

FÉLIX LOPE DE VEGA Y CARPIO

A WILD NIGHT IN TOLEDO

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

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The *Comedia* in Context

The “Golden Age” of Spain offers one of the most vibrant theatrical repertoires ever produced. At the same time that England saw the flourishing of Shakespeare on the Elizabethan stage, Spain produced prodigious talents such as Lope de Vega, Tirso de Molina, and Calderón de la Barca. Although those names may not resonate with the force of the Bard in the Anglophone world, the hundreds of entertaining, complex plays they wrote, and the stage tradition they helped develop, deserve to be better known.

The *Diversifying the Classics* project at UCLA brings these plays to the public by offering English versions of Hispanic classical theater. Our translations are designed to make this rich tradition accessible to students, teachers, and theater professionals. This brief introduction to the *comedia* in its context suggests what we might discover and create when we begin to look beyond Shakespeare.

Comedia at a Glance

The Spanish *comedia* developed in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. As Madrid grew into a sophisticated imperial capital, the theater provided a space to perform the customs, concerns, desires, and anxieties of its citizens. Though the form was influenced by the Italian troupes that brought *commedia dell'arte* to Spain in the sixteenth century, the expansive corpus of the Spanish *comedia* includes not only comic plays, but also histories, tragedies, and tragicomedies. The varied dramatic template of the *comedia* is as diverse as the contemporary social sphere it reflects.

While the plays offer a range of dramatic scenarios and theatrical effects, they share structural and linguistic similarities. Roughly three thousand lines, they are usually divided into

three different *jornadas*, or acts. Plots move quickly across time and space, without much regard for the Aristotelian unities of action, time, and place. The plays are written in verse, and employ different forms for different characters and situations: a lover may deliver an ornate sonnet in honor of the beloved, while a servant offers a shaggy-dog story in rhymed couplets. The plays' language is designed for the ear rather than the eye, with the objective of pleasing an audience.

The *comedia* was performed in rectangular courtyard spaces known as *corrales*. Built between houses of two or three stories, the *corral* offered seating based on social position, including space for the nobles in the balconies, women in the *cazuela*, or stewpot, and *mosqueteros*, or groundlings, on patio benches. This cross-section of society enjoyed a truly popular art, which reflected onstage their varied social positions. A *comedia* performance would have included the play as well as songs, dances, and *entremeses*, or short comic interludes, before, after, and between the acts. As the first real commercial theater, the *corral* was the place where a diverse urban society found its dramatic entertainment.

What's at Stake on the *Comedia* Stage?

Comedias offer a range of possibilities for the twenty-first century reader, actor, and audience. The plays often envision the social ambitions and conflicts of the rapidly-growing cities where they were performed, allowing a community to simultaneously witness and create a collective culture. In many *comedias*, the anonymity and wealth that the city affords allow the clever to transcend their social position, while wit, rather than force, frequently carries the day, creating an urban theater that itself performs urbanity. An important subset of *comedias* deal with topics from national history, exploring violence, state power, the role of the nobility, and religious and racial difference.

The *comedia* often examines social hierarchies that may be less rigid than they first appear. Whether the dominant mode of the play is comic, tragic, historical, or a mixture, its dramatic progression often depends on a balancing act of order and liberty, authority and transgression, stasis and transformation. The title of Lope de Vega's recently rediscovered *Women and Servants*, in which two sisters scheme to marry the servant-men they love rather than the noblemen who woo them, makes explicit its concerns with gender and class and provides a view of what is at stake in many of the plays. Individuals disadvantaged by class or gender often challenge the social hierarchy and patriarchy by way of their own cleverness. The *gracioso* (comic sidekick), the *barba* (older male blocking figure), and the lovers appear repeatedly in these plays, and yet are often much more than stock types. At their most remarkable, they reflect larger cultural possibilities. The *comedia* stages the conflicting demands of desire and reputation, dramatizing the tension between our identities as they are and as we wish them to be.

Among the many forms of passion and aspiration present in the *comedia*, female desire and agency are central. In contrast to its English counterpart, the Spanish stage permitted actresses to play female roles, thus giving playwrights the opportunity to develop a variety of characters for them. While actresses became famous, the powerful roles they played onstage often portrayed the force of female desire. In Lope's *The Widow of Valencia*, for example, the beautiful young widow Leonarda brings a masked lover into her home so as not to reveal her identity and risk her reputation or independence.

The presence of actresses, however, did not diminish the appeal of the cross-dressing plot. One of Tirso's most famous plays, *Don Gil of the Green Breeches*, features Doña Juana assuming a false identity and dressing as a man in order to foil the plans of her former lover, who is also in disguise. Dizzying deceptions and the performance of identity are both dramatic tech-

niques and thematic concerns in these plays. Gender, like class, becomes part of the structure the *comedia* examines and dismantles, offering a powerful reflection on how we come to be who we are.

Remaking Plays in Our Time

In Lope's witty manifesto, the *New Art of Making Plays in Our Time*, he advises playwrights to stick to what works onstage, including plots of honor and love, strong subplots, and—whenever possible—cross-dressing. For Lope, the delight of the audience drives the process of composition, and there is little sense in a craft that does not entertain the public. Lope's contemporaries followed this formula, developing dramas that simultaneously explore the dynamics of their society and produce spectacle. For this reason, early modern Hispanic drama remains an engaging, suspenseful, often comic—and new—art to audiences even four hundred years later.

The *Diversifying the Classics* project at UCLA, engaged in translation, adaptation, and outreach to promote the *comedia* tradition, aims to bring the entertaining spirit of Lope and his contemporaries to our work. Rather than strictly adhering to the verse forms of the plays, we seek to render the power of their language in a modern idiom; rather than limiting the drama as a historical or cultural artifact, we hope to bring out what remains vibrant for our contemporary society. Given that these vital texts merit a place onstage, we have sought to facilitate production by carefully noting entrances, exits, and asides, and by adding locations for scenes whenever possible. Although we have translated every line, we assume directors will cut as appropriate for their own productions. We hope that actors, directors, and readers will translate our work further into new productions, bringing both the social inquiry and theatrical delight of the *comedia* to future generations of audiences.

A Note on the Playwright

Lope Félix de Vega y Carpio (1562–1635) is the towering figure of the *comedia*. Born in Madrid to parents who had migrated to the capital from Spain’s northern regions, he saw in his youth the emergence of the *corral* theaters where he would go on to make his name. In his *New Art of Making Plays in Our Time*, Lope formalized the conventions of the *comedia*, outlining the elements of the vibrant new art of which he was the master. He composed hundreds of plays, in addition to poetry and prose, earning him the name *Fénix de los ingenios* (“Phoenix of Wits”), as the expression *es de Lope* (“it’s by Lope”) became a shorthand for praising quality.

In his own time, Lope’s fame arose out of his prodigious literary talent as well as his colorful biography, for the playwright’s erotic life often left him on the wrong side of the law. After being rejected by the actress Elena Osorio in the 1580s, Lope penned a series of satirical poems attacking her family, and was exiled from Madrid for the offense. Though Lope would go on to take orders in 1614, affairs that defied early modern Spanish religious and legal codes continued to dominate his life. He was accused of a relationship with a widow, Antonia Trillo de Armenta, carried on a sixteen-year affair with the married Marta de Nevares, to whom he dedicated *The Widow of Valencia*, and left an unknown number of illegitimate children.

Despite the varied scandals of his life and his eventual position as secretary to the Duke of Sessa, Lope was a truly successful commercial playwright, who earned income as well as fame through his literary efforts. Today he is best remembered for the drama he came to define—the quick, witty *comedia* of the Spanish Golden Age. After Calderón’s *Life Is a Dream*, Lope’s *Fuenteovejuna* is perhaps the best-known *comedia* in the English-speaking world, and others such as *Peribañez* and *The Dog in the Manger* exemplify the well-constructed Lopean plot. Miguel de Cervantes, his contemporary, may not have meant it as a compliment when he

called Lope a “monster of nature” (*monstruo de la naturaleza*), as the two masters were not on friendly terms. Yet Lope’s prodigious output was fundamental to defining the theater of the age that spanned his life. The monster of nature left us many gifts.

Introduction

Paul Cella and Adrián Collado

A Wild Night in Toledo is one of Lope de Vega’s love plays. The action takes place almost entirely inside an inn in Toledo, a Spanish city where roads and paths cross, and where a multitude of characters of different ages, classes, genders, and regions of Spain come to mingle and make love from dusk to dawn. If they have come to rest, they are in the wrong place: their passions, jealousies, and desires, their trickery, greed, and run-ins with the law will not allow them to sleep a wink during this one wild night. The play depicts a lively group of characters who run, jump, hide, and fight throughout the night in the name of love.

But this is more than a humorous story about love and lovers. Set in Toledo, a city strongly associated with Spain’s Catholic tradition and imperial power, the play nonetheless places religion and politics in the background, allowing the Spanish people to take center stage. In Spain’s “imperial city,” the country’s royal family and illustrious history are mentioned merely as matters of social convention, while the characters devote all their time and energy to what they really care about: intrigue, love, and sex. Characters’ attachments to conventions of social distinction prove to be but skin-deep, while it is as lovers that they reveal themselves in earnest. Though they may be military men, aristocrats, and gentlemen, they share a common desire to experience love in one way or another. Despite his aristocratic decorum, Fineo becomes infatuated with a lowly maid. Gerarda and Lucrecia claim they fear for their reputations, yet they will do

anything to make their romantic adventures with Florencio and Beltrán possible. Captain Acevedo and Lieutenant Carrillo, the soldiers, are perhaps the bawdiest figures on stage. Lope's characters are not primarily members of one class or another, but human beings responding to basic instincts.

The play takes its name from a famous Spanish saying, "pasar una noche toledana," or to spend a restless, sleepless night. There are different explanations for the origin of this saying. One suggests that a "night in Toledo" alludes to a specific night in 8th-century Toledo, when a local Muslim governor invited a group of nobles to his palace under the pretense of a celebration just to have them all beheaded. But there are less violent accounts of this popular expression, which is still in use. One points to the legend according to which unmarried women used to stay awake during the night of San Juan (June 23rd) to hear the name of their future husbands. Another claims that on a night in Toledo the mosquitoes keep visitors up.

A Wild Night in Toledo is at times reminiscent of Miguel de Cervantes's great novel *Don Quijote de la Mancha*, published the same year that Lope's play was written (1605). Lope's leading duo, Florencio and Beltrán, like Cervantes's Don Quijote and Sancho Panza, represent finer feelings versus crass materialism—although, as we shall see, Lope does much to puncture any sense of Florencio's superiority. Also, much of Lope's play takes place in an inn, which functions here as a sort of microcosm of early 17th-century Spanish society, as does Juan Palomeque's *venta* in Cervantes's novel.

The Plots

A Wild Night in Toledo is primarily the story of Lisena, a beautiful, smart young aristocrat from Granada. She has traveled to Toledo in search of her beloved Florencio, who had fled

with his companion Beltrán after wounding (and possibly killing) a presumed rival in a jealous rage. Once in Toledo, the resourceful Lisena assumes the name Inés and adopts lower-class dress and speech to gain employment as a maid at a local inn. As she observes, Toledo is at the crossroads of Spain, and the inn gathers the city news: “This city is on the way / to so many others, / and news— / high or low— / always comes to the inns / before it reaches the courts of kings” (658–663). There is no better place to feel the pulse of things and, therefore, no better place to begin looking for her man on the run.

As Lisena and Florencio arrive in the city, so do many others: military men, women of leisure, and a thwarted lover. *A Wild Night in Toledo* is also the story of how these characters meet in Toledo, fall in love, and resort to deceit and dissimulation to pursue their romantic interests. Before Lisena can win Florencio back, Lope paints the stage with countless love triangles, squares, and pentagons, thus displaying his masterful ability to interweave plots and subplots.

As Act I opens, Florencio and Beltrán have just arrived in Toledo. Florencio is romantic and sensitive, quick to fall in love with pretty women. His friend Beltrán is materialistic and pragmatic, chronically self-interested and never moved by sentimentality. If Florencio is the Platonist, the believer in pure forms of love, honor, and so forth, then Beltrán is the Aristotelian, seeking truth empirically. I’ve got to see it to believe it, Beltrán might say.

Meanwhile, the aristocratic *madrileñas* Gerarda and Lucrecia pass through Toledo as Gerarda flees Madrid to get away from her bothersome suitor, Fineo. They encounter a city preparing a grand celebration in honor of the newly born Prince Philip, son of King Philip III, and decide to stay. Florencio and Gerarda fall for each other at first sight, and after a brief conversation, they decide to spend the festivities, and the night, together. They enter the inn, with Florencio pretending to be Gerarda’s brother to maintain social decorum.

Lisena, calling herself Inés, comes to the city and begins working as a maid at the inn. The position gives her not only privileged access to information in her central location, but the ability to move through the inn and control the rooms. This unrivaled freedom will allow her to frustrate Florencio and Gerarda's romance and manipulate at will virtually all the play's lovers, most of whom are enamored of her.

The next arrivals are Captain Acevedo and Lieutenant Carrillo, military officials who have come to Toledo to attend the royal festivities and recruit soldiers. The Captain is instantly attracted to Lisena/Inés and asks the Lieutenant to speak to her on his behalf. Instead, the Lieutenant courts her himself, claiming that the Captain is an arrogant and violent man. To complicate matters further, Lucindo (an old army friend of the Captain) and Riselo (another soldier) enter the inn. They are intoxicated by Toledo's celebratory atmosphere and will try to sleep with Gerarda and Lucrecia. Finally, at the end of Act I, Florencio and Lisena/Inés meet for the first time in the play, though they pretend not to recognize each other. For Florencio, Lisena's presence threatens his plans to sleep with Gerarda. Lisena, for her part, feels betrayed when she sees how quickly Florencio has replaced her with another woman.

Act II opens with a conversation between the play's four soldiers, who agree that each man will court the woman he has fallen for: the Captain and the Lieutenant will court Inés, Lucindo will court Gerarda, and Riselo, Lucrecia. The Captain immediately invites Inés to spend the night with him and she accepts, though she does not intend to show up for the *rendez-vous*. Instead, her acceptance is the first step of an elaborate plan to separate Florencio from Gerarda and be reunited with her lost love. Gerarda, for her part, sees the attention that Inés is receiving and fears that her Florencio, too, will pursue romance with the beautiful maid. Lisena, eager to exploit her rival's concerns, lies to her, claiming that Florencio, Gerarda's supposed brother, is

one of her many suitors. Gerarda is upset but returns to her lover's arms when Beltrán convinces her that there has been a misunderstanding: Inés thinks he (Beltrán), not Florencio, is Gerarda's brother. The misperception of identities here is conveyed through hilarious dialogues that make the spectator part of the confusion the characters experience.

The closing scenes of Act II bring the first appearance of Fineo, the *madrileño* whom Gerarda is fleeing. Fineo happens upon his old friend the Lieutenant, with whom he briefly discusses the upcoming royal festivities and military matters, before their focus turns to sex and love—they ogle Inés, and Fineo relates to his friend his pursuit of Gerarda. Finally, Act II ends with Inés further implementing her plan to renew her relationship with Florencio: she puts Gerarda and Lucrecia up at the inn, ostensibly to hide Gerarda from Fineo but really to keep her away from Florencio; she sets up two more phony late-night *rendez-vous* with the Lieutenant and Fineo, asking them to wait for her in their rooms; and she sends Lucindo and Riselo to their rooms under the pretense that she has arranged for Gerarda and Lucrecia to pay them a visit after dark. By the end of Act II, Inés's effective power—her ability to determine others' movements and locations—becomes clear. In a play full of soldiers and imperial celebrations, we are encouraged to ask where power lies and how it is exercised in Lope's Spain.

