

GUILLÉN DE CASTRO

UNHAPPILY MARRIED IN VALENCIA

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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 allows 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 noble-men 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

Guillén de Castro y Belvis (1569–1631) was a Valencian playwright whose theatrical oeuvre developed right alongside the *comedia* itself. He was highly involved with the literary world in Valencia, and at age 23 joined the *Academia de los Nocturnos* under the pseudonym *Secreto*. Castro submitted works of prose and poetry to the group, discovering his voice as part of one of the most renowned literary gatherings in Spain. The *Nocturnos* maintained Valencia's position as a highly influential city in the changing literary and intellectual landscape at the turn of the century, and Castro's theater owes much to his years in the *Academia*. Like many of his contemporaries, Castro was a military man as well as a poet; in addition to serving as a captain in the Valencian coast guard in 1593, he also had a brief governorship of a district of Naples. Not much is known about his time in Italy, although during his absence two of his plays, *El caballero bobo* and *El amor constante*, were published in a collection of *comedias* by Valencian dramatists. After failing to revive the literary circles of his youth with the short-lived *Academia de los montañeses del Parnaso*, Castro decided, like so many of his contemporaries, to try his luck in the capital city of Madrid. In preparation for this move, Castro published a collection of his plays with the last of his money, pinning all his hopes on selling these volumes to get him out of debt. The gamble paid off, allowing him to enter a thriving community where poets, playwrights, and novelists jostled for fame. The care he took to publish his own creations and adaptations of some of the most popular works of the period, including Miguel de Cervantes' *Don Quijote de la Mancha*, present us with a playwright who was not only interested in developing his craft but also deeply invested in succeeding in the emerging commercial theatrical market. He published a

second volume of plays in 1625, and remained active in literary circles in Madrid until his death in 1631.

Although only twenty-six of his plays were published in his lifetime, most scholars agree that the total number of works produced by Castro is closer to thirty-five. His plays vary in genre, from the mythological to the urban, and yet across Castro's works there are certain characteristics which signal the influences of a Valencian tradition existing alongside the developing *comedia*, as well as dramatic techniques, themes, and characters that are unique to his theater. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Castro was not afraid to tackle subjects which were thought to be highly taboo in Spanish society on the stage, in particular regicide, bigamy, and sexuality. The major themes explored across Castro's works include: the formation of identity, including gender; power and authority, especially between rulers and their subjects; the troubled domestic relationships of husbands and wives; and center and periphery, examining the social dynamics between Valencia and Castile, and Valencia and its closest Mediterranean neighbors.

Like many of his Valencian contemporaries, much of Castro's theater portrays the dramatic lives of high-born nobility, and often used legendary figures from Iberian history and ballads, adapting them to the stage as in his best-known play, *Las mocedades del Cid*. Castro's works also tend toward the tragic, and even his urban plays, like *Los mal casados de Valencia*, are full of dark humor. His works clearly show a playwright fully engaged with his contemporaries across literary genres, and his skill in translating popular stories, like the ballad of the Cid or Don Quijote's exploits, as well as his unflinching presentation of urban life make him one of the most interesting playwrights of Spanish *comedia*.

Introduction

The typical finale of a seventeenth-century Spanish play is a wedding, and often multiple, simultaneous marriages are the recipe for resolution. Not so with Guillén de Castro's *Unhappily Married in Valencia* (*Los mal casados de Valencia*, c. 1595–1604), an amazingly modern, biting comedy which looks past “happily ever after” and challenges the traditional marriage ending. Two married couples, Ipólita and Don Álvaro and Eugenia and Valerián, are disillusioned with their respective marriages and look outside of their conjugal vows to try to realize their fantasies of a better match. Eugenia heats up the stage in her effort to seduce Don Álvaro, yet is unaware that her husband Valerián is in pursuit of his friend's wife, Ipólita. Don Álvaro brings his mistress Elvira into the home he shares with his long-suffering—and to him insufferable—wife Ipólita. Innuendo, accusations, and revenge steal the show while the cross-dressed Elvira merrily manipulates one and all.

The Plot

The play opens in the home of Don Álvaro and Ipólita, where much of the action takes place, as members of the upper class test the limits of social norms. We meet the two couples and their respective love interests, including a mistress. While his friend Don Álvaro is out of town on business, Valerián is knee-deep in his attempt to woo Ipólita. Just as it seems Valerián will overwhelm Ipólita despite her protests, the old squire Galíndez appears, announcing the return of his master Don Álvaro. Outside, Don Álvaro has just finished explaining to his mistress Elvira, who is dressed as a boy, that she must continue the pretense of being a man because he is married. Before she can respond, Ipólita and Valerián appear to greet the new arrivals. Almost immediately, Ipólita suspiciously questions her husband about the women she assumes he met

while in Zaragoza. Valerián excuses himself, and the discussion between the married couple intensifies. Don Álvaro expresses his disgust for Ipólita's jealousy and denies any missteps while his mistress watches on in amazement. Unsatisfied by her husband's platitudes, Ipólita exits crying. Elvira, for her part, is not the suffering type. Once she and Don Álvaro are finally alone, she calls him a traitor and a liar, but agrees to continue their relationship when Don Álvaro smooth-talks and woos her.

Valerián returns with his wife Eugenia, who feigns exhaustion in order to remain with Don Álvaro while her husband takes the opportunity to speak to Ipólita alone. Eugenia uses her malaise as an excuse to tempt Don Álvaro with her heaving bosom, but the blatant flirtation accomplishes nothing. As he continues to rebuff Eugenia's advances, Valerián and Ipólita enter having a similar conversation. The couples see each other and momentarily face the prospect that their respective spouses have heard the attempts at seduction. Before the accusations can fly, they are distracted by Elvira, now as "Antonio" the page, who runs in fleeing from an infuriated Galíndez, as they blame each other for their behavior. Eventually the two couples decide to spend the evening playing a word game; they invite the servants, including Galíndez, Elvira/Antonio, and a foreign servant named Pierres, to play. The game consists of choosing a letter and then crafting a story to go along with it, including the name of a person they met on a trip and what they dined on, etc. Before long, it becomes clear that the couples are using the game to express their true feelings, as they each pick the letter that corresponds to the person they desire. Among the servants, Elvira displays her cunning by creating an allegorical story, while both Galíndez and Pierres entertain everyone with their foolish responses. The game ends with a punishment for those who made mistakes: Valerián and Eugenia must declare their love for Ipólita and Don Álvaro, respectively. Although nominally this is in jest, Elvira realizes that the game

has come far closer to the truth than anything that came before. Valerián and Eugenia retire for the night, promising to visit the next day.

The second act opens the next morning at the house of Valerián and Eugenia. Valerián gets ready for the day, lamenting the sleepless night he spent and wondering how he will deliver the love letter he has written to Ipólita. He enlists the help of Elvira/Antonio, but before she can leave, Eugenia (not realizing Valerián has written a letter to Ipólita) decides to entrust her with a letter, too, declaring her love for Don Álvaro. Letters in hand, Elvira takes advantage of her role as messenger. Adding two letters from Galíndez and Pierres, she plans to manipulate all the other characters. Don Álvaro appears and is immediately trapped by Eugenia's amorous advances, while Elvira watches astounded at Eugenia's shamelessness. As Don Álvaro rejects her once again Eugenia's pleas become a threat. Just then, Ipólita and Valerián enter the room, surprised to find their spouses looking upset. While Valerián escorts his crying wife away, Ipólita begins another jealous argument with her husband, this time demanding to know what is going on between him and Eugenia. The argument ends with Ipólita storming off, but before Don Álvaro can catch his breath Elvira begins denouncing him and the disguise he is making her wear. Once again Don Álvaro uses his charms to soothe Elvira's feelings, although this time he gives her an ultimatum: either she stops acting like a jealous wife or he will leave her for good. Tired of the jealousies of his wife and mistress, Don Álvaro walks out, leaving Elvira more determined than ever to complicate matters for the deceitful married couples. Eugenia, angered by rejection, tells her husband that Don Álvaro has made a move on her; Valerián vows to pursue Ipólita both for his own pleasure and as revenge against his friend.

On the way back home Elvira teases Galíndez, who leaves the two women alone. Ipólita then asks Elvira/Antonio to confirm her suspicions that her husband has been unfaithful while he

was away, and that he is now pursuing Eugenia. Elvira uses the opportunity to give her Valerián's letter, saying that it is from her husband Don Álvaro to Eugenia. Just then Don Álvaro enters and Ipólita confronts Don Álvaro with the note, which he reads and realizes immediately was meant for her instead. He demands to know how far Valerián has gone with Ipólita, while she denies everything; Don Álvaro considers taking Eugenia as revenge, but decides instead to feign ignorance until he has proof.

Eugenia arrives, having made plans with Ipólita earlier to see a play, and invites Don Álvaro to go with them. While they wait for Valerián to join them, Elvira decides to stir up some mischief with the other servants and pretends to give Galíndez and Pierres notes from the servant girls they want to seduce. She then sees Valerián and entangles him further, giving him the note his wife wrote for Don Álvaro and claiming it is for him from Ipólita. He joins the others, elated because he believes that Ipólita is finally succumbing to his advances.

On the way to the play, everyone hides their true state. The men escort each other's wives as an act of "good faith," which is really a test to see how everyone reacts. Meanwhile Elvira plays a trick on Galíndez, tying him up and painting his face with the help of Pierres and his foreign friends. The couples are interrupted by Galíndez's cries for help, but once they untie him they realize it was all a trick by Elvira/Antonio and continue on their way, amused by the antics of the servants.

Act III begins with Don Álvaro demanding to know who gave Elvira the letter for Ipólita, threatening her if she refuses to answer. She tells him that Valerián wrote the note, but that she lied to Ipólita because her love for Don Álvaro had made her so jealous. He laments Valerián's betrayal, stating that no man he has met is as loyal as he is, and vows to kill his old friend. Elvira pleads with him to calm down, and they enter his study for some privacy. Galíndez arrives in

time to hear Don Álvaro praise his cross-dressed lover's beauty and to see them embrace; as he spies through the keyhole, he becomes convinced that they have a homosexual relationship.

Ipólita enters and Galíndez tells her what he has just seen, then invites her to see for herself. Horrified, Ipólita begs Galíndez to get her brother immediately, although she pretends to know nothing when Elvira/Antonio enters. Elvira apologizes for the trick with the letter and convinces Ipólita that Don Álvaro plans to kill her, his own wife, that night, advising her to leave her room as soon as her husband leaves the house. Ipólita is at her wit's end when her brother Leonardo arrives, leaving Elvira free to set up Galíndez for her final trick.

Ipólita tells Leonardo what she thinks she saw, and he proposes to take her marriage contract to a judge to have the marriage annulled, suggesting that Ipólita hide in a room other than her own while she waits. Elvira goes to Eugenia and tells her that she can arrange a secret meeting between her and Don Álvaro, and then promises to do the same for Valerián with Ipólita. With that arranged, Elvira must answer to an angry Pierres, upset because he has received a note which Elvira claims is from the servant girl Rafaela, but is actually from Galíndez. Elvira convinces Pierres that his love will be waiting to meet him that night, when in fact it will be Galíndez. With her traps set, Elvira escorts Eugenia to Ipólita's room, where she has also sent Valerián. Her trick serves a double purpose: not only will the cheating spouses end up being "unfaithful" to each other, Don Álvaro will believe that his wife has been seduced by Valerián. Elvira sets her plans in motion, first escorting Pierres, dressed as a woman, to Galíndez's quarters, then making sure that Valerián enters the room where his wife is.

The confusion culminates when Leonardo returns with officers of the law to settle the matter of the "illegal" marriage, only to find Don Álvaro, dressed in a nightshirt, ready to kill Valerián after finding him in Ipólita's room. Leonardo and the officers stop him from killing

Valerián, with everyone thoroughly confused when Eugenia exits the room in fear. Just then Pierres, still dressed as a woman, enters fighting with Galíndez, each trying to kill the other for the trick played on them. Ipólita comes out to investigate the noise, and the officer in charge demands an explanation.

Elvira steps forward and confesses that she is a woman, and responsible for the confusion. Valerián seizes the chance to reveal that he paid for Eugenia's first husband to be killed so they could marry. The constables agree with Valerián's claim that this is enough to nullify the marriage, freeing him from any obligation to her. The officer in charge, a bailiff of the Archbishop, then informs Don Álvaro and Ipólita that their marriage has been annulled because they never had the necessary paperwork to make it legally binding. With the marriages dissolved, Elvira surprises everyone, especially Don Álvaro, by declaring that she will return to Zaragoza. After witnessing first hand the awful deceit and disillusion of married life, she decides she would rather be a nun and avoid the whole mess.

Closed Marriages, Open Secrets

Unhappily Married humorously imagines the ins and outs of unrequited love, jealousy, and betrayal, and puts them in motion via various theatrical tools. Guillén de Castro creates a hilarious, action-packed, and quick-witted platform for telling the truth about our hearts' desires in the context of marriage and strict social norms. At a time when society's rules favored men, and disorder was punished by sword or sheriff, Castro gives female characters the agency to confuse their counterparts in the quest for love, and even to reject marriage. Women and servants are afforded the tools of irony and revelation, allowing an audience to discover the systematic injus-

tices of patriarchy that the play charts. Castro juxtaposes dialogues, asides, and wordplay that toy with notions of honor, commitment, and the institution of marriage.

The characters openly hate their marriages and simultaneously hatch secret schemes against their spouses, so that it becomes difficult to determine just how much each character knows about the others. The constant asides offer different levels of insight into the spousal relationships and the dexterity of Elvira's scheming throughout. In early modern Spanish theater, asides are an important theatrical practice: they add psychological depth, playfully engage the audience with a character, and offer social commentary about the events of the play as they unfold. The characters in *Unhappily Married* are not exactly likeable, yet they are profoundly relatable, a feat that Castro accomplishes in large part by having them speak their minds in the asides. These moments give us insight into past hurts, current jealousies, and motivations for how the characters react, as well as conveying joy, dismay, or anger, often solely expressed through asides.

Beyond the asides, Castro conveys motivation, psychological depth, and complex relationships through staging and dialogue. Many of the most important scenes are staged as juxtaposed duologues, where pairs of characters hold entirely separate, often parallel conversations on different parts of the stage. In Act I, for example, the characters become separated from their spouses and instead are paired with each other's, Valerián with Ipólita and Eugenia with Don Álvaro, with the former attempting to seduce the latter. This scene ends when both couples, each having its own exchange of seduction and refusal, end up in the same room:

Enter VALERIÁN and IPÓLITA without seeing the others

IPÓLITA	Stop, on your life.
VALERIÁN	My love will not allow me.
DON ÁLVARO	Let go.

EUGENIA	Wait.	
DON ÁLVARO	Who says so?	
VALERIÁN	I'm crazy for you.	
DON ÁLVARO	You're not yourself.	
IPÓLITA	If you insist,	
	I will let the whole world know.	
EUGENIA	My lord!	
IPÓLITA	(<i>Aside</i>) Oh, heavens!	
<i>They all see each other</i>		(421–431)

Before the two pairs see each other, their dialogue plays like a game of ping-pong. When the stage directions finally indicate that the spousal pairs become aware of the other's presence, we can imagine them on opposite ends of the stage, each one eyeing his or her respective spouse nervously as they all make their way toward center stage. This is one of Castro's favorite staging and dialogue techniques, used to great effect to map out the complicated set of relationships between the characters. Such scenes also increase the ambiguity of the marriages and their secrets. How much does each character know? How much do they suspect? While the audience ponders these questions, it becomes clear that the best informed, or at least the most vocal about her knowledge, is the mistress Elvira.

Elvira has access to information and secrets because, as far as most of the others are concerned, she is merely a servant and thus poses no threat: she is asked to deliver adulterous love letters, she is there when Eugenia declares her love to Don Álvaro the second time, and she witnesses all of Ipólita and Don Álvaro's fights. Her status as a servant also makes her a confidante to the other characters—someone with whom they can share their secrets and woes, without having to worry these will be used against them. Ipólita continues to trust her even after witnessing the love scene between “Antonio” and her husband, believing the disguised mistress when Elvira says that Don Álvaro plans to kill poor Ipólita. And yet, there is some indication that Elvira's

disguise is not as convincing as it seems. Eugenia and Valerián's constant comments about how witty and beautiful "Antonio" is hint at their knowing or suspecting more than they let on.

Urban Entertainment

Beyond its unique portrayal of married life, *Unhappily Married* also provides insight into the domestic life of the urban nobility, exemplified by two scenes in which the characters engage in the leisure activities of their class. Plays reflected the common people's fascination with court life through the extensive portrayal of games that both the nobility and the wealthy merchant classes played to pass the time. Economic privilege allowed for leisure time, and parlor games were often represented on stage as a way to move the plot forward or give context to relationships between characters. This is the case in *Unhappily Married*, where parlor games and references to theatrical events are opportunities for the characters to voice their true desires or concerns. The first of these is the *juego de letras*, or alphabet game, which takes up the latter half of Act I. Such games were typical of the *teatro cortesano*, or courtly theater, as the spectacle and pageantry of court and festival life often made their way into more commercial plays. In this scene, the characters lay it all out on the table, acting out their desires to the amusement of some and the displeasure of others.

