PERIBÁÑEZ
AND THE
COMENDADOR
OF
OCAÑA

Comedia
in Three Acts
by
FÉLIX LOPE
De VEGA CARPIO
(1562-1635)

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

King Henry III of Castile
The Queen
Peribáñez, a peasant farmer
Casilda, wife of Peribáñez
The Comendador or Knight-Commander of Ocaña
The Condestable
Gómez Manrique
Inés
Costanza
Luján, a lackey
A priest, in the manner of the *gracioso,* or clown
Leonardo, a gentleman attending the Comendador
Marín, a lackey
Bartolo, a peasant farmer
Belardo
Antón
Blas
Gil
Benito
Llorente
Mendo
Chaparro
Helipe
A painter
A Secretary
An Alderman and a Councilman
Peasants and peasant women
Musicians
A page

The action of the play takes place at Ocaña and Toledo in 1406. The text of *Peribáñez y el Comendador de Ocaña* we have used is that published by Juan Eugenio de Hartzenbusch in *Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, Vol. XLI.*

ACT I.

The House of PERIBÁÑEZ *in Ocaña.*

Enter PERIBÁÑEZ *and* CASILDA *as bridegroom and bride:* INÉS *as patroness, the* PRIEST, COSTANZA, *musicians, peasants and peasant women.*

INÉS. I wish you both long years of happiness.
COSTANZA. If they be as I wish you'll never die.
CASILDA. My wish to serve makes me deserve your favors.
PRIEST. Although not wrong, such wishes are out of place.
No wish of mine, Casilda, could compare
With the nuptial blessings I read out to you:
I invoked so many that not one remains
For any friend or relative to ask.
INÉS. Your reverence, I'll simply wish them luck.
PRIEST. I put my faith in God who helps the good,
But my niece you'll find a level-headed lass.
PERIBÁÑEZ. If she but be devoid of jealousy
I'll doubt no more and end the argument.
CASILDA. Give me no cause, dear husband, and I vow
You'll never find in me a jealous wife.
PERIBÁÑEZ. From me you'll never even hear the word.
INÉS. They say it was the sky above decreed
That love should thus be burdened by this care.[1]
PRIEST. But now the time has come for both of you
To sit and bless the day that made you one.
PERIBÁÑEZ. Joy in abundance fills my heart this day
That God has given me so fair a bride.
PRIEST. You are right to ascribe that grace to God!
For in this fairest kingdom of Toledo
There is no face can rival hers today.
CASILDA. If by my constant love I can repay
Your fondness, husband, you will still remain
In debt to me.

[1] Blue, the color suggested by the sky, was taken by Spaniards as the symbol for jealousy.

PERIBÁÑEZ. As long as you, Casilda
Cannot in fondness ever hope to win,
So may you fail to conquer me in words.
I'd even lay Ocaña at your feet,
And all the earth that Tagus bathes until
It's Portuguese and enters the Spanish sea.
A wood of olives laden with ripe fruit
To me appears less beautiful, and fields
That bloom with flowers in the month of May,
Untrodden save by footsteps of the dawn.
There's not a pippin ripening on the bough
But would at once proclaim your eminence,
Nor fair transparent oil within the jar
That could so fill my senses with delight,
Nor white wine mellowed for twice twenty years,
Have more aroma than your fragrant lips;
For as the rose smells sweeter to the lord,
So does the peasant revel in his wine.
But neither December's vines I weed and trim
For autumn's sweet new vintage, nor May's showers,
Nor waning August's heaps of wheat can vie
With my delight at seeing in my house
Before my eyes such a blessed antidote
Against chilly winter and the summer heat.
But now I must prepare my heart to be
The fairest mansion wherein you can dwell
In freedom, now that I deserve your love.
Here you will live, and if a countryman,
Through peace of soul, may be a king,
You then, it's plain, are queen of this, my house,
By law of God and human ordinance.
As heaven then, dear wife, will make you blest,
Let all who see you now say: "To the fair
Casilda passes the luck of the ugly girl." [2]

CASILDA. What can I say, when even a passing glance
At you has all but bereft me of my soul?
Never, when in the dance my feet began
To tingle in rhythm, did I feel such thrill,

[2] According to the ancient proverb plain girls were lucky in marriage. One of Lope's plays was entitled *La Ventura de la Fea* (The Luck of the Ugly Girl).

Not even with shrill fife and rattling drum;
Nor myrtle and verbena on the morn
Of St. John's day, nor whoops the dancers gave,
Delighted me as do your loving words.
What well-tuned timbrel delicately played,
What psaltery can be compared to you?
What banner of procession with its cord
And tassels vies with your bespangled hat?
No feet new-shod delight me as your love,
You are the peer among a thousand lads,
A glorious Easter Cake on Easter Day,
With frosted icing, sweets and eggs and all.
Like a red fighting bull you chew the cud
In a green meadow; or like a new woven smock
You're borne 'midst jasmine in a gilded basket.
You're like the Paschal Candle, or the roll
Of baptismal marchpane wrapt in a hood of gauze,
But in the end you're like yourself, because
You have no real rival in the world.

PRIEST. Enough of love; these youths all wish to dance
And choose their partners.

PERIBÁÑEZ. Friends, who are old in love,
Pray pardon us.

A MUSICIAN. May your love go on growing.
(*The musicians sing and the peasants and maidens dance the folía.*)[3]

MUSICIANS. *To you let flowering May*
Fair greetings bring
With murmuring stream:
Let green alders raise their heads
And blossoming almonds pledge their fruit.
After dewy dawns,
In the morning sun,
Let lilies in profusion sprout

[3] According to Covarrubias in his *Tesoro* (1611) the *folía* was a gay, noisy Portuguese dance in which numerous rustics took part. It was accompanied by tambourines and other instruments. Some of the dancers carried on their shoulders boys disguised as girls. The dance was so lively that the performers gave the impression of being mad. Hence the name *folía* which was derived from the Italian *folle* (mad).

From their green spears.
On the mountain side,
Now snows have fled,
Let lowing kine
Browse on the sunny slopes
And crop the fragrant thyme.

FOLÍA. *May God shed blessings on our newly wed,*
And meadows greet them with a nuptial song.
Ice-bound mountains, beetling crags,
Gnarléd oaks and doughty pines
Speed the waters in their course
Thundering down into the vales,
Let sweet-throated nightingales
Warble their love to the green myrtles,
And birds with art build leafy nests.
May God bless our newly wed,
And meadows sing a nuptial song,
For today the two are one.
(*Voices and commotion within. Enter* BARTOLO, *farmer.*)

PRIEST. What is that?

BARTOLO. Can't you tell by the shout and the din?

PRIEST. I'll bet they have brought the young bull?

BARTOLO. A young bull is it? Faith, there are three of them! But the spotted one they are bringing from the country—Holy Moses! he has Spanish fire. More than an hour it took to tie him up. He gave Blas two tosses, and no Italian ever vaulted more lightly over the rope than he did. As for Antón Gil's mare, who had just been taken from pasture, she voided all she'd chewed through her lacerated guts. No laughing matter, I assure you; Tomás had his breeches ripped off, but not one said a word, though the boy may never grow a beard. Our Comendador, Lord of Ocaña and its land, gallantly closed in to attack, braver than a hawk; I swear to God if the bull had not been roped . . .

PRIEST. Could the beast get in here?

BARTOLO. Before, yes.

PRIEST. In that case then I'll go up to the terrace.

COSTANZA. Say a prayer, Your Reverence; there's no reason for you to run away.

PRIEST. A prayer? What for?

COSTANZA. To give you courage to stand your ground.

PRIEST. You're wrong: some bulls don't understand Latin.
(*Exit.*)

COSTANZA. He is evidently going up on the roof—(*Voices within*)—the shouting is growing louder. Let us all go there: as the bull is roped he can't move away.

BARTOLO. That's true: the bull can't go beyond the length of the rope. (*Exit.*)

(*Enter* PERIBÁÑEZ, CASILDA, INÉS, COSTANZA, *peasants, women, musicians.*)

PERIBÁÑEZ. Would you like me to try a few passes?

CASILDA. Ah, no, my love, that is a ferocious beast!

PERIBÁÑEZ. Fierce or no, I'll grip the horns
And fell the bull to show my pluck.

CASILDA. It would be indecorous on your wedding day
To mention horns, and what bridegroom would face,
When newly wed, the horns of a fighting bull? [4]

PERIBÁÑEZ. Talking of proverbs there are two that trouble me:
"Jail not even for warmth," and, "Horn not even
As ink-horn," so I'll obey.

CASILDA. God help us, what is that?
(*Sound of voices within.*)

PEOPLE. What a misfortune!

CASILDA. Somebody has been hurt.

PERIBÁÑEZ. What? While we two were here?
(*Enter* BARTOLO.)

BARTOLO. I wish that beast had never left the wood!
I hope the lads will take no credit for this show.
God's curse on that bull. May you crop no more
In showery April than in swelt'ring August
And when you're mad with jealousy and face
Your rival, may he make mincemeat of you,
And when you ramble bellowing through the woods,
May the streams dry up and you be crazed with thirst
And may you die in the ring before the mob,
Hemmed in and goaded to a shameful death,
Not slain by a knight with lance or golden knife,
But hamstrung by a lackey with rusty blade,
And may you grovel, and your blood stain the dust.

[4] Casilda here delicately alludes to the popular belief that horns symbolized cuckoldry.

PERIBÁÑEZ. Now calm yourself and tell us what occurred;
Zamora's traitor never was so cursed.[5]

BARTOLO. The Comendador, our noble master,
Came proudly riding down the street,
Mounted on his sleek bay charger;
Black-spotted on its chest and back,
Bridled in silver, glaring fiercely,
Snorting and flecking with white foam
Its green and crimson emblem, on it came;
But master spies the charging bull,
Pulls down his cap, and flourishing his stick,
Spurs on his steed, which races like the wind,
Driving the crowd to right and left,
But suddenly gets tangled in the rope,
And down falls master in the midst of them.
His hurt is grievous and I fear for him:
Why am I telling this, when here they come,
Carrying him on their shoulders?

(*Enter the* COMENDADOR, *unconscious, carried by a number of peasants on their shoulders; two lackeys,* MARÍN *and* LUJÁN, *in buskins, cloak and cap, and others.*)

BARTOLO. The Reverend Father was here, so they'll be able to give him absolution.

INÉS. I think he went away to hide.

PERIBÁÑEZ. Go up, Bartolo, and look on the terrace.

BARTOLO. I'll go for him.

PERIBÁÑEZ. Hurry.

LUJÁN. We two will go for a chair to carry his body, if God has decided to take him.

MARÍN. Come, Luján; I'm afraid the Comendador is dead.

LUJÁN. I'm so afraid that my heart is pounding like mad.

(*Exeunt* LUJÁN *and* MARÍN.)

CASILDA. Pedro, I think he is recovering consciousness: go and fetch water.

PERIBÁÑEZ. If the Comendador dies my days at Ocaña are ended. A curse on our feast!

(*All depart except* CASILDA *and the* COMENDADOR. *He lies in a chair, and she holds his hand.*)

[5] The reference is to the famous siege of Zamora in 1072 by King Sancho, during which Vellido Dolfos entered and treacherously killed the King. The incident is referred to in the ballads.

CASILDA. Oh, what a misfortune has befallen
One who is the flower of Spain!
Ah, gallant knight and valiant warrior!
Are you the one who with naked sword
Humbled the proud Moors of Granada?
Are you one who slew many men?
Has a hempen rope sufficed to kill
One whom the sword could not destroy?
Death herself wounds you with a rope,
This was your fate because you snatched
Glory from so many heroes.
Ah, my Comendador!
COMENDADOR. Who calls? Who is here?
CASILDA. Good news! He spoke.
COMENDADOR (*groans*). Alas! Who are you?
CASILDA. It is I, my lord. Do not be anxious,
Or cast down! you find yourself
Among those who wish you well.
Although, my lord, you may now be sorry
You ever chased that bull, remember,
In this house you are welcome.
COMENDADOR. All human treasure's gathered here,
I lay dead on the ground, or so I thought,
But when I recovered my senses I believed
I was in heaven: in God's name, I pray,
Do undeceive me: for surely a man
May fancy he's in heaven when he finds
An angel there like you.
CASILDA. Perhaps you're still hovering on the brink of death.
COMENDADOR. How so?
CASILDA. Because you're seeing visions. If,
You're grateful now because you find yourself
Beneath my humble roof, I'd have you know,
That only today it has become my house.
COMENDADOR. Are you, fair lady, then the happy bride?
CASILDA. Not happy if this misfortune of yours
Should linger and increase because of me.
COMENDADOR. So you're already married?
CASILDA. Yes, and well matched, my lord.
COMENDADOR. Very few beautiful brides are.
CASILDA. My love had the ugly girl's proverbial luck.

COMENDADOR (*aside*). What a pitiful waste that so uncouth a yokel
Should be the husband of so fair a bride!
(*Aloud.*)
Your name, I pray you?
CASILDA. I am called Casilda.
COMENDADOR (*aside*). I am amazed at such perfection in
One dressed in such attire. She is a diamond
Enchased on lead. (*Aloud:*) Fortunate is the man
A thousand times, on whom you bestow your charms.
CASILDA. It is not he who is well wooed, but I,
Comendador, you may be assured of this.
COMENDADOR. Your spirit makes you just the wife for me,
Do give me leave to shower gifts on you.
(*Enter* PERIBÁÑEZ.)
PERIBÁÑEZ. There is no sign of the priest: what if the case
Takes a more serious turn . . .
CASILDA. You're wrong:
Once more our Don Fadrique has his health.
PERIBÁÑEZ. So my love brings fair tidings.
COMENDADOR. Aye, such is
The wondrous power of this most heavenly gem.
(*Enter* MARÍN *and* LUJÁN, *lackeys.*)
MARÍN. They say he has come to himself again.
LUJÁN. My Lord, your chair's here.
COMENDADOR. Don't bring it beyond
The door, I do not need it now.
LUJÁN. Thank God!
COMENDADOR. If I'm restored to health, I hope to show
By my reward how grateful I am to you
For the generous welcome you have given me.
PERIBÁÑEZ. If I, sir, could exchange my health for yours,
Believe me, I would do so.
COMENDADOR. I am sure.
LUJÁN. How do you feel?
COMENDADOR. I have a craving that I didn't feel
When I entered this house.
LUJÁN. I do not follow.
COMENDADOR. It matters not.
LUJÁN. I'm speaking of your fall.
COMENDADOR. My life's in danger owing to a mad desire.