As Act III opens, night has fallen and Florencio is informed that officers of the law have been asking for him around Toledo. We are reminded, thus, that Florencio has either killed or seriously wounded a man. Florencio candidly explains his situation to the innkeeper, requesting a room for him and Beltrán to hide out. The innkeeper not only agrees unhesitatingly to accommodate the men; he also lays out an escape route for them, describing the best way to seek sanctuary should the law come knocking at their door. The innkeeper unwittingly puts the men in the room where Inés has put Gerarda and Lucrecia, seemingly dashing Lisena's hopes to keep Florencio

away from Gerarda. But Lisena quickly regains control. Again, she manipulates the Captain, having him dress up as an officer to chase Florencio and Beltrán out of their hideout-cum-love nest. Just as the lovers' romance begins to heat up, the Captain pounds on the door, causing Florencio and Beltrán to make their escape out a window.

The plot remains focused on the space inside the inn, as the two escapees immediately attempt to return, and as Lisena ably reconfigures her plan to thwart the romantic intentions of Gerarda and her own unwelcome suitors. Florencio and Beltrán race across rooftops, through chicken coops, and away from dogs, as they try to make their way back to the inn and their interrupted assignations. They are arrested by local authorities, but manage to escape via an open sewer and get back to the inn. Meanwhile, Lisena continues her brilliant physical and psychological control of her rivals' and suitors' sexual appetites. Compared at one point to a master chess player, she moves her lascivious guests from room to room, promising with each transfer the satisfaction of their desires. In the play's final sequence, her plots are fully revealed as, one after another, guests emerge from the dark rooms to which Lisena has sent them, each claiming to have been paired with the wrong lover: the Captain has ended up with the Lieutenant, Lucindo with Lucrecia, Fineo with Gerarda, Beltrán with Riselo, and Florencio with Lisena.

At this point, the authorities enter the inn, and the final scene consists in a confrontation between the law and the inn's guests. The authorities propose an ultimatum to the couples: marry or go to jail. Everyone accepts, and Florencio sweetens the deal by bribing the officers. Thus, the "happy endings" here are a result of coercive power, not of free choice, which, as the play has shown, leads to erotic indulgence rather than romantic devotion. Lope concludes his work with a comically subversive paradox: traditional social order has been restored by corrupt police officers, who prefer private gain to public retribution.

Toward a People's History of Early Modern Spain

A Wild Night in Toledo is and is not about Spain's celebration of the birth of King Philip III's son, Prince Philip. In a sense, these events pervade the play: the royal *fiestas* are a frequent topic of conversation; they are the reason several characters travel to Toledo, and signs of the city's preparation and anticipation are everywhere. But this play is not at all about the *fiestas* insofar as it explores the irrelevance of royal affairs to most people's lives. Lope tells the story of two distinct spheres: one of official power and empire, another of the people and their private concerns. Thus, he establishes a compelling contrast: a defining moment of Spain's empire appears as a faint background, while ordinary Spanish lives are thrown into stark relief. We hardly see the event itself; rather, we see a simultaneous slice of life. Symbols of imperial power (e.g., the *fiestas*, Toledo's castle and Catholic places of worship, and the court) appear in the background as the Spanish people take center stage.

The paths that several characters follow through the play similarly draw our attention away from the sphere of imperial power and toward private life. As the focus of these characters' actions and speeches shifts from the former to the latter, so does ours. The Captain and the Lieutenant arrive in Toledo on a mission to recruit soldiers, presumably to secure the empire's future—an unambiguous allusion to Spain's overcommitted military. Yet they devote most of their energy to wooing Lisena/Inés, and practically none to growing the army. The Captain confines himself to the inn so he can continue to pursue Lisena/Inés: “I can't leave this place. [. . .] Because of a certain woman” (968–970). By restricting his own movements, the Captain effectively rules out the possibility of searching for recruits on the streets and prioritizes his sexual appetite over the empire's military might. In Fineo's first appearance, he praises the empire and royal

family, but his words smack of bombast. He has in effect disregarded the royal celebrations, preferring to spend the time following a circuitous route southward from Madrid in pursuit of Gerarda. His coming to Toledo is utterly incidental, as he has arrived in the city not to pay homage to his king, but because he thought it a likely place to find the woman he loves: “I heard about these festivities, / and I’ve come to see if she’s here” (2047–2048). Second, Fineo instantly reveals himself as a flighty man. He claims to have come to Toledo to win Gerarda’s heart, but while speaking dejectedly to his friend the Lieutenant, he immediately begins ogling Lisena/Inés: “What a fierce maid! [. . .] Is she an easy catch?” (1838–1840). Fineo’s capriciousness belies any steadfastness. Finally, the inconstancy and neglect for imperial concerns demonstrated by all three—the Captain, the Lieutenant, and Fineo—are replicated in the play’s overall plot structure: the royal festivities appear in the background in Acts I and II but are totally eclipsed in Act III, which deals exclusively with the resolution of the characters’ love stories.

The disengagement from empire is further evident as characters’ lives diverge from the royal festivities. Lisena does not make a single reference to the *fiestas* and thus appears to exist wholly separate from them. Her coming to Toledo has nothing to do with the royal birth and is solely due to her love for Florencio. Instead, as Inés, Lisena becomes another competing center of attention, a sort of rival to the *fiestas* as she becomes the one to influence the characters’ movements. Significantly, the characters move about the stage according to Lisena’s directions, not some official timetable. Her physical control over the characters is summed up by the Captain, who describes her as a sort of demiurge, moving the other characters at will: “Inés is laying out her endgame / on the chessboard that is this place. / Taking pieces from her bag and / moving men from space to space” (2770–2773). Also, she symbolically replaces the *fiestas* as the city’s major attraction when the innkeeper jokes that “in four days, / she could match up enough people

/ to fill the town square” (3257–3259). The royals may fill Zocodover, Toledo’s main square, during the celebrations, but Lisena, a mere civilian, has beaten them to it.

Florencio and Beltrán also challenge orthodoxy, both religious and lay. It is noteworthy that these two characters resort to a Catholic place of worship purely as sanctuary from their crimes. In the play’s opening lines Florencio and Beltrán admire Toledo’s Main Cathedral but ignore it once they see Gerarda and Lucrecia. Their religious devotion is thus comically called into question. The two ladies, for their part, enter the Church not for any pious reason but as a pretext to satisfy their sexual appetites. In fact, the Church becomes a public space to see and be seen, a veritable place of seduction, as is clear when the ladies’ servant Celio tells them, “You catch people’s eye around here / because you’re from Madrid. / In the church / there were quite a few / who took a good long look at you / and they told me a thing or two” (221–226). In their world, religion and spirituality have been replaced by beauty, pleasure, and desire.

Women, Disguise, and Identity

As is often the case in the *comedia*, female characters have significant agency, controlling their own desires and even manipulating those of others. Lisena, the play’s protagonist, embodies this model of an attractive, intelligent, and resourceful woman. Accompanied by Aurelio, she travels from Granada to Toledo in order to find Florencio and win back his love. Although Lisena/Inés refers to him as her uncle, he is more likely a servant, since no noble uncle would allow a niece to do what she is doing. In fact, the innkeeper questions Aurelio’s kinship to Lisena: “If you are her uncle, / I will be like a father to her,” commenting on the possibility of Aurelio’s disguise (693–694). In any case, Lisena reaches her destination, masquerades successfully as a peasant, and finds a job at the inn. Paradoxically, as the servant Inés she has more freedom to move and act than she did as a noble lady. She alone holds the keys to all the rooms in the inn:

the innkeeper and the rest of the characters depend on her to open them. Her new identity allows her to control the desires of others, and ultimately helps her regain Florencio's heart.

But Lisena is not the play's only strong female figure. Gerarda is also a confident woman, unafraid of fulfilling her desires. She comes to Toledo with her friend Lucrecia to enjoy herself away from Madrid and the supervision of her family and her suitor Fineo. However, Gerarda, as a noblewoman, has to be more cautious than a maid like Inés. For a noblewoman to be seen with a man unless they were related or married would amount to a dishonorable stain on the whole family's reputation. Gerarda is concerned about her honor and about what people would think if her promiscuous conduct became public, although she feels no guilt for her behavior. When Florencio propositions her, she responds with suspicion. Florencio tries to persuade her that they are safe because no one knows them in Toledo: "We're both strangers here / and nobody knows us" (523–524). For appearances' sake, Florencio pretends to be her brother: "Make me your relative. / Say I am your brother" (531–532). As in the case of Lisena and Aurelio, a fabricated family member allows Gerarda to circumvent social surveillance of her honor, ostensibly complying with social norms while fulfilling her desires.

Again in Act III, women use dissimulation to their advantage. Following Lisena/Inés's instructions, Gerarda and Lucrecia both pretend to be Inés when they enter a room in search of their respective lovers. Lisena, once again controlling others' fates, tells Lucrecia that passing as a maid will avoid social disgrace: "pretend you are Inés, / so as not to sully your good name," insisting that lower-class women are under less scrutiny (3032–3033). Of course, this is Inés's scheme to make sure that Gerarda and Lucrecia won't reveal their real names and find out that they've been matched with the wrong lovers. But it also demonstrates the sophisticated techniques of concealment that these women use to elude social reproof.

Throughout the play, the female characters' ability to construct reality with their performance, simulation, and stories is a predominant theme: Lisena disguises herself as a maid and furnishes herself with an uncle; Gerarda adopts a brother; and Lucrecia and Gerarda pretend to be Inés. Convention leads to transgression, as the characters imagine ways to undermine social constraints. In Act III, the sheriff notes how deceptive appearances can be: by "wearing decent clothes," a thief can pass for an honest man. And as Lisena's transformation demonstrates, identity can be disguised, and clothing can easily deceive. Lope presents a malleable reality, produced by human ideas and interactions.

This Translation

This translation is a collaborative effort of UCLA's *Comedia* in Translation Working Group, based on three editions of the play: a 1612 copy and editions by Juan Eugenio Hartzenbusch (1853) and Ignacio Sánchez Aguilar (2002). We have followed Sánchez's text in most cases, diverging from his decisions on the few occasions when other criteria seemed more appropriate. We have focused on making the text as fluent as possible for actors, while preserving the original. We have translated the text into prose, as we find it more conducive to successful productions in an Anglo-American context.

Recent Performance History

In June 2013, Spain's *Joven Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico* staged *La noche toledana* in Madrid under the direction of Carlos Marchena and with a cast of actors all under the age of 28.

Pronunciation Guide

Each vowel in Spanish has just one sound:

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

The underlined syllable in each word is the accented one.

FLORENCIO: FLOH-REHN-SEE-OH
BELTRÁN: BEHL-TRAHN
JULIO: HOO-LEE-OH
CAPTAIN ACEVEDO: AH-SEH-VEH-DOH
LIEUTENANT CARRILLO: CAH-REE-YOH
LUCINDO: LOO-SEEN-DOH
RISELO: REE-SEH-LOH
GERARDA: HEH-RAHR-DAH
LUCRECIA: LOO-CREH-SEE-AH
CELIO: SEH-LEE-OH
LISENA: LEE-SEH-NAH
INÉS: EE-NEHS
AURELIO: AH-OO-REH-LEE-OH
BELARDO: BEH-LAHR-DOH
FINEO: FEE-NEH-OH
TORIBIO: TOH-REE-BEE-OH
MARCIAL: MAHR-SEEAHL
DON FERNANDO: DOHN FEHR-NAHN-DOH
TOLEDO: TOH-LEH-DOH
GRANADA: GRAH-NAH-DAH
ZOCODOVER: SOH-COH-DOH-VEHR
ÉCIJA: EH-SEE-HAH
ALCOLEA: AHL-COH-LEH-AH
ILLESCAS: EE-YEHS-CAHS
ARANJUEZ: AH-RAHN-HOO-EHS
JARAMA: HAH-RAH-MAH
ALCÁZAR: AHL-CAH-SAHR
OCAÑA: OH-CAHN-YAH
YEPES: YEH-PEHS
EL ESCORIAL: EHL EHS-COH-REEAHL
MADRID: MAH-DRIHD
VACIAMADRID: VAH-SEEAH-MAH-DRIHD
SEGOVIA: SEH-GOH-VEE-AH
CONCEPCION: COHN-SEHP-SEE-OHN
JAÉN: HAH-EHN
ZAIDAS: SAH-EE-DAHS

Characters

FLORENCIO
BELTRÁN
JULIO
AN INNKEEPER
CAPTAIN ACEVEDO
LIEUTENANT CARRILLO

LUCINDO
RISELO
GERARDA
LUCRECIA
CELIO
LISENA

AURELIO
BELARDO
FINEO, *gentleman*
TORIBIO
A NOTARY
TWO SHERIFFS

ACT I

SCENE 1

Room or courtyard of an inn

Enter FLORENCIO, BELTRÁN, and JULIO

FLORENCIO	I shall go see the main church.	
BELTRÁN	Then take off your spurs.	
FLORENCIO	I will if I must. If not, there's no point, as we'll have to go to Illescas ¹ to spend the night.	5
BELTRÁN	There goes a coach that could pull the rising sun, after Phaeton ² destroyed the last one on his ill-fated journey.	10
FLORENCIO	It must belong to some ladies.	
BELTRÁN	To beautiful ones, if I do say so myself, and if I may speak at all about this thing called woman.	15
FLORENCIO	Your opinion on this matter has nothing to do with how beautiful they are. It always depends entirely on whether you've been lucky in love. Were they already on their way?	20
BELTRÁN	I saw them get out of the coach.	
FLORENCIO	And where in Toledo did they go?	
BELTRÁN	I think they're at an inn further down the road.	
FLORENCIO	Let Julio run down, then, Beltrán,	

¹ *Illescas*: a town in central Spain, near Toledo.

² *Phaeton*: son of Helios, the sun god, in Greek myth. When he attempted to drive the chariot of the sun, he almost crashed it into the Earth.

if you think it's worth it, 25
 and find out where they're headed.
 Because if they're on their way to Madrid,
 they'll be up for a little chat,
 if that's their sort of thing.

BELTRÁN Go, Julio, with good sense. 30

JULIO I'll take some of that which you have aplenty.

Exit JULIO

SCENE 2

FLORENCIO My loneliness grows
 with no one for company.
 With her gone, Beltrán,
 Granada, and all that happened there,³ 35
 torture my memory,
 and my jealous love.

BELTRÁN Don't be such a bore!
 Why stir up memories of that woman,
 who caused so much trouble? 40
 Damn her thirty times over
 for what she did to us.
 Even here I'm still trembling,
 just thinking about the Law!

FLORENCIO My own sorrow pains me more
 than that man's wound. 45

BELTRÁN Truly, this is fidelity
 fit for a fool!
 You keep faith with a woman
 who led you to jealousy and 50
 knife-blows? You should have
 turned the sword on yourself,
 rather than on him.
 Listen, Florencio,
 that gentleman 55

³ Granada is where Florencio wounded or killed a man for jealousy. Additionally, an ironic reference to the 1492 conquest of the Muslim kingdom of Granada by the Christian forces of Castile and Aragon (1481-1492).