The second of these moments, perhaps odder for a modern reader, occurs at the end of Act II, as Eugenia and Ipólita prepare for an evening's entertainment in the form of a *comedia* at a local merchant's house. Meanwhile, in a capsule scene separate from the main plot, the cross-dressed Elvira plays a mean trick on the squire Galíndez. As the characters themselves note, this scene could very well be the *entremés* or comic interlude for the play the characters are on their way to see, while functioning metatheatrically as the comic interlude for Castro's own play. This

scene has its roots in other forms of traditional Valencian theater, which often had episodic comic moments only loosely related to the central plot, similar to the set pieces from *commedia dell'arte* and the later *entremeses* played between acts of long-form theater. Even the stock characters of traditional theater and the short-form *entremés* appear: the foreign fool (Pierres), the crotchety old man (Galíndez), the passionate woman (Eugenia), the effeminate, cowardly husband (Valerián), the womanizer (Don Álvaro). While the amused reaction of the characters to the cruel trick may strike us as callous, it is important to keep in mind that in the theatrical context of performance the *entremés* exists as a no-holds-barred moment that is meant to take the audience, momentarily, out of the action, suspending the higher-stakes narrative of the *comedia*. While Galíndez is humiliated in a way which would normally call for disgust and horror, his treatment is standard for an *entremés*; it elicits laughter despite its violence not only because comedy of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth-century derived its humor more cruelly than modern sensibilities are accustomed to, but also because the scene has been carefully transformed, metatheatrically, into an *entremés*. Galíndez is no longer Don Álvaro and Ipólita's loyal servant but rather *el vejete*, the archetypal old man always worthy of ridicule in the context of the comic interlude.¹ This scene provides an excellent opportunity for the modern director to bracket the scene with a different acting style, a sketch comedy routine, or even a bit of improv, in the same spirit of the seventeenth-century *entremés*.

Unhappily Ever After: The Denouement

¹ Madroñal, Abraham. "Comicidad entremesil en comedias de algunos dramaturgos del Siglo de Oro." *Bulletin of Spanish Studies* 90. 4-5 (2013): 751-765.

The dissolution of the marriages in the final scene is a unique element of this play, in stark contrast to typical Golden Age *comedias urbanas*. It is important to note that what occurs at the end cannot rightly be called divorce, for divorce as such did not exist in seventeenth-century Spain (it only became legal there in 1981). The only hope unhappily married couples had for the dissolution of marriage was annulment or, of course, for one of the spouses to die. Unlike in Pedro Calderón de la Barca's bloody wife-murder plays, which were written some decades after *Mal casados*, no spouses are killed in this play. Instead, the plot leads to a totally unexpected, and unprecedented, dissolution of marriage based on legal technicalities and not a little fudging of the truth. Castro was clearly well informed on all the valid reasons for annulling a marriage, as the list was very short:

[C]ases of annulment of marriage were also very exceptional and were related to the husband's impotence or "the wife's extreme reticence," which prevented consummation, the young age of the spouses, clandestine marriages or enforced marriages following abduction, consanguinity, the solemn vow [to enter religious life] of one of the spouses, bigamy, or the murder of the previous spouse in order to be able to remarry.²

In *Unhappily Married*, Ipólita's brother Leonardo convinces himself—and more importantly, convinces the Archbishop's bailiffs—that the papal dispensation required for Don Álvaro and Ipólita's marriage to a cousin was never properly notarized, thereby nullifying the entire thing. Meanwhile, Eugenia and Valerián's marriage is nullified through the very specific and oddly fitting technicality of the period which declared that in the case of the murder of one spouse for

² Sperling, Jutta. "Marriage at the Time of the Council of Trent (1560-70): Clandestine Marriages, Kinship Prohibitions, and Dowry Exchange in European Comparison." *Journal of Early Modern History*, 8 (2004): 67-108.

the purposes of marriage to another, the second marriage would be null and void. It is also interesting to note that while the bailiffs admit that Valerián owes nothing to Eugenia due to the murder of her first husband, neither one is brought up on charges; apparently, their horrible marriage has been punishment enough.

“After a time, you may find that having is not so pleasing a thing after all as wanting. It is not logical, but it is often true.” So says Mr. Spock, of *Star Trek* fame, about a marriage gained through duplicitous means. This certainly seems to be the case for the unhappy couples of this seventeenth-century play, for whom the circumstances of marriage in both cases seem to have required more trouble than they were ultimately worth. From beginning to end, the characters are so dissatisfied with their marriages that they are more than a little relieved to find themselves free of their spouses when the curtain closes. Of all the characters, Elvira seems to have learned this hard lesson best: after nursing jealous desires for Don Álvaro during most of the play, her decision to remain single and become a nun comes as another shock in an already surprising denouement. It is clear, however, that her experience with these toxic marriages has shown her that achieving one’s desires does not always lead to a happily-ever-after. Rather than try for marriage with Don Álvaro, who has proven himself to be a suavely manipulative husband fond of gaslighting his spouse, Elvira opts to forgo marriage altogether by joining a convent.

Production History

Unhappily Married in Valencia, based on Eduardo Julia Martínez’s 1927 edition of *Los mal casados de Valencia*, was translated by Laura Muñoz and Veronica Wilson and workshopped by the UCLA working group *The Comedia in Translation and Performance*. Directed by Dr. Barbara Fuchs and sponsored by the Center for 17th- and 18th-Century Studies, this work-

ing group is comprised of UCLA graduate students, local theater practitioners and Golden Age scholars. An adaption of the play, written by Luciano García Lorenzo, toured in Spain in 1994 and again in 2013. More recently, in 2014, a modernized English adaptation by Laurel Ollstein, also entitled *Unhappily Married in Valencia*, was read on the grounds of UCLA's William Andrews Clark Memorial Library as part of *Golden Tongues*, a performance series in association with Playwrights' Arena that aims to engage local Los Angeles playwrights with the rich corpus of Golden Age Spanish plays.

Condensed to one hour, Ollstein's adaptation was drawn from only a synopsis and a few scenes translated by Kathleen Jeffs on Out of the Wings, an online database of Spanish-language plays for English language researchers and practitioners.³ Ollstein moved the action to Valencia, California, a neighborhood in Santa Clarita which was founded in the 18th century as part of Spanish colonizing and missionary efforts. Skipping any reference to a painful history of Colonial Spain in the Americas, Ollstein's adaptation focuses on today's Los Angeles: Don Álvaro is Alvy, a literature professor at the California Institute of the Arts (Cal Arts). In this context, Valencia provides a contemporary suburban setting where isolated couples look for love in all the wrong places.

In Ollstein's words, her play is an "edgy farce about two mismatched married couples living in Valencia, California, each of them searching for something different than what they have, leading to declarations of love for their neighbors' spouses, going off meds, and one husband's mistress (or mister) manipulating everyone." Ollstein's main twist is Elvira's character—not a cross-dressed woman but a gay man who returns from a poetry conference with Alvy. De-

³ For more information about Out of the Wings, visit: <http://www.outofthewings.org/>

spite gender changes and an abbreviated plot, Ollstein conveys the enduring themes from Castro's play, bringing modern audiences closer to Spain's classical theater and illuminating human experiences that have not changed much between then and now.

A Note on Our Translation

Although the movement from verse to prose and a modernization of spelling and punctuation are the only substantive textual manipulations in our translation, the dialogue of minor character Pierres did force us to deviate from our standard translation from Castilian to English. Pierres, a character of uncertain origin, is an interesting anomaly for Spanish theater of the period, given that he does not speak Castilian, the standard language of long-form *comedia*. Pierres is referred to by the other characters as a *gabacho*, a term which might be familiar to a modern-day audience of Spanish speakers as a somewhat derogatory term for people speak Spanish poorly. This, as it turns out, is not too dissimilar from its seventeenth-century usage, when it was used to describe people of the who left the region of the lower Pyrenees, and moved south into the Kingdom of Aragon in search of work. The stereotype of the *gabacho*, willing to do the most menial and degrading tasks to earn money before returning home, is well documented in the *Diccionario de Autoridades*. We have chosen to keep this term as used in the original, because there is no one word in English that would cover the complexity of the Spanish.

Pierres has been a complicated character to translate: he speaks an odd combination of standard Catalan, Valencian dialect, possibly some Occitan, and Castilian of the period. He is described as a drunkard and uneducated to boot. The other characters refer to him as a Frenchman, though he speaks no recognizable French. We have chosen to translate this character with a combination of languages in an attempt to parallel the complicated language mixture used in the

original, in this case with a combination of Catalan, Spanish, English, and French, which should also be made comprehensible through context and gestures. In cases where a gesture will suffice to make the meaning clear, we have attempted to leave in as much as the original language as possible, with translated footnotes where necessary.

Pronunciation Key

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

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

The underlined syllable in each word is the accented one.

DON ÁLVARO: DON AHL-VAH-ROH

IPÓLITA: EE-POH-LEE-TAH

VALERÍAN: VAH-LEH-REEAN

EUGENIA: EH-OO-HEH-NEEAH

ANTONIO: AHN-TOH-NEE-OH

LEONARDO: LEH-O-NAR-DOH

ELVIRA: EHL-VEE-RAH

GALÍNDEZ: GAH-LEEN-DEHS

PIERRES: PEE-EHR (as in the French, “Pierre”)

TWO GABACHOS:GAH-BAH-CHOHS

Characters

DON ÁLVARO

IPÓLITA, his wife

VALERIÁN, gentleman

EUGENIA, his wife

LEONARDO, gentleman, IPÓLITA's brother

ELVIRA, lady

GALÍNDEZ, squire

PIERRES, lackey

TWO PAGES

A BAILIFF and some CONSTABLES

TWO GABACHOS

	your unkind heart so easily forgets! You'd give it up in one moment for the thrill of the hunt. Leave, there's no question you're acting like the worst kind of traitor.	30
VALERIÁN	The greater my betrayal, the more it shows my love.	35
IPÓLITA	How's that?	
VALERIÁN	Wait! Listen!	
IPÓLITA	Listen to what?	
VALERIÁN	My many fine qualities, so you can see I'm madly in love. Am I not a nobleman?	40
IPÓLITA	Yes.	
VALERIÁN	Do I not owe your husband friendship?	
IPÓLITA	Yes.	
VALERIÁN	Well then think about who I am, look upon me, and let your heart melt at the size of my love and the barriers it has overcome. Don't you see how you flatter me the more you call me a traitor, since it makes it all the more notable that I love you as I do?	45 50
IPÓLITA	Let go!	
VALERIÁN	Happy traitor that I am!	

IPÓLITA	And I an unfortunate wretch!	55
VALERIÁN	My betrayal proves just how fine my love is.	
<i>Enter GALÍNDEZ, an old squire</i>		
GALÍNDEZ	Today your pining ends.	
IPÓLITA	What?	
GALÍNDEZ	I saw—	60
IPÓLITA	Who?	
GALÍNDEZ	Hush.	
IPÓLITA	Out with it. Just tell me.	
GALÍNDEZ	My lord Don Álvaro is in Valencia.	65
IPÓLITA	Finally! And about time!	
GALÍNDEZ	He'll be here soon.	
IPÓLITA	You've seen him, then?	
GALÍNDEZ	Yes, my lady.	70
VALERIÁN	And he's home?	
GALÍNDEZ	Yes, my lord.	
VALERIÁN	The game is up.	
IPÓLITA	Come.	

VALERIÁN Careful that he doesn't find out . . . 75

IPÓLITA Hush, you fool.
I care for him too much
to put him in this situation.
A woman who can
defend her own honor, 80
without involving her husband,
makes an honorable wife.

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

IPÓLITA I would run out into the street 85
to embrace him.

SCENE 2

Room in IPÓLITA and DON ÁLVARO's house

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

ELVIRA You're married?

DON ÁLVARO Regretfully.
Just play along.

ELVIRA Just kill me now. 90

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

IPÓLITA My lord!

DON ÁLVARO My lady! 95

IPÓLITA Thank heavens you've returned.

ELVIRA	(<i>Aside</i>) And now I'm dying of jealousy.	
VALERIÁN	(<i>Aside</i>) Envy consumes me.	
DON ÁLVARO	Forgive me for not embracing you first.	100
VALERIÁN	It's good to have you back. Now I await your embrace.	
DON ÁLVARO	Take my arms. You should be grateful I tear them from my wife's neck to give them to you.	105
VALERIÁN	(<i>Aside</i>) It's a lucky man who gets to enjoy her. (<i>Aloud</i>) Well, Álvaro?	
IPÓLITA	(<i>Aside</i>) Oh, traitor!	
VALERIÁN	How was your journey?	110
DON ÁLVARO	Better than I could have imagined.	
VALERIÁN	Zaragoza is heavenly.	
ELVIRA	(<i>Aside</i>) My beloved homeland!	
DON ÁLVARO	It's a beautiful place.	
VALERIÁN	Renowned.	115
DON ÁLVARO	I cried when I had to leave Coso Street. ⁴	

⁴ One of the oldest and best known streets in Zaragoza, since its route corresponds to the *cursus*, a road which bordered the wall in Roman times, and from which it derives its name.

VALERIÁN	And what happened to you there?	
DON ÁLVARO	Strange things, certainly. I'll tell you all about them in a better place and time.	120
VALERIÁN	Until then.	
DON ÁLVARO	You're leaving?	
VALERIÁN	I'll come back later with my wife.	125
DON ÁLVARO	I look forward to it.	
VALERIÁN	I'm sure she will too.	
IPÓLITA	The more the merrier!	
VALERIÁN	<i>(Aside)</i> I'm dying inside.	
ELVIRA	<i>(Aside)</i> I'm furious!	130
IPÓLITA	<i>(Aside)</i> Thank God he's leaving.	
<i>Exit VALERIÁN</i>		
SCENE 3		
DON ÁLVARO	And why so sad?	
IPÓLITA	On your account: you cried when you had to come home so you must have left something behind. There are many ladies . . .	135
ELVIRA	<i>(Aside)</i> Oh God!	

IPÓLITA	. . . in Zaragoza.	
ELVIRA	<i>(Aside)</i> Here we go!	
IPÓLITA	And I fear more than one must have been your lady-friend. What a fine time you must have had with them!	140
DON ÁLVARO	None that could equal the pleasure I have with you.	
ELVIRA	<i>(Aside)</i> You're a master of deception. What am I doing here?	145
IPÓLITA	So what! Haven't you betrayed me before?	
ELVIRA	<i>(Aside)</i> What a tantrum!	
IPÓLITA	Swear to me.	150
DON ÁLVARO	I swear on your beauty.	
IPÓLITA	Swear again. More.	
DON ÁLVARO	I swear on your life.	
IPÓLITA	Swear on your own life, too.	
DON ÁLVARO	Isn't your life my own?	155
IPÓLITA	Yes, my love.	
DON ÁLVARO	Well, light of my life, have faith in me.	
IPÓLITA	Listen . . . even with all that, I don't believe you.	160

A young man and in Zaragoza—
there must have been some chance
to give into your desires.
What did you do?

DON ÁLVARO I conducted business. 165

IPÓLITA And was it all business?

DON ÁLVARO I also visited a few places.

IPÓLITA And courted ladies?

DON ÁLVARO No.

IPÓLITA You didn't even speak to them? 170

DON ÁLVARO I didn't even speak to them.

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

DON ÁLVARO No, I swear.

IPÓLITA I doubt that. 175

DON ÁLVARO Yet I know that it is so.

IPÓLITA Not one, really?

DON ÁLVARO No, by God!
Now leave me alone. For heaven's sake!
I'm fed up with so many questions,
one after the other— 180
enough of this constant jealousy!
I just got here.

IPÓLITA Now you're upset?

DON ÁLVARO Could you at least let me . . . 185

IPÓLITA Such savage sorrow!

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

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

ELVIRA Let me help you.

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

Exit IPÓLITA

SCENE 4

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

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

DON ÁLVARO Yes and no:
no, because I've had my pleasure through lies,
yes, because it's no sin to lie
when you're in love.

ELVIRA	Lying is always dishonorable, you boor.	210
DON ÁLVARO	Look, there's no dishonor in a lie when it deceives a woman: her beauty provides the excuse.	215
ELVIRA	Oh that's rich! You pour salt in the wound! Though you were married, you traitor, you led me on, offered me marriage, tainted my honor, and brought me, despicable man, to where I scream, cry, and suffer . . . all effects of that poison I took in through my eyes. Was that the right thing to do? And then you told me this house— oh, I'm about to explode!— was your cousin's, you ingrate!	220 225
DON ÁLVARO	I spoke the truth.	
ELVIRA	How can I resist my own fury?	230
DON ÁLVARO	The woman you saw is both my cousin and my wife.	
ELVIRA	My fury is so great, I will shout it to the heavens!	235
DON ÁLVARO	If you'll just be quiet, I'll kiss the ground you walk on. Calm down.	
ELVIRA	Has there ever been a betrayal like this?	

	at the thought of seeing the one I adore. (<i>Aloud</i>) Welcome back, and forgive me. I'm nearly dead from climbing the stairs.	270
VALERIÁN	You certainly look it.	
DON ÁLVARO	Rest, please.	
EUGENIA	(<i>Aside</i>) If only I could rest in your arms.	275
DON ÁLVARO	Would you care for anything?	
EUGENIA	My lady Ipólita, where is she?	
DON ÁLVARO	I will let her know you're here. She's weeping at the moment.	280
VALERIÁN	What is it? Is it jealousy?	
DON ÁLVARO	She's unbearable.	
VALERIÁN	Is that why she retired?	
DON ÁLVARO	It's terrible! You know the state she gets into.	285
VALERIÁN	And Doña Eugenia is quite exhausted . . .	
DON ÁLVARO	Would you get her, then?	
VALERIÁN	(<i>Aside</i>) I will, I'm dying to see her.	
<i>Exit</i> VALERIÁN		
EUGENIA	(<i>Aside</i>) Good riddance. How can I get you alone? (<i>Aloud</i>) Could I have some water?	290

DON ÁLVARO	(<i>To ELVIRA</i>) Go and bring some immediately.	
ELVIRA	I'm like the wind.	
<i>Exit ELVIRA</i>		
EUGENIA	(<i>Aside</i>) I must seize the moment!	295
DON ÁLVARO	Well, my lady, are you better now?	
EUGENIA	No, not exactly. Feel my pulse and you'll see. It's racing. Come, feel it.	300
DON ÁLVARO	I can see it racing freely from here. It seems to be a little wild.	
EUGENIA	Oh my God! . . . give me your hand and you'll see I'm burning up.	305
DON ÁLVARO	What! This is going too far! You are sick, but not like that.	
EUGENIA	Press harder, unless my burning heat consumes you.	
DON ÁLVARO	That's what I'm afraid of. Are you still carrying on?	310
EUGENIA	Come here . . .	
DON ÁLVARO	It's not right.	
EUGENIA	. . . and touch my heart.	