(*Exeunt* COMENDADOR *and* LUJÁN. PERIBÁÑEZ *and* CASILDA *remain.*)

PERIBÁÑEZ. I think he is better.

CASILDA. I was sorry for him.

PERIBÁÑEZ. The Comendador's fall seemed to me to be
An evil omen. Bad 'cess to the whole
Feast and the bull, and man who roped the beast.

CASILDA. That is nothing: he later spoke to me.
I think what has occurred is for the best,
For he may favor us if a chance arise.

PERIBÁÑEZ. It is now time, Casilda, for my love
To win love's guerdon and its recompense.
Now that we're in our own house you must be
Its ruler and mine also, though you know
That a woman when she marries must obey;
Such was God's ordinance for all the world.
All peace and happiness for both of us
I base upon that maxim, so I live,
My darling, in the hopes that you will now
Dispel my doubts and my anxieties.

CASILDA. What must a woman do?

PERIBÁÑEZ. Listen to me.

CASILDA. Speak.

PERIBÁÑEZ. To adore your husband and to honor him
Is A, first letter of this alphabet.
As you are good, G is the letter,
Which is all I would ask from you:
The C will make you circumspect,
And S will make you sweet and sensible,
The letter F in life will prove
That you are firm and forceful,
And of stanchest faith.
The H bears tribute to your honor,
The I will make you illustrious,
And by your name shed luster on my house.
Through L you will be liberal,
And M will make you mistress of your children,
And one who will lament their faults.
With N you learn to answer "No"
To vain petitions,
And this "No" that few learn to use

Is contained in the letters N and O.
The P will make you pensive,
And Q describes your quest for men's esteem:
The R will give you sufficient reason
To banish undue folly.
The E will make you always eager
To seek my comfort;
The T will make you true.
The X good Christian, for it is
The first of all the letters
You must learn in life.
With Y and Z you must defend yourself
Against the vice of jealousy
That can destroy our plighted troth in love.
If you but learn by heart this simple song,
You will become the fairest flower of all
The county and I the noblest in the town.

CASILDA. To please you I shall learn
The letters of this alphabet,
But I beg you Pedro dear,
May I recite another one,
If this be not remiss?

PERIBÁÑEZ. Nay, I shall welcome it: recite.
I wish to learn from you.

CASILDA. Well, listen and be patient.
The first letter is A,
For arrogant you must not be;
And B should give you warning
Never to beguile me with lies.
C makes you my companion,
And D proclaims you a donor,
Generous because of my faith in you.
F means your mood is facile,
G bears a tribute to your gallantry,
H to your honesty, and I declares
You are devoid of base ingratitude.
L proves you liberal,
And M the finest man
That ever wedded wife did have,
For love's the peerless treasure.
The letter N proves you'll not be a ninny,

Or a plague your wife must bear.
And as for O it signifies
The hours that you will spend with me,
And P is precious for paternal
Counsels you must give to me,
And Q the quests that I must undertake
To make me worthy of your love.
With R you regale me, S you serve me,
And T shows my stanch tenacity
In clinging to you through thick and thin,
And V heralds love's deathless verity.
And as for X, I wish to imitate it thus
With open arms.
(*She kisses him.*)
As we are here this moment,
So let us be even after death.

PERIBÁÑEZ. I propose, my darling,
To learn this alphabet.
Do you want more?

CASILDA. My love, I hardly know
If I dare on our first day
To ask you a great favor.

PERIBÁÑEZ. My love is piqued.

CASILDA. Are you sure?

PERIBÁÑEZ. Yes.

CASILDA. Do listen.

PERIBÁÑEZ. Speak.

CASILDA. Assumption Day draws near,
And I have such a longing to see Toledo.
My object is not pleasure, but a devout
Wish to behold the image of Our Lady
That is borne in procession through the streets.

PERIBÁÑEZ. My wishes and yours, my love, are the same.

CASILDA. Let us then plan ahead our journey there.
The letter G proves how gallant you are,
And I now kiss your hands a thousand times.

PERIBÁÑEZ. Invite your cousins and we'll travel in style.

CASILDA. Do you wish to pamper me?

PERIBÁÑEZ. I want to buy . . .

CASILDA. Tell me.

PERIBÁÑEZ. A lovely costume. (*Exeunt.*)

(*A room in the* COMENDADOR'S *house. Enter the* COMENDADOR *and* LEONARDO, *his servant.*)

COMENDADOR. Leonardo, call Luján immediately.

LEONARDO. I have told him, but he was upset.

COMENDADOR. Call him again.

LEONARDO. I'll go.

COMENDADOR. Go.

LEONARDO (*aside*). I wonder what will be the end of this?
Though he feels better he is more downcast,
And groans though he is not in pain, and fills
The air with sighs; this must be love, I reckon. (*Exit.*)

COMENDADOR. Casilda, fairer and more radiant
Than blushing dawn in the mantle of the sun,
Or snowy peak that love alone can melt,
With your white hands you culled in the fields of May
All blossoms Zephyr quickens in Flora's bosom.
I saw the green fields hail you with delight,
For here and there fresh buds began to sprout
When they felt the gentle touch of your white feet,
And through your kindly care and husbandry
Evergreen hope now burgeons in my heart.
Lucky the husbandman whose eager hands
Have reaped so ripe a harvest from your breast,
And who one day to come, when his beard is white,
Will see your sons on his heaped threshing floors,
With such a bounteous harvest of ripe fruits,
The sun would let you ride in his golden coach,
Or in the wain that is made of twinkling stars.
For his spade I would exchange my golden sword,
And renounce my Ocaña for your humble home,
The house at which the sun stops every day.[6]
He is lucky to find such treasure in his bed.
(*Enter* LUJÁN.)

LUJÁN. Pardon me: the bay horse needed my care.

COMENDADOR. I am done for, Luján, a thunderbolt has killed me;
I still feel the effects of that swooning fit.

[6] This is a play on the meanings of *casa*, an ordinary house or home, and "celestial house"—one of the twelve divisions of the heavens through which the heavenly bodies pass every twenty-four hours.

LUJÁN. So that fierce passion of yours still endures.
COMENDADOR. Just as fire seeks to soar up to its sphere,
So does the fickle coward soul fly up
Aspiring to such beauty: yes, Luján,
I wish to become a friend of this good peasant,
In whom honor sleeps less than in subtle courtier.
What means must I use to achieve my plan?
Would not the best plan be to say that I
Intend to grant the wishes he expressed,
And, perhaps, bestow on him some other favor?
LUJÁN. If I were cautious and foresaw the danger,
I should win first the indulgence of the husband
Before trying to lay siege to his wife.
This fellow, though he is a decent man,
And is honored among his equals, will
Become unwary if you favor him,
For there are husbands who less cautiously
Defend their honor when they are indebted
For favors given: indebtedness, my lord,
Will make a man neglect his vital duties.
COMENDADOR. What favors shall I first bestow on him?
LUJÁN. If you consider favoring a peasant
Your best plan is to give him a pair of mules,
Which would be just like giving him Ocaña,
For a mule is a peasant's greatest capital;
And for his wife, gold earrings would be best.
This, they say, was the plan Medoro used
To win the heart of fair Angelica.[7]
For Angelica's sake with blood of warriors slain
Rinaldo drenches the fields of Agramante,
And bold Roland, great baron of Anglante,
Piles corpse on corpse upon the martial plain;
While the wizard Malgesí shuns many a wound
From the scepter's fury; watch Sacripante dash,
And Ferragut, Spain's hope, fall to the ground!
But while paladins deal strokes and counterstrokes,
Medoro gives the lady high-heeled shoes,
Choosing a pliant hour, and amidst the oaks,

[7] The following sonnet refers vaguely to incidents in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso,* a work which influenced Cervantes in *Don Quixote* and Lope in his *Hermosura de Angélica.*

Or in the shade of cypress trees he woos,
Gathering so many rosebuds in that hour,
That for thirteen months she was his paramour.

COMENDADOR. The poet was quite skilful in portraying
The blatant triumph of self-interest.

LUJÁN. The wisest plan would be to make a gift;
That is the shortest and most secret way.
And personal favors are sure to betray,
For they are seen and noted by everyone,
And love reveals itself by hint or glance.
Diligent self-interest which deals in cash
Treads softly with feet wrapt in cotton wool.

COMENDADOR. Halt there! self-interest must win the day!

LUJÁN. It levels the mountains and it calms the seas,
Hereafter you will find that this is true.

COMENDADOR. Since you, Luján, served with me in Andalusia,
And I witnessed your honor and your courage,
I have been pleased to tell you of my pleasures
And inner secrets, for you are discreet
And can be trusted in all emergencies.
Who is wise, merits to be held in high esteem,
No matter where he is guided by his fortune;
And so I want to change your present duties.

LUJÁN. Let me know if there's any thing you need,
And of my affection you may rest assured,
Though I can't offer greater services.

COMENDADOR. Banish my lovesick thoughts.

LUJÁN. This is the only way.

COMENDADOR. Let us be off, and you go fetch the mules,
The finest pair the fellow has ever seen.

LUJÁN. Just clap the mule's yoke on that boorish neck,
And you'll see him arrive within the hour
His proud heart furrowed with his love of you,
On the watch for the harvest he now hopes to reap.
Remember, I pray you, that love like wheat
Produces no fruit until money is sowed. (*Exeunt.*)

(*A room in the house of* PERIBÁÑEZ. *Enter* CASILDA, INÉS, COSTANZA.)

CASILDA. It is not too late to start.

INÉS. The weather is fine, and the road is level all the way.

COSTANZA. In summer they often make the journey in ten

hours, and even in less. What fine clothes will you wear, Inés?

INÉS. They are shabby, and you see my figure.

COSTANZA. I am wearing a bodice full of trimmings of silver.

INÉS. With the jacket unbuttoned it looks very well.

CASILDA. I intend to wear one of velvet over a red skirt. That is the show dress of a married woman.

COSTANZA. Inés wanted to lend me a skirt, it belonged to Antón's wife. It was made of elegant cloth woven at Cuenca, where the finest cloth is made, but Menga, Blasco Gil's daughter, wouldn't let me wear it, saying that the color doesn't suit my complexion.

INÉS. I know of somebody who would lend you a finer skirt.

COSTANZA. Who?

INÉS. Casilda.

CASILDA. If you want my white linen skirt, it is becoming, or the green one, which is embroidered.

COSTANZA. You are generous and good-natured, but Pedro might scold you, and I don't want to make trouble, but thank you all the same.

CASILDA. My Pedro is not so bad-natured as you think, Costanza.

INÉS. Is your husband really affectionate?

CASILDA. Are you afraid we'll change so quickly?
In this village you will not find
So devoted a married couple,
Why we are both still nibbling
The icing off our wedding cake.

INÉS. Does he tell you how he raves about you?

CASILDA. He says little else, and I know
That I am all in a daze
From his billing and cooing.
At dusk when the evening star appears
Pedro comes home from the fields,
Hungry for his supper;
But first my heart whispers he is coming
And I rush to open the door for him,
Throwing down my sewing cushion,
(There's always someone in the village
Ready to buy my embroideries).
Pedro jumps off his mule,

And I throw myself into his arms;
I'm sure the poor hungry beast
Grudges us our long kisses,
And hearing it whinny Pedro says:
"As soon as the cattle are fed,
Miss Pretty Face, Pedro will go out again."
While he throws in the straw for them
He sends me out for barley;
I bring it and he sifts it,
And leaves what he will later use.
He then gives it all a stirring in the manger,
And among the animals he kisses me again;
For no place is too humble
For love to celebrate.
We then hasten away from the stall,
For the stew is boiling in the pot,
And hails us with simmering garlic and onion,
Our kitchen reeks, but we rejoice to hear
The pot's lid tapping its gay rhythms,
Which tempt us to trip to a rustic dance.
Then I serve him the meal on a spotless cloth,
But not on silver plates: though I wish that I could.
Instead, our painted plates from Talavera,
With their carnation pattern, feast our eyes.
I warm his plate of soup so cosily
That the lord of this our village,
The Comendador, I am sure, dines no better.
And Pedro has to pay the penalty,
For hardly a single mouthful does he eat,
But he gives me, his dove, the daintiest bit.
He drinks but leaves the half,
And I drain off the heel taps.
I then bring the olives, and if not,
The choice is dessert.
Dinner finished, hand in hand,
We give due thanks to God
For blessings we've received.
And we go off to bed,
Where dawn regretfully calls us,
When it is time for us to part.

INÉS. What a lucky little bride you are

To be so happily wed!
All that we're waiting for now
Is to start our journey.
(*Enter* PERIBÁÑEZ.)

CASILDA. Is the cart decorated?

PERIBÁÑEZ. As best we could.

CASILDA. May they all get in then?

PERIBÁÑEZ. I was sorry, Casilda, to see
That Blas's cart has a rug
And coverlet with coat of arms.

CASILDA. Ask some knight for me.

INÉS. You may ask the Comendador.

PERIBÁÑEZ. He was very kind to us,
And I think he would
Have given it to us.

