast than the pleasure it seeks? Do I not have a point, Don Álvaro?

DON ÁLVARO You do.

VALERIÁN My everything, you know I’m yours. Make room for me in your heart: you’re a tigress and an angel, so cruel and yet so beautiful.

IPÓLITA And I’m faithful to the tips of my toes. For this to work, you would have to be my husband and I would have to be your wife, since you love me and she loves him.


VALERIÁN She’s clever.

IPÓLITA And you’re a cheat.

VALERIÁN Have I done my penance?

EUGENIA Amazingly. It seemed well rehearsed.

VALERIÁN Yes and no. What can be better for our friendship than to speak plainly?

ELVIRA (Aside) These lines stink of truth.
EUGENIA Are there no more penalties?

IPOLITA I don’t think so. Anyone else who made a mistake will just have to live with themselves.

EUGENIA Ipólita didn’t make a mistake, so she has no need of judgement.

IPOLITA My heart is like a seer, so I rarely get things wrong.

DON ÁLVARO Yet you rarely see beyond your jealousy. Anyway, it’s late.

IPÓLITA I’d hardly noticed.

DON ÁLVARO Bring candles.

EUGENIA We should go now, and you get some rest.

She gets up

DON ÁLVARO Am I so fragile?

EUGENIA I’m thinking of you too, my lady.

IPÓLITA What do you mean by that?

EUGENIA Nothing.

IPÓLITA Do you really wish to go?

EUGENIA The sooner we leave,
the sooner we can return and bother you again.

IPÓLITA I enjoy your visits and look forward to them.

VALERIÁN Pierres, come down, and tell the driver to bring the coach around to the door.

DON ÁLVARO We’ll talk tomorrow?

VALERIÁN Whenever you want.

DON ÁLVARO It certainly is late.

VALERIÁN (Aside) Oh, most beautiful image!

DON ÁLVARO Bring lights!

EUGENIA (Aside) Oh, blind love!

ELVIRA Lights, lights!

GALÍNDEZ Here are the torches.

Enter ELVIRA, and enter GALÍNDEZ with torches and distributes them

VALERIÁN Whoever wants can come along and light them from this flame.

EUGENIA Stay here.

IPÓLITA That would not do at all.

EUGENIA You’re already too gracious.

IPÓLITA I insist. I’ll see you to the stairs.
ACT II

SCENE I

In VALERIÁN’s bedroom

Enter VALERIÁN, in nightgowns, washing his hands: one PAGE gives him water and another PAGE gives him a towel

VALERIÁN

What a night!
Bring me water right away.
This fire burning in me,
inflamed by my tears, is driving me insane.
I didn’t want to wake up,
but I haven’t been able to sleep—
it’s impossible to live in this state
and not kill myself.

This letter I hold here,
which this night has helped me imagine,
lays out my cares,
and claims my ultimate happiness.

I explain in verse
my sorrow and pain.

Aren’t lovers always poets?
Melancholy and love
have the same effect,
and so love and poetry
are the business of the wise.

I understand completely
why the world calls lovers fools,
but what part of genius
doesn’t have a touch of madness?

How can I send these lines?
And yet, if they don’t soon meet their audience,
there will have been little joy
in writing them at all.

PAGES offer VALERIÁN the water and while he’s washing, enter ELVIRA
ELVIRA I’ll hide the truth a thousand times
to keep up these tricks:
that Galíndez
is such a fawning old fool.
I cannot stop laughing
over this letter he gave me
for his lady love.
I’m a go-between for such a crazy old fool!
Oh, love! Your tyrannical laws,
your fire, your drive:
snow does not make you cold,
nor grey hair make you old.

VALERIÁN What is it, Antonio?
(Aside) I wonder if I might trust this one,
who is so full of wit?

ELVIRA I’m here to let her know
my lady is on her way.

VALERIÁN My wife?

ELVIRA Yes, my lord.

VALERIÁN Wait a bit . . . I can’t think straight . . .
Ipólita is coming—
go tell Doña Eugenia at once.

The PAGES serving him leave

ELVIRA (Aside) What does he want from me?

VALERIÁN (Aside) He could well do it . . .
but I fear harm.

ELVIRA (Aside) If only he would set my mind at ease . . .

VALERIÁN Well, Antonio,
how are things going for you here?
ELVIRA Very well. With so much kindness, who wouldn’t be doing well? 1295

VALERIÁN And where are you from?

ELVIRA Zaragoza.

VALERIÁN That must be why you’re so clever. In truth, it’s paradise for those who live there. 1300

ELVIRA There are clever men there, though it hasn’t rubbed off on me.

VALERIÁN They must be very clever if they are anything like you.

ELVIRA You are too kind. 1305

VALERIÁN I only tell the truth.

ELVIRA (Aside) What nerve! He holds me back and flatters me—he wants something from me. (Aloud) My lord I’m here to serve. 1310

VALERIÁN God save you, that’s what I wanted to hear.

ELVIRA (Aside) If I give him some rope, he’ll hang himself. (Aloud) Ask away. Nothing would please me more than to serve you. 1315

VALERIÁN I see that you return my good wishes.

ELVIRA I’m at your service, have no fear. I can see in your face . . .
ELVIRA  

(Aside) Now I swear that my suspicions were true.  
(Aloud) Have no doubt, there is nothing I wouldn’t do for you.

VALENIÁN  

Your lady, Antonio, isn’t she dashing?  
Isn’t she beautiful?

ELVIRA  

She perfumes the ground as she walks.  
A man might be forgiven for being taken by her.

VALENIÁN  

Well then, Antonio . . .

ELVIRA  

My lord.

VALENIÁN  

Would you, listen, tell me, if you want . . .

ELVIRA  

(Aside) Oh, Love, what a child you are!  
How you babble on!  
(To VALENIÁN) Don’t worry.

VALENIÁN  

I’m crazy, help me, Antonio, before I lose my mind . . .  
I confess my sinful desire to you.  
I could never pay you enough for fanning the flames.  
What do you say, Antonio?

ELVIRA  

I say  
I am your slave.

VALENIÁN  

And friend to my hopes and dreams  
if you can make them come true.
ELVIRA  What shall I do
to make it happen?

VALERIÁN  Give this note
to your lady . . .
           Hush now, my wife is coming.

Enter EUGENIA

EUGENIA  A secret and without me?

VALERIÁN  Listen . . .

EUGENIA  So you’ve found a new playmate.

VALERIÁN  . . . my lady, I swear on your life,
what I was saying . . .

EUGENIA  Shush,
now I’ll find out
what you’ve been dreaming of.

VALERIÁN  So little trust
from the one whom I adore.

ELVIRA  (Aside) This is good.

VALERIÁN  Listen to me, I beg you.

EUGENIA  Let me be.

VALERIÁN  So angry, my darling?
Why the daggers from your eyes?

EUGENIA  Could you stop annoying me?

VALERIÁN  Yes.
EUGENIA Then leave.  
I want to ask this page what’s been going on.  

VALERIÁN I’ll be going then.  

ELVIRA (Aside) This husband 
is fit to be a woman.  

VALERIÁN Antonio! . . .  

*He makes signs for ELVIRA to keep quiet*  

ELVIRA (Aside) What a dumb-show!  

VALERIÁN (To ELVIRA) Tell the truth.  

ELVIRA This is 
so childish.  

VALERIÁN (Aside) My yearning could make stones weep.  

*Exit VALERIÁN*  

SCENE 2  

*Sitting room in VALERIÁN and EUGENIA’s house*  

ELVIRA (Aside) What shall I say?  

EUGENIA The audacity!  

ELVIRA My lady, don’t worry.  

EUGENIA Oh Antonio, 
you’ve got it all wrong!  
It wasn’t jealousy, good heavens!  
How could I be jealous 
of a husband I retain,
but have no love for, only disdain. And what I’ve suffered here is due to this: the husband who’s bound to me has never had my love. Women want men who are not so easily moved, who are what they seem in thought, word, and deed. It’s inevitable that you will come to detest the one you’re stuck with for life, especially if he acts like a woman. I trust you, and hope you can find a cure for my woes. I’m dying to have a husband who is the very opposite of mine. I want . . .

ELVIRA I know who: my lord.

EUGENIA Oh, Antonio! I cry for him. I adore his daring, his self-confidence and bravado, a tireless man about town, a hungry wolf, loving all and keeping none, subjecting both fury and reason to his sword alone, punching one and slashing the other. And yet, how honorable he has been in the face of my advances: I never saw him yield, even when I begged him. This consumes me— he is just my type. And don’t be surprised— oh, Antonio!—
that these men drive a woman crazy.
These are men to love,
these, men to adore:
they heat up the senses
and set a woman on fire.
And so, it would be a triumph
to hand him the crown,
to make myself his prize.
I adore his mind,
believe everything he says,
and am constantly inspired
to drink him in.
Unlike my beautiful Narcissus there,
so very like a nymph,
whom I spook with my voice,
and trample with my feet.
When, at any moment,
he fears I’ll get upset,
as if the knots on my belt
were a whip to strike him with.
Heaven knows I cannot love him,
when I see him worship the ground I walk on,
not out of love,
but out of fear.

ELVIRA (Aside) Why would she tell me all this!
Jealousy consumes me.

EUGENIA Lend me your hand, Antonio,
as if you were my friend.

ELVIRA What can I do for you?

EUGENIA Give him
this letter.

ELVIRA I am at your service.
(Aside) A nice occupation!
This one makes three.\textsuperscript{16}

EUGENIA And if you are shocked
I tell you all this,
forbear me,
and consider my reasons.
Your master has many
good parts . . .

ELVIRA I’m at your service.
Tell me what you need.
\textit{(Aside) If only you knew how well I know those parts.}

EUGENIA By heaven, Antonio,
I’ll do anything for you,
as long as you make him love me.

ELVIRA \textit{(Aside) Oh, I’m burning up!}
\textit{(To EUGENIA) Trust me.}
\textit{(Aside) I must know more!}
\textit{(To EUGENIA) I’m here to serve you.}
First, tell me . . .