	<p>may well be dead, but even if he isn't, you must drop this whole business, however honorable, and let things cool off. 60 The Chancellery in Granada⁴ won't put up with any nonsense.</p>	
FLORENCIO	<p>Dead or alive, Beltrán, what's done is done. But how can I rid my heart 65 of the love impressed upon it?</p>	
BELTRÁN	<p>By not passing up any chances! How is it possible, in six years of friendship with me, you haven't yet learned 70 how to forget, or the uses of trickery? Do you not see how I approach the game of love, 75 with more wings on my feet than the fleet Mercury, and more keys in my hand than were in the temple of Janus?⁵</p>	
FLORENCIO	<p>Beltrán, 80 if I do not remain faithful to a woman, I bring shame upon who I am.</p>	
BELTRÁN	<p>You must have learned that from them, for they always speak the truth. Oh, my foolish friend! 85</p>	
FLORENCIO	<p>Is it foolish to stick with one's convictions or nobly to uphold them?</p>	
BELTRÁN	<p>Love is like a game of cards:</p>	

⁴ The Royal Audience and Chancellery of Granada was the judicial structure that handled both civil and criminal matters.

⁵ In Roman mythology, Mercury was the god of commerce, communication, travelers, trickery, and thieves, depicted with winged feet. Janus was the god of gates, doors, and passageways, depicted with a staff in one hand and a key in the other. Both references suggest sexual promiscuity: after getting what he wants from a woman, Beltrán swiftly escapes, while with his metaphorical keys he can enter and exit as he pleases.

you have to cheat to get ahead. 90
 Sweethearts finish second,
 sweet-talkers first.
 Why should I play with a deck
 that someone else has already
 shuffled and cut, 95
 or with cards already marked?
 If I know that a woman is trying to play me,
 what does it say about my game
 if I choose to fold?
 They are card sharks, 100
 who always take our hearts,
 steal our diamonds,
 and deal out spades.
 I, knowing all their tells,
 have kept the upper hand 105
 and won, it must be said,
 some juicy pots.

SCENE 3

Enter JULIO

JULIO Those ladies are
 headed for the main church,
 sir—I managed to speak 110
 to one of their servants.
 She told me they'd come
 to Toledo from Madrid.

BELTRÁN If they're from Madrid,
 the Cid⁶ himself would fear them. 115
 They've come from a forsaken place
 that has lost its soul,⁷
 a city once known for its liveliness
 and freedom.
 They'll be more than ready 120
 for *conversation*.
 Prepare yourself!

FLORENCIO I shall follow them

⁶ *El Cid*: Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, the great hero of Spanish medieval epic.

⁷ Madrid became Spain's capital in 1561, but from 1601 to 1606 the government moved to Valladolid. Lope de Vega wrote *A Wild Night in Toledo* during this period.

	to please you, and see this storied city ⁸ along the way.	125
JULIO	Well, then, take off your spurs.	
BELTRÁN	You're right. They seem to be headed for the church, and you really should get a good look at them. Although I don't know about courting women with no spurs on. A smart man should always wear them when pursuing a lady.	130 135
FLORENCIO	Spurs? What for?	
BELTRÁN	Two pairs would be even better.	
FLORENCIO	And why is that?	
BELTRÁN	Two pairs, Florencio: one to catch them, the other to get away.	140
FLORENCIO	What woman would love a man on the run?	
BELTRÁN	It's an inspired bit of play-acting that beckons to love. Women always want whatever slips from their grasp. They hate what they have at home and can take for granted. Haven't you noticed how a caged bird is never as beautiful as the one that flies free, lovely and blithe, dancing in the wind? Those are the men on their way, wandering off, whom women try to catch.	145 150 155

⁸ Toledo, known as the Imperial City, held great symbolic value as the bridge between the Visigothic and Hapsburg monarchies, foregrounding the idea of a continuous Christian Spain while attempting to erase the Muslim presence in Iberia.

FLORENCIO If you say so . . . innkeeper!

SCENE 4

Enter the INNKEEPER

INNKEEPER Sir . . .

FLORENCIO Might there be anything to eat?

INNKEEPER There might be. 160

FLORENCIO What do you have here?

INNKEEPER Nothing, here.
 Perhaps you
 come from a place
 more civilized than this, 165
 but there's nothing I can do about it.

FLORENCIO What shall we do?
 If you don't mind my asking.

BELTRÁN Go hungry all day?
 Give that lackey a tip, 170
 and he'll be off to the races . . .

FLORENCIO Where will he go?

BELTRÁN To Zocodover Square . . .
 or the pillory of Écija . . .⁹
 and then he'll buy a pair of capons, 175
 since they'll be out of chicks.
 We'll put them on the fire,
 they'll roast, and once they're roasted,
 we'll have something to eat.
 And no, I don't mind your asking. 180

FLORENCIO Your jokes are stale.
 And should I not ask?

⁹ *Zocodover*: Toledo's main square. A pillory was a wooden structure used to physically punish and publicly humiliate individuals convicted of crimes. *The pillory of Écija*, a town in southern Spain (Andalucía), was so infamous that the saying "que se vaya al rollo de Écija" was the equivalent of "go to hell."

LUCRECIA	Don't be disappointed if the celebration takes longer to get started. Toledo is a great place, and the longer everything takes, the better.	205
GERARDA	I'm afraid that madman Fineo will find out we're here. Let's just hope his desire won't get in the way of our enjoyment, for I find myself quite fond of this illustrious city.	210
LUCRECIA	Look at that beautiful lady!	
GERARDA	And look there: a gallant man!	215
LUCRECIA	What a cape!	
GERARDA	What style!	
CELIO	Just look at their elegance!	
GERARDA	May God forgive you, Madrid. Were you ever this glorious?	220
CELIO	You catch people's eye around here because you're from Madrid. In the church there were quite a few who took a good long look at you, and they told me a thing or two.	225
LUCRECIA	Really?	
GERARDA	Strangers always attract attention. Men are infatuated with novelty.	
LUCRECIA	I've seen a lot of travelers in the city.	230
GERARDA	Everyone's here for the festivities.	
CELIO	These are travelers, to be sure.	

SCENE 6

Enter FLORENCIO and BELTRÁN

FLORENCIO	(<i>To BELTRÁN</i>) The coat of arms features that miracle. ¹¹	
BELTRÁN	Yes, when the Queen of Heaven, as a reward for Alfonso, ¹² for his miraculous arguments and Catholic zeal, herself took up arms, and conquered the church.	235
FLORENCIO	It's called Primate ¹³ for good reason— more worthy of everlasting fame than the wonder of Ephesus. ¹⁴ What a sanctuary, what a treasure, what relics and grandeur! What fountains, what works of art, what rich golden jewels!	240 245
BELTRÁN	(<i>To FLORENCIO</i>) Hush, there are the two good-looking strangers. Go talk to them, what are you waiting for?	
FLORENCIO	You have no shame, by God. You think it's as easy as walking into a room for rent?	250
BELTRÁN	Sharpen your tongue, then. Ready that quill for speech. Get your look right, and give me three or four gestures so I can pick one. Settle your face, straighten up, shine your shoes, and pretend like you're modest and decent. Throw your head back, run your hand through your hair and your beard.	255 260

¹¹ In the year 666, the Virgin Mary descended into the cathedral and gave Saint Ildefonsus a chasuble (sacred vestment) as reward for defending her honor against pagans who argued against her virginity.

¹² Alfonso VI, King of Castile and Leon, conquered Toledo in 1085.

¹³ The church is officially known as the Primate Cathedral of Saint Mary of Toledo.

¹⁴ *Ephesus*: an ancient Greek city, famed for the Temple of Artemis and one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.

	Tender and courteous, with a voice full of longing and words carefully chosen, go flatter those who'd talk to the devil himself for a mere doubloon.	265
FLORENCIO	You are acting very strange today, Beltrán.	270
BELTRÁN	I care only for my pleasure, amen! If I like a woman, I don't overdo it. I'll buy her the new spring fashion, something not too expensive, and grudgingly, at that. I'll send the gift with a page, and if she is worth it, I'll add a partridge, or rabbit, or things of that sort. Listen up and pay close attention: what you spend on looking good, I spend on dinner for her.	275 280
FLORENCIO	Are they all like that?	
BELTRÁN	Who in the world doesn't like to receive? Tell me, who?	285
FLORENCIO	Is there no one?	
BELTRÁN	Listen.	
FLORENCIO	What?	
BELTRÁN	The doctor expects a doubloon. The lawyer holds out his hand while you point to a line. The barrister, the judge, and the notary won't make a move until they get paid. The secretary only pays attention once you take out your money. All negotiations depend on money alone. He who wants to be your friend, if you give him nothing, will skip your noble friendship and drop you at once.	290 295 300

	The one watching your card-game isn't trying to learn it— he's waiting for your tip.	305
	Who has ever done a favor expecting nothing in return? Well, women are no different. If you come bearing gifts, you'll always get what you want from them, without much effort at all.	310
FLORENCIO	If I believed you, oh the mad things I would do.	
GERARDA	(<i>To LUCRECIA</i>) Handsome men, by my life! Are they Andalusians?	315
LUCRECIA	Their style and dress certainly seem typical of that land.	
GERARDA	The young one would certainly put up a good fight!	320
LUCRECIA	And the other one is not a bad-looking devil.	
FLORENCIO	Oh, what a beautiful angel!	
BELTRÁN	That one has hooves.	
FLORENCIO	Such a lovely girl!	
BELTRÁN	Not to be a wise ass, but the filly's not half bad.	325
GERARDA	I haven't seen a better looking man in the entire city.	
LUCRECIA	Not even the one you left behind?	
GERARDA	Not even him.	330
LUCRECIA	Desire knows no law. And that shadow behind him is not half bad, in my opinion.	
FLORENCIO	Of all the women I've seen here, none is as beautiful as she.	335

BELTRÁN Not even Lisena?

FLORENCIO Not even Lisena.

BELTRÁN That's right, by God!

FLORENCIO Take it as a good sign.

BELTRÁN I think it is a very good sign. 340
And as for the sister who's with her . . .

FLORENCIO Do you like her?

BELTRÁN I do not.
But I wager she plays
go-between for the other one. 345
Just look at those eyes!

FLORENCIO Beautiful.

BELTRÁN And incapable
of doing anyone any good.

FLORENCIO What do you mean? 350

BELTRÁN I bet they can spot a purse
from a mile away.

FLORENCIO Women owe you very little,
Beltrán.

BELTRÁN On the contrary, if they paid up . . . 355

FLORENCIO I can't believe
they give you so much credit.

BELTRÁN They owe me
everything I've ever given them,
because they took it all 360
under duress.

FLORENCIO I need an excuse
to talk to them.

BELTRÁN Walk right up to them.

FLORENCIO	Here I go. I think I'm falling in love.	365
BELTRÁN	Love is an itch you need to scratch.	
FLORENCIO	(<i>To GERARDA</i>) May a stranger . . .	
BELTRÁN	(<i>Aside</i>) Can you believe such an idiot?	370
GERARDA	(<i>Aside</i>) What a fine man!	
FLORENCIO	. . . speak to a stranger . . .	
GERARDA	Though she be a noble lady, if the stranger be one such as you . . .	
BELTRÁN	Everything has a price.	375
FLORENCIO	. . . I beg you, my lady . . .	
BELTRÁN	My lady, don't listen to him. You must be tired of so much strangeness. (<i>Aside</i>) By God, he would have gone on forever.	380
LUCRECIA	Oh, what a tricky devil!	
BELTRÁN	I'm a lot like you.	
FLORENCIO	(<i>To BELTRÁN</i>) Must you joke about serious matters?	385
BELTRÁN	Serious matters, talking to these two? Tell me more, mister stranger.	
FLORENCIO	By God, leave me alone, Beltrán.	
LUCRECIA	(<i>To GERARDA</i>) The gallant's name is Beltrán.	390
GERARDA	What a handsome gentleman!	
BELTRÁN	(<i>To LUCRECIA</i>) So my name is Beltrán, is that a crime?	

LUCRECIA	May it be so for many years. Are you the famous Beltrán, who guided one hundred and twenty blind men across the bridge of Alcolea? ¹⁵	395
BELTRÁN	(<i>To FLORENCIO</i>) Didn't I tell you we were fools compared to those cultured folks who come from Madrid? Let's get out of here, Florencio.	400
FLORENCIO	By my life or yours, silence, just for a minute. I like this woman.	
BELTRÁN	Well, I don't like this other one.	405
FLORENCIO	Why not?	
BELTRÁN	I'm not getting anything from her, and she's quick on the draw.	
FLORENCIO	(<i>To GERARDA</i>) If by chance you have no-one to serve you on this occasion, and if your position would allow, I humbly implore you to accept my sincere offer. I promise I will find us a proper balcony where we can eat and watch the festivities as we sit together.	410 415
LUCRECIA	(<i>To BELTRÁN</i>) And this one, what does he promise me?	420
BELTRÁN	If there's a view of Zocodover Square from the inn where I'm staying, there's your balcony. But you must be mad if you think that you, with no property here—	425

¹⁵ Beltrán was a figure from medieval legend who guided 120 blind men across the Alcolea bridge in Córdoba.

	with nothing, indeed, but the clothes on your back— will get anything out of me.	430
LUCRECIA	You are certainly rude.	
BELTRÁN	I'm not after your money, I deal only in pleasure.	
GERARDA	(<i>To FLORENCIO</i>) I accept your courteous offer. It's neither flattery nor too much daring, but a reflection of your honorable birth. I am inclined to trust you, for a gentleman always honors his promises. So I accept, not because I want to see the festivities, but because I want to see you.	435 440
FLORENCIO	(<i>Aside to BELTRÁN</i>) It's done!	445
BELTRÁN	Thank you, God!	
FLORENCIO	Success!	
BELTRÁN	How much is this costing you?	
FLORENCIO	Just the rent of a balcony and some food.	450
BELTRÁN	Well then, and who did she say they are?	
FLORENCIO	You keep harping on that.	
BELTRÁN	You'll fall for this one, hook, line, and sinker.	
FLORENCIO	So be it.	455
BELTRÁN	I just get the feeling she'll trick you somehow.	
FLORENCIO	What woman is there, Beltrán, who could deceive a man without dishonoring herself? Get out of the way, and let me see her.	460

	Her rare beauty is a mark of nobility, by the clear light of day. (<i>Aside to GERARDA</i>) My lady, your beauty, your spirit, so overcome me that not only will I give you a first class seat to the festivities, but I'll enter the bull-ring myself, if my people can get a horse here in time.	465 470
GERARDA	And what will you do there, for my sake?	
FLORENCIO	Let them run the bulls of Jarama, ¹⁶ which everyone takes for lions— a reputation they well deserve— I will stab four lances into their wrinkled necks.	475
LUCRECIA	And what about you? Will you enter the bull ring for me?	
BELTRÁN	If my servants get here by tomorrow with a cart horse, I give you my word . . . not to enter the ring all day!	480
LUCRECIA	A brave man, by my life!	
BELTRÁN	I never gamble with those who have no money. I never quarrel with powerful men, nor draw my sword against them. I've never liked the sea, nor crossed the river at its ford. I've never mocked a mad man, nor fought against a friend. I've never begged from a peasant, nor helped the unworthy. I've never worried over a loss, nor let a bird in hand get away. I've never insulted anyone, nor spied on them. I've never stopped anyone's pleasure,	485 490 495

¹⁶ *Bulls of Jarama*: type of bull famous for its extraordinary speed, agility, and aggressiveness.

	nor resisted the Law. I've never criticized anyone in public, God forbid— nor have I ever seen a bull, except from the highest balcony.	500
LUCRECIA	You have a fine sense of humor.	505
BELTRÁN	Since the day I was born.	
FLORENCIO	My lady, I am born of an honorable father. I come from Granada, and was headed for Madrid.	510
	But you are so lovely, and detain me so sweetly that my trip back home may take longer than Ulysses took getting to Ithaca, ¹⁷ or Anchises' son to found Rome. ¹⁸	
	What great fortune it is to find you alone!	515
	Please, tell me where your inn is. Since you're here by yourself, and there are no chaperones, I will gladly go there, or you can come to mine.	520
GERARDA	I don't know about that.	
FLORENCIO	Why second thoughts? We're both strangers here, and nobody knows us. Let me at least enjoy looking at you while you are here.	525
GERARDA	I told everyone in Madrid I was going to my relatives in Illescas.	
FLORENCIO	Let's not let such details get in the way! Make me your relative. Say I am your brother.	530
GERARDA	I would be honored . . .	