CASILDA. What do we lose by going to ask him?

PERIBÁÑEZ. Wait a moment; when all is said and done
Why should we start without a coverlet?

INÉS. Let us then go and dress.

CASILDA. You can go and ask him for . . .

PERIBÁÑEZ. What, my Casilda?

CASILDA. A hat.

PERIBÁÑEZ. Not that.

CASILDA. Why? Is it extravagance?

PERIBÁÑEZ. We may be given the plumed hat of a lord
It would be windy for you; for me a burden. (*Exeunt.*)

(*A room in the house of the* COMENDADOR. *Enter the* COMENDADOR *and* LUJÁN.)

COMENDADOR. They are very fine.

LUJÁN. I have never seen finer beasts and I've seen many.

COMENDADOR. The earrings are missing.

LUJÁN. The owner said that the mules are three years old this spring, and they cost the price you gave about a month ago in the fair at Mansilla de las Mulas, and they are broken to pack saddle.

COMENDADOR. Tell me how we can give them to her husband, without arousing his suspicions?

LUJÁN. Summon him to your house and tell him that you are grateful to him for his kind interest. It really makes me laugh to see you appointing a man of my humble parts as secretary to your affairs of the heart.

COMENDADOR. Don't become alarmed; when wooing
A woman of humble parts, you must
Obviously treat such an affair
According to your own lights.
If I were paying court to a lady I should
Have given instructions to my secretary or steward,
Or to a gentleman of my household.
They would have gone in quest
Of diamonds, chains, gems, pearls, clothes, satins,
Damasks, velvets and other rare and exotic things,
Even to the extent of ordering from Arabia
The Phoenix; but since she is a peasant girl,
I am obliged to reveal my plans to you, Luján,
Though you are just my lackey: but in this business
Of buying mules you are just the man I need,
And so through you I treat my love in just the
Same way as it treats me.

LUJÁN. Though your love affair, my lord, is ill-advised,
The way you handle it is wise.
(*Enter* LEONARDO.)

LEONARDO. Here is Peribáñez.

COMENDADOR. Who, Leonardo?

LEONARDO. Peribáñez, my lord.

COMENDADOR. What are you saying?

LEONARDO. I say that Peribáñez inquires for you, and I am sure you know him. Peribáñez is a farmer of Ocaña, a genuine Christian and a rich man, held in veneration by his equals, and if he wished to rise in this town, all who sally forth with their plow would follow his lead. For though he is a peasant, he is honorable.

LUJÁN (*aside to his master*). What makes you so pale?

COMENDADOR. By heavens! the mere report that the husband of a woman I love has arrived makes me tremble and turn pale.

LUJÁN. Will you not have the courage now to see him?

COMENDADOR. Tell him to come in; just as one who is in love
Finds streets and windows, even iron bars
Most pleasing to the eye, and in the maids
Fancies that he sees their mistress' face.
So I imagine I shall discover in her husband
That beauty which has been my bane.

(PERIBÁÑEZ, *in cloak, enters.*)

PERIBÁÑEZ. Let me now bend the knee, my gracious Lord.

COMENDADOR. Oh, Pedro, a thousand welcomes!
Let me embrace you.

PERIBÁÑEZ. My Lord! such favor!
To a rough peasant, one
Of the humble folk in Ocaña;
Why such favors to a mere farmer?

COMENDADOR. You, Peribáñez, are not unworthy of honor.
You are a man of decent birth and habits
And because of your intelligence and wit,
You are the model vassal of my lands,
For this reason I owe you gratitude,
And still more, for I owe my life to you;
Without your help I should have lost it then.
What favor would you have me grant you now?

PERIBÁÑEZ. We men of good repute, as I claim to be,
Although we're poor, we all play the same part
As the noble gallants in the palace do.
My wife wants me to take her to the feast
Which, as you know, is held in the Cathedral
Of Toledo, in the month of August, and
All the Kingdom gathers in that shrine.
Her cousins, too, are going, but, my Lord,
Though I have at home some common woolen cloths,
I have no French tapestries of silk and gold,
No hangings embroidered with coat of arms,
Nor crowned with escutcheons and with feathered crests,
And so, I come to ask whether you, my Lord,
Would lend a rug and hangings to adorn
My cart, and I beseech you, make allowance
For my ignorance, and pardon one in love.

COMENDADOR. Are you happy, Peribáñez?

PERIBÁÑEZ. I would not change this homespun cloth of mine
For the grand cross of Comendador that you,
My Lord, wear on your breast, for I possess
An honored wife of no mean beauty, one
Who is a good and humble Christian.
I don't know whether her love equals mine,
Which is as great as woman ever had.

COMENDADOR. How right you are to love the girl who loves

You, both by divine and human ordinance.
And one whom you may cherish as your own.
Ho there! now give him the rug from Mequinez,
And eight more hangings with my coat of arms;
And as I now have a good chance to requite
The welcome I received in his house, when
I found life again, do give him the two mules,
Which I had purchased for the traveling car;
And to his wife the silver earrings take,
If the silversmith by now has finished them.

PERIBÁÑEZ. Even if in your name I kissed the ground
A thousand times, I could not ever pay
A tithe of what I owe for all you've given me.
My wife and I have been till now your fiefs,
Henceforth we are the servants of your house.

COMENDADOR. Go, Leonardo, with him.

LEONARDO.

(*Exeunt.*)

COMENDADOR. Luján, what's your view?

LUJÁN. Good fortune draws nigh.

COMENDADOR. This is for your ear: saddle my sorrel horse:
I want to go to Toledo in disguise,
For that peasant wench has bewitched my soul.

LUJÁN. Do you want to trail her?

COMENDADOR. Yes, for she possesses me,
Only the sight of her can cool my passion.

(*The entrance to the Cathedral of Toledo. The* KING *and the* CONDESTABLE *enter with suite.*)

CONDESTABLE. Toledo rejoices and is ready to serve,
Now that Your Royal Highness by your presence
Favors the people; and their pleasure grows
On this, the eve of that great festival.

KING. They may thank me for my desire to come.
I'm an ardent lover of the city's splendor.

CONDESTABLE. And Toledo anxiously has done her best
To show her affection and her gratitude.

KING. She is indeed eighth wonder of the world,
Castile's fair crown, and finest ornament;
She is the country's heart, my Condestable,

From whom the limbs receive the life that rouses
Them to vigor. She is in all eyes eminent.
Like Rome she is built on a mountain which
Subdued the seven hills, and has been famed
For many centuries. I leave with love
And admiration her basilica.

CONDESTABLE. This miracle, my Liege, even surpasses
The ancient holy shrine of Ephesus.
Do you propose to attend the cavalcade?

KING. I shall go to set an example by my faith
In the sovereign image, on whose day
I would beg all her prayers for my soul.
(*A page enters.*)

PAGE. The councilors from your noble city hall
Wish to do obeisance to Your Royal Highness.

COMENDADOR. Tell them to enter.

ALDERMAN. Toledo, my Liege, kisses these royal feet,
And wishing to reply to your just claims,
She called her nobles, and all citizens,
By common consent, for the campaign offer
A thousand men from all Toledo's Kingdom,
And forty thousand ducats.

KING. I'm beholden
To Toledo for the services they give
Today, but we expect that from Toledo.
Are you both knights?

COUNCILMAN. Yes, we are knights.

KING. Speak to the Condestable
Tomorrow, that Toledo may be told
How I pay my debt to her nobility.
(*Enter* INÉS, COSTANZA *and* CASILDA *with hats adorned with tassels, and dressed as peasant women of the Sagra of Toledo; and* PERIBÁÑEZ *and the* COMENDADOR, *on the way.*)

INÉS. By heaven! I must see him.
Well we've come in time,
For the King is in the city!

COSTANZA. What a dashing youth!

INÉS. They call him Don Enrique the third. The third
They say makes the best go-between!
He is the son of the King, Don Juan the First,

And thus, grandson of the second Don Enrique,
He who killed the King Don Pedro, and was
A Guzmán through his mother, and a brave
Knight, though the brother was still braver, but
When they fell to the earth, then Fortune turned,
And unlocking their arms gave to Enrique
The dagger, which has now become his scepter.
But who is that tall man talking to him?
He is no less than the Condestable.

CASILDA. They, I suppose, are kings of flesh and bone?

COSTANZA. Of what were you thinking?

CASILDA. Damask or velvet.

COSTANZA. You really are a silly!

COMENDADOR (*aside*). Like a shadow I am following
The sun of that peasant wench,
And so foolhardily that I'm afraid
I'll be recognized by the King's suite.
But already he goes to the Alcázar.
(*Exit the* KING *and his suite.*)

INÉS. Hello! the King is going.

COSTANZA. So soon?
I have not yet been able to
Find out if his head is flaxen or red.

INÉS. Kings in our eyes, Costanza, owing to
Our deference, are like miraculous
Images, for every time we look at them
They seem to us to be of another color.
(*Enter* LUJÁN *with a painter.*)

LUJÁN. Here he is.

PAINTER. Which of them?

LUJÁN. My Lord, here is the painter.

COMENDADOR. My friend.

PAINTER. At your service.

COMENDADOR. Have you brought the card and paints?

PAINTER. Knowing your plan, I've brought
Paints and a card.

COMENDADOR. As soon as those peasant girls
Do settle down at their leisure,
Paint me the portrait
Of the middle one of the three,
Without their being aware of it.

PAINTER. I am afraid 'twill be a hard task;
But I'm confident
The likeness will be good.
COMENDADOR. Take heed of what I need:
If this small portrait on the card
Be a good likeness, I want you then to paint
A full-size one with more space on a canvas.
PAINTER. Do you want it full-length?
COMENDADOR. Not so much: half-length will be sufficient,
But with the same metal disks,
The strings of beads, the smock and jacket.
LUJÁN. They are sitting over there to watch the people.
PAINTER. We now have an opportunity,
And I shall paint the portrait.
PERIBÁÑEZ. Casilda, let us choose that seat over there
To see the illuminations.
It is said that they will bring oxen
To the town hall this evening.
CASILDA. Let us go; for there we shall see them
Without danger or disturbance.
COMENDADOR. You, painter, must portray the sky
All edged with clouds, but draw
A pleasant meadow covered with flowers.
PAINTER. She certainly is ravishingly beautiful.
LUJÁN. So fair that my master
Is all covered with hair and
Disguised as a savage.
PAINTER. The light will fail very soon.
COMENDADOR. Don't fear that; for she has
In her blue eyes another sun!
For you they are stars,
But for me rays of fire.

ACT II.

Assembly room of a brotherhood at Ocaña.

BENITO. This is my view.
GIL. Then sit down and make notes
ANTÓN. It's wrong to hold a chapter with so few.
BENITO. The meeting was already called since yesterday.
BLAS. Last feast, a thousand absences were marked.
GIL. Fellow members, now that our procession
Has been so honored and our Saint revered
It is a shame for our fine brotherhood
To lag behind when there's a remedy.
Such scant devotion reflects on all
Ocaña's folk and holds them up to shame,
For day by day throughout Toledo's realm
Devotion grows in pageants and processions
For old San Roque, our most blessed patron.
Why then, I pray, are we so niggardly
In spending money?
BENITO. It was thoughtlessness.
(*Enter* PERIBÁÑEZ.)
PERIBÁÑEZ. If there is anything that I can do
Then here I am, if now it is not too late.
BLAS. Welcome, Peribáñez, we've missed your advice.
PERIBÁÑEZ. I fear that I can be of little help:
Hence all my hesitations.
BENITO. Sit by me
GIL. Where have you been?
PERIBÁÑEZ. I was at Toledo, where
I took my wife to see the festival.
ANTÓN. I'm sure it must have been a great display.
PERIBÁÑEZ. My friends. I truly do declare I saw
Heaven itself on earth when I beheld
The holy shrine, and image, which I swear
Has not in all the world its peer, unless
The heavenly sculptors do return to earth.
Who has not seen the original throned on high,
Can never match the one Toledo venerates.

The procession was held, as is the custom there,
But there was extra pomp and majesty,
Because the King was present at the feast.
He was passing through the city on his way
To Andalusia to wage the Moorish war.

GIL. Without your constant help, my friend, alas,
Our brotherhood goes wrong in a thousand ways.

PERIBÁÑEZ. I thought the other day I could have come
And walked in the procession of our saint,
But renounced when I was told Casilda's plans,
And until past the octave I could not
Prevail on her to join me.

GIL. So the King
Was there.

PERIBÁÑEZ. Yes, and the Master of Calatrava.
A fine campaign they surely are preparing.
Not one Moor will they leave to tell the tale
Of those who live and quaff the waters of
The Betis, though I know how they meet our troops.
But a truce to all and tell me what's afoot.

BENITO. The business of San Roque's brotherhood,
And since you've come while we were about to name
A steward, Pedro, you're here in the nick of time
To undertake the post.

ANTÓN. When Peribáñez came
I said the same.

BLAS. Who will say nay to this?

GIL. For my part I agreed, and in the feast to come,
Let him take full responsibility.

PERIBÁÑEZ. Though now I am a married man and might
Refuse to undertake this post, I shall
Consent to become your steward, and I'll strive
To spur myself to serve San Roque well.

ANTÓN. I'm sure you'll do what's needful.

PERIBÁÑEZ. What's needed?

BENITO. I'd move that a showier statue
Be made of our San Roque.

PERIBÁÑEZ. A good idea.
What does Gil say?

GIL. He's right. The statue's old.

PERIBÁÑEZ. And what does Antón say?