DON ÁLVARO	I can see it in your eyes.	315
EUGENIA	You've discovered what ails me. Why are you taking so long if the remedy is in your hands?	
DON ÁLVARO	That's what this is about?	
EUGENIA	You are cruel.	320
DON ÁLVARO	I'm a man of honor. I've told you a thousand times, it's inappropriate. Why do you persist?	
EUGENIA	I'd like to find one yes among a thousand no's, and so find my good fortune, like the one who gets the lucky ace among the thousand who don't.	325
DON ÁLVARO	Well, there's no point in trying. I tell you, I am your husband's friend and have never been a traitor. I must warn you, put an end to your antics. You seek fortune in a bad hand.	330 335
EUGENIA	How well you treat me.	
DON ÁLVARO	As my station requires.	
EUGENIA	Are you sure?	
DON ÁLVARO	I am.	340
EUGENIA	How is it possible, ingrate, that you, fickle as can be,	

	<p> throw all sense away, follow any woman you see, and catch all those you follow, without leaving one scrap when the chance comes up. From the haughty lady to the humble maid, since that is what your nature bids you do, and yet you steel your heart against me alone? </p>	<p>345</p> <p>350</p>
DON ÁLVARO	<p> Though it's true, I do follow my desires, I only do so where I owe nothing to a friend. For that would not be fair dealing— it would be shameful indeed to betray a good friend. Where honor rules, pleasure has no sway. One must keep faith with one's friends: he who betrays a friend must know he breaks his word. A man who does such a thing is an enemy of the faith, for whosoever betrays a friend, would betray his God, too. </p>	<p>355</p> <p>360</p> <p>365</p>
EUGENIA	<p> Bravo, my friend! Come and let me bury my sorrows in your chest, and then you too can be a heretic to your faith. I renege from it a thousand times, since it only does me harm. I'm crazy for you! </p>	<p>370</p> <p>375</p>
DON ÁLVARO	<p>Here comes the water.</p>	

EUGENIA It's hardly enough
to put out such a fire.

Enter ELVIRA with a glass of water and some sweets

ELVIRA I ordered some sweets. 380
 That's why it took me so long.

EUGENIA *(Aside)* The later the better.
 (Aloud) Do you trust this pageboy?⁵

ELVIRA I am happy that he trusted me
 to serve you, my lady. 385

EUGENIA A pretty face and pretty words.

DON ÁLVARO Aren't you hungry?

EUGENIA I've already eaten.

ELVIRA Goodness! You're flushed.

EUGENIA I have regained the color I lost 390
 in climbing the stairs.

EUGENIA *drinks the water*

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

EUGENIA What did you say?

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

395

EUGENIA Well said.

⁵ Eugenia's question is also meant to denote surprise and displeasure at Don Álvaro allowing Elvira/Antonio, a servant, to interrupt their private conversation.

DON ÁLVARO	He's an educated lad.	
ELVIRA	With honors, no less.	
EUGENIA	He seems a great fool, with a woman's voice and face.	400
ELVIRA	<i>(Aside)</i> Oh Fortune, look what you've brought me to!	
<i>Exit ELVIRA</i>		
EUGENIA	If you loved me . . .	
DON ÁLVARO	Must you insist?	
EUGENIA	Though you want nothing of it, I must insist. <i>Ay, Don Álvaro!</i>	405
DON ÁLVARO	I'll always be honorable.	
EUGENIA	I'll let the whole world hear my pain, if you won't give up your faith for a new idol.	410
DON ÁLVARO	You know how this works. Surely you're sane enough to see you'll be ruined. Leave me be.	
EUGENIA	Let me be ruined.	415
DON ÁLVARO	What are you trying to do?	
EUGENIA	My darling, love you.	
DON ÁLVARO	This madness has crossed the line.	

EUGENIA This will be the end of me! 420

SCENE 6

Enter VALERIÁN and IPÓLITA without seeing the others

IPÓLITA Stop, on your life.

VALERIÁN My love won't let me.

DON ÁLVARO Let go.

EUGENIA Wait.

DON ÁLVARO Who says so? 425

VALERIÁN I'm crazy for you.

DON ÁLVARO You're not yourself.

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

EUGENIA My lord! 430

IPÓLITA (*Aside*) Oh, heavens!

They all see each other

DON ÁLVARO Look who's here.

EUGENIA (*Aside*) Ay, I'm cursed!

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

IPÓLITA (*Aside*) What a moment!
Did he hear you?

VALERIÁN	What was that about?	
EUGENIA	Wait.	
IPÓLITA	Wait.	440
IPÓLITA <i>runs off stage</i>		
VALERIÁN	What's going on, Don Álvaro?	
DON ÁLVARO	I would like to drag her out by the hair. This refusing to come out . . .	
VALERIÁN	Listen.	445
DON ÁLVARO	. . . Ipólita . . .	
IPÓLITA <i>returns</i>		
VALERIÁN	She was on her way.	
DON ÁLVARO	. . . is so rude, and with such poor manners.	
EUGENIA	(<i>Aside</i>) I'm exhausted by this effort— this is not right.	450
VALERIÁN	(<i>Aside</i>) I was a dead man there for a moment.	
IPÓLITA	(<i>Aside</i>) I'm so unlucky, I thought things might end up even worse.	
VALERIÁN	(<i>Aside</i>) I feared a greater misfortune.	455
EUGENIA	(<i>Aside</i>) I was very lucky this time.	
DON ÁLVARO	(<i>Aside</i>) It could have been worse.	

VALERIÁN	I'm glad I was helpful in getting her to open her bedroom door.	460
DON ÁLVARO	Such nonsense to shut herself in her room when you are visiting.	
IPÓLITA	I know. Better manners are to be expected from a woman like me. Forgive me, my lady.	465
EUGENIA	Fine. Now you must shake hands, and anyone who refuses must face me instead. My sword always finds its mark, even though that last battle has left me all worn out.	470
VALERIÁN	Well said. I'll vouch for that.	
DON ÁLVARO	I'll second it.	475
VALERIÁN	Come, give me your hand.	
IPÓLITA	You should marry us again. It is better without a doubt to start anew when something can't be fixed.	480
DON ÁLVARO	A mistake won't fix a mistake, and it would add insult to injury. You can't redo what wasn't undone.	
IPÓLITA	Do you want it undone?	
DON ÁLVARO	<i>(Aside)</i> Would that it could be!	485

Enter ELVIRA, running, and GALÍNDEZ chasing her

GALÍNDEZ I did that? You liar!

ELVIRA	Having eaten them . . .	
DON ÁLVARO	Calm down.	
GALÍNDEZ	My lord, he's lying.	
ELVIRA	. . . he drank the water, and then said it was hot, and then . . .	510
GALÍNDEZ	A thousand lies!	
ELVIRA	I was sure I could get away from him, so I hit the jug as he held it to his mouth. I'm only sorry there wasn't more water.	515
EUGENIA	So feisty.	
ELVIRA	And I came running to you to save myself.	
GALÍNDEZ	Oh, traitor! My lord, only that last thing was true. He's an incredible rascal.	520
VALERIÁN	It's a great story.	
GALÍNDEZ	He has made a real mess of my poor nose, and if you . . .	525
DON ÁLVARO	Don't get all worked up. Antonio, is that any way to behave? I'll make them whip you a hundred times over.	
GALÍNDEZ	I will happily take care of it.	530
DON ÁLVARO	All in good time.	

EUGENIA	How entertaining.	
ELVIRA	<i>(Aside)</i> The nonsense I must put up with, just to hide the truth!	
DON ÁLVARO	Now, let's find some way to while away the afternoon.	535
VALERIÁN	Good idea!	
IPÓLITA	Let's sit.	
EUGENIA	Do not be sad, my lady, if God is with you.	540
IPÓLITA	I'm at your service. I'll be all right somehow.	
DON ÁLVARO	I'll kiss your hand.	
IPÓLITA	Yes, of course.	
ELVIRA	<i>(Aside)</i> I'm so miserable.	545
VALERIÁN	<i>(Aside)</i> This jealousy . . . !	
EUGENIA	<i>(Aside)</i> This fire . . .	
VALERIÁN	<i>(Aside)</i> . . . undoes me!	
EUGENIA	<i>(Aside)</i> . . . consumes me!	
DON ÁLVARO	What game shall we play?	550
VALERIÁN	Make one up.	
DON ÁLVARO	The game of letters would suit such a learned company.	

VALERIÁN	But we need more people to play.	555
DON ÁLVARO	So be it.	
EUGENIA	Perhaps Galíndez can play.	
IPÓLITA	Will he know how?	
DON ÁLVARO	And young Tony.	
GALÍNDEZ	I'm not sure I should, I don't know . . .	560
DON ÁLVARO	We'll see what he comes up with.	
VALERIÁN	If you want a good laugh, bring in one of those <i>gabacho</i> servants. ⁶	
DON ÁLVARO	You mean Pierres?	
VALERIÁN	Besides being a drunk, he's a little crazy.	565
DON ÁLVARO	Have him come then. Go call him, Antonio.	
ELVIRA	And in his native tongue. M'sieur Pierres!	
<i>Exit ELVIRA</i>		
VALERIÁN	That page isn't half bad.	570
DON ÁLVARO	He's a devil.	

⁶ As a general term, it denotes someone of foreign origin, although in the seventeenth century it was often used to describe someone from the lower Pyrenees region who moved into the city to do manual labor. See Introduction.

GALÍNDEZ	That he is.	
DON ÁLVARO	Pick a letter. ⁷	
EUGENIA	I'll pick the first, <i>A</i> .	575
DON ÁLVARO	And I choose <i>E</i> , the second of the vowels.	
VALERIÁN	I pick the third, which is <i>I</i> .	
EUGENIA	Won't you choose?	
IPÓLITA	Which one, oh God! The <i>A</i> you picked was rightly mine.	580
EUGENIA	Take it, then.	
IPÓLITA	I don't want it. It's not important. I'll pick something else.	585
EUGENIA	Since it's the first, I just thought of it first.	
IPÓLITA	<i>C</i> isn't bad.	
GALÍNDEZ	See, I know some things . . .	
VALERIÁN	I see what you're up to.	590
GALÍNDEZ	. . . that start with this letter, some very bad ones. ⁸	

⁷ The last half of Act I is dedicated to this word game, through which everyone makes their desires known. See Introduction.

⁸ The play on "C words" here probably refers to marriage (*casamiento*) in the Spanish, but could easily refer to cuckoldry in the English.

DON ÁLVARO	Some which are forced upon us.	
VALERIÁN	Galíndez has good taste. Pick a letter.	595
GALÍNDEZ	I choose . . .	
DON ÁLVARO	Is Pierres coming?	
GALÍNDEZ	<i>T.</i>	
VALERIÁN	<i>T?</i>	
GALÍNDEZ	<i>T.</i>	600

SCENE 8

Enter ELVIRA and PIERRES

VALERIÁN	Just in time.	
ELVIRA	Pierres is here.	
PIERRES	At your servicio, monsieur.	
VALERIÁN	Come here, do you know how to read?	
PIERRES	I have some.	605
VALERIÁN	You have to pick a letter.	
PIERRES	What for?	
VALERIÁN	Pick one, and you'll see later what to do with it. It's a game.	610
PIERRES	All right.	

	Give me <i>R</i> .	
DON ÁLVARO	You'll have your work cut out for you. Now young Tony picks.	
ELVIRA	If I think about it, I'll choose worse. I'll take <i>D</i> .	615
DON ÁLVARO	Play the game, my lady.	
EUGENIA	I'm first.	
DON ÁLVARO	Go ahead, my lady.	
IPÓLITA	That's not right.	620
EUGENIA	Well, I started from Aragon.	
VALERIÁN	Now you must forfeit something, your choice.	
EUGENIA	Why?	
VALERIÁN	Because you've made a mistake. Aragon is not a town, it's a kingdom.	625
DON ÁLVARO	Without a doubt.	
IPÓLITA	Give a ribbon for the forfeit.	
EUGENIA	I just did. To continue: I arrived at Almeria, where I stayed the night. My host's name was Antonio and his lady was Ana, and then there was a suitor, Don Álvaro, who followed me on my way.	630 635
VALERIÁN	Fine.	

DON ÁLVARO	It wasn't me.	
VALERIÁN	Oh God, that makes me so jealous.	
IPÓLITA	I feel the same.	
VALERIÁN	I'll have my revenge on you both.	640
EUGENIA	We sat down to dinner, and we started with . . . oh, God! Who will help me? Artichokes. Then, for an entrée, Andalusian duck, for dessert, I suppose, Almonds. And now I've gotten to the hardest part.	645
DON ÁLVARO	And what did you say to that handsome man?	
EUGENIA	I don't know what to say, how sad! . . . That he was as lovely as the Air.	650
VALERIÁN	Is air lovely?	
EUGENIA	It's clear, which is the greatest beauty.	
ELVIRA	It's better felt than seen.	
IPÓLITA	Well said.	655
DON ÁLVARO	He's just a young lad. Go ahead.	
EUGENIA	I'm calm now.	
DON ÁLVARO	What did you tell him?	
EUGENIA	I told him he was the Apple of my eye.	660

GALÍNDEZ	Good, by George.	
IPÓLITA	That works? You know a lot about this game.	
EUGENIA	Are you making fun? (<i>Aside</i>) I know more about the love that sets my soul afire.	665
VALERIÁN	My turn.	
DON ÁLVARO	We're going clockwise.	
VALERIÁN	I went from Ita to Illescas, where I stayed the night at Icarus's Inn.	670
EUGENIA	Come on, forfeit. You've made a mistake.	
VALERIÁN	How?	
EUGENIA	There's no saint by that name.	
DON ÁLVARO	That's right.	675
VALERIÁN	Take this garter.	
EUGENIA	The glove is fine. I'll take the glove.	
PIERRES	Notre dama is the very diablo.	
EUGENIA	Hush, fool.	
VALERIÁN	As I was saying, the host was Inés. And the lady's name: Ipólita.	680

DON ÁLVARO	Good word play, by God.	
VALERIÁN	Surely it cannot surprise you if I want your wife, since mine wants you.	685
GALÍNDEZ	Nice jab.	
DON ÁLVARO	Extremely.	
IPÓLITA	Extremely unlikely.	690
VALERIÁN	But necessary.	
EUGENIA	More like witty.	
ELVIRA	And cliché.	
PIERRES	By Jove.	
DON ÁLVARO	You're doing well.	695
VALERIÁN	They're very witty.	
DON ÁLVARO	What a game.	
IPÓLITA	<i>(Aside)</i> Oh, traitor! <i>(Aloud)</i> Let's hear what's for dinner.	
DON ÁLVARO	Since you are the host, of course you're worried about it.	700
EUGENIA	That's funny.	
DON ÁLVARO	<i>(To IPÓLITA)</i> You're always so very . . .	
EUGENIA	Don't say she's greedy, instead tell her she's very . . . faithful.	705

DON ÁLVARO	This is not about the truth.	
IPÓLITA	What I said was also a joke. What did we have for dinner, Valerián?	
EUGENIA	Good.	710
VALERIÁN	I'll continue: first there were iced shrimp. What more should I say? . . . and then some Eel.	
DON ÁLVARO	You've made a mistake.	715
VALERIÁN	How?	
DON ÁLVARO	That's <i>E</i> , not <i>I</i> .	
VALERIÁN	Details, details.	
DON ÁLVARO	Eel starts with <i>E</i> .	
VALERIÁN	You're right, although it sounds the same.	720
DON ÁLVARO	I'll let it pass, keep going.	
VALERIÁN	Wait.	
EUGENIA	You have to have dessert.	
VALERIÁN	What would I have for dessert? How about Ice cream.	725
IPÓLITA	I can't stand it.	
GALÍNDEZ	I could eat it.	

IPÓLITA	That's a fine offer.	
EUGENIA	Very fine.	730
GALÍNDEZ	I'll eat soft, mushy things. For a mouth with no molars, everything mushy is good.	
VALERIÁN	I told my lady that she was beautiful as the divine Iris, and that I loved her.	735
EUGENIA	You loved her like who?	
VALERIÁN	Like I Imagine.	
ELVIRA	How do you explain that?	
DON ÁLVARO	Oh, lad!	740
GALÍNDEZ	It was a good question.	
VALERIÁN	What I want exists only in my Imagination.	
GALÍNDEZ	That was a clever answer.	
DON ÁLVARO	Very well said.	745
EUGENIA	My husband is very clever.	
ELVIRA	Well said, if he doesn't lie, for you know . . .	
DON ÁLVARO	Will you be quiet?	
ELVIRA	. . . in matters of love, the glib usually lie the most.	750

EUGENIA	A fool fit for a king.	
VALERIÁN	You're right.	
IPÓLITA	Have you ever been in love?	755
DON ÁLVARO	Scoundrel.	
PIERRES	Nail on the head.	
GALÍNDEZ	Take a look at the village idiot.	
DON ÁLVARO	Tell us, my lady.	
IPÓLITA	I left Çaragoza. ⁹	760
ELVIRA	What a shame!	
IPÓLITA	I arrived in Cartagena. My host there was Cain.	
DON ÁLVARO	Strange name.	765
IPÓLITA	I always prefer hosts who can kill the mood.	
EUGENIA	A man's a man.	
VALERIÁN	Good point.	
DON ÁLVARO	Back to the topic, and a good one at that. And your hostess?	770

⁹ One of the variant spellings of Zaragoza still in use in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Ipólita is bending the rules of the game slightly, although either no one catches it or they simply do not call her on it.