EUGENIA What do you want to know?

ELVIRA I should probably know
where your love stands.

EUGENIA It doesn’t.
He can’t stand me,
and you can see it on my face.

ELVIRA Does he scorn you then?

EUGENIA It will make me lose my mind.

\textsuperscript{16} Elvira refers here to the love letters she has received from other characters: Galindez to a servant girl, Valerian to Ipólita, Eugenia to Don Álvaro.
ELVIRA  Enough said.  1485
(Aside) With this, you’ve calmed my fear.
(Aloud) Ah, here comes my lord Don Álvaro.
(Aside) I can’t wait to see
her disappointment.

EUGENIA  Speak of the devil!  1490
Love has conjured him!

Enter DON ÁLVARO

Will you give him the letter now?

ELVIRA  It’s better if you talk to him.

EUGENIA  So afraid and so in love!

SCENE 3

DON ÁLVARO  I kiss your hand, my lady.  1495
Antonio . . .

EUGENIA  He’s a gem,
and very tactful, for sure.

DON ÁLVARO  . . . what are you doing here?

ELVIRA  I’ve struck gold,
a treasure trove,
and there’s no reason
you shouldn’t get a share.

DON ÁLVARO  And have I earned it?

ELVIRA  If you want it, it’s yours.  1505

DON ÁLVARO  Is that so? And where is it?
EUGENIA In my will.

DON ÁLVARO Pardon me, my lady?

EUGENIA Wait, don’t fan my fire.

DON ÁLVARO I came to talk to Valerián.

EUGENIA You must first hear me out. Antonio will bear witness to the pain that’s killing me.

DON ÁLVARO A fine witness.

EUGENIA I confided in him, tired of your scorn.

DON ÁLVARO What a great confidant you have! (Aside) If you only knew what you’ve done!

ELVIRA My lord, be patient and hear her out.

DON ÁLVARO Quiet, lad, don’t you know I am an honorable man?

EUGENIA Be courteous.

DON ÁLVARO Rudeness is better in things related to love: there’s a fine line between courtliness and betrayal.

EUGENIA I’m about to kill myself, and about to kill you.
DON ÁLVARO         You’re being crazy.

EUGENIA          Are you leaving me? Are you going?

DON ÁLVARO         I am leaving you. I am going. 1535

EUGENIA          You scorn me?

DON ÁLVARO         That’s not true.

EUGENIA          Don’t you know me?
                 Aren’t you worried that I’ll shout
                 that it was you who killed me? 1540

ELVIRA          (Aside) What a bold woman!

EUGENIA          I’ve seen your disdain for me,
                 and I’m a woman . . .
                 I’d sacrifice my soul to take revenge.

DON ÁLVARO         (Aside) Can this be possible? 1545
                 I begin to fear her.

EUGENIA          You’ll see more than this:
                 things will get worse,
                 the tighter the choke on my desire.
                 Won’t you surrender to me, oh my enemy? 1550

DON ÁLVARO         I can’t.

EUGENIA          Then kill me.

DON ÁLVARO         I don’t want that either.
                 Can’t you see I’m your husband’s friend?
                 And even if I weren’t, 1555
                 I could never love you,
                 for I see you are a woman
                 who begs for love.
Stop already, and leave me be.

ELVIRA  

(Aside) Ay, what an affront to all women!

EUGENIA  

Horrible man,  
who will neither love me nor kill me.  
Go ahead, loathe my advances,  
follow your heart, but be careful,  
for I will kill you,  
even if it costs me my life.  
I will change my tactics,  
and now my hope  
will empower revenge.  
Desire only goes so far.  
I want to kill you, you worm.  
Beware my wrath!  
Skilled as any swordsman,  
I’ll strike the first blow.

ELVIRA  

My lady is coming.

EUGENIA  

Oh God!

SCENE 4

_Sitting room in VALERIÁN and EUGENIA’s home_

IPÓLITA and GALÍNDEZ enter from outside, and VALERIÁN comes in from another room, each going to their respective spouse

IPÓLITA  

Where are you going?

VALERIÁN  

My lady!

DON ÁLVARO  

(To VALERIÁN) I was just coming to greet you.

ELVIRA  

What a way for you two to meet!
VALERIÁN  What’s wrong?

EUGENIA  Come with me.
         I’m beside myself!

VALERIÁN  Don’t cry.

EUGENIA  You can always trust in treacherous friends.  1585

VALERIÁN  (Aside) If you only knew I am the treacherous one.

*Exeunt* VALERIÁN and EUGENIA

IPÓLITA  Was she so angry with you
         that she left without a word?

DON ÁLVARO She must be angry at her husband.

IPÓLITA  I was deaf, but I’m not blind.
         I didn’t hear what was said,  1590
         but my eyes have seen
         the reason for her anger.
         It’s written all over your face.

DON ÁLVARO What do you mean?  1595

IPÓLITA  Is it not telling,
         to see her like that,
         flushed as she walked away from you,
         and find you looking the same?

DON ÁLVARO Interesting theory, good Lord.  1600

IPÓLITA  Haven’t I seen enough
         to figure out
         that you’ve quarreled with her?

DON ÁLVARO For the love of God, you’re mistaken.
         Give up this insanity.  1605
I have good reason for my suspicions, ingrained in my very soul from being burned before.

Your suspicions are unfounded. You’re always pulling them out of thin air.

My heart is true.

You’re wearing on me.

Oh, woe is me!

Don’t you know I’ve never looked elsewhere?

(Aside) Her jealousies ignite my own.

So much spite!

So much hurt!

(Aside) It’s a bitter pill to love a married man.

My soul is burning.

Where are you going? What are you going to do?

I’m going to cry my misfortunes in a corner of your house.

You’re crying again?

Don’t be surprised. You’re the one who wants it this way.

You women cry
as often as men spit.
Where are you off to?

IPÓLITA  My deep pain
will take me to my grave.

DON ÁLVARO  What are you saying?
Must you flaunt
your crazy tantrums?
Go ahead, make your visit.

IPÓLITA  I don’t want to, you’ve made me too upset.

DON ÁLVARO  For the love of . . .

IPÓLITA  Angry already?

DON ÁLVARO  Go now.

IPÓLITA  I’ll go.

DON ÁLVARO  What I say goes.

IPÓLITA  And that’s very fair.

DON ÁLVARO  Be sensible.

IPÓLITA  How can I?

DON ÁLVARO  Am I the husband or the wife?

GALÍNDEZ  (Aside) I always
hold my tongue
during these spats.

IPÓLITA  How could anyone stand so many insults?

Exit IPÓLITA and GALÍNDEZ through the same door as EUGENIA and VALERIÁN, leaving
DON ÁLVARO and ELVIRA alone
SCENE 5

ELVIRA Don Álvaro, what is all this?
Were you imitating cruel Bireno?  
What was the purpose of deceiving me?
What misfortunes have you led me to?
Are you trying to avenge me
for resisting your first advances?
Couldn’t you have avoided
dashing what little hope I had?
Why have you brought me here, my lord?
One woman has tried to seduce you,
and the other has made me
as jealous as she always feels.
I wouldn’t cry like this
if I didn’t care for you.

DON ÁLVARO Now you’re jealous,
and I’m the target.

ELVIRA You’re right about that.

DON ÁLVARO Oh, my Elvira!

ELVIRA And your poor wife, how sad!
You are kindest to her
when she is most jealous.

DON ÁLVARO For the love of God, you’re mistaken.
Give up this insanity.
What a piercing arrow
you’ve plunged right through me!

ELVIRA I want to go home,
although I might weep for you there.

---

17 In Ariosto’s Orlando Furioso, Olympia is cruelly abandoned by her husband, Bireno.
DON ÁLVARO  I’m losing my patience,  
when what I need is your comfort.  
Why are you being so dramatic?  
What did I do to you? How dare you!  
If one woman begged for my affection,  
and another was jealous,  
I sent one away,  
and the other I ignored.  
What do you want from me?  
Where did I go wrong?  

ELVIRA  What I saw offended me.  
After all, aren’t you married?  

DON ÁLVARO  I’m drowning in women’s tears.  
What should I do?  
Kill my own wife  
to put your mind at ease?  
Don’t you see how insufferable she is,  
how detestable I find her . . .  
at one time I cared for her,  
but now I can’t stand her.  
So much jealousy accrued  
with so much constant spite!  
She’s tried to restrain  
my God-given free will.  
With loathing I broke free  
of her spell and her charm,  
and if you do the same,  
I will break from you, too.  
Elvira, if my affections  
keep you awake at night,  
and you’re not tired of me yet,  
ask me for anything:  
the fish in the sea,  
the birds in the sky,  
show me the finest ones,  
and I’ll gladly get them for you.
For when they take flight,
I will be close behind.
And if the fish don’t come,
I’ll grab my rod,
and fish for them myself:
a feat greater than killing
the highest noble in Spain.
And if he were the king,
or the biggest fool,
I would make sure that he bends
to your wish and your rule.
Ask for the loveliest stars,
and they will be at your command,
although with your eyes
you have no need of them.
If you require Midas’s treasures,
I will get them,
though I have nothing like them,
because your asking is enough.
I would become the thieving Cacus,¹⁸
and steal them just for you.
But don’t be jealous,
don’t start whining,
or come crying to me.
If those terms will suit,
then I’m your slave.
And now I leave you,
so you can think it all through.
I’m going out.
I need the wide open fields.
I need air.
This house is suffocating,
like a hostile jail.

ELVIRA
Your free spirit captivates me,
your audacity consumes me.
I will not lose you,

¹⁸ In Roman mythology, Cacus is a giant associated with thievery.
even if it means my death.  

DON ÁLVARO Freedom has no price.

Exit DON ÁLVARO

ELVIRA  
I will avenge, if I can,  
my disappearing hopes.  
To get revenge on the lot of them,  
I shall hatch a plot,  
and they will all feel  
the sorrows that weigh on me,  
and the fire that burns me  
will burn others, too.  
Here’s Pierres, who has come  
a little too late to comfort me.