¹⁷ *Ulysses*: Roman name for Odysseus. Homer's *Odyssey* tells the story of his long journey home to Ithaca after fighting in the Trojan War, including his long stay with the nymph Calypso.

¹⁸ *Anchises*: the father of Aeneas, the founder of Rome in Virgil's *Aeneid*, who is detained on his epic quest to found Rome by his love for Dido, Queen of Carthage.

	And yet, if you want to be my brother, you'll have to do as a brother does, and defend my reputation.	535
FLORENCIO	Agreed. I'll defend your beauty, even from myself! From now on, I am your brother, and should I harm you in any way, my own hand will come between us to defend you.	540 545
GERARDA	In that case, I will come to your inn. (<i>Aside</i>) Oh, I like this man— I think I'm falling in love. What do I have to lose? Can't I look after myself? But can a woman trust herself?	550
FLORENCIO	Beltrán, take these ladies to our inn.	555
BELTRÁN	(<i>Aside to FLORENCIO</i>) Have you agreed on a price?	
FLORENCIO	Can't you just keep quiet?	
BELTRÁN	If a man goes to see a merchant, a jeweler, or a silversmith, and leaves his friend at the door while he makes a deal, he'll always want to know how much he paid.	560
FLORENCIO	What is there to buy or sell here?	
BELTRÁN	These two foxes look fine, but we'll get nothing from them. (<i>Aloud</i>) Well then, I'll be the butler. There will be cloths, there will be heaters, there will be fantastic food. Let's spend plenty of money— and they say love comes cheap at inns such as this!	565 570

	If you get out of here with more money than you brought, you'll return to Granada as a prodigal son, and I as a roasted pig!	575
FLORENCIO	Beltrán has a peculiar sense of humor, ladies, but he will serve you well. I am sure he got his buffoonery, like his name, from Madrid. The moment he stops joking, he is a serious, capable man.	580
BELTRÁN	<i>(Aside)</i> Nothing is too difficult when your head's in the clouds! <i>(Aloud)</i> And what excuse will they use to come to our inn?	585
FLORENCIO	Simple: I'll say I'm her brother, that I've come to take her back to Granada, and that she had set out looking for me too.	590
BELTRÁN	Great! An excellent plan, like none I've ever seen. You'll meet at the inn, like the Jarama and the Tagus, flowing together at Aranjuez. ¹⁹ So, are you her brother yet?	595
FLORENCIO	Isn't it obvious?	600
BELTRÁN	<i>(To LUCRECIA)</i> And what am I to you, my lady?	
LUCRECIA	I should slap you in the face. You, my relative?	
BELTRÁN	What's the problem? I am a gentleman. My ancestor was one of the three wise men.	605

¹⁹ The rivers Tagus and Jarama meet at the city of Aranjuez, to the south of Madrid.

	I can't be your relative?	
LUCRECIA	That's right!	610
BELTRÁN	Ah, I know why you don't want to be related to me.	
LUCRECIA	Pray tell?	
BELTRÁN	You don't want to have to get a dispensation to marry me. ²⁰	615
GERARDA	What is your name?	
FLORENCIO	I? Florencio. What's yours?	
GERARDA	Gerarda.	
BELTRÁN	Tell me, what is your name?	620
LUCRECIA	Listen . . .	
BELTRÁN	I'll give you an hour of silence.	
LUCRECIA	I'm named for that model of chastity. ²¹	625
BELTRÁN	I'll bet you're not as chaste as she was.	
GERARDA	Celio . . .	
CELIO	Yes, my lady . . .	
GERARDA	Take my things to these gentlemen's inn right away.	630
FLORENCIO	Today, I've abducted the beautiful Europa. ²²	

²⁰ If they were related, they would have to secure dispensation from the Church in order to marry each other.

²¹ An allusion to the Roman Lucretia, symbol of chastity. To avoid the shame of her rape by Sextus Tarquinius, son of the last King of Rome, she committed suicide.

Give me your hand. 635

GERARDA Here it is.

BELTRÁN And yours?

LUCRECIA Here's mine.

BELTRÁN It's cold.

LUCRECIA Why? 640

BELTRÁN It hasn't found its bedfellow yet.

Exit all

SCENE 7

Enter LISENA, in peasant dress, and AURELIO

AURELIO This is where you want to stay, Lisena?
At this inn?

LISENA I couldn't imagine
a better opportunity, Aurelio. 645

I won't go any further.

No one will notice me here,
disguised as I am and serving at this inn.

The innkeeper invited me to serve him,
having seen my poor clothes 650
and heard the simple language

I pretended to speak.

Seizing fortune by the forelock,

I agreed to do so,

Aurelio, at least for as long 655

as I know nothing

of my lost love.

This city is on the way

to so many others,

and news— 660

high or low—

always comes to the inns

²² *Europa*: In Greek mythology, a beautiful Phoenician woman with whom Zeus, the king of the gods, fell in love. Assuming the guise of a tame bull, Zeus gained Europa's trust, abducted her, and escaped to Crete.

before it reaches the courts of kings,
 for such are the laws
 of Fame and of Time. 665
 I'll find out what's going on in Granada,
 what's happening in Madrid,
 and where my Florencio has gone.

AURELIO I will agree to this plan,
 though it does not entirely please me, 670
 only because you're wise enough
 to achieve that rare goal—
 not to say what you think.
 Here comes the innkeeper.
 Be careful, he'll recognize you. 675

LISENA How little you know women.

AURELIO Semiramis claimed as much.²³
 Pretending to love her son,
 she ruled over a huge empire.

LISENA I only hope 680
 to rule one heart.

Enter the INNKEEPER

INNKEEPER You should at least see
 the house you are to serve.
 You may go upstairs, Inés,
 if you wish to take a look. 685
 There is plenty to do.

LISENA Goodbye, Uncle Aurelio.

AURELIO Goodbye.

Exit LISENA

INNKEEPER You may be sure
 I will look after her 690
 as you would yourself.

²³ *Semiramis*: the legendary wife of King Ninus of Assyria. After Ninus was fatally wounded, Semiramis masqueraded as her son and tricked the army into following her instructions. She reigned for 42 years in disguise, conquering much of Asia.

AURELIO I trust you to do so.

INNKEEPER If you are her uncle,
I'll be like a father to her.

AURELIO Consider yourself her father, then, 695
and see that you fulfill your duty.

INNKEEPER And where are you headed?

AURELIO To Madrid.
Know that she is well born,
although circumstances have led her 700
to this poor state.

INNKEEPER That is plain to see.
But virtue is
the only true wealth.

Exit all

SCENE 8

Enter JULIO and the INNKEEPER

JULIO Come in, my good innkeeper. 705

INNKEEPER What is it?

JULIO Those ladies,
who just got out of their coach
at an inn further down the way,
are the very ones my master 710
was to find in Madrid,
for one is his sister, the other his cousin.
They have moved here instead,
and we need beds prepared in this room,
and another room for a servant, 715
for they wish to stay for the festivities.

INNKEEPER Excellent news.
Hey, you, Toribio, Inés.

Enter TORIBIO

TORIBIO (*Aside*) Curse the day

they set bullfights in Toledo. 720
We are the ones who pay!

INNKEEPER Which rooms do we have?

TORIBIO The one with the balcony and the three upstairs.

INNKEEPER In the second hallway?

TORIBIO That's right. 725
Where we had that fellow
back from the New World,
and the one in the corner.

INNKEEPER That will do. 730
Give the ladies the one with the balcony.

TORIBIO Come with me.

JULIO Let's go.

Exit TORIBIO and JULIO

INNKEEPER These days, even the Alcázar²⁴
would be much too small. 735
Everyone's here for the festivities!
Inés! What am I saying?
Inés! She is beautiful.
There'll be no greater attraction in Toledo.

Exit the INNKEEPER

SCENE 9

Enter CAPTAIN ACEVEDO and LIEUTENANT CARRILLO in their traveling clothes, followed by the INNKEEPER

LIEUTENANT A fine inn.

CAPTAIN And quiet. 740

LIEUTENANT Tomorrow it shall be even more so.

²⁴ *Alcázar*: a large military fortification that overlooks Toledo.

CAPTAIN	<i>(To a servant, offstage)</i> In a moment you'll find us our swords and we will go out to see Toledo.	
<i>Enter the INNKEEPER</i>		
INNKEEPER	<i>(Aside)</i> We're never short on soldiers.	
CAPTAIN	So, my good man, do you have room?	745
INNKEEPER	Yes, praise be to God. I can lodge your entire company here in my house.	
LIEUTENANT	You certainly could, at its present size.	
INNKEEPER	What about the company?	750
CAPTAIN	I am just going in search of it now.	
INNKEEPER	Where?	
CAPTAIN	In Ocaña and Yepes. ²⁵ But tell me about the festivities.	
INNKEEPER	They're going to be extraordinary!	755
CAPTAIN	At such moments, by God, every man wants to show the loyalty he owes his king.	
INNKEEPER	You are noble, and this is most fitting. What could make a Spaniard happier than the birth of a prince for Spain?	760
LIEUTENANT	There must be festivities all over the world!	
CAPTAIN	Indeed, from the Indies of the east to the Antarctic south. It's only right— they're all Spanish subjects. In foreign kingdoms, too,	765

²⁵ *Ocaña and Yepes*: towns near Toledo, Spain.

there must be proper rejoicing. 770

LIEUTENANT God save that sun,
born to such shining stars.
Go and have them set the tables,
my good man.

INNKEEPER I shall. 775

Exit the INNKEEPER

CAPTAIN And shall we have a touch of gaming?

LIEUTENANT Yes, if we can find someone to play with.

SCENE 10

Enter LISENA

LISENA This middle room
can be for the Captain.

CAPTAIN I hope so, for I've found
my salvation in this house. 780
You are beautiful!
Are you the innkeeper's daughter, my lady?

LISENA No, sir,
I was made to serve my sorrows. 785
I come from a barren place,
where those who serve
are only born to die.

CAPTAIN You do not deserve such a fate.
Heaven knows 790
you'd make a fine lady
if you hadn't been born
in such a sterile place.

LIEUTENANT Such a girl, in a place like this!

CAPTAIN Such a beautiful peasant! 795

LIEUTENANT For these people to be served by her!
They are fools and barbarians.

She steps away from them

CAPTAIN	Lieutenant . . .	
LIEUTENANT	What is it?	
CAPTAIN	Nothing you could do for me would please me more than for you to speak to this woman.	840
LIEUTENANT	Even a blind man could see you are struck.	
CAPTAIN	Tell her: if she will come with me to Italy, I shall keep her in a fine state, and you shall be my witness. I'll dress her in the richest garments, beautifully worked, fine as a pearl from the Indies.	845
LIEUTENANT	And Marcela?	
CAPTAIN	There is no Marcela. Tell her I shall dress her in a coat so elegant it will cost more than all the gold in Milan. Tell her I shall make her a fine necklace, of such rare jewels that it will be worth more than the flagship of the fleet. And to top it all off, a mantle of the lightest silk, airy as my sighs. Then, as a sign of my captivity, a chain of the thickest links, greater than those of Marseilles. ²⁶ For silks and pillows, I promise a thousand fine pieces of cloth! Tell her I'll have her shoes dipped in silver mines.	850 855 860 865 870

²⁶ The massive chains that once closed off the port of Marseilles were taken by the Aragonese as booty in 1423 and donated to the cathedral of Valencia, where they were displayed.

	By my faith as a Spaniard, tell her, if this is not love, she shall ride with me on the steeds of the sun. ²⁷ And should I ever see her unhappy, I'll fight a thousand men to make things right— that and much more I will do!	875
LIEUTENANT	I shall do as you say.	
CAPTAIN	God guide you.	880
LIEUTENANT	Inés, listen here.	
LISENA	What is your command?	
LIEUTENANT	You see him over there . . .	
LISENA	What about him?	
LIEUTENANT	That man you see over there is the greatest braggart from here to Flanders. ²⁸ He has noticed you, and so have I.	885
LISENA	You are too kind.	
LIEUTENANT	That man has never dealt with a woman without striking her and taking her jewels.	890
LISENA	Those are the ones I pine for.	
LIEUTENANT	As for myself, I'm a very tender man, indulgent, sensitive, so easy-going that I need no reins. I don't provoke jealousy, nor do I feel any. I never get angry, or make a scene. I do gamble, yet I am quite well off.	895 900

²⁷ An ironic reference to Helios, the sun god, who drove the chariot of the sun with disastrous results.

²⁸ *Flanders*: a northwestern European region corresponding roughly to Holland and Belgium. Flanders was part of the Spanish Empire from the mid-16th century until the 18th century. From 1568-1648, it was almost constantly at war as the Dutch fought for their independence.

SCENE 12

Enter LUCINDO and RISELO

LUCINDO	They went into this inn.	
RISELO	Did you like them that much?	
LUCINDO	I promised, by God, I'd kill a bull with a knife, to serve one of them.	930
RISELO	Is anyone escorting them?	
LUCINDO	Not really, but those two strangers just came up and walked off with them.	935
RISELO	Well, look at this handsome soldier.	
LUCINDO	And not a bad sword either, by God! Captain, sir!— what are you doing here in Toledo?	940
CAPTAIN	Where else would one be? I'm at your service.	
LUCINDO	Where is the Marqués?	
CAPTAIN	He's off to Oran. ²⁹	
LUCINDO	Yes, now I remember.	945
CAPTAIN	Our friend Don Lorenzo went with him.	
LUCINDO	You look wonderful! I must say, you're glowing! The court clearly agrees with you. How's this for a celebration!	950

²⁹ *Oran*: a city on the Mediterranean coast of present-day Algeria, and part of the Spanish Empire in the period.

CAPTAIN This is a great event.
 What brings you to this inn?

LUCINDO I've been following two women
 from out of town all the way from church. 955

CAPTAIN I've only heard talk of them.

LUCINDO I liked one of them so much
 that I must talk to her,
 if you'll have my back.

CAPTAIN I always have your back, 960
 if Love is on your side.
 You should dine here with me,
 the better to woo her.
 I can make room for a friend.

LUCINDO I am but your humble servant. 965
 But, really, it should be the other way around.
 You should come to my house.

CAPTAIN I can't leave this place.

LUCINDO Why not?

CAPTAIN Because of a certain woman. 970

LUCINDO That settles it. I'll stay here with you.

SCENE 13

Enter FLORENCIO and BELTRÁN, who stand on one side

FLORENCIO Was there anything to eat, Beltrán?

BELTRÁN They'll set out whatever they have.
 There's not much in Toledo.

FLORENCIO Please don't hold back. 975
 I am so . . .

BELTRÁN Say no more.

FLORENCIO Set the table.