IPÓLITA	She was called Catalina. And there was Cosme as my enemy.	
DON ÁLVARO	That's my middle name.	775
IPÓLITA	Who else but you would I dine with in this world?	
DON ÁLVARO	Is that why you chose that letter?	
IPÓLITA	I picked what was left of you, because all I get from you are the leftovers.	780
VALERIÁN	Oh, very good!	
GALÍNDEZ	Precious.	
EUGENIA	You're just perfect.	
ELVIRA	You're honest and clever, a recipe for jealousy.	785
DON ÁLVARO	Quiet, by God, my life depends on it! If you praise her for being jealous, it will be the death of me. What did you start with?	790
IPÓLITA	Crab Cakes.	
DON ÁLVARO	Good start.	
IPÓLITA	I'll go on: when you're angry, you make a tempest in a teacup, and then call me the crabby one, when I want to ask you something. So I'd like to return the favor.	795

VALERIÁN	Good show.	
IPÓLITA	And then Chopped liver.	800
GALÍNDEZ	This also brings up some history.	
IPÓLITA	It's written on the lines of my face.	
VALERIÁN	Isn't she funny?	
EUGENIA	Infinitely.	
DON ÁLVARO	May God keep her in his infinite glory.	805
IPÓLITA	To save you from suffering . . .	
ELVIRA	Now that's malice.	
IPÓLITA	. . . and no trick.	
DON ÁLVARO	God save you for a long time.	
EUGENIA	Do tell, what did you have for dessert?	810
IPÓLITA	It was Cynicism.	
DON ÁLVARO	Good Heavens, isn't that the truth! There's never been a meal at my table without cynical jealousy.	815
VALERIÁN	Eating is better when you add a little spice.	
EUGENIA	What did you say to that suitor?	
IPÓLITA	I told him he was as beautiful as Cupid.	

DON ÁLVARO	How effusive!	820
IPÓLITA	Not at all, for I love in him what he hates most in me.	
DON ÁLVARO	And what is that?	
IPÓLITA	Character.	825
EUGENIA	Well, you're all figured out.	
ELVIRA	Quarrels between spouses are just the storm before the calm. This is what souls long for.	
DON ÁLVARO	Antonio, that's just the price of marriage.	830
IPÓLITA	And a high price to pay.	
DON ÁLVARO	Now I'll start. <i>E</i> is my letter: leaving from Écija, this is hard, to Emaús.	835
IPÓLITA	You are in the wrong.	
DON ÁLVARO	Am I?	
VALERIAN	She's right. You arrived at Emaús, which is a castle, not a town.	840
IPÓLITA	Luckily, I caught you.	
DON ÁLVARO	I was in the wrong. Enough.	

GALÍNDEZ	A rolling stone gathers no moss.	845
DON ÁLVARO	I've been a fool in rolling along.	
IPÓLITA	As in so many other things.	
DON ÁLVARO	Like you and your mood.	
IPÓLITA	Come on, you must forfeit something.	
DON ÁLVARO	Everything I have and you could want is yours. Name it.	850
IPÓLITA	Your hat will do.	
DON ÁLVARO	The host was Esteban.	855
EUGENIA	The hostess?	
DON ÁLVARO	Wait . . . Eufemia.	
IPÓLITA	And now the lady.	
DON ÁLVARO	<i>E</i> will give me a chance for revenge.	860
VALERIÁN	Just as the <i>I</i> did for me.	
DON ÁLVARO	And yet, I don't want what belongs to a friend— whom I respect—even in jest.	
IPÓLITA	God save you for me.	865
DON ÁLVARO	Instead, I'll say her name was Elvira.	

ELVIRA	(<i>Aside</i>) He remembered my name! It's the least he could do.	
EUGENIA	(<i>Aside</i>) He'll do anything not to name me.	870
IPÓLITA	Elvira! A novel name. Is she a foreigner? Do tell.	
GALÍNDEZ	A daughter of the Cid ¹⁰ was named Elvira.	875
VALERIAN	You know so much history.	
PIERRES	Beaucoup, he's always reading!	
GALÍNDEZ	Hush, wino.	
ELVIRA	Surely you were his squire, and that's why you remember.	880
GALÍNDEZ	Am I as old as that, boy?	
PIERRES	Les dames call you goiter.	
EUGENIA	The spitting image!	
GALÍNDEZ	My actions speak louder than words.	
<i>Everyone laughs</i>		
IPÓLITA	This is good. What did you dine on?	885
DON ÁLVARO	I can't think of anything, as a starter, Endives, and then . . . I'm fed up with this.	

¹⁰ Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, the great hero of Spanish medieval epic.

VALERIÁN	You're losing it now.	
DON ÁLVARO	Just you wait. We had, yes, I say, an Eggplant, and for dessert, Elderberries.	890
IPÓLITA	I already fear her beauty. How did you describe her?	
DON ÁLVARO	I praised her Excellence.	895
IPÓLITA	Did you love her?	
DON ÁLVARO	Extremely.	
IPÓLITA	You always go to extremes.	
DON ÁLVARO	I erred but once, it could have been worse.	900
ELVIRA	I'll speak now, if you're finished.	
DON ÁLVARO	Go ahead.	
ELVIRA	I started out from my Desire.	
DON ÁLVARO	Instead of from a place?	905
ELVIRA	It had towers and walls, but I abandoned them on the way to my Damage.	
VALERIÁN	You speak in allegories.	
EUGENIA	Very fine ones!	910
ELVIRA	The host was Disappointment, and the hostess was Delay,	

	a bad woman.	
EUGENIA	No doubt.	
ELVIRA	She delays in order to kill any happiness that might come. My lady was Dejection herself— the way the suitor liked it.	915
IPÓLITA	What did they have for dinner?	
ELVIRA	We will eat in bed, a dash of Discouragement, with a dollop of Desolation, and for dessert, Dissatisfaction, the end of a poor, Despondent Devil.	920
EUGENIA	Isn't he amusing?	925
IPÓLITA	Extremely.	
EUGENIA	And to this dangerous dame you said . . .?	
ELVIRA	That she looked beautiful as a Damsel in Distress.	930
VALERIÓN	What a witty boy, by God.	
ELVIRA	Then, on her life and mine, I swore I loved her.	
VALERIÓN	How?	
ELVIRA	As Destiny Demands.	935
DON ÁLVARO	He's a devil.	
GALÍNDEZ	I'll start with decorum,	

	if I may.	
DON ÁLVARO	Go ahead.	
GALÍNDEZ	I left Toledo, and from Toledo I came to Toro.	940
VALERIÁN	There's good wine there.	
GALÍNDEZ	Isn't all wine good to a worn-out traveler?	
DON ÁLVARO	Extremely.	945
GALÍNDEZ	Am I doing all right?	
IPÓLITA	Very well, keep going. What was the name of the host?	
GALÍNDEZ	You want me to name the host? Terence. ¹¹	950
EUGENIA	What a perfect name for you to say! And the hostess?	
GALÍNDEZ	Teresa.	
ELVIRA	She'd be pretty ancient.	955
GALÍNDEZ	Then there was my Trotting dame. ¹²	
IPÓLITA	GalíndeZ, what dame is this?	
GALÍNDEZ	You people will drive me mad!	

¹¹ Terence (Publius Terentius), one of the most famous Roman playwrights, is known for his clear and direct language.

¹² Reference to prostitutes.

	This much is clear: if this dame didn't trot, she could never keep up with me.	960
DON ÁLVARO	Good one.	
GALÍNDEZ	And it's clear, and I'll say it clearly, that those who trot first, will gallop later.	965
DON ÁLVARO	That's good.	
GALÍNDEZ	And to my lady, I gave some Truffled balls. ¹³	
VALERIÁN	Good to eat. That's all you should have given her.	970
GALÍNDEZ	They paired well, if you'll pardon the expression.	
DON ÁLVARO	Galíndez!	
IPÓLITA	Say, what else did you give?	975
GALÍNDEZ	We had Tenderloin.	
VALERIÁN	Very good. What were the desserts?	
GALÍNDEZ	Turrón. ¹⁴	
ELVIRA	Were you able to eat it?	980
GALÍNDEZ	Why do you ask?	

¹³ In Spanish *turmas* can refer either to testicles or truffles.

¹⁴ *Turrón* or *torrone* is a confection popular in Spain and Italy, often made of almond nougat.

ELVIRA	Well, without teeth, how could you chew?	
EUGENIA	Especially the kind from Alicante. ¹⁵	
GALÍNDEZ	This lad gets into everything.	985
ELVIRA	Why not, old man?	
GALÍNDEZ	I'll give you . . .	
VALERIÁN	Forget him, and keep going. What did you say to your lady?	
GALÍNDEZ	That she was beautiful . . . What a moment! What shall I say, when my thoughts go every which way? I'll say that . . .	990
ELVIRA	That's not a bad solution. Clearly it helps you. You keep hitting yourself on the head, and I'll take a stick to you.	995
GALÍNDEZ	How can I come up with anything when this rascal keeps interrupting?	
DON ÁLVARO	Leave it for now, and afterwards, I'll have him whipped for you.	1000
GALÍNDEZ	She was pretty, like . . . I can't think of the word . . . like . . . oh, the devil take it . . . like a Turk!	1005
VALERIÁN	Nice!	

¹⁵ City in southern Valencia which continues to be famous for its *turrón*, which is especially hard.

DON ÁLVARO	That's good!	
EUGENIA	How do you love her?	
GALÍNDEZ	I adore her like . . . What's this, is there more? Like a Tigress.	1010
IPÓLITA	Like a tigress? What nonsense!	
GALÍNDEZ	They have a certain reputation.	
EUGENIA	How so?	1015
GALÍNDEZ	There is no lady who does not become fierce when a man falls for her. And so what I'm telling her is that I love her more than myself.	1020
DON ÁLVARO	Good argument.	
VALERIÁN	And proven. —Ah, Pierres! Are you asleep, <i>gabacho</i> ?	
PIERRES	My noggin hurts.	
VALERIÁN	You're drunk.	1025
PIERRES	Not from any vino you gave me.	
VALERIÁN	What letter did you have?	
PIERRES	<i>R.</i>	
VALERIÁN	Have you figured out the game?	

PIERRES	Yes.	1030
VALERIÁN	Well then, go ahead, start.	
PIERRES	I left from who knows where, I left from, um, Roussillon.	
DON ÁLVARO	Where did you go?	
PIERRES	To Ruzafa. ¹⁶	1035
GALÍNDEZ	How well the jughead speaks!	
PIERRES	Très bien, better than the old fart.	
ELVIRA	Enough of that.	
EUGENIA	The host, what was his name?	
PIERRES	How? Roland.	1040
ELVIRA	Is he French?	
PIERRES	Sans sainthood. ¹⁷	
VALERIÁN	A famous name at that.	
PIERRES	Of course!	
IPÓLITA	And the hostess, what was her name?	1045
PIERRES	I don't know, mon dieu. Her name was Roma.	

¹⁶ A neighborhood in the city of Valencia.

¹⁷ A reference to the *Song of Roland*, which for the French functions as an epic story of Christian knights fighting the Moorish invasion. On the Spanish side, the same episode involves the hero Bernardo del Carpio allying with the Moors to defend Spain from the French.

ELVIRA	Did she have a Roman nose? ¹⁸	
EUGENIA	Good Lord!	1050
VALERIÁN	What a drunk.	
GALÍNDEZ	He should forfeit something.	
DON ÁLVARO	This one plays to make mistakes.	
EUGENIA	What was the lady's name, Pierres?	1055
PIERRES	Oh, j'adore! I'm embarrassed, but I'll say it.	
IPÓLITA	What was her name?	
PIERRES	Rafela.	
IPÓLITA	My maid's name!	1060
DON ÁLVARO	Even this drunk knew which letter to pick?	
EUGENIA	Love reaches all.	
VALERIÁN	Love teaches all. And what did you eat? Tell us.	1065
PIERRES	Rue.	
DON ÁLVARO	Good food.	
IPÓLITA	Funny. And then?	

¹⁸ This reference jokes with the association of Rome with prostitution, where the "Roman nose" was a term for snub noses or complete loss of the nose due to syphilis.

PIERRES	I'm not sure what to say.	1070
GALÍNDEZ	Good Lord, he's sweating.	
VALERIÁN	He can't put two and two together. See how he frets.	
GALÍNDEZ	Don't rattle him.	
PIERRES	No, mon dieu.	1075
ELVIRA	Well, what?	
PIERRES	A Rat.	
VALERIÁN	A rat? Truly you're drunk! And for dessert?	
PIERRES	Je ne sais pas. I say, Radishes.	1080
GALÍNDEZ	Very good.	
ELVIRA	You eat it, you share it.	
EUGENIA	Now tell us how pretty your lady was.	1085
GALÍNDEZ	And call on Cupid.	
PIERRES	Like a Rabbit.	
IPÓLITA	Of course.	
EUGENIA	How silly.	
VALERIÁN	Now more nonsense. How did you love her?	1090

PIERRES	Like Regurgitation.	
DON ÁLVARO	A release?	
ELVIRA	Of radishes and wine.	
VALERIÁN	It sounds like a good meal.	1095
IPÓLITA	We've certainly enjoyed it.	
EUGENIA	Well, the game is over, we must receive our penance.	
IPÓLITA	Who will give it out?	
EUGENIA	I say it should be you.	1100
IPÓLITA	Me, I couldn't.	
VALERIÁN	Whoever caught the mistake, decides the punishment.	
DON ÁLVARO	Good idea.	1105
EUGENIA	Well, I was first to make a mistake. I want to pay the first penalty.	
VALERIÁN	I'll give you your penalty: you'll say sweet nothings to Don Álvaro at once, since you chose him as the suitor in your story.	1110
EUGENIA	You're so amusing.	
VALERIÁN	That's your penalty.	

EUGENIA	Ipólita can teach me, and I'll learn from her.	1115
IPÓLITA	Given this penalty I command that he scorn you.	
GALÍNDEZ	That's the spirit.	
DON ÁLVARO	That's fair. I accept.	1120
EUGENIA	Do I really have to do this?	
VALERIÁN	On your knees, Eugenia.	
EUGENIA	On my knees? My scornful lord, don't look like that, when I say you're as beautiful as the sky above.	1125
DON ÁLVARO	What's this you say?	
VALERIÁN	Not bad.	
DON ÁLVARO	I won't listen to a word of it.	1130
IPÓLITA	He's so good at scorn.	
EUGENIA	Rejection stokes my flame. Don't be so cruel. Let me return to my senses. Look at me, my darling, I'm yours, and I'd die for you. There's no call for such scorn.	1135
DON ÁLVARO	And I am, as is right, a friend to my desires, but loyal to my friend.	1140

EUGENIA	Will that do, judge?	
VALERIÁN	Anyone would think this has happened before. Such repartee seems to have been rehearsed.	1145
IPÓLITA	Doña Eugenia was something to see.	
DON ÁLVARO	This is true.	
IPÓLITA	Even in jest, it's hard to believe you could be loyal.	1150
DON ÁLVARO	If all women belonged to my friend, I wouldn't offend you with any of them.	
EUGENIA	<i>(Aside)</i> Here's my chance to get what I want. I will have my revenge, since this is the day of reckoning. <i>(Aloud)</i> Now Valerián, you say sweet nothings to Ipólita. Here, take your glove.	1155
DON ÁLVARO	Are you taking vengeance on me, too?	
IPÓLITA	Don't think that I won't get you.	1160
VALERIÁN	<i>(To DON ÁLVARO)</i> I know I do you wrong.	
DON ÁLVARO	Not to worry. It's just a game.	
VALERIÁN	<i>(Aside)</i> My heart is all aflame, like my immortal shame. <i>(Aloud)</i> I say, lady, that I love you— no, truly, I adore you, I weep for you and die for you, and you should not scorn me,	1165

	since it's not your penalty.	
IPÓLITA	What can be more powerful in a noble breast than the pleasure it seeks? Do I not have a point, Don Álvaro?	1170
DON ÁLVARO	You do.	
VALERIÁN	My everything, you know I'm yours. Make room for me in your heart: you're a tigress and an angel, so cruel and yet so beautiful.	1175
IPÓLITA	And I'm faithful to the tips of my toes. For this to work, you would have to be my husband and I would have to be your wife, since you love me and she loves him.	1180 1185
GALÍNDEZ	<i>(Aside)</i> Well said, by Saint Michael.	
VALERIÁN	She's clever.	
IPÓLITA	And you're a cheat.	
VALERIÁN	Have I done my penance?	1190
EUGENIA	Amazingly. It seemed well rehearsed.	
VALERIÁN	Yes and no. What can be better for our friendship than to speak plainly?	1195
ELVIRA	<i>(Aside)</i> These lines stink of truth.	

EUGENIA	Are there no more penalties?	
IPOLITA	I don't think so. Anyone else who made a mistake will just have to live with themselves.	1200
EUGENIA	Ipólita didn't make a mistake, so she has no need of judgement.	
IPOLITA	My heart is like a seer, so I rarely get things wrong.	
DON ÁLVARO	Yet you rarely see beyond your jealousy. Anyway, it's late.	1205
IPÓLITA	I'd hardly noticed.	
DON ÁLVARO	Bring candles.	
EUGENIA	We should go now,	1210
<i>She gets up</i>		
	and you get some rest.	
DON ÁLVARO	Am I so fragile?	
EUGENIA	I'm thinking of you too, my lady.	
IPÓLITA	What do you mean by that?	1215
EUGENIA	Nothing.	
IPÓLITA	Do you really wish to go?	
EUGENIA	The sooner we leave,	

the sooner we can return and bother you again.

IPÓLITA I enjoy your visits and look forward to them. 1220

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

DON ÁLVARO We'll talk tomorrow?

VALERIÁN Whenever you want.

DON ÁLVARO It certainly is late. 1225

VALERIÁN (*Aside*) Oh, most beautiful image!

DON ÁLVARO Bring lights!

EUGENIA (*Aside*) Oh, blind love!

ELVIRA Lights, lights!

GALÍNDEZ Here are the torches. 1230

Enter ELVIRA, and enter GALÍNDEZ with torches and distributes them

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

EUGENIA Stay here.

IPÓLITA That would not do at all.

EUGENIA You're already too gracious. 1235

IPÓLITA I insist.
I'll see you to the stairs.