SCENE 6

Enter PIERRES

ELVIRA Oh, good Pierres!

PIERRES Mon dieu save you:  
friend of yours, Antonio, I am, oui.

ELVIRA And I yours.  

PIERRES You could do to me  
un favor gigantique?

ELVIRA What is it, Pierres? What can I do for you?

PIERRES Listen, I have to tell you something:  
I’m in love un chic.  

ELVIRA What is un chic?
PIERRES    A bit.

ELVIRA    You’re a bit in love, and very crazy.

PIERRES    Yes, this letter, please to take, Antonio, to my mademoiselle, my bon amic.

ELVIRA    Who is this lady? What’s her name?

PIERRES    Her name is Rafela.

ELVIRA    Very well, Rafaela. I’ll help. And what will I get?

PIERRES    We’ll drink the vino together.

ELVIRA    Now I’ve got a full quartet of letters. And here come the ladies. I am happy to help you, good Pierres.

PIERRES    And I, Antonio, will forever be a bon friend et companion.

Exit PIERRES

SCENE 7

Enter VALERIÁN, EUGENIA, IPÓLITA and GALÍNDEZ

19 The variations in the name of the servant girl Pierres is enamored with are different, just another way the text marks Pierres’ linguistic idiosyncracies.
VALERIÁN    I will come with you, my lady.

IPÓLITA    I will not allow it.

EUGENIA    I have more to tell you. 1795

IPÓLITA    At my house then.

EUGENIA    Soon then.

VALERIÁN    Wouldn’t you like me to come with you?

IPÓLITA    No I would not, and it is wrong of you to ask. 1800

GALÍNDEZ    You have here a gentlemanly and honorable squire, grey-haired, bespectacled, who offers you his arm, instead of one about to devour you with his eyes. I don’t like his look. 1805

IPÓLITA    Antonio, come with me.

ELVIRA    At your service, here I come. 1810

EUGENIA    Hush, Antonio.

ELVIRA    (Aside) You have good reason to be suspicious, since you insist on being so foolish. What mischief I can do with these four notes! 1815

Exeunt ELVIRA, IPÓLITA, and GALÍNDEZ, leaving VALERIÁN and EUGENIA alone

VALERIÁN    Tell me again,
though it makes my blood boil.

EUGENIA Is it so hard for you to understand?

VALERIÁN This is all Ipólita’s fault.

EUGENIA I’ll tell you again, that your friend is not your friend: he wants to dishonor you.

VALERIÁN Don Álvaro?

EUGENIA What, is he a saint?

VALERIÁN He is trying to seduce you?

EUGENIA And by force, the traitor! What? You’re surprised?

VALERIÁN And shocked, shocked!

EUGENIA Why do you keep asking me? Don’t you think it has come time to sharpen your dagger and sword to defend our honor? Does your doubt make you anxious? Instead of arguing with me here, shouldn’t you let your gun do the talking?

VALERIÁN crosses himself

That would be the right way to go, and not . . . Why are you making all those crosses? Make a cross on his back, like the ones on your chest.
Who can wait around
for your nonchalance to turn to action?
Tell me to do what Don Álvaro wants.
Go ahead,
keep searching your heavy heart for an answer.
What woman could feel passion
for a man like this,
a woman despite his beard?  

Exit EUGENIA

VALERIÁN  What purpose could Don Álvaro have in his hopes?
Is it to insult me,
or is it revenge
for him to seduce my wife?
Did he know I meant to cuckold him?
Whatever the reason,
now that I know of his betrayal,
I have an excuse for mine.
In part, I am happy
that I am not the only traitor,
although this is an insult
that consumes my thoughts.
It all comes down to this:
to take my revenge,
I must guard my house,
while I dishonor his own
I will rekindle my hopes,
since what was once betrayal
is now only fair,
and what was once just for pleasure,
is now for revenge, too.

Exit VALERIÁN

SCENE 8

Room in IPÓLITA and DON ÁLVARO’s house
Enter IPÓLITA, GALÍNDEZ and ELVIRA

IPÓLITA       Galíndez,
you have not been discreet.

GALÍNDEZ     Rage beats discretion.

IPÓLITA       You slapped him
for no reason.

ELVIRA       Look where fate has brought me!

GALÍNDEZ     Being treated like an old fool is nothing?
And in the street he treats me like a monkey.
Curse him!

IPÓLITA       I will consider this offense,
which occurred in my presence,
playful roughhousing just this once.
Although for me,
your old age absolves you.

GALÍNDEZ     That’s no less an insult!

IPÓLITA       Tread carefully now, Galíndez.

ELVIRA       He’s so old,
there’s no way he’ll get all the way to Rome:
he will repent right here,
and get his absolution.

GALÍNDEZ     Good for nothing busybody.

ELVIRA       You old fart,
doesn’t your conscience trouble you?

GALÍNDEZ     By Saint Peter!

81
IPÓLITA: Quiet Antonio!  
Galíndez!

GALÍNDEZ: Good show.  
One of us is going to be taken by the devil.  
Is it right that some bully,  
without shame or fear,  
urchin that he is,  
dancing around on a bench,  
has taken it as his duty  
to mock me  
and my life?  
He exhausts my patience,  
and makes me lose my good sense.  
A man with my reputation would never run,  
even when chased by a bull,  
but walk away slowly  
and carefully,  
and take out his sword  
only if need be.

IPÓLITA: What a speech.  
He’s crazy.

GALÍNDEZ: And with that I’m off to sleep.

Exit GALÍNDEZ

SCENE 9

Room in IPÓLITA and DON ÁLVARO’s house

ELVIRA: I swear that you will pay.  
With your slow and feeble pace,  
you won’t escape.

IPÓLITA: Listen, Antonio.
ELVIRA  What is it?

IPÓLITA  I take it you witnessed my tears, which would soften the hardest stone. You have seen me at my worst.

ELVIRA  I have.

IPÓLITA  Wait.

ELVIRA  And even if I hadn’t, your eyes would tell me of your pain.

IPÓLITA  Well then, Antonio, you know well the truth I suspect. Confide in me, I will hide it deep inside, under a thousand locks and keys. Look at the misery I live in, which only you can relieve.

ELVIRA  (Aside) Once again, I will cast you in the fire that consumes me.

IPÓLITA  Surely you know, and can tell me if my greatest pain is true. Even if the truth hurts, suspicion is always worse. Does Don Álvaro burn for Doña Eugenia? Say yes. I wouldn’t have believed it from her, but I will believe it from you.

ELVIRA  She told you that?

IPÓLITA  Without prompting, she flung a spark from her lips
into my breast
My heart was already kindled with suspicion:
her words set me afire with jealousy.

ELVIRA  
(Aside) Can I possibly be seeing  
a betrayal such as this?  

1955

IPÓLITA  
Antonio, I am burning up.

ELVIRA  
(Aside) What will it take to convince you of the truth?  
Women are wicked,  
and I, no less so.  

1960

IPÓLITA  
Tell me, Antonio.  
My suspicions squeeze the breath from me  
like a noose around my neck.  
I wish to know nothing,  
and yet want you to tell me.  

1965

ELVIRA  
I do not wish to hurt you.  
(Aside) God, what a web I’ll weave!  
(To IPÓLITA) If it will relieve you, my lady,  
to know the truth,  
this note should do that,  
since it was written for Eugenia.  
But you must return it to me.  

1970

IPÓLITA  
You can take it back,  
once whatever is in the note  
leaves me for dead.  
These are verses, his verses,  
and my clear misfortune.  

1975

ELVIRA  
(Aside) Wasn’t it a good trick  
to give Ipólita the note meant for her,  
and to tell her that her husband  
sent it to Doña Eugenia?  

1980

IPÓLITA  
So heartless!
(Aside) I will make her husband into her worst enemy, for my lover’s wife must be my foe. God will forgive me for attempting this. My own peace will be born of battles between these two. (To IPÓLITA) Give me the note, my lord, Don Álvaro is coming.

He has seen me with it, the traitor!

My lady, you will get me killed.

I will keep my word, and keep this secret to myself.

I need to go. I am sick with worry.20

SCENE 10

Enter DON ÁLVARO

What’s wrong? Something is wrong. What is that paper you’re holding? Why have you hidden it?

I am ashamed on your behalf, because you have no shame.

What is this? This is strange. It must mean something, by God, this sudden disrespect,

---

20 Elvira says this aloud, and in the Spanish slips up by referring to herself in the feminine. She also remains on stage during the next scene, although she has no lines.
and such distance.
This trembling with anger,
this uneasiness,
tears of fire,
changing color,
from pale to yellow
and then to bright red . . .
I will find out what is wrong with you,
even if you try to hide it.
Take out that note.
Give it to me now!

IPÓLITA  
Listen.

DON ÁLVARO  
Out with it.

IPÓLITA  
Your wickedness,
and my misfortune are both written here.
Until now I have only wept
at your wanton ways,
but now I weep to know
that you’ve abandoned all honor.
You want to seduce her,
your friend’s wife,
and you wrote these things to her.

DON ÁLVARO  
What are you saying?
Who told you that?

IPÓLITA  
I am saying it.
I am saying that you are a traitor.

DON ÁLVARO  
Silence, foolish woman.

IPÓLITA  
Unhappy silence.

DON ÁLVARO  
I want to pierce you to the soul
when you attack my honor like this.
I would never be capable of such an offense,
even in my imagination!
Now, what’s in this letter?

IPÓLITA  
*(Aside)* What torture this is!

DON ÁLVARO  
Unyielding suspicion!
*(Reading)* “I lay awake all night, my lady, and only when Apollo began
to fasten his horses to the sun
did I fall asleep,
dreaming that your love and desire
took you from your husband
to my waiting arms.
But I was awoken by the cold reality
of unrequited love, my nemesis,
which will not allow our union,
not even in dreams.
Later, my soul was consumed
in jealousy’s cruel flames,
seeing that my dreams
are his reality.
Enjoy his homecoming,
so long awaited and desired.
Alas, misfortune keeps from me
what it grants him as your husband.”
Here the note ends.
This pierces me
to the soul.
And you think this is my hand?
These verses, do they sound like me?
Do I write such bad verses,
and in such a fine hand?

