

Life is a Dream

By Calderon de la Barca

“Are all glories like dreams-the true ones taken to be false, and the false ones, to be true? There's so little difference between one and the other that we cannot be sure if what we're seeing and enjoying is simple fact or an illusion! Can it be the copy is so like the original that no one knows which is which?”

Dramatis Personae

BASILIO, King of Poland	Mark Hughes Cobb
SEGISMUNDO, Prince	Joseph Welty
ASTOLFO, Duke of Muscovy.....	Bert McClelland
CLOTALDO, An old man	Steve Burch
CLARIN, A clownish servant.....	Joseph Arrigo
ESTRELLA, Princess	Morgan Hall
ROSAVRA, A lady	Elizabeth Thiel
Soldiers/Servants	Richard LeComte
	Calvin
	Madelaine Tatro
	Riley Rawson
Spanish passages	Madelaine Tatro

Soldiers/Servants – Richard - Servant 2
Riley – Soldier 2, Servant 1
Calvin – Soldier 1

ACT ONE, SCENE ONE (On one side, mountain crags; on the other, a tower, with SEGISMUNDO'S cell at the base; dusk.)

While Rosaura's opening lines are read in Spanish the soldier/servants set the two ladders up center and the two benches down center. They exit left. Segismundo enters and lays down between the two benches while Rosaura climbs up the stage right ladder, steps over to the stage left ladder, followed by Clarin (who remains in the stage right ladder.)

ROSAURA. Where have you thrown me, mad horse,
half griffin? You rage like a storm,
then flicker like lightning,
outspeeding light. Beast, there's not
one natural instinct in you
tearing your mouth to hurl
and drag yourself through
this labyrinth of tangled rocks!
While I, desperate and blind, scramble down
these rugged, twisting, barren crags
where there is no way but what the laws
of destiny set down for me. Poland,
you greet this stranger harshly,
writing her entry in blood
on your sands; she hardly arrives
before hardship arrives.
But when was pity ever showered
on anyone in misery?

CLARIN. Say any two, including me.
Misery needs company.
Besides, if it was the two of us
who left our country searching
for adventure, surely
the same two arrived here,
hard luck, crazy falls down crags
and all; so why shouldn't I complain
if in sharing all the pain,
I don't get half the credit?

ROSAURA. I fail to mention you
in my complaints, Clarin,

because I do not like
depriving you of the right
and consolation to voice your own.

CLARIN. Well, madame, what are we to do now,
alone and stranded without a horse,
at this late hour on a barren slope,
as the sun is setting?

ROSAURA. If my eyes
do not deceive me and this is not
a fantasy, a trick of failing daylight,
I seem to see a building there.

CLARIN. My hopes deceive me,
or else I see what you see.

ROSAURA. Standing there amid huge bare rocks,
there's a crude fortress tower, so small
and so roughly made it looks
like just another rock
fallen down the mountain side.

CLARIN. Let's move closer, madame.
We've stared enough; it's better letting
them who live there exercise
their hospitality.

ROSAURA. The front door
stands open to ... what is it,
a mausoleum? And pitch darkness
comes crawling out as though
the night itself were born inside.

[The sound of chains is heard. *Clarín & Rosaura speak together.*]

CLARIN. Good Heavens, what's that I hear?

ROSAURA. I'm a solid block of ice and fire!

CLARIN. It's just a bit of rattling chain.

[The sound of chains is heard.]

Destroy me if it's not the ghost
of a galley slave.

SEGISMUNDO. [within] Oh misery and wretchedness!

ROSAURA. Whose unhappy voice was that?
Now I've more suffering to contend with.

CLARIN. And I, more nightmares.

ROSAURA. Clarin ...

CLARIN. Madame ...

ROSAURA. This is desolating.
Let's leave this enchanted tower.

CLARIN. When it comes to that, I haven't
got the strength to run away.

ROSAURA. Isn't that tiny light
like someone's dying breath?
Yes, and even from here
I can make out by its reflection
a murky prison cell, a tomb
for some still living carcass.
But even more astonishing,
there's a man lying there
in heavy chains, wearing
animal skins, whose only
company is that tiny light.

[As *SEGISMUNDO* stands up Rosara and Clarin step aside to stage right,
listening]

SEGISMUNDO. Heavens above, I cry to you,
in misery and wretchedness,
what crime against you did I commit
by being born, to deserve
this treatment from you?
I understand my being born

is crime enough, and warrants
your sternest judgment, since
the greatest sin of man
is his being born at all.
What worse offense was mine,
to call for this, my greater punishment.
Are not all others born as I was?
And, if so, what freedom do they have
which I have never known? *[climbs up on one of the benches]*
A bird is born, fine-feathered
in all its unimagined beauty,
but scarcely does it sprout
that small bouquet of plumage
when its wings cut through the halls of air,
scorning safety in the sheltered nest.
Why should I, whose soul is greater
than a bird's, enjoy less liberty?
I rise to such a pitch of anger
that I feel like Etna, volcanic;
I want to rip my chest open
and tear out pieces of my own heart.
By what law, reason, or judgment
is a man deprived of that sweet gift,
that favor so essential,
which God has granted to a stream,
a fish, a brute, a bird?

ROSAURA. His words move me. I pity him
and am afraid.

SEGISMUNDO. Who's been listening
to me? Is that you, Clotaldo?

ROSAURA. *[steps forward to slightly right of center stage]* Only some lost
unhappy soul among these cold rocks
who heard you in your misery.

SEGISMUNDO. *[jumping off the bench, mirrors Rosaura]* Then I'll kill you at once
As you already know my weaknesses.
You overheard me-that's enough.

For that alone, these two strong arms
of mine must tear you apart.

CLARIN. *[not moving]* I'm deaf, I couldn't hear a word you said.

ROSAURA. I throw myself at your feet.
If you were born human,
my doing so would free me.

SEGISMUNDO. *[somewhere in speech Segismundo begins circling around a kneeling Rosaura who stands]*

Your voice moves and softens me,
your living presence stops me,
and your level glance confuses me.
Who are you? I know so little
of the world here in this tower,
my cradle and my tomb.
I've never seen or spoken to
another human being, except
the man who hears my lamentations
and has told me all I know
of earth and heaven;
Though I'm a beast among men,
a man among beasts, and sunk
in misery, -it is you, and you
alone, who douse the fire of my wrath,
fill my sight with wonder
and my hearing with admiration.
Each time I look at you
the vision overwhelms me
so that I yearn to look again.
I do not know what not looking
at you would mean; it would be worse
than fiercest death, madness,
rage, and overwhelming grief.
It would be life-for, as
I've had so bitterly to learn,
bringing life to one who's desperate
is the same as taking life away
from one who swims in happiness.

ROSAURA. I look at you astonished,
amazed at what I hear, not knowing
what to say to you nor what to ask.
I can only say that Heaven
must have brought me here
to be consoled, if misery
finds consolation in seeing
someone still more miserable.
I find that you have gathered up
my troubles and turned them into bliss.
So if by chance any
of my troubles can relieve you,
I am...

CLOTALDO. [within] *[off left, Segismundo stays center, Rosaura & Clarin retreat to right side of stage]*
Cowards, or are you fast asleep!
Is this the way you guard the tower,
Letting two people break into the prison ...
Be quick now,
go capture them before they can
defend themselves, or else kill them.

Voices. [within] Treason!

CLARIN. Oh prison guards
who let us in here, since there's a choice,
capturing us would be simpler now.

[Enter CLOTALDO with a pistol and the SOLDIERS, all wearing masks.]
CLOTALDO. Keep your faces covered, everyone.
It is most important, while we're here,
to let no one recognize us. *[Clotaldo stays LC, the soldiers line up in front of ladders]*

CLARIN. Here's a little masquerade!

CLOTALDO. You there-you, who out of ignorance,
have trespassed on this forbidden spot

against the order of the King,
put down your arms and lives.

SEGISMUNDO. Master tyrant,
before you injure them, I'll give up
my life to these blasted chains,
where, by God, with my hands and teeth
I'd sooner tear myself apart
than let you harm them!

CLOTALDO. What's all this bluster, Segismundo?
You know your own misfortunes
are so immense that Heaven
declared you dead before
you were even born. You know
these chains are simply a restraint
to curb your mad, proud rages.
-Now throw him back in, and shut
the door to his narrow cell.

*[He is shut in and speaks from inside.] [two soldiers push him in and then
pivot the upstage ends of the benches until they touch, they exit stage right
and change into ladies and waiting.]*

SEGISMUNDO. Heavens, you were right to take
my freedom from me. Otherwise
I'd be a giant rising up
against you, piling your jasper
mountains up on stone foundations
till I reached the top to smash
the crystal windows of the sun! *[exits down the center aisle, goes to off left side.
Changes to princely garb.]*

CLOTALDO. *[calling off to Segismundo as he exits]*
Perhaps your being kept from
doing it makes you suffer here.

ROSAURA. *[kneeling]* Since I see how much pride offends you
I'd be foolish not to beg you
humbly, at your feet, to spare my life.
Let Pity move you, sir;
it would be bad for me

if you happened to dislike
Humility as much as Pride.

CLARIN. If neither one can move you
I, who can't say I stand
for Pride or for Humility
but for something in between,
beg only, from where I'm standing,
for your help and your protection.

