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# "Speak to me in vernacular, doctor": Translating and Adapting Tirso de Molina's *El Amor Médico* for the Stage

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“SPEAK TO ME IN VERNACULAR, DOCTOR”: TRANSLATING AND ADAPTING  
TIRSO DE MOLINA’S *EL AMOR MÉDICO* FOR THE STAGE

A Thesis Presented

by

SARAH BREW

Submitted to the Graduate School of  
The University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

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Considered one of the greatest playwrights of the Spanish Golden Age, Tirso de Molina (1580?-1648) lived something of a double life, alternating—much like the characters in his plays—between two separate and often conflicting lives. Though Tirso, whose real name was Gabriel Téllez, spent the greater portion of his life in the church as a Mercedarian friar, his dramatic output as a playwright was prodigious in scope. Fewer than 90 of his plays survive today, and only a handful have been translated into English. This M.F.A. thesis therefore presents the first-ever English-language translation and adaptation of one of Tirso’s plays, *El amor médico*, translated as *Love the Doctor*. The translation/adaptation is preceded by an introduction, as well as by chapters contextualizing the play in the writing of Tirso, the *comedia*, and the world of seventeenth-century medicine and cross-dressing. The thesis concludes by examining both the translational strategies and artistic choices made at various stages in the process of translating and adapting Tirso’s circa 1621 *comedia*.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

The process of translating a play is something akin to the art of theater-making. There is no one correct approach to costuming, nor one single right way to light a set, just as there is no one correct way to translate a word or phrase. Translating involves a complex sequence of choices, much like the choices a director might make when staging a play, or the choices a playwright will make when writing lines for her characters. As literary critic and translator George Steiner would argue, translation is not a science—a series of rights and wrongs—but rather an “exact art.”<sup>1</sup> Such I have found to be true in my process of translating and adapting Tirso de Molina’s *El amor médico*.

At the time I first began translating Spanish playwright Tirso de Molina’s *El amor médico* in 2009 during my first semester of graduate school, I was immersed in production for another *comedia* by Tirso—*Marta la pidoso*—which Professor Harley Erdman had just translated for the first time ever in English. I was serving as dramaturg on the world-premiere production of his translation at UMass. After spending the previous summer reading drafts of the translation, followed by several weeks in rehearsals, I came to know certain aspects of Tirso’s writing. Unique to Tirso’s dramaturgy, I learned, were complicated series of actions that get very quickly untangled in the very last moments of the play. What was exciting to me about Tirso’s play was the

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<sup>1</sup> This term “exact art” comes from British philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein. In *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation*, Steiner argues that translation “has nothing to gain from the (mathematically) puerile diagrams and flow-charts put forward by would-be theoreticians” (xvi). Rather, he posits, translation is a “hermeneutical task,” one that relies on interpretation more than theory, and one that is “exact in its ideals of precision,” as he states in his article “On an Exact Art (Again)” (21).

strong female protagonist at its core: Marta, a woman who goes as far as feigning a religious conversion to escape marriage and instead be with the man she loves. It was she that drove me back to Tirso when looking for a play to translate in a translation class in 2009.

When searching for a Tirso play to translate, I was also looking for one that had never been translated into English. Over the course of his career, Tirso somehow wrote more than 300 plays, yet less than 90 survive today, and only a handful have been translated into English. Of those that had never been translated, *El amor médico* stood out to me for several reasons. The word “*médico*” in the play’s title is what first caught my attention; I spent the first year of my undergraduate career studying Biology with dreams of becoming a doctor. But what drew me into the play was the character of Jerónima. I was excited by the character’s venture toward love and medicine. I admired the way she negotiated her goals in both of these undertakings, and was delighted by how readily she said “no” to authority. Like Marta in *Marta the Divine*, Jerónima is a clever trickster and improviser, but the way in which she’s written in Tirso’s play makes her—even on the page—feel more multifaceted and richly complex than other protagonists Tirso wrote.

After my first read of the play, I was surprised that *El amor médico* had never been translated before. But as I continued to study the play and as I began translating, it became apparent that this was surely in part because of its obscurity. Because these plays from 17<sup>th</sup> century Spain are rarely translated, and even more rarely produced, so contemporary audiences are not as familiar with their conventions. Because of this obscurity among contemporary audiences, I would argue, *comedias* have only very recently (certainly with the help of the RSC’s 2004-05 season of Golden Age plays) been

produced. These plays were written at the same time Shakespeare was writing, but Spanish plays from this period are very different. Unlike English plays from this time, Spanish plays have several page-long monologues, shift verse forms frequently, and feature endings that are rapidly resolved, for example. In addition to this, *El amor médico* is also a challenging play because Jerónima disguises herself as three different individuals, there are several extraneous characters in any given scene, and two of the three acts contain several scenes in which characters are speaking Portuguese. But aside from these challenges, Tirso's *El amor médico* is eerily modern. The female protagonist must learn to balance and negotiate her love for medicine and her love for a man just as any woman in the twenty first-century might.

In translating and adapting this play, I made it my goal to create a text that captures a sense of that which is contemporary about Jerónima. Though I've made radical changes to Tirso's original play, my aim has been ultimately to produce a performance text with which English speakers might encounter the dramatic output of Tirso, and through which theaters can begin to explore the dynamics of his writing on stage.

In my translation and adaptation work, I've also kept notions of textual fidelity at the fore. Specifically, I've constantly questioned how faithful I should be to Tirso's original text when creating an adaptation of a never-before-translated play. Since I ended up heavily adapting the play, one question I'm interested in and that I address later in this study is how much adaptation can happen before the play is no longer a translation of Tirso's. There are also questions about translating *comedias* in particular that I reflect upon in this thesis. Specifically, I address the issue of how to translate moments unique to the *comedia* (the long, rhetorical speeches like Gaspar's in *El amor médico*, for example),

and whether those moments require adaptation for English-speaking audiences.

Additionally, I explore and reflect on the ways a translator might deal with culturally foreign moments in plays when translating for non-native readers. In *El amor médico*, many scenes in the play take place in the Portuguese language, and though in my final draft of the script I retain this Portuguese, I've experimented with other techniques for dealing with multilingual plays in translation through this process.

From my development of the script, in conversations with collaborators, and through reflections on the production process, I have also formed in this thesis a strategy (based on both performance and text) with which one can translate a Golden Age *comedia* for a contemporary English-speaking audience.

The process of translating and adapting Tirso's play has been a long one, and one which has been highly collaborative. While I began the project alone in a class, much of the end result is not my solo work, but also the work of Josephine Hardman, whose creation of the literal translation of Tirso's play permitted my work as adaptor. Many revisions and drafts of this adaptation also came out of production work, including two stages readings at the Renaissance Center, one at the Association for Theater in Higher Education (ATHE) conference in Chicago, and a world premiere production at UMass, all of which included several additional collaborators (namely, my co-translator Josephine Hardman, my advisor/dramaturg Harley Erdman, the director Noah Simes, and the director's advisor Gina Kaufmann). As such, this thesis documents and reflects upon the evolution of *Love the Doctor* as it was affected and influenced by various collaborations.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> With the exception of a few quotations that come from early drafts of the script, all quotations and citations of *Love the Doctor* come from the final draft of the script, which is included in the Appendix of this thesis.

## CHAPTER II

### CONTEXTS

#### A. Tirso de Molina

Tirso de Molina (1579-1648) is considered one of the greatest playwrights of Spain's "Golden Age." His witty, ironic and often paradoxical and contradictory writing reflects the double life he was leading in the theater and the church. Though little is known about him, we do know that his real name was Gabriel Téllez, that his background was humble (his father was a servant in a noble household), and that by 1600, he had become a Mercedarian friar in the Order of Mercy (Thacker, *Companion* 62). But Tirso's career in the theater didn't begin until later. Between 1606 and 1615, he lived in Toledo—the cultural center of Spain—and began writing, allying himself with Lope de Vega and the three-act *comedia nueva*, the new freewheeling form of popular theater that was sweeping the Spanish stage at the time. It was during this time that Tirso became more well-known in Spain, his works being produced more often. Tirso also briefly left the theater of Spain after his rise in stature to travel on a mission to Santo Domingo between 1616 and 1618 as a representative of his Mercedarian Order (Erdman 3).

Most consider 1620-1625, the "Madrid years," the peak of Tirso's writerly career, and it was in this time that his world radically changed. In 1621, Tirso experienced the death of King Philip III of Spain (who Tirso admired), the accession of the teenaged Philip IV, and the subsequent rise of the Count-Duke of Olivares (Thacker, *Companion* 62). Perhaps as a result of this shifting, somewhat uncertain time, Tirso's writing became more satirical. It was also during this time that Tirso wrote *El amor médico*, a

labyrinthine play that reflects the vexed historical moment in Spain during which he was living, particularly in regard to his native Spain's relationship with Portugal.

It is presumed that Tirso chose a pen name in an attempt to separate his religious and theatrical lives. As Erdman states in his introduction to his translation of Tirso's *La celosa de sí misma*, "it is not so much that he was trying to create a secret identity (although this cannot be ruled out) so much as he probably saw it as wise to separate one aspect of his professional life from the other" (3). But the friar's love for the theater led him to choose a pen name with theatrical overtones: Tirso—or thyrsus—is the name for the staff of Dionysus, the Greek god of wine, revelry, and theater (Erdman 3). Not surprisingly, this double life Tirso lived would generally have been a problematic one. He got away with it for a time, but he tended to pointedly poke fun at the ruling classes, wrote bawdy subject matter, and eventually got on the wrong side of the Count-Duke of Olivares. In short, Tirso was a social critic and satirist. At the pinnacle of his writing career, Tirso was censured several times by the church for the obscenities in his plays. Most notably, on March 6th, 1625, he was forbidden by Felipe IV's watchdog group, the Council on Reform, from writing "plays that foster profane incitements and examples,"<sup>3</sup> and was sentenced to excommunication and exile to a remote monastery, though it seems Tirso had good enough connections to avoid both (Erdman 4). He continued to write during and after this time, while also serving in his Order as *Cronista general*—official historian. Tirso died in 1648 in Almazán after spending the last two decades of his life reestablishing himself as a man of the cloth while continuing to write—albeit less often and less widely—for the theater.

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<sup>3</sup> "Con comedias que hace profanas y de malso incentives y ejemplos" (Kennedy 85).

Tirso's writing tends to be satirical and ironic. The dramaturgy of his plays is complex and intricate, as he tends to create the most elaborate plot elements. But Tirso wastes no space; his writing is also dense and resourceful, as he accomplishes several tasks in one sentence. He is also careful to wrap up the endings of his plays quickly, as most *comedia* writers do, and restore a sense of justice in the world of the play. His plays are also bolstered by complex, psychologically rich characters put in extreme situations. Tirso is most famous for creating the character Don Juan in a play attributed to him: *El burlador de Sevilla* (c. 1616-1625), or *The Trickster of Seville*. He also had an influence on playwrights after him, as *El amor médico* inspired Molière's play *L'Amour Médecin*.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps most notable are Tirso's female protagonists. Yet while his ability to write strong, smart and resourceful women in the patriarchy of seventeenth-century Spain surpasses that of all his contemporaries, Tirso's plays often end in a Baroque, paradoxical fashion, with a blend of the comic and tragic: like Jerónima in *El amor médico*, the females at the center of his plays all must return to their subordinated positions within the structure of the male-dominated society of their time.

But to say Tirso simply wrote within the barriers of his society is not entirely accurate; like most *comedia* writers, he was also a staunch advocate of modifying the way plays were written. As Jonathan Thacker states in his study *A Companion to Golden Age Theatre*, Tirso "ridiculed the imposition of an unrealistic unity of time" and argued that "a blend of the old tragic and comic genres" create " 'una mezcla apacible' like a hybrid fruit" (Thacker, *Companion* 62-3).

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<sup>4</sup> Molière's play premiered in Versailles for King Louis XIV on September 15, 1665 (*L'Amour Médecin*).

Always a forward-thinking playwright excited by change, Tirso's plays pose challenging yet particularly suitable opportunities for translators. While the opportunity exists to complete at least somewhat "faithful" translations of his many plays, Tirso's stories are especially suitable for translators looking to adapt Tirso in the way he sought to adapt and modify the rigid dramaturgical structure in which he was writing. One such play is Tirso's *El amor médico* which, though it centers on a dynamic, complex character and utilizes intricate plot devices, has several holes which can benefit from dramaturgical surgery. Just as Tirso would sometimes "improve on Grecolatin or Renaissance prototypes" (Sullivan, *Counter-Reformation* 73), so does my adaptation of Tirso's play divert from his story as it was originally told.

## **B. *El amor médico***

### **1. *Comedias***

Before the sixteenth century, public Spanish theater was very limited. Plays were written for private use, performed at religious festivals, or staged in Latin classes as students practiced their rhetoric.

According to Melveena McKendrick, in Spain, theater as a form of public entertainment—as opposed to theater written for private audiences—did not exist until the 1540s and 1550s, when a number of men responded to the public's growing appetite for dramatic entertainment and started their own theater companies (*Theatre in Spain* 41). These companies performed with primitive equipment, on stages (*carros*) composed of a few wooden planks, and with improvised costumes.



The growth of Spanish theater was dramatic and rapid.<sup>5</sup> In the earlier years, the groups specialized in one or two plays at a time; by the 1590s, several types of drama were all competing for the favor of Spanish playgoers. These included the following: tragedies, historical drama, the Italian import known as *commedia dell'arte*, and the emerging *comedia nueva*. *Commedia dell'arte*, translated as “comedy of art” or “comedy of the profession,” refers to improvised theater. Characters, character relationships, subjects and situations were all devised before, but the action of each scene was created on the spot. *Comedia*, which can be translated as “play,” does not distinguish a play as being either a comedy or a tragedy. The *comedia nueva* genre, however, specifically refers to the type of play written by Lope de Vega and his followers between about 1580 and 1680.<sup>6</sup>

*Comedias* are always made up of three acts, are roughly 3,000 lines long, and are polymetric (containing a variety of verse meters, each with a specific function). The range of subject matter in the genre is hugely varied, including history, legend, mythology, romance, town life, country life, the Bible, and the lives of the saints. As in *commedia dell'arte*,<sup>7</sup> there are some stock characters in the *comedia* genre. Almost every play includes a pair of lovers, as well as a comic servant or sidekick. Other common characters include figures of authority such as fathers, husbands or brothers, or figures that disrupt such as rivals, jealous suitors, enemies, and even the Devil. Characters often

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<sup>5</sup> For an excellent study on the *comedia*, see Jonathan Thacker’s *A Companion to Golden Age Theatre*. Woodbridge: Tamesis, 2007.

<sup>6</sup> Lope’s *El arte nuevo de hacer comedias*.

<sup>7</sup> Zan Ganassa (pseudonym Alberto Naseli), a 16<sup>th</sup>-century Italian actor, was perhaps the first to take a *commedia* company outside of Italy.

find themselves trapped in a social or biological role by these figures of authority, as is Jerónima in *El amor médico*.

## 2. The Play

The earliest version of *El amor médico* comes from the *Cuarta parte de las comedias del maestro Tirso de Molina* in 1635 (Bushee 93). It is dated somewhere between 1619-25, following Tirso's trip to America, though there is no extant manuscript. There seem to be fascinating similarities between the character of Jerónima and 17<sup>th</sup>-century writer Doña Feliciana Enríquez de Guzmán, whose life paralleled Jerónima's own dual life, with the exception that—as Emilio Cotarelo y Mori points out—Jerónima goes to Coimbra while doña Feliciana studied in Salamanca.<sup>8</sup> It is also possible that the lead character's role was named after Jerónima de Burgos (1580?-1641), an early seventeenth-century actor known to have performed in some of Tirso's other plays. By the time this play was being performed, however, Burgos was middle-aged and much older than most actors who played the *dama*<sup>9</sup> roles, so it's not likely that she played the role of Jerónima.

The play is set around 1497-8, though the addition of María of Aragon, Queen of Portugal, in my adaptation places the play a bit later in 1500, when the Queen was just eighteen years old. The play begins in Seville, Spain and ends in Coimbra, Portugal.

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<sup>8</sup> “*El argumento de la comedia tiene el mismo giro que las aventuras de la Sevillana doña Feliciana; hastase hace de Sevilla a la protagonista, y pasa aquí parte de la acción; con la diferencia de que, en vez de estudiar en Salamanca, lo hace en Coimbra*” (Cotarelo y Mori *Tirso*).

<sup>9</sup> The *dama* of a *comedia* was the leading lady.

Scenes take place on streets, in the homes of Jerónima and Don Ignacio, in front of Doctor Barbosa's home, and at the University of Coimbra.

Each of the three acts takes place in roughly one day (or 24-hour period), but time elapses between each act. The first act of the play is set in Seville, Spain, and sets up Jerónima's situation with Gaspar, the man that has been staying in her home for one month but has yet to see and talk to her. In the second act, the play shifts to Coimbra, Portugal, where Jerónima disguises herself as Doctor Barbosa and starts serving Estefanía, the woman to whom Gaspar is betrothed. In the third act of the play, Jerónima—through a series of tricks—eventually gets Estefanía to marry her brother Gonzalo, and Gaspar to marry her, though her disguise is found out and she is ordered to return home to Spain and stop practicing medicine.

*El amor médico* is rich in character, plot, and situation, and contains several aspects which posed challenges in translating and adapting. For example, one interesting feature of this play is that, though a majority of the play is written in Tirso's native Spanish, there are crucial moments that happen entirely in Portuguese. The only two characters in the play that use Portuguese are the two Spanish women, Jerónima and Quiteria.

Tirso's *El amor médico* is a play of juxtapositions, demanding a balancing of those sometimes-conflicting ideas. At its heart is a woman who is simultaneously trying to marry a man and practice medicine while she shifts between many disguises. Her success depends on an extensive knowledge in many areas—languages, medicine, love. Because the play is dense with substance—both at the sentence-level and in terms of larger plot and thematic concerns—in a later chapter of this study I will address the

specifics of how Tirso builds his play, and then how I translated that construction. Before considering how I adapted Tirso's dramaturgy, I first give a brief synopsis of Tirso's original Spanish play, consider the nature of Tirso's original audience, and examine both the issues of female cross-dressers, and women and medicine in the early modern period.

### 3. Synopsis of Tirso's *El amor médico*<sup>10</sup>

A young woman, Jerónima—whose ambition it is to study medicine—becomes offended when her brother Gonzalo's friend, Gaspar, comes to stay in their home but seems to ignore her. When her brother flees to Pamplona to defend Spain against attacks from the French, and Gaspar flees to Portugal, Jerónima decides to follow Gaspar.

In Portugal, Gaspar falls in love with Estefanía, whose father fears she has come down with the plague. When a doctor is called in, Jerónima enters—disguised as a man, Doctor Barbosa—and proceeds to woo Estefanía. Jealous of Estefanía's attraction to the "doctor," Gaspar goes to talk with him, but along the way runs into the doctor's sister, "Marta," who is actually Jerónima dressed in female garb. In the disguise of a female, Jerónima successfully woos Gaspar, who then tells Doctor Barbosa that he is in love with the doctor's sister, "Marta." Meanwhile, Gaspar's friend Rodrigo falls in love with Estefanía.

Later confronted by Estefanía after almost being found out, Doctor Barbosa confesses that he is not really the doctor but "Marta," dressed as her brother. After a series of tricks that nearly go awry, "Marta" confesses that in fact "she" really is the doctor, not his sister, and that "he" wants Estefanía's hand in marriage. Estefanía agrees.

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<sup>10</sup> This synopsis borrows from Jean S. Chittenden and Matthew D. Stroud's online resource, "The Characters and Plots of Tirso's *Comedias*."

Gaspar then enters, announcing that he wants to marry “Marta.” Still dressed as the doctor, Jerónima asks him to marry "me," a request that shocks Gaspar. She tells him in secret, however, that she's really “Marta” dressed as the doctor, and they agree to marry. In the final moments of the play, Jerónima’s maid enters to announce that Jerónima’s brother (from the first act of the play) has been killed, and that she must go back to Seville to take care of the family’s estate. Thus is Jerónima's identity revealed and, as per the happy ending of the *comedia*, Gaspar and Jerónima decide to marry, as do Rodrigo and Estefanía.

### **C. Women and Medicine in Early Modern Spain**

One of the important contextual elements in Tirso’s play is medicine. In addition to the complex history of early modern Spanish medicine prevalent in the play, Tirso’s story is also unique in that it places a woman at the center of this profession—a circumstance which was generally prohibited at the time Tirso was writing. I therefore devote the next section of this study to an overview of the historical background of seventeenth-century Spanish medicine, much of which contemporary audiences might not be readily aware.

Though practicing medicine was illegal for women in the period *El amor médico* takes place, there was a time in early modern Spain when women healers were not only working legally, but were ubiquitous and in fact sought out more often than their male counterparts. It was only during the professionalization of medicine in the fifteenth century that women were banned from practicing (Dangler 34). And even in this period of medical history, the practices of women’s education were somewhat contradictory;

while most women were prohibited from learning, women of the court were allowed to study.<sup>11</sup>

In this section, I consider the developments of women practicing in the field of medicine. I begin by briefly introducing aspects of women's education in Spain. From there, I consider more specifically the nature of medicine in the medieval period—the moment before Tirso's play was written. Following this, I look at various methods of learning medicine, and consider how they were received in the larger community. I also review how the professionalization of the medical practice in early modern Spain changed the roles of female medical practitioners, and end by considering this history in the context of *Love the Doctor*.

### 1. Women's Education

While men freely and openly studied in university, women were denied the opportunity for such an education. In fact, the only formal education a woman could receive was a religious education, if she were a nun, within the walls of a convent.<sup>12</sup> There were also, however, some instances in which wealthy women were tutored by individuals. For example, there is extensive record of Queen Isabel of Spain educating her children, one of whom later became Queen María of Portugal. In her book *Education and Women in the Early Modern Hispanic World*, Elizabeth Teresa Howe writes that “Isabel also influenced the education of children in other royal courts through the

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<sup>11</sup> For more information on women's education in this period, see Elizabeth Theresa Howe's *Education and Women in the Early Modern Hispanic World*.

<sup>12</sup> For more information on women's education in convents, see Mary Elizabeth Perry's *Gender and Disorder in Early Modern Seville* and Elizabeth Lehfeldt's *Religious Women in Golden Age Spain*.

marriages of her daughters with kings of Portugal, England, and Flanders” and that, because of this, her daughters “earned praise for their accomplishments as scholars and queens” (xii). Even so, Howe states that “the generally accepted view” in the early modern Hispanic world was that “women were, by and large, illiterate and invisible in the masculine world of arms and letters” (ix).

## 2. Medieval Medicine

The medieval period of European history—the time between the fifth and fifteenth centuries—can be characterized as more tolerant than that which followed it. In this time, women were considered legitimate in the medical practice. While they didn’t hold the same authority as men in the field of medicine, women often practiced a form of medicine in the “healing arts” which today constitutes at least a portion of the medical profession. In her book *Mediating Fictions: Literature, Women Healers, and the Go-Between in Medieval and Early Modern Iberia*, Jean Dangler writes that women “were sought to heal illnesses as diverse as eye ailments, skin diseases, and lovesickness, and were typically expected to exercise surgical procedures and child delivery, prescribe drug and herbal remedies, and employ logotherapies such as conjurations and incantations” (20). Unlike contemporary medical practices, in which patients visit hospitals and clinics to receive treatment, “medieval healers often visited the sick at home, or the sick visited the healer at her home, shop, or marketplace” (22).

Often these women were given license to practice. Some were even granted permission to work as surgeons and physicians until the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. There is historical record, for example, of a woman named Cahud, who was found

practicing surgery in the royal house of the kingdom of Valencia in 1332. Another Valencian woman, Juana, was given a license by the king to practice surgery and medicine in 1384 (Dangler 20).

Though these women were prohibited from studying medicine at university, before the early modern period they were able to learn their skills through a combination of three different modes: family members (including husbands, fathers, and even mothers), guilds (often only after the death of a woman's husband or father), and first-hand experience (Dangler 23). If a woman became a nun, she also learned from and with her sisters. Georgina Sabat Rivers asserts that convents were "a place where women could develop their intellectual and literary abilities" (3). And while men were able to freely study medicine in universities, as time passed, women were more often accepted into the profession; Dangler asserts that "the public could not rely upon the medications of men doctors, since early modern men physicians were routinely criticized for being incompetent and ineffective" (48). In fact, complaints against the incapable (male) professionals were so prevalent that, as Dangler points out, medicine "became a literary trope in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as evidenced by early modern theater such as Calderón de la Barca's *El médico de su honra*" (48).

### **3. Professionalization of Medicine**

The turning point of the medical profession in Western European history came with the professionalization of medicine—a response to the decline in the efficacy of medical treatment. This shift took place largely during the fifteenth century, and is characterized by a systematized effort to advance medicine and specifically male



physicians. Due to a lack of general uniformity in medical practice and legislation, at the end of the fifteenth century Catholic kings sought to enact a system of regulating practitioners (Dangler 40). In response to this, there were four general developments in Western European medicine which aimed to counteract the ineffective medical practices: university study; enactment of laws regulating medical practice, which barred women, Jews, and Muslims from practice; the establishment of licensing boards (including the *Protomedicato*<sup>13</sup>); and the rise of hospitals and clinics (Dangler 35).

As medical practices became regulated, there was a radical decrease in the number of women that were practicing medicine legally. Dangler notes that “women were increasingly restricted from healing practice and their work was progressively described as standing in opposition to the work of the learned male physician” (34). While there is little evidence of female doctors working illegally, María Luz López Terrada notes in her article on practitioners in Valencia that there is documentation of instances in which “extra-official healing practices were actively repressed” (Terrada 8).

Thus, the development in Western European medicine during the fifteenth century can be characterized by a preference for “theoretical” over “practical” medicine, as there became an increasing demand for advanced study in medicine, a path which Jerónima embarks upon in Tirso’s play only once she is protected by a male disguise.

#### **4. Medicine in *Love the Doctor***

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<sup>13</sup> See María Luz López Terrada’s article “Medical Pluralism in the Iberian Kingdoms: The Control of Extra-academic Practitioners in Valencia” for more information on the *Protomedicato*.

The storyline of medicine in my adaptation is one that is representative of the few real-life cases for which there exists historical documentation. While it seems likely that women dreamed of escaping the harsh realities of their imprisoned, oppressed lives, breaking free and dressing as a man in order to perform certain tasks reserved only for men—if even for a short period of time—was something very few women were able to successfully complete. That these mostly subjugated women in early modern Spain were able to witness such successes on the stage from the *cazuela* of the theater is thus marked by a certain tension; while they can't do it themselves, they can watch women—whose personal, off-stage lives were surely much like their own—practice medicine and not only get away with it, but also do it successfully. It is even more ironic, as David Román points out, that while Spain at this time was full of restrictions forbidding women from learning, the female actress playing such a role was educated herself, as she had to learn the techniques of “movement, versification, and, sometimes, design, in order to play her part (455). Though our contemporary American world is different than Tirso's world of early modern Spain in many respects, one can't help but be reminded of women's education today, an issue still vexed with questions of equality and access.