But unobtrusively, for in such folk
You will always find maliciousness on show.
At the dance I managed to have a word with her,
I paid my court, but bashfully she replied.
Next day when on the threshing floor we met
I spoke to her and poured forth all my woes.
She then paid greater attention to my prayers,
And promised to give a kind ear to my love,
When I hinted that she might be my wife,
Though she feared what she had good cause to fear.
And I assured her, if she would consent,
That you yourself would even make the match,
But if she refused, then nothing would be done.
And so if you desire through Casilda's door to pass,
Only Inés will help you to achieve success,
For she is her cousin, and she's pert as well.

COMENDADOR. Ah, Leonardo, would that my good luck
Could but discover a way to mollify
The cruel harshness of that peasant heart!

LEONARDO. Is she then so ungrateful?

COMENDADOR. I followed her,
You know where, as a shadow does the sun.
But when I showed her my face unconcealed,
She gazed at me in terror as at death:
Her face, now flushed, now pale, like driven snow,
Did change as rage and scorn did surge in her.
And I gazed at her with humble and loving eyes,
Showing that her harsh looks were killing me.
In her distracted state she was even lovelier,
And such my madness, Leonardo, was
That one day I called in a painter who
Has painted my scornful love on a card.

LEONARDO. Was it a good likeness?

COMENDADOR. So good that later,
Upon a full-size canvas he did paint
Her image which I'll keep before my eyes,
To charm me more than the original.
It is ready: go to Toledo now for it,
Since I may not the living image love,
I shall live with the painted effigy.

LEONARDO. I'll serve you, though I grieve to see you woo

A woman who is sure to deny herself,
Until she knows what you intend to do.
Let me just speak a moment with Inés
And you will see how we shall settle all.

COMENDADOR. If she has all the powers that you say,
The world has no more interest for me.
(*Enter* LUJÁN *disguised as a reaper.*)

LUJÁN. Are you alone?

COMENDADOR. Luján, Leonardo's here.

LUJÁN. A reward, my Lord, for I bring you good news.

COMENDADOR. If your desires to help me don't suffice
I assure you I have in Ocaña some estates.

LUJÁN. In reaper's clothes, my Lord, I went to Peribáñez,
And asked work as day laborer in his fields,
So from today I am in his house disguised.

COMENDADOR. Would I, Luján, were with you at daybreak.

LUJÁN. Tomorrow we reapers go to the fields,
But for your love there is a remedy at hand
For Peribáñez has gone to Toledo,
And left me free this night to act. As soon
As the reaping squadron are asleep around
The doorway, and as soon as I hear your sign,
Or the sound of your footsteps, the door I'll open
And guide you to the room, where you may see
That woman who has been invincible.

COMENDADOR. How can I, Luján, reward you for your help?

LEONARDO. Reason's the finest treasure of the soul.

COMENDADOR. What a simple method you have found for me
To rid me of my worst anxieties!
Now that the jealous yokel is not here,
And has tonight abandoned all to me,
If, when the reapers are asleep, you come,
And open the door to me, my hopes revive
That my mad love will end in victory.
A double share of good luck I have had,
For the yokel's gone and failed to pierce your mask.
Have you examined all the house with care?

LUJÁN. Of course I examined it and visited
The room of the sun whose rays consume your heart.

COMENDADOR. And did you go into her room to be
The Spanish Phaëton of a celestial sun?

What dread temerity! and was my angel occupied?
LUJÁN. Busy embroid'ring, seated on her dais,[9]
Not on a chair of rich brocade, though she
Might well have had one, but of blue leather,
Embossed with a gilt fringe on the edges,
Which instead of tassels, were on the corners cut.
And as throughout Castile the people say
That "ere August is old one feels the cold,"
And rain by now has fallen in our village,
Both wish to be gentle folk before the winter,
And all their walls they have decked with your hangings.
So I said when I saw your honored arms,
"That's no adornment, but Casilda's trophy,
For such has been the god of love's decree."
COMENDADOR. Nay, my arms warned you when that day they took
Possession of the conquest they had made;
For hanging where they do they've not surrendered.
But were they lives I would vow them well spent.
Go back now lest they notice you are here;
And while I now prepare me for the fray,
Night will descend and be compassionate.
LUJÁN. Will Leonardo go with you?
COMENDADOR. That would be wise;
At all times it is comforting to find
A loyal friend at hand. (*Exeunt.*)
(*The porch of* PERIBÁÑEZ'S *home. Enter* CASILDA *and* INÉS.)
CASILDA. By my soul, Inés, you'll stay this night with me.
INÉS. It is only right that I should ask for leave.
Don't take offense; they're my parents, after all.
CASILDA. Lest they grow anxious I'll send word to them.
It is late I tell you.
INÉS. Cousin, as you please.
CASILDA. No greater pleasure could you give to me.
INÉS. Of nights, Casilda, you are wont to sleep
With someone by you, hence your nervousness.
Your husband's absence I'll not compensate,
For he's as fine a youth in words and deeds
As ever breathed, but at the slightest noise

[9] The *estrado* or dais was a platform at the end of the room, on which ladies sat.

I swoon, at a sheathéd sword I quake,
At a naked blade I lose all consciousness.
CASILDA. There is no need to worry in this house.
The reapers sleep beside the entrance door.
INÉS. What is wrong with you, my dear, is loneliness,
You fear your cares will filch away your sleep.
CASILDA. You are right, for our anxieties are doors
Through which press all the jealous fiends of love,
And fear, and once we begin to fear,
We can no more sleep than we can relieve
Our love by jealousy.
INÉS. Does he give you cause
While he is at Toledo?
CASILDA. Can't you see,
My dear Inés, that jealousy's a breath
Of wind and may blow gusts from any quarter.
INÉS. I always heard that it came from Medina.[10]
CASILDA. And what about Toledo? Could it not
Come from there too?
INÉS. Fair girls are there, I know.
CASILDA. Come in to supper.
(*Enter* LLORENTE *and* MENDO, *reapers.*)
LLORENTE. Early to bed, early to rise.
MENDO. That's true. I think it is time to get some sleep.
CASILDA. Inés, the reapers are turning in.
INÉS. We'll go.
Tell Sancho to keep a sharp eye on the orchard. (*Exeunt.*)
LLORENTE. The mistress of the house goes to the door;
She'll be chasing us as the master's not at home.
(*Enter* BARTOLO *and* CHAPARRO, *reapers.*)
BARTOLO. By sunrise I have to reap the meadow slope.
CHAPARRO. If sleep permits . . . God give you good repose,
Mendo and Llorente.
MENDO. There'll be little rest.
We two with our sickles will go toilin' and moilin',
Now gatherin' into sheafs, now cuttin' and reapin'.
CHAPARRO. By heaven, Mendo, if it be worth a mention,
Honest work always makes a decent show.

[10] Medina del Campo, where there was a famous animal fair, was famed for the beauty of its women. So too was Toledo, and was often praised by Lope de Vega.

Come sit down all of you before we sleep
And let us sing a song or tell a tale.
We must have fun.

BARTOLO. Are you drowsy, Llorente?

LLORENTE. By heavens, Bartolo, I wish the dawn
Would come to me four times a year, no more.
(*Enter* HELIPE *and* LUJÁN, *reapers.*)

HELIPE. Is there room for us all?

MENDO. Welcome, Helipe.

LUJÁN. Do you think I might find a tiny place?

CHAPARRO. There'll be room for you: squat down by the door.

BARTOLO. We're all agreed we want to sing a song.

CHAPARRO. Or we might listen to a tale.

LUJÁN. If anyone
Can spin a yarn, let him first join our group.

CHAPARRO. I wraps me in my cloak and down I sits.

LUJÁN. First have a song and I'll tell you the tale.
It's one that I have just remembered now.

MENDO. Sing.

LLORENTE. I'll start the tune. (*They sing to guitars.*)

Trefoil, my Lord, that blooms in the dell;
Trefoil, my Lord, how fragrant the smell!
Trefoil of the lass who is fickle and vain,
Trefoil of the lass who is fickle again.
With her white widow's coif she looks so demure,
But the minx wears a red petticoat as a lure.
Trefoil, my Lord, that blooms in the dell!
Trefoil, my Lord, how fragrant the smell! [11]

LUJÁN. They seem to have fallen asleep.
Better not sing any more.

LLORENTE. I'd like to sleep but it will not be on clover.

LUJÁN (*aside*). What's halting me? The reapers are asleep.
O night, I now commend my love to you;
The whistles urge speed, I must open the door.
Is that you, my Lord?
(*Enter the* COMENDADOR *and* LEONARDO.)

COMENDADOR. Here I am.

LUJÁN. Come in quick.

COMENDADOR. I am inside.

[11] This charming song closely resembles one of the ballads in the *Romancero General* of 1600 (f. 327 V.).

LUJÁN. They're dozing off. You now may safely pass;
Even if a cart passed they would not awaken.
COMENDADOR. Luján, I don't know the house,
Guide me to her chamber.
LUJÁN. Let Leonardo stay here.
LEONARDO. That suits me.
LUJÁN. Follow me.
COMENDADOR. O love! O Fortune; do favor my quest.
(*The* COMENDADOR *and* LUJÁN *enter the house;* LEONARDO *stands watch watch behind the door.*)
LLORENTE. Are you there, Mendo?
MENDO. What's up, Llorente?
LLORENTE. There are men in the house.
MENDO. Men?
I must confess I feared as much;
Is this the way then they respect
The good name of Peribáñez?
LLORENTE. I'm not sure; they're not common folk.
MENDO. How so?
LLORENTE. One wears a cloak with gold on it.
MENDO. Gold is it? Strike me dead
If it isn't the Comendador himself,
LLORENTE. Let's give a shout.
MENDO. Better to hold our whisht?
LLORENTE. I suppose it would. How do you know
It is the Comendador?
MENDO. In Ocaña there's no other man
Would dare set foot in here,
Nor even think of doing so.
LLORENTE. That comes of wedding a pretty lass.
MENDO. She may be blameless?
LLORENTE. Quite so. They're coming back.
Pretend to be asleep.
COMENDADOR. Ho there, Leonardo!
LEONARDO. What's wrong, my Lord?
COMENDADOR. I lost the finest chance I ever had.
LEONARDO. How so?
COMENDADOR. That heartless woman has her window tightly closed.
LEONARDO. Call her.
COMENDADOR. If only there was nobody about . . .

They'll awake.

LEONARDO. They'll not awake, they are reapers;
And wine and weariness are padlocks
On reason and the external senses.
But hark! I hear them opening
The window at the door.

COMENDADOR. All goes awry.

LEONARDO. Suppose it is she?

COMENDADOR. It is she I'm sure.

(CASILDA, *with her face muffled, appears at the window.*)

CASILDA. Is it time to rise, friends?

COMENDADOR. My lady, dawn comes and it's time to reap,
But when you show your face, the Sun at once
Arises but to find itself eclipsed.
We all must sympathize with your sad plight,
When we observe your forlorn loneliness,
Surely your husband must not wish you well,
For to Toledo he has gone today,
Thus leaving you one dreary night alone.
If such were the luck of our Comendador
—Full well I know his love for you—
Though you repel and treat him scornfully.
I swear he would not thus abandon you,
Not even were the King to summon him.
For never among lovers has it been the case
To leave thus alone so fair a face.

CASILDA. Now you, good country man from far-off lands,
Who have come to our harvest as a guest,
Where did you pick up such malicious ways?
On with your leggings and off with your cloak,
Then with scythe on shoulder, and with gloves in belt,
Go forth at dawn for the day is calling you
Tie up the dried sheaves and don't harm the ears,
And when the stars come out go to your rest,
But don't poke your nose where you're sure to stumble.
The Comendador of Ocaña woos, I'm sure,
A high-born lady, not one in a smock
Of rough red homespun or a skirt of wool.
I'm sure she'll wear a forelock waved with curls,
And a gorgeous ruff of finest starchéd linen,
But not an uncouth coif upon her hair

Or a headdress all trimmed up with silver braid.
On holy days she'll go in state to Mass
In coach and pair or sedan chair lined with silk.
You will not see her riding from the fields
To the vines in lumbering waggon with side poles.
And she'll write him in cleverly worded letters
A thousand marvelous courtesies, but not
A mere rustic wife's scorn and curt refusal
Tricked and decked out with plenty of courtly lordships.
For him she'll wear her amber-scented gloves,
And she'll smell sweetly of perfumes and spices,
But not of wild thyme or fragrant lavender,
Or pennyroyal or the flowering bramble.
But even if the Comendador himself
Were to love me as he loves his own life,
And even if virtue and honor were
Nought but a delusion and a mockery,
I'd rather have Pedro on his dapple mare,
His beard stiff with frost and his snow-flecked shirt,
His crossbow athwart, and hanging from the saddle
A pair of rabbits or a brace of partridge,
And running behind his gray hound on the leash,
Than the Comendador in his silken cap,
With hood and shoulder puffs ablaze with gems.
And the ancient stone cross in the hermitage
More deeply stirs my heart to say my prayers
Than the red cross of the Apostle Santiago
That shines like a star on my Lord's braided doublet.
Go then, you reaper, else you'll rue this day,
For if my Peribáñez comes, I swear
You'll never see the light of another day.

COMENDADOR. I'm staying, mistress mine . . . mistress!
Casilda, my love, Casilda,
I am the Comendador;
Open, I entreat you.
Look! two strings of finest pearls
I have to give you, and a chain
Inlaid with many colors, heavier than my own.

CASILDA. Reapers of my house, it is time to rise;
Sweet-smelling dawn is summoning you to work:
Come raise your shouts of joyous merriment;

And he who culls most clusters by the eve,
Shall win the straw hat Pedro wears in the vines.
(*She leaves the window.*)

MENDO. Llorente, our mistress calls,

LUJÁN (*aside*). Flee, my Lord, flee quickly;
Or else the people will see you.

COMENDADOR. Ah what a cruel Libyan asp she is!
Even though I spend all my wealth,
My honor, my good name, my life,
I'll humble your pride and vanquish your wrath. (*Exit the* COMENDADOR, LUJÁN *and* LEONARDO.)