CLOTALDO. You there, soldier! Take away
their weapons and blindfold them; they're not
to see how or where they're going. *[the soldier will be holding blindfolds which
the business with the swords will stop them from putting on them]*

ROSAURA. Here is my sword-I can only yield it up to you,
since you are in command here;
it may not be surrendered to one of lesser rank. *[Rosaura hands her script to the
soldier. While the business with Clarin continues she removes the sword from her
belt, and lays it over the benches. And then retrieves the script from the soldier.]*

CLARIN. *[to a SOLDIER]* Here's mine surrendering itself to the least of all of
you-take it, man! *[that soldier withdraws it from Clarin's belt on the 'take it.']*

ROSAURA. And if I must die, I wish you
to have this as a token
for your sympathy, a gift worthy
as its master, who once wore it
at his side. I beg you, guard it well,
for though I do not know
precisely what its secret is,
I know this golden sword
has certain special powers.
Indeed, trusting to nothing else,
I came with it to Poland,
hoping to avenge an insult.

CLOTALDO. *[late in the speech steps forward to examine the sword.]* *[aside]* My
God, what's this? Old wounds,
reopen, my confusion deepens.

[aloud] Who gave this to you?

ROSAURA. A woman.

CLOTALDO. Her name?

ROSAURA. I swore not to reveal it.

CLOTALDO. How do you know,
how can you assume
there's some secret about this sword?

ROSAURA. Because she who gave it to me said,
"Go to Poland, and use your wits,
your guile, or some ruse to bring
this sword to the attention
of the noblemen and leaders there.
For I know that one of them
will favor you and help you."
Yet since he may have died,
she did not wish to give his name.

CLOTALDO. [*aside, to the audience, relaxed freeze from rest*] Heaven help me!
What's this I hear?
Did this really happen
or is simply an illusion.
But surely it's the sword
I left behind with Violante,
promising that whoever came
wearing it would find me tender
and receptive as any father to his son.
Heaven help me, what shall I do?
What is there to do? To take him
to the King (oh God!) is to lead him
to his death. But to hide him
is to break my oath of fealty
to the King. ... Why do I hesitate?
Does not loyalty to the King
come before one's own life and honor?
Let loyalty prevail-let him die!

Yet, he is my son, he bears my blood.

The best recourse would be

to go and tell the King,

"Here's my son, and he must die."

But if, perhaps, the very scruple

which sustains my honor

moves the King to mercy

and merits having my son spared,

then I'll help him to avenge

the insult; but if the King

in strictest justice should execute

my son, then he will die

not knowing I'm his father.

[aloud] Strangers, come with me, and do not fear

you are alone in your misfortunes,

for in such dilemmas,

where life or death hangs by

a thread, I cannot tell

whose lot is worse-yours or mine.

[Exeunt *stage left*. *Clotaldo* picks up the sword, the soldiers hand off the blindfolds (but they are not put on) and escort *Rosaura* & *Clarín* off.]

ACT ONE, SCENE TWO In the capital; a hall in the royal palace.

While next bit of Spanish text is read, Soldier/servants clear one ladder and one bench each to the off sides of the stage. The ladder and bench should be placed flat to the playing area, with the ladder on the upstage side.]

ASTOLFO and SOLDIERS enter *from stage right*, and the PRINCESS ESTRELLA and LADIES-IN-WAITING *from stage left*. *Soldiers and ladies-in-waiting hang back and Astolfo and Estrella take center.*

ASTOLFO. Drums and trumpets, birds and fountains
each responds with its own fanfare
to your bright rays that once were comets.
Thus, all alike salute you, madame:
Because your coming pales the daylight
which has banished night away,
yours is the glory of Aurora,
the peace of sweet Flora,
Minerva's martial stance,
who reign as queen of all my heart.

ESTRELLA. If what you say is measured
by any human action,
your gallant courtly phrases
are belied by all this menacing
display of arms, which I oppose,
since your lispng flattery
contradicts the sabre-rattling
that I've seen. I'll have you know
such behavior is contemptible
which uses honeyed words
to disguise the aim to kill.

ASTOLFO. You've been badly misinformed,
Estrella, if you doubt me
and think my words are insincere.
I beg you now to hear me out.
When Eustorgio the Third,
King of Poland, died, his heirs were
Basilio, who succeeded him,
and two daughters, of whom we are
the offspring. Basilio, being both childless

and a widower, is now
suffering the usual decline
of age in time; so you
and I now both lay claim
to the throne. You insist
that being the daughter
of the elder sister gives you
the prior right; and I, that being male,
gives me precedence over you.
The King our uncle has called us here
to judge between us. I came here
not to fight with, but to be subdued by, you.
Now may the all-knowing god of love
concur with the subjects of this land
in their prophetic wisdom.
And let such concord lead to your
becoming queen and, as my consort,
reigning over my heart's desire.
And, toward your greater honor,
as our uncle yields the crown,
may it reward you for your courage,
and its empire be my love for you!

ESTRELLA. The least my heart can hope for
in response to so much courtesy
is to wish the crown were mine,
if only that I might rejoice
in giving it to you-
even though my love might still suspect
there's reason to mistrust you
in that portrait locket which you wear
dangling over your chest.

ASTOLFO. I can explain it all to you quite easily ...

[Sound of drums. Enter KING BASILIO *from center aisle* with retinue.
*Estrella and Astolfo speak while the king and retinue enter, no breath
between the lines. Baslio stops with back to audience until he speaks. The
audience is the court of Poland.*]

ESTRELLA. Wise Thales . . .

ASTOLFO. Learned Euclid ...

ESTRELLA. You who rule ...

ASTOLFO. . . . you who are immersed ...

ESTRELLA.. ... Among the signs ...

ASTOLFO. . . . among stars and zodiac ...

ESTRELLA. Plotting their course ...

ASTOLFO. . . . tracing their passage ...

ESTRELLA. Charting them ...

ASTOLFO. . . . weighing, judging them,
Overlapping

ESTRELLA. Permit me like ivy
humbly ... To cling around your waist.

ASTOLFO. Permit these arms, wide
opened ... Lovingly to kiss your feet.

BASILIO. Come, niece and nephew, embrace me.

So, while I confess I'm tired
of the heavy weight of all my years,
I beg only for your silence now.
When everything is told,
my story will no doubt amaze you.

*[Astolfo and Estrella fade back to their attendants, giving Basilio the whole stage
and audience to work, including the aisle.]*

Listen to me, then, beloved niece
and nephew, noble court of Poland,
my kinsmen, vassals, friends.

You knew the world in honoring
my years of study has given me
the surname Learned.

As you know, the science
I pursue and love the most
is subtle mathematics,
through which I steal from time and take

from fame their slow-moving powers to
divulge more and more
of what's new to man each day.
For now, perceiving in my tables
all the novelties of centuries
to come, I triumph over time,
forcing it to bring about
the happenings I have foretold.

By my late wife, I had an
ill-starred son, at whose birth
the heavens drained themselves of signs
and portents. Before emerging
in the lovely light of day
from the living sepulcher
of the womb, time and again
between waking and delirium,
she saw a monster in human form
burst savagely out of her womb,
while she, blood-drenched, dying, gave birth
to the human viper of this age.

The prophecies were all fulfilled.
His horoscope at birth was such.
that the sun, all bathed in blood,
clashed in furious combat
with the moon, the earth serving
as battleground. So the sun in frenzy
or delirium saw the birth
of Segismundo, who giving
indication of his nature
caused his mother's death,
as if to say ferociously,
"I am a man, since I begin by
repaying good with evil."

Hastening to my studies,
I discovered everywhere I looked
that Segismundo would be
the most imprudent of men,

the cruelest prince, the most ungodly
monarch, through whom this kingdom
would be split and self-divided,
and he, swept by fury and outrageous crimes,
would trample on me, and while I lay
prostrate before him, my face
become a carpet for his feet.

And so, believing that the fates
correctly prophesied
catastrophe by such dire omens,
I decided to imprison
the newborn monster and see
if human wisdom could dominate
the stars. The news went out
the child had died at birth.
I built a tower in the crags
and rocks of those mountains.
There Segismundo lives now, poor
and wretched in captivity,
tended, seen, and spoken to,
only by Clotaldo.

Now here are three things to consider:
first, that my respect for you is such
that I would spare you from servitude
and the oppression of a despot.
Second, it must be decided
if depriving my own flesh and blood
of rights sanctioned by the laws
of man and God would be in keeping
with Christian charity.
There's no law that says that I,
wishing to restrain another
from tyranny and cruelty,
should practice them myself.
Now here's the third and last point
and that's to see how much in error
I may have been in giving
easy credence to foretold events.

For though temperament impels him
to acts of violence, perhaps
they will not wholly master him;
even if the most unbending fate,
the most destructive planet, sway the will
in one direction, they cannot force
the will to do their bidding.

And so, having turned the matter
over so much, I have come to a
conclusion that may shock you.
Tomorrow I will bring him here, who,
without knowing he is my son
and your King, Segismundo
will be seated on my throne,
to govern and rule over you.

In this way I accomplish
three things, each answering
to the three questions I have put.

First, if he is prudent,
wise, benign, and thus wholly
disproves the prophecy about him,
you may all enjoy in him
your native prince as King.