Jerónima's relationship to the world of medicine in Tirso's play not only invited original audiences to consider women's access to education, but does the same to audiences today: that Jerónima gets to practice medicine still feels like a significant accomplishment today, for she must survive the trials of her world—moving to a new country, serving a wealthy family, and dressing as a man—before eventually winning the race to an academic seat, just as she would need to perform other tests in our contemporary world.

#### **D. Female Cross-dressing in the Comedia**

The prevalence of female characters disguised in male attire in *comedias* has led to extensive studies on this type of character within the field of Spanish Golden Age drama. In this section, I will discuss the importance of this character type in the *comedia*, specifically applying it to Jerónima's disguise of Doctor Barbosa in *Love the Doctor*.

Though women in seventeenth-century Spain faced strict statutes on how they could legally operate in public,<sup>14</sup> the stage during this period offered women the chance to interact with men in ways they would never be able to in real life. While covered and chaperoned in their daily lives, women on the Golden Age stage lived in close proximity to men, performing in a fictive world in which the standard rules of seventeenth-century Spain no longer applied at all times. The stage conventions of this time also granted women the chance to wear male attire and disguise themselves as men. Though highly forbidden in everyday life, the frequency of this convention in the Golden Age theater resulted in the creation of a specific character type—the *mujer varonil*. In her seminal work on the *mujer varonil*, Merveena McKendrick notes that “from the 1570's onwards, this motif of the *mujer varonil* became increasingly prominent in Spanish drama; she became one of the theater's most popular character types” (*Mujer Varonil* x). Of the more than 80 plays that Tirso wrote, it is estimated that Tirso used this character type in at least 20 of his plays.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Juan Luis Vives' *De institutione feminae christianae*, c. 1524-8, lists the ways seventeenth-century women should be confined.

<sup>15</sup> Blanca de los Ríos estimates in *Tirso de Molina: Obras dramáticas completas, tomo I* (Madrid: M. Aguilar, 1946) that the *mujer varonil* appeared in 21 plays (unnumbered page immediately following title page), while Carmen Bravo-Villasante says in *La mujer*

Though every play which features a *mujer varonil* does not accurately represent how women in seventeenth-century Spain were living, a close look at the confined, restricted lives these women experienced might tell us something about why the *mujer varonil* character exists at all. I thus begin with a brief overview of women's lives in seventeenth-century Spain before connecting these women's lives to their subsequent representation in the theater. I then go on to consider women on the Golden Age stage, discussing which actions they got away with on stage that would have been prohibited in the real world—namely, cross-dressing. Finally, I discuss what effect these cross-dressing women had on their audiences, and then consider what the *mujer varonil* character means to the contemporary English-speaking audience of a *comedia* in translation.

### **1. Rules and Strictures for Women in seventeenth-century Spain**

Spanish women of the upper class in the seventeenth century lived confined lifestyles. They were often kept under the strict supervision of their elders and, most notably, their male relatives. In fact, there is record of writing done in the period on how to both physically and socially confine women. This type of imprisonment was the subject of Juan Luis Vives' *De institutione feminae christianae*, written c. 1524-8 and requested by Catherine of Aragon for her daughter Princess Mary. Among many others, Fray Luis de León also wrote *La perfecta casada*, a document intended as a gift for a recently married female relative, in 1583. The narrative is León's personal interpretation of a section of text in Proverbs 31 which begins with "A woman of worth, who can find

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*vestida de hombre en el teatro español, siglos XVI-XVII* the character type appeared in more than 24 (27-8).

her?” In his document, León applies the verses to what he considers the rules an ideal wife should follow. Among his many recommendations, León advises new wives to be chaste, frugal, modest and silent.

Margaret O’Connell notes in her dissertation on cross-dressers in Shakespeare and plays of the Golden Age that in families with larger incomes, women were often “segregated from the outside world to the point of being virtually prohibited to associate with persons not of their own household—especially persons of the opposite sex” (27). It was assumed that a woman would not practice promiscuous or otherwise questionable acts; rather, women were urged to develop submissive qualities such as modesty, shyness and timidity. And not just that: if a woman possessed righteous morals, it was expected that she would not even show her face in public (O’Connell 40).

Physical constraints on women were ubiquitous. In addition to being socially barred from men, women were kept away from men by the physical barrier of veils and long dresses. Yet in her article on women and intimacy, Lisa Vollendorf notes that “repeated regulations concerning female clothing suggest that women frequently disobeyed rules governing their attire” (“Sex” 4).

Courtships between men and women were known throughout the communities in which they lived, though couples were extremely limited in how they interacted while in the public sphere. Marriages between these couples were almost always arranged by parents, and while men were allowed to study at university and work jobs, women were relegated to a life at home. When they were allowed to have books at home, women were

constantly reminded that a woman belongs at her man's side.<sup>16</sup> Dawn Smith writes that “the status quo was viewed as immutable and no one, least of all women themselves, would have dreamed of challenging that fact” (“Upside-Down” 256).

Yet even while rigid constraints bound women, there were certainly moments when women broke free and defied these regulations. As referenced in the previous section, women often found a certain independence in practicing skills and trades that were reserved for the opposite gender.

## 2. Cross-dressing in Public in seventeenth-century Spain

Though strict gender rules existed in 17<sup>th</sup> century Spain, notions of gender became ambiguous and amorphous. Anita Stoll argues that gender roles in this time “were in a state of confusion,” explaining that even “wearing the clothing of the opposite sex could alter the sex of the wearer” (“Gender” 114).

Though McKendrick asserts that those women that were passing as men “amount to a mere handful over a period of many centuries,” some women snuck out of their homes, veiled, to flirt with men. There were others who even went so far as to disguise themselves as men (*Mujer Varonil* 320). The life of one Spaniard in particular provides an extreme case: Eleno/a de Céspedes, a Moorish hermaphrodite living in early modern Spain, claimed that she was both genders, and was therefore put on trial for bigamy and sorcery during the Inquisition.<sup>17</sup> As the trial sought to correctly determine Céspedes' sex,

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<sup>16</sup> For more information on women's roles in seventeenth-century Spain, see Melveena McKendrick's *Woman and Society in the Spanish Drama of the Golden Age: A Study of the Mujer Varonil*, pp. 329-30.

<sup>17</sup> See Vollendorf's “I am a man and a woman: Eleno/a de Céspedes Faces the Inquisition” for a thorough chronicle and analysis of the Céspedes trial.

the ambiguity with which Céspedes described her physical body and experiences in life only perplexed those at the proceeding. Between her own testimony and stories from others in her life, Céspedes appears to have had both male and female physical parts at different points in her life. As Vollendorf points out in her article about Céspedes, this declaration actually “conforms to a pattern validated by some medical treatises, which postulated that women might become men through a burst of heat that caused their interior, manlike genitals to be expelled” (“Elena” 12). Though Céspedes was born a woman, throughout the trial, she referred to herself as a man, as she had been living as a man (with a wife) for a long time before the trial. And when doctors examined Céspedes, they found that she appeared to have the physical body of a man. One doctor even testified that Céspedes had “a virile member in good and perfect shape with two testicles” (“Elena” 22). Yet they were set on proving that she was in fact a woman. This dispute of gender testifies to the fact that Céspedes’ definition of sex and gender relied on a sense of flexibility and malleability. What makes this case particularly interesting to this study is that Céspedes became a licensed surgeon, and when the Inquisition trial concluded that Céspedes was indeed a woman disguising herself as a man, they forced her to end her career as a surgeon, leave her wife, and live as a woman for the rest of her life. Ironically, Céspedes was also sentenced to completing 10 years of unpaid medical service at a hospital, working in a setting in which only men were allowed to work, yet dressing—according to the sentence—in the apparel of a woman.

In their study on female transvestism in Europe during this period, Rudolf Dekker and Lotte C. Van de Pol chronicle the cases of 120 female cross-dressers across Europe between 1550-1839. The study doesn’t provide a close look at Spain during this period,

nor does it focus on women who disguised themselves as professionals such as doctors. The study provides, however, a lengthy account of those women who were able to pick up the skills of a trade such as those of a soldier or sailor, and use them at least in part, as a man might. The book begins stating that crossing over to another gender was “a real and viable option for women,” especially for those who were not living sufficiently as women (1-2). The study also makes the rather obvious observation that those women who successfully cross-dressed for a substantial amount of time had particularly “strong nerves, some intelligence, and possibly a talent for acting” (17); in disguising themselves as men, these women performed gender in such a way that may have been reminiscent of the way an actor performs a role on the stage.

Dekker and van de Pol expand upon this connection between the women that were cross-dressing in life and those that were doing it on stage; they say that the theme as a literary and theatrical convention had its own “traditions and clichés,” (2) but that cross-dressing on the stage surely shaped the reality of female cross-dressing. The study provides sufficient evidence that “many actresses who played trouser-roles on the stage” preferred to dress in men’s clothing in their daily lives. The opposite is also true, the book states: several “former cross-dressers took to the stage” (101). This connection between female cross-dressers and actors is a theme that is apposite to a discussion of Jerónima as a cross-dresser in *Love the Doctor*.

There are several other similarities between the real-life cross-dressing women in seventeenth-century Spain and the character of Jerónima in my adaptation. One of those parallels is closely tied to how cross-dressing women were received in society. Often, female soldiers and sailors were “received at court and rewarded” (Dekker 95) just as



Jerónima wins the race for a prestigious seat at the University in Coimbra, then becomes “Doctor of the King’s Chamber” for the King and Queen of Portugal. Another moment in the script is fueled by this history: Dekker and van de Pol write that a woman’s true gender was often discovered “when she became ill or was wounded” (21). This was the inspiration for a moment in my adaptation when Gonzalo notices Jerónima holding a hand to her own heart. He asks her if she’s in pain, and she admits her heart does ache, but that she can’t seem to heal it. When he suggests another doctor lay a hand on Doctor Barbosa’s “swollen breast” (146), Jerónima quickly declines and diverts their conversation.

What made these female cross-dressers a particularly subversive force in early modern Spain was that their presence forced others to continually question the boundaries of each gender. Dekker and van der Pol assert that “a woman who became a man strove to become something better, higher, than she had been, and that was considered an understandable and commendable effort in itself. If she was successful, one had to admire her” (74). But it seems that if this were the case, there were an equal number of individuals who felt threatened by women who secretly disguised themselves as men. Even more threatening, then, might have been a woman who publicly, with permission from her art form, authorized by the theater, was able to dress in pants and carry a sword on the stage.

### **3. Cross-dressing on the Golden Age Stage**

Female cross-dressing became a predominant theme in all Renaissance literature, not to mention a particularly strong force in early modern Spanish drama. Unlike

England, where very few "breeches roles" existed,<sup>18</sup> and where women weren't even allowed to act on the stage, Spain provided a place where women could not only perform, but also dress in male garb. In her study on transvestism in England and Spain, Ursula Heise notes that there were a large number of women performing on the Spanish stage from the 1530s to the 1580s, but that they must have been banned at some point shortly thereafter, for in 1587 the Confidenti, an Italian company, had to apply to Philip II for actresses to perform in Madrid (358). The women were granted permission to act, but this was cut short only a decade later in 1596 when the Count of Castile prohibited women from acting because "many inconveniences result from it," as the text of the law states.<sup>19</sup> It's unclear, however, whether or not the statute was enforced (Rennert 207), because the King's Council repeatedly forbade women from appearing on stage in male dress at several other points later in this period: 1600, 1608, 1615, 1641, and 1646. The repetitive nature of this stricture suggests a failure in enforcing this regulation. As Heise points out, the cross-dressing plays became "so overwhelmingly popular that antitheatrical writers and state legislation [saw] themselves forced again and again to address the question of the legitimacy of female cross-dressing before a public audience" (358). One reason for this, according to Heise, is the "heightened moral repressiveness of Spanish society" (366) during the time these strictures were passed.

Though certainly influenced and informed by public life outside of the theater in seventeenth-century Spain, I would argue it was the subversive position of these women inside the theater that caused problems. This issue was precipitated largely by what

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<sup>18</sup> Shakespeare, for example, only wrote five "female page" plays.

<sup>19</sup> "...salen mujeres a representar, de que se siguen muchos inconvenientes" (Cotarelo, *Bibliografía* 620).

happened with the bodies of female cross-dressers on stage, and continued with the exchange that happened between actors and audience members in the theater of the time. A close look at the nature of these cross-dressing roles in the theater is therefore important at this point.

#### **4. *Mujer Varonil***

One of the most popular character types of the *comedia*, the *mujer varonil* defies translation. Literally, the phrase means “manly woman,” but she is not simply a woman with male traits and mannerisms. McKendrick notes in her seminal work on the subject that this translation has “too strong a flavor of sexual deviation” (*Mujer Varonil* ix).

Instead, she argues, the *mujer varonil* signifies something broader, more encompassing.

She is

...the woman who departs in any significant way from the feminine norm of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. She can take the form of the *mujer esquiva* who shuns love and marriage, the learned woman, the career woman, the female bandit, the female leader and warrior, the usurper of man’s social role, the woman who wears masculine dress or the woman who indulges masculine pursuits... (McKendrick ix)

These women were a particularly threatening force in terms of their social position in their respective dramatic environments. Perhaps a representation of the attitude of oppressed seventeenth-century women, the *mujer varonil* revolted against the restrictive world in which she lived in a forceful way. McKendrick posits that these women “embark upon careers out of ambition, not in pursuit of love, but even so a crisis of some sort is needed, for verisimilitude’s sake, to lever them out into the world” (239).

It was not only their social positions, but also women’s bodies on stage that created a titillating experience for audience members. This experience began with not just

their bodies, but also the clothing on their bodies. Ever a signifier of gender, costumes in the theater of early modern Spain were of particular importance.<sup>20</sup> When in public these female actors typically wore long skirts covering their legs, while in the theater—when playing the *mujer varonil* in a *comedia*—these women wore pants. Nowhere else in seventeenth-century Spain but in the theater could people see the shape of a woman’s leg in the way that a pair of pants would expose them.<sup>21</sup> As McKendrick notes, the *mujer varonil*’s presence on stage was therefore “blatantly sexual” (*Mujer Varonil* 320-1). There is even first-hand account of how audience members received such moments on stage. Francisco Ortiz describes the device as follows:

...ha de ser más que he hielo el hombre que no se abrasa de lujuria viendo una mujer desenfadada y desenvuelta, y algunas veces, para este efecto, vestido como hombre, haciendo cosas que movieran a un muerto.

...the man would have to be made of more than ice who didn’t burn with lust seeing a shameless and licentious woman, and sometimes, to achieve this effect, dressed like a man, doing things which would move a dead man. (McKendrick 321)

Heise notes that Friar Jose de Jesus Maria further declared in 1600 that “if a woman acting in her own attire is so dangerous for the chastity of those who watch her, what will occur if she acts in men's clothing, which is so lewd a habit, designed to inflame the hearts in mortal concupiscence?”<sup>22</sup> And one Father Juan de Mariana further posited that “women of excellent beauty, of outstanding grace, movements and postures appear in the

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<sup>20</sup> As Erdman notes in the introduction to his translation of *La celosa de sí misma*, Tirso was “Obsessed with dress and fashion” (7).

<sup>21</sup> This ultimately inspired me to specify in my adaptation that Jerónima wears pants (116, 140).

<sup>22</sup> “Si representar la mujer en su propio habito pone en tanto peligro la castidad de los que la miran, que hará si representa en traje de hombre, siendo uso tan lascivo y ocasionado para encender los corazones en mortal concupiscencia?” (Cotarelo, *Bibliografía* 381).

theater to play diverse characters in the shape, clothing and habits of women and even of men, which is something that greatly provokes wantonness and has great power to corrupt men" (Heise 367).<sup>23</sup> In other words, when women were dressed in the revealing attire of a male, they were exposing parts of their bodies that might not otherwise be exposed except when naked. A man being tempted with the thought of a naked woman while in the theater is certainly something authorities in Tirso's day wanted to control.

While B.B. Ashcomb suggests that cross-dressed women appeared in plays "because it was good theater" (50), the presence of these cross-dressed women was seen by some as subversive; they created a sexual and pleasurable excitement among audience members, and therefore also a more loose and malleable sense of gender and sexuality. Stoll asserts that their prevalence in the *comedia* presented on stage "the forbidden, the desire to tread near dangerous margins of society within the rigidly structured binary gender system" ("Cross-dressing" 86). Perhaps more notably, the *mujer varonil* also "embodies a powerful fantasy of all the social possibilities generally foreclosed to the female spectators in Spanish Renaissance society" (Heise 372). While women watched female actors dress in breeches, deceive men, and kiss other women from the *cazuela*, perhaps they were inspired at moments—by the transformative power of theater—to rebel against the strict gender roles they experienced in everyday life.

But the *mujer varonil*'s subversiveness has a limit; at the end of most *comedias*, situations—romantic or otherwise—align themselves into the societal dictates, the heterosocial hegemony, of that time. Order is almost always restored; the women marry

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<sup>23</sup> "...mujeres de excelente hermosura, de singular gracia, de meneos y posturas; salen en el teatro a representar diversos personajes en forma y traje y habito de mujeres y aun de hombres, cosa que grandemente despierta a la lujuria y tiene muy gran fuerza para corromper los hombres" (Cotarelo, *Bibliografía* 431).

the men, and are once again subservient—in one way or another—to the males in the plays.

The question must be asked, then: what exactly is the *mujer varonil*'s function in the *comedia*? And how does her physical presence in the theater inform notions of gender? Is the protagonist who disrupts gender patterns strong enough of a force that audience members forget the play's dubious ending? Or does the conventional ending reify the heterosexual order?

Stroud wonders if gender really is “so superficial in these plays that it is merely a function of the signifiers one chooses to wear?” or if there exists “an essentialism to gender that forces each character to assume the gender that corresponds to his or her sex in order to have a happy ending” (67). Heise posits that “the actress falls victim to the male gaze at the same time that the female audience is fed a temporary illusion of power” yet it remains true that “Spanish authorities of the time attribute to the female transvestite a genuinely disruptive power, as their continued attempts at repressing this particular convention demonstrate” (372). A female spectator could watch a female actress gain power and control on stage while playing a “breeches role,” but then leave the theater and learn of yet another ban on these “breeches roles” from the King's Council.

*Mujeres varoniles*, therefore, are subversive within the structure of the plays (perhaps only) until the endings, in which they themselves enforce the dominant, heterosexual norms of early modern Spain. It is in the endings of the *comedias* that women are prevented from prospering independently, “beyond the limits imposed by the end of the play” (257), as Smith asserts.

But this is not necessarily true of contemporary *comedias* in translation. Though it is interesting to consider whether seventeenth-century audiences felt that the women in such endings were ultimately subversive or not, the distinctly different nature of women today implies that audiences will view such an ending through a different lens. Therefore, I'd like to now consider how Jerónima's presence in Tirso's play (as juxtaposed against the backdrop of a dominant male society, and in the context of a 21<sup>st</sup> century audiences) informed my translation and adaptation process.

### **5. Tirso's Women**

Tirso is perhaps most well known for the women he wrote into his plays. While there were few mother figures in the *comedias* (Smith, *Perception* 19), Tirso and his contemporaries became masters of writing the roles of romantic female leads, *damas*, into their plays. A "feminist" of his day (McKendrick, *Mujer Varonil* 332), Tirso wrote female characters that rebelled against the oppressive society in which they were living, often by disguising themselves as men. One thing that made Tirso's characters particularly complex was the ambiguity with which he wrote what we might call "queer" characters. Gail Bradbury posits that an "irregular sexuality flourished" (567) in Tirso's theater. Tirso's female cross-dressers have physically sexualized and romanticized moments with other female characters, and his male characters feel an attraction to the cross-dressed women. This "irregular" sexuality is the fuel behind the scene near the end of Act 3 in which Jerónima and Estefanía kiss.

Though others wrote just as many female cross-dressing characters at the time, Ashcomb posits that Tirso's women surpassed all the others in intellect and psychological depth (46). McKendrick said of Tirso's women:

His understanding of female psychology was subtler than Lope's and his tolerance of female independence and of female eccentricity greater. His greatest service to women was, perhaps, to allow them to a high degree a quality which other dramatists tended to pass over or at least underrate. Lope's women have warmth, great spirit, courage, and determination. Tirso's have, in addition, intelligence. If Lope's women rise to the occasion, Tirso's create it. Their intelligence, furthermore, is almost invariably greater than that of their men. (McKendrick 330-1)

Yet even while Tirso's women were intelligent, often even cleverer than men in the plays, their ability to successfully deceive and disguise was directly linked to their destiny in the final moments of Act 3. Should she err, Dawn Smith explains, a "fallen woman is not often allowed a second chance in the *comedia*: if the man who wrongs her is not prepared to marry her...she must pay the price of infamy (real or imagined) by death or by banishment to a convent, or she may sometimes be redeemed through divine intervention" (*Perception* 20-1). These women were still relegated to the margins of society come the end of the play. Though Tirso's women "had no objection to love or marriage" (McKendrick *Mujer Varonil* 330) they often returned to a world of imprisonment when getting married at the end of the play, once again trapped by a constraint all too similar to that which they fought so forcefully to break away from at the beginning of the play. They are "(re)integrated into the social status quo" (Smith, *Perception* 21), even when they take charge, as is the case in my adaptation of *Love the Doctor*. Ultimately, Jerónima's rebellion is fruitless in that she loses her ability to practice medicine.



## 6. Jerónima in *Love the Doctor*

One of the most fascinating things about Jerónima in *Love the Doctor* is the way she balances and negotiates her love for the medical profession and her desire to be loved by a man: the two are inextricable. Yet the irony of her existence is that she can't win either—the chance to be a doctor and to marry Gaspar—without first becoming a man for a short period of time. In this way, as Stoll suggests, Jerónima “has little use for the traditional woman's role” (“Cross-dressing” 90).

It is thus her love that ultimately determines Jerónima's gender at the end of the play. In other words, she might have chosen to continue disguising herself as a man and practicing medicine, yet it is her love for Gaspar that puts her in dangerous situations—moments in which her disguise could very easily be revealed—and ultimately reveals her identity as a woman. As Stoll says, Jerónima “chooses her gender based on love” (“Cross-dressing” 94). Though her gender reverts back to the feminine, by the end of the play Jerónima has experienced a whirlwind of events as both a man and a woman.

Yet McKendrick argues that Jerónima remains a character unchanged in Tirso's Spanish play. She says:

There is no suggestion that Jerónima will continue with her career or that she should be allowed to do so...Jerónima succeeded as a man and she has now revealed herself as a woman. But neither is there any indication that Jerónima will give up her books. The couple are in love, they marry, but Jerónima's character has undergone no metamorphosis. (McKendrick 237)

I would argue, however, that Jerónima has undergone a transformation more radical than that of most cross-dressers. She not only dresses as a man, but is constantly aware of the dangers such cross-dressing creates, and therefore devises sub-plots in which she must

also disguise herself as other characters, providing the dramaturgical support to her own main plot—practicing medicine and winning Gaspar.

The result is that Jerónima continually goes back to her disguises; after a moment on stage as herself, Jerónima dresses up once again as “Marta.” And in the final scene of the play, Jerónima enters as Doctor Barbosa, then changes her disguise (for the first time on stage) to “Marta,” and then back to the Doctor again, until she is ultimately able to convince Estefanía to marry the Doctor—a trick, of course, that will be fixed when Jerónima replaces the Doctor with her brother, Gonzalo.

There is one particular moment in my adaptation that illustrates this continual change. It occurs in Act 3, when Jerónima reveals herself to Gaspar. She learns, in the moments between this scene and the next with Estefanía, that it is not sufficient to just be Jerónima. She must continue to deceive. The fact that Jerónima returns to her disguise even after she’s already revealed herself to Gaspar becomes a political statement; she is not allowed to dress as a man and practice medicine, yet as a woman she can’t, either. She must continue to mask her true identity until she unweaves the web of confusion she’s created, until social order is restored through her untangling. In this way, Jerónima is the tragic heroine of the play. She’s become ill—both as a result of love and loss—and is forced to minister to herself.

In the final moments of my adaptation, Tirso’s view of what a woman in the seventeenth century must do to get what she wants is illuminated in the lines of the Queen of Portugal. Though the Queen (who, at this moment in the play, is dressed in male attire) demands that Jerónima give up her medical license and position at the university, in a private moment between the two women the Queen urges Jerónima to

“henceforth study only in the solitude / of your home in Spain” (167). Though social order must be restored, these two women—who have experienced by this point in the play positions of great power in a male-dominated society—understand and acknowledge their slippery, evasive nature, while they also subvert the hegemonic social norms of the period. Perhaps the most interesting thing about her role as the *mujer varonil* is that Jerónima’s position and power are continually ambiguous. Her disguise constantly raises questions about whether such women are being placed in the role of authority or of subservience. A *mujer varonil* who must hang up her doctor’s robes and revert back to her life as a woman, Jerónima has become the paragon of women—transgressive and progressive.

### **E. Spectators of the Comedia**

There is virtually no thorough and detailed performance history record for plays from the Spanish Golden Age. Marie-Christine Kerr states that not one “adequate, contemporaneous eye-witness account of a *corral* performance has come to light to date, if in fact such an account was ever written” (Kerr 7). Jonathan Thacker writes in his book *A Companion to Golden Age Theatre* that it “is still rare for an edition of a Golden Age play to deal in any depth with matters of original staging or modern productions of the work” (135). Unlike current studies in Shakespeare, Thacker points out that those in the field of Golden Age drama are still rooted in the world of the textual. He says they “have shown a tendency to treat works from the period as literature to be read, rather than as drama to be performed” (134).

But despite this gap of information, there is some knowledge of what staging conditions and audience makeup in the period may have been like. Some scholars in the field have tried to piece together this record in conclusive studies. We know, for example, that acting in the period was distinctly contemporary. Thacker writes that the acting style “probably attempted to make the play and its characters believable” (136). Theaters would have also attempted to suggest the “disdistinctiveness, foreignness, or remoteness” of a character through costume (Thacker 137).

There are also extant records of the numbers of people attending the theater in this period. Thacker says, according to Charles Davis and J.E. Varey<sup>24</sup> in *Los corrales de comedias y los hospitales de Madrid, 1574-1615*, that the average audience in the *corrales* in Madrid between the years of 1579 and 1586 “has been estimated to be 636 spectators (with a highest figure of 1116 in the Príncipe and 1511 in the Cruz)” (127). By the 1630s, however, the capacity increased to roughly 1900 seats, “some 1200 were public spaces for men, 380 were public places for women, and the balance were spaces in the boxes” (127).

As suggested in the way audience members were counted above, there was a strict separation of each sex in the theater. Thacker writes that, with the exception of mixed-gender seating in the *apoyentos*, “Men and women were strictly segregated” (127).

Women even had a separate entrance

...to the Príncipe theatre in the Calle del Prado, just around the corner from the façade. One of the *alguaciles* who policed the theatre was required to prevent the molestation of the female play-goers as they tried to reach the entrance... (127)

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<sup>24</sup> See Davis and Varey, *Los corrales de comedias y los hospitales de Madrid, 1574-1615*, pp. 66-7 and 76.

In addition to there being physical threats to women outside of the theater, women also experienced such threats inside the *cazuela*, which was strictly reserved for women only; just as female actors would dress as men on stage, so would male spectators sometimes dress “as women in order to access the *cazuela* and mix closely with the female spectators” (127).