SCENE 1

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

PAGES *offer* VALERIAN *the water and while he's washing, enter* ELVIRA

ELVIRA	I'll hide the truth a thousand times to keep up these tricks: that Galíndez is such a fawning old fool. I cannot stop laughing over this letter he gave me for his lady love. I'm a go-between for such a crazy old fool! Oh, love! Your tyrannical laws, your fire, your drive: snow does not make you cold, nor grey hair make you old.	1265 1270 1275
VALERIÁN	What is it, Antonio? (<i>Aside</i>) I wonder if I might trust this one, who is so full of wit?	
ELVIRA	I'm here to let her know my lady is on her way.	1280
VALERIÁN	My wife?	
ELVIRA	Yes, my lord.	
VALERIÁN	Wait a bit . . . I can't think straight . . . Ipólita is coming— go tell Doña Eugenia at once.	1285
<i>The PAGES serving him leave</i>		
ELVIRA	(<i>Aside</i>) What does he want from me?	
VALERIÁN	(<i>Aside</i>) He could well do it . . . but I fear harm.	
ELVIRA	(<i>Aside</i>) If only he would set my mind at ease . . .	1290
VALERIÁN	Well, Antonio, how are things going for you here?	

ELVIRA	Very well. With so much kindness, who wouldn't be doing well?	1295
VALERIÁN	And where are you from?	
ELVIRA	Zaragoza.	
VALERIÁN	That must be why you're so clever. In truth, it's paradise for those who live there.	1300
ELVIRA	There are clever men there, though it hasn't rubbed off on me.	
VALERIÁN	They must be very clever if they are anything like you.	
ELVIRA	You are too kind.	1305
VALERIÁN	I only tell the truth.	
ELVIRA	<i>(Aside)</i> What nerve! He holds me back and flatters me— he wants something from me. <i>(Aloud)</i> My lord I'm here to serve.	1310
VALERIÁN	God save you, that's what I wanted to hear.	
ELVIRA	<i>(Aside)</i> If I give him some rope, he'll hang himself. <i>(Aloud)</i> Ask away. Nothing would please me more than to serve you.	1315
VALERIÁN	I see that you return my good wishes.	
ELVIRA	I'm at your service, have no fear. I can see in your face . . .	

VALERIÁN	<i>Ay</i> , Antonio!	
ELVIRA	<i>(Aside)</i> Now I swear that my suspicions were true. <i>(Aloud)</i> Have no doubt, there is nothing I wouldn't do for you.	1320
VALERIÁN	Your lady, Antonio, isn't she dashing? Isn't she beautiful?	1325
ELVIRA	She perfumes the ground as she walks. A man might be forgiven for being taken by her.	
VALERIÁN	Well then, Antonio . . .	1330
ELVIRA	My lord.	
VALERIÁN	Would you, listen, tell me, if you want . . .	
ELVIRA	<i>(Aside)</i> Oh, Love, what a child you are! How you babble on! <i>(To VALERIÁN)</i> Don't worry.	1335
VALERIÁN	I'm crazy, help me, Antonio, before I lose my mind . . . I confess my sinful desire to you. I could never pay you enough for fanning the flames. What do you say, Antonio?	1340
ELVIRA	I say I am your slave.	
VALERIÁN	And friend to my hopes and dreams if you can make them come true.	1345

ELVIRA	What shall I do to make it happen?	
VALERIÁN	Give this note to your lady . . . Hush now, my wife is coming.	1350
<i>Enter EUGENIA</i>		
EUGENIA	A secret and without me?	
VALERIÁN	Listen . . .	
EUGENIA	So you've found a new playmate.	
VALERIÁN	. . . my lady, I swear on your life, what I was saying . . .	1355
EUGENIA	Shush, now I'll find out what you've been dreaming of.	
VALERIÁN	So little trust from the one whom I adore.	1360
ELVIRA	<i>(Aside)</i> This is good.	
VALERIÁN	Listen to me, I beg you.	
EUGENIA	Let me be.	
VALERIÁN	So angry, my darling? Why the daggers from your eyes?	1365
EUGENIA	Could you stop annoying me?	
VALERIÁN	Yes.	

EUGENIA Then leave.
I want to ask this page what's been going on. 1370

VALERIÁN I'll be going then.

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

VALERIÁN Antonio! . . .

He makes signs for ELVIRA to keep quiet

ELVIRA (*Aside*) What a dumb-show! 1375

VALERIÁN (*To ELVIRA*) Tell the truth.

ELVIRA This is
so childish.

VALERIÁN (*Aside*) My yearning could make stones weep.

Exit VALERIÁN

SCENE 2

Sitting room in VALERIÁN and EUGENIA's house

ELVIRA (*Aside*) What shall I say? 1380

EUGENIA The audacity!

ELVIRA My lady, don't worry.

EUGENIA Oh Antonio,
you've got it all wrong!
It wasn't jealousy, good heavens! 1385
How could I be jealous
of a husband I retain,

	but have no love for, only disdain. And what I've suffered here is due to this:	1390
	the husband who's bound to me has never had my love. Women want men who are not so easily moved, who are what they seem in thought, word, and deed.	1395
	It's inevitable that you will come to detest the one you're stuck with for life, especially if he acts like a woman.	1400
	I trust you, and hope you can find a cure for my woes. I'm dying to have a husband who is the very opposite of mine. I want . . .	1405
ELVIRA	I know who: my lord.	
EUGENIA	Oh, Antonio! I cry for him. I adore his daring, his self-confidence and bravado, a tireless man about town, a hungry wolf, loving all and keeping none, subjecting both fury and reason to his sword alone, punching one and slashing the other.	1410 1415
	And yet, how honorable he has been in the face of my advances: I never saw him yield, even when I begged him.	1420
	This consumes me— he is just my type. And don't be surprised— oh, Antonio!—	

	that these men drive a woman crazy.	1425
	These are men to love, these, men to adore: they heat up the senses and set a woman on fire.	
	And so, it would be a triumph to hand him the crown, to make myself his prize.	1430
	I adore his mind, believe everything he says, and am constantly inspired to drink him in.	1435
	Unlike my beautiful Narcissus there, so very like a nymph, whom I spook with my voice, and trample with my feet.	1440
	When, at any moment, he fears I'll get upset, as if the knots on my belt were a whip to strike him with.	
	Heaven knows I cannot love him, when I see him worship the ground I walk on, not out of love, but out of fear.	1445
ELVIRA	<i>(Aside)</i> Why would she tell me all this! Jealousy consumes me.	1450
EUGENIA	Lend me your hand, Antonio, as if you were my friend.	
ELVIRA	What can I do for you?	
EUGENIA	Give him this letter.	1455
ELVIRA	I am at your service. <i>(Aside)</i> A nice occupation!	

	This one makes three. ¹⁹	
EUGENIA	And if you are shocked I tell you all this, forgive me, and consider my reasons. Your master has many good parts . . .	1460
ELVIRA	I'm at your service. Tell me what you need. (<i>Aside</i>) If only you knew how well I know those parts.	1465
EUGENIA	By heaven, Antonio, I'll do anything for you, as long as you make him love me.	1470
ELVIRA	(<i>Aside</i>) Oh, I'm burning up! (<i>To EUGENIA</i>) Trust me. (<i>Aside</i>) I must know more! (<i>To EUGENIA</i>) I'm here to serve you. First, tell me . . .	1475
EUGENIA	What do you want to know?	
ELVIRA	I should probably know where your love stands.	
EUGENIA	It doesn't. He can't stand me, and you can see it on my face.	1480
ELVIRA	Does he scorn you then?	
EUGENIA	It will make me lose my mind.	

¹⁹ Elvira refers here to the love letters she has received from other characters: Galíndez to a servant girl, Valerián to Ipólita, Eugenia to Don Álvaro.

ELVIRA	Enough said. (<i>Aside</i>) With this, you've calmed my fear. (<i>Aloud</i>) Ah, here comes my lord Don Álvaro. (<i>Aside</i>) I can't wait to see her disappointment.	1485
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EUGENIA	Speak of the devil! Love has conjured him!	1490
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Enter DON ÁLVARO

Will you give him the letter now?

ELVIRA	It's better if you talk to him.
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EUGENIA	So afraid and so in love!
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SCENE 3

DON ÁLVARO	I kiss your hand, my lady. Antonio . . .	1495
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EUGENIA	He's a gem, and very tactful, for sure.
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DON ÁLVARO	. . . what are you doing here?
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ELVIRA	I've struck gold, a treasure trove, and there's no reason you shouldn't get a share.	1500
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DON ÁLVARO	And have I earned it?
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ELVIRA	If you want it, it's yours.	1505
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DON ÁLVARO	Is that so? And where is it?
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EUGENIA	In my will.	
DON ÁLVARO	Pardon me, my lady?	
EUGENIA	Wait, don't fan my fire.	1510
DON ÁLVARO	I came to talk to Valerián.	
EUGENIA	You must first hear me out. Antonio will bear witness to the pain that's killing me.	1515
DON ÁLVARO	A fine witness.	
EUGENIA	I confided in him, tired of your scorn.	
DON ÁLVARO	What a great confidant you have! (<i>Aside</i>) If you only knew what you've done!	1520
ELVIRA	My lord, be patient and hear her out.	
DON ÁLVARO	Quiet, lad, don't you know I am an honorable man?	1525
EUGENIA	Be courteous.	
DON ÁLVARO	Rudeness is better in things related to love: there's a fine line between courtliness and betrayal.	1530
EUGENIA	I'm about to kill myself, and about to kill you.	

DON ÁLVARO	You're being crazy.	
EUGENIA	Are you leaving me? Are you going?	
DON ÁLVARO	I am leaving you. I am going.	1535
EUGENIA	You scorn me?	
DON ÁLVARO	That's not true.	
EUGENIA	Don't you know me? Aren't you worried that I'll shout that it was you who killed me?	1540
ELVIRA	<i>(Aside)</i> What a bold woman!	
EUGENIA	I've seen your disdain for me, and I'm a woman . . . I'd sacrifice my soul to take revenge.	
DON ÁLVARO	<i>(Aside)</i> Can this be possible? I begin to fear her.	1545
EUGENIA	You'll see more than this: things will get worse, the tighter the choke on my desire. Won't you surrender to me, oh my enemy?	1550
DON ÁLVARO	I can't.	
EUGENIA	Then kill me.	
DON ÁLVARO	I don't want that either. Can't you see I'm your husband's friend? And even if I weren't, I could never love you, for I see you are a woman who begs for love.	1555

Stop already, and leave me be.

ELVIRA *(Aside)* Ay, what an affront to all women! 1560

EUGENIA

Horrible man,
who will neither love me nor kill me.
Go ahead, loathe my advances,
follow your heart, but be careful,
for I will kill you, 1565
even if it costs me my life.
I will change my tactics,
and now my hope
will empower revenge.
Desire only goes so far. 1570
I want to kill you, you worm.
Beware my wrath!
Skilled as any swordsman,
I'll strike the first blow.

ELVIRA My lady is coming. 1575

EUGENIA Oh God!

SCENE 4

Sitting room in VALERIAN and EUGENIA's home

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

IPÓLITA Where are you going?

VALERIÁN My lady!

DON ÁLVARO (To VALERIÓN) I was just coming to greet you.

ELVIRA What a way for you two to meet! 1580

VALERIÁN	What's wrong?	
EUGENIA	Come with me. I'm beside myself!	
VALERIÁN	Don't cry.	
EUGENIA	You can always trust in treacherous friends.	1585
VALERIÁN	<i>(Aside)</i> If you only knew I am the treacherous one.	
<i>Exeunt VALERIÁN and EUGENIA</i>		
IPÓLITA	Was she so angry with you that she left without a word?	
DON ÁLVARO	She must be angry at her husband.	
IPÓLITA	I was deaf, but I'm not blind. I didn't hear what was said, but my eyes have seen the reason for her anger. It's written all over your face.	1590
DON ÁLVARO	What do you mean?	1595
IPÓLITA	Is it not telling, to see her like that, flushed as she walked away from you, and find you looking the same?	
DON ÁLVARO	Interesting theory, good Lord.	1600
IPÓLITA	Haven't I seen enough to figure out that you've quarreled with her?	
DON ÁLVARO	For the love of God, you're mistaken. Give up this insanity.	1605

IPÓLITA	I have good reason for my suspicions, ingrained in my very soul from being burned before.	
DON ÁLVARO	Your suspicions are unfounded. You're always pulling them out of thin air.	1610
IPÓLITA	My heart is true.	
DON ÁLVARO	You're wearing on me.	
IPÓLITA	Oh, woe is me!	
DON ÁLVARO	Don't you know I've never looked elsewhere?	1615
ELVIRA	<i>(Aside)</i> Her jealousies ignite my own.	
DON ÁLVARO	So much spite!	
IPÓLITA	So much hurt!	
ELVIRA	<i>(Aside)</i> It's a bitter pill to love a married man.	1620
IPÓLITA	My soul is burning.	
DON ÁLVARO	Where are you going? What are you going to do?	
IPÓLITA	I'm going to cry my misfortunes in a corner of your house.	
DON ÁLVARO	You're crying again?	1625
IPÓLITA	Don't be surprised. You're the one who wants it this way.	
DON ÁLVARO	You women cry	

	as often as men spit. Where are you off to?	1630
IPÓLITA	My deep pain will take me to my grave.	
DON ÁLVARO	What are you saying? Must you flaunt your crazy tantrums? Go ahead, make your visit.	1635
IPÓLITA	I don't want to, you've made me too upset.	
DON ÁLVARO	For the love of . . .	
IPÓLITA	Angry already?	
DON ÁLVARO	Go now.	1640
IPÓLITA	I'll go.	
DON ÁLVARO	What I say goes.	
IPÓLITA	And that's very fair.	
DON ÁLVARO	Be sensible.	
IPÓLITA	How can I?	1645
DON ÁLVARO	Am I the husband or the wife?	
GALÍNDEZ	<i>(Aside)</i> I always hold my tongue during these spats.	
IPÓLITA	How could anyone stand so many insults?	1650

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

ELVIRA	<p>Don Álvaro, what is all this? Were you imitating cruel Bireno?²⁰ What was the purpose of deceiving me? What misfortunes have you led me to? Are you trying to avenge me for resisting your first advances? Couldn't you have avoided dashing what little hope I had? Why have you brought me here, my lord? One woman has tried to seduce you, and the other has made me as jealous as she always feels. I wouldn't cry like this if I didn't care for you.</p>	1655
DON ÁLVARO	<p>Now you're jealous, and I'm the target.</p>	1665
ELVIRA	<p>You're right about that.</p>	
DON ÁLVARO	<p>Oh, my Elvira!</p>	
ELVIRA	<p>And your poor wife, how sad! You are kindest to her when she is most jealous.</p>	1670
DON ÁLVARO	<p>For the love of God, you're mistaken. Give up this insanity. What a piercing arrow you've plunged right through me!</p>	1675
ELVIRA	<p>I want to go home, although I might weep for you there.</p>	

95

DON ÁLVARO	<p>I'm losing my patience, when what I need is your comfort. Why are you being so dramatic? 1680 What did I do to you? How dare you! If one woman begged for my affection, and another was jealous, I sent one away, and the other I ignored. 1685 What do you want from me? Where did I go wrong?</p>
ELVIRA	<p>What I saw offended me. After all, aren't you married?</p>
DON ÁLVARO	<p>I'm drowning in women's tears. 1690 What should I do? Kill my own wife to put your mind at ease? Don't you see how insufferable she is, how detestable I find her . . . 1695 at one time I cared for her, but now I can't stand her. So much jealousy accrued with so much constant spite! She's tried to restrain 1700 my God-given free will. With loathing I broke free of her spell and her charm, and if you do the same, I will break from you, too. 1705 Elvira, if my affections keep you awake at night, and you're not tired of me yet, ask me for anything: the fish in the sea, 1710 the birds in the sky, show me the finest ones, and I'll gladly get them for you.</p>

For when they take flight,
 I will be close behind. 1715
 And if the fish don't come,
 I'll grab my rod,
 and fish for them myself:
 a feat greater than killing
 the highest noble in Spain. 1720
 And if he were the king,
 or the biggest fool,
 I would make sure that he bends
 to your wish and your rule.
 Ask for the loveliest stars, 1725
 and they will be at your command,
 although with your eyes
 you have no need of them.
 If you require Midas's treasures,
 I will get them, 1730
 though I have nothing like them,
 because your asking is enough.
 I would become the thieving Cacus,²¹
 and steal them just for you.
 But don't be jealous, 1735
 don't start whining,
 or come crying to me.
 If those terms will suit,
 then I'm your slave.
 And now I leave you, 1740
 so you can think it all through.
 I'm going out.
 I need the wide open fields.
 I need air.
 This house is suffocating, 1745
 like a hostile jail.

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

²¹ In Roman mythology, Cacus is a giant associated with thievery.

even if it means my death. 1750

DON ÁLVARO Freedom has no price.

Exit DON ÁLVARO

ELVIRA I will avenge, if I can,
my disappearing hopes.
To get revenge on the lot of them,
I shall hatch a plot, 1755
and they will all feel
the sorrows that weigh on me,
and the fire that burns me
will burn others, too.
Here's Pierres, who has come 1760
a little too late to comfort me.

SCENE 6

Enter PIERRES

ELVIRA Oh, good Pierres!

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

ELVIRA And I yours. 1765

PIERRES You could do to me
un favor gigantesque?

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

PIERRES Listen, I have to tell you something:
I'm in love un chic. 1770

ELVIRA What is un chic?

PIERRES	A bit.	
ELVIRA	You're a bit in love, and very crazy.	
PIERRES	Yes, this letter, please to take, Antonio, to my mademoiselle, my bon amic.	1775
ELVIRA	Who is this lady? What's her name?	
PIERRES	Her name is Rafela.	1780
ELVIRA	Very well, Rafaela. ²² I'll help. And what will I get?	
PIERRES	We'll drink the vino together.	1785
ELVIRA	Now I've got a full quartet of letters. And here come the ladies. I am happy to help you, good Pierres.	1790
PIERRES	And I, Antonio, will forever be a bon friend et companion.	

Exit PIERRES

SCENE 7

Enter VALERIÓN, EUGENIA, IPÓLITA *and* GALÍNDEZ

²² The variations in the name of the servant girl Pierres is enamored with are different, just another way the text marks Pierres' linguistic idiosyncracies.