The second thing is this:
if he's cruel, proud, outrageous, wild,
I shall then have faithfully discharged
my obligation, and as a king
in just authority, and his going back
to prison will not constitute an act
of cruelty but fair punishment.

[Baslio is back in center for the following. As he speaks of Estrella and Astolfo they come and stand to his side.]

And finally, if the Prince
turns out as I say, then I'll give you
monarchs more worthy
of the crown and scepter-namely these,
my niece and nephew, who,
conjuring their claims and pledging
holy matrimony together,

will be tendered what they have deserved.
This is my command to you as King,
this is my desire as father,
this is my advice as sage,
and this, my word to you as elder.

Soldiers/Ladies-in-Waiting. Give us our Prince, we would beg him now to be our King. *[Including Clotaldo etc. off left.]*

BASILIO. My subjects, I thank you all
for your esteem and favor.
And you, my mainstays and supports,
retire to your rooms meanwhile
until we meet the Prince tomorrow.

Soldiers/Ladies-in-Waiting. Long live King Basilio the Great. *[Including Clotaldo etc. off left.]*

[All except BASILIO exeunt with ESTRELLA and ASTOLFO the way they entered, just avoce the ladders. Soldiers & Ladies-in-Waiting transform into Servants. Enter CLOTALDO, ROSAURA, and CLARIN from extreme up left. Rosaura & Clarin stay up left, Clarin will be carrying the sword.]

CLOTALDO. Sire, may I speak with you?

BASILIO. Ah, Clotaldo, you are very welcome.

CLOTALDO. Sire, I have always felt welcome here
before, but now I fear
some sad, contrary fate
under law and the use of custom.

BASILIO. What's wrong?

CLOTALDO. A misfortune,
Sire, overwhelmed me out of what
appeared to be the greatest joy.
This handsome youth
recklessly burst into the tower,
Sire, and there saw the Prince,
and he is-

BASILIO. [overlapping Clotaldo] Don't disturb yourself,
Clotaldo. If this had happened
any other day I confess
I would have been annoyed.
But now that I have let the secret
out, it does not matter who knows it.
See me later; there are many things
I must consult with you about,
and many things for you to do.
And not to have you think
I blame you for any negligence,
I pardon your prisoners. [*exit back down the center aisle, and remain for next scene*]

CLOTALDO. Great Sire, long life to you!
[aside] Heaven's improved our luck;
I'll not tell him he's my son,
since that's no longer necessary.
[aloud] Strangers, you're free to go.

ROSAURA. I am in your debt eternally.

CLARIN. And I, infernally.
What's a few letters' difference,
more or less, between two friends? [*sits on left bench*]

ROSAURA. To you I owe my life, sir;
and since the credit's due to you,
I am your slave forever.

CLOTALDO. It is not your life you owe me,
for a man of honor can't be said
to be alive if his honor's lost.
And if as you have told me
you've come here to avenge an insult,
I have not spared your life,
for you brought none to spare;
a life disgraced is no life at all.

ROSAURA. Then I admit I have none,
though you have spared it for me.
Yet when I am avenged
and my honor's cleansed, my life
will seem a gift worth giving you.

CLOTALDO. *[gesturing to Clarin, leaving script behind, to slide the sword in Rosaura's belt. When that's done he returns to the bench.]*

Take back the burnished sword
you wore; I know it will suffice,
stained with your enemy's blood,
to avenge you.

ROSAURA. In your name I put it on again,
and on it swear to get my vengeance,
even though my enemy should be
more powerful.

CLOTALDO. Is he-by much?

ROSAURA. So much so, I may not tell you
that your sympathy and favor, which
move me so, won't be turned against me.

CLOTALDO. Telling me would only win me
further; it also would remove
the possibility of my giving
aid to your enemy.

ROSAURA. Then, not to have you think I value
your confidence so little,
know that my adversary is
no less a personage than
Astolfo, Duke of Muscovy!

CLOTALDO. If you were born a Muscovite,
the man who's ruler of your country
could not possibly dishonor you.

ROSAURA. Though he was my Prince, I know

he could and did dishonor me.

CLOTALDO. But he couldn't; even if
he'd slapped your face, that wouldn't be an insult.

ROSAURA. It was much worse than that.

CLOTALDO. Tell me.

ROSAURA. Yes, I'll tell you-though I cannot say
why I regard you with such respect,
so that I hardly dare to tell you
these outer garments are deceptive,
and do not belong to me.
Consider this enigma
carefully: if I'm not the person
I appear to be, and he came here
with the view of marrying
Estrella, he could dishonor me.
There, I have said enough.

[Exeunt ROSAURA and CLARIN]

CLOTALDO. Listen! Wait! Stop! What sort of maze
is this now, where reason finds no clue?
It is my honor that's at stake.
The enemy is powerful.
I'm only a subject, and she-
she's but a woman. Heavens above,
show me the way to go. [*Exits down center aisle*]

ACT TWO, SCENE ONE A room in the palace.

As another Spanish text is spoken, soldier/servants move the two ladders onto the stage at an angle forming wings and one of the benches center, flat on to the audience.

Enter Basilio and Clotaldo, speaking, from in the center aisle.

CLOTALDO. It's all done, just as you directed.

I brought him the pacifying drink,
which you ordered to be made,
of such drugs, which, instead of killing,
are merely sleep-inducing.

And so, taking this drug with me

I went down to Segismundo's narrow cell

and talked with him a while about

those humane studies taught him.

To elevate his spirit further

toward the enterprise you had in mind,

I proposed the subject

of the mighty eagle and its speed,

how, in scorning the lower regions of the wind,

it rises to the highest realms of fire.

I said, "Of course, as the king of birds,

he should take precedence over them.

That's his right "This was enough

for Segismundo, for on the subject

of royalty his discourse is full

of eager, proud ambition.

Thus moved by something in his blood

he replied, "So even in

the commonwealth of birds someone

requires they swear obedience.

The example comforts me

in my misery, since if I'm

anybody's subject here, that's

because I'm forced to be. On my own

I'd never bow to any man.'

I then administered the potion.

It scarcely left the glass

and touched his throat when all

his vital spirits fell asleep.
I brought him here
to your chamber where all
the majesty and grandeur owing
to his person were awaiting him.
He lies there now in your bed where,
when his torpor ends, he'll be treated,
just as if he were yourself.
But what is your purpose
in having Segismundo brought here
to the palace in this way?

BASILIO. I would like to know if the stars,
which can't be wrong and have given us
so many further signs of his bad character,
may still mitigate or even
slightly soften their influence, and be
allayed by his valor
and discretion, since man himself can
master his own fate.
This I would like to test
by bringing him here, where
he will know he is my son
and where he can show what
his real character is like.
If he's magnanimous he'll rule;
if he's tyrannical and cruel,
back to his chains he goes.
But now you'll ask why have I
brought him sleeping here this way.
If he discovers that he's my son today,
then wakes up tomorrow
to see himself again reduced
to misery in his own cell,
he'll come to know his true condition,
only to despair, for knowing who
he is would be no consolation.
So I wish to mitigate the possibility
by making him believe
that what he saw was something

that he dreamt. In that way
two things will be tested:
first, his true character,
for when he wakes he'll act out all
he's dreamt and thought; and secondly,
his consolation, for if he has
to see himself obeyed today
and subsequently back in prison,
he'll believe that he was dreaming,
and he'll be right in thinking so,
since everyone alive on earth,
Clotaldo, is only dreaming.
I'll withdraw, as you, his tutor, stay
and guide him through this new perplexity
by telling him the truth. For if
he knows the truth perhaps
he'll grasp the danger facing him
and more easily overcome it. *[Exits Stage Right]*

Enter CLARIN from Stage Left, climbs part way up the ladder.

CLARIN.

Four whacks I had to take
to get inside here; they were laid on
by a redheaded halberdier
showing off his livery and beard,
but I had to see what's going on.

CLOTALDO. *[aside]* There's Clarin, that girl's servant
My God! that girl, such a dealer
in misfortunes, bringing my disgrace
all the way from Poland!
[aloud] Tell me, Clarin, what's new?

CLARIN. What's new, sir, is that Rosaura,
who believes you sympathetic
to her cause of vengeance, has taken
your advice and put on again
her proper woman's clothing.

CLOTALDO. That's good-it's right she dresses properly.

CLARIN. Also, she's changed her name
and wisely made it known she is your niece,
whereby her reputation's risen
till now she's maid of honor here to
the incomparable Estrella.

Clotaldo. That's fine-at last I now can stand
responsible for her honor.

CLARIN. Further news:
she's favored so, being your niece,
she's treated like a queen, while I,
who came with her through thick and thin,
I am dying of hunger.
Nobody thinks of me at all.
They forget my name's Clarin,
meaning trumpet-and if I once
sound off, there's a tune will carry all
the news there is to Astolfo,
Estrella, and the King, because
Clarin the trumpet and Clarin the manservant
are two things which don't keep secrets well.

CLOTALDO. There's something in what you say.
I'll see to it you're better treated.
Meanwhile, you are in my service.

CLARIN. Yes, but here comes SEGISMUNDO.