Not surprisingly, as Rennert points out in *The Spanish Stage in the time of Lope de Vega*, these audiences “were often unjust and noisy, and always hard to please” (117).

He goes on to clarify that

Of course I do not refer here to the more respectable who occupied the boxes or *aposeptos* and who generally went masked. The motley crowd that surged into the *cazuela* (stewing-pan), which men were not allowed to enter, was no less disorderly than the “infantry” of the *patio*, so that an *alguacil*, or peace officer, was always stationed in this gallery to keep them within bounds. Here no woman with any regard for her reputation entered unmasked. Like the *mosqueteros*, these denizens of the *jaula*, or cage, as it was also called, pelted the actors with fruit, orange-peels, *pepinos* (cucumbers), or anything they found at hand, to show their disapproval, and generally came provided with rattles, whistles, or keys, which they used unsparingly. (119)

The women occupying the *cazuela* were set apart from those sitting in the *aposeptos* by their demeanor while watching a show. McKendrick also writes about this in *Theatre in Spain, 1490-1700*. Women in the *cazuela* “rattled keys against the railings” and “never stopped talking and laughing” (192). McKendrick also notes how disorderly the theater could be before a play started; spectators tried to enter without paying, and “there was quarreling over seats and anger of late starts” (192). Up in the *cazuela*, “stink bombs were let off and mice let loose” on occasion, and “from time to time some bright spark took it into his head to put on skirts and cause consternation by joining the women in the intimacy of their box” (192). This rowdy behavior continued even after performances

ended. If a show finished late, as it was getting dark, “fights broke out, pockets were picked and the women spectators were molested as they left” (193).

Performing to audiences strictly divided by sex (and therefore by viewpoint and ideology) must have created a place of great tension. The fact that audiences were physically divided based on their gender illustrates how fragile the issue of gender was in early modern Spain. This divide is also reminiscent of what Jill Dolan has said about theater spectators in our own time.

As Dolan points out in her seminal book *The Feminist Spectator as Critic*, traditional theater assume a “male gaze.” Playwrights anticipate, she posits, that the view of their audiences is largely that of a male. When watching a play which assumes a male gaze, then, a female audience member is troubled in that she is asked to view the play from the perspective of the “ideal spectator carved in the likeness of the dominant culture” (1)—in other words, the perspective of a white, middle class, heterosexual male.

Ultimately, the problem is that the “spectators’ individuality is subsumed under an assumption of commonality” (Dolan 1). Of course not all spectators view theater from the perspective of a male, nor can they be asked to; therefore, an audience member can easily be seen as subversive if s/he does not adopt the view of the “ideal spectator.”

It is easy to see how Tirso could have written *El amor médico* with a male spectator in mind. If anyone enjoyed the end of the play, in which Jerónima is subjugated and sent back to Spain, it was the men in the audience. But I would argue that Tirso’s writing doesn’t solely assume a male gaze; he wrote just as much with a female spectator in mind. Even though Jerónima is put back in her place (as a woman) in the final moments of the play—since the rigid structure of playwriting in Tirso’s day only allowed

for him to be radical and subversive to an extent—Tirso’s female spectators were able to watch a woman dominate and trick men for a majority of the play. Though Jerónima doesn’t get the last word, these female spectators in Tirso’s day did get the encouragement of watching a woman break from the control of her brother and rise to the status of Doctor of the King’s Chamber, a role reserved for only men in the period. It is easy to imagine keys banging on railings and women blowing their whistles in support of Jerónima as the cross-dressed protagonist teases Tello, tricks Don Ignacio into believing she’s a doctor, and wins the heart of both Estefanía and Gaspar.

But the thing that complicates this (and the thing that I constantly considered while adapting the play) is the fact that while Jerónima is pursuing her goals, she’s disguised as a male. Literally, Jerónima is seeing through the eyes of a male perspective for a large portion of the play. In fact, one of the important messages of both Tirso’s play and my adaptation is that gender is ambiguous and fluid; one can dress as a man and subsequently become, in another’s eyes, a man. As in the relationship between Jerónima and Estefanía, the play posits that a woman can fall romantically in love with another woman, yet still end up in a heterosexual relationship. And while a woman can disguise herself as a man in the play, a man in the play can passionately, vehemently, and perhaps even with the emotional fervor of a woman, fall in love.

Given this, I propose that my adaptation assumes both a male and a female gaze. It invites male and female perspectives to consider contemporary notions of gender and sexuality. More than my desire to please female audiences is my desire to invite audiences to consider the shortcomings and celebrate the successes of both genders.

## CHAPTER III

### PROCESS OF TRANSLATION

#### A. Translation Strategies

Literary translation involves a complex set of challenges. Translators must make several choices about which principles they will look to and use when translating.

In addition to making general decisions about how closely they will adhere to what their source language text says, translators must also make detailed choices in their work, answering questions such as whether they will translate word by word, sentence by sentence, phrase by phrase, thought by thought, and so forth. Translations must furthermore deal with the issue of how to translate culture. And then, there is often the question of dialect, tone, and sometimes, as is the case in Tirso's play, the question of how to translate multilingual passages. The process of translating Tirso's *El amor médico* was particularly challenging in that the project raised several questions about the nature of translation, and invited me to grapple with several of the choices outlined above.

One of the greatest challenges on the project became one of whether to strictly (and faithfully) translate the play, or whether adaptation would be necessary. Though I was hesitant to change Tirso's play, for my original aim was to be faithful to Tirso's intentions, it became clear after Josephine finished the literal translation of the play that our translation would require some adaptive work. Tirso's text was at times dramaturgically unclear and dramatically stilted, and we both felt the piece could benefit from some reshaping. I then had to answer the question of how much I should cut from, add to, and adapt Tirso's play, and how much of the plot I should leave untouched. I also



needed to decide in which cultural milieu I should build the world of the play. It was therefore important for me to acknowledge how much of my contemporary American environment I would filter into the world of my adaptation, and how much I would retain of Tirso's fifteenth-century Spanish setting. Related to this was the question of what to do with the large sections of Portuguese that were in Tirso's Spanish play.

In this chapter, I articulate the translation strategies that guided my work on this play based on the questions above, and then briefly cite examples from the adaptation to highlight these larger choices. At the end of the section, I discuss the specific challenges of translating a Spanish *comedia*.

### **1. Domestication and Foreignization**

During the second year of my graduate program, I completed an independent study on translation theory with Professor Harley Erdman. In reading selections from the vast body of work on translation theory, I studied such prolific theorists, linguists and translators as Walter Benjamin, George Steiner, Lawrence Venuti, Susan Bassnett, and Edwin Gentzler.

One of the most widely known principles I studied was Lawrence Venuti's theory of transparency and fluency in translation. Venuti defines domestication, or transparency, as the extent to which a translation seems to have originally been written in that language. In his discussion of fluency, he asserts that "the more fluent the translation, the more invisible the translator, and...the more visible the writer or meaning of the foreign text" (*After Babel 2*). After arguing that a translation which hides the translator is not desirable, Venuti instead advocates for a translation strategy which resists such

fluency. The opposite of domestication, called foreignization in Venuti's study, is a type of translation that intentionally breaks conventions by retaining some of the foreignness of the original text.

Although not actively resisting or submitting to Venuti's theory, I found it nearly impossible to completely domesticate the text and make a story which was specific to my culture, as several elements of the story—its location, time setting, costumes and situations, for example—were distinctly foreign to contemporary Anglophone audiences. In the same vein, I found it quite impossible to do the opposite—create a text that was entirely foreignized.

In translating and adapting Tirso's play, however, I found that it was possible to both foreignize and domesticate simultaneously. For example, in Act 2 Gaspar tells the disguised Jerónima that he only seeks "hands that give [him] pleasure," to which Tello responds in Tirso's play "*Come manos mi señor, / que es amante de grosura.*" Josephine translated this line in the literal translation as "Eat hands my lord, / for you are a lover of grease." Tirso's use of *grosura*—"grease"—is a reference to how the Spanish often called the Portuguese "greasy," for they used animal grease to soften their hands.<sup>25</sup> In working with Josephine's literal translation, I slightly altered the line to the following: "Eat her hands out, Gaspar, / for you're a lover of this loose, greasy kind" (129). In doing so, I retained the obscure, foreign reference to the Portuguese's "greasy" nature. But beside the added word of "loose," the word "greasy" can be interpreted as something like "slippery" or "promiscuous," thus making the entire phrase feel as though it could have been originally written in English.

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<sup>25</sup> Harley Erdman footnotes this in my adaptation.

I ultimately found Venuti's theory of translation one which was more concerned with amplifying the voice of the translator and less concerned with the success of the translation itself. Rather than focus on how I might make myself more visible in the work, I found I was more interested in making the translation comprehensible and engaging.

## **2. Page and Stage**

One of the first issues I encountered when starting this translation project was purity. Coming from a background of English literature, I was at first resistant to the idea of eliminating "readings" of a dramatic text. I was more inclined to translate for a reader—for someone savoring the words on the page—than for the theater audience member. I had many strong opinions about the relationship between dramatic texts and performance, especially in the plays of early modern playwrights like Shakespeare and Christopher Marlowe, whose works have somewhat vexed textual histories. As an undergraduate student in an English department, I learned that theater productions closed off possibilities in texts, even more so when they were cut and edited down for performance. Marlowe's protagonist Doctor Faustus, they would say, is more than a man coping with a mid-life crisis.

One key to the relationship between text and performance that I've since realized my literary mind was missing, however, is that a production must choose to tell just one (or a small few) of the infinite variety of "readings" of a play. As they make a series of performance choices, productions ultimately close off several valid readings of a text, but in doing so tell a more specific, unified, and coherent story. Audience members, then, are

asked to consider what story the production is telling. It's valid, of course, for them to consider what stories the production is *not* telling, but they must always initially be open to the production's reading of the text, and then further open to what outside influences the production team's work might have taken on.<sup>26</sup>

As a result of these views on the relationship between text and performance, my translation of Tirso's play was one that ultimately focused on opening up possibilities in performance. For example, though the fact that Jerónima must disguise herself as a man in order to practice medicine is so specific that it eliminates certain stagings of the text (such as one set in New York City today), the play's setting of Spain and Portugal, the conventions of masking oneself with a veil, and the plot of falling in love with a man are generic enough to still stand being staged in several different unspecific settings and periods in time.

### **3. Text Untranslated**

The presence of the Portuguese language in Tirso's Spanish play posed another challenge in my adaptation process. With two of the three acts set in Portugal, there are several scenes in which characters speak Portuguese. Over the course of the translation and adaptation process, I experimented with several different ways of translating (and not translating) the Portuguese, which I outline in the next section of this chapter. In the end, however, I decided to leave the Portuguese untouched. Just as the Portuguese would be somewhat unintelligible for Tirso's original audiences, I reasoned, so the straight Portuguese would also be incomprehensible for contemporary audiences. Therefore, my

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<sup>26</sup> See Andrew James Hartley's book *The Shakespearean Dramaturg* for an examination of the construction of meaning in theater.

technique for handling the Portuguese in Tirso's play was one akin to Venuti's foreignization in that hearing Portuguese spoken in an English-language production may take contemporary audiences out of the story, even though my strategy was not intentionally one which sought to foreignize Tirso's play. Leaving the Portuguese in the play untranslated is in other ways a technique for which German critic Walter Benjamin might advocate.

#### 4. Adapting Tirso

One piece of translation theory in particular, discussed in Walter Benjamin's "The Task of the Translator," was particularly influential in my adaptation work. In his essay, Benjamin posits that original texts and their translations together create a "*die reine Sprache*"—a "pure language." In other words, they complete each other. Benjamin argues that every translation ultimately produces mistranslations and misunderstandings of the original text, but that those mistranslations also reveal otherwise hidden aspects of the source text which ought to be treasured. Translation, then, becomes part of the "afterlife" of a text—a prolongation of the original. As a result of this mutually dependent relationship between original and translation, Benjamin argues that the task of the translator is not to attempt to indicate what is being conveyed in the original text, but to uncover the "intended effect" and produce an echo of the original.

At first, I was skeptical of a translation's ability to release something equal to or greater than the original; this seemed implausible and futile. But as Josephine and I continued producing drafts of the translation/adaptation, and as I found myself understanding things about Tirso's play I had never realized until it had been translated

into English, I began to appreciate Benjamin's thesis in support of empowering the translator, especially since theater is a collaborative art which relies on the visions and ideas of many (which I've taken to mean that Tirso needs me just as much as I need him). Of particular interest to me was thus the idea of using artistic license to create a "new text," and in this case specifically, an adaptation of a text.

Another article which heavily influenced my translation work was translation theorist Susan Bassnett's "Ways Through the Labyrinth: Strategies and Methods for Translating Theatre Texts." In her article, Bassnett suggests that a "faithful" translation of a play should not necessarily anticipate the demands of performance, but instead focus on the linguistic structures of the text. She writes: "it is only within the written that the performable can be encoded and there are infinite performance decodings possible in any playtext" (102). While it was clear to me that I'd need to be selective about which of the "infinite performance decodings" I chose to emphasize in my translation, it was also important to me that I not depend entirely on what was "within the written" as I created a script which would be handed over to actors, designers, and a director. After all, a performance is ultimately only inspired by the text, for most of a performance transcends the textual, and even that which begins with the text (like the dialogue that actors speak) is influenced by the world of the production. To separate the written from the performance as I translated would be to ignore that the words I translated would need to be spoken by actors. In fact, I couldn't help but think about production as I translated. So, as I worked on drafts of the translation, I kept in mind that not all the answers to performance would be held within the written text.

## 5. Translating *Comedias*

With each draft of this translation, I aimed to create versions that honor what the original Spanish says in ways that are easy for an actor to speak. In the introduction to *The Comedia in English: Translation and Performance*, Susan Paun de García posits that literal translations of *comedias* can “communicate the nuances and complexities” of their source texts, but not always in a manner that “can be spoken trippingly on the tongue” (32). Since the theater demands a certain faithfulness not only to the text, but also flexibility for the actors, the director, the audience, the space, et cetera, I have sought to retain those complexities that exist in the Spanish, but in ways that anticipate the demands of performance. In other words, I’ve searched to find a balance between the give and take of translation, and find distinct ways in the English language to communicate those nuances of the original Spanish.

In translating this *comedia*, I have come across some challenges specific to the genre, including the long, rhetorical speeches characteristic of the *comedia*, and the quick endings in which plot elements get wrapped up in neat packages. In working through several drafts of this script, a long speech by Gaspar became particularly challenging. In the speech, which is 283 lines (each of eight syllables) long in the original Spanish, Gaspar recounts the story of how his engagement with Micaela was cut short, and why he has fled his home in Toledo. Like most of the long speeches in *comedias*, Gaspar’s speech feels as though it is simply exposition, and as though it doesn’t provide any information which is absolutely crucial to the outcome of the story. Paun de García even asserts that these long speeches have, in modern times, been regarded as “unactable” (3). At first glance, the speech in Tirso’s play feels absolutely dispensable.

But the fact that it is 283 lines long cannot be ignored; that it is long draws attention to the moment. The speech stands out on the page, and even more so in performance—when one voice and body dominates a (perhaps small) theatrical space for several minutes—this long, rhetorical speech naturally feels much more important.

The length of such a speech also provides a valuable texture to the aural environment of the play (in this case, a heightened, poetic language) which would not be there to the same extent if the speech was heavily cut. The longer speech also provides audiences a closer glimpse of the character's life and his sense of being, allowing him more time and words to develop who the character is and what his objective might be. Paun de García posits that cutting such speeches would result in a “less reasoned development of character and/or a less suspenseful plot” (3). The long speech adds scope for developing ideas and playing with the internal changes within the long speech. It also adds a certain complexity to what can otherwise become an arguably flat, one-dimensional character.<sup>27</sup> Additionally, this type of speech allows the audience to settle into the baroque language of the back-and-forth nature of working out one character's thought process on stage. In his book *Radical Theatricality*, Bruce Burningham asserts that, like lush rhetoric and the work of modern set designers of Eugene O'Neill's plays, these long speeches in the *comedia* actually aid “the spectators in creating a stronger theatrical signified” (151). After all, he goes on, “very few dramas consist of anything approaching pure dialogue” (151). Using as an example a speech of seventy-five lines from Lope's *Fuenteovejuna*, Burningham explains that in such moments, the actor

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<sup>27</sup> In the production at UMass, several audiences members—as well as members of the cast and production team—felt like Jerónima was the dynamic character, and that Gaspar was not a complex foil to which she could play, but instead a single-minded, unchanging puppet of sorts.



“ceases to be a “character” in any functional sense and becomes, instead, a “performance narrator” (152).

While I’ve kept in mind the practical considerations of time while working on this translation, I ultimately feel that the extra time it takes to deliver a longer monologue provides an opportunity rather than a hindrance. While one incarnation of the speech in an earlier draft was of medium-length (in terms of other cuts I did to the speech at various stages in my process), in the end, it was important for me to pick one or the other—a radically cut, short version, or a very long version—because landing somewhere in the middle would muddy the intention. Rather than creating a medium-length speech, which could be easily forgettable, I felt it important to either create a long speech, which draws attention to the fact that it’s absurdly long, or the opposite—a short speech which passes almost too quickly.

In my final version of the script, I’ve decided to use a long version of the monologue, which is 83 lines in length (each line longer than the eight syllabus in the original Spanish), though I include in an appendix to the script the shorter (33-line) version of the speech should a production team feel a cut is important to its telling of the story.

Another challenge of this play in particular was the ending. Like other *comedias*, Tirso’s play wraps up very quickly, all the plot lines getting untangled within only a few lines of text. Because these endings feel somewhat foreign to contemporary audiences, I specifically chose to showcase the absurdity of this quick ending by adding to it a plot device characteristic of other plays in this period (but one which this play didn’t already have). During a conversation about gender in Tirso’s play with my co-translator

Josephine, I had the idea to add a Queen, whose presence enforces a *deus ex machina* on the plot. Rather than adapt the ending and stretch it out into an end which my audiences might be used to, I did the opposite. Though not intentionally foreignizing this moment in the translation, making it clear that the play is a translation, my choice to highlight the strangeness (for my intended audience) of a Queen resolving the issues of a Portuguese woman could be seen as what Venuti would call a “foreignizing” technique. Yet at the same time, such an ending is also reminiscent of many of Shakespeare’s *deus ex machina* endings. In this way, the technique could also be arguably one of domestication, for it reminds contemporary audiences of a writer whose conventions are familiar.

It is also important to note here that, even though a silent collaborator, much of my adaptation has been inspired by Shakespeare. Mainly, his writing has been an inspiration for me as I constructed the rhetoric of the play. Unlike some contemporary prose translations of *comedias* (such as Jose Rivera’s 1999 *Sueño*, a translation/adaptation of Calderón de la Barca’s *La vida es sueño*), the language of my adaptation closely resembles Shakespeare’s writing in that it is heightened in some places, both in terms of syntax and form (as I will explain in greater detail in Chapter IV). What is more, Shakespeare’s language itself has informed—and in some cases even infiltrated—my adaptation. For example, a monologue delivered by the Queen was inspired by a monologue of Duke Vincentio in *Measure for Measure*. In fact, one of the Queen’s lines in my adaptation in particular is almost exactly the Duke’s: “hence shall see what these seemers be” (151). As a sort of homage to Shakespeare, there are other moments in my adaptation that allude to the Bard. For example, Gaspar and Tello’s exchange below recalls Hamlet’s opening line in the play *Hamlet*:

GASPAR  
(*To Tello*) They look so much alike.

TELLO  
(*To Gaspar*) The Doctor and Marta?

GASPAR  
(*To Tello*) They are kin.

TELLO  
(*To Gaspar*) As well as kind and gentle. (134)

Though it is impossible to articulate a translation theory which is all-encompassing, and which instructs how to handle every single translation question or issue which might arise, I have found the following objective useful in guiding my choices at almost every phase of my process of translating a *comedia*: create a performance text which is easy for an actor to speak, and one which honors both what the Spanish says as well as certain dramaturgical impulses of my own that make the story more comprehensible.

### **B. Stages of the Translation Process**

Since its conception in a translation course in 2009, this translation/adaptation of *El amor médico* has undergone extensive changes in various drafts. The purpose of this section is to chronicle in an extended overview the events that transpired between starting this translation project and producing the draft of the script that is part of this thesis (see Appendix).

As mentioned earlier, during the fall of 2009, I began translating *El amor médico* as part of a translation course. Over the course of the semester, I was able to translate most of the first act of Tirso's play, with the constant help and support of my professor, Harley Erdman. Early on in the semester, we determined that it would be more beneficial

to do quality translation work on a portion of the play than to do hasty, haphazard translation work on the entire play, and I therefore only translated roughly half of the first act of the play. Because I focused on such a small section, I was able to take the text through a series of drafts. I began with a literal translation, focusing on getting the words Tirso's characters were speaking into intelligible English.

The translation course culminated in an evening of scene readings from the plays our class translated. For this event, I had chosen to stage the first scene of *El amor médico*, and was therefore challenged to bring this section of text to the next level of translation. As I worked from the literal translation on this scene, then, I was challenged to make the “intelligible English” of my literal translation into lines that not only made sense, but also had a sense of flow and could easily be spoken by actors.

As I translated this opening scene, I felt I owed it to Tirso to be somewhat faithful to his play. The scene thus stayed very close to the original Spanish in many ways. I retained the same jokes Tirso created (even when they were not that funny to a contemporary American audience<sup>28</sup>), cut no lines, and created a verse structure and rhyme patterns that mirrored the polymetric verse of the original Spanish. I chose to work with a specific line length—approximately eight English syllables per line. My goal was not to go so far as to adapt the work or “modernize” the language by cutting historical

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<sup>28</sup> In the staged reading, I retained Quiteria's comedic story to Jerónima about a man with a tumor in his side who visits a bad doctor and ends up being saved not by the doctor, but by a mule. (“But when the man signed for his pills, / A mule—which had been quite restless— / Put his hoof in proper position / And burst this man's matured tumor / From the side it was hidden in. / When the pain had finally ceased / The man declared, with no humor: / ‘In healing tumors, I now know / That the mule is the best doctor.’”) The speech, which highlights the ignorance of seventeenth-century Spanish doctors, is culturally foreign to contemporary American audiences. When performed during this evening of scene showings, it got very few laughs.

and cultural references so that the translation would be more comprehensible for a contemporary audience; doing so felt unethical. It wouldn't exactly be Tirso's play if I made radical changes. The language thus felt slightly heightened both in its form and content. It was a translation not shaped for a theater audience, but for a reader.

Though eager to continue working on the translation—for my work in these four short months had raised questions to answer and introduced challenges to overcome—I realized that my proficiency in Spanish wasn't at the level it needed to be to finish a literal translation of the play. Thus, at the end of this fall semester in 2009, I set the project aside.

It was during the next semester, in the spring of 2010, that I met English graduate student Josephine Hardman in a Shakespeare course I was taking in the English department. Josephine, a native Spanish speaker from Argentina, was at the time pursuing her M.A. in English, and was focusing her studies on the historical, cultural, and political context of the English Renaissance. We connected again later in the early fall of 2010 at the UMass English Graduate Conference, where we were both presenting papers on topics related to the Spanish Golden Age and learned of each others' interest in Spanish drama. Shortly after the conference, I met with Josephine to talk about the possibility of us becoming co-translators on Tirso's *El amor médico*.

By the end of 2010, Josephine had come on board to help with the first step of the translation process—producing the literal translation. Harley immediately began mentoring us through the process of collaborating on a translation, and remained an active resource and springboard for both of us throughout the process. Josephine spent that winter break continuing where I had left off with the literal translation. By February

1<sup>st</sup> of 2011, Josephine had finished a complete literal translation of the play, at which point I went back to the beginning of the play and started working on a “stageworthy” draft. By the time I began working on this next draft, Josephine and I had committed to producing two public staged readings of our translation at the UMass Center for Renaissance Studies, which were to happen in April and May of 2011.<sup>29</sup> With the demands of performance in mind, Josephine and I sat down with her literal translation and made cuts to Tirso’s play that we felt would help the flow of the story in performance.

In most ways, with the exception of the cuts we made, this draft was similar to the first scene that was staged in 2009; again, I retained most of Tirso’s jokes, created a verse structure and rhyme patterns to mirror Tirso’s many shifts in verse form, and used specific line lengths—either eight or ten English syllabus, depending on the verse structure.

After the staged readings, Josephine and I learned that our translation would be part of the 2011-2012 Department of Theater season at UMass. Knowing that we needed to create a translation specifically for the stage, we let go of the need to be faithful to how Tirso shaped his play, and instead focused on figuring out our own answers to the above questions and then making them clear, even if it meant making changes to Tirso’s play. At this stage, Josephine and I also acknowledged that our translation of *El amor médico* would never be able to tell all the readings and stories we had seen packed into Tirso’s

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<sup>29</sup> The first reading took place on April 7-8, 2011 at the Center for Renaissance Studies. The second reading took place on May 1, 2011, also at the Center for Renaissance Studies, and was part of the UMass Renaissance Festival.

play in one production, and thereby felt encouraged to make bold dramaturgical choices in the translation.

Though the staged readings were overall successful in that we received positive feedback on the speakability of the language in our translation, there were many elements of the translation that Josephine and I wanted to revisit. One thing that had become very clear to us was that we cut too much of the text and there was a lot that would need to be restored. Also, most of the translation was still much too literal at the sentence-level and therefore not quite speakable by the actors.

During a check-in meeting with Harley, we realized there were many additional questions about the play which we needed to answer before deciding which parts of the text to restore. Some of these included the following: Does Jerónima actually have enough skill to practice medicine? What is the off-stage action that takes place? How much of that can and/or should stay off-stage? Can any of it be moved on-stage with the addition of scenes? What is the logic of the Portuguese? Why is the King only in one scene of the entire play?

All of this prompted a third draft of the translation. We decided at this point, since a large portion of the edits were ones adaptive in nature, and since as a dramaturg this type of work fell more in my area of expertise than it did Josephine's, that I would take over the translation and work independently, then send finished drafts to Josephine for her feedback.

Over the summer of 2011, with the help of Harley, Josephine, Gina Kaufmann and Noah Simes (who was to be the director for the fall production at UMass), I produced two additional drafts of the translation. It was during the creation of these two drafts that

the translation also became an adaptation, as I had made several large changes to Tirso's story (which I discuss in detail later in this thesis). Some of these changes include the addition of the Queen character, the merging of Rodrigo into Gonzalo, the change from rhyming to unrhyming verse, and the restoration of lines from Tirso's play.

By the end of the summer, after I had completed a full second draft, I was able to test the script in a staged reading of the play at the Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE) conference, which was directed by Gina Kaufmann. Though we only staged seven scenes of the play, I was able to gain a sense of how audiences were responding to the play's rhetoric, dramaturgy, jokes, et cetera. With a cast made up of Golden Age scholars (including Bruce Burningham, Rick Davis, John Fletcher, Susan Paun de García, Janine Ann Kehlenbach, Elizabeth Marie Petersen, Kerry Wilks, and Jason Yancey) and a team of "dramaturgical experts" (Mindy Stivers Badía, Nena Couch, Ben Gunter, Kathleen Jeffs, Shannon Polchow, and Kerry Wilks), I was also able to get feedback on this second summer draft from individuals who were already familiar with *comedias* and Golden Age theater. In fact, these individuals' insights helped shape subsequent drafts.