IPÓLITA  
Dear God, a miracle!

DON ÁLVARO  
I am shaking with anger.
If the homecoming is mine,
as it states here,
then this note was meant for you.
IPÓLITA Then I have been deceived.

DON ÁLVARO Yes, this is the handwriting of a traitor, whom I believed to be loyal: it is Valerián’s.

2075

IPÓLITA Can it be? I am not to blame, my lord.

DON ÁLVARO How can this love note be mine when everything in it is his? Who has given you this note? Have you no answer?

2080

IPÓLITA Only my bad luck.

DON ÁLVARO Speak, for the love of heaven, which I am unworthy of.

IPÓLITA Young Tony gave it to me.

2085

DON ÁLVARO And what did Tony tell you?

IPÓLITA That it was yours—so wicked! You need to believe me, and kill me if I stray at all from the truth.

2090

DON ÁLVARO I believe you, and it’s clear, for your excuse is written all over your face. Although you cannot see it, I believe what you say— any wife of mine would naturally be an honest woman. What’s more, I now see that my own worth blinded me to what that traitor was capable of
in his evil desire.
I’m like a man,
who in the darkness walks by some horror unawares,
but who, in the light of day,
looks back and sees his narrow escape.
But this is no way to proceed!
It is neither wise nor noble
to believe so readily
what is so lightly written.
Letters lie a thousand times over,
and this one might as well.
You, Don Álvaro, can make this right.
What liberties has Valerián
taken with you?

IPÓLITA (Aside) What should I say?
It will be the end of them.

DON ÁLVARO Have you noticed them? Have you been aware of them?

IPÓLITA (Aside) Oh God, I will force him into action if I say anything!
I’m a miserable woman!

DON ÁLVARO Why do you look so distressed?
Don’t you understand what I’m asking?

IPÓLITA I heard you.

DON ÁLVARO Have you been aware of Valerián
trying to woo you?

IPÓLITA (Aside) Would it not be better
to deny everything?

DON ÁLVARO Tell me.

IPÓLITA My lord.

DON ÁLVARO Did he betray me or was he merely bold?
Did he convey his desires to you with his soul, or with his mouth?
Tell me.

IPÓLITA My lord.

DON ÁLVARO His mad longing, did you see it in his eyes? Did you know of it?

IPÓLITA (Aside) I should deny it.

DON ÁLVARO Have you no answer?

IPÓLITA No, my lord, he is our friend, and he is honorable.

DON ÁLVARO You are trying to spare me my revenge. Enough. Why am I even asking you this? When you hesitated to say no, you spoke a thousand yesses. Go to your room, and let no one see you’re upset.

IPÓLITA (Aside) This intense feeling will be my downfall. His rash fury promises a million scandals. (Aloud) Listen, my lord.

DON ÁLVARO Silence and be gone. I already know you are honorable.

IPÓLITA (Aside) I must leave. I begin to fear his anger. This could lead to a fiery outburst. God help him.

DON ÁLVARO This has gone too far.
Enough of this insolence!
I must be prudent,
and not get too angry.
Haste and anger
can make a man brave,
but only with good sense
can a man be honorable.
What insolent madness,
and from a friend!
His heart must be the opposite of mine.
With his wife wooing me,
it would be so simple to take revenge!
Vengeance should be mine,
but I must take it honorably.
To see if he is truly a backstabber,
I should give him ample opportunity
to commit an offense,
and so tailor a punishment to fit his crime.
I will try to feign ignorance,
though I’m no good at it.
Even in this I am too honest.
What a disgraceful mess!
And what does this vile woman want,
so close to sundown!

SCENE 11

Enter EUGENIA, GALÍNDEZ, PIERRES and ELVIRA

EUGENIA He’s crafty.

GALÍNDEZ He’s insolent.

ELVIRA I am at your command.

DON ÁLVARO Well, madam,
why do you bring light upon this house
just as the sun is retiring for the day?
ELVIRA We’re going out.

DON ÁLVARO Where to? *(Aside)* My soul is on fire.

EUGENIA There’s a play tonight that Ipólita and I will attend, with your permission. If you’d like to come, we can all go in my carriage.

DON ÁLVARO Right, and this play, where is it taking place?

EUGENIA At the Merchant’s house.

DON ÁLVARO Which merchant?

EUGENIA Don Gaspar. Only he, in his excellence, deserves to be known by that name.\(^{21}\)

DON ÁLVARO He’s very gallant.

PIERRES He’s molt manly.

GALÍNDEZ And he has a clean conscience.

ELVIRA No small thing for a merchant.

EUGENIA His wealth flows freely from his coffers.

DON ÁLVARO He’s very rich and important.

EUGENIA Rational in all things but conflict.

ELVIRA Everyone must adore him, then.

---

\(^{21}\) Reference to Don Gaspar Mercader Count of Buñol, contemporary of Guillén de Castro who was notorious for his bad temper and who often hosted literary and theatrical events at his manor.
DON ÁLVARO  And how will you go?  2210
EUGENIA  We’ll cover our faces. 22
DON ÁLVARO  And do they let in women who don't show their face?
EUGENIA  That’s what Valerían went to go see.
DON ÁLVARO  While we wait, let’s see if Ipólita will join us.  2215
EUGENIA  Is she . . . ?
DON ÁLVARO  As usual, she’s . . . 
EUGENIA  She can be very extreme.
DON ÁLVARO  (Aside) What a traitor!
Here comes the source of all my troubles.  2220
EUGENIA  (Aside) This bull-headed man
will pay for his disdain
with no less than his life.

Exeunt DON ÁLVARO and EUGENIA

SCENE 12

ELVIRA  (Aside) Now I can trick these two,
since no one is listening to us.  2225
That’s right.
The note meant for the one, I will give to the other.

---

22 By the early seventeenth century there was great controversy surrounding veiled women attending the theater, as this allowed for anonymous, licentious activity and so became associated with women of loose morals. See Laura Bass and Amanda Wunder, Hispanic Review, 2009.
GALÍNDEZ  Me, a play? Me, a play?  
I will take to my good bed.  
Maybe with peace and quiet  
my headache will be cured! . . .

ELVIRA  Even though you were cruel to me . . .

GALÍNDEZ  Come here boy, and let me show you a thing or two!

ELVIRA  Just keep quiet.  
Here’s an answer to that letter you gave me.

GALÍNDEZ  Oh what a happy lover I am!  
When did I ever deserve this?  
From now on,  
I will put this young man on a pedestal.  
I could kiss your feet,  
and, with God as my witness,  
I almost want to cut off the hand  
I used to slap you.

ELVIRA  Look how he carries on.

PIERRES  Old fool words!

GALÍNDEZ  Dear Cupid!  
You dull my head,  
and stir up butterflies in my stomach.

ELVIRA  Well Pierres?

PIERRES  Well companion?  

ELVIRA  I have the response to your letter.  
You’re lucky  
that I am the one to bring it to you.

PIERRES  Oh mon sir Antoine,  
this response I am content with!
Pierres now jumps more for joy than Galíndez, old wreck.

*(Sings)* “If I go off to France, to lap up Jesus’s blood, nevermore will I return again.”

ELVIRA Your song celebrates your good fortune, while others use it to dispel their sadness, or even to dispel a crowd . . . different effects born of different causes.

PIERRES I want to kiss your feet, those are the hands I get, or your breasts, even your mouth.

ELVIRA Courtesy à la French. A pretty sight.

PIERRES My Antoine.

ELVIRA To repay me you shall do me a favor.

PIERRES No doubt you shall see the strength and esprit of moi.

ELVIRA *(Aside)* I want to have a little fun with this old man. It will be my revenge. *(To PIERRES)* Do you have any friends?

PIERRES Mais oui, and the crème de la crème of la France.

ELVIRA You’ll be in need of them.

PIERRES And pour que?
ELVIRA To help you.
Your master is coming.
Listen, quickly, to what you must do. 2285

Enter VALERIÁN

VALERIÁN I can imagine so many schemes
to achieve my dearest dreams!
Revenge and pleasure
in one fell swoop.
Best to keep up the pretense.
In this world,
only liars prosper,
only traitors survive. 2290

ELVIRA Go now! I’ll be along later.

PIERRES And I will dance, pardiu. 2295

Exit PIERRES

SCENE 13

ELVIRA My lord.

VALERIÁN Antonio,
I am fighting my own illusions!

ELVIRA I’m sure you will conquer them.
(Aside) And I want to fool them all:
I’ll give this one the note
that his wife wrote. 2300

VALERIÁN What’s that you say, Antonio?
Did you do what I asked of you?

ELVIRA Of course. 2305
She hands him a letter

VALERIÁN    There’s an answer? Lucky me.

ELVIRA     Hush now, take this, and don’t be sad.
           I must go,
           so that no one sees us together.

VALERIÁN    I am a fortunate man!

ELVIRA exits

Happy heavens, beautiful heavens,
sacred heavens, friendly heavens!
I will read it—but here they come . . .
Oh, I wish they would delay a little longer!
I will go from joy to madness
if the heavens don’t answer my prayer.

Enter DON ÁLVARO, IPÓLITA, and EUGENIA

EUGENIA    Valerián is taking his time.

DON ÁLVARO Here he comes.

VALERIÁN    Did I take too long?

EUGENIA     And did you find out if
           they allow women in veils?

VALERIÁN    They do.

DON ÁLVARO    Well, then, let us go since it is already very late,
           and it’s getting dark, which is even worse.

EUGENIA     (Aside) Vile man!

IPÓLITA     (Aside) Scoundrel!
EUGENIA  Don’t worry, God is with you.

DON ÁLVARO  Torches!

VALERIÁN  The one I brought should be enough.

IPÓLITA  *(Aside)* This is killing me.

DON ÁLVARO  I entrust my wife to you.

VALERIÁN  While you look after mine.

DON ÁLVARO  *(Aside)* This way I can hide my fury.