SERVANTS (*from the sides they left on*) enter attending SEGISMUNDO,
who appears to be in a state of shock.
SEGISMUNDO. Heavenly God, what is this?
What's this I see, God help me!
My wonder makes me fear it less
than my belief, which doubts it more.
I, in this sumptuous palace?
I, in silks and in brocades?
I, surrounded by swarms of servants?
To say I'm dreaming would be untrue

I know quite well that I'm awake.
I'm Segismundo, am I not?
Heavens, tell me if I'm mistaken,
and tell me what happened to my brain
and my imagination
while I slept that I should
find myself in such a place?
But be that as it may,
let them all serve me, come what will.

Servant 1. [aside to SERVANT 2] What a melancholy chap this is!

Servant 2. Who wouldn't be, considering what's happened to him.

CLARIN. I wouldn't.

CLOTALDO. Your Majesty and Noble Highness:
let me kiss your hand and be
the first to render homage
and my obedience to you.

SEGISMUNDO. [aside] It's Clotaldo-but how can it be
that he who treated me
so miserably in prison
now addresses me respectfully?
What is happening to me?

CLOTALDO. In the huge bewilderment
brought on by your new situation
you'll find your reason and your
every utterance beset by doubt.
I wish, if possible, to free you
from all doubt, because, Sire, you should know
you are the Crown Prince of Poland.
If you were kept from others
and in seclusion till now,
that was due to fate's bad auguries,
foretelling numberless disasters
for this kingdom once the proud laurel
crowned your august brows. But now,

trusting that your prudence
may yet overcome the stars,
you were brought here to this palace
from the tower where you lived,
My Lord the King, your father,
will come to see you, Segismundo,
and from him you'll learn the rest.

SEGISMUNDO. The rest? You infamous vile traitor!
Now that I know who I am, what more
do I need to learn in order
to express my pride and power from
now on? How do you explain
your treason to this country,
you who hid from me, and so denied,
the rank due me by reason and law?

CLOTALDO. [overlapping] Alas, unhappy me!

SEGISMUNDO. You played treason with the law,
a wheedling game with the King,
and a cruel one with me.
And so the law, the King, and I,
after such monstrous misdeeds,
condemn you now to die between
these two bare hands of mine.

Servant 2. But, my Lord,

SEGISMUNDO. Don't interfere now-
anybody. It's useless. By God,
if any of you get in front
of me, I'll throw you out the window!

CLOTALDO. Alas, for you
cannot know that all this
arrogance you turn on me
is only something that you're dreaming. [Exits Stage Right]

Servant 2. But you ought to know-

SEGISMUNDO. Get out of here!

Servant 2. -that he was obeying the King.

SEGISMUNDO. If his law's unjust, the King
is not to be obeyed.
Besides, I was the Prince.

Servant 2. It's not for him to undertake
to say if any law is good or bad.

SEGISMUNDO. I suspect something bad's
about to happen to you,
since you go on arguing with me.

CLARIN. The Prince is altogether right,
and you are in the wrong.

Servant 2. And who asked you to talk?

CLARIN. I just decided to.

SEGISMUNDO. And you,
who are you, tell me?

CLARIN. A meddling
snoop-I do that job best. In fact,
I'm the biggest busybody
the world has ever known.

SEGISMUNDO. You're the only one who
pleases me in this brave new world
of moribunds.

CLARIN. Sire, I am the greatest pleaser
of whole worlds of Segismundos.

[Enter ASTOLFO, *from stage left*]
ASTOLFO. Oh Prince and sun of Poland,

how fortunate is this day
when you appear and fill it,
from one horizon to the other,
with joyful and blessed splendor!

SEGISMUNDO. God save you.

ASTOLFO. Of course you do not
know me. Only that excuses you
from honoring me properly.
I am Astolfo, born Duke
of Muscovy and your cousin.
We are of equal rank.

SEGISMUNDO. If my "God save you" doesn't please you
and you complain and make so much
of who you are, next time you see me
I'll say, "May God not save you!"

Servant 2. [aside to SEGISMUNDO] Sire, Astolfo merits...

SEGISMUNDO. I couldn't stand the way he came in
and talked so pompously.

Servant 1. He's a grandee.

SEGISMUNDO. And I am grander.

Servant 2. However that may be, it would be
better if more respect were shown
between you than among the rest.

SEGISMUNDO. And who asked for your opinion?

Enter ESTRELLA. [*from Stage Right*]
ESTRELLA. Your Highness, Noble Sire,
you are most welcome to this throne,
which so gratefully receives you.
and wishes to secure you,

SEGISMUNDO. [to CLARIN] Now you tell me,
who is this proud beauty, this human
goddess at whose lovely feet
Heaven strews its radiance?

CLARIN. Sire, your star cousin, Estrella.

SEGISMUNDO. But more like the sun than a star.
My heart wells up to your well-wishing
my well-being, though seeing you
is the only welcome thing
I can admit today.
Estrella, you can rise
and in your dawning fill
the brightest star with happiness.
Come, let me kiss that hand of yours.

Servant 2. [aloud] Consider, Sire, it is not right
to take such liberties,
especially with Astolfo here ...

SEGISMUNDO. Haven't I already told you
I don't care for your opinions?

Servant 2. What I say is no more than right.

SEGISMUNDO. That sort of thing infuriates me.
Nothing's right if it goes against
the things I want.

Servant 2. But I heard you say,
Sire, that one must honor and obey
only what is right and just.

SEGISMUNDO. You also heard me say
I'd throw anyone off
this balcony who gets me mad.

Servant 2. Such a thing as that just can't be done
to someone like myself.

SEGISMUNDO. No?

Well, by God, then I'll just try it.

[SEGISMUNDO 'lifts him up bodily and goes out' *Stage Left, the others, except Astolfo follow but don't actually get off stage, making exclams & noises, then return immediately. Estrella exits Stage Right calling for the king*]

SEGISMUNDO. [returning] He fell from the balcony right into the sea. So, by God, it could be done after all!

ASTOLFO. Now you should try restraining your violent temper. There's as much difference between men and beasts as between living in the wilds and in a palace.

SEGISMUNDO. Now if you get so righteous every time you say a word, maybe you'll find yourself without a head to hang your hat on.

[Exit ASTOLFO *Stage Left, Enter BASILIO from Stage Right.*]

BASILIO. What has been going on here?

SEGISMUNDO. Nothing's going on. There was a man who got me mad, so I threw him off that balcony.

CLARIN. Be careful, that's the King.

BASILIO. So your arrival here has cost a man his life, and on the first day too.

SEGISMUNDO. The man said it just couldn't be done, so I did it and won the bet.

BASILIO. Prince, I am greatly grieved.

I came to see you, supposing
that being warned against
the ascendancy of certain stars,
you were overcoming adverse fate;
but I find you in a rage instead,
and that your first act here has been a heinous murder.
How can I welcome you
with open arms, knowing that yours,
so cruelly skilled, have dealt out death?

SEGISMUNDO. I can do without your fond embrace,
as I've done without it till now,
because a father who can treat me
so scornfully he has me
brought up like an animal,
chained up like a freak, and wanting
to see me dead-what does it matter
to me if he embraces me or not,
when he's deprived me of the right
to be a human being?

BASILIO. God in Heaven, if only
I'd never given you a life,
I'd never have to hear your voice
or look at your outrageous face.

SEGISMUNDO. If you'd never given me a life
I'd have no complaint against you,
but since you did and then
deprived me of it, I must complain.
If giving something freely
is a rare and noble thing,
to take it back again
is as base as one can be.

BASILIO. Is this the way you thank me
for making you a prince who were
a poor and lowly prisoner?

SEGISMUNDO. But what's there to thank you for?

What are you really giving me,
tyrant over my free will,
now that you've grown so old and feeble
that you're dying? Are you giving me any
thing that isn't mine?
You're my father and my King.
And so all this majesty
is what justice and the law
of nature already grant me.
I am not obliged to you at all,
but could call you to account instead
for all the years you've robbed me
of liberty and life and honor.

BASILIO. Insolent barbarian,
you've confirmed the prophecy
of Heaven, to which I now appeal
to look at you, brash and puffed up
with pride. Though now you know
the truth about yourself
and are completely undeceived,
and though you see yourself preferred
above all others, I am warning you,
be moderate and humble,
for you may find you're only dreaming
though you think yourself awake.

SEGISMUNDO.[Aside] Can it be I'm only dreaming
though I think myself awake?
[to Basilio] I am not dreaming, for I know
and feel what I have been and
I know who I am, and however
you bemoan it and regret it,
you cannot rob me of the fact
that I am the born heir to this throne.
And if you once had me bound in chains,
that was because I had
no notion who I was,
but now I know exactly who I am,
and that's knowing I am

partly beast and partly man.

Basilio exits Stage Right. Enter ROSAURA from Stage Left, dressed as a woman.

ROSAURA. [aside] Here I come to find Estrella,
but dreading to think that
Astolfo may find me. Clotaldo
wishes him not to know who I am.

CLARIN. [to SEGISMUNDO]
What is it here you've liked most among
the things you've seen and wondered at?

SEGISMUNDO. Nothing has amazed me here
that I had not foreseen.
But if there were anything
in this world that may have struck me,
it's a woman's beauty.