In response to the staged reading at ATHE, I then produced a draft with which we went into rehearsals at UMass in the fall of 2011. Several changes were made to the script during the rehearsal process, which I describe in detail in the following chapter. Following the UMass run, I created a final draft of the script, which appears in the appendix of this thesis, and which was published in a 2012 issue of *The Mercurian*, a translation journal.



While cutting text and tweaking syntax happened at every stage of the translation/adaptation process, the script underwent a very specific progression of changes in several other areas. In the following chapter, I outline those changes the play has undergone in five of its major drafts. While there have been more than five total drafts of the script, the five I've chosen to draw examples from are those in which Josephine and I made the greatest number and most radical changes. They are as follows: the literal translation (January 2011), the first 'stageworthy' draft, of which there was a staged reading at the UMass Renaissance Center (April 2011); the draft which was staged at the ATHE conference (August 2011); the UMass performance draft (October 2011); and the final draft (January 2012). In order to capture the evolution of the script in a chronological fashion, I organize the next chapter into three sub-sections: before production, during production, and after production.

## CHAPTER IV

### FROM PAGE TO STAGE

In this chapter, I discuss in detail *Love the Doctor*'s evolution in three main stages of its development. First, I discuss the work done on the script before production, including everything between its inception and before going into rehearsal for the UMass production during the fall of 2011. While there have been a great amount of changes at the microscopic level, I will document in this first section the larger changes and evolutions that warrant analysis. They are as follows: the process of titling the play; the merging of Gonzalo and Rodrigo; the change from King to Queen; the Portuguese language in the play; the revision of Act 1; and the structuring of the verse. In the second section, I reflect on the rehearsal process, describing in detail which discussions took place, where collaborations resulted in changes in the script, and what I observed from the production process. In the third and final section, I discuss the final draft of *Love the Doctor* (see Appendix) and record which changes were made to the script in response to the fall production at UMass.

#### **A. Before Production**

##### **1. Title**

The original title of Tirso's play is *El amor médico*, which literally means "medical love" or "medicinal love." Additionally, some early versions of the Spanish text, however, insert a comma—*El amor, médico*—which changes the literal meaning of

the title. It was this flexibility in possible translations that inspired Josephine and I to open ourselves to the idea of a more adaptive title for our translation.

Early in the process, when I had just completed a first stageworthy draft of the translation, we impulsively titled the play (which, at the time, wasn't quite adaptive yet) *The Doctor's Love*; it felt mostly literal and faithful to Tirso's title. This was the title we used for two staged readings of the play in the spring of 2011.

When we learned that our translation would be part of the UMass Theater Department's 2011-2012 season, and as we discovered the play would undergo some adaptation, we began thinking about different titles. Among those we seriously considered were the following: *Love's Cure*, *Love Doctor*, *Doctor of Love*, *Love's Doctor*, *Degree to Love*, *The Doctor of Illusion*, and *The Mistress of Disguise*. We liked and felt that the most freely adaptive of these titles—such as *The Doctor of Illusion*—would highlight Jerónima's all-important capacity to improvise.

Ultimately, we chose *Love the Doctor* as our title because it captures some of the ambiguity in Tirso's title; it is at once a command to love a doctor and a phrase which tells us the name and describes the nature of a certain doctor—Love.

## **2. Rodrigo to Gonzalo**

In Tirso's Spanish play, the characters Gonzalo and Rodrigo are two different men. Gonzalo, a Spaniard, is the brother of Jerónima, and Rodrigo is the Portuguese man that falls in love with and ends up marrying Estefanía. Though these two roles were left largely untouched in the literal and first stageworthy drafts, after the staged reading at the Renaissance Center I merged these two characters into one. Gina Kaufmann and I had

first had this idea while discussing the script immediately after the April and May 2011 staged readings. I liked the idea of combining these roles because it would cut down on the number of bodies on stage.<sup>30</sup> But even more important than this, combining these two characters—along with their motivations, objectives, and relationships to other characters in the play—would help create a stronger, more focused character. First we considered merging Gonzalo into Rodrigo, cutting Gonzalo from the first act of the play and focusing instead on Rodrigo, the Portuguese man of the second and third acts. But then we had the idea to do the opposite—merge the large role of Rodrigo into Gonzalo. Turning the somewhat arbitrary Portuguese man into Jerónima’s brother, thereby making him present in both Spain and Portugal, created what I feel is a stronger antagonistic presence and obstacle for Jerónima, especially when she becomes Doctor Barbosa. In addition to maneuvering around Estefanía, Ignacio, Gaspar and Tello in order to conceal her true identity, Jerónima must now also hide from her own brother.

This change also created great opportunities for more dramatic stage moments, in which lines that already existed in the Spanish became more colorful and dynamic in the new context. In the merging of these characters, for example, Gonzalo is given Rodrigo’s old lines about how Doctor Barbosa has such skill. He says: “He’s smart, indeed, / for being so young” (123). The fact that Gonzalo, Jerónima’s brother, unknowingly says these encouraging words to his disguised sister—after he’s discouraged her from studying earlier in the play—creates a moment of delicious dramatic irony that wouldn’t exist if Rodrigo spoke the lines (as he does in Tirso’s play). This shift also prompted me to fill out other moments in the play with my own inventions. For example, there is a

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<sup>30</sup> Tirso’s play is cluttered with secondary servant characters, and while I was cutting them, I decided to also take a closer look at these two characters.

moment in the play in which Gaspar has just met Doctor Barbosa's fictional sister, "Marta," after which the Doctor enters. At this moment, Gonzalo and the Doctor—Jerónima in disguise—are on stage together. In a brief exchange of asides, Gaspar and Tello quickly marvel at how "they look so much alike," to which Tello asks "The Doctor and Marta?" and Gaspar responds with "They are kin" (134). But the proximity of Jerónima to her brother Gonzalo provides a moment of dramatic irony for the audience, who is aware that the Doctor is actually Jerónima, and that she's simultaneously the sibling of Gonzalo and the fictional "Marta."

### 3. King to Queen

In Tirso's play, King Manuel of Portugal appears in one scene, at the very beginning of Act 3. Though the appearance of the King at this moment in the play is dramaturgically justified—because he is appointing Jerónima in her disguise as Doctor Barbosa to the position Doctor of the King's Chamber—one such short moment for the King in the play feels somewhat arbitrary. Given this, in an early draft of the play, I added the King to a second scene in order to bolster his presence and provide a *comedia*-esque ending (with a *deus ex machina*) to a play that didn't already have it. To do this, I added an entrance of the King in the final moments of the play just after Quiteria reveals to all that Jerónima's father has died, that she's a woman, and that she's therefore been practicing medicine illegally in Portugal. I wanted to keep the essence of Tirso's ending—Jerónima giving up her disguise and marrying the man. Naturally, since no character in Tirso's play directly speak lines about how she must renounce her position as

doctor, I invented such lines for the King character, for he was, I thought, the most likely to make such a command.

But giving these lines to the King, I felt, changed the spirit of the ending. No longer was Jerónima being forced to give up her masculine disguise, but she was also being told to do so by a man. Though such words coming from the King make sense, given gender dynamics in the period, I felt that such an ending would be too heavy-handed and severe; moreover, a King commanding the young woman to return to her womanly life and marry a man would also be too predictable.

Rather than change lines, I then had the idea to change the King character to a Queen while discussing the gender dynamics in Tirso's play (and day) with Josephine after the staged reading in April 2011. I ultimately felt that an ending in which a female monarch—María of Aragon, Queen of Portugal—tells another woman, Jerónima, that she must return to her life as a woman (and practice medicine “only in the solitude of your home in Spain”) would be more equivocal, and capture the spirit of the ambiguity and contradiction with which Tirso writes.

After I made this change, the choice to change genders helped develop several other aspects of the play. Most obviously, changing the character of the King to a Queen added one more strong female role to a play which I felt was very much already about gender, but which was previously lacking in female roles. Not only that, I also felt a female monarch would more clearly tell the story I wanted to tell with this translation.

After the staged readings of the play in April and May of 2011, at the prompting of Harley, Josephine and I talked about why Jerónima travels to Portugal to practice medicine. In other words, we wondered, why could she not pretend to be a doctor in her

home country of Spain? Though the place she travels to in Portugal—Coimbra—is an old, conservative university town, it’s clear that in this play Portugal allows her more freedom than does Spain. That made me question what it was about Portugal that was liberating. Ultimately, I wanted to reflect these more liberal leanings of Portugal by having a cross-dressed female Queen tell Jerónima she could no longer practice medicine.

The addition of Queen María of Aragon was desirable also because of two connections between the Queen and Jerónima. First, both are Spanish women living in Portugal. And second, Jerónima references Queen María of Aragon’s mother early in the play. In Act 1, Jerónima says in a monologue that Queen Isabel of Spain learned Latin with her maid, and therefore so should she. Queen María of Aragon, the character I’ve added to this adaptation, was the daughter of Queen Isabel, and a student of Latin. The idea of Jerónima following in a Queen’s scholarly footsteps was very appealing.

#### 4. Portuguese

The Portuguese in Tirso’s play posed a particularly difficult challenge. Jerónima, when disguised as the Portuguese lady “Marta,” speaks mainly in Portuguese. Her maid Quiteria speaks a few lines of Portuguese, and Gaspar seems to understand the women when they’re speaking the language, though he himself doesn’t speak it. In the final act of the play, when Jerónima is disguised as “Marta,” she speaks to Estefanía, a noble Portuguese lady in a mangled, grammatically incorrect Portuguese:

*Nao me engeita combarias;  
Ficad fidalgo con Deos  
Que naon falo castellanos. (129)*

During the staged reading of the translation at the Renaissance Center, I anticipated laughter from the audience as we neared this humorous scene. (We had elected in our translation to leave Jerónima's Portuguese untranslated, expecting that such absurd language would lead our audiences to laugh.) In this reading, the actor playing Jerónima (Linda Tardif) read the Portuguese clumsily, so as to play the humor of the situation, and the audience was silent. Surprised by this, Josephine and I discussed how we might otherwise translate the Portuguese to capture the comedy we felt was inherent in the original while considering how audiences might respond to different translation choices. A person who had seen this reading later approached me and urged us to consider using a Southern dialect (either Texas, North Carolina, Alabama, or the like) in place of the Portuguese. Because at times Romance languages are not mutually unintelligible, he reasoned, the closest analog we (monoglot Americans) have for the Spanish-Portuguese in Tirso's play would be one-dialect-or-accent-of-English versus another. Though as a theater practitioner I have always considered myself one who generally puts what "works" over what is "faithful," I found myself flustered by this recommendation. Though his suggestion to use dialect felt cheap and too comical, this audience member was right about one thing—translating the Portuguese in such a way that it incited laughter in/for audiences was one way the Portuguese could work in translation

Given this, I tried something different in the next draft of the translation. Instead of using a straight Portuguese or dialect-inflected English, I translated Tirso's Portuguese into a Portu-English. Jerónima's lines looked like this:

*Nao me offended;*  
*Stay fidalgo con Deos*  
*Que naon speak Español.*



The point of using this combination of English and Portuguese was to emphasize the humor and absurdity of Jerónima speaking Portuguese, as well as to highlight that the Portuguese she speaks is mangled and incorrect. But as I continued working on drafts of the play, and as I began talking about the play with the student that would be directing the production of *Love the Doctor* in the fall of 2011, Noah, I realized this was actually counter to my vision of Jerónima. Rather than create a character that spoke a flawed Portuguese at which an audience would likely laugh, it was important to me that Jerónima be an erudite woman who defies the gender restrictions of her world, and then uses those skills to reach her academic goals and move up in society. To do this, then, I ultimately decided to retain Tirso's Portuguese. To most of the ears of an English-speaking audience, this Portuguese would make Jerónima sound learned. I did, however, retain this combination of English and Portuguese for the few lines that Jerónima's maid Quiteria speaks. For example: "*Senora, necesito vamoose now*" (153).

Ultimately, the Portuguese is something that—aside from a few minor cuts—didn't change much once rehearsals began. And what is more, Noah and I agreed that Jerónima spoke Portuguese because she actually knew how. To help support this view of Jerónima once we went into production, Noah directed the actor playing Jerónima to speak the Portuguese as if she knew every word of it, and as if she had been studying the language for years and was finally getting the chance to use it.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Because we had such a short rehearsal process, the actor playing Jerónima (Julia Piker) found it challenging to memorize all the lines of Portuguese. When she wasn't quite off-book in rehearsals, Noah had her do an exercise which also supported our view of the character—he asked her to make up words and sounds where she couldn't remember the Portuguese lines so that she was speaking quickly and confidently, rather than slowly and cautiously.

## 5. Revision of Act 1

Another large adaptive change I made before going into rehearsals involved cutting more than half of the lines in Act 1, which in Tirso's play is composed of three scenes and a total of 1151 lines. The draft of my adaptation that we used for the staged reading at ATHE roughly followed this structure. In the first scene, Jerónima reveals to Quiteria that she's spied on Gaspar, and that she's determined to find out what he's hiding. In the second scene, Gaspar recounts to Gonzalo the story of why he's fleeing Toledo, and the two men encounter two disguised ladies who tell them to meet them in the Gardens of the Alcázar, where they will share "important news from Toledo." The third scene, of course, then occurs in the Gardens, where the ladies deliver news to the men. Though the logic of this progression made sense, it wasn't until the staged reading that it became clear that the action in the second and third scenes of this act could be combined to heighten the tension, focus the action, and compact the storytelling.

Another thing that radically changed the play (as a result of the merging of Gonzalo and Rodrigo) was my revision of the end of Act 1, when Gonzalo comes on stage and disrupts Gaspar's interactions with the veiled ladies. In Tirso's play, Gonzalo enters to tell Gaspar to prepare for war, for enemy forces are in Seville and have torn through his house and posted court orders for his detainment. Gonzalo then goes on to explain how he is also being called off to war, and that he will leave Seville to travel to Pamplona. For Gonzalo to be called off to battle wouldn't make sense in light of my merging of Rodrigo into Gonzalo, for the change required Gonzalo to now be present in Portugal for Acts 2 and 3—not fighting a battle in Pamplona. Thus, I cut all references to Gonzalo being called off to war, and replaced this with Gonzalo saying he needs to leave

Seville, “for fear they’ll / hold [him] hostage” (104). Additionally, I wanted to make it clear that the mess Gonzalo finds is the mess Jerónima and Quiteria made while tearing through Gaspar’s desk to find letters. Thus, I cut the reference to the posting of court orders. This part of the speech now goes as follows:

Leave this news of your lady here, Gaspar,  
and arm yourself for the bloody course of war.  
Your enemies are here in Seville, and they’re  
so enraged they have torn through my house,  
scattering the papers from your desk all over your room.  
I plan to leave Seville at dawn for fear they’ll  
hold me hostage, though I’m not yet sure where I’ll go. (104)

## 6. Verse

The form of the language in my adaptation is something that has evolved over its many drafts. Like other *comedias* written in this period, Tirso’s play is polymetric in form; that is, it shifts verse forms several times over the course of the play. *El amor médico* contains six of these verse forms: *redondillas*, *quintillas*, *romances*, *silva de consonantes*, *décimas*, and *intercaladas*. Each of these forms has a specific function in the *comedia*—some feature heightened, unusual poetic language while others are used for narrative and were more readily familiar to the Spanish ear.

In the first draft of the translation, I felt it was important to capture the changes in tone these shifts in verse form bring, and therefore attempted to recreate in English different verse forms so as to mirror what Tirso does with the Spanish. My equivalent was thus a series of iambic verse forms that varied in line length, rhyme scheme, and register. For example, my English equivalent of Estefanía’s lines in the first draft of the play, which were written in the form of the Spanish *décima* in Tirso’s play, went like this:

My tyrant imagination,

I'm left alone, aching from your tricks.  
Tell me, how audacious are you  
To give madness such station?  
How does your darkness find location  
When it can't find its own mistake?  
Why do you love disparities  
That have no similarities?  
Is the result of my pride this ache?  
I love a doctor? My heart will break!

I was able to test this version of Estefanía's speech at the staged reading at the Renaissance Center in April 2011, and there learned that the repetition of sounds and inverted syntax became difficult for actors to speak, and that the rhyme and varying iambic verse forms were therefore getting in the way of an audience's immediate understanding.

Therefore, in later drafts of the script, I chose to not shift the verse structure of the English in every place Tirso's does, since trying to do so only leads in English to clumsy poetic inversions that are essentially at odds with the flow of the Spanish. I do, however, use other techniques to communicate this difference aurally. For example, when the verse form switches to *romance* as Gaspar relays his back-story in Act 1 at great length, I heighten Gaspar's language by formalizing his syntax in order to separate the moment from what immediately precedes and succeeds it. For example, Gaspar's poetic speech

But in love, as in stormy waters,  
change can become the pilot;  
just when I thought I'd disembark  
upon the sheltered shore of marriage,  
a jealous eastern wind blew  
and returned me to the open sea  
where my suffering was constant  
and my misfortunes drowned me. (97)

is followed by more colloquial language from Tello:

Stand back! My sword is aimed

to thrust at all in these streets! (98)

Above all, I have aimed to favor the rhythm and flow of this speech over absolute faithfulness to the number of syllables allotted to each line.

I've also decided to create what I refer to here as "free verse": a (poetry) that does not rhyme or have a regular meter, but which mirrors verse in that on the page there are visual breaks in sentences. Below is an example of lines in my "free verse," followed by the same lines as they would appear in the form of prose:

My love begins to fear I'm jealous  
of this young Doctor Barbosa.  
When Estefanía can't see him, she's sad,  
and she's full of joy when he's around.  
When he touches her arteries,  
they communicate their woes.  
The door that closes before me  
is wide open for the doctor. (125)

My love begins to fear I'm jealous of this young Doctor Barbosa. When Estefanía can't see him, she's sad, and she's full of joy when he's around. When he touches her arteries, they communicate their woes. The door that closes before me is wide open for the doctor.

On the pages of the final script, the lines of my adaptation appear to be verse, much like Shakespeare. The difference, however, is that my verse does not follow a rhyme scheme, nor does it have a regular, iambic meter. To illustrate this, below are two samples of text from a monologue Estefanía delivers in the play. The first is her monologue as it appears in my final draft of the script. The second is an early, rhyming version of the same monologue.

Imagination, you're a tyrant!  
They've gone and left me alone with you.  
Tell me, why in my distress do you  
tempt me to have such lustful thoughts?  
Why must you entertain such madness

when my mind finds misery with such ease?  
How can you hit your target  
in the darkness of night when  
you miss it in the light of day?  
Are all my audacious wishes now  
directed to this dark end? I love a doctor?  
Be quiet! To speak this is insanity. (112)

My tyrant imagination,  
I'm left alone, aching from your tricks.  
Tell me, how audacious are you  
To give madness such station?  
How does your darkness find location  
When it can't find its own mistake?  
Why do you love disparities  
That have no similarities?  
Is the result of my pride this ache?  
I love a doctor? My heart will break!

That said, my adaptation does make use of rhyme (and other literary devices) in certain places. One such place is the end of the first act:

QUITERIA

Go back to the books that you cherish.

JERÓNIMA

I pray that in their pages I will not perish! (105)

This scene at the end of Act 1 needed a button in its closing moment to cleanly separate it from the beginning of Act 2, and a rhyming couplet was able to do just that. Though I utilize rhyme at the end of this act, however, I don't do it at the end of every act or scene. Other acts end with buttons using different conventions; Act 3, for example, ends with Jerónima using the play's title in a sentence.

Another way my verse is slightly different than Shakespeare's verse is that in my adaptation, there is no strict rule that dictates where the lines break and the next ones begin, and my reasoning for this is twofold.

First, I wanted to be able to choose the best words possible in each line of text, regardless of how they may or not have fit into a structured, iambic line of verse. Blank verse allowed me to freely choose words, regardless of their length in syllables and the scansion they created.

Second, I want to capture the tone of this translation/adaptation, and one of the most effective ways to do that as the writer is visually. Since this is a script for actors, the line breaks in the script communicate a certain formalism about the language. In seeing free verse on the page, as opposed to prose, actors understand that the language of the play is heightened; rather than naturalistic like the language in, for example, an Eugene O'Neill play. It is important to me that this sense of formalism be communicated, because it is precisely what implies everything in production in terms of acting style, design, and so forth.

As a result, line breaks sometimes occur at the end of a sentence, and at other times in the middle of a sentence. Often characters also have shared lines, where one character speaks a short line of dialogue, and the next speaker's words are indented on the page, so as to finish what appears to be a full line of dialogue. An example follows:

JERÓNIMA

What surprise! You have a deficit in your liver,  
but excess bile makes you choleric.  
You're aggravated, burning in your heart!

ESTEFANÍA

Yes, yes!

JERÓNIMA

Now listen to me, my lady,  
It's in your best interest to prevent this;  
my diagnostic knowledge tells me so.  
First, you must follow a diet that will

remove this excess heat and bile. (117)

As mentioned above, there is no exact science to this method; the purpose is only to create the appearance of a structured verse so as to communicate the tone of the adaptation.

After making these large and mostly adaptive changes to the script, the rehearsal process for the October 2011 production at UMass brought about even more changes, which I document in the next section of this chapter.

### **B. During Production**

In this section, I reflect on and recount the rehearsal process of *Love the Doctor* at UMass, describing in detail the discussions that took place with my collaborators, as well as how those conversations led to script changes. After briefly recounting the details and nature of this rehearsal process and production, I begin this section by discussing the cuts that were made during the rehearsal process. I then consider additions and alterations that came out of discussions during rehearsals. Finally, I end by describing some discoveries about the play that were made while rehearsing the script.

The rehearsal period for *Love the Doctor* was a short one. The first rehearsal occurred on September 19<sup>th</sup>, and the show opened less than four weeks later on October 13<sup>th</sup>. There were a total of six performances of *Love the Doctor* in the Curtain Theater at UMass between the days of October 13<sup>th</sup> and October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2011. Before the show opened, the run had sold out entirely.

This first production of *Love the Doctor* was true to the period in that the world on the stage looked and sounded like seventeenth-century Spain. The set design (by



Miguel Romero) for this show was very sparse; in the newly renovated Curtain Theater, our actors played on a set comprised of two sets of stairs, both of which connected to a mezzanine level of the theater. Every surface of the space was painted black, and there were no set pieces. Props were also very minimal in this production.

The costumes (by Evan Laux) for this production were from roughly the period in Spain during which the play was written—the seventeenth century—though the play is set some hundred years earlier, c. 1500. All actors wore a black base costume, and were provided with costume pieces to wear on top of these. The *galanes* (Gaspar and Gonzalo) and *barba* (Ignacio) wore doublets with capes hats, while the *gracioso* (Tello) wore a vest and open-neck shirt. Gaspar and Gonzalo also had swords, but did not use them for any stage combat. The women wore ornate bodices and skirts. Estefanía also wore a ruff around her neck to denote the period. Because of her many disguises, Jerónima had the most costume pieces in the show. She started out in a matching gold and brown bodice and skirt. As the veiled Spanish woman, Jerónima covered herself with a long magenta veil. Disguised as “Marta,” she wore a beige hooded cape, and as Doctor Barbosa, she wore black university regalia. Under her gown, a pair of black pants were visible. After becoming Doctor of the King’s Chamber in Act 3, a bright yellow *muceta* was added to Jerónima’s cap and gown.

The lighting design (by Margo Caddell) was minimal. The lights created a space which would showcase the actors’ movement. Little color was used within the scenes, though one of the interludes—after Act 1, while the characters traveled from Spain to Portugal—used blue gels and water-like gobos to convey travel by water.

The sound design (by David Wiggall) in this production was minimal and of the period. The opening sound of the show, while Gaspar entered and stood in the courtyard of Jerónima's home, was a courtly Spanish melody which is abruptly cut off in a comic screech as Jerónima speaks her first line of text. The sounds that followed came during the interludes. They were all generally of the period, and had clear, crisp buttons at their ends.

The director for this production was Noah Simes, the dramaturg Harley Erdman, and the assistant dramaturg, Alison Bowie. Gina Kaufmann also served as the director's advisor. The actors in this production were Julia Piker (Jerónima), Kate Jones (Quiteria), Ryan Moore (Gaspar), Mac Leslie (Gonzalo), Toney Brown (Tello), Monica Giordano (Estefanía), Justin Avergon (Ignacio), and Emma Cohen (Queen).

### **1. Cuts**

One of the most fruitful aspects of this rehearsal process for me as the writer was its flexibility and collaborative nature. The production had been advertised as a "workshop production," which in the UMass Department of Theater essentially means a smaller production team, a smaller budget (than our main stage shows), and therefore more modest production values. While it is usually undesirable for a production to have fewer resources, in this case less was more liberating. Because we weren't focused on working with a complex set, for example, we were able to spend more time discussing, revising, and refining the script in the rehearsal hall. Ultimately, this allowed for the script to evolve during the process. One way in which it radically evolved was through cuts.

Cuts were made for various reasons during the rehearsal process. Several of these were small cuts made to quicken moments or help clarify characters' lines. For example, Act 1 in the draft with which we went into rehearsals ended in a long passage from Jerónima: "In matters of love, the doctor can't cure others / if she can't cleanse the perilous stuff / that weighs upon her own heart." While I enjoyed the sweeping language of these lines, we discovered only after the actor playing Jerónima (Julia Piker) had been doing the lines on her feet that the moment needed to be a short, quick one, since the long line here only slowed the actor's exit down. Ultimately, I changed the line to "In matters of love, the doctor can't cure others / unless she can cure herself" (96).

Many other cuts happened as a result of actors asking good questions of the text. Often, in table work, an actor would ask a question about one of their lines—usually, why they were saying it—and we would realize in that moment that there wasn't a good reason why they needed to speak the line. The result was usually that the line would get cut. For example, when Jerónima—disguised as Doctor Barbosa—is explaining to Gaspar why smaller, younger people are smarter, she delivers a long monologue citing various ancient scholars to prove her point. One such section goes as follows:

...The most  
overweight man is exceptionally humid,  
and there's nothing like humidity—  
of the four humors—to destroy  
rationality and erase the potential  
of our reason and memory.  
This flaw we cannot find in  
people of smaller size, whose physical dryness  
prevents the flesh from expanding.  
Incapable of stretching itself,  
the flesh remains taut,  
and therefore the soul more united.

In rehearsal, we noticed how repetitive the speech was, and therefore chose to cut the first sentence of the above passage.

Other cuts were made during rehearsals when moments didn't seem necessary to the outcome of the play. Often, I found that trying these cuts led to discoveries and thus restorations of text. A monologue Tello has in Act 2, for example, felt like one such moment while in rehearsals. In his speech, which comes immediately after Gonzalo and Gaspar leave to see Estefanía, Tello tells the audience he's had a misunderstanding—thanks to the fact that he doesn't speak Portuguese—with the servants in Estefanía's home. The monologue essentially sets up that the play has now moved to Portugal and that Tello doesn't understand Portuguese. Though in rehearsal the actor playing Tello (Toney Brown) did a good job with this moment, several individuals watching our first run-through felt the moment could be cut. What had been a sixteen-line monologue was cut down to

In Portugal, all is like syrupy love.  
Everything is *bota*, everything's *lua*,  
everything's *fidalgo valiente*,  
Except there's no way to understand anyone!