BARTOLO. Up with you quick, Chaparro, the dawn's at hand.

CHAPARRO. Come on, Helipe, it is very late.

HELIPE. By heaven, Bartolo, look at the peaks!
They're now bathed in the white light of the dawn.

LLORENTE. Follow me, good friends, lest our mistress say
Our sickles are idle as our master's away.
(*Exeunt, shouting gaily.*)

(*A room in a painter's house, at Toledo. Enter* PERIBÁÑEZ, *the* PAINTER *and* ANTÓN.)

PERIBÁÑEZ. Of all the holy pictures I have seen,
There is one that I'd like to see again,
Whether because it charms, or else perhaps
Because I'm a peasant like the girl portrayed.
Since you've agreed to repair our patron's statue,
May I have another look at that girl's portrait?

PAINTER. I agree with you: the girl is beautiful.

PERIBÁÑEZ. Take her off the nail; I want Antón to see her.

ANTÓN. I've seen her but I'd like to see her again.

PERIBÁÑEZ. Go, then, I pray, and fetch her.

PAINTER. I'll go now.
(*Exit the* PAINTER.)

PERIBÁÑEZ. You'll see an angel.

ANTÓN. I know why you gaze
At the peasant girl with such anxiety.

PERIBÁÑEZ. That is because of the costume she is wearing:
You're wrong if you think it delighted me.

ANTÓN. I suppose you thought that she was like your wife.

PERIBÁÑEZ. Do you believe Casilda is so fair?

ANTÓN. Pedro, you are her husband, and I think
It is fitter you should sing her praise than I.

(*Enter the* PAINTER *with the full portrait of* CASILDA.)

PAINTER. Here is the girl.

PERIBÁÑEZ (*aside*). And my dishonor too.

PAINTER. What do you think?

PERIBÁÑEZ. Very fine. And you, Antón?

ANTÓN. In your eyes it is a token full of beauty,
In the eyes of the world a work of art and grace.

PERIBÁÑEZ. Go, Antón, to the inn and saddle, I'll be there.

ANTÓN (*aside*). I may be a dunce but I know very well
It's Casilda's portrait. Pedro's jealous mad.
Farewell. (*Exit* ANTÓN.)

PERIBÁÑEZ. Heaven has made none finer.
What beautiful eyes! What a dainty mouth!
From where, pray, came this lovely girl?

PAINTER. If you now fail to recognize that girl,
Then I conclude that she's not well portrayed,
For she comes from the village where you live.

PERIBÁÑEZ. From Ocaña?

PAINTER. Yes.

PERIBÁÑEZ. I know a bride, whom she resembles.

PAINTER. I don't know who she is,
But I'm sure that I painted her in secret,
Not as I here present her, but upon a card.
This is the copy I have made from it.

PERIBÁÑEZ. I know the man who had her portrait made,
If I guess right, will you tell me the name?

PAINTER. I shall.

PERIBÁÑEZ. The Comendador of Ocaña then?

PAINTER. As I am sure that she is unaware
That one of Spain's most noble lords is now
In love with her, I am convinced it is he.

PERIBÁÑEZ. Did she not know?

PAINTER. You too ignored the truth.
At first because of her fidelity
It was no easy task to paint her picture.

PERIBÁÑEZ. Would you entrust it to me? I'd bring it to her.

PAINTER. But they have not yet given me the money,

PERIBÁÑEZ. I'll pay you the full amount.

PAINTER. The Comendador would rage and rant. His lackey
I await tomorrow.

PERIBÁÑEZ. Does the lackey know?
PAINTER. Swift as a bolt he goes to vanquish her.
PERIBÁÑEZ. I saw him yesterday and wished to meet him.
PAINTER. Have you another order for me yet?
PERIBÁÑEZ. While you repair the saint, I'll come to see
This picture a thousand times.
PAINTER. As you please. Farewell. (*Exit the* PAINTER.)
PERIBÁÑEZ. Alas, what horrors have I seen and heard
When heaven is angry and Time's out of joint?
If my wife's not a partner in this evil
How shall I tell her where she has done me wrong?
Who can ever judge a husband's jealousy?
Enough that the Comendador now woos my wife,
Enough that he robs me of my good name,
When it is he my good name should respect.
But I'm a vassal and he is my lord,
I live beneath his shelter and defense.
If he thinks he'll rob me of my good name
Then I shall have to rob him of his life;
For a wrong attempted means a wrong is done.
I was a fool to marry, but I thought, alas,
That with a lovely wife my soul would spend
A whole lifetime of pleasure, but I failed
To reckon that one day the might of wealth
Would gaze with envy and covet my love.
Deuce take the humble man, amen I cry,
Who roves the world in quest of a lovely bride!
Now Don Fadrique has my wife portrayed,
When to sketch her is a blow to my good name.
And if when painted my honor goes limping
Why then my good repute will run a risk,
Deuce take the humble man, amen, I cry,
Who roves the world in quest of a lovely bride! (*Exit.*)
(*A room in the house of the* COMENDADOR. *Enter* LEONARDO *and the* COMENDADOR.)
COMENDADOR. By letter, Leonardo, just arrived,
His Majesty commands me send at once
From Ocaña and its land some fighting men.
LEONARDO. What will you do?
COMENDADOR. Let them make proclamation
And muster up to two hundred valiant youths,

To be divided in two companies,
A hundred peasants and a hundred squires.

LEONARDO. Were it not better if they all were squires?

COMENDADOR. Your wits, alas, do not keep pace with mine,
And thus, you stay far distant from my thought!
Peribáñez I intend to make the chief
And Captain of those hundred peasant lads,
And keep him absent by this stratagem.

LEONARDO. What strange ideas enter lovers' minds!

COMENDADOR. Love is but war, and all its thoughts but schemes.
Has he come yet?

LEONARDO. Luján did say to me
That they expected him to dinner, and he found
Casilda full of anguish and distressed.
Then from Inés I heard she would not tell
Of all that took place on that famous night,
And in agreement with Inés she wished
To feign, that she might not upset her husband
So he beholding her so woebegone
Might not have courage to reveal his thoughts,
Though later he'd find plenty serving you.[12]

COMENDADOR. Hard-hearted woman, may a heavenly curse
Alight upon that moment when I fell,
Since then, my Leonardo, I have been
A haunting suppliant beside her door.

LEONARDO. Nay hush, my Lord, for Troy itself was strong,
Yet when it fell its walls were leveled flat.
Your peasant doxies are inclined to be
A trifle shy, and being of lower rank
They mostly answer "nay" when they mean "yea."
Do but send off her husband honestly,
And you will reach the crown of your delight.

COMENDADOR. May my good fortune hold; but by my troth,
Though I've been active in the lover's fray,
As all the world knows, yet today I'm scared.

LEONARDO. We should find out if Pedro will arrive.

COMENDADOR. Go, Leonardo, and search for Inés;
But don't walk up her street, or raise your eyes

[12] Leonardo here speaks ironically of Peribáñez's service to the Comendador.

To her window; don't loiter by her door.
LEONARDO. To show marked distrust is discourtesy,
For no one ever loved without a hope. (*Exit* LEONARDO.)
COMENDADOR. They tell a tale of a king who loved a tree,
And of a statue that a youth did tend
To whom by night and day he lisped of love.
But he who loved a tree trunk or a stone
Could still have hopes of reaching his desire,
For he at last, when people were not nigh,
Could kiss and fondle to his heart's delight.[13]
Wretched am I whose fate it is to love
The green ungrateful ivy clinging to a wall,
Whose harshness I do try in vain to melt.
Such is the end my fondest hopes foretell,
But since I am so sure that I shall die,
May Cupid therefore change you into stone. (*Exit.*)
(*Enter* PERIBÁÑEZ *and* ANTÓN.)
PERIBÁÑEZ. You may go home, Antón, it's only right.
ANTÓN. And what of you? Haven't you a reason too?
PERIBÁÑEZ. I like to see my reapers; and I've come
In the nick of time, for here lies tillage land.
ANTÓN. Casilda's surely finer tillage, man.
PERIBÁÑEZ. That's how it is; but I must give the men
A plan of what they have to do for me,
You go and see your wife and mine as well.
Tell her I'm staying here to see our land.
ANTÓN (*aside*). A strange affair, but I don't want to let
Him guess that I have understood his thought.
May God be with you. (*Exit* ANTÓN.)
PERIBÁÑEZ. And protect your King.
So grievous are my wrongs that I did make
Pretense and thus go home at a late hour,
How sad I feel! If my Casilda now
Be blameless, why do I thus flee from her?
Woe's me, beloved one, my evil lot

[13] This story, which Lope drew from Pero Mexia's *Silva de Varia Lección* (1500), originally came from Herodotus (VII: 31), who describes how Xerxes near Sardis found a beautiful plane tree which he presented with gold ornaments and placed under one of the gods. The legend is perpetuated in Handel's famous Largo from his opera *Xerxes*.

I do attribute to your peerless charm.
If you were not so fair you could not rouse
Such maddened love in our Comendador.
Here are my wheat fields and my threshing floors,
Yet fields and pastures I hoped to gaze upon
With heart rejoicing, when I lived at peace.
When I last saw you I had other hopes,
And when my heart rejoiced I planned to fill
To the brim my bins with your fair spikes of grain,
But now I must dissemble—(*Voices*)—for I fear
Their whooping cries though I must hear them sing;
But when another's instrument is playing
It is then one's soul begins to weep in earnest.
(*Shouts within as the peasants reap.*)

MENDO. Bartolo, make haste; the night will soon be here,
For now the sun is just about to set.

BARTOLO. He always sups well who works well, I trow,
So says the well known ancient Spanish proverb.

LLORENTE. I'll challenge you, Andrés, to swig four pints.

CHAPARRO. I'll give you two more challenges, Ginés.

PERIBÁÑEZ. Now all disturbs me, and there's nought but grief.

MENDO. Llorente, now sing of our master's bride.

PERIBÁÑEZ. What's left for me now? But I care no more
For life, or even heaven itself, alas.
Who will at last relieve me of my life?
(*A reaper sings.*)
Ocaña's proud Comendador one day
Peribáñez's lovely spouse did come to woo,
But she, who's dainty as she's virtuous,
Did answer thus to the Comendador;
"I love more my Peribáñez in his plaid
Than you, Comendador, in braided cloak." [14]

PERIBÁÑEZ. I'll pluck up courage now I hear that song,
For what this reaper sings must be the truth
Of all that in my absence has occurred.
How great a blessing heaven does bestow
Upon the man who has a virtuous wife!
I think the men are leaving their daily task.

[14] These lines, especially the last two (which Lope also incorporated in another play, *San Isidro labrador de Madrid*), came from the old ballad which inspired Lope to write the play.

PERIBÁÑEZ. Wife!
CASILDA. My love!
PERIBÁÑEZ. Are you well?
CASILDA. I'm without you.
PERIBÁÑEZ. Are you well?
CASILDA. Now I see I am more than well, Inés.
INÉS. Pedro!
PERIBÁÑEZ. What is lacking now I have you both?
CASILDA. I am most grateful to our dear Inés,
Who has stayed with me since you went away.
PERIBÁÑEZ. When she weds, you will wear your fancy shoes,
And, as it's custom, I'll go new shod too.
CASILDA. What have you now brought for me from Toledo?
PERIBÁÑEZ. Desires in plenty, but they weighed so much
I could not bring you gems nor finery.
But I have brought you for your dainty feet
Open slippers tied with ribbons of silvery pink,
Two bonny girdles to hold up your skirt,
A yard and a half in length with silver clasps.
CASILDA. May heaven bless you a thousand years, my love.
PERIBÁÑEZ. While on my way I had a nasty fall
And it's a miracle I'm safe and sound.
CASILDA. God save us, husband, you do frighten me.
PERIBÁÑEZ. I fell from a slope upon a heap of stones.
CASILDA. What's happened?
PERIBÁÑEZ. Had I not served our San Roque,
And said a prayer as I was falling off
My bay mare, it is dead I'd be this day.
CASILDA. I am in terror when I hear your words.
PERIBÁÑEZ. I promised him the object in my house
Of greatest value to adorn his shrine;
And so tomorrow take that coat of arms
Down from the walls, for we've scant use for it,
And hang it up instead, upon the wall,
On our saint's chapel in sign of gratitude.
CASILDA. Had they been tapestries of France, adorned
And woven of silk, and pearls, and precious stones,
I would not say a single word in argument.
PERIBÁÑEZ. It were best that hangings with another's coat
Of arms should not be blazoned on our walls,
Lest people start to murmur in the town

That a rustic should surround his simple bed
With hangings blazoned with device and arms
Of our Comendador. Such crests and plumes
Are out of place amidst the plow and spade,
Amidst the flail, the winnowing fork and hoe.
For our whitewashed walls should not display
Such silken crosses, but those made of grain,
And straw with poppies, camomile, and furze.
For one thing and one only I require:
To find before me painted images:
Of the Annunciation and the Assumption,
Of poor St. Francis with his stigmata,
St. Peter Martyr and St. Blas, the twin
Unrivaled doctors when my throat is raw,
And St. Sebastian and St. Roque, these,
And many other sacred images;
Now portraits—that is different, I say:
We might as well have ghosts upon the walls,
One ghost I saw which I would like to . . .
But I would not like anything at all.
Casilda, let us now sit down to dine,
And then do you prepare my bed for me.

CASILDA. Are you not well, my love?

PERIBÁÑEZ. It's well with me.

(*Enter* LUJÁN.)

LUJÁN. A servant from the Comendador has come.

PERIBÁÑEZ. From whom?

LUJÁN. The Comendador of Ocaña.

PERIBÁÑEZ. What does he want with me at such an hour?