ROSAURA realizes the prince is looking at her so she starts to exit.
Stop, woman-listen to me!
Coming and going so fast, you push
sunrise and sunset together.
With the dawn and the dusk colliding
that way, you cut short my day.
[aside] Her beauty-I've seen it somewhere before.
[aloud] Woman-the most endearing word
a man can utter-who are you?
Though I do not know you,
I adore you, claiming you
on faith alone, and luckily
I have the feeling that
I've seen you once before.
Who are you, lovely woman?

ROSAURA. Simply an unhappy lady
in Estrella's retinue.

SEGISMUNDO. Say no such thing. Say you are the sun
from whose fire that other star,
Estrella, borrows its flamboyance,

bathing in the splendor of your light.
How is it that you serve
one of lesser beauty, you
who all in one are lovelier
than sun and stars, diamond and rose?

[CLOTALDO *appears from Stage Right & stays up by the ladder.*]

CLOTALDO. [aside] I must do something to restrain him;
I'm responsible, after all,
I brought him up .. . But what's this now?

ROSAURA. I esteem your favor,
but let silence fill the rhetoric of my reply.
Speaking best is speaking least.

SEGISMUNDO. Stay here, you do not have to leave!

ROSAURA. I must ask that permission, Sire.

SEGISMUNDO. Your leaving me abruptly
is not asking it but taking
such permission for granted.

ROSAURA. If you don't give it, I must take it.

SEGISMUNDO. You'll turn my courtesy
to impropriety; resistance
is a poison I can't swallow.

ROSAURA. But if that poison, full of rage
and hate and fury, should overcome
your patience, you still could not,
you would not dare, dishonor me.

SEGISMUNDO. I'll try it, just to see if I can
once you make me lose the awe
I feel for your beauty, for when
a thing's impossible I find
the challenge to overcome it
irresistible; only today

I threw a man off that balcony
who said I couldn't do it.
So, just to find out if I can-what
could be simpler?-I'll let your virtue
go flying out the window.

[As Clotaldo speaks Segismundo advances on Rosaura who retreats]

CLOTALDO. [aside] Lord,
What am I to do now that mad lust
threatens my honor a second time?

ROSAURA. Then the prophecy was true
foretelling how your tyranny
would bring to this poor kingdom
riots of monstrous crimes and deaths,
treason and furious contention.
But what's a man like you to do
who is human in name only,
insolent, insensitive,
cruel, impulsive, savage, and
tyrannical, someone
born and bred among beasts?

SEGISMUNDO. To keep you from insulting me
I spoke to you gently,
hoping that way I might win you.
But if despite my courtesy
you still accuse me of such things,
then, by God, I'll give you reason to.
All of you now, leave us!
And lock that door behind you.
let no one enter.

*[Exeunt CLARIN Stage Right and SERVANTS to the sides they came in on
and become Soldiers again]*

ROSAURA. Take care-

SEGISMUNDO. I'm a raging brute-no use trying to chain me down.

[approaching Segismundo, getting between he and Rosaura]

CLOTALDO. Sire, look, be lenient.

SEGISMUNDO. You've provoked me once again,
you crazy, weak old man.
Do my cruelty and fury
mean so little to you?
How did you get in here?

CLOTALDO. This woman's cries brought me here
to urge you to be more moderate
for all this may only be a dream.

SEGISMUNDO. Spouting that way about illusions
makes me fighting mad! Now let's see if
killing you is real or just a dream.

[As SEGISMUNDO tries to draw his dagger,
CLOTALDO stops him, falling to his knees.]

SEGISMUNDO. Take your crazy
hand off my dagger! Hands off me,
I tell you -- enemy, doddering
old idiot, or you'll see [They fight]
these arms of mine crushing you to
death!

ROSAURA. Oh God in Heaven!
Help, oh, come and
help him! Clotaldo is being murdered!
[Exit Stage Right]

[CLOTALDO falls to the ground, ASTOLFO enters from Stage Left and
stands between them.]

ASTOLFO. Well, what's this, magnanimous Prince?
Is this the way to stain your keen blade,
in an old man's frozen blood?
Come, sheathe that shining knife of yours.

SEGISMUNDO. Not till it runs with your putrid blood.

ASTOLFO. Having put his life in my
protection should do him
some further good.

SEGISMUNDO. Your own death

will be that further good.
Now I can avenge myself
for your piquing me before,
by killing you as well.

[ASTOLFO draws his sword and they begin to duel.

Enter BASILIO with ESTRELLA from Stage Right.]

BASILIO. What, drawn swords in my presence?
What's the reason for this?

ASTOLFO. Nothing, Sire, now that you are here.
[They sheathe their swords.]

SEGISMUNDO. A great deal-even though you're here, Sire.
I was about to kill that old man.

BASILIO. And you had no respect for those white hairs?

SEGISMUNDO. Such futile nonsense-expecting me
to honor someone's white hairs!
[to the KING] Perhaps some day you'll see your own
become a carpet for my feet. [Exit Stage Left]

BASILIO. And before you see that day arrive,
back to your old sleep you'll go,
where all that's happened to you here
will come to seem like all the glories
of this world, something that you dreamed.
[Exeunt the KING with CLOTALDO Stage Right]

ASTOLFO. How rarely fate deceives us
in foretelling our misfortunes,
as certain to be right
in predicting what is evil
as to be wrong in predicting good.
In such a light, Estrella,
consider my case: when, madame,
I beheld your gaze flashing
such brilliant rays, it turned the sun
into a shade and the sky

into a passing cloud;
so fate seemed to promise great success.
Fate in this was right, but also wrong:
right, when promising such favors,
and wrong, when in effect it deals out
nothing but disdain and scorn.

ESTRELLA. I do not doubt your gallantries
contain a certain weight of truth,
but they must be intended
for that other lady
whose portrait you were wearing
in a locket on a chain
that hung around your neck
when you came to see me.
And so, Astolfo, she alone
deserves your compliments.

ASTOLFO. I'll see to it that portrait
is replaced with the image
of your loveliness against my breast.
When Estrella lights the way
shadows disappear, just as stars do
when the sun itself arrives.
Let me go and get the locket now.
[aside] Forgive me, beautiful Rosaura,
but when it comes to that,
both men and women are untrue
who are absent from each other. [Exit Stage Left]

[Enter ROSAURA from Stage Right]
ESTRELLA. Astrea!

ROSAURA. My lady.

ESTRELLA. I'm so glad it's you, since you're
the only one I can confide in.

ROSAURA. My lady, you honor me in serving you.

ESTRELLA. Astrea,
in the short time I have known you,
you've won my trust completely.
And so, knowing what you are,
I dare confide in you what I have
often kept even from myself.

ROSAURA. I am all obedience.

ESTRELLA. Then to tell this to you briefly:
Astolfo, my cousin-
he and I are to be married.
The first day we met I was troubled
that he wore the portrait
of another woman round his neck.
Since he's so gallant and in love
with me, he's gone to get the portrait
and will bring it to me here. His giving it to me
will embarrass me no end.
Please stay behind and when he comes,
tell him to give it to you. [EXIT Stage Right]

ROSAURA. Good God,
what am I to do now?
If I say who I am,
I offend Clotaldo,
whom I must loyally support
since he saved my life; and he tells me
to wait silently until
my honor has been satisfied.
But if I do not tell Astolfo
who I am, and he finds out,
how can I continue this pretense?
For though my voice, my tongue, my eyes
deny it, my heart will tell him
that I lie. What shall I do?
Heaven help me.

Enter ASTOLFO from Stage Left with the portrait.
ASTOLFO. Here, madame, is the portrait.

But . . . oh God!

ROSAURA. What's so astonishing,
Your Grace? What stops you?

ASTOLFO. Hearing you, Rosaura,
and seeing you.

ROSAURA. I, Rosaura?
Your Grace must be mistaken, thinking
I'm some other lady. No, I'm Astrea.

ASTOLFO. Rosaura, stop pretending,
one's heart can never lie.

ROSAURA. Since I cannot understand Your Grace
I don't know how to answer you.
I can only tell you
that Estrella, brilliant and beautiful
as Venus, has asked me to wait
for you in her stead; she asked me
to accept the portrait for her
which Your Grace would give me.

ASTOLFO. Try as you will, Rosaura,
you are no good at pretending!
Tell your eyes to harmonize
with the music of your voice.
Otherwise they grow discordant
and throw their instrument out of tune,
trying to temper their false notes
with the truth of feeling in it.

ROSAURA. As I've said, I'm waiting only for the portrait.

ASTOLFO. All right, then,
since you wish to carry this pretense
to its conclusion, I'll go along.
So, Astrea, go tell the Princess,
in answer to her request,

that I respect her too much to send
a mere likeness, and instead,
because I value and esteem her,
I am sending the original.

ROSAURA. A bold man with a fixed purpose,
who bravely undertakes a mission,
and then finds a substitute is offered,
even one of greater value,
would feel balked and foolish
returning without the prize
he set out to obtain.
I was asked to get the portrait;
if I bring back the original,
though it be more valuable,
my mission is not accomplished.
And so, Your Grace, give me the portrait.
I cannot return without it.

ASTOLFO. But if I don't give it to you,
how are you to get it?

ROSAURA. This way! Let go of it,
you scoundrel!

ASTOLFO. Impossible!

ROSAURA. So help me, I will not see it fall
into another woman's hands!

ASTOLFO. You're a real terror!

ROSAURA. And you're a fiend!