BELTRÁN	Today you'll see a splendid meal. To start I'll give you a drink from a most ingenious water pump.	980
FLORENCIO	Will you never stop?	
BELTRÁN	What do you expect? That's the way I am. Look, there go some fine gentlemen.	985
FLORENCIO	Yes, and they look like soldiers.	
CAPTAIN	Your company alone honors me.	
LUCINDO	Good company means more to me than any table.	990
CAPTAIN	Let's go, so we can see those girls.	
RISELO	One of them is extremely beautiful.	
<i>Exit the CAPTAIN, LUCINDO and RISELO</i>		
FLORENCIO	Those men are off to eat. What about us?	995
BELTRÁN	With all this love, we'll have to feast with our eyes. I will make that scoundrel bring whatever's left.	
<i>Exit BELTRÁN</i>		
SCENE 14		
FLORENCIO	I could see, and now I am blind. I was loved, and now I am a lover. Blind Love works strange effects when it wants to. Where a little fire just went out, another one blazes forth.	1000
	Innkeeper, innkeeper! Bring water to wash my hands.	1005

I will deny who I am,
 even if she begs and pleads.
 (*Aloud*) Have you been here long, my friend,
 here in this house? 1040

LISENA I've been here about
 a year and a month.

FLORENCIO Pour the water, please.

LISENA My pleasure. 1045

FLORENCIO A year?

LISENA Yes, about a year now.

FLORENCIO And what's your name?

LISENA Inés.

FLORENCIO You are beautiful. 1050

LISENA There was a man who used to think so,
 until he changed his mind.

FLORENCIO If he changed his mind,
 I'm sure he had a good reason.

LISENA Men always claim it's a woman's fault
 when they forget her. 1055

FLORENCIO Men are firm unless provoked,
 even if a thousand women beg at their feet.

LISENA The man I'm talking about
 used jealousy as an excuse. 1060

FLORENCIO Unfounded jealousy is inexcusable,
 but it's justified if true.

LISENA I think his was unfounded.

FLORENCIO That's very convenient.

LISENA I know my own love is true,
 and that he has done me wrong. 1065

Courtyard of the inn

Enter the CAPTAIN, *the* LIEUTENANT, LUCINDO, *and* RISELO

CAPTAIN	Forgive me, but this was the best feast the inn could muster.	1095
LUCINDO	Atlas's could not be finer. ³⁰	
CAPTAIN	We lay our hearts out on this table. So much does friendship dare!	
LIEUTENANT	To love is to dare.	
RISELO	Where affection rules, the will is powerless.	1100
LUCINDO	What did you think of the lady from Madrid?	
CAPTAIN	She has sated you beforehand and allowed me to keep up my reputation. Her beauty provided such a feast for the eyes, you did not even notice the dinner I put on the table.	1105 1110
LUCINDO	How could I? As long as the soul is nourished, the body may starve.	
CAPTAIN	Do you want me to talk to her, and take care of this?	1115
LIEUTENANT	You won't have a chance before the festivities. She is too well guarded.	

³⁰ *Atlas*: a Titan whom Zeus defeated and condemned to bear the weight of the heavens. In Ovid's *Metamorphosis*, Atlas lives in a luxurious palace, comically compared here to a modest inn. Also, in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, the wizard Atlas conjures a magical palace in which every character searches in vain for the object of his or her desire.

RISELO	Since he is her brother he will not be so greedy, not like some jealous lover, or a husband at court. Why, this very afternoon he might go see the city!	1120
LUCINDO	God willing!	1125
CAPTAIN	You can never fall if you keep your feet well planted on the ground. I never set my mind to the whims of time and fortune, or to capricious winds. Are you in love with this lady from Madrid?	1130
LUCINDO	Head over heels.	
CAPTAIN	See now how low I've fallen. I don't try to walk on water or float in the wind. I don't look at the sun, or long for the rare pearl. I don't reach for the stars, or die for silks and cloth-of-gold, fancy styles or curled locks. My soul does not ride on these things, like a sail in the wind. The only thing you and I have in common is that today, in this house, I have fallen most truly in love.	1135 1140 1145
LUCINDO	I can't help you if you won't tell me who she is. If you can share the secret, I would be honored.	1150
CAPTAIN	We soldiers cannot keep love secret, or be constant in our loves. Alas, we have these two flaws. When you've got your well-dressed officer—	1155

CAPTAIN Do you fancy her as well?

LUCINDO No, but whoever wins Inés's heart,
 should speak to Gerarda on my behalf.

CAPTAIN Here comes Inés. Wait for me here.

LUCINDO Goodbye. 1200

CAPTAIN We'll talk later.

Exit the LIEUTENANT, LUCINDO, and RISELO

SCENE 2

Enter LISENA

LISENA *(Without seeing the CAPTAIN)*
 My misfortunes will drive me mad,
 as if I wasn't mad enough already.
 How I long to cast into oblivion
 what my soul so loudly speaks. 1205
 My sorrows claim I have not suffered enough.
 My injured honor swears revenge.
 My jealousy calls on me
 to try the unthinkable for love's sake,
 if given but half a chance. 1210
 My love urges me to leave this place,
 yet *he* wanders about Toledo, full of schemes.
 It's all in vain, for in the end,
 I'll lose myself between love and fear.

CAPTAIN Good day, lady Inés! 1215

LISENA Who is that?

CAPTAIN I'm a guest at the inn.

LISENA Well come in then, if that's what you're doing.

CAPTAIN *(Singing)* Inés, I'm a tiny little bit

Am I still that man, strong and brave,
 who incites, attacks, and gives his all?
 Am I the one who fiercely charges
 the enemy, the ship, when duty calls?
 Love, tell me, where is my spirit?
 What have you done with my heart?
 Come, let me have it back.
 I am your soldier now. 1250
 1255

LISENA What is it that you want, sir?

CAPTAIN I love you a tiny little bit, Inés.

LISENA What is holding
 your tongue back?

CAPTAIN Just seeing you there, Inés. 1260

LISENA What do you see in me?

CAPTAIN I hush, and love speaks in my place.
 Can't you understand
 that to see you is to adore you?

LISENA Is there anything else? 1265

CAPTAIN Yes.

LISENA I'm listening.

CAPTAIN I'll tell you in a bit.

LISENA When or how?

CAPTAIN If you will come to see me tonight,
 I should be able to find the right words. 1270

LISENA *(Leaving)* For God's sake!

CAPTAIN Why in such a hurry?

LISENA How could I not be,
 when there is so much to do?
 Let me go. I must sweep. 1275

CAPTAIN Sweep?

LISENA Yes, this palace you see here.

CAPTAIN Your fair hands are better suited
for other instruments. 1280

LISENA *(Aside)* Heavens, here comes my enemy.
Assist me now. Help me, my wits;
lend a hand, jealousy,
for I want nothing to do with love.
(To the CAPTAIN) Please, leave me be, sir. 1285

CAPTAIN Listen, Inés.

LISENA Leave me, sir,
for here comes Gerarda.

CAPTAIN But will you come to me?

LISENA I will. 1290

CAPTAIN *(Aside)* Victory! Veni, vidi, vici.³⁵
Inés is mine.

Exit the CAPTAIN

SCENE 3

Enter GERARDA

GERARDA Whom are you shouting at, Inés?

LISENA Oh, my lady Gerarda!
At that fool, who wants 1295
what belongs to someone else.
He was trying to convince me
to visit his room tonight.

GERARDA I might blame him
for seeking your love 1300
in his boorish fashion.
But to want you is no crime,

³⁵ *Veni, vidi, vici*: “I came, I saw, I conquered,” attributed to Roman statesman and general Julius Caesar, in reference to his military victory at the Battle of Zela (47 BCE).

if you please him so.
Indeed, they all seem to love you, Inés.

- | | | |
|---------|---|--------------------------------------|
| LISENA | If you had surrendered
to some happy man,
a suitor or a husband
who had stolen your heart,
would it then be right
for another to woo you,
seek the same favors from you,
on the very same night? | 1305

1310 |
| GERARDA | That cannot be, Inés.
Only public women do that.
If you want to keep your honor,
you must love only one. | 1315 |
| LISENA | I have given my word
to a certain suitor,
and now the Captain also
wants a room at the inn.
That cannot be. | 1320 |
| GERARDA | I am delighted you'd share
your secrets with me. | |
| LISENA | We're women both.
What do you expect?
These are our foibles. | 1325 |
| GERARDA | Tell me the truth, Inés.
Was it love, or interest? | |
| LISENA | Just a pinch of affection. | |
| GERARDA | So you're fond of him? | 1330 |
| LISENA | Am I made of stone? | |
| GERARDA | I thought love was strictly
for lords and ladies.
I never imagined
there'd be love at an inn. | 1335 |
| LISENA | Sometimes love prefers
breeches over stockings. | |

- Even pheasant can get old—
sometimes a good haunch of beef is best.
No dress fits better
than a brand-new one.
If love is born of sight
and desire of privation,
then travelers will surely
catch the worst case. 1340
- GERARDA You should make some excuses
for the ones who desire you, Inés,
given your qualities.
Now that you've told me
that you're in love and your lover
will be at your side tonight,
just tell me which of two
is the one whom you long for.
And may you get what you want! 1350
- LISENA Such concern for me!
I'll tell you later. 1355
- GERARDA Come back, stop, and listen.
I just want to be sure you've rolled your lucky dice.
Who is he, by my life?
Tell me, tell me, and don't lie! 1360
- LISENA (*Aside*) All according to plan!
(*Aloud*) You want to know
the secrets of love at an inn?
I would tell you, Gerarda,
but I'm afraid that confessing to love
is the most I can do for you.
I must keep his name quiet
to protect a gentleman's honor. 1365
- GERARDA But what would a man lose?
- LISENA I'm thinking of his reputation.
Although I know full well
that gold may shine
even when wrapped in sackcloth. 1370
- GERARDA Don't underestimate yourself, Inés.
If Love himself
landed in this inn, 1375

- he would surely surrender
 to your beautiful face.
 And just as the guests
 turn their money over 1380
 to the innkeeper for safekeeping,
 so Love would entrust you
 with his swift arrows—
 for your eyes would make
 the perfect quiver for them. 1385
- LISENA What lovely flattery comes
 from your curiosity to know
 who it is that will be
 by my side tonight.
 Yet neither my reputation nor his 1390
 is what keeps me from telling you,
 by God. No, it was learning
 of your bond, Gerarda,
 to the one I adore.
- GERARDA Mine? At this inn? 1395
- LISENA Yours.
- GERARDA Who is he?
- LISENA Your brother.
- GERARDA My brother . . .?
 Like a good courtier,
 he's just saying pretty things. 1400
- LISENA If I am the one
 who stores Love's arrows,
 couldn't one of them
 have pierced his heart?
 What is it? What's wrong? 1405
- GERARDA What, indeed?
 After all, my brother is a man...
- LISENA So he is.
- GERARDA . . . a man in love with you? 1410
- LISENA Yes, if he ever loved me.

- GERARDA . . . and who has arranged
to see you tonight?
- LISENA And with such passion
that he gave me this ring 1415
as proof of his love.
And poor though I may seem,
believe me, I would never do this
for money. I have fallen hard.
I'm very much in love. 1420
- GERARDA Your words have reassured me.
- LISENA (*Aside*) Have they?
- GERARDA (*Aside*) And today I swear to
strike him from my heart. 1425
It should be simple enough
to throw out one who just moved in.
- LISENA (*Aside*) That hit her hard.
- SCENE 4
- Enter FLORENCIO and BELTRÁN*
- BELTRÁN A strange thing, by God!
I wouldn't have believed it,
if I hadn't seen it with my own eyes. 1430
- FLORENCIO (*Aside to BELTRÁN*) Here they are,
the two of them.
- BELTRÁN If someone told me such a tale,
I'd think it was all a joke.
So that's Lisena, Florencio? 1435
- FLORENCIO Enough, Beltrán, quiet!
- BELTRÁN There's nothing
a determined lover won't try.
- LISENA My lady, I'm going to make the beds.

- Did someone spoil your fun?
- FLORENCIO You loved me scarcely an hour ago.
- BELTRÁN Jealousy put an end to that! 1465
 I'll bet you are feeling suspicious
 because of that fetching maid, Gerarda.
 Is that it? I'd be glad to know
 if you're jealous on my account,
 because I swear to you, 1470
 she's all mine.
 If I can be honest with you,
 Florencio and I have
 an agreement of sorts
 whenever we are on the road. 1475
 He'll approach as many ladies
 as might come his way,
 while I tackle all the maids
 who make our beds.
 So Inés falls to me. 1480
 She is in my jurisdiction,
 within five leagues of the inn.
- GERARDA Beltrán, if you think
 that women from Madrid are fools,
 undone by time and ill fortune, 1485
 you've missed the mark.
 Imagine Madrid
 as a sort of Noah's ark,
 like in the Great Flood.³⁶
- BELTRÁN It's like the Cid's trick ark, 1490
 full of sand, instead of gold.³⁷
- GERARDA It's got two
 of each kind of animal.
- BELTRÁN No, I'm sure it must
 have more than that. 1495
 The rabbits from the park

³⁶ In the Book of Genesis of the Hebrew Bible, God tells Noah to build an ark to save himself, his family, and a remnant of all the world's animals from the coming flood. Gerarda compares the variety of people found in Madrid to the variety of animals in the ark.

³⁷ In *The Poem of the Cid* (vv. 100-181) the titular hero tricks two Jewish lenders into taking a strongbox, or ark, full of sand and making them believe it is filled with gold.

get all the way to San Juan.³⁸

GERARDA

And what lies in that Ark?
 Two sensible people and two fools,
 two wealthy ones and two beggars, 1500
 two wise and two ignorant,
 two commoners and two nobles,
 two tall and two short,
 two fat and two thin,
 two turtle-doves and two harpies, 1505
 two lay people, two clerks,
 two gardens, two deserts,
 two people with eyes and two with one eye,
 two dirty and two proper,
 two ladies and two maids— 1510
 so that when the deluge is over,
 the world may have all the characters it had before,
 with no need to cast them all over again.
 Now, Beltrán, you wouldn't happen to think
 I am one of the fools, would you? 1515
 Florencio did not trick me,
 though he tried.
 And if ladies are his lot,
 you seem to have changed places,
 for he ignores a lady now. 1520
 Or are you so fond of him
 that you grant him what is yours?
 Tell him a gentleman—a suitor to ladies—
 should not stoop so low.
 It's your duty, Beltrán. 1525
 Inés belongs to the inn—
 she's not for him.
 He's arranged to see Inés tonight,
 and given her a ring as a pledge,
 if there can be such a thing. 1530
 He who loves me
 should refrain from such low thoughts
 and self-abasement.
 He who boasts of so much elegance
 and calls me his own 1535
 should not look at the stars,
 much less at a maid.
 My God! How disgusting!
 What shameful taste!

³⁸ Perhaps a reference to Calle San Juan de Mata in Madrid, which is close to open woodland.