LUJÁN. You'll soon find out if you but speak to him.

PERIBÁÑEZ. Are you, perchance, the reaper who last night
Entered my house?

LUJÁN. You don't remember me?

PERIBÁÑEZ. Where many men pass; it is not surprising.

LUJÁN (*aside*). This looks bad.

INÉS (*aside*). He speaks with many meanings.

PERIBÁÑEZ (*aside*). So the Comendador's looking for me?
Honor, you are ungrateful to my cares!
If you are glass then even the best, alas,
The merest blow can shatter into bits.

ACT III.

The Main Square in Ocaña. Enter the COMENDADOR *and* LEONARDO.

COMENDADOR. Now tell me briefly, Leonardo, all
That took place at Toledo.
LEONARDO. Even if
My tale's told briefly it will tax your patience.
COMENDADOR. Good news will even heal a mortal wound.
LEONARDO. His Majesty King Henry, called the Just,[15]
Whom Cato emulates in equity,
And Aristides, held in Madrid his court
In the year fourteen hundred and six,
When envoys came to say Granada's King,
The Moor, had broken truce and had refused,
Despite all promises and threats, to hand
Back Ayamonte's fort or tribute pay;
And so the monarch of Castile resolved
To wage just war against him, and at once
Assembled at Toledo all his fiefs
And kinsmen from Navarre and Aragón
As did befit the greatest king in Spain.
The knights and prelates are assembled there
With attorneys of the towns and villages
To hold their councils in the Alcázar,
And from Sigüenza's bishop seek advice,
Who rules Toledo's holy church today.
The see is vacant through the recent death
Of the great prelate, Don Pedro Tenorio.
Likewise Palencia's bishop there we find,
Don Sancho de Rojas, the fair counterpart
Of his famed ancestors; for him there waits
Toledo's princely see; and next we find
Don Pablo, Cartagena's bishop, who

[15] The following speech of Leonardo is, as Menéndez y Pelayo pointed out (Vol. XIV, p. 70, of *Obras Completas*), a versified version of the first chapter of the Chronicle of King Juan II (Logroño, 1517).

Is designate for Burgos, and again
The gallant Don Fadrique, who is now
The Count of Trastamara. Though he is
Titled Duke of Arjona, all the Court
Calls him and Don Enrique Manuel,
The King's first cousins, whose swords caused a blaze
Not of Granada but of Troy itself.
Don Lopez Dávalos, grandee of Spain,
By his good fortune and by his own arms
Castile's Condestable, glory of his house;
The Lord High Chamberlain, by blood descent
And by his own prowess, though I'll admit
His sire was one to leave such legacy,
Don Juan Velasco, worthy of all praise.
I'll mention one they call the Judge Supreme,
Don Diego López de Estuñiga,
And the Capitán-General of Castile, to wit,
Gómez Manrique, whose intrepid deeds
Granada and Castile have chronicled.
Nor should I pass by the judges of the Court
Of Oyer and Terminer, who protect the realm,
Pero Sánchez del Castillo, Rodríguez de Salamanca,
And Peribáñez . . .

COMENDADOR. Stop . . . Peribáñez . . . halt . . .
My blood freezes when I hear that name.

LEONARDO. How droll! I name the Judges of the King
To you and one called Peribáñez,
And you think he's our Ocaña countryman.

COMENDADOR. Up to the present I was asking you
To tell me the causes of the King's campaign,
But I am now afraid to hear the tale.
And so, is His Majesty resolved to make
A campaign with the flower of Castile's knights
Upon the frontiers guarded by the fiefs
Of the Granadines, who still deny to us
Their tribute?

LEONARDO. That is all I have to tell.

COMENDADOR. Well now, take note of one important point.
While you Toledo-wards your way did wend
My plan had reached its full accomplishment.
I spoke to Peribáñez and informed him

That I was pleased to nominate him now
A captain of a hundred countrymen,
And that he should straightway prepare himself.
It seemed that he felt honored, and it is true,
Unless it's honor wrapped in infamy.
But he was out to win it, and he spent
His little wealth on trappings and fine clothes,
And yesterday paraded in the square
His company. And Luján says today
He marches to Toledo with his men.

LEONARDO. Your way to fair Casilda then lies clear,
Though she be still as boorish and unkind.

COMENDADOR. Yes, but prolongéd absence must produce
On love the same effect that water does,
When many a year its course flows over stones.

(*Drums play.*)

LEONARDO. What mean those drums?

COMENDADOR. They surely are his drums.
But your ensign is mustering the squires,
So go, my Leonardo, take your arms,
And that we may deceive him all the more,
You too, must sally forth with all your men.

LEONARDO. I hear them coming. Tarry here for me.

(*Exit* LEONARDO.)

(*Enter a company of farmers grotesquely armed, followed by* PERIBÁÑEZ *with sword and a dagger.*)

PERIBÁÑEZ. I did not wish to leave without farewell
To you, my Lord.

COMENDADOR. I esteem your courtesy.

PERIBÁÑEZ. I go to serve you.

COMENDADOR. Say "the King my Lord."

PERIBÁÑEZ. The King and you.

COMENDADOR. That is as it should be.

PERIBÁÑEZ. It is just that I should serve the King, and you,
For it's through you I have my honor now.
For how could I have ever so deserved
To find myself with my cloak, hood, and hoe
Promoted captain with short lance and flag
Of the King, whose royal ears had never heard
My name pronounced, and whose great stature far
Exceeds all five dull senses I possess.

May God, my Lord, preserve you many years.
COMENDADOR. And may He, Pedro, bring you happiness.
PERIBÁÑEZ. Am I correctly dressed?
COMENDADOR. You are indeed.
There's now no difference 'twixt both of us.
PERIBÁÑEZ. There's only one thing I would wish . . .
COMENDADOR. Speak out.
PERIBÁÑEZ. If you, my Lord, would gird on me my sword
That I might be honored.
COMENDADOR. Hand it to me,
I'll dub you knight, for with such dash, I hope
You'll soon become a valiant officer.
PERIBÁÑEZ. In heaven's name, my Lord, I have it here,
Let your Grace gird it on.
COMENDADOR. I'll do it now,
That you may wear it for my sake.
BELARDO. Down on your knees this instant, Blas, I say,[16]
They want to make of him a nobleman.
BLAS. Say, friend, did he fall short in anything?
BELARDO. In plenty if you don't quick bend the knee.
BLAS. Belardo, you who are advanced in years
Tell me, will they now hit him with your sword?
BELARDO. Sure I know more about my dappled ass
And its packsaddle, harness, and all its gear
Than I do of the how and why they arm
The Knights of Castile.
COMENDADOR. You're already dubbed.
PERIBÁÑEZ. What else must I do?
COMENDADOR. You must swear on oath
That you will serve Almighty God and King
With this your sword.
PERIBÁÑEZ. This I do swear and vow
To bear it always in honor's defense,
So now at your behest I'm off to war
And you defender of this land remain.
Wherefore, though married recently, I leave
My house and wife, and I consign them both
Henceforth to your responsibility.
This I entrust to you, for it is more

[16] Belardo was the poetic name by which Lope de Vega frequently introduced himself into his plays.

Than my own life with which I go to war,
For though I am so confident that none
Will do her wrong, I like to think
That you protect her, and being so wise
You know full well what Honor signifies;
For when Honor's at stake it can't be matched
With property, or even life itself.
And he who knows what his honor is worth
Can never possibly be robbed of it.
And you did gird me with my sword, my Lord,
Wherefore I understand what honor means.
Before this I was all but ignorant.
Now since this honor you have granted me
Makes us both equal, see that you guard it well,
Or I shall have cause to complain of you.

COMENDADOR. I now give you leave to complain of me,
If I should be disloyal to this trust.

PERIBÁÑEZ. March on, my men, and let there come what may.
(*He marches off arrogantly behind his company. Exit.*)

COMENDADOR. His way of speaking left me a bit perplexed
For now I'm sure he will begin to plot
How he may be avenged, or else complain.
But as I have my thoughts so charged with guilt,
With my own malice I now judge his words,
Whereas his words were said in innocence.
And even were it malice that I heard,
Who is the peasant could prevail against me?
You most rebellious and unthankful girl,
And may my passion die ere dawn shall break! (*Exit.*)

(*A street in Ocaña, outside* PERIBÁÑEZ'S *house. Enter above on the gallery at the back of the stage* COSTANZA, CASILDA, *and* INÉS.)

COSTANZA. And so at last your husband goes away?

CASILDA. Pedro's off to the front, but in the war
He has left at home I could win greater fame.

INÉS. Casilda, don't be so depressed; the rank
Of Captain is not given just any way.

CASILDA. Never, Inés, may you deserve such rank!

COSTANZA. Indeed, Inés, that is the very truth,
I've never seen commissions come our way,

For they belong to squires and noblemen.
But also I have been informed that he
Goes only to Toledo with the troops.

CASILDA. If this had not been so, could I have lived?

INÉS. I hear the sound of drums. It must be he!

COSTANZA. Pity those who go with him, but not yourself.

(*Enter* PERIBÁÑEZ *with the drum, flag and soldiers.*)

BELARDO. You see the damsels on the balcony,
When I see them I am young once again;
I'm no longer for them nor they for me.

PERIBÁÑEZ. Are you so old Belardo?

BELARDO. Pleasure's gone.

PERIBÁÑEZ. But something's left beneath that homespun cloak.

BELARDO. I tell you, Captain, there was once a time
When in the sun and open air I played
The clown, the shepherd, and the sacristan,
But one year, when snow fell, I saw my hair
Was gray, so I took refuge in the church.

PERIBÁÑEZ. Why you've reached only three decades and nine.

BELARDO. You must add three more years the nurse did say,
Who weaned me, but I am sure she forgot,
For she had scanty memory, but way back
In the dark ages, my first jaw tooth came.

PERIBÁÑEZ. Already, I suppose, you went to school?

BELARDO. I could tell you on oath what I then knew,[17]
And thousands say I scarcely then could read,
But upon my word there's truth in it, I say;
For since to dance, to sing or play to me
Comes naturally, I know how to write
Without knowing how to read, a novel gift!

CASILDA. My dashing captain of my gloomy thoughts!

PERIBÁÑEZ. My lady of the balcony for whom
I hold the banner.

CASILDA. Are you leaving now
Ocaña, sir?

PERIBÁÑEZ. My lady, I must take
These soldiers to Toledo, they're my cares.

CASILDA. If they are soldered they'll no trouble give.

[17] A reference to the carping critics who were always finding fault with Lope de Vega.

If you're not jealous your honor has nought to fear.[18]

PERIBÁÑEZ. If I could be sure I'd not have such fears.
It's not for you I'm anxious, but because
Of him on whose behalf I lead the men.
If only my cares could be yours as well,
They would not go whither they are going now,
Nor I, my lady, be going with them too.
Security, which brings a moment's truce
In the grim war in which I find myself,
Now takes me to Toledo, and beyond
The world to desperate extremity.
And so I come to bid farewell to you,
And I leave you a guardian of yourself,
Because in you and with you I remain;
But from you I would now a favor beg
That ladies give new captains in the field,
When they await the trophies from their wars.
Do you not think I speak as though I had
A solemn mien and knightly courtesy?
Who would have said that a mere countryman,
Who yesterday had cut the stubble dry
With his steel sickle curved with tiny teeth,
Whose feet a-treading the purple grapes had made
The wine press overflow with dusky must,
And whose coarse hand the iron plow had grasped,
Would speak to you today in martial words,
Wielding his sword and decked in lordly plumes.
Learn now that I am noble and can do
Whatever I wish, for the Comendador,
Casilda, armed me; so this lesser thing,
When the time comes, as I suspect it will
Tonight, I reckon, will decide my life.

CASILDA. Your dark words I now fail to understand:
The favor, yes, I know it is due to you.
But what gift can a country girl bestow
Upon a captain?

PERIBÁÑEZ. Don't so name yourself.

CASILDA. From me, my Pedro, this black ribbon take.

[18] Casilda makes a play on the words *soldar—soldados*. If Peribáñez's cares (i.e., jealousies) are well mended he need not worry about his honor.

PERIBÁÑEZ. Is black the color, wife, you give me now?
CASILDA. Pray tell me are there omens in the war?
PERIBÁÑEZ. It is a token of despair and prophesies
Exile or mourning.[19]
BLAS. Tell me, fair Costanza,
What token to a soldier do you give
For all his compliments?
COSTANZA. I'll give you, Blas,
This leash of dog's hide, though you're setting out
For a place where dogs in plenty you will find
From which to fashion them.
BLAS. God grant the Moors
Make them of my raw hide, if I don't kill
All those in battle whom I put to flight.
INÉS. Will you, Belardo, not request a favor?
BELARDO. Inés, as veteran, not as youthful swain,
From your hands I deserve a compliment.[20]
INÉS. Take my shoe.
BELARDO. Nay, fair lady, pause a while;
A shoe-slap when delivered from a height
Will smart.[21]
INÉS. Belardo, bring a Moor to me.
BELARDO. For days I've gallivanted after Moors,
But if one does not come to me in prose
From this day on I'll offer him in verse.[22]
(*Enter* LEONARDO *as Captain, with drum and banner and a company of squires.*)
LEONARDO. Now march in order, soldiers, as I said.
INÉS. What's this?

[19] Black was the sign of banishment and exile as well as death.
[20] Belardo (Lope de Vega) had served in military expeditions against the Azores in 1583, and with the Invincible Armada against England in 1588.
[21] Women wore shoes with very thick soles and heels of cork, which made them taller than men. According to Covarrubias, when they were in a temper they were liable to pull off their shoe and inflict punishment upon those who had offended them.
[22] Here Lope de Vega alludes to some forthcoming literary work, probably his *Jerusalén conquistada*, an epic poem on the crusade of Richard Coeur de Lion. That work he wrote in 1604, as he refers to having finished it in a letter to the Duke de Sessa of September 3, 1605.