[She tries to take the portrait from him. As they struggle over the portrait.
ESTRELLA enters from Stage Right.

ESTRELLA. Astolfo, Astrea, what is this?

ROSAURA. You directed me to wait here
for Astolfo to request a portrait for you.

Being alone, it occurred to me
that I happened to have my own
here in my sleeve. I intended
to look at it, like anyone
alone trying to amuse himself.
It fell from my hand to the ground.
Coming in just then to give you
the portrait of some other woman,
Astolfo picked mine up, and now
is not only set against
surrendering the one
you asked for but also
wants to keep the other one.
I pleaded and protested,
but he would not give it back.
In my anger and annoyance
I tried to snatch it from him.
The one he's holding in his hand
is mine; you can tell by looking
if it isn't a likeness of me.

ESTRELLA. Let me have that portrait, Astolfo.

[She takes it out of his hand.]

ASTOLFO. Madame ...

ROSAURA. Would you say it's me?

ESTRELLA. Who would doubt it?

ROSAURA. Now have him give you the other one.

ESTRELLA. Take your portrait, and go.

ROSAURA. [aside] I've got it back now; let come what will. [Exit Stage Left]

ESTRELLA. Now give me the portrait I asked for.
Though I'll never look at it
or talk to you again, I insist
I won't permit you to keep it,
having been fool enough to beg you for it.

ASTOLFO. Beautiful Estrella,
though I wish for nothing better
than to serve you obediently,
I cannot possibly give up
the portrait you ask for, because-

ESTRELLA. You are a villain and, as a suitor,
beneath contempt. I don't want it now.
If I had it, it would only
remind me how I had to ask you for it. [Exit Right]

ASTOLFO. Wait, listen, look, let me say . . .
The good Lord bless you, Rosaura!
How, or why in the world,
did you come to Poland now?
Just to ruin me and yourself? [Exit Stage Left]

ACT TWO, SCENE TWO The Prince's cell in the tower.
Another passage is read in Spanish. The ladders are placed up center, the benches
are moved to the sides of the stage, at an angle. SEGISMUNDO, in chains and
animal skins, as in the beginning, lies stretched out on the ground; CLOTALDO
enters with two SOLDIERS and CLARIN from Stage Right.

CLOTALDO. You can leave him here now,
His insolent pride ending
where it began.

CLARIN. Better not wake up, Segismundo,
and see how lost you are, your luck
all gone, and your imaginary
glory passing like life's shadow,
and like death, all in a flash.

CLOTALDO. A man who can turn phrases like that
deserves to have a place apart,
a room where he can go on prattling.
[to the SOLDIERS] Take hold of this man and
lock him up in that cell.

CLARIN. But why me?

CLOTALDO. Because a tight prison cell
is just the place for trumpeters
who want to blare their secrets out.

CLARIN. Did I, by any chance, offer
to kill my father? No.
Was I the one who picked up
little Icarus and threw him
off the balcony? Is this a dream
or am I only sleeping?
What's the point of locking me up?

CLOTALDO. Clarin, you're a trumpeter.

CLARIN. Well, then. I'll play the cornet,
and a muted one at that;
as an instrument it's miserable!

[They take him away, and leave him upstage of the ladders, exit Stage Right.
Enter BASILIO from Stage Right, masked.]

BASILIO. Clotaldo!

CLOTALDO. Sire!

BASILIO. Alas, foolish curiosity
brought me here like this
to see what's happening to Segismundo.

CLOTALDO. See him lying there in complete abjection.

BASILIO. Unhappy Prince-oh, the fatal hour
you were born!

CLOTALDO. Sire, he's restless and talking to himself.

BASILIO. What will he be dreaming now? Let's listen to what he says.

SEGISMUNDO. [in his sleep] A just prince must punish tyrants.
Clotaldo must be put to death,
and my father kiss my feet.
Once my uncontested valor
finds its way into the vast
theatre of this world to clinch
its vengeance, they'll all see
how Prince Segismundo subjugates
his father. [waking] But, good Lord,
what's this? Where am I now?

BASILIO. [to Clotaldo] He must not see me. You know
what's to be done. [He withdraws stage right.]

SEGISMUNDO. Is this really me? Can I be he
who now returns to see himself
reduced to such a state, bound up
and clapped in chains? God Almighty,
what things have I been dreaming!
Is it time for me to waken now?

CLOTALDO. Yes, it's time for you to waken.
Or would you spend the whole day sleeping?
Have you been awake at all
since I began that disquisition
on the eagle? Were you left behind
while I was following its slow flight?

SEGISMUNDO. Yes, nor have I wakened yet,
Clotaldo, for if I grasp
your meaning, I must be still asleep.
In that I can't be much mistaken,
for if what I felt and saw so clear
was something that I dreamt,
then what I'm looking at this moment
would be unreal; I dream that I'm awake.

CLOTALDO. Tell me what you dreamt.

SEGISMUNDO. If I thought it was a dream

I'd never tell you what I dreamt.
But what I saw, Clotaldo
yes, I'll tell you that. I woke,
I saw myself lying in a bed-
And gathered there around me
were a thousand noblemen
bowing and calling me their Prince.
Then you yourself appeared,
and changed my quiet numbness into
an ecstasy by telling me
that I was the Prince of Poland.

CLOTALDO. Surely you rewarded me
for bringing you such news.

SEGISMUNDO. Just the opposite. In a rage
I tried to kill you twice
for being such a traitor.

CLOTALDO. Did I deserve the punishment?

SEGISMUNDO. I was lord and master there
of everybody. And I took
revenge on all of them,
except for a woman that I loved ...
I know that that was true, for
it's the only thing that stays with me.
All the rest has disappeared.

[Basilio exits Stage Right]

CLOTALDO. So much talk
about eagles put you to sleep
and made you dream of empire. Still
it would be better, Segismundo,
if you could dream, instead,
of honoring the one
who took such pains to bring you up;
for even in a dream, remember,
it's still worth doing what is right.

SEGISMUNDO. True enough. And so, put down
the beast in us, its avidity
and mad ambition, since we may
just happen to dream again,
as we surely will, for the world
we live in is so curious
that to live is but to dream.
And all that's happened to me tells me
that while he lives man dreams
what he is until he awakens.
The King dreams he's a king,
and so he lives with this illusion,
making rules, putting things in order,
governing, while all the praise
he's showered with is only lent him,
written on the wind, and by death,
transformed to dust and ashes.
The rich man dreams he's wealthy with
all the cares it brings him. The poor man
dreams he's suffering his misery
and poverty. The fellow
who improves his lot is dreaming,
and the man who toils and only
hopes to, is dreaming too.
And dreaming too, the man
who injures and offends.
And so, in this world, finally,
each man dreams the thing he is,
though no one sees it so.
I dream that I am here
manacled in this cell,
and I dreamed I saw myself
before, much better off.
What is life? A frenzy.
What is life? An illusion,
fiction, passing shadow,
and the greatest good the merest dot,
for all of life's a dream, and dreams
themselves are only part of dreaming. [Exeunt Down Center]

ACT THREE, SCENE ONE *There will be no pause in the action.* Clarin enters from behind the ladders, and climbs one.

CLARIN. I'm kept a prisoner
in an enchanted tower
because of what I know.
To think a man like me should
have to die of hunger and stay alive!
As for me I'm fainting out of
hunger, because I told the truth.
I find I'm in prison where all day
I'm taught the philosophic text
of No-eateries, and all night,
the stuff of No-dineries.
If silence is ever canonized
in a new calendar,
Saint Secrecy should be
my patron saint because
I celebrate his day,
not by feasting but by fasting.
Still, I deserve this punishment
because instead of blabbing, I shut
my mouth, which for a servant
is the greatest sacrilege.

[The sound of bugles, drums and voices outside.]
Soldier 1. [offstage] Here's the tower where they put him.
Knock the door down, everyone, and let's go in.

CLARIN. Good Heavens
its clear they're looking for me,
since they say I'm in here.
What do they want of me?

Soldier 1. Now go in.
[Soldiers enter from both sides of the stage.]

Soldier 2. Here he is.

CLARIN. Here he isn't.

All Soldiers. Sire ...

CLARIN. [aside] Are they drunk, or what?

Soldier 1. You are our Prince.
We want you and won't accept
anyone but a native ruler-
no foreigners! We all kiss your feet.

All Soldiers. Long live our mighty Prince!

CLARIN. [aside] Good God, they really mean it!
Is it customary in these parts
to grab someone every day
and make him a prince, then
throw him back into the tower?
Now I see that's just what happens.
Well, so that's the part I'll play. [*Climbs down from the ladder.*]

Soldiers. We're at your feet. Let us have them ...

CLARIN. Impossible. I need my feet.
Besides, what good's a footless prince?

Soldier 2. We've told your father, straight out,
we'll recognize only you as Prince,
and not someone from Muscovy.

CLARIN. You told my father?
Oh, how disrespectful of you!
Then you're nothing but riffraff.

Soldier 1. But it was out of loyalty
we said it-straight from the heart.

CLARIN. Loyalty? If so, you're pardoned.

Soldier 2. Come with us and reclaim your kingdom.
Long live Segismundo!

All. Hurray, Segismundo!