VALERIÁN  *(Aside)* This is my chance. I will dishonor him in return.

DON ÁLVARO  *(Aside)* If he betrays me, I will kill him.

EUGENIA  *(Aside)* Let there be no bloodshed!

IPÓLITA  *(Aside)* He has handled this wisely. What a worthy husband!

EUGENIA  *(Aside)* What a disgraceful husband!

SCENE 14

*Enter ELVIRA, PIERRES, and two GABACHOS carrying a ladder*

ELVIRA  That’s fine. Call at that door, and he will come to the window.

PIERRES  And the porta is open.

ELVIRA  It makes little difference.
GALÍNDEZ  
*(Offstage)* Who’s calling? Who is it?  
Who’s making all that noise?  
I’m coming.

ELVIRA  
Throw the rope over him now.

GABACHO 1  
It’s done.  

ELVIRA  
Hammer the nail.

GALÍNDEZ  
*Ay, ay, ay!*  
I’m choking, by the holy virgin!

ELVIRA  
Get his face!  
And his crazy white hair!  
He can hold his ground while the bull charges.  
Step lively,  
by God.\(^2\)

GALÍNDEZ  
I’m choking!

PIERRES  
Watch out for the bull!

ALL GABACHOS  
Over here, you uglysnout beast,  
you can’t get us, soie, soie!

ELVIRA  
If your pretend love  
has you so fired up,  
receive these compliments,  
sent by your lady love.  

PIERRES  
Old fool.

GABACHO 2  
You’ve wet yourself.

GABACHO 1  
Old Man Goiter!

---

\(^2\) In this farcical scheme, Elvira leads Pierres’s cronies in a cruel joke against the old squire Galíndez. They string him up and paint his face.
GALÍNDEZ  Jesus!  2370
ELVIRA  Let’s leave him like this.  They’re coming. Run!
GABACHO 1  We will make our escape.
PIERRES  This has been magnifique.
ELVIRA  Perfection!  2375
GALÍNDEZ  Those devils got me.
ELVIRA  My work is done here.  Gentlemen, go, be gone!

Exeunt GABACHOS

SCENE 15
ELVIRA  This way, they’re killing Galindez!

Enter DON ÁLVARO and VALERIÁN with swords drawn, along with their wives

IPÓLITA  Don Álvaro, where are you going?  2380
DON ÁLVARO  Leave me.
EUGENIA  (Aside) This coward was not first at the scene.
GALÍNDEZ  I’m dying.
DON ÁLVARO  Galíndez, what are you screaming?  2385
VALERIÁN  Bring that ax over.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Lines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GALÍNDEZ</td>
<td>They’ve left me here, as you can see, hanged and dead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DON ÁLVARO</td>
<td>They’ve certainly left you in a foul mood, and a sight to be seen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUGENIA</td>
<td>Good lord! One can’t help but laugh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VALERIÁN</td>
<td>Galíndez!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPÓLITA</td>
<td>I would laugh, but I am in such a state, my heart is in my throat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GALÍNDEZ</td>
<td>Untie me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DON ÁLVARO</td>
<td>Who is behind this joke?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELVIRA</td>
<td>Some scoundrel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GALÍNDEZ</td>
<td>Oh you traitor!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DON ÁLVARO</td>
<td>A daring one at the very least.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VALERIÁN</td>
<td>We’ll sort this all out later, not in the street.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DON ÁLVARO</td>
<td>This has been the comic preamble for the play we are about to see.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACT III

SCENE 1

DON ÁLVARO’s room

Enter DON ÁLVARO and ELVIRA

DON ÁLVARO

When it comes to honor, everything must give way, Elvira. There’s no room in my heart for a beautiful face, for obligation or love. There is only room for matters of honor. Who gave you this letter for Ipólita? I will have the truth, or kill you, by God.

ELVIRA

Has it come to this between us? You threaten me?

DON ÁLVARO

And I adore you.

ELVIRA

That would have been enough.

DON ÁLVARO

I’m out of my mind, and must look to my honor. Don’t cry.

ELVIRA

I have good reason to cry.

DON ÁLVARO

Hush, you’ll have no reason to complain, but tell me first whose note this is.

ELVIRA

Valerián gave it to me,
showering me with money and compliments so I would deliver it. He’s dying for her.

DON ÁLVARO  Good God!

ELVIRA  I, believing that it wouldn’t add insult to injury, gave her the note as yours, telling her it was written for Doña Eugenia.

DON ÁLVARO  A clever trick!

ELVIRA  I am dying for you. I am yours and not your wife’s. That much is clear. I wanted to inflame her jealousy, to make her burn like me. I’ve become a devil, blinded by love: other souls twist in my flames, and I watch them with pleasure. If love can excuse my behavior, then forgive me, for he is the false friend, perverse and a traitor.

DON ÁLVARO  I forgive your tricks if you will forgive my anger. A friendship of so many years, and the ties that bind . . . Is there a love that could unravel or twist it? Either honor has no strength, or there is no honor in this world. But no, for I have it in spades, rather too much than too little.
Perhaps everyone else is lacking, because I have it all. I have earned my standing over many thankless years: never have I found another man like myself. To find no friend with honor, to know one can’t be had, were he to be watched from the cradle to the grave! One looks to profit, another to pleasure: sacred friendship, where have you gone? What has happened to you? You were raised to the heavens from the lowly earth. You are sacred to me. Valerián, false friend! I will kill him, or die in the attempt.

ELVIRA  Listen, my lord.

DON ÁLVARO  This sword will enforce his punishment.

ELVIRA  He fully deserves it, but you are furious now, and you’ll never carry out your sentence this way. Be reasonable, just as you are bold. Can’t you see that secret betrayals must be secretly avenged?

DON ÁLVARO  (Aside) Although she is a woman, she makes a good point. I will set aside my fury. This is good advice, regardless of the source.
ELVIRA    Shush, and as proof of my love,
         I will see to it
         that only you witness
         your vengeance and his death.
         Tonight, I will take care of him
         so that you can see,
         should you care to watch,
         that not all women are cowards.
         This I will do,
         as long as you trust me.
         What do you say?  2500

DON ÁLVARO  I say yes.  2505

ELVIRA    If you want to have your vengeance,
         you must pretend to leave.
         Say you must visit your village tonight,
         and leave the rest to me.
         Then you shall see
         what your heart desires.  2510

Enter GALÍNDEZ at the door, only partly on stage

DON ÁLVARO  You’re so brave,
         so beautiful,
         my greatest good fortune,
         and the cure for my honor.
         You are all my happiness,
         the apple of my eye.  2520

ELVIRA    Shall we go into your study?  2515

DON ÁLVARO  Yes.  2525

They enter a room offstage\textsuperscript{24}

\textsuperscript{24}In a typical corral performance, there would have been at least two doors at ground level, one of which led into the backstage area or a small room. In this scene, Antonio/Elvira and Don Álvaro have retreated
SCENE 2

GALÍNDEZ    Oh my God!

DON ÁLVARO   For you I will set aside my anger.

GALÍNDEZ    Is this a dream?
Are these two delusions?

ELVIRA      As you lie here in my arms,
I will tell you what I have planned.

DON ÁLVARO   My worries disappear,
while I am in your embrace.

GALÍNDEZ    fully enters the stage

GALÍNDEZ    Is this Spain or Sodom?
Oh, sacred Inquisition!
My lord and Antonio
follow that most infamous sect.\textsuperscript{25}
I want to watch
through this keyhole,
and yet I’m sure they’ll cover it too,
since it is a hole!
Look at them, by God,
how they wrestle!
Is it a trick or a sudden itch?
Now they speak with their eyes,
and listen with locked lips.
No wonder this fiery sin
is called unspeakable.\textsuperscript{26}

\textit{Enter IPÓLITA}

\begin{flushleft}
into this interior room, Don Álvaro’s study, while Galíndez looks in on them through a keyhole or crack in the door.
\end{flushleft}

\textsuperscript{25} In the Spanish “Learned followers of Mohamed.” Early modern Spaniards associated North Africa and Islam with sodomy, even though it was fairly common in courts throughout the Mediterranean.

\textsuperscript{26} Sodomy was referred to as the “unspeakable sin.”
IPÓLITA  Am I never to have a moment’s peace?  
Galíndez, what are you looking at?  

2550

GALÍNDEZ  Oh my lady! A terrible evil.  
Our lord . . .

IPÓLITA  What?

GALÍNDEZ  My lady,  
he is a wicked man.

2555

IPÓLITA  Why?

GALÍNDEZ  At this moment,  
he is . . .

IPÓLITA  Where? Can it be so?

GALÍNDEZ  Well he’s . . .

2560

IPÓLITA  What?

GALÍNDEZ  A bad Christian.

IPÓLITA  Why? Oh unhappiness!

GALÍNDEZ  Because he . . .

IPÓLITA  What? What is happening?

2565

GALÍNDEZ  He’s a sodomite.

IPÓLITA  What are saying, you rude idiot?

GALÍNDEZ  That my lord is a . . .

IPÓLITA  Shut up!
GALÍNDEZ I’ll shut my mouth, but you should open your eyes.  2570

IPÓLITA I am mad with grief! Vile, despicable! Inexcusable men! Servants and traitors!  2575

GALÍNDEZ Look through here, and you’ll see young Tony and my lord in an embrace as tight as a vine on a tree. Look and see if I am telling tales.  2580

IPÓLITA Oh good heavens, I’m in the depths of despair!  2585

GALÍNDEZ Come and see.  2585

IPÓLITA I have seen it already. Oh Galíndez, I am dead!  2585

GALÍNDEZ Kick down the door, make a scene.  2585

IPÓLITA Jesus Christ! We must be rational! Do this for me, for my sanity.  2590

GALÍNDEZ I will do anything you want.  2595

IPÓLITA Oh unhappy woman! Go, Galíndez, get my brother, and tell him to come at once.  2595

GALÍNDEZ Like the wind I go.  2595

Exit GALÍNDEZ
IPÓLITA

Oh blind man!
God has let you wander.
Lord knows that I adored you,
that I was crazy for you!
If I could barely live with jealousy,
how can I survive this sin?
What can I do? I am lost.
To what extremes . . . what excess!
Oh God, let me keep my sanity,
although you ruin my life!
Don Álvaro perverse, heavens above!
Mine is a horrible misfortune.
I have suffered through
so many fits of jealousy,
troubled sorrows,
a restless obsession
over his shameless exploits,
yet I worshipped him,
thinking he was noble and honorable.
What should I feel
when I see he is not noble, not human,
not honorable, nor even a Christian,
but gives in to such evil desire?
His offense to God weighs on me,
with good reason, more than his offense to me.