COSTANZA. The company of wearied squires.[23]
INÉS. Our brawny farmers made a better show.
COSTANZA. Their cloaks are finer, not their bravery.
PERIBÁÑEZ. Ho there! let every man be all agog
To show his mettle, dash and elegance.
BELARDO. What if those cowards think they've beaten us,
Then let ours leisurely stroll in front of them.
PERIBÁÑEZ. Ho there! Let nobody advance: let lancer now
Follow crossbowman.
(*Each company wheels round the other, glaring at one another.*)
BLAS. Now the time has come,
Belardo, to show dash.
BELARDO. You hold your whisht!
Even the most decrepit age will find
In its own gallant spirit its relief.
LEONARDO. Enough! The farmers now vie with the squires!
BELARDO. You'll see those fellows running away like hounds.
BLAS. No stags could race faster once they perceive
A Moor near by. To name one were enough.
BELARDO. I saw them all run when we fought the bull.
(*Exeunt the farmers.*)
LEONARDO. So now they've gone away. Come here, Inés!
INÉS. Is it you, my Captain?
LEONARDO. Why have your cousins gone?
INÉS. Don't you yet know the reason? Why Casilda now
Is like a rock. Tonight she's in a huff.
LEONARDO. May our Comendador not see her then
For a while tonight.
INÉS. Hush! Mum's the word, I pray;
I'll fix his trysting when I am assured
That Pedro goes to rest.
LEONARDO. Then if you wish
To capture my affection, blind the eyes
Of that hard-hearted girl who is so niggardly
Protecting her honor. Our Comendador
Is like one at death's door since yesternight.
INÉS. Tell him to come to the street.

[23] According to Henri Mérimée, the edition of 1614 reads *cansados* (wearied). *Revista de Filología española* II, 1919, pp. 61-63. Other editions read *casados* (married).

LEONARDO. What signal, pray?
INÉS. Whoever sings well.
LEONARDO. So I'll say farewell.
INÉS. Will you come also?
LEONARDO. I intend to hand
Over to my ensign our brawny men,
Then I shall meet you at our tryst.
INÉS. Farewell. (*Exit.*)
LEONARDO. Come sound the march, for now two suns have set.
(*Exeunt.*)

(*A hall in the house of the* COMENDADOR. *The* COMENDADOR *in a dressing gown and* LUJÁN, *his lackey.*)

COMENDADOR. And so you saw him finally depart?
LUJÁN. Aye, he was riding on a goodly mare,
One as swift in battle to o'ertake or flee.
I wish you'd seen our Peribáñez lead
His men, the sight would banish all your cares.
COMENDADOR. He is, I know, the best of company;
But I, alas, prefer that of his wife.
LUJÁN. It's said, faint heart never won a fair lady.
COMENDADOR. Luján, the men will dine in the city
Tomorrow.
LUJÁN. If tonight they're billeted.
COMENDADOR. Neither the Captain nor his men should halt.
LUJÁN. Well as they're peasants and the day is short,
And as the dance with beating drum beguiles,
Still I am sure they'll march without a halt
Right to Granada.
COMENDADOR. How shall I pass the time
That lasts from now till ten o'clock tonight?
LUJÁN. But it is already nearly nine. Don't fret
And be so gloomy that when Fortune smiles
Upon your plans, impatience mars your joy;
Remember expectation, too, has charms.
COMENDADOR. I must, alas, when happiness delays,
Still trust in hope, despairing all the while.
LUJÁN. And Leonardo, will he come with us?
COMENDADOR. Don't you see by my plan it's fixed that he
Must wed Inés, for she must open the door.
LUJÁN. What signal will you give?
COMENDADOR. It will be in song.

LUJÁN. What happens if they frighten off the game?
COMENDADOR. At first they will give us help, for in the noise
No one will understand what's happening,
Or the opening and the closing of the doors.
LUJÁN. Your plan's well laid and all has been foreseen,
But yet I once heard of a family
That gathered in a place to celebrate
A wedding, and to eat their fill, and dance.
The priest came, and the bridegroom, and with him
The bridesmaid, and the groomsman, and as well
The drummer with a handsome psaltery.
But it turned out the bride had not said "yes,"
For she cried they had brought her 'gainst her will.
And so, when all had gathered in the church,
The priest did ask, and she three times denied
The question, so the marriage was dissolved.
COMENDADOR. Do you then mean to say that we, in spite
Of all precautions, have left out Casilda's "yes"?
LUJÁN. I fear you shoulder a heavy enterprise,
For she is hard, and her "yes" you did need.
COMENDADOR. Our plan is not so ill devised, and since
Her boorish harshness will not yield to prayers,
She must be tricked.
LUJÁN. Perhaps you will succeed,
But I'm inclined to think we're in the dark.
(*Enter a servant and the musicians.*)
PAGE. The musicians have arrived.
FIRST MUSICIAN. Here are, my Lord,
Lisandro and Leónido till dawn.
COMENDADOR. My friends, give thanks that I entrust you with
A theme that is both gallant and my own.
SECOND MUSICIAN. My Lord, you honor us.
COMENDADOR. Has eleven struck?
LUJÁN. One, two and three . . . no more.
SECOND MUSICIAN. You counted wrong.
The clock struck eight.
COMENDADOR. How comes it now
That you should be so unwilling to tell
The hours the clock so gladly gave to me.
LUJÁN. If you expect it's later, I'll count three.
COMENDADOR. One must not watch.

LUJÁN. Do calm yourself and dine.
COMENDADOR. God send you a bad Easter when you say dine.
LUJÁN. Well, have a drink then.
COMENDADOR. Is there snow?
PAGE. There's none.
COMENDADOR. Share it between you both.
PAGE. The cloak is here.
COMENDADOR. Show it to me. What is that?
PAGE. A black cloth.
COMENDADOR. Whatever I see disturbs me. All those brutes
Do mock me. Mourning? for what purpose?
PAGE. Do you want a colored cloak?
LUJÁN. In love affairs
The discreet lover never wears a cloak
Of colors, for it is said that in a court
Color oft gives a clue to judge a man.[24]
COMENDADOR. You fool, I'm all for color: are you servants here,
Or else despotic duennas?
PAGE. See the color.
COMENDADOR. I go, my love, wherever you will guide
My footsteps. Do but grant a night to me
For all the days I've spent in servitude.
LUJÁN. Shall I go?
COMENDADOR. Yes, as Leonardo will
Not be with me. Musicians, tune your strings,
Perhaps sweet music still may quench my fire. (*Exeunt.*)
(*A street. Enter* PERIBÁÑEZ.)
PERIBÁÑEZ. Lucky is the man who owns a mare,
A beast that both can flee and overtake,
For thus without discomfort he may ride.
As soon as I had billeted my men,
I then with speed unwonted, did return
To Ocaña. Now how truthfully I could say:
"What is my honor but a fragile reed?"
And there's no reed so fragile as my honor,
Which bends before whatever wind is blowing.

[24] In the days of Lope de Vega black was worn in the daytime, but for night adventures colored cloaks were worn. Luján, however, who is always cautious, thinks the colored cloaks might cause the Comendador to be identified.

But honor's reed is brittle, hollow, and
Devoid of substance, save some paltry leaves
With which it ornaments its hollow trunk.
The reed, alas, is all pomp and display:
It is fanciful, it's thin and breakable,
And when it is green it is for so short a time.
The fragile reed and honor too are full
Of knots, and they are only for the deaf,
And for my speechless neighbors in the town.
Here in Ocaña you sprang up with me,
When a fickle breeze was blowing through the town.
I'll cut you before you break, you fragile reed.
I thank my lucky stars for you, my mare,
Who have with such devotion carried me
Back to Ocaña. Blessed be the oats
And barley I so often gave to you!
I never did employ you in a cause
More honored, and it is now I reap my gain
For which I can't be grateful enough to you.
On other occasions you have carried me,
But I weighed little then; my honor now
Is greatly spurring me on, and if I am
So grateful it is for running all the course
While burdened by the insults heaped on me.
Let every man take pride in his trusty sword,
A coat of mail, and a friend of good repute,
One honored in the opinion of the world,
A goodly traveling cloak and other things;
But I swear a beast can give me wondrous aid.
O mare of mine! in less than one short hour
Three leagues gone! Why you even match the wind.
And if they paint the wind with wings, you shall
From this day onwards also have your wings.
And here is Antón's house, whose walls adjoin
My own, which bend their weight to ruin me.
I want to call, for now I think it's time
To do so. Ho! you in the house! Antón.

ANTÓN (*from within*). Ho, woman! Don't you think someone has called?

PERIBÁÑEZ. Peribáñez.

ANTÓN. Who knocks at such an hour?
PERIBÁÑEZ. Here I am, Antón.
ANTÓN. I'll go as I hear the voice,
No matter who it may be. Who is it?
PERIBÁÑEZ. It's Peribáñez.
ANTÓN. Who?
PERIBÁÑEZ. It is I
Whom heaven today chastised so cruelly.
ANTÓN. Full dressed I laid me down to sleep, for I
Had set my mind on rising with the dawn;
I'm mighty glad I am not in the nude.
How can I help?
PERIBÁÑEZ. By your leave through your house
I wish to enter mine; for certain things
So clear by day shadows become by night.
Now I suspect that in Toledo you
Heard some tales about me.
ANTÓN. Though I heard
I held my tongue, but I can reassure . . .
PERIBÁÑEZ. You need say no more. My Casilda is
An angel.
ANTÓN. You must shower gifts on her.
PERIBÁÑEZ. Let me be, brother.
ANTÓN. Do come in, I pray:
It is only for the news I've heard of her.
PERIBÁÑEZ. If I can only be quite sure of her,
I'll be forever hers, so help me God.
ANTÓN. Where are your men?
PERIBÁÑEZ. My ensign is with them.
All I have brought with me are my own woes,
And no small feat the mare has done to bring
Us both, for God's my witness, I've enough
Anxieties to drive me raving mad. (*Exeunt.*)
(*A street outside* PERIBÁÑEZ'S *house. Enter the* COMENDADOR, LUJÁN *with bucklers, and the musicians.*)
COMENDADOR. You minstrels may begin your singing now
In this place that the wind may help your song.
SECOND MUSICIAN. It is written.
COMENDADOR. How I hate what they call tuning!

(The Musicians sing:)
At your door I was tossed by the bull,
My bonny bride:
And you never even cried: "Heaven help him."
At your door I was caught by the bull,
The bull of your wedding feast:
Such a tossing he gave me the whole town laughed;

And you full of dignity and full of mockery,
My bonny bride,
You never even cried: "Heaven help you."
(INÉS *appears at the door.*)

INÉS. Stop it, Don Fadrique.
COMENDADOR. Is it you, Inés?
INÉS. I'm here.
COMENDADOR. Though it is but eleven I'm a soul in pain.
May your bead win me pardon that I may
Be freed from pain.[25]
INÉS. Has Leonardo come?
COMENDADOR. He makes sure of Peribáñez. Do secure, Inés,
My entrance and contrive that I may see
My precious pearl. Leonardo'll soon be here.
INÉS. Will he be long delayed?
COMENDADOR. Not long I trust.
With such a cunning husband he could take
No chances.
INÉS. I believe that at this hour
His wish to be seen in captain's uniform
Is sure to keep him in Toledo still.
COMENDADOR. Perhaps this very moment he's asleep.
May I go in? Do tell me if I may.
INÉS. Come in: I delayed in case Leonardo might
Arrive.
LUJÁN. Luján, may he, too, enter?
COMENDADOR. Now, Lisandro, cease
your song. Farewell till dawn.
(*They enter the house. The musicians remain.*)
FIRST MUSICIAN. May Heaven favor your designs.

[25] According to popular superstition, the souls in Purgatory wandered at midnight. To one of the beads of the rosary the Pope granted an indulgence in favor of the souls in Purgatory.

SECOND MUSICIAN. And we,
Where shall we go?
FIRST MUSICIAN. To bed.
SECOND MUSICIAN. A pretty wench!
FIRST MUSICIAN. Silence!
SECOND MUSICIAN. I must confess I'm envious.
(*Exeunt.*)

(*A room in* PERIBÁÑEZ'S *house. Enter* PERIBÁÑEZ.)

PERIBÁÑEZ. Over Antón's garden walls I made my way
Into my house and found the doors of yard
And threshold open: in the chicken house
I wished to hide, but feared some cock might warn
Them of my presence. By the corner light
I watched the cock, but found him half-asleep
Amidst his twenty or his thirty hens.
"I am amazed that you so calmly sleep
When your fortune's so doubtful: here am I
Who cannot even protect a single wife,
Yet you insist on guarding so many more."
I can't sleep for I'm crazed with jealousy,
And I suspect a cock with a crimson crest,
For he has it emblazoned on his chest.
At last like a thief I left and came in here,
Where I saw my doves, models of wedded bliss,
And watching their soft billing and their cooing,
As they imparted through their beaks their love,
I said: "May God's most weighty curse alight
Upon the squab who now disturbs you twain."
The geese now awakened, and the pigs
Are grunting, the oxen bellowing, so the laws
Of honor now cause widespread restlessness,
On my behalf, and even the donkey roped
To the manger brays; for I am master here,
And all now see that the rope is throttling me.
I long to weep; I'm sorry for myself
And all my woes . . . but, if Casilda sleeps.
Hush! I hear the sound of voices near.
In this big sack of flour I'd better hide.
If this should be the Comendador himself,
He surely thinks I'm far away from here. (*He hides.*)

CASILDA. I'm sure I heard men talk.