But in cutting the speech down to just these four lines, we—and in particular the dramaturg on the production, Harley—realized that Tirso probably wrote the moment for a costume change; immediately before this speech Gonzalo and Gaspar are on a street in Coimbra talking about Estefanía, and immediately after Tello's speech, they are about to meet Estefanía in her home. Though a costume change wasn't happening in our production, we realized that retaining Tello's long version of the monologue allowed for

a more smooth transition from street to house. For performances, I therefore restored a majority of the lines from this monologue.<sup>32</sup>

Large chunks of text were also cut in rehearsals to speed the action along. One such cut involved Gaspar's long monologue in Act 1, which I discuss in the previous chapter (though my final version of the script for this thesis restores the long version).

## 2. Additions and Alterations

The flexibility with which our actors and production team worked allowed not only for cuts, but also for amendments and additions to the text. On occasion, additions would be made solely for the delight an additional word or phrase brought; for example, when actor Toney Brown accidentally read "Eat her hands, Gaspar" as "Eat her hands out, Gaspar" in callbacks, I realized the extra laughs he got were worth an extra word.<sup>33</sup>

Just as actors asked questions that resulted in cutting text, so also did actors ask questions that led to amended lines. The actor playing Estefanía (Monica Giordano) was particularly helpful in this way. In one of her monologues, Estefanía asks the invisible "Imagination" why it tempts her and causes her distress. In the rehearsal draft of the script, Estefanía says:

Imagination, you're a tyrant!  
They've gone and left me alone with you.  
Tell me, what has misery done  
to make you so desirable?  
How vain are you to give  
audience to such madness?  
How can your darkness hit its target  
when the clear light of day stumbles?

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<sup>32</sup> See p. 108 of this thesis for final version of the monologue.

<sup>33</sup> This line was retained in the final draft, and can be found on p. 129.

In rehearsing this monologue, Monica asked about one particular line: “How can your darkness hit its target / when the clear light of day stumbles?” How, she wondered, could Imagination have such a thing as “darkness” which is capable of hitting an arbitrary target? And why, furthermore, was it important to what Estefanía was saying about Imagination? This prompted me to look back at the original Spanish and Josephine’s literal translation. Realizing my adaptation of these lines was slightly inaccurate, I therefore changed the line in rehearsals to a more clear “How can you hit your target / in the darkness of night when / you miss it in the light of day?” (112)

Other additions to the text were made to help clarify the story. For example, after watching a run-through of the show, Noah and Gina noticed that Gonzalo and Jerónima are never on stage as Gonzalo and Jerónima until the very last moment of the play; that is, Jerónima is always disguised as someone else when interacting with her brother. Because several moments in the play—many of which are comedic—rely on audiences realizing the two are siblings, we decided that it would be very important to establish this sibling relationship in a physical way. I therefore chose to add a moment during Jerónima and Quiteria’s conversation in Act 1 in which Gonzalo enters, says “I’m going to the Gardens, sister,” and exits, so that we can see the two together. Gonzalo’s line is also followed by a line from Quiteria—“Blame your brother for locking you up” (92)—to reinforce this idea.

Another line that was never cut, but that got amended several times was one of Tello’s in the final act of the play. The line comes near the beginning of Act 3, Scene 2, and is spoken by Tello as an aside in response to Doctor Barbosa being bold and forthright with Gaspar. Early on in rehearsals, the lines went as follows:

GASPAR

You shouldn't be upset; I've come for you.

JERÓNIMA

You try to escape when you see me coming.  
You know I have a sister, and your eyes  
are fixed on every window in my house,  
yet you claim that you're here to speak with me?  
If you continue with such loose behavior  
your noble reputation will pay the price.  
Though it may be acceptable in Spain,  
such dishonorable behavior in Portugal  
is denounced. As long as you're in Coimbra,  
live as we do, and you will find favor.  
But know that among books and prescriptions,  
my study also holds rifles.

TELLO

*(Aside)* My God,  
he's got some balls!

It's also important to note here that the line precedes two encounters between Jerónima and Tello, in which Jerónima as Doctor Barbosa is first playfully—and then forcefully—threatening to “bleed” Tello to heal an ailment he claims to have on his genitals.

In Noah's staging of this moment, I had become inspired by the potential for a sexual tension between Tello (Toney Brown) and the cross-dressed female actor playing Jerónima (Julia Piker). Just as Estefanía and “Marta” (not to mention Estefanía and the cross-dressed Jerónima) have a somewhat ambiguous relationship, the idea of Tello being attracted to and having a physically charged relationship with Doctor Barbosa was also very appealing to me. But even more than this, during rehearsals I was intrigued by the idea that Tello discovers that Doctor Barbosa is a woman. After all, he does note that Doctor Barbosa is a “male doctor wearing women's shoes,” and that such doctors come

from “schools of gossip” (140). Thus, during the second week of rehearsals, I changed Tello’s line to “My God, / she’s got some balls.”

For the remainder of the rehearsal process, several of my collaborators on the production team thought the line should be changed back to “he’s got some balls.” If Tello knew Doctor Barbosa was actually a woman disguised as a man, they reasoned, he would immediately tell Gaspar, Jerónima would be found out, and the play would be over. With some resistance, the line was changed quite late in the process—during technical rehearsals—back to “My God, / he’s got some balls” for the sake of clarity. In the third section of this chapter, I discuss my edit of this passage for the final draft of the script.

Another amendment to the script occurred very early in the rehearsal process—on the first day of rehearsals, right before printing out the script for actors, in fact. Though I had retained all the Spanish characters’ names Tirso created, one was particularly hard to pronounce: Íñigo. Because I had also recently realized that Íñigo’s family is Spanish—not Portuguese—I therefore changed the name to its Spanish equivalent, Ignacio.

### **3. Discoveries**

Throughout the rehearsal process, with the help of the actors and production team, I made several discoveries about the play. Many of these were brought about when actors asked questions. For example, when rehearsing the opening scene of the play, Noah and the actors playing Jerónima (Julia Piker) and Quiteria (Kate Jones) helped me discover the various reasons why Jerónima hasn’t yet confronted Gaspar about ignoring her simply by trying to identify their acting objectives in the scene. From one simple question—



“How do I get what I want?”—came several answers. Perhaps Jerónima doesn’t have access to Gaspar from her living quarters. Or maybe she’s not allowed to speak to him. Or perhaps she’s afraid to confront him, and therefore must use several disguises to face him.

One of the biggest discoveries made during the rehearsal process deals with the many layers of Jerónima’s identity. In the final act of the play, after Gaspar has told Doctor Barbosa he’s in love with “Marta,” Jerónima and Quiteria, disguised as Spanish ladies in Portugal, approach Gaspar and Tello as they stand on a street in Coimbra near the home of Doctor Barbosa. As Tello flirts with Quiteria, Jerónima tells Gaspar she knows that he has dishonored women in both Spain and Portugal, and that he must now keep his promises “Be loyal before news travels back to / those who will force you to get married, / for better or worse” (150). They exit, and Jerónima re-enters in the next scene as “Marta.” This scene, though, felt arbitrary and haphazard. Yet another disguise for Jerónima—on top of the Spanish lady in Act 1, Doctor Barbosa, and “Marta”—seemed confusing. In rehearsals we discussed the various reasons Jerónima uses disguises, but we never had a good answer for this disguise. A few of my collaborators suggested I cut the moment, for it seemingly had no concrete impact on the outcome of the play, but for some reason—despite the fact that I couldn’t yet articulate why it was important—my impulse was to keep this scene.

After re-reading the scene several times, I met with Harley to discuss the moment. In doing so, we realized two particular things that ultimately inspired me to adapt—not to mention retain—the moment in my adaptation.

First, after looking back at the original Spanish text, Harley observed how similar this moment in *El amor médico* is to one particular moment in Tirso's *Marta la piadosa*, which Harley translated in 2009.<sup>34</sup> *Marta* is the story of a woman who feigns a religious conversion in order to marry Felipe, the man she really loves. At one point in the play, Felipe is disguised as a scholar and is serving in Marta's home. After the two have seemingly had sex (between Acts 2 and 3, as in *Love the Doctor*), Marta and Felipe get in a fight because Marta has caught Felipe kissing her own sister, Lucía. The moment is reminiscent of Jerónima and Gaspar's moment in *El amor médico* in that both couples get in a public fight, and at approximately the same point in the play.

Second, we thought we had found a mistranslation in one particular monologue of this scene. In Tirso's play, Jerónima, as a veiled woman, tells Gaspar where she was born, and that she hosted him for an entire month. Though we originally thought the Spanish text says Jerónima is from Toledo, it became clear upon further inspection that the veiled woman was not from Toledo, after all. Still, I used this mistake as inspiration for turning the veiled woman into Jerónima.

Ultimately, the fact that this moment was similar to a moment in another of Tirso's plays inspired me to adapt one line in order to clarify that it is not a random veiled woman, but Jerónima herself, that is now approaching Gaspar. In my version, Jerónima enters alone and reveals to Gaspar her true identity—and thus that she, Jerónima, is aware of all that he's done. At this moment, however, it is not revealed to Gaspar that Jerónima has been disguised as the Doctor and "Marta" all along—only that Jerónima is in Portugal and is aware of all that has happened.

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<sup>34</sup> This was the UMass production for which I served as dramaturg. Gina Kaufmann, Noah's directing advisor, directed this production of Harley's translation.

Though a large number of changes were made to the script during this rehearsal process, more still were made after the production closed.

### **C. After Production**

In this third and final section, I discuss the final draft of *Love the Doctor* (which is included in the Appendix of this thesis) and record which changes were made to the script in response to the fall production at UMass.

While some of the revisions made between the October production draft and the final draft included here were small—changes in words, for example—there were a number of changes I made that were responses to things that didn't completely work in production during the UMass run in October 2011. Among those larger changes, which I describe here, are the following: Gonzalo now puts Jerónima in a convent at the end of Act 1; Tello's "She's got some balls" line has been changed once again; the Queen now wears a male disguise and speaks a new monologue; and Jerónima and Gaspar's off-stage action between Acts 2 and 3 is clarified.

During the rehearsal process, the assistant dramaturg on the production, Alison, kept asking why—if Gonzalo found his home had been torn apart by Gaspar's enemies at the end of Act 1—would he quickly flee Seville, but leave his sister Jerónima at their house? Though none of the actors asked this question when in rehearsals, nor did any of my other collaborators raise the question, my logical impulses told me the moment needed to be addressed in the next draft. At the end of the play Gonzalo threatens to throw his sister into the Convent of Santa Clara upon learning of her "false medicine" (164). To support this, I decided to have Gonzalo put Jerónima in the convent as he's

leaving Seville at the end of Act 1. Doing so not only justifies Gonzalo's impulse to put Jerónima back in the convent at the end of play, but also gives Jerónima the opportunity—and the extra motivation—to escape Seville and follow Gaspar to Portugal. Though we don't get to see the moment on stage, for it occurs between Acts 1 and 2, we learn about Jerónima's escape from the convent in Act 2 from Quiteria:

Your blind love's brought us on a great journey;  
you entered the light of a convent as a woman, and  
escaped it in the darkness of night disguised as a man,  
but the chase for freedom must end right now. (126)

The moment is also referenced at the beginning of Act 3, when Gonzalo is congratulating Doctor Barbosa on "his" new position as Doctor of the King's Chamber. In an intimate moment between the brother and disguised sister, Gonzalo explains that love is the reason he wouldn't let his sister (Jerónima) see the man (Gaspar) staying in their home; he tells her he "knew she'd think she loved him / when they first locked eyes" (142). This connection gives the siblings a moment of dramatic irony:

JERÓNIMA

And where is your sister now?

GONZALO

A convent in Spain, where both her body and soul  
are safe from the sickness this world produces.

JERÓNIMA

Her body and soul are perhaps safe,  
but what of her heart?

GONZALO

Better that her heart is  
in the hands of God than the hands of a human. (142-3)

Another change that I made to the script in response to the rehearsal process was Tello's line "My God, / she's got some balls." After going through several changes during the rehearsal process, I was ultimately still inspired by the erotic nature of this moment which wasn't yet being captured in the line above, and for that reason I revisited it after the production closed. Initially, when working on the final draft, I changed the pronoun from "he" back to "she." But this didn't solve the problem of why Tello wouldn't immediately tell Gaspar that Doctor Barbosa is a woman. I searched for reasons Tello wouldn't tell Gaspar—perhaps Tello wanted all to himself the female disguising herself as Doctor Barbosa, and feared Gaspar would take her from him, for example. But every reason I devised only created more problems. Finally, when faced with changing the pronoun back to "he," I realized that what excited me about this moment wasn't that Tello discovers that Doctor Barbosa is a woman disguised as a man, but that Doctor Barbosa's gender is somewhat ambiguous. It is this ambiguity—the uncertainty about whether a person is male or female—that creates some of the exciting sexual tension in the earlier "bleeding" scenes between Tello and Jerónima. Moreover, this ambiguity also speaks to the fluidity of gender characteristic of the early modern Spanish period, as exhibited by people like Eleno/a de Céspedes.<sup>35</sup> In the final version of my adaptation, Tello thus makes an observation not about the gender of Doctor Barbosa, but rather about the fact that the assumedly male doctor has a rather feminine quality: "For such a gentle one," he says, "this doctor's got some balls!" (146).

My addition of the Queen of Portugal in the production draft of the script also raised some questions which needed to be addressed in the post-production draft of the

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<sup>35</sup> See p. 23-4 for Eleno/a's fascinating story of hermaphroditism.

script. In my adaptation from King to Queen, I added the monarch figure to the final scene of the play, invoking a *deus ex machina* ending in which the Queen comes forth and orders Jerónima back to Spain. My collaborators pointed out during the production process that while my revised ending was fitting of a seventeenth-century play, it felt strange that the Queen simply appears in the final moments of the play, somehow magically aware of everything that has passed between meeting Doctor Barbosa at the beginning of Act 3 and the end of the play. To address this problem, I created a very minor sub-plot for the Queen. At the beginning of Act 3, Scene 3—immediately after Jerónima approaches Gaspar for the first time as herself, tells him “I’m not the woman you think I am” (150) and demands that he “be loyal”—the Queen enters in male attire and delivers the following monologue:

I’m not the woman you think I am, for today  
I conceal myself in the cloak of cunning.  
It seems that the heart of this honest Portugal  
has been infected by one furtive fraudster.  
Therefore, in the name of medicine, permit me  
to deceive as I take leave of my title and seek  
out honesty in the secret harbor of this residence.  
Supplied with the threads of a servant boy,  
I now formally in person bear like a true male,  
and hence shall see what these seemers be. (151)

The Queen’s monologue, which mirrors Jerónima’s at the start—“I’m not the woman you think I am...” (151)—becomes a foil for the main plot of the play; Jerónima finally reveals herself to Gaspar after having been disguised for most of the play, while the Queen just now takes on a disguise. The monologue not only explains how the Queen knows what Jerónima has been up to when she is caught at the end of the play, but also

provides a fitting motif of disguise and gender ambiguity that runs parallel to Jerónima's own experiences of gender and disguise in the play.

The final large change that I made to the play in response to rehearsals was the addition of a few lines of text to clarify the off-stage action between Jerónima and Gaspar in the time that passes between Acts 2 and Acts 3. While in rehearsals, Harley asked me one day what I thought happens between these two acts. My first thought was that probably not much happens, besides the fact that Jerónima gains enough prestige to be granted the title "Doctor of the King's Chamber" by the Queen at the beginning of Act 3.

Harley wondered, however, whether something sexual happens between Gaspar and Jerónima between the acts; after all, the two exit, as indicated in stage directions, into Doctor Barbosa's home together at the end of Act 2. We also noticed a parallel between the moment in this play and a moment in another of Tirso's plays, *Marta la piadosa*, as mentioned in the previous section of this thesis. At the exact same moment in *Marta la piadosa*—the end of Act 2—Felipe (while disguised as a Friar) has just pretended to faint into Marta's arms, at which point Marta's father urges the girl to help "get him to a bed" and take care of him. The act ends with some flirtatious lines, perhaps—as Harley's translation suggest—"leaving Marta and Felipe in bed?" The last stage direction suggests even more: "Marta and Felipe go under the sheets?" In a production of *Marta* at UMass in 2009, this scene ended with the actors playing Marta and Felipe kissing on the stage floor. Though it's not explicit, it is suggested in both the text and Gina's staging in this 2009 production that Marta and Felipe engage in some sexual activity, perhaps going as far as having sex.

After considering that Jerónima and Gaspar might have sex between Acts 2 and 3 in my adaptation, I further considered how such an act would affect their relationship in the remainder of the play. Because I think having sex would justify the moment earlier in my adaptation in which Jerónima confronts Gaspar as herself in great anger, I decided to make it clear that something physical happened between “Marta” and Gaspar between the Acts 2 and 3. I did this by adding some lines to a conversation between Doctor Barbosa and Gaspar in Act 3, Scene 2. When Gaspar tells Doctor Barbosa that he’s in love with the doctor’s sister “Marta,” the two have the following conversation:

JERÓNIMA

So you have seen her?

GASPAR

I did, yesterday,  
gracing a window with her presence.

JERÓNIMA

And are you pleased with what you saw?

GASPAR

Not just that, I am pleased with what I had.

JERÓNIMA

Is that so?

GASPAR

Your sister can work miracles, Doctor.  
Her heavenly touch seems to improve my health.  
In fact, she’s so good to me that I want for us to  
share our fortune. (147)

Ultimately, the change in lines here clarifies that the two engaged in some sort of intimate physical behavior, thereby raising the stakes for Jerónima in her pursuit of Gaspar. The fact that she’s now given Gaspar her “honor” means she will be disgraced if she does not end up with him.



## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

When I began this translation/adaptation of Tirso's *El amor médico*, the idea of translating a never-before-translated play was very appealing. To share with one culture something new which another already had seemed a generous act, one of connecting cultures and illuminating the successes of one for another. But quickly I discovered that a simple, faithful and literal translation from one language to another would not be possible. No matter how I translated, I'd never be able to say in English what Tirso said in Spanish.

Translation is rarely a direct transposition, a rewriting in a second, target language that carries precisely the same meaning over from the original source language. It is therefore almost never obvious how a word, phrase or sentence must be translated. Rather, one must make a series of intricate choices carefully, considerately, courageously.

In translating Spanish *comedias*, as I did in translating *El amor médico*, I believe that focusing on how to create a story that works well dramaturgically should be a translator's primary focus, while recreating the original play (in a literal way) should be secondary. Not simply a restating of what's already been said in Spanish, *Love the Doctor* is a version of Tirso's play, and one that has been informed and colored by my many collaborations along the road of theatrical translation and adaptation.

APPENDIX

**LOVE THE DOCTOR**

by Tirso de Molina

translated and adapted by Sarah Brew

from a literal translation by  
Josephine Hardman

**Characters (in order of appearance)**

Doña Jerónima

Quiteria, her maid

Don Gaspar

Don Gonzalo, Jerónima's brother

Tello, Gaspar's servant

Doña Estefanía

Ignacio, her father

María of Aragon, Queen of Portugal<sup>36</sup>

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Footnotes prepared by Harley Erdman for the October 2011 production at the University of Massachusetts

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<sup>36</sup>María de Aragon: daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, she was Queen of Portugal, 1500-1517. (She also was the full sister of Catharine of Aragon, who married England's Henry VIII.) The play, though written in the early 1620s, is set c. 1500.

## ACT 1

### ACT 1, SCENE 1

*A room in Doña Jerónima's house, in Seville, Spain.*

*Jerónima and Quiteria enter.*

#### JERÓNIMA

Have you ever seen a more discourteous guest?  
He's spent an entire month in our house,  
and don Gaspar hasn't realized  
a woman is living above him.  
If he does know, he's worse than I thought.  
How can he call himself a gentleman  
if he doesn't bother to get to know me?  
He's not even said hello one time,  
yet you still defend him.

#### QUITERIA

From what I've observed of him, he's perfect.  
On the outside, he's sturdy like a golden pine.  
On the inside, he's passionate and bursting with sap.  
When I talk to him, he seems honorable.  
He dresses himself like a king but  
doesn't look like he's tried too hard.  
He's quite young, but not so much that you need  
to worry he'll play games with your heart;  
he's just old enough to be an ideal match  
for you, Jerónima.

#### JERÓNIMA

You make him sound as perfect as  
the gentlemen in Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier*.<sup>37</sup>

#### QUITERIA

*(Aside)* Strange moods like this have made  
her into an excessively passionate woman.  
*(To Jerónima)* You think he's awful only because  
he hasn't come upstairs to visit you.  
If he doesn't know a woman's here,  
can you blame him?<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>This influential book from the early 1500s laid out ideal qualities for "courteous" gentlemen: bearing, gestures, manner, athleticism, learning, etc. Jerónima's expectations of what is "courtesy" and "courteous" will be referenced later in the play.

JERÓNIMA

Of course I can!

He's ignored me for an entire month.  
It's only because he's an outsider,  
a foolish northerner from Castile,  
that we Sevillians haven't removed him yet.<sup>39</sup>

QUITERIA

Castilians are serious and stick to their own business.  
Not everyone is as passionate as you are, Jerónima,  
allowing such petty things as this man to excite you.

JERÓNIMA

That's nonsense, Quiteria. It's his duty  
to be curious, given that he is our guest.  
You've mistaken his cold behavior for courtliness.  
Last night I spied him through my window blinds  
going into the courtyard, so I yelled out:  
"Young man, tell me: where is my brother?"  
And without looking up at me he said:  
"Señora, he's left for the Alameda."<sup>40</sup>  
But then, in the most courteous manner,  
he removed his hat and bowed down,  
all the while not acting surprised to hear me.  
He knows I'm here yet still ignores me.

*Gonzalo enters.*

GONZALO

I'm going to the Gardens, sister.

*Gonzalo exits.*

QUITERIA

Blame your brother for locking you up.

JERÓNIMA

He is just as bad. Ever since  
I refused the husband he chose,

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<sup>38</sup>Young, unmarried Spanish women lived under the rigid control of their fathers/brothers. It would be socially unacceptable for Jerónima to initiate any contact with Gaspar.

<sup>39</sup>Gaspar is from Toledo, in Castile, well north of Seville: a dry, windblown plateau, where people are known to be more aloof, severe. Seville is in Andalucía, the extreme south of Spain, close to the Mediterranean Sea and Africa. It is a lush, subtropical place where people have the reputation of being warmer, more outgoing.

<sup>40</sup>Alameda: a park in Seville.

Gonzalo has been avoiding me.

QUITERIA

I can't say his actions surprise me.  
You've done nothing but sit in your  
room and study. You've taught yourself  
Latin, and now you learn Portuguese.  
If you had taken your brother's advice,  
you could have been married by now.

JERÓNIMA

I pursue the North Star of my desire—  
I do what I want. My father never  
stopped me from learning Latin  
before he left to fight in Pamplona.<sup>41</sup>  
Why must women sew straight lines  
when men's needles have no bounds?  
Seville celebrates men when they excel  
in learning, and especially in medicine.  
And aren't the subjects of these lands supposed  
to imitate their King's customs and laws?  
Queen Isabel has hired a tutor, *La Latina*,<sup>42</sup>  
to teach her and her children every day.  
I've even heard her daughter María of Aragon  
learned Latin from this maid, and now  
serves as the Queen of Portugal.  
Therefore, if our Queen gets to learn  
Latin with her maid, I will do the same.

QUITERIA

Learn Latin with your maid, but imitate  
the Queen in all other things she does, too:  
just as your monarch married, so must you.

JERÓNIMA

If only I had a mate like Ferdinand who let  
me study, I would marry without hesitation.  
But marriage is like Algeria:  
we women are imprisoned in it.<sup>43</sup>  
When I study, I'm free as any man.

---

<sup>41</sup>Pamplona: town in Navarre, in extreme northern Spain, near France. In the early 1500s, Spain was fighting to conquer Navarre, an autonomous kingdom. The point here is: the father is very far away.

<sup>42</sup>*La Latina*: nickname for Beatriz Galindo (1465-1534), Queen Isabella's learned lady-in-waiting and tutor; she also was a physician.

<sup>43</sup>Algeria is where many Spaniards were taken captive by Moorish pirates, then ransomed back, often after many years in dungeons. A simile for "bondage."

Must the prison of marriage  
always bar women from learning?

QUITERIA

I couldn't say; I've not had the luxury  
of learning the art of rhetoric as you have.  
But tell me: why should a woman study medicine?

JERMÓNIMA

Because if women studied medicine,  
our city would have more healthy people.  
Do you think that simply dressing the part  
is enough to be called a doctor?  
A dedicated mind makes good doctors.  
A veterinarian must take exams for  
days before he's hired to practice.  
But a doctor—who has the power to give  
and take away life—does much less  
before he's granted a license to practice.

QUITERIA

You'll end up just as disrespected  
as all the other doctors in Seville.<sup>44</sup>

JERÓNIMA

As long as I'm not as disrespectful as  
our guest.

QUITERIA

Back to him, are we?

JERÓNIMA

Do you know what I think the problem is?  
I'll bet he's left behind a woman in Toledo,  
and lingering thoughts of her prevent him  
from loving another woman here in Seville.

QUITERIA

That can't be true. If only there had been  
communication between the two of you,  
you wouldn't be suspicious of this fine man.  
Lovesick women like you go mad when they  
imagine what chivalrous deeds a man should do.  
Their musings imprison them in their own minds.

---

<sup>44</sup>Most doctors were disreputable—these “surgeons” doubled as barbers and traveled from town to town bleeding people for a fee. They had no training and low status.

Besides, traveling always brings new love.

JERÓNIMA

Then let's help him find new love.

QUITERIA

How?

JERÓNIMA

Last night I saw Gaspar shuffling a stack of papers.

QUITERIA

From where did you watch him?

JERÓNIMA

The keyhole.

QUITERIA

Impressive focus! If only you had the key.

JERÓNIMA

Deprivation causes this appetite;  
it's because he hasn't looked at me  
that I've spied on him. Besides,  
I find his disposition peculiar.

QUITERIA

So this is what you call 'practicing medicine'?

JERÓNIMA

No, but in studying his disposition  
I am practicing to become a doctor.  
As he read those papers, his face would change;  
with some he'd laugh, with others he'd sigh.  
Although he read them to himself,  
it seems he's like a lover, for the passion  
in the ink of those letters painted every  
emotion on Gaspar's face, bringing him  
to tears and to laughter all at once.  
And like a lover, he read them over and over.  
I could have watched his face all night,  
but then he blew out the light of his candle.  
I went back to the darkness of my room  
dreaming of his face, yet defeated.  
My heart is plagued if from the beginning  
I have nothing to sustain me in this quest

of love except my dreams. I admit I'm jealous,  
Quiteria, but I will not be at rest until I find  
what lies between those papers' lines.

QUITERIA

But tell me where you saw these papers first.

JERÓNIMA

In the unlocked drawer of his desk.