SCENE 3

Enter ELVIRA

ELVIRA

(Aside) What a stroke of luck it would be
to get away with such a grand scheme.
There she is.

IPÓLITA

Here is the infamous root
of the pain that consumes me.
I will pretend I know nothing,
although I’m burning inside.

ELVIRA (Aside) I will wait for her to call to me.

IPÓLITA I am full of anger, but I will keep it in check.

ELVIRA (Aside) What’s going on? Her face is blotched, and she is frowning at me. Has she discovered my trick with the note already? It’s possible. Has she realized I am a woman?

IPÓLITA (Aside) I will call him over.

ELVIRA (Aside) I will go to her.

IPÓLITA (Aside) To maintain the pretense, I should call to him, the traitor! What should I do?

ELVIRA (Aside) I should go to her first, to prove my nonchalance. (Aloud) My lady?

IPÓLITA Antonio?

ELVIRA Is something wrong? You seem . . .

IPÓLITA I am overcome with great sorrows, and have little hope of happiness.

ELVIRA Some angel speaks to you, warning you of sorrows to come.

IPÓLITA What are you saying?
ELVIRA Your misfortune pains me. 2655

IPÓLITA What now? Have you brought another note to fool me?

ELVIRA I myself was deceived. You must now brace yourself for the worst, the most terrible, most cruel fate. 2660

IPÓLITA May the heavens see me through!

ELVIRA (Aside) What a tale I will weave! (To IPÓLITA) Make sure no one is listening to us. 2665

IPÓLITA I will go mad from confusion.

ELVIRA I feel for you, from the bottom of my heart, given your great misfortune. And so I must warn you: your husband wants to kill you. 2670

IPÓLITA My husband?

ELVIRA Do not tremble so. 2675

IPÓLITA Oh God!

ELVIRA It would be better to find some way out of this.

IPÓLITA (Aside) And if this traitor lies? My heart tells me: 2680
I should both fear and doubt his word.
(Aloud) And do you know why he wants to kill me? . . .

ELVIRA He needs no serious reasons.

IPÓLITA Because I belong to him, he can kill me?

ELVIRA It may well be, because you are his wife.
If you think I am deceiving you, then listen to this:
he will pretend to leave tonight, but he means to come back, under cover of dark, to kill you.
If you see him leave, and wish to stay alive, do not wait for him in your bed, because that is where he will take your life.
Wait in another room for as long as he’s gone, then you can trust your own eyes, even if you don’t trust me.

IPÓLITA Oh God! What is this feeling!
What shall I do?
You upset me so that I have to believe you.
(Aside) The heavens must have filled him with compassion for me.
He has given me a chance to avoid my demise.
This must be true, poor me!
By my faith, I could believe Don Álvaro capable of anything, after what I saw today.
God no longer holds Don Álvaro in His powerful hand.
ELVIRA Calm your fearful soul,
and your troubled heart.

IPÓLITA This cannot possibly be.

ELVIRA Here comes your husband.

IPÓLITA Who?

ELVIRA I must go now.
It’s better he not see us together.

IPÓLITA You have good reason for your misgivings.
(Aside) Protect me, divine heavens.

SCENE 4

Enter DON ÁLVARO

DON ÁLVARO Prepare my clothes,
my boots, and spurs for travel.

IPÓLITA Where are you going, my lord?

DON ÁLVARO I need to take
a short trip today.

IPÓLITA (Aside) Oh wretched woman!
I am a short trip away from death.
This confirms what I was told . . .

DON ÁLVARO What now! You’re crying? What is it?

IPÓLITA Since when do you leave me
without leaving me in tears?

DON ÁLVARO Your weeping weighs on me.
It’s always like this:
When I go,
these tears of yours flow so easily,
they are hard to take.  

**IPÓLITA**

Say instead
that you are sick and tired
of seeing them,
because they are my tears
and therefore, your burden.  

**DON ÁLVARO**

They weigh on my heart,
because they are yours.  

**ELVIRA** *(Aside)* Not bad flattery.  

**IPÓLITA** *(Aside)* These sweet words
are nothing but lies.  

**DON ÁLVARO**

All right now, embrace me,
and may God be with you, my lady.  

**ELVIRA** *(Aside)* Would that someone
could sever the bond between them!  

**IPÓLITA** *(Aside)* These are the arms, oh cruel one,
that I saw offend me with their infamy!

**DON ÁLVARO**

God be with you,
and shed no more tears.  

**IPÓLITA**

Godspeed.  

*Exit DON ÁLVARO*

My heart pounds
with confirmed suspicions!
His honeyed words
confirm his treachery.
Sudden kindness such as this
is a sure sign he’s either wronged me, or plans to do so. What else can I expect amid such confusion?

ELVIRA (Aside) All goes well. (To IPÓLITA) This should be proof of my good intentions.

IPÓLITA I find myself condemned, with no trial and no remedy.

ELVIRA Take my advice and protect yourself.

IPÓLITA God help me.

SCENE 5

Enter LEONARDO, IPÓLITA’s brother, and GALÍNDEZ

LEONARDO Well, sister?

IPÓLITA Brother!

ELVIRA (Aside) Will my hopes be in vain?

IPÓLITA Come, listen.

LEONARDO Calm down.

LEONARDO and IPÓLITA continue speaking quietly to each other on the side

GALÍNDEZ This is a fine one!

ELVIRA Don’t I get thanks
for the letter, Galíndez?27

GALÍNDEZ You deserve a beating instead. 
(Aside) For now I’ll only singe you. I’ll get my revenge later.28 
(Aloud) Am I a country bumpkin or a Frenchman, that you write me, and make fun of me in that language?

ELVIRA Now you’re making me laugh. 
Don’t you know that Pierres, who is such a great friend of yours, wrote that because your lady chose him as go-between? 2795

GALÍNDEZ Now you’re just pulling my leg.

ELVIRA Let me read the letter to you, Galíndez. Give it here.

GALÍNDEZ I already tore it up: it made me so angry.

ELVIRA You tore it up?

GALÍNDEZ That’s right. The language and the letter, both annoyed me. 2805

ELVIRA That gabacho, who might well have been drunk, wrote as best he could. But it was your lady’s affections he wrote. 2810

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27 Referring to the letter written by Pierres for the servant Rafaela which she gave to Galíndez in preparation for her last trick.
28 With this Galíndez indicates that he plans to denounce Antonio to the Inquisition as a sodomite; fire was often an instrument of Inquisitorial punishment, especially for the worst offenders against the Church.
GALÍNDEZ  You jest.

ELVIRA  You’ll see.

GALÍNDEZ  And how is that?

ELVIRA  Just wait.
What if I bring your lady to your room tonight? Will you still think I’m full of hot air?

GALÍNDEZ  I will believe you speak marvels, and sacred mysteries, filling my room with incense, and sweet smoke. What is this you say, Antonio?

ELVIRA  Hush. I will bring her tonight. Come with me, and I will tell you how to prepare for her.

GALÍNDEZ  I would like to befriend one who promises such things. And if he wants to be a fairy, I could be his pimp.

IPÓLITA and her brother LEONARDO end their side discussion

LEONARDO  Good God! I wish you would stop saying those things. Is this a trick?

IPÓLITA  This is no trick. I wish to God that it were!

LEONARDO  You saw him?
IPÓLITA  With the same weeping eyes
that look upon you now.
I saw their eyes reflected in each other’s,
much to my despair.
I saw them entwining their necks,
and sharing their lips,
and I would have seen much worse,
had I stayed to look.

LEONARDO  God help us! What an affair!

IPÓLITA  And now I see, to my sorrow,
that these signs of his life
are the omens of my death.
I’m sure he will kill me.
Someone capable of this,
so contrary to nature,
is capable of anything.
This is what I was told
by his partner in sin,
who gave me no end of proof.
Brother, my life, honor, and soul
are in your hands.

LEONARDO  These things must be handled
with tact and wisdom.

IPÓLITA  I am resolved to flee
my dishonor and his madness.

LEONARDO  Listen, do you have, by chance,
the brief and dispensation
in which the Pope approved
your unhappy marriage?²⁹

²⁹ As cousins, Don Álvaro and Ipólita would have needed a special dispensation from the Pope in order to marry.
IPÓLITA | I do.
---|---
LEONARDO | A thought has occurred to me, while you've shed your tears. I know from experience that some certificates are drawn up carelessly, and can be full of errors. Something tells me that might be the case with yours. Give me the license. I will examine it, and if there is any fault in it I'll take it to a judge. Then we will be rid of this burden, this unhappiness, once and for all.
---|---
IPÓLITA | Good. You can work that out. But get me to safety now, away from here, brother, for I fear I will be killed if I stay.
---|---
LEONARDO | If I took you, it would reflect poorly on our honor and reputation, but the bailiff can do it. He is an officer, and takes care of cases like this for the Archbishop.
---|---
IPÓLITA | And what if as soon as night falls—see how quickly it comes—I am killed, and the remedy comes too late . . . Oh, I am wretched!
---|---
LEONARDO | Listen.
---|---
IPÓLITA | My misery has turned me into a coward.
LEONARDO

Set up a bed in another room.
Have only one servant with you, and keep watch for your life, locking yourself in, so that if your husband comes looking for you, he cannot open the door without making noise.
I will call my friends into the street here, and they will kill whomever they need to, in order to prevent your death.
But I will return sooner than that with the officer.