CLARIN. [aside] So Segismundo's the one you're after? Oh, well, then Segismundo must be the name they give all their fictitious princes.

Enter SEGISMUNDO from Center Aisle.
SEGISMUNDO. Who is it here that's calling Segismundo!

CLARIN. [aside] Well I'll be a pseudo-SEGISMUNDO.

Soldier 1. Now who is Segismundo?

SEGISMUNDO. I am.

Soldier 2. [to CLARIN] You pretentious idiot, how dare you impersonate Segismundo?

CLARIN. Me, Segismundo?
I deny that! Why, you were the ones who segismundozed me in the first place. So you're the pretentious idiots, not me.

Soldier 1. Great Prince Segismundo, we acclaim you as our sovereign. The great King Basilio, seeks to deprive you of your lawful right to succeed him and to give it to Astolfo. But the populace has no wish to see a foreigner come here to rule over them. And thus, nobly scorning fate's ominous predictions, they've come to assist you by their arms, so that you may leave this tower and reclaim the kingly crown and scepter.

SEGISMUNDO. Heavenly God, do you wish me
once again to dream of grandeur
which time must rip asunder?
Do you wish me once again
to glimpse half-lit among the shadows
that pomp and majesty
which vanish with the wind?
This must not, no, it must not happen!
I cannot bear to see myself
bound down again by a private fate.
Knowing as I do that life's a dream,
I say to you, be gone and leave me,
vague shadows, who now pretend
these dead senses have a voice
and body, when the truth is they are
voiceless and incorporeal.
I understand you now, yes,
I understand you and I know now
that this game's the game you play
with anyone who falls asleep.
For me, no more pretenses, no more
deceptions. My eyes are wide open.
I've learned my lesson well.
I know that life's a dream.

Soldier 2. If you think we're deceiving you,
just cast your eyes up to
those mighty mountains and see
all the people waiting there
for your commands.

SEGISMUNDO. Yes, and this
is just the thing I saw before,
as clearly and distinctly
as I see it now, and it was all
a dream.

Soldier 2. Great events, my lord,
always are foreseen this way.

That is why, perhaps, you saw them
in your dream first.

SEGISMUNDO. You're right.
This was all foreseen; and just in case
it turns out to be true,
since life's so short, let's dream,
my soul, let's dream that dream again,
but this time knowing the pleasure's brief
from which we suddenly must waken.
Thus forewarned, and knowing that
however much it seems assured
all power is only lent
and must be given back to
its donor, let's dare do anything.
My subjects, I appreciate
your loyalty to me.
With my aggressiveness and skill,
I'm the one to lead you
out of servitude to foreigners.
Strike the call to arms; you'll soon have proof
of how great-hearted my valor is.
I intend to wage war against
my father, dragging whatever truth
there is out of the stars of Heaven.
I'll see him grovel at my feet ...

All. Long live Segismundo!

Enter CLOTALDO from the center aisle.
CLOTALDO. Good Lord, what's all this uproar?

SEGISMUNDO. Clotaldo.

CLARIN. [aside] I'll bet he throws him off the cliff.

CLOTALDO. I come to lie down at your feet, Sire,
knowing I must die.

SEGISMUNDO. Get up,

little father, get up from the ground,
for you're to be my guide,
my true North Star. I entrust you
with my first efforts, aware of
how much I owe to your loyalty
for bringing me up. Come, embrace me.

CLOTALDO. What's that you say?

SEGISMUNDO. That I'm dreaming,
and "Even in a dream, remember,
it's still worth doing what is right."

CLOTALDO. Indeed, Sire, if doing right
is to be your motto, then surely
it should not offend you if the plea
I make now is in the same cause.
Wage war against your father?
I must tell you that I cannot serve
against my King, thus cannot help you.
I am at your feet. Kill me!

SEGISMUNDO. [aside] Traitor! Villain! Ingrate!
God knows, I should control myself,
I don't even know if I'm awake.
[aloud] Clotaldo, your courage
is enviable, thank you.
Go now and serve the King;
we'll meet again in combat. [Clotaldo exits Left]
You, there! [to the soldiers] Strike the call to arms!
Fortune, we go to rule!
Do not wake me, if I sleep,
and if it's real, don't put me
to sleep again; but whether real
or not, to do the right thing
is all that matters.

[Sigismundo, Soldier 1& 2 exit down center, the other two soldiers start
down the aisle but stop half way so they can return and move the ladders.
CLARIN shrugs his shoulders and follows Sigismundo.]

ACT THREE, SCENE TWO A hall in the royal palace.

As another passage is read in Spanish the ladders are moved off the sides (the soldiers stay off those sides), the benches remain where they are. Enter BASILIO from Stage Right and ASTOLFO from Stage Left.

BASILIO. Astolfo, tell me, what prudence
could restrain a wild horse's fury?
You can hear the echoes breaking
far across the mountains: from one side,
Segismundo! and from the other,
Astolfo! while the throne room,
split by duplicity and horror,
becomes again the grisly stage where
urgent fate enacts its tragedies.

ASTOLFO. Then, Sire, we'll defer our happiness.
For if Poland, which I hope to rule,
now withholds obedience to me,
it's because I have to win it first.
Give me a horse, and let me show
my fearlessness, hurling lightning, as
I go, behind my shield of thunder. [Exits Right]

BASILIO. What must be admits no remedy;
what's foreseen magnifies the peril,
impossible to cope with,
while to evade it only brings it on.
The risk I tried to shun meets me head on;
and I have fallen in the trap
I took such pains to sidestep.
Thus I've destroyed my country and myself.

Enter ESTRELLA from Stage Right .

ESTRELLA. If your Majesty in person
does not intervene to halt
this riot swelling with each
new band fighting in the streets
and squares, you'll see your kingdom
swimming in scarlet waves, and caked

in its own purpling blood.

Enter CLOTALDO from Stage Left.

CLOTALDO. Thank God I've reached you here alive!

BASILIO. Ah, Clotaldo, what news
have you of Segismundo?

CLOTALDO. A blind and monstrous mob
poured into the tower; out of
its recesses they plucked their Prince,
who, when he saw himself
a second time restored to grandeur,
relentlessly displayed his valor
and hoarsely swore he'd drag what truth
there is out of the stars of Heaven.

BASILIO. Give me my horse. Relentless too,
I go in person to put down
an ungrateful son; and, to defend
my crown, will show that where knowledge failed,
my cold steel must succeed. [Exit Right]

ESTRELLA. And at his royal side, the Sun God,
I'll be the invincible Bellona;
hoping to frame my name with his
in glory, I'll stretch my wings
and fly like Pallas Athena,
war goddess and protector.

[Exits Right as the call to arms is sounded ROSAURA enters Left, detaining
CLOTALDO.

ROSAURA. I know that war is everywhere,
but though your valor beckons you
impatiently, listen to me first.
You well remember how I came
to Poland, poor, unhappy,
and humiliated, and how,
shielded by your valor,
I took refuge in your sympathy.

Astolfo still persists in trampling
on my honor by going nightly
to the garden to meet Estrella.
I've taken the garden key
and can now make it possible
for you to enter there
and wipe my cares away.
So, with daring, courage, strength,
you will restore my honor,
determined as you are
to avenge me by killing him.

CLOTALDO. It's true, Rosaura, that from
the moment I met you
I was inclined to do all
I possibly could for you.
Meanwhile I tried to think of some way
to restore your honor, even though
it should involve murdering Astolfo.
But oh, it must have been the madness
of senility in me! So here I was,
about to kill him when ... when
Segismundo tried to murder me.
And there was Astolfo, on the spot,
to save me- How could I kill the man
who saved my life? So here I am,
split between duty and devotion:
what I owe you, since I gave you life,
and what I owe him, who gave me life.

ROSAURA. I'm sure I needn't tell a man
of honor that when it's nobler
to give, it's sheer abjection to receive.
By that token, he insults you,
and by it you remain obliged to me
for having given me
what you received from him.
Therefore, as giving is worthier
than taking, you must apply yourself
to the mending of my honor,

a cause far worthier than his.

CLOTALDO. While nobility lives on giving,
gratitude depends on taking
what's given. And having learned by now
how to be the giver, let me now be known
as well for being grateful.
That I can achieve, as I achieved
nobility, by way of being
generous again, and thereby show
I love both giving and receiving.

ROSAURA. When you granted me my life,
you told me then yourself
that to live disgraced
was not to live at all.
Therefore, I received nothing from you.

CLOTALDO. You've won; first I'll be generous.
Rosaura, you will have my estate,
but live in a convent.
Surely at times like these,
with the kingdom so divided,
I could not, as a born nobleman,
add to my country's misfortunes.
In following my proposal,
I continue loyal to the crown,
generous to you, and grateful
to Astolfo. Now choose this way
which best suits you between extremes.
If I were your father, God knows
I couldn't do more for you.

ROSAURA. If you were my father,
I'd endure this insult silently.
But since you're not, I won't.

CLOTALDO. Then what do you intend to do?

ROSAURA. Kill the Duke.

CLOTALDO. A woman
who has never known her father,
and so courageous?

ROSAURA. Yes.

CLOTALDO. What inspires you?

ROSAURA. My good name.

CLOTALDO. Think of Astolfo as . . .

ROSAURA. The man who utterly disgraced me.

CLOTALDO... . your King and Estrella's husband.