	What filthy desire! What vile love! What a despicable trophy!	1540
BELTRÁN	Don't go using such language to describe Beltrán's fine taste! It's a foible shared by many men of good judgment.	1545
FLORENCIO	Quiet, Beltrán. If you go on defending these women, she will think I like them!	
BELTRÁN	Should I keep quiet when you say nothing, while someone insults the apples of my eye? For God's sake, I'll have you know there are fine maids out there with no embroidered skirts, no light cloaks, no elegance, no heels even! Their bonnets plain, their aprons whiter than snow, peddling their cream— a simple love is proof of good taste! What petticoat on a lady can compare to the bloom and snow of a maid half-dressed?	1550 1555 1560 1565
	What good is it for husbands or suitors to shower women with potions when all they do is poison them?	
GERARDA	Beltrán, Inés and the other maids around here may be beautiful swans to you, but you should know they have ugly feet under all those feathers. Just a glimpse of them would undo the whole effect. When a painter paints the devil, he starts out with a human face, but when he comes to the feet, the hooves give the truth away.	1570 1575 1580

- And what are maids, I ask you?
Painted devils!
- BELTRÁN They're the ones I care for,
not stuffy ladies full of titles. 1585
- GERARDA Beltrán, dyers stink of dye,
painters of oil,
and fishermen of fish.
Tanners stink of leather,
maids of the wash. 1590
- BELTRÁN Isn't that fresh and clean scent
much better than the whiff
of prudery and affectation?
Insult them all you will,
but let me have Inés. 1595
- GERARDA Oh, so she's yours, is she, Beltrán?
- BELTRÁN Tonight we celebrate our wedding.
- GERARDA How can that be, when she told me
that my brother was courting her?
- BELTRÁN Hilarious, isn't it, Florencio?
She thinks I'm her brother! 1600
- FLORENCIO She must think Beltrán
is your brother if she said that!
- GERARDA Thoughts of that sort
are unworthy of a gentleman like you. 1605
Enough! I admit my own confusion
led me too quickly to anger.
If I've offended you,
I humbly await my punishment.
Though I would much rather 1610
have those arms around my neck.
- FLORENCIO They are love's sign and seal,
duly witnessed and recorded.

They embrace

GERARDA I'm yours.

LISENA "I'm yours!"

BELTRÁN You're mine?

LISENA I am not talking to you. 1640

BELTRÁN What do you mean?
You said, "I'm yours."

LISENA Me?
I was just repeating what I heard.
Let me through, Beltrán. 1645

GERARDA Florencio, you are the apple of my eye.

LISENA "You are the apple of my eye!"

BELTRÁN Those eyes
will make everything right.
I am the apple of your eye, you say? 1650

LISENA Would I say such things to you?
Can't you tell my suffering
makes me repeat their words?

BELTRÁN So quickly you deny what you've said, Inés?

LISENA I am not Inés! 1655

BELTRÁN You're mad.
What do you mean you are not Inés?

FLORENCIO (*To GERARDA*) I love only you.

LISENA This is beyond love.
This is pure jealousy.
"I love only you!" 1660

BELTRÁN That is no more than I deserve.

LISENA (*Aside*) "I love only you?"
Oh no, you traitor, not so long
as I am here looking at you. 1665
"I love only you!"

BELTRÁN	My Inés, so you love no one but me, after all?	
LISENA	Beltrán, I feel faint. I am Lisena! Can't you see?	1670
FLORENCIO	(To GERARDA) I can't live without you.	
LISENA	(<i>Aside</i>) Can this really be happening? Oh, eternal punishment! Oh, jealousy! Like a hellfire that consumes me. (<i>Aloud</i>) "I can't live without you."	1675
BELTRÁN	Already you can't live without me?	
LISENA	I am the living Echo of those tender words, Beltrán. I sound the last sighs of that Narcissus, ³⁹ who turned me into thin air at that fateful fountain.	1680
BELTRÁN	What fountains? What? Can't you see there are no fountains in Toledo?	1685
GERARDA	Let's go, darling.	
<i>Exit FLORENCIO and GERARDA</i>		
LISENA	What is left of me?	
BELTRÁN	Calm down, Inés.	
SCENE 6		
LISENA	You despicable go-between. Cape and mantle to them both.	1690

³⁹ *Narcissus*: In Greek mythology, a hunter who was known for his beauty. He saw his reflection in a fountain, fell in love with his image, and, unwilling to part from it, withered away and died by the water's edge. In his *Metamorphoses*, Ovid introduces a new character, Echo, a nymph who falls in love with Narcissus and is scorned by him. Echo is only able to speak the last words she has heard spoken.

who cried and felt so much?
That he should disgrace a woman
who loves him so well?

- BELTRÁN Don't Beltrán me, Lisena. 1735
If you want me to stop
calling you Inés,
and talk about what you want,
open your eyes and realize
you're the one who provoked 1740
this change in him. By God!
A woman in love should not allow
another man to speak to her.
To speak to her? Not even to look at her!
Eustacio chases after you, 1745
and you're swept off your feet.
And after this
most unfair competition,
he acts fierce and tries
to chase us off his street. 1750
And you want the other one
to hold his peace?
Florencio has run away from Granada,
leaving his parents behind, all for your sake.
And you? You have the nerve to complain 1755
that he has forgotten you.
What do you say to that?
- LISENA Even if I had given Florencio
a reason to act as he has—
and this is all, in truth, 1760
his jealous fantasy—
the fact that I have come here,
to serve in these clothes,
bringing shame on my good name,
should undo any blame. 1765
Beltrán! Confess!
You saw Gerarda's friend from Madrid,
young and pretty,
and you convinced Florencio
to do what he's done, 1770
so you could have some fun.
Don't make me the cause
of his unjust forgetting.
- BELTRÁN Don't you know me?

For God's sake! 1775
 If Nature's brush
 could paint on a lady everything
 He placed in the heavens . . .
 The hue of the sun,
 precious stones, crystals, roses, 1780
 the divine smell of flowers . . .
 If she had the wisdom
 of celestial spirits, lips of coral,
 and a mouth full of pearls . . .
 I would never fall for a lady. 1785
 I, Lisena, a lady?
 I, tender, loving, and caring?
 I, writing nonsense?
 I, going around in a daze,
 jealous and afraid? 1790
 Oh, my holy maids, come
 plead your case! Good God!
 You could not offend me more
 by slandering me in a book,
 sticking me through the chest, 1795
 insulting me in public, affronting me,
 or writing libels against me,
 than by claiming I love a fine lady.
 It's true enough that she favors me,
 and that I flatter her back, 1800
 but interest or love? Me?
 Take care of yourself, Lisena.
 I pity you.

Exit BELTRÁN

LISENA Wait, listen! How can you be so harsh?
 I am so wretched! 1805
 Everyone abandons me.
 What am I to do?
 Nothing is now
 as it once was.
 Oh, you traitor, you dissembler! 1810
 I know your tricks well.

Exit all

SCENE 7

Enter FINEO and the LIEUTENANT

FINEO	<i>(To a servant offstage)</i> Tell them to store our luggage and see to the mules.	
LIEUTENANT	I hardly recognized you when I saw you walk by, Fineo.	1815
FINEO	It was good of you to call out to me.	
LIEUTENANT	You look fantastic! Not a day older.	
FINEO	God knows I'm not as well as you think.	1820
LIEUTENANT	Is there anything better than two friends running into each other?	
FINEO	Where are you headed?	
LIEUTENANT	I am spending time that I will never get back. I am recruiting men.	1825
FINEO	With whom?	
LIEUTENANT	With Captain Acevedo.	
FINEO	Congratulations, then. He is a great friend, and a worthy man.	1830
LIEUTENANT	And you, where are you headed?	
FINEO	Oh, I have so many things to tell you.	
LIEUTENANT	Nothing surprises me anymore.	1835
FINEO	Will they not give us a room?	

Enter LISENA

LISENA	Here is the key.	
FINEO	What a fierce maid!	
LIEUTENANT	Easy.	
FINEO	Is she an easy catch?	1840
LIEUTENANT	She is like the wind. The Captain has already fallen for her. He doesn't want to leave this place. He has put his trust in me, but I've fallen for her, too. Anyway, we're going to watch the bullfight; it should be quite an event.	1845
FINEO	What a lovely girl!	
LIEUTENANT	Beautiful! She shines like new gold.	1850
FINEO	If the Captain and the Lieutenant love her, I would like to join their company.	
LIEUTENANT	Oh lord, I don't know if you'll be welcome. She's got the temper of a young bull.	1855
FINEO	Oh, darling! Why so sad?	
LISENA	What's it to you?	
FINEO	Lieutenant Carrillo loves you so tenderly, that I, as his friend, long to deserve your courtesy, and request your favor.	1860
LISENA	This room will do. Will it be just you?	1865
FINEO	Yes, just me.	
LISENA	I will get it ready.	

FINEO	What a slim waist!	
LIEUTENANT	Glorious. But first, my little nymph, before you go, tell me why you're so sad.	1870
LISENA	Because of men.	
FINEO	If it's because the one you love doesn't treat you as he should, choose another—there are plenty more.	1875
LISENA	I don't like any of them.	
<i>Exit LISENA</i>		
FINEO	You've forgotten what it is to love.	
LIEUTENANT	What do you think of her?	
FINEO	A very pearl.	
LIEUTENANT	We're alone now. Tell me. What's dragged you away from Madrid? The festivities?	1880
FINEO	I'm not here for that.	
LIEUTENANT	Then what?	
FINEO	I am following a lady.	1885
LIEUTENANT	Has she betrayed you?	
FINEO	She told her family she was on her way to Aranjuez. ⁴⁰ I went after her, and followed her into the gardens there.	1890
LIEUTENANT	And was she there?	
FINEO	No.	
LIEUTENANT	I've heard stories about those gardens.	

⁴⁰ *Aranjuez*: a city in central Spain, is famous for its royal palace, orchards, and gardens.

FINEO	<p>I'll tell you what I saw. Philip the Catholic⁴¹ has wrought more wonders in Spain than his father or grandfather, both undefeated.⁴² Why, if people were wonders, then the first among them would be his princely children.</p>	1895
	<p>The monastery of El Escorial⁴³ is the eighth wonder of the world, from the North Pole to the South and from East to West. Toledo and Segovia have their powerful castles. Madrid, its fine palace, rich in paintings and stables. But leaving those aside, lend me your ears for a moment, and I will show you Aranjuez as on a little map.</p>	1900
	<p>I went through Vaciamadrid.⁴⁴ Thank God I didn't spend the night, for it's none too clean, you know. There I saw the splendid palace with a beautiful view of its rivers. Never mind the old house, a vestige of things past. Ladies know best the wicked refuge it once provided.⁴⁵ I left for Arganda, and saw the Ambassador's villa. I continued on to San Martin,⁴⁶</p>	1905
	<p></p>	1910
	<p></p>	1915
	<p></p>	1920

⁴¹ Philip III of Spain (ruled 1598-1621).

⁴² Philip III's grandfather was Charles V. His father was Philip II of Spain.

⁴³ *El Escorial*: palace and monastery to the north of Madrid, a symbol of Spanish imperial and Catholic power.

⁴⁴ *Vaciamadrid*: a town a short distance to the southeast of Madrid that served as a secret romantic meeting place for Spanish royalty and way station for royal travel to and from the capital.

⁴⁵ One hypothesis for the origin of Vaciamadrid's name is that it comes from the Arabic *Manzil Maÿrit*, which means "the hostel of Madrid." The reference to an inn serving as a clandestine meeting place for lovers seems to fit both the history of the palace later built there and the nature of the inn where the action of this play takes place.

⁴⁶ *Arganda and San Martin de la Vega*: municipalities a short distance to the southeast and south of Madrid, respectively. The German ambassador Hans Klevenhüller built himself a small palace or villa (1594-1597) surrounded by lush gardens and filled with art by famous Renaissance painters. The ambas-

proof that the Fourth or Fifth⁵¹
 will free the Holy City
 and Christ's Holy Sepulcher.⁵² 2000
 I saw, at last, after all these things,
 the marriage of the two rivers,
 for there they become one—
 no priest required.
 I won't even mention the fountains, 2005
 the water games, the jets,
 nymphs, satyrs, and children
 in marbles and castles.
 And those avenues of flowers
 where her Serene Highness the Princess, 2010
 the springtime of this Elysium,
 goes to exercise!
 Wherever she would step,
 even at the height of summer,
 white roses were born, 2015
 as was said of Venus.
 There is white jasmine,
 fragrant jonquil,
 and pale broom,
 Adonis and Narcissus.⁵³ 2020
 There are blue and red linnets,⁵⁴
 salvia and red iris,
 pristine wallflowers,
 carnations, and laburnum,
 and the water, which cuts through stones. 2025
 There are birds from the Indies
 with two red tassels
 upon their feathered heads,
 named Zaidas, though they are not
 descended from Moors.⁵⁵ 2030
 But why go on about birds,

⁵¹ Hypothetical future kings, descendants of the monarch at the time, Philip III.

⁵² *The Church of the Holy Sepulcher*: located in Jerusalem, believed to be the site of Jesus Christ's crucifixion, burial, and resurrection. Fineo refers to the enduring crusading fantasy of reconquering Jerusalem from its Muslim Ottoman rulers.

⁵³ *Venus*: the goddess of love, fertility, and prosperity in Roman mythology. In the story of her birth, Venus rises from the sea and comes to land. The foam that touches the shore as she does causes white roses to grow. In Greek mythology, Adonis and Narcissus were both transformed into flowers, the anemone and the daffodil, respectively.

⁵⁴ *Linnets*: a bird in the finch family.

⁵⁵ *Zaida*: a common Arabic female name. Fineo's disclaimer about the Arabic origins of the bird's name betrays an unease about the Moorish cultural heritage of Spain.

	<p>or their various colors, why proceed with the portrait of this second Paradise? Suffice it to say it all belonged to the sovereign father of the grandson of Charles the Fifth.⁵⁶</p>	2035
LIEUTENANT	<p>Oh, how you make me long to go! I must see it before the week is up.</p>	
FINEO	<p>Go soon, and you'll find the bronzes I saw, and the marble I've described. Yet my lady was not there. I left the garden, Lieutenant, and continued on to Illescas, but could not find her there. I heard about these festivities, and I've come to see if she's here, driven mad as I am by this love I cannot speak.</p>	2040 2050
LIEUTENANT	<p>Well now, forget your pain. This is a great opportunity for some amusement. Come, take off your spurs, your boots. The city is filled with thousands of women who've come to see the grand festivities, the jousting and the feats of strength. Distraction makes any sorrow easier to bear. They also say there will be a literary contest, and since you touch on the poetic, you can write for the prize.⁵⁷</p>	2055 2060
FINEO	<p>What are the topics?</p>	
LIEUTENANT	<p>Too many to count.</p>	

⁵⁶ Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor and Charles I of Spain, was the father of Philip II, with whom the building is associated in these lines, and grandfather of Philip III, the king of Spain when Lope wrote this play.

⁵⁷ Mayor Alonso de Cárcamo, who was good friends with Lope, asked the playwright to organize a literary contest in Toledo (1605). On May 6 of that year the rules for the contest were posted, along with the acceptable topics. The poets who participated created verses in praise of the king and the newly born crown prince, much like those recited by the Lieutenant.