INÉS. . . I'm sure you're wrong.
CASILDA. But you were speaking to a man.
INÉS. Was I?
CASILDA. You were.
INÉS. You heard him then?
CASILDA. Take heed, my dear.
If it is not malice, they must be robbers.
INÉS. Robbers! You frighten me.
CASILDA. Then shout aloud.
INÉS. I shall not shout.
CASILDA. I will.
INÉS. Then you'll awake
The entire neighborhood to no avail.
(*Enter the* COMENDADOR *and* LUJÁN.)
COMENDADOR. My love is past endurance and no fear
Restrains me, neither can I keep silence,
I am your Comendador and Lord.
CASILDA. I have
No Lord save Pedro.
COMENDADOR. As a slave I come,
Although I am your Lord. Do pity me,
Or else I'll have to say I found this lackey
Who stands before you.
CASILDA. Though I feared the ray
I was not frightened by the thunderbolt.
So then, my cousin, you have betrayed me!
INÉS. Come now: what madness is this, when you are
A needy farmer's wife, your spouse a boor?
Who would allow a prince to die of grief?
For him it is matter of life and death,
For you and your honor there is no such risk.
You know Peribáñez to Toledo's gone.
CASILDA. O cruel and most heartless cousin, you
Are changed from cousin to vile go-between.
COMENDADOR. Let me now see what I can do with her.
LUJÁN. The better course would be to leave them now:
Alone they'll come to an understanding soon.
(*Exit* INÉS *and* LUJÁN.)
CASILDA. I am a captain's wife, even if you are
Comendador. But don't come near me, for
Biting and kicking I'll . . .

COMENDADOR. Softly and silently.
(*Enter* PERIBÁÑEZ.)
PERIBÁÑEZ (*aside*). Alas, my honor! what awaits me here?
I'm just a farmer and it were best to speak,
But better still to kill him. Pardon me, (*Aloud:*)
Comendador: my honor now becomes
A patronage of greater weight than yours.
(*He wounds the* COMENDADOR.)
COMENDADOR. My God! You've killed me: do have pity, pray.
PERIBÁÑEZ. Do not fear, my love, come this way, and follow me.
CASILDA. Alas, I can't speak. I am terrified. (*Exeunt.*)
(*The* COMENDADOR *staggers to a chair.*)
COMENDADOR. Lord, by your sacred blood take pity now;
My wound drives me to beg a vassal's pardon.
(*Enter* LEONARDO.)
LEONARDO. Ah, there is chaos everywhere, alas!
Inés, where are you hiding? My Inés!
COMENDADOR. I hear voices here. Who calls?
LEONARDO. It is I.
COMENDADOR. Ah, Leonardo! can't you see me?
LEONARDO. My Lord?
COMENDADOR. Yes, Leonardo.
LEONARDO. What happened? Are you faint?
COMENDADOR. I'm dying, slain by him—I deserve my fate.
LEONARDO. You are wounded then? By whom?
COMENDADOR. I do not wish
Outcry or shouts of vengeance any more.
My life is in danger, only in the soul
I place my hopes. Let there be no extremes
Or violence: I have been justly slain.
Bear me that I may now confess my sins,
And let us all our vengeance leave aside.
I pardon Peribáñez.
LEONARDO. Can it be said
That a peasant slew you and that I refused
To avenge your death? Alas! I grieve for that.
COMENDADOR. I vow he's not a peasant but a knight:
For I myself did gird on him the sword
With gilded guard.[26] He hasn't ill used his blade.

[26] The gilded guard was the insignia of an infantry captain.

LEONARDO. Let us go, and I'll knock at the chapel door
Of Our Lady of Remedies.
COMENDADOR. There's God alone. (*Exeunt.*)
(*Enter* LUJÁN, INÉS, PERIBÁÑEZ, CASILDA.)
PERIBÁÑEZ. Here you'll die, both of you.
INÉS. Without a wound
I'm dead already.
(LUJÁN *and* INÉS *run across the stage.*)
LUJÁN. O wretched Luján,
Where will you hide?
PERIBÁÑEZ. There's no reprieve for you.
LUJÁN. Why, Captain?
PERIBÁÑEZ. You feigned to be a harvester.
INÉS. And why am I to die?
PERIBÁÑEZ. You betrayed us all.
(LUJÁN *runs to the edge of the stage, and then* INÉS *pursued by* PERIBÁÑEZ.)
LUJÁN. Alas, I'm done for!
INÉS. Dearest cousin of mine!
CASILDA. No blood ties count when honor is at stake.
(PERIBÁÑEZ *returns.*)
PERIBÁÑEZ. They both fell at the entrance.
CASILDA. Just has been
Their punishment.
PERIBÁÑEZ. Casilda, will you stay
With me?
CASILDA. You know I'm yours for good or ill.
PERIBÁÑEZ. Upon the haunches of this frisky mare
You shall behold Toledo's dawn with me.
CASILDA. Even on foot I'd go with you I say.
PERIBÁÑEZ. In all grim incidents a truce will last
When there lies land between the battling sides,
And harshness has not time to strike its blow.
CASILDA. May God have mercy on the Comendador.
By his temerity he was undone. (*Exeunt.*)
(*The gallery of the Alcázar at Toledo. Enter* KING HENRY *and the* CONDESTABLE.)
KING. It gladdens us to see with what great joy
Castile is mustering to our royal flag.
CONDESTABLE. Your Royal Highness, they abhor the sway
The African in our fair Spain now holds.

KING. We mean to free all Andalusia,
If our good army will but close its ranks
Before inclement winter with its ice
Freezes the fields and moves the earth to tears.
And since the wide plain has sufficient space,
Juan de Velasco, you must organize
The stately armed tourney I have in mind.
And let the fame of such a tournament
Ring through the world and strike such awe in men,
That even our gold-bearing Tagus may,
As it flows through its adamantine gorge,
See o'er the green fields a new Toledo rise
With its rich tents and its gay pavilions.
Let in Granada the usurping Moor
Our blood-red flags and pennon start to fear,
And turn his happiness to sad lament.
CONDESTABLE. Today you'll see me form the companies.
KING. The Queen whose presence I adore arrives.[27]
On such occasions she inspires the troops.
(*Enter the* QUEEN *and her suite.*)
QUEEN. If it is important, later I'll return.
KING. Even were it so, I beg you not to go,
My lady, what can I discuss of peace
That you could not give me advice about?
And if it is of war that I am treating,
When do I not take counsel, love, with you?
How fares Don Juan?
QUEEN. He weeps for lack of you.
KING. God guard him: he's a heavenly looking glass,
Wherein those who departed see themselves
Better portrayed than those of the present day.
QUEEN. Prince Juan's your son, and that alone endears him.
KING. But when we say he's yours, though he is ours,
It is he reveals your virtue's legacy.
QUEEN. May Heaven make him fit to copy you.
If that were granted to him and no more,
He has been given all the good I wish.
KING. Knowing your generous love I well believe it.

[27] The Queen was Katherine, daughter of John of Gaunt, the Duke of Lancaster of Shakespeare's *Richard II*. Her mother was Costanza, daughter of Pedro the Cruel.

QUEEN. He is but two years old; I wish he were
Just old enough to follow this campaign
Under your banners.
KING. Would that this were so,
And he would then begin to raise Christ's banner.
(*Enter* GÓMEZ MANRIQUE.)
What drums are these?
GÓMEZ. Men from the Vera march
And from Extremadura.
CONDESTABLE. From Guadalajara, too,
And Atienza people come.
KING. And from Ocaña as well.
GÓMEZ. The lag is due to a tragic incident.
KING. What was it?
GÓMEZ. People say who have just come,
That a farmer there has murdered Don Fadrique.
KING. Slain Don Fadrique! the greatest who ever wore
The Order of St. James.
QUEEN. Is it true?
GÓMEZ. Too true.
KING. My lady, those tidings grieve my soul.
How did such rank disorder ever occur?
GÓMEZ. Through jealousy.
KING. Was it just?
GÓMEZ. Madness it was.
QUEEN. Jealousy it was, for few alas are sane.
KING. And is the peasant captured?
GÓMEZ. Later he
Fled with his wife.
KING. What strange effrontery!
With such tidings Toledo welcomes me!
Is this the way Spain trembles at my law?
Now see you proclaim my edict in Toledo,
In Madrid, Segovia, Talavera and
Ocaña: those who take them alive or dead
A thousand crowns as income will receive
On the nail. Go then, and let no man conceal,
Or give them sustenance or other help
On peril of his life.
GÓMEZ. I go. (*Exit.*)
KING. I trust

God's austere hand may shroud the heavens now.

QUEEN. You may be sure when fame of the promised gold
Reaches covetous ears the culprits will be found.
(*Enter a page.*)

PAGE. Here is Arceo who brings all complete
The Royal Standard.

KING. Let him bring it now.
(*Enter* ARCEO, *one of the secretaries, with a red standard. On it are the arms of Castile with a hand above holding a sword, and on the other side Christ crucified.*)

SECRETARY. This, Sire, is the Royal Standard.

KING. Show it to me.
I like it. And this captain likewise was
One whom I ransomed.

QUEEN. What do the letters say?

KING. They say: "Judge thy cause, Lord."

QUEEN. They are solemn words.

KING. They justly should cause fear.

QUEEN. Let us now see
What's on the other side.

KING. The Castle and
The Lion, and this blazoned hand that is
Now chastising.

QUEEN. The writing?

KING. Just my name.

QUEEN. What?

KING. Instead of Third, Henry the Just.
I want that name to strike fear in the world.
(*Enter* GÓMEZ.)

GÓMEZ. The edicts now they do proclaim amidst
The city's lamentations.

QUEEN. Even stones
Would feel pity.

KING. Enough. What? can the hoes
Be compared to the crosses of St. James?
How could that be?

QUEEN. Poor man, if he's not hiding
His outlook's grim.

KING. I hereby take my oath,
I'll so chastise him that I'll affright the world.
(*Enter a page.*)

PAGE: A farmer here says he must speak with you.
KING. My lady, let us sit.
CONDESTABLE. A warning this.
(*Enter* PERIBÁÑEZ, *dressed as a farmer with long cloak, and his wife.*)
PERIBÁÑEZ. Allow me to kneel, Your Royal Highness, now.
KING. Speak out, I pray, and stay not on your knees.
PERIBÁÑEZ. How can I speak, Your Royal Highness, when
Words fail me and my brain is all awry,
Since I have gazed upon your royal face,
But since necessity forces me to speak,
And in your justice placing all my faith,
I shall start thus: Peribáñez am I called . . .
KING. Who?
PERIBÁÑEZ. Peribáñez from Ocaña.
KING. Slay him, guards,
Go slay him.
QUEEN. Not before my eyes, you guards,
Stand back, I say.
KING. You must respect the Queen.
PERIBÁÑEZ. As you do order them to butcher me
Will you not even hear me, Henry whom
The people call the Just?
QUEEN. Well said, take heed,
My Lord.
KING. You are right, and I had forgotten
That in disputes defendants must be heard,
And all the more so when they are so weak.
Continue.
PERIBÁÑEZ. I'm a man of peasant stock,
But my blood is unsullied and untainted
By Jew or Moor. I was the best among
My equals, and in all affairs they gave
First vote to me: Six years I bore the staff
Of office. I married that woman there.
Although she comes of peasant stock, her blood
Likewise is pure, and she is virtuous,
If Envy, reputation's minister,
Ever saw one. But alas it came to pass
That Don Fadrique, the Comendador,
The town of Ocaña's titled lord, began,

Like a mere stripling, to pay court to her;
Pretending I had done him services,
He honoréd my humble house and home
With some armorial hangings, which I found
Were laden with my own dishonor's weight.
He gave me as well a goodly pair of mules,
But not good enough to drag my honor's cart
Out of the mud of my own infamy.
And then one night, when I was absent from
Ocaña, he did try to rape my wife,
But he was in his fondest hopes deceived.
I came, I heard it all, and from my low
Walls I then took his coat of arms away,
Which might have served as cloak to fight the bull.
I now was wiser to his purposes;
But calling me one morning he announced
That letters had come from Your Highnesses
Bidding him muster troops for this campaign.
At last a brave squadron of a hundred men
He gave me, and the title of captain too.
I left Ocaña with them; but as I knew
That my dishonor clearly shone at night,
I rode back on a mare, and reached my house
By ten o'clock at night, for I had heard
A squire once say it was good luck to keep
At home two good mares for emergencies.
I found my door battered down and all uncoifed
My wife, just like a simple little ewe,
Who finds herself in the clutches of the wolf.
She screamed, I came, I drew the selfsame sword
And dagger I had girded on to serve
Your Royal Highness, not for such sad deeds,
I pierced his heart, and then and only then
He let the white ewe go, for, shepherd-like,
I knew well how to snatch her from the wolf.
I came then to Toledo, where I found
That for my head they then were offering there
A thousand crowns; and so I have resolved
That my Casilda should conduct me here.
Grant this boon, I beseech Your Royal Highness,
For she it is who now should win the prize,

Since she'll be my widow, don't let her lose
So bountiful a prize: what do you say?

QUEEN. I've wept.
That answer is enough for all to see
That this is not a crime but bravery.

KING. How strange that such a humble countryman
Should set so high a value on his name.
By the Almighty there's no reason why
He should be slain: We call this cruel justice.
And now I see so brave a man, I want
In this campaign to make him captain of
The very soldiers he took from Ocaña.
Henceforth his pay be given to his wife,
And carry out my word, and after this,
For his protection and his personal
Defense I give him leave to carry arms
Defensive and offensive.

PERIBÁÑEZ. All do well
To hail our noble King surnamed "the Just."

QUEEN. To you most honest country girl I grant
Four dresses, that being a soldier's wife
You may appear in all your finery.

PERIBÁÑEZ. And thus, dear Senate, ends our tragicomedy,
Peribáñez and Ocaña's Knight-Commander.