VALERIÁN	I will come with you, my lady.	
IPÓLITA	I will not allow it.	
EUGENIA	I have more to tell you.	1795
IPÓLITA	At my house then.	
EUGENIA	Soon then.	
VALERIÁN	Wouldn't you like me to come with you?	
IPÓLITA	No I would not, and it is wrong of you to ask.	1800
GALÍNDEZ	You have here a gentlemanly and honorable squire, grey-haired, bespectacled, who offers you his arm, instead of one about to devour you with his eyes. I don't like his look.	1805
IPÓLITA	Antonio, come with me.	
ELVIRA	At your service, here I come.	1810
EUGENIA	Hush, Antonio.	
ELVIRA	(<i>Aside</i>) You have good reason to be suspicious, since you insist on being so foolish. What mischief I can do with these four notes!	1815
<i>Exeunt ELVIRA, IPÓLITA, and GALÍNDEZ, leaving VALERIÁN and EUGENIA alone</i>		
VALERIÁN	Tell me again,	

	though it makes my blood boil.	
EUGENIA	Is it so hard for you to understand?	
VALERIÁN	This is all Ipólita's fault.	1820
EUGENIA	I'll tell you again, that your friend is not your friend: he wants to dishonor you.	
VALERIÁN	Don Álvaro?	
EUGENIA	What, is he a saint?	1825
VALERIÁN	He is trying to seduce you?	
EUGENIA	And by force, the traitor! What? You're surprised?	
VALERIÁN	And shocked, shocked!	
EUGENIA	Why do you keep asking me? Don't you think it has come time to sharpen your dagger and sword to defend our honor?	1830
	Does your doubt make you anxious? Instead of arguing with me here, shouldn't you let your gun do the talking?	1835
VALERIÁN	<i>crosses himself</i>	
	That would be the right way to go, and not . . . Why are you making all those crosses? Make a cross on his back, like the ones on your chest.	1840

Who can wait around
 for your nonchalance to turn to action?
 Tell me to do what Don Álvaro wants. 1845
 Go ahead,
 keep searching your heavy heart for an answer.
 What woman could feel passion
 for a man like this,
 a woman despite his beard? 1850

Exit EUGENIA

VALERIÁN What purpose could Don Álvaro have in his hopes?
 Is it to insult me,
 or is it revenge
 for him to seduce my wife?
 Did he know I meant to cuckold him? 1855
 Whatever the reason,
 now that I know of his betrayal,
 I have an excuse for mine.
 In part, I am happy
 that I am not the only traitor, 1860
 although this is an insult
 that consumes my thoughts.
 It all comes down to this:
 to take my revenge,
 I must guard my house, 1865
 while I dishonor his own
 I will rekindle my hopes,
 since what was once betrayal
 is now only fair,
 and what was once just for pleasure, 1870
 is now for revenge, too.

Exit VALERIÁN

SCENE 8

Room in IPÓLITA and DON ÁLVARO's house

Enter IPÓLITA, GALÍNDEZ and ELVIRA

IPÓLITA	Galíndez, you have not been discreet.	
GALÍNDEZ	Rage beats discretion.	
IPÓLITA	You slapped him for no reason.	1875
ELVIRA	Look where fate has brought me!	
GALÍNDEZ	Being treated like an old fool is nothing? And in the street he treats me like a monkey. Curse him!	1880
IPÓLITA	I will consider this offense, which occurred in my presence, playful roughhousing just this once. Although for me, your old age absolves you.	1885
GALÍNDEZ	That's no less an insult!	
IPÓLITA	Tread carefully now, Galíndez.	
ELVIRA	He's so old, there's no way he'll get all the way to Rome: he will repent right here, and get his absolution.	1890
GALÍNDEZ	Good for nothing busybody.	
ELVIRA	You old fart, doesn't your conscience trouble you?	
GALÍNDEZ	By Saint Peter!	1895

ELVIRA	What is it?	
IPÓLITA	I take it you witnessed my tears, which would soften the hardest stone. You have seen me at my worst.	1925
ELVIRA	I have.	
IPÓLITA	Wait.	
ELVIRA	And even if I hadn't, your eyes would tell me of your pain.	1930
IPÓLITA	Well then, Antonio, you know well the truth I suspect. Confide in me, I will hide it deep inside, under a thousand locks and keys. Look at the misery I live in, which only you can relieve.	1935
ELVIRA	<i>(Aside)</i> Once again, I will cast you in the fire that consumes me.	
IPÓLITA	Surely you know, and can tell me if my greatest pain is true. Even if the truth hurts, suspicion is always worse. Does Don Álvaro burn for Doña Eugenia? Say yes. I wouldn't have believed it from her, but I will believe it from you.	1940 1945
ELVIRA	She told you that?	
IPÓLITA	Without prompting, she flung a spark from her lips	1950

	into my breast My heart was already kindled with suspicion: her words set me afire with jealousy.	
ELVIRA	<i>(Aside)</i> Can I possibly be seeing a betrayal such as this?	1955
IPÓLITA	Antonio, I am burning up.	
ELVIRA	<i>(Aside)</i> What will it take to convince you of the truth? Women are wicked, and I, no less so.	1960
IPÓLITA	Tell me, Antonio. My suspicions squeeze the breath from me like a noose around my neck. I wish to know nothing, and yet want you to tell me.	1965
ELVIRA	I do not wish to hurt you. <i>(Aside)</i> God, what a web I'll weave! <i>(To IPÓLITA)</i> If it will relieve you, my lady, to know the truth, this note should do that, since it was written for Eugenia. But you must return it to me.	1970
IPÓLITA	You can take it back, once whatever is in the note leaves me for dead. These are verses, his verses, and my clear misfortune.	1975
ELVIRA	<i>(Aside)</i> Wasn't it a good trick to give Ipólita the note meant for her, and to tell her that her husband sent it to Doña Eugenia?	1980
IPÓLITA	So heartless!	

ELVIRA	(<i>Aside</i>) I will make her husband into her worst enemy, for my lover's wife must be my foe. God will forgive me for attempting this. My own peace will be born of battles between these two. (<i>To IPÓLITA</i>) Give me the note, my lord, Don Álvaro is coming.	1985 1990
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IPÓLITA	He has seen me with it, the traitor!
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ELVIRA	My lady, you will get me killed.
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IPÓLITA	I will keep my word, and keep this secret to myself.	1995
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ELVIRA	I need to go. I am sick with worry. ²³
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SCENE 10

Enter DON ÁLVARO

DON ÁLVARO	What's wrong? Something is wrong. What is that paper you're holding? Why have you hidden it?	2000
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IPÓLITA	I am ashamed on your behalf, because you have no shame.
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DON ÁLVARO	What is this? This is strange. It must mean something, by God, this sudden disrespect,	2005
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²³ Elvira says this aloud, and in the Spanish slips up by referring to herself in the feminine. She also remains on stage during the next scene, although she has no lines.

	and such distance. This trembling with anger, this uneasiness, tears of fire, changing color, from pale to yellow and then to bright red . . . I will find out what is wrong with you, even if you try to hide it. Take out that note. Give it to me now!	2010 2015
IPÓLITA	Listen.	
DON ÁLVARO	Out with it.	
IPÓLITA	Your wickedness, and my misfortune are both written here. Until now I have only wept at your wanton ways, but now I weep to know that you've abandoned all honor. You want to seduce her, your friend's wife, and you wrote these things to her.	2020 2025
DON ÁLVARO	What are you saying? Who told you that?	
IPÓLITA	I am saying it. I am saying that you are a traitor.	2030
DON ÁLVARO	Silence, foolish woman.	
IPÓLITA	Unhappy silence.	
DON ÁLVARO	I want to pierce you to the soul when you attack my honor like this. I would never be capable of such an offense,	2035

	even in my imagination! Now, what's in this letter?	
IPÓLITA	(<i>Aside</i>) What torture this is!	
DON ÁLVARO	Unyielding suspicion!	2040
	(<i>Reading</i>) "I lay awake all night, my lady, and only when Apollo began to fasten his horses to the sun did I fall asleep, dreaming that your love and desire took you from your husband to my waiting arms. But I was awoken by the cold reality of unrequited love, my nemesis, which will not allow our union, not even in dreams. Later, my soul was consumed in jealousy's cruel flames, seeing that my dreams are his reality. Enjoy his homecoming, so long awaited and desired. Alas, misfortune keeps from me what it grants him as your husband." Here the note ends. This pierces me to the soul. And you think this is my hand? These verses, do they sound like me? Do I write such bad verses, and in such a fine hand?	2045 2050 2055 2060
IPÓLITA	Dear God, a miracle!	
DON ÁLVARO	I am shaking with anger. If the homecoming is mine, as it states here, then this note was meant for you.	2070

IPÓLITA	Then I have been deceived.	
DON ÁLVARO	Yes, this is the handwriting of a traitor, whom I believed to be loyal: it is Valerián's.	2075
IPÓLITA	Can it be? I am not to blame, my lord.	
DON ÁLVARO	How can this love note be mine when everything in it is his? Who has given you this note? Have you no answer?	2080
IPÓLITA	Only my bad luck.	
DON ÁLVARO	Speak, for the love of heaven, which I am unworthy of.	
IPÓLITA	Young Tony gave it to me.	2085
DON ÁLVARO	And what did Tony tell you?	
IPÓLITA	That it was yours—so wicked! You need to believe me, and kill me if I stray at all from the truth.	2090
DON ÁLVARO	I believe you, and it's clear, for your excuse is written all over your face. Although you cannot see it, I believe what you say— any wife of mine would naturally be an honest woman. What's more, I now see that my own worth blinded me to what that traitor was capable of	2095 2100

	<p>in his evil desire. I'm like a man, who in the darkness walks by some horror unawares, but who, in the light of day, looks back and sees his narrow escape. 2105 But this is no way to proceed! It is neither wise nor noble to believe so readily what is so lightly written. Letters lie a thousand times over, 2110 and this one might as well. You, Don Álvaro, can make this right. What liberties has Valerián taken with you?</p>	
IPÓLITA	<p><i>(Aside)</i> What should I say? It will be the end of them. 2115</p>	
DON ÁLVARO	<p>Have you noticed them? Have you been aware of them?</p>	
IPÓLITA	<p><i>(Aside)</i> Oh God, I will force him into action if I say anything! I'm a miserable woman!</p>	
DON ÁLVARO	<p>Why do you look so distressed? 2120 Don't you understand what I'm asking?</p>	
IPÓLITA	<p>I heard you.</p>	
DON ÁLVARO	<p>Have you been aware of Valerián trying to woo you?</p>	
IPÓLITA	<p><i>(Aside)</i> Would it not be better 2125 to deny everything?</p>	
DON ÁLVARO	<p>Tell me.</p>	
IPÓLITA	<p>My lord.</p>	
DON ÁLVARO	<p>Did he betray me or was he merely bold?</p>	

	Did he convey his desires to you with his soul, or with his mouth? Tell me.	2130
IPÓLITA	My lord.	
DON ÁLVARO	His mad longing, did you see it in his eyes? Did you know of it?	2135
IPÓLITA	<i>(Aside)</i> I should deny it.	
DON ÁLVARO	Have you no answer?	
IPÓLITA	No, my lord, he is our friend, and he is honorable.	2140
DON ÁLVARO	You are trying to spare me my revenge. Enough. Why am I even asking you this? When you hesitated to say no, you spoke a thousand yesses. Go to your room, and let no one see you're upset.	2145
IPÓLITA	<i>(Aside)</i> This intense feeling will be my downfall. His rash fury promises a million scandals. <i>(Aloud)</i> Listen, my lord.	2150
DON ÁLVARO	Silence and be gone. I already know you are honorable.	
IPÓLITA	<i>(Aside)</i> I must leave. I begin to fear his anger. This could lead to a fiery outburst. God help him.	2155
DON ÁLVARO	This has gone too far.	

Enough of this insolence!	
I must be prudent,	2160
and not get too angry.	
Haste and anger	
can make a man brave,	
but only with good sense	
can a man be honorable.	2165
What insolent madness,	
and from a friend!	
His heart must be the opposite of mine.	
With his wife wooing me,	
it would be so simple to take revenge!	2170
Vengeance should be mine,	
but I must take it honorably.	
To see if he is truly a backstabber,	
I should give him ample opportunity	
to commit an offense,	2175
and so tailor a punishment to fit his crime.	
I will try to feign ignorance,	
though I'm no good at it.	
Even in this I am too honest.	
What a disgraceful mess!	2180
And what does this vile woman want,	
so close to sundown!	

SCENE 11

Enter EUGENIA, GALÍNDEZ, PIERRES and ELVIRA

EUGENIA	He's crafty.	
GALÍNDEZ	He's insolent.	
ELVIRA	I am at your command.	2185
DON ÁLVARO	Well, madam,	
	why do you bring light upon this house	
	just as the sun is retiring for the day?	

ELVIRA	We're going out.	
DON ÁLVARO	Where to? (<i>Aside</i>) My soul is on fire.	2190
EUGENIA	There's a play tonight that Ipólita and I will attend, with your permission. If you'd like to come, we can all go in my carriage.	
DON ÁLVARO	Right, and this play, where is it taking place?	2195
EUGENIA	At the Merchant's house.	
DON ÁLVARO	Which merchant?	
EUGENIA	Don Gaspar. Only he, in his excellence, deserves to be known by that name. ²⁴	2200
DON ÁLVARO	He's very gallant.	
PIERRES	He's molt manly.	
GALÍNDEZ	And he has a clean conscience.	
ELVIRA	No small thing for a merchant.	2205
EUGENIA	His wealth flows freely from his coffers.	
DON ÁLVARO	He's very rich and important.	
EUGENIA	Rational in all things but conflict.	
ELVIRA	Everyone must adore him, then.	

²⁴ Reference to Don Gaspar Mercader Count of Buñol, contemporary of Guillén de Castro who was notorious for his bad temper and who often hosted literary and theatrical events at his manor.

DON ÁLVARO	And how will you go?	2210
EUGENIA	We'll cover our faces. ²⁵	
DON ÁLVARO	And do they let in women who don't show their face?	
EUGENIA	That's what Valerián went to go see.	
DON ÁLVARO	While we wait, let's see if Ipólita will join us.	2215
EUGENIA	Is she . . . ?	
DON ÁLVARO	As usual, she's . . .	
EUGENIA	She can be very extreme.	
DON ÁLVARO	<i>(Aside)</i> What a traitor! Here comes the source of all my troubles.	2220
EUGENIA	<i>(Aside)</i> This bull-headed man will pay for his disdain with no less than his life.	

Exeunt DON ÁLVARO and EUGENIA

SCENE 12

ELVIRA	<i>(Aside)</i> Now I can trick these two, since no one is listening to us. That's right. The note meant for the one, I will give to the other.	2225
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²⁵ By the early seventeenth century there was great controversy surrounding veiled women attending the theater, as this allowed for anonymous, licentious activity and so became associated with women of loose morals. See Laura Bass and Amanda Wunder, *Hispanic Review*, 2009.

GALÍNDEZ	Me, a play? Me, a play? I will take to my good bed. Maybe with peace and quiet my headache will be cured! . . .	2230
ELVIRA	Even though you were cruel to me . . .	
GALÍNDEZ	Come here boy, and let me show you a thing or two!	
ELVIRA	Just keep quiet. Here's an answer to that letter you gave me.	2235
GALÍNDEZ	Oh what a happy lover I am! When did I ever deserve this? From now on, I will put this young man on a pedestal. I could kiss your feet, and, with God as my witness, I almost want to cut off the hand I used to slap you.	2240
ELVIRA	Look how he carries on.	
PIERRES	Old fool words!	2245
GALÍNDEZ	Dear Cupid! You dull my head, and stir up butterflies in my stomach.	
ELVIRA	Well Pierres?	
PIERRES	Well companion?	2250
ELVIRA	I have the response to your letter. You're lucky that I am the one to bring it to you.	
PIERRES	Oh mon sir Antoine, this response I am content with!	2255

	Pierres now jumps more for joy than Galíndez, old wreck.	
	(<i>Sings</i>) "If I go off to France, to lap up Jesus's blood, nevermore will I return again."	2260
ELVIRA	Your song celebrates your good fortune, while others use it to dispel their sadness, or even to dispel a crowd . . . different effects born of different causes.	2265
PIERRES	I want to kiss your feet, those are the hands I get, or your breasts, even your mouth.	
ELVIRA	Courtesy à la French. A pretty sight.	2270
PIERRES	My Antoine.	
ELVIRA	To repay me you shall do me a favor.	
PIERRES	No doubt you shall see the strength and esprit of moi.	2275
ELVIRA	(<i>Aside</i>) I want to have a little fun with this old man. It will be my revenge. (<i>To PIERRES</i>) Do you have any friends?	
PIERRES	Mais oui, and the crème de la crème of la France.	2280
ELVIRA	You'll be in need of them.	
PIERRES	And pour que?	

ELVIRA	To help you. Your master is coming. Listen, quickly, to what you must do.	2285
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Enter VALERIÁN

VALERIÁN	I can imagine so many schemes to achieve my dearest dreams! Revenge and pleasure in one fell swoop. Best to keep up the pretense. In this world, only liars prosper, only traitors survive.	2290
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ELVIRA	Go now! I'll be along later.
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PIERRES	And I will dance, pardiu.	2295
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Exit PIERRES

SCENE 13

ELVIRA	My lord.
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VALERIÁN	Antonio, I am fighting my own illusions!
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ELVIRA	I'm sure you will conquer them. (<i>Aside</i>) And I want to fool them all: I'll give this one the note that his wife wrote.	2300
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VALERIÁN	What's that you say, Antonio? Did you do what I asked of you?
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ELVIRA	Of course.	2305
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She hands him a letter

VALERIÁN There's an answer? Lucky me.

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

VALERIÁN I am a fortunate man! 2310

ELVIRA *exits*

Happy heavens, beautiful heavens,
sacred heavens, friendly heavens!
I will read it—but here they come . . .
Oh, I wish they would delay a little longer!
I will go from joy to madness 2315
if the heavens don't answer my prayer.

Enter DON ÁLVARO, IPÓLITA, and EUGENIA

EUGENIA Valerián is taking his time.

DON ÁLVARO Here he comes.