FINEO	What verses do we start from?	2065
LIEUTENANT	Concise ones: “By will of God, a great feat in Austria’s sea never outdone, Margarita, mother-of-pearl, has now a pearl of a son.”	2070
FINEO	The first and the third are the most difficult. I’ll take off my boots.	
LIEUTENANT	Go on, I’ll talk to Inés in the meantime.	2075
<i>Exit</i> FINEO		
SCENE 8		
<i>Enter</i> LISENA		
LIEUTENANT	Oh, my Inés! Don’t you want to be mine?	
LISENA	To see you is to weep. Let me sweep.	
LIEUTENANT	Inés, you are like the dawn sweeping away the stars. With those beautiful hands, the light of heaven is never far. Do battle with me. Put up your arms, Inés, and you shall see . . .	2080 2085
LISENA	Quiet! Later, when the night is quite dark, you may come speak to me. You know where my room is. During the day I never agree, nor let anyone in. I don’t want the innkeeper to know of this sin.	2090

LISENA	I spoke to the two of them, Lucindo, for the two of you.	2155
RISELO	You did well.	
LUCINDO	And what did they say?	
LISENA	She expects you'll sleep at the inn tonight, so you can see her from midnight till six!	2160
LUCINDO	Sleep here? How?	
LISENA	I will give you rooms. Gerarda has it all planned out.	2165
RISELO	Well, we won't sleep without first visiting their room the first chance we get.	
LISENA	All right, then, the two of you should go beg the Captain for a dinner invitation.	2170
RISELO	Let's go.	
LUCINDO	What a night we have ahead of us!	
LISENA	You can tell me all about it tomorrow.	2175

Exit LUCINDO and RISELO

SCENE 11

Enter FINEO

FINEO	<i>(Without seeing LISENA)</i> It's all very strange, almost like a dream, so odd that even the dreamer cannot understand it. I came here to find Gerarda,	2180
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full of jealous passion,
 and at this inn I found
 a maid so beautiful
 that my desire for her
 is like a runaway horse, 2185
 undoing my passion for those other eyes.
 Tonight, at least,
 I'd like to try . . . But here she comes.

LISENA *(Aside)* This is the one searching
 for a lover's gaze. 2190
(To FINEO)
 Do you not like the room, sir?

FINEO By God,
 not nearly as much as I like you!

LISENA That's very kind of you.

FINEO I will only be in Toledo 2195
 for this one night.

LISENA I thought so.

FINEO I want to tell you about a wish I have.

LISENA I have to prepare dinner.

FINEO And could I not tell you 2200
 sometime later tonight?

LISENA Oh, Lord! You could tell me your whole list.

FINEO Where will you be, Inés?

LISENA My room is just past the kitchen,
 to the left. 2205

FINEO Is that right?
 That's a sign of your importance.

LISENA Rest assured,
 though it is I who has to trust you.
 Keep your eyes about you, 2210
 and let no one notice, sir,
 that you and I are talking.

or maybe he's out of the woods,
or maybe he's dead.
So they're after us with a warrant?

FLORENCIO Things will be worse for us 2250
if we leave the city now.

BELTRÁN What do you mean?
It's nine o'clock,
and very dark.

FLORENCIO Because the Law is on our trail. 2255
They'll be on the lookout,
especially this late.

BELTRÁN Call the innkeeper.

Exit JULIO

FLORENCIO The end of the day, as the night falls, 2260
is the safest time of all.
With everyone heading home,
there's more confusion,
more noise, more people.

JULIO returns with the INNKEEPER

JULIO Here's the innkeeper.

FLORENCIO Wait outside. 2265

Exit JULIO

Innkeeper, with worldly men,
with good, honest men,
one may speak frankly, isn't that right?

INNKEEPER How may I help you?

FLORENCIO Listen. While in Granada, 2270
I wounded a man so that he almost lost his life.
They say there is a warrant out for my arrest.
At this hour, it is too late to leave the city.
Is there a room in this house
where I can hide for the night? 2275

INNKEEPER	That one right there has windows facing the Concepción, or the Carmen, ⁵⁸ if you prefer. From there you can easily reach the roof of the next house over, get down into a barnyard, and finally into the fields. And from there, you can get to the monastery.	2280
FLORENCIO	Perfect. I trust in your protection.	
BELTRÁN	Is the jump dangerous, innkeeper?	2285
INNKEEPER	By God, there's nothing to it!	
BELTRÁN	That's why I ask. I'm not exactly a featherweight. And since the heavens didn't give me the face of an angel, I wouldn't want to steal their thunder.	2290
FLORENCIO	Let us in, innkeeper.	
INNKEEPER	Inés! Do you hear me, Inés?	
SCENE 2		
<i>Enter LISENA</i>		
LISENA	When you need something, you know no other name. My God! Can't you call someone else? Can't you see how tired I am after serving so many guests?	2295
INNKEEPER	Open up that room.	
LISENA	Which one?	2300
INNKEEPER	You're so slow! Give me those keys.	

⁵⁸ *The Carmen*: a steep public roadway that led to the isolated square of Concepción, at the bottom of which was the monastery of Carmen Calzado. Churches and monasteries were sanctuaries for criminals, since legal officials could not enter them to make arrests.

LISENA The key to that room isn't here.

INNKEEPER What do you mean it's not here?

LISENA It's lost. 2305

INNKEEPER Come on. Give it here.

LISENA Let go. I'll open the door.

INNKEEPER Fine. But hurry!

LISENA Why do you want this room?
Aren't there others? 2310

INNKEEPER It has to be this one.
Don't talk back to me, girl.
(Aside to FLORENCIO and BELTRÁN)
Go on in, the beds are made.
And if you should hear the Law at the door,
there's a window right there. 2315
Get yourselves over to the Carmen.

FLORENCIO Thank you, my good man, I am in your debt.

BELTRÁN I can't get past this business of the jump.

INNKEEPER In the meantime, I will go see if anyone is keeping watch.

Exit the INNKEEPER

BELTRÁN *(Aside)* Must I really jump? 2320

FLORENCIO *(Aside to BELTRÁN)* Get in there already.

BELTRÁN My God, Florencio,
if it is really high up, you'll have to jump first.

Exit FLORENCIO and BELTRÁN

SCENE 3

LISENA Who has ever suffered like this?
On this night when I feared that 2325

my jealousy would prove justified,
 when I thought everything
 was under control,
 with my enemy locked up
 and rendered harmless, 2330
 that vile innkeeper
 puts them in the same room!
 But no, he doesn't know what's going on,
 or that they're in there together.
 I put them into that room, 2335
 so that I could be safe,
 as long as I kept hold of the keys.
 He must have given them that room
 because they fear the Law,
 and they can get to the monastery from there. 2340
 Unaware of my misfortune,
 he's put the four of them together!
 Together! They are in there together,
 with plenty of time and space
 to enjoy each other at will. 2345
 Just kill me with love, jealousy!
 I was the key.
 I gave Florencio and Gerarda
 the chance to be together!
 My God! How can I live with the thought of it, 2350
 happening now, at this very moment?
 Florencio with another woman,
 before my very eyes!
 Together in the same room,
 holding, embracing one another. 2355
 How can I know it, see it,
 allow it, hold my tongue?
 How can I not call on the heavens?
 How can I not scream and rant?
 How can I not go mad, 2360
 and break down those vile doors,
 though they were made of diamond,
 to barge in and kill them?
 Just kill me with love, jealousy!
 I was the key. 2365
 I gave Florencio and Gerarda
 the chance to be together!
 Florencio, you traitor,
 I am Lisena. If you claim you left me
 because I made you jealous, 2370
 then why resort to deception?

I have always loved you, you cruel man.
 Don't give me reasons to forget you.
 You were my first love.
 I never loved before or after. 2375
 Oh Heavens, I am trembling.
 Did they come here to meet?
 Have they already recognized each other in there?
 Does she want him to hold her in his arms?
 Or are they hiding in silence, 2380
 because Gerarda doesn't know who has come in,
 and Florencio doesn't know
 that it's Gerarda?
 What terrible confusion!
 But they will talk. 2385
 One of them will certainly make noise,
 and the other will ask who's there.
 Or, when he hears someone breathing,
 Florencio will ask, suspiciously,
 "Who's there?" 2390
 How can Gerarda, after hearing his voice,
 possibly stay away from him?
 Lovers' arms work faster than their voices.
 How then, my sorrows,
 am I to endure you, 2395
 when you allow them
 to enjoy each other?
 I will not allow it.
 I will tear you to pieces, you cursed doors.
 May fire consume you, 2400
 though I die in the attempt,
 a Samson⁵⁹ to this dreadful temple.
 Just fall on me, kill me already.
 I was the key.
 I gave Florencio and Gerarda 2405
 the chance to be together!

SCENE 4

Enter the CAPTAIN

CAPTAIN Ah, my lady Inés!

⁵⁹ *Samson*: In the book of Judges, Samson leads the Israelites in their fight against the Philistines. Overpowered, Samson was tied to the temple pillars. He tore down the pillars and with them the entire temple, killing both his enemies and himself.

LISENA	<i>(Aside)</i> The one thing I needed!	
CAPTAIN	The night had barely tiptoed in, once Apollo ⁶⁰ made his exit, and already I was waiting for you. You've taken your time, and now it's ten o'clock.	2410
LISENA	<i>(Aside)</i> Will my troubles never end? What will I say to him? Dear Lord! Will this work? It will have to do. This will be the antidote for the poison of my jealousy. <i>(Aloud)</i> Captain, we'll need to clear out this room here for there aren't any others, and this is all I can think of.	2415 2420
CAPTAIN	By God, were these the walls of Antwerp or of Maastricht at the siege . . .! ⁶¹	
LISENA	Hush! We'll need to use our wits. That's most reliable. Come with me, and say that the Law is at the door.	2425
CAPTAIN	Shall I disguise myself, or go like this?	
LISENA	You'll need a disguise.	2430
CAPTAIN	All right! Let's go. For you, I would kick down the doors . . .	
LISENA	I'm sure you would, but wouldn't that hurt your feet?	
CAPTAIN	By God, you are right!	2435
LISENA	<i>(Aside)</i> What a blowhard!	
CAPTAIN	<i>(Aside)</i> Inés, so sweet and pure!	

⁶⁰ *Apollo*: Greek god of the sun.

⁶¹ *Antwerp and Maastricht*: two cities in Flanders that had recently been under siege by the Spanish.

	Do I look like one? One of her fingers found its way into my mouth. I bit down, and now she's crying.	2465
GERARDA	Where is she?	
BELTRÁN	She won't come.	
GERARDA	Is she out of her mind?	2470
SCENE 6		
<i>Enter LUCRECIA</i>		
LUCRECIA	Damn you, Beltrán! You always take things too far!	
BELTRÁN	Quiet, and watch what you say to me!	
LURECIA	Where are they?	
BELTRÁN	They are right here!	2475
LUCRECIA	What a dark room!	
GERARDA	My love, how did you get in here?	
FLORENCIO	I followed a cruel destiny to this unexpected delight. The cards turn out right when you least expect it. There's a silver lining to every cloud, and every storm must pass. I was running away from an officer from Granada, so I asked the innkeeper . . .	2480 2485
BELTRÁN	Is this the time and the place, Florencio? Words are not the point when lovers are alone. When the rivers Tagus and Jarama meet ⁶²	2490

⁶² Aranjuez. See note 19.

would make of you a bunch of rosary beads.
 Snow is unpleasant, and mortally cruel.
 Silver is all gone now,⁶⁸ and gold
 would get you clipped like a coin.⁶⁹
 Let's just say I adore you,
 my lady, and leave it at that.

2530

SCENE 7

The CAPTAIN speaks from offstage

CAPTAIN Open up!

FLORENCIO They're at the door!

BELTRÁN Our time is up. Is that a gavel banging,
 or the pommel of a sword?

2535

FLORENCIO Go to the door, Beltrán.

CAPTAIN Open up in the name of the Law!

BELTRÁN The Law? Good God!

LUCRECIA We are ruined!

GERARDA Could this be the innkeeper's malice?

2540

FLORENCIO Let's jump.

BELTRÁN You want me to do what?
 "Oh night, dear to me as day,
 what a stroke of luck it was
 that brought me to Toledo!"

2545

FLORENCIO Jokes at a time like this, Beltrán?
 Curse the day I was born!
 Let's jump!

BELTRÁN I couldn't do that, could I?

⁶⁸ A possible allusion to the dire economic situation of the Spanish Crown between the end of the 16th and beginning of the 17th century. During that time, silver coins were increasingly replaced with copper-based ones. Imports of silver from the Americas fell to half their previous rate, and were used to pay off the Genoese and other creditors.

⁶⁹ Small amounts of precious metal were clipped off coins, diminishing their value.

FLORENCIO	Those roofs are close enough.	2550
BELTRÁN	Am I a cat, Florencio, to be jumping around on roofs?	
FLORENCIO	Jump and be quiet, Beltrán!	
BELTRÁN	And now I have to jump quietly? By God, I'll take half the roof down with me if I jump!	2555
FLORENCIO	Enough, don't be such a drag! Jump now! They'll have the door open soon!	
BELTRÁN	If I weren't such a drag, I could have been a trapeze artist, and made a fortune flying about.	2560
FLORENCIO	Jump!	
BELTRÁN	Am I a dog, then, to jump at your beck and call?	2565
FLORENCIO	Yes!	
BELTRÁN	OK, then I'll go first. It's a long way down, by God! This was not a hoop for the dog to jump through . . .	2570
FLORENCIO	There's a whole crowd outside!	
BELTRÁN	You know what? Jail isn't so high up. Walking into prison sounds a lot safer than falling from here.	2575
FLORENCIO	Hurry up and jump!	
BELTRÁN	I will! God, get ahold of yourself! "Beautiful night in Toledo, you put the <i>Attic Nights</i>	2580

	to shame!”	
FLORENCIO	Should we turn ourselves in, then?	
BELTRÁN	Can’t you see I’m much too heavy to dance? ⁷⁰ I’ll jump.	2585
FLORENCIO	Well I’m jumping.	
BELTRÁN	I object . . . Let’s jump together, and take our lives in each other’s hands. Going once, going twice . . .	2590
FLORENCIO	What a fate! Here I go!	
	<i>He jumps</i>	
BELTRÁN	Godspeed.	
GERARDA	Open the door. There’s nothing to see in here.	2595
BELTRÁN	I’ll jump.	
LUCRECIA	Be well!	
BELTRÁN	This is what they call cartwheeling into hell!	
	<i>BELTRÁN jumps</i>	
SCENE 8		
	<i>Enter LISENA</i>	
LISENA	It’s all right. They’ve gone now.	2600
GERARDA	Who was it?	
LISENA	Sheriffs, searching for a thief.	

⁷⁰ Beltrán may be alluding to hanging.

GERARDA	That was very upsetting!	
LISENA	Did Florencio jump?	2605
LUCRECIA	He did.	
GERARDA	There they go on the roofs.	
LISENA	Was it hard for Beltrán?	
LUCRECIA	I'm sure the landing was. But anyway, who brought them here?	2610
LISENA	I did, to make you happy, and then I managed to get rid of the Sheriff.	
GERARDA	How lucky!	
LUCRECIA	Send for them now, so they can come back.	2615
LISENA	Once things calm down, they'll come back to the inn. But in the meantime you can wait in my room, Gerarda, where you'll converse with him at your ease. Lucrecia can wait alone in the room across the way.	2620
GERARDA	Where did my Florencio go?	
LISENA	Do you miss him?	2625
GERARDA	Oh Inés, do what you can so I can be with him!	
LISENA	Follow me.	
GERARDA	You are my North Star. Bring me the sun to fill my soul with light!	2630
LISENA	You'll be with him until morning, with no one to disturb you. (<i>Aside</i>) I swear they will remember	

this *Wild Night in Toledo!*

Exit all

SCENE 9

Enter BELTRÁN and FLORENCIO

FLORENCIO	Are you hurt?	2635
BELTRÁN	There's not a single bone in one piece.	
FLORENCIO	Where are we?	
BELTRÁN	How am I supposed to know? Is there a map of all the rooftops? A chart to show the path from chimney to chimney, or from ridge to ridge? A Ptolemy, ⁷¹ or some other cosmographer, of the roofs, instead of the heavens?	2640
FLORENCIO	This house looks like an inn.	2645
BELTRÁN	That it is, no doubt. From Concepción to Carmen every building this side of the street is an inn.	
FLORENCIO	This must be a pigeon loft, or a chicken coop.	2650
BELTRÁN	I think one of these roofs must hold a hive.	
FLORENCIO	Worse than bees— those are drones or wasps. They've left my face, legs, and hands full of holes, like a sieve.	2655
BELTRÁN	By God, that wasp left a welt on my nose that's made an elephant of me!	