QUITERIA

Then let's go cure your lovesickness using  
the medicine you've studied, for both  
love and sickness are forms of madness.

JERÓNIMA

In matters of love, the doctor can't cure others  
unless she can cure herself.

*They exit.*

ACT 1, SCENE 2

*In the Alcázar Gardens.*<sup>45</sup>

*Don Gaspar and don Gonzalo enter.*

GONZALO

I know while you're here in Seville,  
you must not be missing Castile, Gaspar.  
Here in these lush Gardens of the Alcázar,  
it must be clear why Seville has  
become the heart of Spain's splendor.  
While Castile has but a tiny inland tributary,  
the heart of Seville is linked directly to  
the vein of a mighty river flowing to the sea.

GASPAR

Your observations are correct.  
Seville has proven to be full of  
life in the one month I've been here.  
I've been quite well until I received these.

GONZALO

Letters? Are they from Micaela?

---

<sup>45</sup>Lush royal gardens in Seville, full of mazes and nooks.



In the time you've been my guest,  
I've not been able to persuade you  
to finish telling me what brought you here.  
Let me now be your confidant in this,  
and you'll reap the fortune of our friendship.

GASPAR

I served in royal Toledo<sup>46</sup>  
the most beautiful angel.  
She came from noble ancestry,  
and the name her family gave her,  
Micaela, was proof of her faithfulness.  
For six months time my luck was good  
in the conquest of honest love.  
But in love, as in stormy waters,  
change can become the pilot;  
just when I thought I'd disembark  
upon the sheltered shore of marriage,  
a jealous eastern wind blew  
and returned me to the open sea  
where my suffering was constant  
and my misfortunes drowned me.  
Micaela's mother and brother,  
without even consulting her,  
promised her to a wealthy man, don Jaime.  
His noble blood and powerful connections  
were enough for me to fear him,  
so I did not protest their decision.  
Soon after the match, some rogues were  
gossiping and speaking of my love affairs.  
One of them sent don Jaime an  
anonymous letter that went like this:  
"Though you've been promised  
Micaela's hand, your marriage will  
bloom too late, for don Gaspar has already  
deflowered your lady in his bed."  
They put this note with other letters,  
and when Micaela's mother read the news,  
the shameful burden killed her.  
Jaime, convinced that I had written the letter,  
broke off his engagement with Micaela.  
Although I denied the accusation  
that my hand had written this letter,  
Micaela refused to believe me.

---

<sup>46</sup> For an alternate, shorter version of this speech, please see page 169.

She exchanged kindness for contempt,  
sighs of longing for stern silence,  
sweet letters for a cruelty that killed my hope.  
She'd not accept apologies,  
nor could I prove my innocence.  
One day while at the edge of the Tajo<sup>47</sup>  
I saw in the river the reflection  
of some men who, I've always suspected,  
had reason to renounce don Jaime.  
I approached them in a friendly manner,  
exchanging conversational words,  
all while taking note of the things  
they said that would support what I suspected:  
that they were the rogues who wrote the letter.  
When my suspicions were confirmed,  
I called them cowards for concealing  
their names, for family names  
are what signify one's honor.  
When they argued back, I challenged them  
to sign with steel what they hadn't signed with ink.  
Then, taking out my sword, I quickly  
killed one man and wounded the others.  
Forced out of Toledo by Ferdinand,  
whose punishment leaves no room for favor,  
I now seek shelter in you, my friend.  
But I've recently heard don Jaime  
has pressured Micaela's brother into  
agreeing that the couple marry, after all.  
Don Jaime has also recently ordered  
a group of men to arrest me,  
so I must flee to the East Indies,  
though my first stop is the old  
university town of Coimbra in Portugal,  
where the royal court will grant me  
favors and dispatch me to India.  
Traveling by ship, endless folds of hungry sea  
will drown my memories of love's  
tragedies and restore my fame in battle.

*Tello enters.*

TELLO

Stand back! My sword is aimed  
to thrust at all in these streets!

---

<sup>47</sup>Toledo's river.

GASPAR

Restrain yourself, Tello.

TELLO

Ay, let me be!

I've only come to find and devour a sweet one.  
The Gardens are bursting with their honey breath—  
three or four here, seven more there!  
What a lovely place God has created.  
At least half of what my eyes feast on  
is beautiful!

*Doña Jerónima and doña Quiteria arrive, veiled,<sup>48</sup> in  
Sevillian bonnets.*

JERÓNIMA

Quiteria! My brother is here.

QUITERIA

And so is Gaspar. But forget them—you need  
to tell me what's going on with these letters.

JERÓNIMA

I had hopes of meeting Gaspar here in disguise,  
but Gonzalo will surely recognize me.

QUITERIA

Your skill in disguising yourself is exceptional.  
But why do you need a disguise to talk to Gaspar?

JERÓNIMA

I must be honest with you, Quiteria.  
This man has entered my soul through  
the most unusual doors that love has  
ever seen. And it all began with disrespect.<sup>49</sup>  
Can you believe that poor manners  
have made me fall in love with him?  
We women, as you know, succumb  
to men when they are arrogant.  
The man who undervalues us—

---

<sup>48</sup>A veil was like a mask for women: it allowed them to go out incognito, and therefore have more freedom of behavior. It was sometimes associated with sexual impropriety and prostitution. Laws were frequently passed prohibiting women from wearing veils.

<sup>49</sup>In the Baroque period, there was a fascination with how love works. Does it enter the soul through the eyes? ("Love at first sight.") Through other senses? Imagination? Tirso frequently deals with this question, dramatizing the complicated psychology behind human desire.

we love him unconditionally.  
But the man who desires us—  
we find him irritating and indiscreet.  
We will not let him look at us,  
for love is like an inversed mirror.  
Passionate men freeze us with their heat  
while the frozen men ignite us with their ice.  
If only men knew we felt this,  
how easily they could win us!  
Though I've nearly lost all hope,  
I'm glad I spied on him.

QUITERIA

Through the keyhole?

JERÓNIMA

Not once, but twice.

I waited at his door until he went  
out this morning, then snuck into his room,  
raided the drawers of his desk,  
and found a stack of papers from Toledo,  
whose contents revealed that Gaspar  
had loved a lady named Micaela.  
It seems he destroyed her reputation,  
for her letter said he's left her with no honor,  
no husband, and a dead mother.  
You can see how this letter revived  
my hopes and all my suspicions.

QUITERIA

I think they see us.

JERÓNIMA

Then let them not  
recognize us. Let's call for them.

*Jerónima and Quiteria cover themselves. They signal the men.*

GASPAR

Those ladies are calling for us!

GONZALO

That one's quite shapely.

*Jerónima approaches don Gaspar, speaking in his ear.*

JERÓNIMA

I bring important news and letters from  
Toledo, my noble sir.

GASPAR

Has my reputation in love  
followed me all the way from Toledo?

TELLO

*(Aside)* A veiled woman! This must be a challenge.

GONZALO

What news might you have, my lady?

JERÓNIMA

I can't say, for my honor fears I will be recognized.  
Though I'm disguised, those who are familiar  
with my face lurk in these parts.

GONZALO

*(To Gaspar)* I would never let my sister  
Jerónima roam Seville as this woman does.  
Strange adventures occur in the Gardens;  
these passageways have witnessed women  
in elaborate and cunning disguises  
arrange promiscuous escapades.

GASPAR

*(To Gonzalo)* Did you hear what she said?  
She has news from Toledo. Though I left  
the city in the dark of night, I'm afraid my enemies  
may have followed me and are now nearby.

GONZALO

Could they have followed you to my home?

GASPAR

They may have.

GONZALO

Then wait here for me, and see  
what information you can get from this lady.  
I'll go home to make sure they've not arrived.

*He exits.*

GASPAR

My lady, I entreat you most humbly  
to share with me this news you have.  
I lend my ears to your voice.

JERÓNIMA

This courtesy seems to be quite new to you.

TELLO

*(Aside)* She starts with a confrontation?  
Perfect. From down here, we have nowhere  
to go but up.

GASPAR

*(To Jerónima)* I don't know why  
I've earned this bad reputation.  
My behavior has always been honorable.

JERÓNIMA

That's not what I've heard from the woman  
you have offended.

GASPAR

Who is this woman I've offended?  
Is it Micaela?

JERÓNIMA

It might be. The woman  
you've offended complains with good reason.  
She's a close friend of mine—  
though not a friend of yours.

GASPAR

If you talk with her frequently, promise  
to bring me some hopeful news from  
this woman in Toledo, for I can't think  
of another privy to such accusations.  
You said that you have letters for me written  
by her hand?

JERÓNIMA

I come as a letter in the flesh.

GASPAR

From Toledo?

JERÓNIMA  
From around there.

GASPAR  
But you won't tell me who you are?

JERÓNIMA  
If I knew you were really interested in knowing me, I'd happily invite you to come into my home.

GASPAR  
I do not understand you.

JERÓNIMA  
Well, that's a bad sign.

TELLO  
*(To Quiteria)* May I ask for just one favor from this covered face, whose curtains remain closed even during Easter and Holy days? Are you a servant to this lady? Show me a sign, just a small one.

QUITERIA  
Don't touch!

TELLO  
Oh wool veil, why do you hide my honey beneath your holy cloth? My tongue can already taste your beauty, simultaneously sweet and spicy!

*Tello goes to uncover Quiteria. She strikes him.*

JERÓNIMA  
Let's get down to business, Gaspar. You must know that now Micaela— regretting her scornful actions and missing you in your absence— has kicked don Jaime out of her house and is eager to see you again.

GASPAR

Rainbows of fortune emerge from behind  
the clouds. Disguised in darkness,  
you bring sunbeams that color my skies  
with joy again! Give me your hands!

TELLO

(*To Quiteria*) And you give me yours,  
even if they're covered with calluses.<sup>50</sup>

*Enter don Gonzalo. The ladies move aside.*

GONZALO

Leave this news of your lady here, Gaspar,  
and arm yourself for the bloody course of war.  
Your enemies are here in Seville, and they're  
so enraged they have torn through my house,  
scattering the papers from your desk all over your room.  
I plan to leave Seville at dawn for fear they'll  
hold me hostage, though I'm not yet sure where I'll go.  
Jerónima will need to go to the Convent of Santa  
Clara until it's safe for me to return to Spain.  
My lady, were you my sister I would order you  
back into your home. The streets are dangerous.  
We'll talk more when the sun has set, Gaspar.  
I leave to prepare for my departure.

*Gonzalo exits.*

GASPAR

(*To Jerónima*) This sudden misfortune disrupts  
the beginnings of your good news.  
You see that I'm in danger.  
I've not gotten to know you yet,  
but I must ask this favor now:  
that you and your lady go to  
my love, Micaela, and there distract  
her with word of how much I miss her.  
I leave tonight, but if I can  
serve you some way in Portugal,  
send me the terms of this favor.

JERÓNIMA

The favor I want is too long and  
too wide for you to fulfill it.

---

<sup>50</sup>Calluses: sign of manual labor (hence, a servant, not a lady).



*Gaspar exits.*

TELLO

*(To Quiteria)* I am the ball and he's the chain;  
where he goes, I go dragging along.

*Tello exits.*

JERÓNIMA

A storm of waves, this is, that  
strives to drown my love for him!  
I'm met with more adversity?

QUITERIA

How should I know? Let's go home  
now so your brother doesn't wonder  
where we are when he returns.

JERÓNIMA

Does he really love Micaela?  
Or does he leave for Portugal because  
he can find more love and beauty there?  
A foreign, Portuguese woman, perhaps?  
My foolish thoughts plot against me!

QUITERIA

Go back to the books that you cherish.

JERÓNIMA

I pray that in their pages I will not perish!

*Exeunt all.*

**ACT 2**

ACT 2, SCENE 1

*A street in Coimbra, Portugal.*<sup>51</sup>

*Enter don Gonzalo, dressed in traveler's clothes, with don Gaspar.*

GASPAR

Gonzalo! You're in Portugal?

GONZALO  
Gaspar?

GASPAR

How improbably convenient it is to see  
you here.

GONZALO

And how fortunate for both of us!

GASPAR

Give me your arms once again, my friend,  
for now we begin new adventures in this land.

GONZALO

You sailed here shortly after we parted?

GASPAR

I did. No sooner had I boarded a ship in Portugal  
bound for the Indies where I would lead a navy  
than I heard word that my uncle, don Ignacio,  
had just recently moved from his native  
Spain to Portugal, so I jumped ship.

GONZALO

Gulfs of salt seas are not deep enough  
to measure the depths of your fortune.  
So you're to stay with your uncle?

GASPAR

Yes; he favors me as his guest.  
And not just that, I'll also be a lover;

---

<sup>51</sup>Coimbra: old university town in northern Portugal. Its university, established in 1290, is one of the oldest in Europe.

he gives me the hand of his daughter Estefanía.  
A dispensation will be needed, for she's my cousin,  
though I have heard it's now arranged.<sup>52</sup>

GONZALO

I fear you'll be blamed, at least as a  
frivolous man, if not as a womanizer.  
Micaela, now engaged, has sparked  
the flame of love in don Jaime.

GASPAR

The sparks of my jealousy would grow if  
they were not extinguished by this new pledge;  
I'm in Portugal now, and I will love Estefanía.  
Don't you know traveling always brings new love?  
My affection for Micaela is now forgotten;  
I'm grateful for her inconstancy.  
(*Aside*) But who was the veiled woman  
that spoke to me in the Alcázar?  
Her message of Micaela was wrong,  
and it's clear she's not from Toledo.  
I must forget about her; the heavens have  
changed my course, and I'm to marry Estefanía.  
(*To Gonzalo*) Gonzalo, since you've left the dangers of your home,  
where in Portugal will you find safety?

GONZALO

Now that my sister Jerónima is locked up  
safely in the Convent of Santa Clara, I am free  
to seek in Portugal a promotion in rank from  
King Manuel and the Lady his Queen.

GASPAR

I wish you luck with your present venture.  
The court is always rich with opportunity.

GONZALO

I trust I'll thrive in this part of Portugal.

GASPAR

You will, for as we speak, the plague  
itches fiercely in Lisbon, while Coimbra  
is still full of peace and good health.<sup>53</sup>

---

<sup>52</sup>A dispensation from the Pope was required for cousins to marry.

<sup>53</sup>Plague was a constant threat to cities in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Lisbon, a large urban seaport, would be a breeding ground for disease. Smaller Coimbra, an inland ivory-tower, would be relatively sheltered.

*Enter Tello*

TELLO

Sir, you're called by our lady Estefanía who is no longer the modest one I once knew. Her father wishes to relieve the girl of maidenhood by giving her hand to you, for he can find no other man in Coimbra who is able to fill his daughter with the tender love he knows you'll thrust upon her.

GASPAR

Would you like to come see her, Gonzalo?

GONZALO

And also to speak with your uncle, don Ignacio, whose favor with the King may prove useful.

GASPAR

That's true. Now come and let us admire the discretion, beauty, courtesy and grace of my cousin, Estefanía.

*Gonzalo and Gaspar exit.*

TELLO

In Portugal, all is like syrupy love. Everything is *bota*, everything's *lua*,<sup>54</sup> everything's *fidalgo valiente*,<sup>55</sup> except there's no way to understand anyone! Yesterday a young woman said to me "*traiceme do jardim huas boninas ollai, e un ramo de cravos.*" I was just about to explore the terrain of her vast fields, but as I bowed down before her, I learned that *cravos* are "carnations," not kisses, and *boninas* means "flowers," not fingers. She immediately sent me out of the house to pick flowers, and with the help of a second young woman, I plucked petals more pretty than I've ever seen in Spain.

---

<sup>54</sup>*Bota*: boots. *Lua*: glove. Fashion associated with Portugal.

<sup>55</sup>*Fidalgo valiente*: brave gentleman

*Tello exits.*

ACT 2, SCENE 2

*Don Ignacio's home in Coimbra, Portugal.*

*Enter Estefanía, Ignacio, Gaspar and Gonzalo.*

IGNACIO

To see you in my home in Portugal, Gaspar,  
my luck today is boundless as the sea.  
The man who never leaves his own land to  
visit others is bad-mannered. This is why I've  
moved my family here from our native Spain.  
Such kingdoms as Portugal's provide knowledge,  
and the one who comes to see it and learn  
will always return home ready for all.  
There's no knowledge in books as there is  
in the world, for one always learns more when  
he is not buried deep in the tattered pages of an  
old story. In Portugal you will prosper quickly.

GASPAR

I thank you, uncle, for your kind favor.

IGNACIO

And your friend, here, is of noble blood  
and comes seeking rightful honor?

GASPAR

He does, my lord.

GONZALO

I will not miss Spain if I find  
favor in His Excellence the King of Portugal.

IGNACIO

I will speak with the King today.

GONZALO

When I am blessed with your protection, sir,  
I'm bound to find good fortune everywhere.  
(*To Estefanía*) It seems as though with my good luck I will  
soon serve in your country, my lady.

ESTEFANÍA

I'd very much like to see you excel  
in a role that will make Portugal shine.

IGNACIO

It seems, Estefanía, that you're sad.

ESTEFANÍA

My sadness is brought on by these rough times.  
They say the plague torments the whole kingdom.

IGNACIO

If you say this, you're bound to be infected.  
The mind can do more damage than the plague.  
Coimbra is clear, and its river pristine.  
If you wish to distract yourself from this grief,  
spend your days outside and you'll forget your woes.  
Remember, Doctor Barbosa<sup>56</sup> prescribed that you  
walk the fields once every day to get fresh air.

ESTEFANÍA

How can I go out when the Doctor leaves me?  
Solitude always makes me twice as sad.  
But I will try to fill my thoughts with things  
that cannot make my melancholy worse.<sup>57</sup>  
If for no other reason, I'll do this so  
you don't worry about me.

GASPAR

Now that we've found eternal joy in our love,  
You'll rarely encounter pleasure in other places.  
But surely you can find some joy?

ESTEFANÍA

When one lives in a place that has no joy,  
she can't expect to be happy, Gaspar.  
Sorrow is my hostess, and I don't know  
of a guesthouse that must provide its guest  
with something it does not already have.  
Guests must leave if they're displeased with their host.

GASPAR

---

<sup>56</sup>“Barbosa”: hairy-faced.

<sup>57</sup>It was widely held that there were four “humors” or temperaments: choleric, melancholic, phlegmatic, and sanguine. These were seen as tied to bodily fluids and combinations of hot/cold and dry/moist. A melancholic's fluids were excessively cold and dry, and therefore needed re-balancing. Much of Barbosa's upcoming diagnoses are founded in this theory.

Your somber mood sparks love in me.  
Love cries when it sees eyes filled with tears,  
and smiles when it sees eyes filled with laughter,  
for love is like a mirror, reflecting all.  
And like the sea, love is embued only  
when it reflects the vaulted world around it.

ESTEFANÍA

Forgive me if I stop responding to you.

GASPAR

I mean to serve you, and not to offend.

IGNACIO

Let's leave her, for this melancholy is  
a habit she's learned from her mother.  
She was often consumed by grief, and  
although I know she loved me very much,  
it was pure luck when I could console her.  
Perhaps the Doctor can help.

*He exits.*

GASPAR

*(Aside)* How quickly her night darkens my sun!  
The dawn of my luck has only just risen,  
yet my desires are already clouded.  
And she is to be my wife!

GONZALO

*(Aside)* Estefanía is so beautiful!  
The sunlight of her soul fills my heart  
with abundant joy! Though she's promised  
to Gaspar and my success depends on  
keeping in his good company, I love  
this woman and she must be my wife.

*Gaspar and Gonzalo exit.*

ESTEFANÍA

Imagination, you're a tyrant!  
They've gone and left me alone with you.  
Tell me, why in my distress do you  
tempt me to have such lustful thoughts?  
Why must you entertain such madness  
when my mind finds misery with such ease?

How can you hit your target  
in the darkness of night when  
you miss it in the light of day?  
Are all my audacious wishes now  
directed to this dark end? I love a doctor?  
Be quiet! To speak this is insanity.  
How can love be called a cure  
when it's a sickness in itself?  
Love destroys our willpower and  
makes us its servants. But soon after  
love heals our bodies, it withdraws,  
leaving us to minister to ourselves.  
What kind of inhuman medicine is this?  
What kind of remedy can love be,  
that cures plagues but is itself a plague?  
It sickens while it heals! If only  
my father had never received this doctor.  
If he had never taken my pulse  
I'd not be punished by this disease  
of love which, upon the briefest contact  
with my veins, sets my heart ablaze!

*Enter Ignacio, Gaspar, Gonzalo, and Tello.*

IGNACIO

Doctor Barbosa is on his way.  
I love my daughter very much,  
and her sadness forces me to  
take the very best care of her.

GASPAR

I cannot blame you for being concerned,  
for who would not worry at the sight of  
an eclipsed sun, burning, yet buried in snow?

GONZALO

We'll all get sick if she can't get well.

GASPAR

And I will love her more than any other.

TELLO

We'll run a hospital that worships women!

IGNACIO

*(To Estefanía)* You'll only get more melancholic if you're alone.



Why don't you spend the day out in the countryside?

ESTEFANÍA

There's no promise of remedy in that.  
The fields make me sad just like music does.

IGNACIO

What's the source of your sadness?

ESTEFANÍA

I don't know. Nothing seems to relieve it these days.

IGNACIO

You look pale.

ESTEFANÍA

I feel like such a bad daughter.  
To keep you from worrying, I'll hide these things.  
Every night when I sleep, palpitations wake me.  
I'm full of such anger it hurts to breathe.  
The ache in my heart causes such anguish.

TELLO

Palpitations? It must be a fake illness like *egocentritis*.

IGNACIO

Tello, your jokes used to cure my daughter's  
sadness when she was a poor, melancholic child.  
Go ahead, try once more.

TELLO

I fear that my  
humor has dried up in my old age.  
The most effective cure for all virgins like  
her consists of four injections of a husband  
at night, but not a single dose of mother-in-law  
to deal with the next morning.

ESTEFANÍA

Someone get rid of him!

TELLO

I hit a nerve?

ESTEFANÍA

If you don't leave, I will!

TELLO

I see I did.

Call me the bitch doctor, and the doctor is out.

*He exits, then enters again.*

TELLO

The doctor is in.

ESTEFANÍA

Bring him to me!

IGNACIO

Let him in.

*Tello exits. Enter Jerónima disguised as a doctor wearing a long sotanilla,<sup>58</sup> a cape with hood, gloves, and pants.*

JERÓNIMA

Let God be upon this house,  
*amantes et amentes.*<sup>59</sup>

GONZALO

*(Aside)* This doctor's face is  
familiar to me. Perhaps he's from Spain.

IGNACIO

You arrive in good time, doctor. You see,  
my daughter is not well.

JERÓNIMA

What could be wrong?  
She's beautiful.

GASPAR

Does beauty affect health?

JERÓNIMA

You do not know? When the four humors are  
balanced, they give shape to beauty.  
This is what the famed Galen of Pergamon<sup>60</sup>  
calls *ad pondus*,<sup>61</sup> for he proposes

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<sup>58</sup> A long, black robe worn by scholars.

<sup>59</sup> Latin: "lovers and lunatics."

<sup>60</sup> Galen: famed Roman physician/philosopher who put forth the theory of the four humors.

the human temperaments are  
counterbalanced by bodily humors.  
When blood enters the liver, it's disguised in white,  
but when it leaves, it's dressed in red  
in order to nourish all organs *cum sanguine*.<sup>62</sup>  
The body takes on the color and quality  
of that which it feels, for each organ  
searches for its loving mirror image,  
until *pallor mortis*<sup>63</sup> takes hold of the body.  
This is why women of nobility are delicate  
and the most prone to illness.

GASPAR  
I've heard that.

JERÓNIMA  
This sick and gloomy quality in them  
will easily produce melancholy.  
And, even if it fails to make them sick,  
it will still fatigue their disposition—  
perhaps more in some than in others—  
because it increases their production of bile,  
cools all their organs down to a deep freeze,  
and causes incurable diseases.  
If this lady does not distract herself  
and if she should go on in such sadness  
and solitude, she will grow much sicker.  
*Imaginatio* is the central  
principle to *facit casum*.<sup>64</sup>  
It is best for her to preempt this dark  
depression by taking precautions now.

ESTEFANÍA  
Don't waste your words and aphorisms.  
Just check my pulse.

*Jerónima feels her neck.*

JERÓNIMA  
Your pulse is heavy.

ESTEFANÍA

---

<sup>61</sup>Not clear what *ad pondus* means, beyond what Jerónima paraphrases.

<sup>62</sup>Latin: "with blood."

<sup>63</sup>Latin: "postmortem paleness"

<sup>64</sup>*Imaginatio facit casum*: Latin axiom, "Imagination makes it so."

*(Aside)* Loving blood, tell him what my illness is.  
Use my mouth as an artery in this,  
for it is linked directly to my heart.

JERÓNIMA

A quiet vein. Give me another one.

*Jerónima puts her ear to Estefanía's breast.*

GASPAR

*(Aside)* To watch a doctor touch that which I'm denied!  
What a fortunate occupation!

GONZALO

*(Aside)* My God,  
I think her illness must be contagious,  
for it is starting to cling to me, too.

JERÓNIMA

Does anything hurt?

ESTEFANÍA

My heart.

JERÓNIMA

Right now?

ESTEFANÍA

No. It only hurts when I'm alone...  
*(Aside)* without you!

JERÓNIMA

And what else do you feel when you are sick?

ESTEFANÍA

I feel as though I'm drowning...  
*(Aside)* in my love!  
*(To Jerónima)* I don't know. Something is bothering me.

JERÓNIMA

When you spit?

ESTEFANÍA

No. When I speak.

JERÓNIMA

Perhaps it is mucus from the pituitary glands.

ESTEFANÍA

My palms feel like they're on fire.  
Whatever I touch, they ignite in flames.  
Feel, feel.

*She gives Jerónima her hands.*

JERÓNIMA

Holy imbalance!

ESTEFANÍA

I burn like Troy.

JERÓNIMA

What surprise! You have a deficit in your liver,  
but excess bile makes you choleric.  
You're aggravated, burning in your heart!

ESTEFANÍA

Yes, yes!

JERÓNIMA

Now listen to me, my lady,  
It's in your best interest to prevent this;  
my diagnostic knowledge tells me so.  
First, you must follow a diet that will  
remove this excess heat and bile.

ESTEFANÍA

Speak to me in vernacular, doctor.

JERÓNIMA

Take note of what I say you must now eat:  
begin with food that's between dry and wet.  
*Verbi gratia*,<sup>65</sup> turkey, chicken, pork,  
pheasant, veal, and rabbit, but not pigeons.  
Request that pots and pans be filled with these:  
green cilantro, white watercress, and blue  
borage<sup>66</sup> with peppermint. When mixed together,  
These foods will balance your temperature.  
Forget onions; you'll have no more of those.  
All fish you eat must be dry and roasted,

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<sup>65</sup>Latin: "for example"

<sup>66</sup>Borage (also called "Starflower"): Mediterranean herb.

and only from the river—not a lake or pond.  
Sauces must be fragrant, but without pepper.  
At night you must eat roasted pears and eggs,  
and you must drink two drops of red wine,  
very watered down. To avoid fatigue,  
exercise regularly. With all this,  
your melancholia should be cured.  
I hope to God you get well very soon,  
for I wish to see your joy restored and  
your rosy cheeks in full bloom.