VALERIÁN Did I take too long?

EUGENIA And did you find out if 2320
they allow women in veils?

VALERIÁN They do.

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

EUGENIA (*Aside*) Vile man! 2325

IPÓLITA (*Aside*) Scoundrel!

EUGENIA	Don't worry, God is with you.	
DON ÁLVARO	Torches!	
VALERIÁN	The one I brought should be enough.	2330
IPÓLITA	<i>(Aside)</i> This is killing me.	
DON ÁLVARO	I entrust my wife to you.	
VALERIÁN	While you look after mine.	
DON ÁLVARO	<i>(Aside)</i> This way I can hide my fury.	
VALERIÁN	<i>(Aside)</i> This is my chance. I will dishonor him in return.	2335
DON ÁLVARO	<i>(Aside)</i> If he betrays me, I will kill him.	
EUGENIA	<i>(Aside)</i> Let there be no bloodshed!	
IPÓLITA	<i>(Aside)</i> He has handled this wisely. What a worthy husband!	2340
EUGENIA	<i>(Aside)</i> What a disgraceful husband!	

SCENE 14

Enter ELVIRA, PIERRES, and two GABACHOS carrying a ladder

ELVIRA	That's fine. Call at that door, and he will come to the window.	
PIERRES	And the porta is open.	
ELVIRA	It makes little difference.	2345

GALÍNDEZ	(<i>Offstage</i>) Who's calling? Who is it? Who's making all that noise? I'm coming.	
ELVIRA	Throw the rope over him now.	
GABACHO 1	It's done.	2350
ELVIRA	Hammer the nail.	
GALÍNDEZ	<i>Ay, ay, ay!</i> I'm choking, by the holy virgin!	
ELVIRA	Get his face! And his crazy white hair! He can hold his ground while the bull charges. Step lively, by God. ²⁶	2355
GALÍNDEZ	I'm choking!	
PIERRES	Watch out for the bull!	2360
ALL GABACHOS	Over here, you uglisnout beast, you can't get us, sooie, sooie!	
ELVIRA	If your pretend love has you so fired up, receive these compliments, sent by your lady love.	2365
PIERRES	Old fool.	
GABACHO 2	You've wet yourself.	
GABACHO 1	Old Man Goiter!	

²⁶ In this farcical scheme, Elvira leads Pierres's cronies in a cruel joke against the old squire Galíndez. They string him up and paint his face.

GALÍNDEZ	Jesus!	2370
ELVIRA	Let's leave him like this. They're coming. Run!	
GABACHO 1	We will make our escape.	
PIERRES	This has been magnifique.	
ELVIRA	Perfection!	2375
GALÍNDEZ	Those devils got me.	
ELVIRA	My work is done here. Gentlemen, go, be gone!	

Exeunt GABACHOS

SCENE 15

ELVIRA	This way, they're killing Galíndez!
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Enter DON ÁLVARO and VALERIÁN with swords drawn, along with their wives

IPÓLITA	Don Álvaro, where are you going?	2380
DON ÁLVARO	Leave me.	
EUGENIA	<i>(Aside)</i> This coward was not first at the scene.	
GALÍNDEZ	I'm dying.	
DON ÁLVARO	Galíndez, what are you screaming?	2385
VALERIÁN	Bring that ax over.	

GALÍNDEZ	They've left me here, as you can see, hanged and dead.	
DON ÁLVARO	They've certainly left you in a foul mood, and a sight to be seen.	2390
EUGENIA	Good lord! One can't help but laugh.	
VALERIÁN	Galíndez!	
IPÓLITA	I would laugh, but I am in such a state, my heart is in my throat.	2395
GALÍNDEZ	Untie me.	
DON ÁLVARO	Who is behind this joke?	
ELVIRA	Some scoundrel.	
GALÍNDEZ	Oh you traitor!	2400
DON ÁLVARO	A daring one at the very least.	
VALERIÁN	We'll sort this all out later, not in the street.	
DON ÁLVARO	This has been the comic preamble for the play we are about to see.	2405

ACT III

SCENE 1

DON ÁLVARO's *room*

Enter DON ÁLVARO and ELVIRA

DON ÁLVARO	When it comes to honor, everything must give way, Elvira. There's no room in my heart for a beautiful face, for obligation or love.	2410
	There is only room for matters of honor. Who gave you this letter for Ipólita?	
	I will have the truth, or kill you, by God.	2415
ELVIRA	Has it come to this between us? You threaten me?	
DON ÁLVARO	And I adore you.	2420
ELVIRA	That would have been enough.	
DON ÁLVARO	I'm out of my mind, and must look to my honor. Don't cry.	
ELVIRA	I have good reason to cry.	2425
DON ÁLVARO	Hush, you'll have no reason to complain, but tell me first whose note this is.	
ELVIRA	Valerián gave it to me,	2430

showering me with money and compliments
so I would deliver it.
He's dying for her.

	Perhaps everyone else is lacking, because I have it all.	2465
	I have earned my standing over many thankless years: never have I found another man like myself.	2470
	To find no friend with honor, to know one can't be had, were he to be watched from the cradle to the grave!	
	One looks to profit, another to pleasure: sacred friendship, where have you gone? What has happened to you?	2475
	You were raised to the heavens from the lowly earth.	2480
	You are sacred to me. Valerían, false friend! I will kill him, or die in the attempt.	
ELVIRA	Listen, my lord.	
DON ÁLVARO	This sword will enforce his punishment.	2485
ELVIRA	He fully deserves it, but you are furious now, and you'll never carry out your sentence this way.	2490
	Be reasonable, just as you are bold. Can't you see that secret betrayals must be secretly avenged?	
DON ÁLVARO	<i>(Aside)</i> Although she is a woman, she makes a good point. I will set aside my fury. This is good advice, regardless of the source.	2495

ELVIRA	Shush, and as proof of my love, I will see to it that only you witness your vengeance and his death. Tonight, I will take care of him so that you can see, should you care to watch, that not all women are cowards. This I will do, as long as you trust me. What do you say?	2500 2510
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DON ÁLVARO	I say yes.	
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ELVIRA	If you want to have your vengeance, you must pretend to leave. Say you must visit your village tonight, and leave the rest to me. Then you shall see what your heart desires.	2515
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Enter GALÍNDEZ at the door, only partly on stage

DON ÁLVARO	You're so brave, so beautiful, my greatest good fortune, and the cure for my honor. You are all my happiness, the apple of my eye.	2520
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ELVIRA	Shall we go into your study?	
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DON ÁLVARO	Yes.	2525
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They enter a room offstage²⁷

²⁷ In a typical *corral* performance, there would have been at least two doors at ground level, one of which led into the backstage area or a small room. In this scene, Antonio/Elvira and Don Álvaro have retreated

IPÓLITA	Am I never to have a moment's peace? Galíndez, what are you looking at?	2550
GALÍNDEZ	Oh my lady! A terrible evil. Our lord . . .	
IPÓLITA	What?	
GALÍNDEZ	My lady, he is a wicked man.	2555
IPÓLITA	Why?	
GALÍNDEZ	At this moment, he is . . .	
IPÓLITA	Where? Can it be so?	
GALÍNDEZ	Well he's . . .	2560
IPÓLITA	What?	
GALÍNDEZ	A bad Christian.	
IPÓLITA	Why? Oh unhappiness!	
GALÍNDEZ	Because he . . .	
IPÓLITA	What? What is happening?	2565
GALÍNDEZ	He's a sodomite.	
IPÓLITA	What are saying, you rude idiot?	
GALÍNDEZ	That my lord is a . . .	
IPÓLITA	Shut up!	

GALÍNDEZ	I'll shut my mouth, but you should open your eyes.	2570
IPÓLITA	I am mad with grief! Vile, despicable! Inexcusable men! Servants and traitors!	2575
GALÍNDEZ	Look through here, and you'll see young Tony and my lord in an embrace as tight as a vine on a tree. Look and see if I am telling tales.	2580
IPÓLITA	Oh good heavens, I'm in the depths of despair!	
GALÍNDEZ	Come and see.	
IPÓLITA	I have seen it already. Oh Galíndez, I am dead!	2585
GALÍNDEZ	Kick down the door, make a scene.	
IPÓLITA	Jesus Christ! We must be rational! Do this for me, for my sanity.	2590
GALÍNDEZ	I will do anything you want.	
IPÓLITA	Oh unhappy woman! Go, Galíndez, get my brother, and tell him to come at once.	2595
GALÍNDEZ	Like the wind I go.	
<i>Exit GALÍNDEZ</i>		

IPÓLITA	<p>Oh blind man!</p> <p>God has let you wander.</p> <p>Lord knows that I adored you,</p> <p>that I was crazy for you!</p> <p>If I could barely live with jealousy,</p> <p>how can I survive this sin?</p> <p>What can I do? I am lost.</p> <p>To what extremes . . . what excess!</p> <p>Oh God, let me keep my sanity,</p> <p>although you ruin my life!</p> <p>Don Álvaro perverse, heavens above!</p> <p>Mine is a horrible misfortune.</p> <p>I have suffered through</p> <p>so many fits of jealousy,</p> <p>troubled sorrows,</p> <p>a restless obsession</p> <p>over his shameless exploits,</p> <p>yet I worshipped him,</p> <p>thinking he was noble and honorable.</p> <p>What should I feel</p> <p>when I see he is not noble, not human,</p> <p>not honorable, nor even a Christian,</p> <p>but gives in to such evil desire?</p> <p>His offense to God weighs on me,</p> <p>with good reason, more than his offense to me.</p>	<p>2600</p> <p>2605</p> <p>2610</p> <p>2615</p> <p>2620</p>
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SCENE 3

Enter ELVIRA

ELVIRA	<p><i>(Aside)</i> What a stroke of luck it would be</p> <p>to get away with such a grand scheme.</p> <p>There she is.</p>
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IPÓLITA	<p>Here is the infamous root</p> <p>of the pain that consumes me.</p> <p>I will pretend I know nothing,</p>	<p>2625</p>
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although I'm burning inside.

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

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

2630

ELVIRA *(Aside)* What's going on?
Her face is blotched,
and she is frowning at me.
Has she discovered my trick with the note already? 2635
It's possible.
Has she realized I am a woman?

IPÓLITA (*Aside*) I will call him over.

ELVIRA (*Aside*) I will go to her.

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

2640

ELVIRA (*Aside*) I should go to her first,
 to prove my nonchalance.
 (*Aloud*) My lady? 2645

IPÓLITA Antonio?

ELVIRA Is something wrong?
 You seem . . .

IPÓLITA I am overcome with great sorrows,
and have little hope of happiness. 2650

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

IPÓLITA What are you saying?

ELVIRA	Your misfortune pains me.	2655
IPÓLITA	What now? Have you brought another note to fool me?	
ELVIRA	I myself was deceived. You must now brace yourself for the worst, the most terrible, most cruel fate.	2660
IPÓLITA	May the heavens see me through!	
ELVIRA	<i>(Aside)</i> What a tale I will weave! <i>(To IPÓLITA)</i> Make sure no one is listening to us.	2665
IPÓLITA	I will go mad from confusion.	
ELVIRA	I feel for you, from the bottom of my heart, given your great misfortune. And so I must warn you: your husband wants to kill you.	2670
IPÓLITA	My husband?	
ELVIRA	Do not tremble so.	2675
IPÓLITA	Oh God!	
ELVIRA	It would be better to find some way out of this.	
IPÓLITA	<i>(Aside)</i> And if this traitor lies? My heart tells me: I should both fear and doubt his word.	2680

(*Aloud*) And do you know
why he wants to kill me? . . .

ELVIRA He needs no serious reasons.

IPÓLITA Because I belong to him, 2685
he can kill me?

ELVIRA It may well be,
 because you are his wife.
 If you think I am deceiving you,
 then listen to this: 2690

he will pretend to leave tonight,
but he means to come back,
under cover of dark, to kill you.

If you see him leave,
and wish to stay alive, 2695

do not wait for him in your bed,
because that is where he will take your life.

Wait in another room
for as long as he's gone,
then you can trust your own eyes, 2700
even if you don't trust me.

IPÓLITA Oh God! What is this feeling!
 What shall I do?
 You upset me so
 that I have to believe you. 2705

(*Aside*) The heavens must have filled him
with compassion for me.

He has given me a chance
to avoid my demise.

This must be true, poor me! 2710

By my faith,

I could believe Don Álvaro capable of anything, after what I saw today.

God no longer holds Don Álvaro
in His powerful hand. 2715

ELVIRA	Calm your fearful soul, and your troubled heart.	
IPÓLITA	This cannot possibly be.	
ELVIRA	Here comes your husband.	
IPÓLITA	Who?	2720
ELVIRA	I must go now. It's better he not see us together.	
IPÓLITA	You have good reason for your misgivings. (<i>Aside</i>) Protect me, divine heavens.	
SCENE 4		
<i>Enter DON ÁLVARO</i>		
DON ÁLVARO	Prepare my clothes, my boots, and spurs for travel.	2725
IPÓLITA	Where are you going, my lord?	
DON ÁLVARO	I need to take a short trip today.	
IPÓLITA	(<i>Aside</i>) Oh wretched woman! I am a short trip away from death. This confirms what I was told . . .	2730
DON ÁLVARO	What now! You're crying? What is it?	
IPÓLITA	Since when do you leave me without leaving me in tears?	2735
DON ÁLVARO	Your weeping weighs on me. It's always like this:	

	When I go, these tears of yours flow so easily, they are hard to take.	2740
IPÓLITA	Say instead that you are sick and tired of seeing them, because they are my tears and therefore, your burden.	2745
DON ÁLVARO	They weigh on my heart, because they are yours.	
ELVIRA	<i>(Aside)</i> Not bad flattery.	
IPÓLITA	<i>(Aside)</i> These sweet words are nothing but lies.	2750
DON ÁLVARO	All right now, embrace me, and may God be with you, my lady.	
ELVIRA	<i>(Aside)</i> Would that someone could sever the bond between them!	2755
IPÓLITA	<i>(Aside)</i> These are the arms, oh cruel one, that I saw offend me with their infamy!	
DON ÁLVARO	God be with you, and shed no more tears.	
IPÓLITA	Godspeed.	2760
<i>Exit</i> DON ÁLVARO		
	My heart pounds with confirmed suspicions! His honeyed words confirm his treachery. Sudden kindness such as this	2765

is a sure sign he's either wronged me,
or plans to do so.
What else can I expect
amid such confusion?

ELVIRA *(Aside)* All goes well. 2770
 (To IPÓLITA) This should be proof
 of my good intentions.

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

ELVIRA Take my advice and protect yourself. 2775

IPÓLITA God help me.

SCENE 5

Enter LEONARDO, IPÓLITA's brother, and GALÍNDEZ

LEONARDO Well, sister?

IPÓLITA Brother!

ELVIRA *(Aside)* Will my hopes
be in vain? 2780

IPÓLITA Come, listen.

LEONARDO Calm down.

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

GALÍNDEZ This is a fine one!

ELVIRA Don't I get thanks

	for the letter, Galíndez? ³⁰	2785
GALÍNDEZ	You deserve a beating instead. (<i>Aside</i>) For now I'll only singe you. I'll get my revenge later. ³¹ (<i>Aloud</i>) Am I a country bumpkin or a Frenchman, that you write me, and make fun of me in that language?	2790
ELVIRA	Now you're making me laugh. Don't you know that Pierres, who is such a great friend of yours, wrote that because your lady chose him as go-between?	2795
GALÍNDEZ	Now you're just pulling my leg.	
ELVIRA	Let me read the letter to you, Galíndez. Give it here.	
GALÍNDEZ	I already tore it up: it made me so angry.	2800
ELVIRA	You tore it up?	
GALÍNDEZ	That's right. The language and the letter, both annoyed me.	2805
ELVIRA	That <i>gabacho</i> , who might well have been drunk, wrote as best he could. But it was your lady's affections he wrote.	2810

³⁰ Referring to the letter written by Pierres for the servant Rafaela which she gave to Galíndez in preparation for her last trick.

³¹ With this Galíndez indicates that he plans to denounce Antonio to the Inquisition as a sodomite; fire was often an instrument of Inquisitorial punishment, especially for the worst offenders against the Church.

GALÍNDEZ	You jest.	
ELVIRA	You'll see.	
GALÍNDEZ	And how is that?	
ELVIRA	Just wait. What if I bring your lady to your room tonight? Will you still think I'm full of hot air?	2815
GALÍNDEZ	I will believe you speak marvels, and sacred mysteries, filling my room with incense, and sweet smoke. What is this you say, Antonio?	2820
ELVIRA	Hush. I will bring her tonight. Come with me, and I will tell you how to prepare for her.	2825
GALÍNDEZ	I would like to befriend one who promises such things. And if he wants to be a fairy, I could be his pimp.	2830
<i>IPÓLITA and her brother LEONARDO end their side discussion</i>		
LEONARDO	Good God! I wish you would stop saying those things. Is this a trick?	
IPÓLITA	This is no trick. I wish to God that it were!	2835
LEONARDO	You saw him?	

IPÓLITA	<p>With the same weeping eyes that look upon you now. I saw their eyes reflected in each other's, much to my despair. 2840</p> <p>I saw them entwining their necks, and sharing their lips, and I would have seen much worse, had I stayed to look. 2845</p>
LEONARDO	<p>God help us! What an affair!</p>
IPÓLITA	<p>And now I see, to my sorrow, that these signs of his life are the omens of my death. I'm sure he will kill me. 2850</p> <p>Someone capable of this, so contrary to nature, is capable of anything. This is what I was told by his partner in sin, 2855</p> <p>who gave me no end of proof. Brother, my life, honor, and soul are in your hands.</p>
LEONARDO	<p>These things must be handled with tact and wisdom. 2860</p>
IPÓLITA	<p>I am resolved to flee my dishonor and his madness.</p>
LEONARDO	<p>Listen, do you have, by chance, the brief and dispensation in which the Pope approved your unhappy marriage?³² 2865</p>

³² As cousins, Don Álvaro and Ipólita would have needed a special dispensation from the Pope in order to marry.