IPÓLITA

I fear the worst, but I will do as you say.

LEONARDO

Is it settled, then?

IPÓLITA

It is.

LEONARDO

Come then, and forget your fear.

IPÓLITA

May our Lord take pity on me:
Dear Lord, on this unhappy day, I turn for my protection to the holy Mother of your holy Son, most devoutly.

LEONARDO

Take heart, your cause has brought strength to my arms.

IPÓLITA

Oh, Don Álvaro! Piece by piece, I will tear you from my breast.

Exeunt

SCENE 6
Enter ELVIRA and EUGENIA

ELVIRA  I would have come,  
even if you had not ordered it.

EUGENIA  Why, Antonio?  

ELVIRA  I have been serving you  
in a thousand ways.

EUGENIA  And has any good come of it?

ELVIRA  Are you still in love with my master?

EUGENIA  He will never leave my breast,  
more out of stubbornness than love.  
If I cannot see him dead,  
I would love to see him mine.

ELVIRA  If you have the spirit for it,  
he will be yours without a doubt.

EUGENIA  How?

ELVIRA  First,  
you must place your trust in me.

EUGENIA  My heart  
is in your hands.

ELVIRA  Then stay,  
and listen to me.

EUGENIA  I am listening.

ELVIRA  Come with me tonight,  
and I will take you to him,  
while he is none the wiser.
What I have planned
is a night of passion for you both,
without his knowing
whom he beds.\(^{30}\)
Imagine it,
and attend to your deepest desires.

EUGENIA I do attend to them,
yet I have a husband.
There is no way for me
to get away from him.

ELVIRA I have already thought
of a way around this obstacle:
I can get him out of the house,
and perhaps even the city.

EUGENIA If you do,
I will follow your instructions,
to satisfy my desire.

ELVIRA Well,
I say you can leave it to me.
Go now,
I think your husband is near.

EUGENIA That settles it.

Exit EUGENIA

ELVIRA I will tangle them all in my web,
as long as luck is on my side.

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\(^{30}\) The “bed-trick,” in which an expected partner is replaced with someone else, is a common literary motif throughout Renaissance and Golden Age literature. In this case Eugenia awaits Don Álvaro in bed, pretending to be Ipólita. See Adrienne Laskier Martín, *An Erotic Philology of Golden Age Spain*, pp 198-202. [THIS PARTIAL CITATION FEELS OUT OF PLACE, ESPECIALLY W/OUT A BIBLIOGRAPHY. OMIT?]
SCENE 7

Enter VALERIÁN

VALERIÁN In such strange times, everything is doubt and affliction.

ELVIRA The time is right, I think, to work my intrigue.

VALERIÁN Oh Antonio! On my life, I was on my way to find you.

ELVIRA And I, my lord, was coming to speak to you, and serve you.

VALERIÁN Ever since you gave me that note, Antonio, my thoughts, which were already smoldering, have been set ablaze. You’ll see what you’ve done, if my wayward reasoning betrays the confusion you’ve left in my soul. But now, to be clear, I must ask you to tell me who it was, who gave you this note.

ELVIRA Do you hold me in such little regard, my lord, as to think I lied to you? I told you before, and I’ll tell you again: my lady gave it to me.

VALERIÁN So, what do you say?

ELVIRA A thousand times yes.

VALERIÁN Can it be true?
ELVIRA You can believe what I bring to you.

VALERIÁN I tell you, it is written in my wife’s hand. When I saw that, I was thrown into an abyss of illusions.

ELVIRA Perhaps she wrote it as a go-between for you. Could she not have been tricked by a friend whom she trusts, who told her she was writing to a married man?

VALERIÁN That would be strange.

ELVIRA Don’t you know that the best lie is to lie with the truth?

VALERIÁN She certainly writes well!

ELVIRA That’s easy to explain. She’s so honorable and proper, no one has suspected that from time to time she does take a pen in hand.

VALERIÁN She did not even notice what a state this has put me in.

ELVIRA I tell you, in order to fool around with you, the first thing she’s done is to fool your wife with this fine trick.

VALERIÁN I could believe it,
if I knew she favored me.

ELVIRA Perhaps this is how
she reveals embers long hidden away.

VALENIÁN And what’s more,
she does not respond to what I wrote her.
Listen, she writes:
(Reading) “Although you make a mockery
of all my true feelings,
I will make you love me,
or at the very least kill me.”
Would I ever treat
her deepest desires as a joke?

ELVIRA What if she believes that, until now,
all your words have been in jest?

VALENIÁN Impossible.

ELVIRA Not so.
Thousands of women,
faced with a man in the throes of passion,
have believed
he was just mocking love.

VALENIÁN I still do not understand.
(Reading) “I will wait for a chance
for my flaming passion to envelop you.”

ELVIRA Blind though you may be,
surely you can see,
that her line speaks volumes.

VALENIÁN (Reading) “And I shall speak to you tomorrow,
if I lack a chance,
or my life today.”

ELVIRA Either I am crazy,
or her message is plain as day.
And more so to me,
who has come
to assure you about tonight.

VALERIÁN You expect me to have my wits about me,
overjoyed as I am?
How is it, Antonio,
that I have earned this glory overnight?

ELVIRA The disdain of a husband
can work quickly on a wife.
Perhaps in her desperation,
she will grant your greatest desire.
But let us leave this discussion aside:
he has gone on a journey tonight.
Say that you are leaving, too,
let me know where to find you,
and I will take you
to your bliss.

VALERIÁN You say Don Álvaro
has left Valencia?

ELVIRA There’s no doubt,
and you can finally occupy that place
he has freely shunned.
Quickly,
tell your wife you are leaving.

VALERIÁN I’m on my way.
I can’t stop to think
about the exaltation that awaits me,
or I might die of happiness
by merely imagining it.
It’s better not to think,
so as not to spoil my pleasure.

ELVIRA And where should we meet,
so I can take you to your paradise?

VALERIÁN    In the Plaza Seo.31
ELVIRA    Best foot forward.
VALERIÁN    I am so happy!

Exit VALERIÁN

ELVIRA    The trap tightens nicely.
Here comes another appellant:
he has a solid case against me,
given that I lie just like a lawyer.

SCENE 8

Enter PIERRES

PIERRES    Son of a dirty rotten bitch,
who has made a ruse with me and the lettre!

ELVIRA    What’s wrong, Pierres?

PIERRES    Get away!

ELVIRA    You do flourish so.
What’s wrong?

PIERRES    You have swindled me.

ELVIRA    Me? How’s that?

PIERRES    With lo paper.
Either you excuser yourself,

31Also referred to as Plaza of the Virgin, near the Cathedral of Saint Mary.
or you will regret it.
Who do you make of me,
although servant and lackey?
Feel now the sword of Pierres.

PIERRES grabs his sword

ELVIRA I think you are—lovely speech by the way!—
a French gentleman.
Why so angry
at someone who would be your friend?

PIERRES Pardiu, but you have to read
this papier you have given me.32

ELVIRA Give it here. It says:
(Reading) “My lady,
your beauty has made me . . .”

PIERRES E bien, be I a mademoiselle?

ELVIRA (Aside) Now I understand.
(Aloud) Listen, Pierres, calm down,
and I will tell you what’s going on.
“... offer you this fire of mine,
though my hair be white as snow.
Do not take this lightly:
a Castilian gentleman
offers you his life and hand.”

PIERRES Castiliano?

ELVIRA (Aside) Crazy old man!
(Aloud) “I leave my heart in your hands,
I, who long to see you and to serve you,
rather than write to you.”
(Aside) What a pretty note, and so old fashioned!
(Aloud) Now listen to what happened

32 Letter written by Galindez to Madalena, another servant girl.
to lead to your frustration:
that pompous and
loud-mouthed old man
also gave me a note
to try to conquer Madalena,
who pays him little attention.
And God knows
I had another just like this one,
and so I gave yours to her,
and hers to you: it’s my fault.
I beg your forgiveness,
and to make it up to you . . .

PIERRES
I feel I have a need to laugh.

ELVIRA
Here is the good part:
Rafaela is waiting to see you tonight,
and if you show up,
you will surely enjoy her.

PIERRES
I will exit leaping and dancing.

ELVIRA
In that case,
we will need to borrow a skirt and a veil.
Dressed as a woman,
escorted only by me,
you will enter very carefully.
I will take you by the hand
to the old Castilian’s room,
which he has agreed to loan us.
Then, Rafaela will come down—
I will bring her myself—
and while you enjoy yourselves,
I’ll serve you by keeping watch.
Do you dare?

PIERRES
Pierres is no chicken.
I go with you.
ELVIRA Isn’t Antonio a good friend?
No more pouting, then?

PIERRES I have wish to kiss your hands:
you are, Antoine, most honorable man.

ELVIRA Hold it.

PIERRES Your feet have been kissed—
"ay!"—by Pierres.

ELVIRA Leap, yes, and dance, too.
Go now,
and borrow a dress from someone.

PIERRES The shopkeeper is French.
I’ll convince her to give me lend.

ELVIRA Get it, then,
and I’ll come soon to escort you.

PIERRES I run full speed.

Exit PIERRES

ELVIRA I can hardly stop laughing
at all the tangled webs I weave.

SCENE 9

Enter EUGENIA

EUGENIA Everything is secured.
Oh, Antonio, he is gone now.
How did you make him leave?

ELVIRA I cast a strong spell.
EUGENIA  No doubt some enchantment has fallen from your lips.

ELVIRA  We must go. It’s getting late, my lady.

EUGENIA  Come then, cover me with my veil.

ELVIRA  (Aside) Tonight, I will bring together you and your husband. That way, Don Álvaro can take his vengeance on you both.

*Exeunt EUGENIA and ELVIRA. Enter GALÍNDEZ*

GALÍNDEZ  How this sweet expectation makes the hours seem long! And my years can no longer carry this burden without fatigue! What if the lad who takes so long has fooled me? Dear Cupid, who give my senses, fierce war, and sweet peace! Sleep begins to wear on me: I must suffer it on my feet, for if I sit, I will sleep like a log. Who comes here? It’s him. Now my wishes will come true.