ESTEFANÍA

Wait, doctor!

If my well-being means this much to you,  
you must stay here for my recovery.  
Everything falls to your authority.  
(*Aside*) Oh, if only he understood me!

JERÓNIMA

I gave you instructions for a reason.  
Now you must be the one to implement.

ESTEFANÍA

But my good health rests only in your hands.

IGNACIO

How do you feel, daughter?

ESTEFANÍA

My health improves  
when I am standing next to the doctor.

GASPAR

Rather than studying from textbooks in school,  
this boy spent his stipend on doctor's clothing.

JERÓNIMA

The threads of a man's clothing are stronger  
than the rods of a prison cell, Gaspar; they  
hold much power and give him great authority.

GASPAR

I fear Doctor Barbosa is too young to prescribe,  
for he is still without the authority of a beard.  
His age is not that of a good doctor.

### JERÓNIMA

Skill in the sciences comes not with age.  
Even the great Aristotle himself cannot  
answer: why is wit greater in youth?  
The Roman goddess Minerva,  
known to the Greeks as Athena,  
painted her face so as to look young,<sup>67</sup>  
and she became the symbol of wisdom.  
At nineteen, Augustus triumphed.<sup>68</sup>  
At thirty-two, Galen achieved the  
laurel and crown of Apollo.<sup>69</sup>  
And I don't expect you to belittle  
me for my small stature, either,  
since the wise man credits it:  
Plato says as weight increases,  
intelligence diminishes. The most  
overweight man is exceptionally humid,  
and there's nothing like humidity—  
of the four humors—to destroy  
rationality and erase the potential  
of our reason and memory.  
What I lack in physique, I make up  
for in spirit. The honest coat of a doctor  
demands authority and respect, and even  
more when it heals such pleasant patients.

### ESTEFANÍA

Tell me what makes the perfect doctor.  
The very sound of your voice pleases me.

### JERÓNIMA

One must be amiable and speak well,  
smell sweet as a woman and dress the part.  
All of these things make patients less nervous.  
If a doctor came to see a patient  
poorly dressed, even more poorly spoken,  
he'd never raise the spirits of his patient.  
Doctors must first heal inner illnesses,  
ones that affect the soul, not the body.

### ESTEFANÍA

What truth is this! I feel like a new woman!

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<sup>67</sup>The legend referenced here is unclear.

<sup>68</sup>Julius Caesar's nephew, Augustus, was given the title "Caesar" (Great One) while still a teenager.

<sup>69</sup>See previous note on Galen. "Laurel and crown" is used poetically here, to imply the peak of wisdom. (Apollo, who bestowed these honors, was god of medicine.)

Check my pulse again.

JERÓNIMA  
The change is astounding!

What do you think?  
ESTEFANÍA

JERÓNIMA  
I think that you are healed.

My color?  
ESTEFANÍA

JERÓNIMA  
Jasmine and rose.

ESTEFANÍA  
And my palms?

Cool.  
JERÓNIMA

My breath?  
ESTEFANÍA

JERÓNIMA  
Lemon flower and apples.

My disposition?  
ESTEFANÍA

JERÓNIMA  
Divine.

ESTEFANÍA  
My balance?

Miraculous.  
JERÓNIMA

ESTEFANÍA  
Take these two diamonds.

*She gives them to Jerónima.*



GASPAR

*(Aside)* If this is medicine and not love,  
I know nothing of either.

JERÓNIMA

I will return tonight to see you.

ESTEFANÍA

Where are you going?

JERÓNIMA

To meet my sister.  
Escaping the plague in Lisbon, she comes  
to Coimbra to seek life.

ESTEFANÍA

Your sister?

GONZALO

*(Aside)* He has a sister?

GONZALO/ESTEFANÍA

*(Aside, separately)* A new lover for Gaspar.

JERÓNIMA

Mine, and your servant.

ESTEFANÍA

She arrives today?

JERÓNIMA

I suspect she is already at my home.

ESTEFANÍA

She's young?

JERÓNIMA

And has a pretty face.

ESTEFANÍA

A maiden?

JERÓNIMA

A vigilant one.

ESTEFANÍA

But I won't see her?

JERÓNIMA

If you wish to see her, then she will come to serve you, but only after you have rested for a few days.

ESTEFANÍA

Does she have a name?

JERÓNIMA

Doña Marta de Barcelos.

ESTEFANÍA

And you are Doctor Barbosa.

JERÓNIMA

I'll bring my sister to you.  
(*To Ignacio*) Your lordship must protect me, for at this time my good name, honor, and fortune are at stake.

IGNACIO

How is this so?

JERÓNIMA

Some passionate supporters have urged me to put myself in the running for a prestigious, endowed seat at the University. This afternoon I will give a lecture on medicine.

IGNACIO

How wonderful!

JERÓNIMA

I have some young supporters, and even some esteemed elders on the faculty who have the power to vote. With the weight of their authority on my side, the balance of opinion will help me win the seat. Tomorrow I'll read an opposition<sup>70</sup> and declare my candidacy for the seat;

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<sup>70</sup>Official declaration of candidacy for prestigious university seat. Medicine was part of a classical university education, where "scientific" texts by Aristotle, Galen, and others were studied. These learned "philosophical doctors," so to speak, enjoyed prestige, unlike low-status traveling surgeons.

I hope that you will go with me.

IGNACIO

I will.

And if you need an extra vote...

JERÓNIMA

Please, no.

Justice is the only support I'll need,

and I know the wise must never bribe.

*(To Ignacio)* A few words in private with you, señor?

Your daughter must take one more precaution,

for at this time she's not quite fully healed;

although she is in love with Don Gaspar,

any rushed decisions when she's this sick

will only delay her healing process.

IGNACIO

I'll see everything's taken care of. Return tonight?

JERÓNIMA

With what I've said: ingest and digest.

Go with God.

ESTEFANÍA

Bring your sister to visit me, Doctor.

*Exit Jerónima and Estefanía.*

IGNACIO

The doctor is remarkably skilled.

GONZALO

He's smart, indeed, for being so young.

GASPAR

But such youth in medicine brings danger.

IGNACIO

He's held in high opinion in Coimbra,

and I am satisfied to have him here.

We'll see his skill in Estefanía's health.

GONZALO

A sick man can make great improvements  
when he places his trust in the care of a doctor.

GASPAR

I wouldn't give him my pulse.

IGNACIO

No? Why not?

GASPAR

He's too young to have endured  
the vigilance of perpetual learning  
that becoming a doctor demands.

IGNACIO

You don't like him.

GASPAR

*(Aside)* It must be clear I'm  
jealous of this man.

IGNACIO

What has he done to you?

GASPAR

What? You think such a tiny doctor could hurt me?

IGNACIO

When he forbids you from the thing you love,  
you'll learn he's cruel.

GASPAR

I'm not his patient;  
how can he forbid me from anything?

IGNACIO

I must not hide what he's prescribed for you.  
You know, Gaspar, that women seek no more  
safety than the shelter of marriage.

GASPAR

Right.

IGNACIO

In trying desperately to achieve this,  
women become so distressed they cannot sleep.  
The doctor says that since I've blessed your marriage,  
my daughter loves you with such intensity that

the fire of passion in her heart prevents resting.  
The excess blood her body is producing  
has made her melancholic once again.  
We are to relieve her of this distraction  
until the plague is over. We'll try to  
divert her attention, and you must not  
spend time with her alone.

GASPAR  
What?

IGNACIO  
If she rests now, her love will be conserved  
for better times. This order you must follow, Gaspar,  
for I will obey everything Doctor Barbosa prescribes.

*He exits.*

GONZALO  
(*Aside*) For this prescription, I'll give many thanks!  
I love his daughter with such jealousy,  
with wild and fierce, yet discreet, passion.  
Gaspar is blocked from Estefanía,  
and I owe this doctor many favors,  
for now he also brings a sister to Coimbra.  
(*To Gaspar*) The more delayed, the more delight.  
Your promised love will be more beautiful.  
Estefanía, now sad, will be healed.  
If you desire to become her lord,  
have patience and follow this doctor's word.

*He exits.*

GASPAR  
My love begins to fear I'm jealous  
of this young Doctor Barbosa.  
When Estefanía can't see him, she's sad,  
and she's full of joy when he's around.  
When he touches her arteries,  
they communicate their woes.  
The door that closes before me  
is wide open for the doctor.  
He's allowed to visit not once, but twice,  
while I'm supposed to stay away?  
Deceitful medicine, I doubt you.  
What could he want from sweet ladies

and ripe moments, she being a sweet fruit,  
and this being the moment to pluck her?  
She twice gave him her hands today,  
and I could see in doing so, he aroused her.  
No doctor can heal jealousy,  
for the pain it brings is incurable.  
Doctor Barbosa, share your visits with me,  
or starting today, call me your enemy.

*He exits.*

### ACT 2, SCENE 3

*A street near the home of Doctor Barbosa in Coimbra,  
Portugal.*

*Enter Jerónima, dressed as a woman, and Quiteria, both in  
their cloaks.*

#### JERÓNIMA

Quiteria, I must share my woes with you.  
My love, nearly my enemy,  
is burning for another lady.  
He loves Estefanía, and she loves me.  
My distress is old, but my pains are new.  
Gaspar loves the woman he can't have,  
and the lady imitates him in this.  
I love with the same kind of suffering,  
and in the end we three just cheat ourselves.  
How can I escape from this labyrinth?

#### QUITERIA

If you can't find a solution in plays,  
you can't expect to find one in real life.  
Your blind love's brought us on a great journey;  
you entered the light of a convent as a woman, and  
escaped it in the darkness of night disguised as a man,  
but the chase for freedom must end right now.  
I don't know why you love studying this much  
when it forces you into such madness.  
You're charging money on false pretenses,  
you're pretending to heal fatal ailments,  
killing twenty when, by chance, you heal four.  
You're ruining good doctors' reputations;  
not one of them speaks well of your methods.  
You've dug yourself into a hole, for now

you must pretend you have a sister here.  
And Estefanía wants to meet her!  
Even if you manage to satisfy everyone,  
you're bound to make a mistake playing  
all these roles.

JERÓNIMA

Just wait, Quiteria. We'll be fine.

QUITERIA

Then I pray we do not get caught. Where are  
we going in yet another disguise?

JERÓNIMA

To see Estefanía. My misfortune.

QUITERIA

What are you planning get us tangled up in now?

JERÓNIMA

We'll see.

QUITERIA

Gaspar and his page are coming!

JERÓNIMA

Cover yourself.

*They pull up their hoods.*

*Don Gaspar and Tello enter.*

TELLO

I suspect that the doctor lives right here where  
these two covered Portuguese ladies have emerged.

GASPAR

Women are cloaked in Portugal, as well?

TELLO

They must have learned the fashion in Spain.

QUITERIA

*(Aside)* And so we set our stage with new tricks.

GASPAR

Ladies, God be with you.

JERÓNIMA

*Fidalgo, os anjos vos vencan.* [English: Knight, be blessed by angels.]

TELLO

The angels shall revenge us?

GASPAR

She said *vencan*, you idiot, not revenge.  
Their mother tongue is Portuguese,  
and nothing like the Spanish we speak.  
But don't worry, I'll be your translator.  
She says "the angels will bless us."

TELLO

Ah, bless us. That's good.

*Jerónima extends her ungloved hand.*

GASPAR

What a lovely hand!

TELLO

It looks worn out to me, like it's worked hard.  
Spanish women care for their tender hands.  
I wonder what slippery business the women in Coimbra  
are up to that would make their hands as greasy as this.

JERÓNIMA

*Deixamos passar diante,* [English: Let us walk ahead.  
*Que temos presa.* we are in a hurry.]

GASPAR

First let me see if your face matches your hand;  
I've not seen such a lovely one in days.

JERÓNIMA

*Inda millor.* [English: (The face) is prettier.]

GASPAR

Really? It's better than your hand?

JERÓNIMA

*Nao me engeita combarias;* [English: I am not offended;



*ficad fidalgo con Deos  
que naon falo castellanos.*

stay with God, gentlemen,  
for I do not speak Spanish.]

GASPAR

I only seek hands that give me pleasure.  
If your beauty matches your hands, let hands  
do me this favor.

TELLO

Eat her hands out, Gaspar,  
for you're a lover of this loose, greasy kind.<sup>71</sup>

GASPAR

Shut up, you fool. (*To Jerónima*) I beg you, let me see  
just two fingers of your face for my delight.

JERÓNIMA

*Vindes doudo?* [English: Are you insane?]

GASPAR

I come willing to risk it all, by God.  
Aren't you going to satisfy me?  
I love someone else, but it's too much trouble.

JERÓNIMA

*Assentai come la o iogo  
desde oge ansi, e naom cureis.* [English: Establish with her new rules  
starting today, and stop worrying.]

GASPAR

You must be skilled in love to give such advice.  
Would you like to confirm by unveiling?

JERÓNIMA

*O, que enfadonio e sobejo!* [English: Oh, you are nosy and intrusive!]

TELLO

(*To Quiteria*) Let's remove your veil, too, and show your face!  
Uncover yourself, my delicious tart!

QUITERIA

*Tiraibos!* [English: Leave us alone!]

TELLO

---

<sup>71</sup>The Spanish often called the Portuguese "greasy" because they used animal grease to soften their hands and gloves.

Try both? Gladly! Show more skin!

JERÓNIMA

*Deixaimos ir.*

[English: Let us go.]

GASPAR

I'm looking for a doctor,  
but after seeing you I don't need him.  
Of all the women I have seen while traveling,  
none have cared to love me as I deserve.  
I did speak to one lady in Seville—  
she was also covered—and I must say  
she looked quite similar to you.  
I'm becoming impatient, my lady,  
looking at you with your hidden face.  
Oh, if you're as pretty as I presume!  
If only you could make me forget the  
unfortunate affairs of my visit,  
if my heart could be soothed in Portugal,  
if you were the first lady to love me,  
if you were loving and obedient!  
My stars begin to align themselves,  
my love begins to improve itself.  
My lady, let the sun shine on your face.

JERÓNIMA

*(To Quiteria) Ai mana mina.*

[English: Oh sister.]

GASPAR

Forgive my bad manners.  
You did not cause my torment, but I know that  
you could cure me of the pain I'm feeling right now.  
Why so aloof? Your indifference surprises me  
as you abandon courtesy for scorn. You're  
beautiful, but you're cold and very dry.

JERÓNIMA

*He seca? Pois burrifaya.*

[English: She's dry? Well, water her then.]

GASPAR

If I am called upon to douse you, I'd be  
as prostrated as a knight before his queen.

JERÓNIMA

*Bom dicho.* [English: Well said.]

GASPAR

If you come from a noble family,  
I'll turn my love for you into a life  
And treat you like the Queen of Castile.

JERÓNIMA

*De manera esconjurando  
falais, que por derradeiro  
a fazer lo que naom queiro  
forcais; vindivos chegando.*

[English: You are begging  
in such a way, that I am  
finally torced to do what  
I have avoided: to come close to you.]

*They move aside.*

TELLO

*(Aside)* When he sets his eyes on something, he wants it instantly.  
*(To Quiteria)* Perhaps I can seduce you a little, too?

QUITERIA

*Gaze en mis ojos.*

[English: Look me in the eyes.]

TELLO

*(To Gaspar)* Graze on her what? Are they melons?

GASPAR

Gaze, not graze. They're so  
beautifully bright, and so large, too!  
The brilliance of the sun does not compare.

JERÓNIMA

*Pois catai estoutro.*

[English: Look at the other one.]

GASPAR

Between your eyes,  
and hands, I fear I lose myself in love.

JERÓNIMA

*Pois ollai...  
mais naon, que he meu hirmaon aquele.  
Martiña,<sup>72</sup> entremos em casa.*

[English: Look...  
but no, that is my brother.  
Martiña, let's go inside.]

GASPAR

Your brother?

JERÓNIMA

---

<sup>72</sup>Martiña: the "iña" ending makes this a stereotypically Portuguese-sounding name. It is ridiculous, as "Marta" and "Martiña" are essentially the same name ("Chris," "Chrissie.")

*Ollai, la pasa.* [English: Look, there he goes.]

GASPAR  
The doctor?

JERÓNIMA  
*Oui. Sí. Meu hirmaom he ele.* [English: He is my brother.]

*She uncovers her face and exits.*

TELLO  
(*To Quiteria*) You're leaving, Martiña?

QUITERIA  
Run *en casa*.

*She exits.*

TELLO  
Rouen Castle? That's in France!

GASPAR  
Tello, this woman slays me! From the time  
I saw her veiled, I gave her my soul.  
And now that she's unveiled herself for me,  
I owe her one soul every day we meet.

TELLO  
What will you do about Estefanía?

GASPAR  
Kick her out.

TELLO  
And what about Micaela?

GASPAR  
Disinherit her on grounds of tyranny.

TELLO  
And what about the lady from Seville?

GASPAR  
I never saw her.

TELLO

And this new lady?

GASPAR

She's not a lady, but a golden seraph.

TELLO

Let's go. We'll look for the doctor later.

GASPAR

I came here seeking to revenge myself on this man,  
but now I must thank him for his sister  
who's erased Estefanía from my mind.  
Did you see her hand and face? What beauty!  
All others in Coimbra are just puffs of air.

TELLO

Your brain is a puff of air. You're switching  
between women faster than women shift moods.  
You think it's good to try on three ladies  
in just one year? Are they like shirts to you?

GASPAR

I have done nothing. They've provoked me.

TELLO

Will you marry this one?

GASPAR

How could I know?  
If she's as chaste as she is beautiful...

TELLO

You're engorged. Why don't you sleep on it?  
Remember, blind Cupid, she's a doctor's sister.

GASPAR

You should call her an angel, Tello.

*Enter Jerónima as Doctor Barbosa, with Don Gonzalo.*

JERÓNIMA

Love is a sickness just like any other,  
but it afflicts our spirit and soul.  
It seizes our bodies just like the flu,  
but it directs its pain straight to the heart.

One usually finds the cure for this only with time,  
for our souls, which are bound by our bodies,  
are always fighting to be released from their chains.  
It is not unusual for bodies bound by blood—  
say, the bodies of a brother and sister, perhaps—  
to suffer the same ailments simultaneously.  
Lovesickness, in particular, is a condition  
that runs in families. It's an inherited disease.

*Jerónima takes Gonzalo pulse.*

JERÓNIMA

You have a lover's pulse.  
By drinking cold liquids and medicines,  
the fire in your heart should cool quickly.

GONZALO

Be discreet when you speak of this passion  
that burns me.

JERÓNIMA

So near my house, Gaspar?  
Do you need something?

GASPAR

*(To Tello)* They look so much alike.

TELLO

*(To Gaspar)* The Doctor and Marta?

GASPAR

*(To Tello)* They are kin.

TELLO

*(To Gaspar)* As well as kind and gentle.

GASPAR

Doctor Barbosa, my hopes, my life, and my love  
depend on you.

JERÓNIMA

You mean Estefanía.  
If you speak a single word to her this month,  
you'll kill her. Your time will come later.

GASPAR

I must speak to you now.

JERÓNIMA  
I'm listening.

GASPAR  
But I can't. We're enemies.  
Are you healing don Gonzalo, as well?

GONZALO  
I'm not feeling so well here today.

GASPAR  
The plague worries us all, don Gonzalo.

GONZALO  
(*Aside*) What is love but the worst plague?

GASPAR  
Doctor, are you going home?

JERÓNIMA  
I am.

GASPAR  
Can I come, too?

JERÓNIMA  
Estefanía makes you so hasty.

GASPAR  
No, doctor. My sickness and my cure both  
live in your house.

JERÓNIMA  
I see.

GASPAR  
That is the truth.

JERÓNIMA  
I heal all illnesses with prescriptions,  
but you must take my word, for my name is  
renowned in these parts.

GASPAR

Do you think I won't?

JERÓNIMA

Follow me.

GASPAR

How lucky I am!

TELLO

Doctor, you must know that in my most long and lively part I am killed by nine abscesses.

JERÓNIMA

Abscesses, you say. Is there any liquid that gets ejected from these wounds?

TELLO

There is.

It comes when the wounds become swollen.

JERÓNIMA

If you'd like, I'll relieve you of these pains.

TELLO

I've found the pain subsides by applying pressure to my injured parts; perhaps you can relieve me with your gentle hands?

JERÓNIMA

May I examine you?

TELLO

Please do.

*As Jerónima is about to examine Tello:*

JERÓNIMA

A very sensible decision, for I fear these abscesses might be tumors. Though I can usually handle such small maladies on my own, I fear I must draw twenty ounces of blood from the stunted site to properly diagnose you.

TELLO

Twenty ounces?!



JERÓNIMA

If you've got that much.

TELLO

Am I to be castrated like a bull?

GASPAR

Tello, do as he says if you don't wish to wither away.

TELLO

Body of Christ! Twenty ounces!  
You won't drain my swelled wound, doctor.  
Though my words hold little power,  
bearing my sword's shaft I can fend off  
your tiny needle's prick!

*Gaspar and Jerónima exit together into her home, as Tello follows behind.*

### ACT 3

#### ACT 3, SCENE 1

*The University of Coimbra, Portugal.*

*Enter all characters except for Jerónima and Estefanía.  
After the Queen, enter Jerónima (as Doctor Barbosa)  
wearing pants, a cloak, tights, an academic cap, and a  
muceta.<sup>73</sup> Music and applause accompany their entrance.*

#### JERÓNIMA

Your majesty joins gravity and kindness,  
producing love and respect in  
both the scholarly and the simple,  
and in me eternal obligation,  
for now you honor me with great renown.

#### QUEEN

Doctor, your abundant knowledge,  
for such a youth, deserves my honor and respect.  
The distinguished position you've obtained,  
and in it your astute solutions  
and innovative arguments,  
justify your entry into my chamber.  
Starting today, we entrust the  
pulse of Portugal's King to you,  
and thus the health of our country.  
You're now Doctor of the King's Chamber.

#### TELLO

*(Aside)* His *bedchamber*? The old man's nurse!

#### JERÓNIMA

Your Majesty, may Spain admire you  
in the many happy centuries to come.  
Your lofty praise is more precious than  
that which Marcus Aurelius gave to the  
esteemed Roman doctor, Galen.<sup>74</sup>  
Not even the golden statues  
Athens erected for Hippocrates<sup>75</sup>

---

<sup>73</sup>A short cape that covers the shoulders worn by doctors, lawyers, and other professionals and academics in the period.

<sup>74</sup>Galen was physician to the Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius. Among other achievements, he helped to diagnose and treat the plague that affected the empire under Aurelius.

<sup>75</sup>Hippocrates: ancient Greek physician, and "father" of modern medicine.

parallel the grace, my Lady, that  
Your royal highness has granted me.

QUEEN

*(Aside to Jerónima)* And she who praises  
the Queen raises her own status.

*(To all)* Go now to visit with the King,  
doctor. He is becoming sad and  
his bosom is troubled with hazards  
which weigh heavily upon his heart.  
I have faith in your sensitive and  
gentle remedies to heal him.

JERÓNIMA

I thank you for your trust, my lady.

QUEEN

I thank you for your duties, noble sir. Your  
service in the court will not go unnoticed,  
for it is a most rare and extraordinary one.  
I'll discover you next in the royal residence, Doctor.

*The Queen exits.*

IGNACIO

Enjoy your position, doctor,  
for many happy years.

JERÓNIMA

I did not expect any less in serving  
you. Your grace promised me  
such favors.

IGNACIO

I hope the palace  
won't let you forget my daughter,  
who still depends on you, doctor.

JERÓNIMA

Good sir! Must you remind me of this  
when you know I long to serve her?  
I will leave to see her at once.

IGNACIO

She will not see other doctors;  
reward her for the faith she's placed in you.

JERÓNIMA

I hope to bring you relief by  
restoring your daughter to health.

*Don Ignacio exits.*

GASPAR

Although you're not indebted to me,  
I depend upon you for my progress, as well.

JERÓNIMA

If circumstances allow I promise  
your time apart from the lady  
will be brief. Do not be sad  
because of this present restraint.

GASPAR

You've read my pulse incorrectly,  
for it beats for another person.

JERÓNIMA

Although wise doctors can make diagnoses,  
there are some things they just can't guess.  
You're speaking so mysteriously.

GASPAR

My will is a mystery;  
but I'll reveal its secret  
if we can converse privately.

JERÓNIMA

Today I'm busy with academic affairs.  
Tomorrow you can tell me what you will  
and rid yourself of this ailment.

*Exit Gaspar.*

TELLO

A male doctor wearing women's shoes.  
I hear these small doctors don't come from  
schools of medicine but from schools of gossip.  
And where there's one, they'll multiply  
until they've consumed us all. You're a  
busy doctor, but I wish you could find  
the time to heal my wound. If you take

my blood, I'll throb with such agony.  
Instead you might find inspiration from the  
waxing moon and heal me tonight by  
circulating my orbs one hundred times.

JERÓNIMA

This injured place must be massaged  
with medicinal balms to stop the pain.

*Jerónima produces a vial of medicine and kneels before  
Tello.*

TELLO

Which kind are they? And how much?

JERÓNIMA

Six ounces...of hot peppers.

TELLO  
Shit!

JERÓNIMA

You must chop them into small pieces  
so they cauterize your skin quickly,  
then add a pinch of alum, white lead,  
and six micrograms of saltpeter.<sup>76</sup>

TELLO

By God, doctor, if you have a  
sound conscience, don't prescribe  
remedies that will ruin me.

JERÓNIMA

If I don't, you'll die.

TELLO.

But chili peppers?  
Who has ever peppered his pecker?

JERÓNIMA

You must do as I say and heed my diagnosis.

TELLO.

Saltpeter! Hot peppers!  
Oh, the gall in dainty doctors!

---

<sup>76</sup>Saltpeter: potassium nitrate, a key ingredient of gunpowder.

*He exits.*

GONZALO

Among the many praises you've  
received, I offer mine to you.  
I hope they're not considered less worthy  
because I give them to you last;  
I assure you they're more sincere  
than all you've received before,  
for you're like a brother to me.  
You know there is no one like  
me to celebrate your genius.  
And now I hope your skill will heal  
the passion I described to you  
that burns me up without warning,  
for it was in jealousy that  
I came, I saw, and I loved.

JERÓNIMA

You speak as Caesar did in Rome.

GONZALO

I know I can't be lovesick,  
for I've only just met this lady.  
Love takes time to grow;  
it's a thing which follows years  
of favors and sympathies.  
It's precisely why I wouldn't let my  
sister see a man staying in our home;  
I knew she'd think she loved him  
when they first locked eyes.

JERÓNIMA

And where is your sister now?

GONZALO

A convent in Spain, where both her body and soul  
are safe from the sickness this world produces.

JERÓNIMA

Her body and soul are perhaps safe,  
but what of her heart?

GONZALO

Better that her heart is

in the hands of God than the hands of a human.  
You must see how Estefanía has destroyed my own.  
Though she only looked at me with her eyes,  
she instantly set my heart ablaze.  
I know this can't be love,  
for love comes from the soul,  
not the body. What I'm feeling is  
merely a fleeting passion of the heart.