⁷¹ *Ptolemy*: Greco-Egyptian astronomer, mathematician, and geographer (c. 100 CE.-170 CE), whose geocentric cosmology prevailed in Europe until the heliocentric theories of Copernicus and Galileo.

FLORENCIO	Wouldn't we be better off with the chickens?	
BELTRÁN	To hell with the chickens! I was barely in the coop when the rooster started closing in on me. It must have thought I was a thief— it nearly pecked my eye out!	2660
FLORENCIO	Am I very dirty?	2665
BELTRÁN	Like a dung heap.	
FLORENCIO	What was that first place we walked through?	
BELTRÁN	A pigsty. I got eaten half to death by all the fleas I picked up.	
FLORENCIO	It's a miracle we escaped that dog!	2670
BELTRÁN	Not me, I wasn't so lucky.	
FLORENCIO	It bit you?	
BELTRÁN	I lost a pound and a half from my left calf.	
FLORENCIO	A chip off the old block!	2675
BELTRÁN	That dog showed no respect for family. I'm a gentleman, ⁷² I'll have you know, though I may look like a dog.	
FLORENCIO	My God, what a night!	
BELTRÁN	This fantastic luck of mine should teach me not to fall in love again.	2680
FLORENCIO	How is it Love's fault?	
BELTRÁN	Love may be wonderful in Toledo by day, but not at night. It's all ups-and-downs, brick walls,	2685

⁷² Florencio implies that Beltrán is descended from Muslims, who were often insulted as “dogs” in early modern Spain. Beltrán claims he is of noble Christian descent, though not very convincingly.

let me enjoy what I want tonight!
 Then may owls sing your dark praise,
 then may the pious heavens embrace
 your blackest course, oh Night,
 over the sun, so pure and bright. 2750

LIEUTENANT (Aside) A guest is up,
 watching and waiting
 outside Inés's room.

CAPTAIN (Aside) Someone has gotten here first.
 Who could it be?
 Is he waiting for Inés? 2755

LIEUTENANT (Aside) Is that the Captain? It is.

CAPTAIN (Aside) The Lieutenant is here.

FINEO *returns*

FINEO (Aside) I'll come around again
 to see if that man is gone. 2760
 Just my luck!
 Now there are two of them.
 What if they're both here
 for the same reason? 2765
 One is watching me carefully,
 while the other heads toward me.
 I must make my rounds again,
 to conceal my intentions.

Exit FINEO

CAPTAIN (Aside) Inés is laying out her endgame
 on the chessboard that is this place. 2770
 Taking pieces from her bag,
 moving men from space to space.
 Is the lieutenant her pawn, too?
 If I'm not mistaken, 2775
 Inés has invited the whole regiment
 to seek her out tonight.
 There's no doubt they'll all turn out.
 Here come two more now!
 If the captain can't resist, 2780
 the soldiers don't stand a chance.

SCENE 11

Enter LUCINDO and RISELO

LUCINDO	Oh night serene, beautiful, and clear.	
RISELO	Dark night, you cruel fiend.	
LUCINDO	Wrap me lovingly in your wings.	
RISELO	Lend me the shadow of your tear.	2785
LUCINDO	Cover my thoughts in your dark cloak.	
RISELO	Let me be Tarquin to this Lucrece. ⁷⁷	
LUCINDO	With Gerarda let me find my ease!	
RISELO	Oh night, it's you that I invoke.	
LUCINDO	Only you, Night, can satisfy a lover.	2790
RISELO	Night, you are the sum of all love.	
LUCINDO	You undo shame under your cover.	
RISELO	Your silence fits us like a glove.	
LUCINDO	To you we'll offer, in a wink.	
RISELO	Coal.	2795
LUCINDO	Ebony.	
RISELO	Myrrh.	
LUCINDO	Tar.	
RISELO	And ink!	
LUCINDO	<i>(To RISELO)</i> There are people coming, Riselo. It must be Florencio and Beltrán.	2800

⁷⁷ For Tarquin and Lucretia, see note 21.

Enter FINEO

FINEO	<p><i>(Aside)</i> Good God! Now there are four. When I left, there were only two! Well, I won't leave again, I'll just wait for her here. If I leave again, I'm sure to return and find so many men there won't be room for us all. There are five of us now, what a sight! What stamina Inés has! This is a duel, it seems, by the book.⁷⁸ Three here where I set foot, or maybe four is what she wanted. Even with five, Inés stands her ground! She's challenged them all, and put them to the test, all according to the law. Many have been called, but who will be chosen?⁷⁹</p>	<p>2805</p> <p>2810</p> <p>2815</p> <p>2820</p>
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SCENE 12

Enter LISENA

LISENA	<p><i>(Aside)</i> My God, these blundering lovers have sprouted like weeds! The courtyard is thick with them. Can these strong oaks have grown overnight?</p>	
CAPTAIN	<p>Inés, over here!</p>	2825
LIEUTENANT	<p>Inés! Can you hear me?</p>	
LISENA	<p><i>(Aside)</i> How confidently they come to nest! There's not a bird so easily caught as a man lured by a woman. I dare not speak to any of them.</p>	2830

⁷⁸ The laws of the "fuero de España" state that a challenge to a duel must be issued before the king and five gentlemen. Fineo jokes about the number of suitors in the patio: since there are five men around, the battle (of love) is lawful.

⁷⁹ Ironic allusion to the Gospel of Matthew 20:16: "Many are called, but few are chosen."

FINEO Beautiful Inés!

LUCINDO My darling Inés!
Inés, I say!

LISENA *(Aside)* Well now,
they are in for quite a night,
switching partners all around. 2835
Only Love knows where they'll end up.
Putting them back in their place
will be a tricky business.
(Aloud) Oh, how careless! I can't believe it! 2840
Fire, fire, fire . . .
(Aside)... burns inside them all!

Enter the INNKEEPER

INNKEEPER Where?

LISENA In the kitchen, sir!

CAPTAIN *(Aside)* To the devil with this love! 2845

Exit the CAPTAIN

LIEUTENANT *(Aside)* I must go now, but I'll be back.

Exit the LIEUTENANT

LUCINDO *(Aside to RISELO)* Let's go, and we'll come right back.

Exit LUCINDO and RISELO

FINEO *(Aside)* This woman has gone mad.

Exit FINEO

INNKEEPER There's nothing here.

LISENA Quiet, sir! Fire, fire! 2850

Exit all

SCENE 13

On the street

Enter BELTRÁN and FLORENCIO

BELTRÁN	Run!	
FLORENCIO	What good would it do us now?	
BELTRÁN	What luck we've had!	
FLORENCIO	What a night it has been!	
BELTRÁN	What do you mean "been"? What time is it?	2855
FLORENCIO	By God, you're right. It's not over yet.	
BELTRÁN	It's after one, I think.	
FLORENCIO	One? More like three.	
BELTRÁN	No, then the Seven Sisters ⁸⁰ would be out already, rising from the edge of the sky, and climbing north toward the heavens.	2860
	Two men, three hours in a stable, and a thousand fleas gnawing at them!	2865
FLORENCIO	Don't call them fleas. These are demons!	
BELTRÁN	I saw a flea that had pincers to bite with.	2870
FLORENCIO	What a night!	
BELTRÁN	What a bed!	
FLORENCIO	So this is falling in love in Toledo, with girls at inns!	2875

⁸⁰ *The Seven Sisters*: the Pleiades, among the nearest star clusters to Earth and the most obvious to the naked eye.

may be yet to come!

Enter two SHERIFFS, the NOTARY, and some people

BELTRÁN	What are we going to do?	
FLORENCIO	Well, all I know is we can't run now.	
SCENE 14		
SHERIFF 1	Who goes there?	2915
FLORENCIO	Can't you see?	
SHERIFF 1	Who are you?	
FLORENCIO	Two law-abiding citizens.	
SHERIFF 1	At this hour? Impossible.	
BELTRÁN	So what about you?	2920
SHERIFF 1	Don't move!	
FLORENCIO	<i>(Aside to BELTRÁN)</i> Have they come to arrest us?	
BELTRÁN	No doubt.	
FLORENCIO	Change your name.	
BELTRÁN	I will, and don't you tell them yours.	2925
NOTARY	Are you trying to flee?	
BELTRÁN	No, not at all, I'm just tired of being on my feet.	
SHERIFF 1	Bring a chair over here.	2930
NOTARY	Who are you?	
FLORENCIO	Two travelers.	

NOTARY	Of what sort?	
FLORENCIO	Gentlemen.	
NOTARY	Gentlemen? How is that? Where are you going at this hour?	2935
BELTRÁN	To our inn.	
SHERIFF 1	And where do you come from?	
SHERIFF 2	<i>(Aside to the NOTARY)</i> He sounds uneasy. They must be thieves. Separate them.	2940
NOTARY	You're right. Keep this one here. Get that one over there.	
<i>They separate BELTRÁN and FLORENCIO</i>		
BELTRÁN	<i>(Aside)</i> Dear Lord, don't make us suffer more of the same! A wretched night, of roofs, attics and dovecotes, stables and workshops, fleas, kicks, and locks, running from the Law, just to run right into it! What bad luck!	2945
		2950
<i>They interrogate FLORENCIO individually</i>		
FLORENCIO	Step back, gentlemen. There's nothing to see here.	2955
SHERIFF 1	State your name.	
FLORENCIO	I'm Don Fernando.	
SHERIFF 1	And your partner, who is he?	
FLORENCIO	A certain gentleman.	
SHERIFF 1	His name?	2960

FLORENCIO	Marcial.	
SHERIFF 1	Where are you two from?	
FLORENCIO	From Jaen. ⁸¹	
NOTARY	All right, that's enough from you. Now, go get the other one.	2965
BELTRÁN	What do you want from me?	
NOTARY	What's your name?	
BELTRÁN	It's Rob. It used to be Robby. But now it's just Rob.	2970
NOTARY	And what are you to this gentleman?	
BELTRÁN	I used to be his servant. Now I keep his wine cellar and raid his pantry.	
NOTARY	What is his name?	2975
BELTRÁN	Don Blas.	
NOTARY	Where is he from?	
BELTRÁN	From Talavera. ⁸²	
SHERIFF 1	Arrest them.	
BELTRÁN	What's wrong?	2980
SHERIFF 1	Just your story. You scoundrels, you low thieves!	
NOTARY	They must be from that gang who pulled off the robbery in Seville. ⁸³	
SHERIFF 1	Yes, but none too smooth.	2985

⁸¹ *Jaen*: a city in south-central Spain.

⁸² *Talavera*: a town a short distance to the west of Toledo.

⁸³ Seville's prosperity attracted a great deal of criminal activity.

- LISENA Lower your voice!
There are a million exhausted suitors around.
Pretend you're Inés. 3010
- GERARDA I'll do my best.
Here I go.
- LISENA Go on, don't be scared,
and don't rustle as you walk. 3015
The finest man ever born in Granada
is waiting for you in there.
- GERARDA Why would I be scared?
He promised to marry me.
- Exit GERARDA*
- LISENA And he will keep his word. 3020
- LUCRECIA Tell me, Inés, where is Beltrán?
I can't tell if it's his charm that's won me over,
or if he's just my destiny.
- LISENA He's in that room,
eager to please you, 3025
for that is a lover's greatest reward.
- LUCRECIA Is he hurt?
- LISENA From what?
- LUCRECIA From the jump.
- LISENA No, go on in. He's ready and waiting for you. 3030
But, just in case some nosy neighbor hears you,
pretend you are Inés,
so as not to sully your good name.
- LUCRECIA That should work,
since this whole place is full of people looking for you. 3035
- LISENA I've told both of your lovers
to call you Inés.
- LUCRECIA Will they never say our true names?

that great treasure of man,
 was finally ours. 3105
 We climbed out and made our way to this inn,
 to clear up the enema—er, enigma.
 And what of our ladies?

LISENA Come in. Lucrecia is waiting for you in here,
 and Gerarda for you. 3110

FLORENCIO Goodbye, then.
 Thanks to you, I'm Gerarda's now.

LISENA Go in quietly. I will go get her.
(Aside) My love resists your cruelty
 with all the courage I can muster. 3115

BELTRÁN So, are you getting her or not?

LISENA Yes, I'm going now.
(Aside) Oh my poor heart!

BELTRÁN Is this enough for one night in Toledo?

LISENA *(Aside)* No, not yet. 3120
 For with my final trick,
 your troubles begin, and mine will end.

Exit all

SCENE 17

Enter the SHERIFFS, the NOTARY, and SERVANTS

SHERIFF 1 I tell you they came in here.
 I saw this door open.

SHERIFF 2 I heard a noise. 3125

NOTARY And I heard the knocks.
 Call them out.

SHERIFF 2 Hello in there!

NOTARY No answer. How nice!

NOTARY	Indeed, this is getting good.	
SHERIFF 1	Open those rooms. What is this, innkeeper?	3205
INNKEEPER	I don't know. For God's sake, I went to bed unaware of any of this. Inés must be some kind of devil.	3210
SHERIFF 2	Open up right now!	
SCENE 19		
<i>Enter FINEO</i>		
FINEO	Why such an uproar? What is all this? I'm a man, and she is a woman.	
NOTARY	Another woman?	
INNKEEPER	Oh, my Lord!	3215
NOTARY	Play the saint another time.	
INNKEEPER	What woman are you taking about?	
FINEO	Inés, who came to see me and is here right now. Is it a crime for a passing man to rub up with a maid? I talked to her in the kitchen yesterday.	3220
<i>Enter GERARDA</i>		
SHERIFF 1	So this is your maid?	
GERARDA	I am Florencio's wife. I am with my husband.	3225
FINEO	Gerarda!	

chasing my fancy.
 I am a woman
 whose worth is plain to see, 3280
 just ask the two of them.
 I came here following Florencio,
 dressed as a peasant,
 and jealous of the change in him.
 I found him at this inn, 3285
 and became a servant here, as you can see,
 Here I saw how he, so unfaithful,
 was captivated by this woman.
 So I used my wits,
 as women do. 3290

SHERIFF 1 How peculiar!
 Innkeeper, is there anyone else here?

INNKEEPER No. Just those you see here.

SHERIFF 1 Is any of these men our suspect?

SHERIFF 2 This man sounds like him, 3295
 but they all say they are
 gentlemen from Granada,
 and, since you are gentlemen, too,
 hear me out.
 Are these ladies your equals? 3300

SHERIFF 1 They say nothing.

SHERIFF 2 I'm asking if they're your equals.

FINEO Gerarda is mine.

LUCINDO And Lucrecia is mine.

FLORENCIO And Lisena mine. 3305

SHERIFF 2 Well, then, that's that.
 You can pledge your troth to each other,
 faithfully and under oath,
 or come with me to prison.

FINEO I give my hand to Gerarda. 3310

LUCINDO I give mine to Lucrecia.

FLORENCIO	I give mine to Lisena, and I will keep my word.	
CAPTAIN	I give mine to the Lieutenant.	
BELTRÁN	I give mine to Riselo.	3315
LIEUTENANT	None of that! Show some decorum!	
FLORENCIO	Gentlemen, please dine here tonight. You'll get fifty ducats to your credit.	
SHERIFF 1	May you all rejoice a thousand years!	3320
BELTRÁN	Oh, so now our days are numbered!	
FLORENCIO	And here ends, noble senate, this <i>Wild Night in Toledo</i> .	