*Enter EUGENIA in a veil, led by the hand by ELVIRA*

Is that my Madalena?

ELVIRA  No. Entertain this lady for me. Madalena is on her way down.

*Exit ELVIRA*
EUGENIA  Have no fear.  
Madalena will soon be here.

GALÍNDEZ  Being at your side  
makes everything more charming.  
You could take Madalena’s place, you know,  
and save me from burning up,  
while I wait for her.  
That would give me great pleasure.

EUGENIA  By God, that’s good.  
And if she were to come?

GALÍNDEZ  I’m man enough for two.

EUGENIA  Your intentions are good.

GALÍNDEZ  My deeds are even better!

EUGENIA  So tell me, do you pay women double,  
or just double-cross them?

GALÍNDEZ  Your wit doesn’t cut me,  
though you have plenty more, I’m sure.  
Powerful and poor,  
I neither pay them, nor double-cross them.  
I know my business well, my lady.  
I swear I am not two-faced,  
but neither will I lose face.

EUGENIA  A fine answer.  
You are a sly old man.

GALÍNDEZ  And I want to be yours.  

Enter ELVIRA

ELVIRA  My lady, come with me.
Luckily—and truly it is fortunate—the house is now just as I described to you. She’s left the room that she usually occupies, and has retired to another one, taking her serving women with her. A joyous encounter awaits you. Come, and get yourself in her bed. Follow me, come.

EUGENIA I will follow you.

ELVIRA I’ll be back.

GALÍNDEZ I shall wait here.

_Exeunt EUGENIA and ELVIRA_

What is that young rascal up to? He must also want a woman, just as I do. By God, he should enjoy himself! Let him have some pleasure, as I will. The only thing that worries me is if it all ends now. If Madalena were to come, and I were to get her with child, praise God! How happy that would make me!

_Enter ELVIRA_

ELVIRA _Aside_ I leave her to undress. How humiliated she’ll be! I’ll call that _gabacho_ now to make a fool of the old man. _Aloud_ Galíndez? I’ll be right back.
GALÍNDEZ  Don’t be long.

ELVIRA  I am the wind itself.

Exit ELVIRA

SCENE 10

Enter DON ÁLVARO

DON ÁLVARO  This is the only way
to resolve this situation.  
To trust a woman
with such a weighty matter
is to have lost one’s mind,
especially in this case.
I want to be home,
with my wife by my side.
Who knows, if in the time I have been gone,
Elvira has driven her mad?
I must appease Ipólita
with a greater affection—
to drive her to her death
could cause me great harm.
This is much better
than waiting for anything else.
There’ll be no lack of opportunity
to kill a traitor.

GALÍNDEZ  (Aside) Good God, he’s coming this way.

DON ÁLVARO approaches him

DON ÁLVARO  Who goes there?

GALÍNDEZ  (Aside) Is that my master?

DON ÁLVARO  Ah, Galíndez! When I call to you,
answer me. What are you doing here with the door open?

GALÍNDEZ I was taking some fresh air.

DON ÁLVARO Very funny. When you come back in, make sure to close the door.

GALÍNDEZ Of course. Do you want a light?

DON ÁLVARO I don’t want to wake anyone, and I am quite used to undressing without one.

DON ÁLVARO exits

GALÍNDEZ Well, I won’t close the door, even if day breaks. I will see my hopes through to the end, by the golden fleece!33

Enter ELVIRA and PIERRES, dressed as a woman covered with a veil

Is that them?

ELVIRA Keep your mouth shut, for now.

GALÍNDEZ That a veil should conceal the divine light of my sun!

ELVIRA Be quiet, and keep pretending, while I go on ahead, and she will be completely fooled.

33 In Greek mythology, the quest for the golden fleece undertaken by Jason and the Argonauts takes them to the ends of the earth though many obstacles.
PIERRES  So much you do to 
    fool Beelzebub himself.

ELVIRA  Are you happy?

GALÍNDEZ  I am crazy 
    with happiness.

ELVIRA  That’s right.

GALÍNDEZ  Is it possible . . . ?

PIERRES  Èvidemment!

GALÍNDEZ  . . . that I touch your beautiful hand?

ELVIRA  This makes me want to laugh.

GALÍNDEZ and PIERRES exit holding hands, and enter VALERIÁN

VALERIÁN  He who waits loses his mind.

ELVIRA  I would stop here, 
    but I have things to finish.

VALERIÁN  Antonio . . .

ELVIRA  You have come right on time. 
    I was about to go looking for you. 
    And yet with all your boldness, 
    this could still go wrong. 
    You are too excited.

VALERIÁN  What do you expect, 
    when I’ve been waiting here 
    forever?

ELVIRA  I think you are the first man 
    to hit the truth with an angry fist.
Come with me.

SCENE 11

Enter LEONARDO, IPOLITA’s brother, accompanied by other people

LEONARDO Yes, that’s him. He just went in. Come, let’s go, and since the door is open, we must enter quietly, and without disturbances.

BAILIFFS and CONSTABLES enter with their batons. DON ÁLVARO enters from another door wearing a nightshirt, stabbing at VALERIÁN while the latter tries to get away. All who entered attempt to separate them.

DON ÁLVARO Do you run from me, you traitor?

VALERIÁN What is this? I’m lost! God help me!

DON ÁLVARO I am going to kill you, and whoever let you in my house.

Enter all the BAILIFFS and CONSTABLES at last to aid LEONARDO in separating the two fighting men

CONSTABLE Stop! In the the name of the King!

DON ÁLVARO Can’t you see?

LEONARDO Stop, brother!

DON ÁLVARO Can’t you see that you offend my honor

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34 Bailiffs were under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop and considered religious officials, while constables had the power to apprehend criminals. Both would have been needed to escort a married woman from the home of her husband.
if you help the one who offended me?

**CONSTABLE** We have him now. That is enough.

**DON ÁLVARO** Let me go before I lose my mind.

**CONSTABLE** Stay calm, be reasonable, and tell us how this man has offended you.

**DON ÁLVARO** I will do as you ask, but then you must let me go. That man there came into my house with traitorous intent. I was in bed with my wife.

**LEONARDO** With my sister?

**DON ÁLVARO** And the traitor . . .

**LEONARDO** Heartless luck!

**DON ÁLVARO** He came into my room.

**CONSTABLE** You go in, my lord Leonardo, and retrieve your sister.

**LEONARDO** exits

**DON ÁLVARO** Get to the truth quickly, so that I can kill him at last.

*Enter LEONARDO with EUGENIA, the former thinking it is IPÓLITA*

**LEONARDO** Come now, quickly.

**EUGENIA** My life is over.

**DON ÁLVARO** Oh God! What’s this I see?
Is it possible? I cannot believe it.

VALERIÁN Oh, miserable man, that woman is my wife!

Enter PIERRES, dressed as a woman with a veil, fighting with GALÍNDEZ

PIERRES Mon dieu,  
I must do massacre to this vile queer.  

CONSTABLE What is this?  
They are like puppets in a spectacle!  
Hold them!  
This is like a tangled dream.  

Enter IPÓLITA

IPÓLITA Brother!

LEONARDO Sister, come out,  
you have a new master.

DON ÁLVARO What confusion all of a sudden!

VALERIÁN What incredible humiliation!  

CONSTABLE I don’t know what to say or do  
in such an unprecedented situation.

ELVIRA I must confess that this whole mess  
might have been my fault.

CONSTABLE How’s that?  

ELVIRA First, my lord,  
I must let you all know that I am a woman.

IPÓLITA Good God!

LEONARDO What a strange affair!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELVIRA</td>
<td>It was a prank, and no small thing to pull off.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONSTABLE</td>
<td>The gall!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GALÍNDEZ</td>
<td>And a silver tongue to accomplish such a trick.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VALERIÁN</td>
<td>Listen, my lord, I can scarcely catch my breath: on my orders, my wife’s first husband was killed. I arranged this with her. Once she was left a widow, I married her. She can vouch that this is true.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUGENIA</td>
<td>It is.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VALERIÁN</td>
<td>I have kept this from the law, and I ask you now if that woman could be considered my wife.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONSTABLE</td>
<td>I declare she cannot be, and you must immediately step aside and leave her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VALERIÁN</td>
<td>With that, my lord, my honor is well satisfied.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUGENIA</td>
<td>A just comeupance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DON ÁLVARO</td>
<td>The heavens have revenged me in the most extreme way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEONARDO</td>
<td>Do tell, sir, why have you come?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONSTABLE</td>
<td>My lord Don Álvaro, it appears that those who sought the dispensation for your marriage in Rome</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
got it all wrong.
And so, from this moment on,
Ipólita no longer belongs to you,
but to whomever she wishes.

DON ÁLVARO
Very well,
if that is what she wants.
Could anyone believe that I,
honorable as I am,
would want to keep any woman
against her will?
(Aside) What happiness! I am free!

IPÓLITA
I would rather be without a husband,
than be a jealous wife.

ELVIRA
Well could I, my lord,
demand that you and the heavens,
who owe me my honor,
grant me justice,
by making me your wife.

CONSTABLE
Tell us then, what do you plan to do?

ELVIRA
Yet God forbid that I should want that.
I have seen what married life is like
in these two couples.
And so,
may God keep me from taking on that burden.
I want to return to my homeland,
where there must be a convent
to provide me with sweet peace,
far from the bitter wars of matrimony.

CONSTABLE
If you are all satisfied,
I have no more business here.

Exeunt BAILIFFS and CONSTABLES
EUGENIA  From now on,  
I will give free rein to my thoughts.

VALERIÁN  It’s a wide world,  
and I’ll stride across it at my ease.  

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GALÍNDEZ  I must do a cruel penance.

PIERRES  I will retourner to la France.

IPÓLITA  I will turn my cares to heaven,  
that greatest of mysteries.  

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DON ÁLVARO  As my bondage ends,  
so ends Unhappily Married in Valencia.

Exeunt