JERÓNIMA

You speak so philosophically.  
Love at first sight is exciting  
especially when, as it often is,  
requited by the other one.  
This love first begins in the body,  
then later reaches the soul,  
and last asks the mind to understand.  
From there, it becomes spiritual.  
Therefore if you loved this lady  
immediately after seeing her,  
it simply means the stars have aligned.<sup>77</sup>  
But I must warn you now that she  
caused this same sensation in the man  
who now walks sadly through Coimbra.  
Though you're no healthier than he,  
Gaspar seems quite incurable.

GONZALO

As do you, Doctor. What is the matter?

JERÓNIMA

The matter?

GONZALO

With your heart, sir.  
You hold it as if it hurts you to breathe.

JERÓNIMA

It does.

GONZALO

Do you know the cause of the pain?

JERÓNIMA

I do, but I fear I can't seem to heal it.

---

<sup>77</sup>In the above section, Jerónima cites well-known Baroque theories about love.

GONZALO

Then you should let someone examine you,  
if you don't mind another skilled doctor laying  
his hands on your swollen breast.

JERÓNIMA

No!

My heart is strong, and I'll be cured in time.  
Don't worry; I'll make sure both my heart  
and yours heal. Though I can't predict  
what's to come, it wasn't by accident I  
forbid Gaspar from seeing Estefanía.  
I expect you'll prepare to honor me when  
you rise to the title of husband.  
God bless you. I go to treat the sick.

*She exits.*

GONZALO

What luck. God bless his sweet methods!  
From everything I've seen since I've come here,  
Estefanía despises Gaspar and sends him away.  
This all seems too good to be true,  
for it is clear that she's made  
Gaspar lovesick and miserable.  
But is she not a woman?

*He exits.*

ACT 3, SCENE 2

*A street near the home of Doctor Barbosa in Coimbra,  
Portugal.*

*Don Gaspar and Tello enter.*

GASPAR

I come on the pretext of the doctor.

TELLO

And so the theme of your madness persists.

GASPAR

Love puts me off course.



TELLO

I can see it now:  
as soon as she falls in love with you,  
her love will extinguish your passion's flame  
until you find another woman to  
start the fire and replace the first.  
You know how I can tell this will happen?  
You've fallen in love four times already.

GASPAR

What do you expect? Among all women,  
only Marta is worthy of being worshipped.

TELLO

Marta, but not the Virgin Mary?

GASPAR

Aren't you sick of insulting me?

TELLO

We are in a foreign land, Gaspar.  
Portuguese women must be more modest  
than those in Spain.

GASPAR

That's probably true  
only in the most remote villages.  
At court, ladies are not this shy.  
Right now, Marta's brother is busy  
with the duties of his university seat  
and leaves me space to visit with her.

TELLO

Just go. When you fall for a new lady,  
I'll be the one laughing down here.

*Enter Jerónima as Doctor Barbosa.*

JERÓNIMA

And so we meet again before my house?  
If in Spain doors are opened by love,  
in Portugal they are closed by honor,  
for love here always leads to jealousy.  
What have you come in search of, Gaspar?

GASPAR

You shouldn't be upset; I've come for you.

JERÓNIMA

You try to escape when you see me coming.  
You know I have a sister, and your eyes  
are fixed on every window in my house,  
yet you claim that you're here to speak with me?  
If you continue with such loose behavior  
your noble reputation will pay the price.  
Though it may be acceptable in Spain,  
such dishonorable behavior in Portugal  
is denounced. As long as you're in Coimbra,  
live as we do, and you will find favor.  
But know that among books and prescriptions,  
my study also holds rifles.

TELLO

*(Aside)* For such a gentle one,  
this doctor's got some balls!

GASPAR

Leave this anger and listen as a friend.

JERÓNIMA

What could you possibly have to tell me?

GASPAR

Although I've not studied whether  
love is subject to scientific laws,  
I know when Estefanía sees you she's  
relieved of the illness that plagues her,  
and that in secrecy you've been a cure  
for both her illness and her lovesickness.  
From this relationship come romantic impulses,  
not ones of melancholy, as she says.  
She spends hours just giving you her pulse,  
and through this she also offers you her soul.  
By constantly giving you her hands, she's asking  
that you extinguish the fevers you've ignited.  
Since your profession demands that you  
touch others, I see how she's confused such  
touching with embracing.

JERÓNIMA

Stop, Gaspar.

Your suggestions are not noble;  
they're base and common like a villager's.  
I am a man of great reputation.  
Until now, nobody has attacked  
the prestige of the medical profession.

GASPAR

It's no mistake to do so if we see its dangers.  
But I did not mean to offend you, sir.  
I hope to make you my new friend and serve  
you since we're no longer competitors.

JERÓNIMA

I do not understand.

GASPAR

The beauty of  
your face I now see in your sister;  
she is the object of my devotion.

JERÓNIMA

So you have seen her?

GASPAR

I did, yesterday,  
gracing a window with her presence.

JERÓNIMA

And are you pleased with what you saw?

GASPAR

Not just that, I am pleased with what I had.

JERÓNIMA

Is that so?

GASPAR

Your sister can work miracles, Doctor.  
Her heavenly touch seems to improve my health.  
In fact, she's so good to me that I want for us to  
share our fortune. I'll grant you rights to Estefanía,  
and you, permit me to seal a deal of love with  
your sister. If you'd like, I can also endow your  
marriage with two thousand gold chequeens.<sup>78</sup>  
I'll give up my inheritance to marry Marta,

---

<sup>78</sup>Chequeens: currency of Turkish origin, in use around the Mediterranean.

and when you become my brother-in-law  
you shall have more power to help us both.

JERÓNIMA

A long story with a foundation of sand, I see.  
Though I am by no means a poor man,  
I'm not the first-born son and am not  
heir to my family's estate;  
I must rely on my hard work and  
reputation for my financial security.  
I am a doctor, and have earned a good name  
which is bound to protect all my interests.  
I studied medicine for love, not money.  
It seems that you don't value honest love,  
Gaspar, for I hear you've recently dishonored  
women in both Portugal and Spain.  
Knowing this, how can I trust that  
you will treat my sister with respect?  
Marta's worth is not measured in numbers;  
your devotion to her cannot be counted in  
money, but only in the healing service of love.  
Have you repaid my sister in love, Gaspar?  
Or only with the dishonorable actions  
you're now known for? These words  
spoken against you taint your name.

*She exits.*

GASPAR

What's going on?

TELLO

What do I know?  
If you fold your hand too soon,  
you must suffer the consequences.

*Enter Quiteria. She gives Gaspar a letter from Marta and exits.*

GASPAR

Marta has written to me!

TELLO

Won't you read it already?

GASPAR

The heavens must rescue  
my brain.

TELLO  
If they can find it.

*Gaspar opens the letter and reads it to himself.*

GASPAR  
Such a warm and tender letter, Tello!

TELLO  
Just let it melt you later.

GASPAR  
(Reads) “*Tudo canto vos falou  
meu hirmaon vos ei ouvido.*” [English: “Everything you have said,  
I’ve heard from my brother ...”]

TELLO  
What does that mean?

GASPAR  
She has heard  
everything while hiding.  
(Reads) “*Por o furaco escondido.*” [English: “...through a hidden hole.”]

TELLO  
A hidden hole?! Obscene!

GASPAR  
What’s obscene?

TELLO  
She’s speaking of a vile hole. Perhaps  
you two can make sense of this together,  
but I’m not going near anyone’s hole.

GASPAR  
Just listen, and I’ll read the love letter:  
“While listening from the front door’s keyhole,  
I have heard what my brother said; I am yours.  
It does not matter if he’s scolded you.  
My brother does not understand this life.  
You’re my love, and if what you want is me,  
you shall have me for the rest of eternity.”

TELLO

I still don't approve of this, Gaspar.  
Holes can be very dangerous, especially  
around young lovers such as yourself.

*Enter Jerónima, covered.*

GASPAR

This one—is she the one I wish to see?  
She is Marta, no?

TELLO

Yes and no.  
No, because she is a sealed letter.  
But yes because her signature seems  
to reveal her identity.

GASPAR

My love sees  
through everything. Marta?

JERÓNIMA

Hold, sir.  
Be courteous.

TELLO

She speaks your native tongue!

GASPAR

Are you not Marta?

*Gaspar and Jerónima speak, apart*

JERÓNIMA

I'm not the woman you think I am,  
though I do also come from her house.  
I was born in Seville where, if you  
remember, I hosted you for a month.  
In Spain, you were careless with me.  
In Portugal, you were rude to another woman.  
I beg you, keep your promises to those who are innocent.  
If you do not, you mock the Spanish way  
and thereby dishonor the Portuguese.  
Be loyal before news travels back to  
those who will force you to get married,  
for better or worse.

*Exit Jerónima.*

GASPAR

Jesus! What is this mess?

TELLO

Foreshadowing.

Let's go before a third one enters. Like the plague,  
they follow us everywhere.

*Gaspar and Tello exit.*

ACT 3, SCENE 3

*In Estefanía's house.*

*The Queen enters, in male attire, and speaks to her people,  
the audience.*

QUEEN

I'm not the woman you think I am, for today  
I conceal myself in the cloak of cunning.  
It seems that the heart of this honest Portugal  
has been infected by one furtive fraudster.  
Therefore, in the name of medicine, permit me  
to deceive as I take leave of my title and seek  
out honesty in the secret harbor of this residence.  
Supplied with the threads of a servant boy,  
I now formally in person bear like a true male,  
and hence shall see what these seemers be.

*The Queen disappears from sight.*

*Jerónima (in female garb with a cloak), Quiteria and  
Estefanía enter.*

ESTEFANÍA

Remove your cloak.

JERÓNIMA

*Naom posso,  
ocu pacaons muitas teno.*

[English: I cannot,  
I have many other errands to run.]

ESTEFANÍA

I'd rather see you when you're relaxed.

JERÓNIMA

*Virei vagante outro dia.* [English: I will come unoccupied another day.]

ESTEFANÍA

My God, you look just like your brother!  
There is no difference between your faces.  
Doctor Barbosa is very handsome.

JERÓNIMA

*Quem? Ele? He muito mimoso.* [English: Whom? Him? He is very affectionate.]

ESTEFANÍA

Whoever isn't healed by the doctor  
becomes more sick. But, is he a lover?  
And does he have a lady in this court?  
Tell me: who makes his heart catch fire?

JERÓNIMA

*Eu volo direi por certo;* [English: I will tell you precisely;  
*seus mimos tem aqui perto.* his loves are close by.]

ESTEFANÍA

She's close by?

JERÓNIMA

*En vosa casa.* [English: In your house.]

ESTEFANÍA

Marta,

if she is in my house, who could it be?  
We are both women. You can tell me this.  
Do I know this woman?

JERÓNIMA

*Pois nao?* [English: Well, no?]

ESTEFANÍA

And she's in my house? Is it my cousin Leonor?

JERÓNIMA

*Por ela morre meu hirmaom.* [English: My brother dies for her.]

ESTEFANÍA

He dies for Leonor? (*Aside*) What a mess!  
Well, does she at least love the doctor back?



JERÓNIMA

*He cavaleiro o doutor  
dos Barbosas e Barcelos;  
bem pode.*

[English: The doctor is a gentleman  
of Barbosa and Barcelos;  
he can love her if he wants.]

ESTEFANÍA

I'll undo all of her plans.

JERÓNIMA

*Tende cuidado,  
porque si ja se ham casado  
Deos vos guarde de feito he.*

[English: Be careful;  
if they are already married,  
God will guard them fiercely.]

QUITERIA

*Senora, necesito vamoose now.*

[English: Lady, you must leave now.]

ESTEFANÍA

In my house?

JERÓNIMA

*Por vos server  
falaremos outro dia  
devagar, porque o doutor  
ou tem de ser de Lianor  
ou de vosa sinoria.*

[English: To serve you,  
I will talk with you another day  
carefully, because the doctor  
will belong to Leonor,  
or he will belong to you.]

*Jerónima and Quiteria exit.*

ESTEFANÍA

Will he belong to Leonor or me?  
Love and honor, have pity on me.  
Is it easier to die than keep my love?  
Leonor kills me. Is it too much to ask  
that she who gives her wrist to the doctor  
will, in return, receive his hand in marriage?  
If Gaspar is a gentleman and is sensitive to my best  
interests, what could I lose? Would I not, in fact, win?  
My illness persists, yet I want to be healed.  
My father will forgive me, for he's the one  
who brought the fiery plague into this house.  
Love, like fire, burns everything it touches.

*Enter Gonzalo.*

GONZALO

I come to you with news, Estefanía,  
but I don't know if it's good or bad.

ESTEFANÍA

What makes you interested in my business?

GONZALO

I've found myself at the center of your joy and pain.  
You've looked at me with love since I arrived;  
you've shown disgust when speaking to Gaspar.  
Since love can't be concealed, I'll share this news:  
the doctor says you've fallen for me.

ESTEFANÍA

Who says this to you?

GONZALO

Doctor Barbosa.

ESTEFANÍA

He said that I love you?

GONZALO

He swears it.

ESTEFANÍA

If this is his diagnosis, he's no doctor,  
and I no longer trust his prescriptions.  
Never praise he who switches positions;  
going between doctor and matchmaker,  
this man makes mistakes when he  
tries to minister to the ill.

GONZALO

Perhaps he didn't understand your eyes,  
but don't you know that pulses cannot lie?  
You can pretend you have no feelings now,  
but the doctor will come and clear this up.

*He exits.*

ESTEFANÍA

This doctor falls in love with my cousin,  
then swears that I love someone else?  
Who's ever seen a man more mad than he?

*Enter Jerónima as Doctor Barbosa*

JERÓNIMA

My duties in the court prevented me  
from visiting with you earlier, my lady,  
but they don't prevent the joy of serving you.  
My new position sanctioned by the Queen,  
which gives me work in the royal bedchamber,  
keeps me so long that I must constantly  
beg my friends to pardon my tardiness,  
unless Marta in my likeness was able to  
substitute my presence. How are you feeling,  
Estefanía? Has your melancholy subsided?  
You look relieved of something now.  
Let me feel your pulse.

ESTEFANÍA

I no longer trust  
licensed—or should I say licentious—doctors.  
Their skills corrupt, and where they're admitted,  
they seduce women.

JERÓNIMA

What are you saying?

ESTEFANÍA

What a performance! To cure my illness and steal  
my soul in one move!

JERÓNIMA

Who, me?

ESTEFANÍA

You? You're a saint.  
Do such doctors as you always prescribe  
remedies of marriage?

JERÓNIMA

Has someone said  
I'm a marriage-hustler?

ESTEFANÍA

Gonzalo tells me you prescribe husbands  
for all your female patients in Coimbra.  
Leonor, I hear, will be healthy, for  
now she has a doctor and husband in one.

JERÓNIMA

That malicious low-life has lied to you!

ESTEFANÍA

That's enough, doctor.

JERÓNIMA

Motherless bastard.

ESTEFANÍA

That could be true...but stop, or you'll  
embarrass yourself.

JERÓNIMA

You're jealous of  
my duties at court. I lecture novices in the ways  
of medicine, I care for the pulses of royalty,  
but you're threatening to destroy their health.

ESTEFANÍA

With Leonor you'll be much healthier.  
But you're no longer allowed in my house,  
or even to treat my neighbors' illnesses.  
My father will find out everything.  
Let's see if he lets you continue  
healing women with these false words.

JERÓNIMA

Look, just listen...

ESTEFANÍA

Leave me alone, Doctor.  
Women must stand by one another.  
I can only trust your sister now.

JERÓNIMA

Please wait.

ESTEFANÍA

Why won't you leave? Must I scream? Why do you stall?

JERÓNIMA

Because you will not listen to me.  
After all my sister said, you really trust her?

ESTEFANÍA

Why shouldn't I? Women don't lie like men.  
Now get out.

JERÓNIMA

Relax, relax.

ESTEFANÍA

Why relax?  
(*Yelling*) Gaspar! Father! Everyone! Help!

JERÓNIMA

Relax, I say, because I am Marta.

ESTEFANÍA

Who?

JERÓNIMA

And a doctor.

ESTEFANÍA

Oh, great. This is lovely.  
You lie to me as if I cannot see?

JERÓNIMA

Look at me and tell me if I lie.

ESTEFANÍA

How did you learn to speak several languages?

JERÓNIMA

My brother taught me.

ESTEFANÍA

Who can confirm this?

JERÓNIMA

I performed as my brother to make you  
jealous. I lied to you about Leonor;  
my brother has never seen this woman.  
I wish I could warn him of this mess now,  
but I need to get home immediately.

ESTEFANÍA

This is good news. But tell me: how were you  
able to become a man so quickly?

JERÓNIMA

With a friend and an outfit from my brother.

ESTEFANÍA

I need more proof.

JERÓNIMA

Did I not say *o doutor*  
*tina aqui perto seus mimos?*

[English: ...the doctor  
keeps his lovers close by?]

ESTEFANÍA

That is true...

JERÓNIMA

*And por derradeiro sino*  
*nao vos dise que a meu hirmao*  
*tina de chamar marido*  
*Estefanía o Lianor?*

[English: ...did I not finally tell you  
that my brother would call either  
you or Leonor his wife?]

ESTEFANÍA

Then it's true. So he doesn't love my cousin?

JERÓNIMA

It was all a trick. He only loves you  
and is jealous of your lover, don Gaspar.

ESTEFANÍA

Assure him that I do not love Gaspar;  
my love is only for your brother.

JERÓNIMA

I kiss your hands for my brother.

*Jerónima kisses Estefanía's hands.*

ESTEFANÍA

But why did your brother tell Gonzalo  
I loved him?

JERÓNIMA

I don't know.

ESTEFANÍA

Gonzalo  
came here trying to convince me that I love him.

JERÓNIMA

It could be because my brother is furious about your upcoming marriage to Gaspar. I hear many in Coimbra are jealous of your union with him.

ESTEFANÍA

Your brother heard about the dispensation?

JERÓNIMA

If he knew how lucky he was,  
he would be full of joy.

ESTEFANÍA

Then remind him that he will be mine.  
I am constant in my love for him.

JERÓNIMA

Words are not enough; how can you prove this?

ESTEFANÍA

What do you mean?

JERÓNIMA

Will you risk danger  
and offer him your hands in marriage?

ESTEFANÍA

First I need to know if he is noble.

JERÓNIMA

I can attest to that.

ESTEFANÍA

Of course you would;  
the outcome of this matters much to you.

JERÓNIMA

That's fine. Go search for your witness then,  
but know that Leonor will steal your place.

ESTEFANÍA

How?

JERÓNIMA

Yesterday she spoke of marriage,

and now, if I guess correctly, they are talking to make sure they won't be stopped.

ESTEFANÍA

You cunning witch, not telling me he loves Leonor, that he sees her daily?

JERÓNIMA

I only meant to calm your worrying.

ESTEFANÍA

Is such a deception even possible?  
A woman with so many concoctions?  
A man with so many betrayals?  
In love with Leonor? Oh, my jealousy!  
You really must leave now, or I will go persecute them both!

JERÓNIMA

I stay, my lady.

ESTEFANÍA

You won't go?

*(Loudly)* Then I'll have you removed!

JERÓNIMA

I stay

because I am the doctor. Stop yelling!

ESTEFANÍA

Who are you?

JERÓNIMA

Doctor Barbosa.

ESTEFANÍA

What a mess.

JERÓNIMA

I've given you a great scare.

ESTEFANÍA

A man

absorbed into a woman's body now?

Tell me which you are.



JERÓNIMA

I am your doctor,  
the one who visited you twice today;  
the first time under my sister's name,  
and then a second time under my own.  
I first came dressed as a woman, and then  
a second time in man's clothing.  
You must not judge me by my clothes.

ESTEFANÍA

So Marta was not with me earlier?

JERÓNIMA

She was not. Her threads stood in place of mine.  
It was my young age and my scanty beard,  
the fire of my love in which I melt,  
the dispensation and jealous feelings,  
that transformed me into a woman.  
(*Taking her hand*) Give me your hand, and let us be married.

ESTEFANÍA

It is yours.

JERÓNIMA

Then we are to be married?

ESTEFANÍA

Yes. No. I don't know.

JERÓNIMA

I insist on hearing this from you.  
Do you take me to be your husband?

ESTEFANÍA

I do.

JERÓNIMA

Yes?

*She kisses Estefanía.*

*Enter Gaspar and Gonzalo.*

GASPAR

Peace. We will not fight over this.  
The doctor has spoken the truth to me:

he is Estefanía's lover now.

JERÓNIMA

Well, Gaspar, Gonzalo. What is this?

GONZALO

A competition.

GASPAR

I will not fight you.

Estefanía will not be my wife.

Though I have served her, she does not love me.

ESTEFANÍA

It is true.

GASPAR

I am to marry Marta.

JERÓNIMA

I accept you as her husband, Gaspar,  
but the wedding must take place today.

GASPAR

Nothing would please me more. Call for her now.

JERÓNIMA

Listen. (*Takes him aside.*) Will you marry me?

GASPAR

Are you insane?!

JERÓNIMA

Don't judge me by my clothes. I am Marta.

GASPAR

What?

JERÓNIMA

I'm only disguised to help my brother.  
My brother, the doctor.

GASPAR

How did you do this?

JERÓNIMA

It required me to devise many plots.  
I'll tell you later. You know from my letter  
what I want from you.

GASPAR  
Are you mocking me?

JERÓNIMA  
You cannot see beyond my clothing?  
Or just because I don't speak Portuguese?  
*Pois catai os ollos minos,  
que onte vistes hum a hum,  
a boca, os dentes e o riso.*  
I alternate disguises as skillfully as  
my polyglot tongue alternates languages:  
Spanish, Portuguese, Latin, English, French.

[English: Well, look at my eyes,  
the same ones you started into yesterday,  
and my mouth, teeth, and smile.]

GASPAR  
Give me your hand.

*Jerónima gives Gaspar her hand.*

JERÓNIMA  
*Esta foi a que perdido  
vos teve a bolta primeira.*  
[English: This is the hand that lost itself  
when it first met you.]

GASPAR  
It's true.

JERÓNIMA  
Don Gonzalo, bear witness to  
Gaspar as he becomes Marta's husband.

GONZALO  
I will.

ESTEFANÍA  
If I may bear witness to your marriage,  
I will consider myself prosperous.

JERÓNIMA  
Then all is set. Now Gonzalo, I beg you  
give your hand to this lady.

ESTEFANÍA  
To me?

JERÓNIMA

(*To Estefanía*) Play along.

ESTEFANÍA

You're no longer my husband?

JERÓNIMA

Your marriage is secure; I promise  
you will take my family name.

*Estefanía and Gonzalo hold hands.*

*Enter Quiteria, Ignacio, and Tello.*

JERÓNIMA

Martiña!

QUITERIA

Martiña and Marta are over.  
I come bearing news I must deliver:  
your father has died of the plague.  
His friends and your family wait in Seville.

JERÓNIMA

Lovers, please excuse me at this time.  
I've loved Gaspar since he was our house guest  
in Seville. It was he that turned me into a doctor,  
and I can finally call him my husband.

GONZALO

Jerónima! What false medicine you've  
performed on so many hearts in Portugal. Come,  
we're going home to Spain. You're returning to  
the Convent of Santa Clara, and you will  
renounce all your books and medical instruments.

IGNACIO

Wait, you're a woman?

JERÓNIMA

I am, and have been  
a woman while practicing medicine.

IGNACIO

What deception! Someone call for the constable.

JERÓNIMA

I beg you, Señor, take pity on me. I came to Portugal for love, but found true happiness in healing your daughter of her sickness. Look into Estefanía's face; do you not find there the image of perfect health?

IGNACIO

Healed or not, your doubling is too severe to be pardoned. Apprehend this woman for her deception.

*The Queen of Portugal appears again in male attire.*

QUEEN

Hold, gentles. This doctor is not to be imprisoned, for he has opened the doors of love and ministered to the ailing heart of Manuel, the King of Portugal.

IGNACIO

But he's a woman, Your Highness.

QUEEN

It is through women that the most valuable knowledge has come to mankind. Doña Jerónima, for your most excellent medical service in the King's Chamber, and in the spirit of *La Latina*, I pardon these perilous practices you've performed while serving in Portugal. Your medical license and endowed chair at the University, however, you must now bequeath to a man and henceforth study only in the solitude of your home in Spain. (*Aside to Jerónima*) But you should know, my child, of all the knowledge I've attained in studying, I am most certain of the authority a woman may have in her place of birth.<sup>79</sup>

JERÓNIMA

Your Highness, I am eternally thankful for your pardon. I will happily continue to practice this passion, if even in the privacy of my

---

<sup>79</sup>After her older sister died, María of Aragon, at the age of 18, was taken from her home in Spain and married off to her sister's former husband King Manuel I of Portugal to reaffirm dynastical links with the future Spain.

home in Spain, with my brother's blessing.

GONZALO

God's blessing on all your passions, Jerónima.

QUEEN

Your words are passion. But, pray you,  
stir up no more embers, or the hand of Portugal  
must cool them in the name of honor.

*The Queen exits.*

ESTEFANÍA

So you don't have a sister?

JERÓNIMA

Love transformed  
both Marta and the Doctor into one.

ESTEFANÍA

Is there a worse betrayal than this?

JERÓNIMA

Don Gaspar is my husband, for through my  
skillful acts I've surely earned his love.

GASPAR

I consider myself lucky in this.

GONZALO

Then let us put Gonzalo in your place.

IGNACIO

You will be my heir with my daughter's word.

ESTEFANÍA

I follow your wishes.

TELLO

And Martiña?

QUITERIA

Quiteria.

TELLO

Quiteria, so that

we're not burdened with marriages today,  
I will take you as my wife on Sunday.

IGNACIO

God help me, I'm amazed by all this!

JERÓNIMA

It was love that turned me into a doctor,  
and the doctor that cured the lovesick here,  
for to be healed of this ailment that plagues the heart,  
one must learn to *love the doctor*.

*End of play*

GASPAR

I served in royal Toledo  
the most beautiful angel: Micaela.  
For six months time my luck was good.  
But in love, as in stormy waters,  
change can become the pilot;  
just when I thought I'd disembark  
upon the sheltered shore of marriage,  
a jealous eastern wind blew  
and returned me to the open sea  
where my misfortunes drowned me.  
Micaela's mother and brother,  
without even consulting her,  
promised her to a wealthy man, don Jaime,  
though he called off their engagement  
when some rogues wrote don Jaime an  
anonymous letter declaring I had  
already deflowered his lady in bed.  
I found these villains and challenged them  
to sign with steel what they hadn't signed with ink.  
Then, taking out my sword, I quickly  
killed one man and wounded the others.  
Forced out of Toledo by Ferdinand,  
I now seek shelter in you, my friend.  
Don Jaime has also recently ordered  
a group of men to arrest me,  
so I must flee to the East Indies,  
though my first stop is the old  
university town of Coimbra in Portugal,  
where the royal court will grant me  
favours and dispatch me to India.  
Traveling by ship, endless folds of hungry sea  
will drown my memories of love's  
tragedies and restore my fame in battle.

Alternate (shorter) version of Gaspar's speech on page 98.



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