IPÓLITA	I do.	
LEONARDO	A thought has occurred to me, while you've shed your tears. I know from experience that some certificates are drawn up carelessly, and can be full of errors. Something tells me that might be the case with yours. Give me the license. I will examine it, and if there is any fault in it I'll take it to a judge. Then we will be rid of this burden, this unhappiness, once and for all.	2870 2880
IPÓLITA	Good. You can work that out. But get me to safety now, away from here, brother, for I fear I will be killed if I stay.	2885
LEONARDO	If I took you, it would reflect poorly on our honor and reputation, but the bailiff can do it. He is an officer, and takes care of cases like this for the Archbishop.	2890
IPÓLITA	And what if as soon as night falls— see how quickly it comes— I am killed, and the remedy comes too late . . . Oh, I am wretched!	2895
LEONARDO	Listen.	
IPÓLITA	My misery has turned me into a coward.	

LEONARDO	Set up a bed in another room. Have only one servant with you, and keep watch for your life, locking yourself in, so that if your husband comes looking for you, he cannot open the door without making noise. I will call my friends into the street here, and they will kill whomever they need to, in order to prevent your death. But I will return sooner than that with the officer.	2900 2905 2910
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IPÓLITA I fear the worst,
 but I will do as you say. 2915

LEONARDO Is it settled, then?

IPÓLITA It is.

LEONARDO Come then, and forget your fear.

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

2920

LEONARDO Take heart,
your cause has brought strength to my arms. 2925

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

Exeunt

SCENE 6

Enter ELVIRA and EUGENIA

ELVIRA	I would have come, even if you had not ordered it.	
EUGENIA	Why, Antonio?	2930
ELVIRA	I have been serving you in a thousand ways.	
EUGENIA	And has any good come of it?	
ELVIRA	Are you still in love with my master?	
EUGENIA	He will never leave my breast, more out of stubbornness than love. If I cannot see him dead, I would love to see him mine.	2935
ELVIRA	If you have the spirit for it, he will be yours without a doubt.	2940
EUGENIA	How?	
ELVIRA	First, you must place your trust in me.	
EUGENIA	My heart is in your hands.	2945
ELVIRA	Then stay, and listen to me.	
EUGENIA	I am listening.	
ELVIRA	Come with me tonight, and I will take you to him, while he is none the wiser.	2950

	<p>What I have planned is a night of passion for you both, without his knowing whom he beds.³³ Imagine it, and attend to your deepest desires.</p>	2955
EUGENIA	<p>I do attend to them, yet I have a husband. There is no way for me to get away from him.</p>	2960
ELVIRA	<p>I have already thought of a way around this obstacle: I can get him out of the house, and perhaps even the city.</p>	2965
EUGENIA	<p>If you do, I will follow your instructions, to satisfy my desire.</p>	
ELVIRA	<p>Well, I say you can leave it to me. Go now, I think your husband is near.</p>	2970
EUGENIA	<p>That settles it.</p>	
<i>Exit</i> EUGENIA		
ELVIRA	<p>I will tangle them all in my web, as long as luck is on my side.</p>	2975

³³ The “bed-trick,” in which an expected partner is replaced with someone else, is a common literary motif throughout Renaissance and Golden Age literature, . In this case Eugenia awaits Don Álvaro in bed, pretending to be Ipólita. See Adrienne Laskier Martín, *An Erotic Philology of Golden Age Spain*, pp 198-202. [THIS PARTIAL CITATION FEELS OUT OF PLACE, ESPECIALLY W/OUT A BIBLIOGRAPHY. OMIT?]

ELVIRA	You can believe what I bring to you.	
VALERIÁN	I tell you, it is written in my wife's hand. When I saw that, I was thrown into an abyss of illusions.	3005
ELVIRA	Perhaps she wrote it as a go-between for you. Could she not have been tricked by a friend whom she trusts, who told her she was writing to a married man?	3010
VALERIÁN	That would be strange.	3015
ELVIRA	Don't you know that the best lie is to lie with the truth?	
VALERIÁN	She certainly writes well!	
ELVIRA	That's easy to explain. She's so honorable and proper, no one has suspected that from time to time she does take a pen in hand.	3020
VALERIÁN	She did not even notice what a state this has put me in.	3025
ELVIRA	I tell you, in order to fool around with you, the first thing she's done is to fool your wife with this fine trick.	3030
VALERIÁN	I could believe it,	

if I knew she favored me.

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

VALERIÁN And what's more, 3035
she does not respond to what I wrote her.
Listen, she writes:
(*Reading*) "Although you make a mockery
of all my true feelings,
I will make you love me, 3040
or at the very least kill me."
Would I ever treat
her deepest desires as a joke?

ELVIRA What if she believes that, until now,
all your words have been in jest? 3045

VALERIÁN Impossible.

ELVIRA Not so.
Thousands of women,
faced with a man in the throes of passion,
have believed 3050
he was just mocking love.

VALERIÁN I still do not understand.
(*Reading*) "I will wait for a chance
for my flaming passion to envelop you."

ELVIRA Blind though you may be, 3055
surely you can see,
that her line speaks volumes.

VALERIÁN (*Reading*) "And I shall speak to you tomorrow,
if I lack a chance,
or my life today." 3060

ELVIRA Either I am crazy,

	<p>or her message is plain as day. And more so to me, who has come to assure you about tonight.</p>	3065
VALERIÁN	<p>You expect me to have my wits about me, overjoyed as I am? How is it, Antonio, that I have earned this glory overnight?</p>	
ELVIRA	<p>The disdain of a husband can work quickly on a wife. Perhaps in her desperation, she will grant your greatest desire. But let us leave this discussion aside: he has gone on a journey tonight. Say that you are leaving, too, let me know where to find you, and I will take you to your bliss.</p>	3070 3075
VALERIÁN	<p>You say Don Álvaro has left Valencia?</p>	3080
ELVIRA	<p>There's no doubt, and you can finally occupy that place he has freely shunned. Quickly, tell your wife you are leaving.</p>	3085
VALERIÁN	<p>I'm on my way. I can't stop to think about the exaltation that awaits me, or I might die of happiness by merely imagining it. It's better not to think, so as not to spoil my pleasure.</p>	3090
ELVIRA	<p>And where should we meet,</p>	

	so I can take you to your paradise?	
VALERIÁN	In the Plaza Seo. ³⁴	3095
ELVIRA	Best foot forward.	
VALERIÁN	I am so happy!	
<i>Exit VALERIÁN</i>		
ELVIRA	The trap tightens nicely. Here comes another appellant: he has a solid case against me, given that I lie just like a lawyer.	3100
SCENE 8		
<i>Enter PIERRES</i>		
PIERRES	Son of a dirty rotten bitch, who has made a ruse with me and the lettre!	
ELVIRA	What's wrong, Pierres?	
PIERRES	Get away!	3105
ELVIRA	You do flourish so. What's wrong?	
PIERRES	You have swindled me.	
ELVIRA	Me? How's that?	
PIERRES	With lo paper. Either you excuser yourself,	3110

³⁴Also referred to as Plaza of the Virgin, near the Cathedral of Saint Mary.

or you will regret it.
 Who do you make of me,
 although servant and lackey?
 Feel now the sword of Pierres. 3115

PIERRES *grabs his sword*

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

PIERRES Pardiu, but you have to read 3120
 this papier you have given me.³⁵

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

PIERRES E bien, be I a mademoiselle? 3125

ELVIRA *(Aside)* Now I understand.
(Aloud) Listen, Pierres, calm down,
 and I will tell you what’s going on.
 “. . . offer you this fire of mine,
 though my hair be white as snow. 3130
 Do not take this lightly:
 a Castilian gentleman
 offers you his life and hand.”

PIERRES Castiliano?

ELVIRA *(Aside)* Crazy old man! 3135
(Aloud) “I leave my heart in your hands,
 I, who long to see you and to serve you,
 rather than write to you.”
(Aside) What a pretty note, and so old fashioned!
(Aloud) Now listen to what happened 3140

³⁵ Letter written by Galíndez to Madalena, another servant girl.

	<p>to lead to your frustration: that pompous and loud-mouthed old man also gave me a note to try to conquer Madalena, who pays him little attention. And God knows I had another just like this one, and so I gave yours to her, and hers to you: it's my fault. I beg your forgiveness, and to make it up to you . . .</p>	<p>3145</p> <p>3150</p>
PIERRES	I feel I have a need to laugh.	
ELVIRA	<p>Here is the good part: Rafaela is waiting to see you tonight, and if you show up, you will surely enjoy her.</p>	3155
PIERRES	I will exit leaping and dancing.	
ELVIRA	<p>In that case, we will need to borrow a skirt and a veil. Dressed as a woman, escorted only by me, you will enter very carefully. I will take you by the hand to the old Castilian's room, which he has agreed to loan us. Then, Rafaela will come down— I will bring her myself— and while you enjoy yourselves, I'll serve you by keeping watch. Do you dare?</p>	<p>3160</p> <p>3165</p> <p>3170</p>
PIERRES	<p>Pierres is no chicken. I go with you.</p>	

ELVIRA	Isn't Antonio a good friend? No more pouting, then?	3175
PIERRES	I have wish to kiss your hands: you are, Antoine, most honorable man.	
ELVIRA	Hold it.	
PIERRES	Your feet have been kissed— <i>ay!</i> —by Pierres.	3180
ELVIRA	Leap, yes, and dance, too. Go now, and borrow a dress from someone.	
PIERRES	The shopkeeper is French. I'll convince her to give me lend.	3185
ELVIRA	Get it, then, and I'll come soon to escort you.	
PIERRES	I run full speed.	
<i>Exit</i> PIERRES		
ELVIRA	I can hardly stop laughing at all the tangled webs I weave.	3190
SCENE 9		
<i>Enter</i> EUGENIA		
EUGENIA	Everything is secured. Oh, Antonio, he is gone now. How did you make him leave?	
ELVIRA	I cast a strong spell.	

EUGENIA No doubt some enchantment 3195
has fallen from your lips.

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

EUGENIA Come then, cover me with my veil.

ELVIRA (*Aside*) Tonight, I will bring together 3200
you and your husband.
That way,
Don Álvaro can take his vengeance on you both.

Exeunt EUGENIA and ELVIRA. Enter GALÍNDEZ

GALÍNDEZ How this sweet expectation 3205
makes the hours seem long!
And my years can no longer carry
this burden without fatigue!
What if the lad who takes so long has fooled me?
Dear Cupid,
who give my senses,
fierce war, and sweet peace! 3210
Sleep begins to wear on me:
I must suffer it on my feet,
for if I sit,
I will sleep like a log.
Who comes here? It's him. 3215
Now my wishes will come true.

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

Is that my Madalena?

ELVIRA No. 3220
Entertain this lady for me.
Madalena is
on her way down.

Exit ELVIRA

EUGENIA	Have no fear. Madalena will soon be here.	
GALÍNDEZ	Being at your side makes everything more charming. You could take Madalena's place, you know, and save me from burning up, while I wait for her. That would give me great pleasure.	3225
EUGENIA	By God, that's good. And if she were to come?	3230
GALÍNDEZ	I'm man enough for two.	
EUGENIA	Your intentions are good.	
GALÍNDEZ	My deeds are even better!	
EUGENIA	So tell me, do you pay women double, or just double-cross them?	3235
GALÍNDEZ	Your wit doesn't cut me, though you have plenty more, I'm sure. Powerful and poor, I neither pay them, nor double-cross them. I know my business well, my lady. I swear I am not two-faced, but neither will I lose face.	3240
EUGENIA	A fine answer. You are a sly old man.	3245
GALÍNDEZ	And I want to be yours.	
<i>Enter ELVIRA</i>		
ELVIRA	My lady, come with me.	

Luckily—and truly it is fortunate—
the house is now
just as I described to you. 3250
She's left the room
that she usually occupies,
and has retired to another one,
taking her serving women with her.
A joyous encounter awaits you. 3255
Come, and get yourself in her bed.
Follow me, come.

EUGENIA I will follow you.

ELVIRA I'll be back.

GALÍNDEZ I shall wait here.

Exeunt EUGENIA and ELVIRA

What is that young rascal up to? 3260
He must also want a woman,
just as I do.
By God, he should enjoy himself!
Let him have some pleasure, as I will.
The only thing that worries me 3265
is if it all ends now.
If Madalena were to come,
and I were to get her with child,
praise God!
How happy that would make me! 3270

Enter ELVIRA

ELVIRA (Aside) I leave her to undress.
How humiliated she'll be!
I'll call that *gabacho* now
to make a fool of the old man.
(Aloud) Galindez? I'll be right back. 3275

	answer me. What are you doing here with the door open?	3300
GALÍNDEZ	I was taking some fresh air.	
DON ÁLVARO	Very funny. When you come back in, make sure to close the door.	
GALÍNDEZ	Of course. Do you want a light?	3305
DON ÁLVARO	I don't want to wake anyone, and I am quite used to undressing without one.	
DON ÁLVARO <i>exits</i>		
GALÍNDEZ	Well, I won't close the door, even if day breaks. I will see my hopes through to the end, by the golden fleece! ³⁶	3310
<i>Enter ELVIRA and PIERRES, dressed as a woman covered with a veil</i>		
	Is that them?	
ELVIRA	Keep your mouth shut, for now.	3315
GALÍNDEZ	That a veil should conceal the divine light of my sun!	
ELVIRA	Be quiet, and keep pretending, while I go on ahead, and she will be completely fooled.	3320

³⁶ In Greek mythology, the quest for the golden fleece undertaken by Jason and the Argonauts takes them to the ends of the earth though many obstacles.

PIERRES	So much you do to fool Beelzebub himself.	
ELVIRA	Are you happy?	
GALÍNDEZ	I am crazy with happiness.	3325
ELVIRA	That's right.	
GALÍNDEZ	Is it possible . . . ?	
PIERRES	Èvidemment!	
GALÍNDEZ	. . . that I touch your beautiful hand?	3330
ELVIRA	This makes me want to laugh.	
GALÍNDEZ <i>and</i> PIERRES <i>exit holding hands, and enter</i> VALERIÁN		
VALERIÁN	He who waits loses his mind.	
ELVIRA	I would stop here, but I have things to finish.	
VALERIÁN	Antonio . . .	3335
ELVIRA	You have come right on time. I was about to go looking for you. And yet with all your boldness, this could still go wrong. You are too excited.	3340
VALERIÁN	What do you expect, when I've been waiting here forever?	
ELVIRA	I think you are the first man to hit the truth with an angry fist.	3345

if you help the one who offended me?

CONSTABLE We have him now. That is enough.

DON ÁLVARO Let me go before I lose my mind.

CONSTABLE Stay calm, be reasonable,
and tell us how this man has offended you. 3365

DON ÁLVARO I will do as you ask,
but then you must let me go.
That man there came into my house
with traitorous intent.
I was in bed 3370
with my wife.

LEONARDO With my sister?

DON ÁLVARO And the traitor . . .

LEONARDO Heartless luck!

DON ÁLVARO He came into my room. 3375

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

LEONARDO *exits*

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

Enter LEONARDO with EUGENIA, the former thinking it is IPÓLITA

LEONARDO Come now, quickly. 3380

EUGENIA My life is over.

DON ÁLVARO Oh God! What's this I see?

Is it possible? I cannot believe it.

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

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

PIERRES	Mon dieu,	3385
	I must do massacre to this vile queer.	

CONSTABLE What is this?
 They are like puppets in a spectacle!
 Hold them!
 This is like a tangled dream. 3390

Enter IPÓLITA

IPÓLITA Brother!

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

DON ÁLVARO What confusion all of a sudden!

VALERÍAN What incredible humiliation! 3395

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

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

CONSTABLE	How's that?	3400
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ELVIRA First, my lord,
I must let you all know that I am a woman.

IPÓLITA Good God!

LEONARDO What a strange affair!

ELVIRA	It was a prank, and no small thing to pull off.	3405
CONSTABLE	The gall!	
GALÍNDEZ	And a silver tongue to accomplish such a trick.	
VALERIÁN	Listen, my lord, I can scarcely catch my breath: on my orders, my wife's first husband was killed. I arranged this with her. Once she was left a widow, I married her. She can vouch that this is true.	3410 3415
EUGENIA	It is.	
VALERIÁN	I have kept this from the law, and I ask you now if that woman could be considered my wife.	3420
CONSTABLE	I declare she cannot be, and you must immediately step aside and leave her.	
VALERIÁN	With that, my lord, my honor is well satisfied.	3425
EUGENIA	A just comeuppance.	
DON ÁLVARO	The heavens have revenged me in the most extreme way.	
LEONARDO	Do tell, sir, why have you come?	
CONSTABLE	My lord Don Álvaro, it appears that those who sought the dispensation for your marriage in Rome	3430

	got it all wrong. And so, from this moment on, Ipólita no longer belongs to you, but to whomever she wishes.	3435
DON ÁLVARO	Very well, if that is what she wants. Could anyone believe that I, honorable as I am, would want to keep any woman against her will? (<i>Aside</i>) What happiness! I am free!	3440
IPÓLITA	I would rather be without a husband, than be a jealous wife.	3445
ELVIRA	Well could I, my lord, demand that you and the heavens, who owe me my honor, grant me justice, by making me your wife.	3450
CONSTABLE	Tell us then, what do you plan to do?	
ELVIRA	Yet God forbid that I should want that. I have seen what married life is like in these two couples. And so, may God keep me from taking on that burden. I want to return to my homeland, where there must be a convent to provide me with sweet peace, far from the bitter wars of matrimony.	3455 3460
CONSTABLE	If you are all satisfied, I have no more business here.	

Exeunt BAILIFFS and CONSTABLES

EUGENIA	From now on, I will give free rein to my thoughts.	
VALERIÁN	It's a wide world, and I'll stride across it at my ease.	3465
GALÍNDEZ	I must do a cruel penance.	
PIERRES	I will retourner to la France.	
IPÓLITA	I will turn my cares to heaven, that greatest of mysteries.	3470
DON ÁLVARO	As my bondage ends, so ends <i>Unhappily Married in Valencia</i> .	

Exeunt