ROSAURA. That, by God, he'll never be!

CLOTALDO. This is madness!

ROSAURA. I know it is.

CLOTALDO. Well, control it.

ROSAURA. I can't.

CLOTALDO. Then you'll lose ...

ROSAURA. Yes, I know.

CLOTALDO. ... your life and honor.

ROSAURA. Yes, of course.

CLOTALDO. Why? What do you want?

ROSAURA. To die.

CLOTALDO. That's sheer spite.

ROSAURA. No, it's honor.

CLOTALDO. It's hysteria.

ROSAURA. It's self-respect.

CLOTALDO. You're in a frenzy.

ROSAURA. Angry, outraged!

CLOTALDO. So there's no way to curb
your blind passion?

ROSAURA. No, there's not

CLOTALDO. Who's to help you?

ROSAURA. Myself.

CLOTALDO. And no other way?

ROSAURA. No other way.

CLOTALDO. Consider now, if there's another ...

ROSAURA. Another way to ruin myself, of course. [exit Stage Left, add belts,
sword and shield to costume, goes to center aisle]

CLOTALDO. Daughter, wait for me-I'll go
with you, and we'll be lost together. [Exit Stage Left]

ACT THREE, SCENE 3 An open field.

Enter SEGISMUNDO from center (he now has belt and sword again) with
CLARIN and Soldiers 1 & 2. The other two soldiers enter from they exited, and
while Segismundo speaks they lay the ladders on their sides.]

SEGISMUNDO. If Old Rome, in its triumphant
Golden Age, could see me now,

how she'd rejoice at the strange sight
of a wild animal leading
mighty armies. And yet,
my soul, let us not fly too high,
or the little fame we have
will vanish, and when I wake
I'll plague myself for having gained
so much only to lose it all.

[A drum is sounded.]

CLARIN. [spoken very quickly, with great excitement, looking down center]
Mounted on a fire-eating steed
(excuse me if I touch things up
a bit in telling you this story),
on whose hide a map is finely drawn,
for of course his body is the earth,
and his heart the fire locked up
in his breast, his froth the sea,
his breath the wind, and in
this sweltering chaos I stand
agape, since heart, froth, body, breath,
are monsterized by fire, earth, sea, wind
mounted on this dappled steed,
which feels the rider's spur
bidding it to to fly
[casual] I mean, look here,
there's a very lively woman
riding up to meet you.
God, it's Rosaura. [He withdraws and sits behind the left bench.]

SEGISMUNDO. Heaven has restored her to me.

[ROSAURA enters from center.]

ROSAURA. Magnanimous Segismundo,
like the sun regaining luster
so too you come now, a bright new sun
of Poland rising in the world.
Oh aid this poor unhappy woman.
Hear my tragic story. My mother
was a noblewoman in Muscovy.

She was deceived by tender
love's expression and his promises
to marry her. This scoundrel fled,
Leaving her this sword.
My fate has been as grim as hers.
The man who destroyed my honor
and good name is ... [chokes on his name]
Astolfo was the faithless wretch
who, forgetting love's delights
came here to Poland, fresh for new
conquest, to marry Estrella.
And when, oh valiant Segismundo,
I now see you, ripe for vengeance,
against your father and your country,
I have come to help you fight. And so,
brave captain, let us go together
to prevent the projected marriage.
As a woman I come hoping to win you
over to my honor's cause;
but also as a man would, I come
to swell your heart, battling for your crown.

SEGISMUNDO. [aside] If it's true that I'm still dreaming,
oh God, suspend my memory,
let me escape from all this,
or else give up thinking of it!
If I only dreamed the grandeur
in which I saw myself before,
how can this woman bring up details
known patently to me alone?
Then it was true and not a dream; but if true-
how can my life be called a dream?
Are all glories like dreams-
the true ones taken to be false,
and the false ones, to be true?
There's so little difference
between one and the other
that we cannot be sure if what
we're seeing and enjoying
is simple fact or an illusion!

Can it be the copy is so like
the original that no one knows
which is which? If this is so,
and one must be prepared to find
all pomp and majesty,
all the power and the glory,
vanishing among the shadows, then
let us learn to take advantage
of the little while that's granted us,
because all we can enjoy now
is what's to be enjoyed between dreams.
Rosaura's in my power;
my soul adores her beauty ...
Let's take advantage of the moment.
Let love break all laws of gallantry
and the trust that lets her lie there
at my feet. But if it's all a dream, all vainglory,
who'd want to substitute vanity
that's human for glory that's divine?
Is not all our former bliss a dream?
Does not a man who's known great joy
tell himself, when the thought of it
returns, "Surely it was all a dream"?
If this proves I'm disillusioned,
knowing that pleasure is a lovely flame
soon turned to ashes by the wind,
let me aim at what is lasting,
that longer-living glory
where joys are not a dream
nor greatness swallowed in a sleep.
Rosaura has lost her honor.
The duty of a prince is not
to take it but to give it back.
By God, then, I shall restore
her reputation before I claim
any crown.
[to a SOLDIER] Sound the call to arms! This day
must see me fighting before darkness
buries its gold rays in dark green waves.

ROSAURA. But, Sire, is this the way you'd leave me?
Without a single word?
Won't you even turn and look at me?

SEGISMUNDO. Because your honor hangs
by a thread, Rosaura, I must be cruel
now in order to be kind.
I do not dare to talk to you,
because my deeds must do the talking.
I do not even look at you because,
as someone sworn to look after
your honor, I have all I can do
to keep from looking at your beauty.
[Exits Stage Right with the SOLDIERS]

ROSAURA. God, why all these riddles now?
After all my troubles, to be left with piecing out
a meaning from such puzzling replies!

CLARIN wanders back onto the stage.
Clarín! Where have you been?

CLARIN. Cooped up in a tower, and reading
my fortune-life or death-in a deck
of cards. The first card frowned at me,
thumbs down: my life is forfeit. Poof!
that's when I came close to bursting.

ROSAURA. But why?

CLARIN. Because I know the secret
of who you are and, in fact, Clotaldo ...
But what's that noise?

[The sound of drums.]

ROSAURA. What can it be?

CLARIN. An armed squad's left the besieged palace
to fight and overcome Segismundo's wild armies.

ROSAURA. Then how can I be such a coward

and not be at his side
to scandalize the world that basks in
so much cruelty and anarchy? [Exit Right]

Voices. Long live our invincible King!
Other Voices. Long live our liberty!

CLARIN. Long live both-liberty and King!
Let them live together;
I don't care what they're called
so long as I'm not called.
This spot here between the rocks
looks mighty well protected
and out of the way enough for me
to watch all the fireworks.
Death won't find me here-to hell with it!

[He hides behind the ladders; drum beats, the call to arms; BASILIO,
CLOTALDO, ESTRELLA and ASTOLFO enter from Right, fleeing.]
BASILIO. No king was ever more regretful,
no father more beset, ill-used.

CLOTALDO. Your army is beaten,
and retreating everywhere pell-mell.

ASTOLFO. The traitors are victorious.

BASILIO. Clotaldo, let us escape the wrath
and ruthlessness of a tyrant son.

[Shots are fired offstage; CLARIN falls, wounded, out of his hiding place.]
CLARIN. Heaven help me!

ASTOLFO. Who is this unhappy soldier, fallen so bloodily at your feet?

CLARIN. A man whose luck ran out.
Trying to hide from death,
I ran straight into it.
There's no safe highway leading past
the force of destiny or fate's inclemency.

So if by fleeing you now attempt
to free yourselves from death, remember,
you die when it's God's will you die.

[He stumbles out and falls offstage left.]

BASILIO. "Remember, you die when
it's God's will you die." Good Lord,
how convincingly this corpse
reflects upon our error,
showing our ignorance the way
to greater understanding,
to teach us how vain
are men's deliberations when set
against a higher will and cause.
So in endeavoring to free
my country of murder
and sedition, I succeeded
only in giving it away
to murderers and traitors.

CLOTALDO. Although it's true, Sire, that fate
knows all the ways and byways,
still it isn't Christian to believe
there's nothing to pit against fate's wrath,
Because there is-a manly prudence
will conquer fate's adversities.
But since you're not yourself exempt
from such contingencies, do something
now, in order to protect yourself.

ASTOLFO. Sire,
hidden in some nearby thickets,
there's a horse that runs like lightning.
Take it and escape, and I'll
keep you covered from behind.

BASILIO. If God intends that I should die here,
I should like to meet it face to face.

A call to arms; SEGISMUNDO, Rosaura and the whole company enter from the right. Astolfo speaks while they are entering.

ASTOLFO. Sire, escape now.

BASILIO. Why? Step aside, Astolfo.

CLOTALDO. What have you in mind?

BASILIO. To do something, Clotaldo,
that has long needed doing.

[to SEGISMUNDO] If you've come to find me, Prince,
here I am now, at your feet. [He kneels.]

Here's my neck-stamp on it!

Here's my crown-trample on it!

Chain and use me as your slave!

After all I've done to ward it off,
let fate receive its due, and the word
of Heaven be fulfilled at last.

SEGISMUNDO. Distinguished court of Poland,
listen to me: your Prince addresses you.

My father, at my feet here,

using as his excuse

the auguries of my foul nature,

made of me a brute, a half

human creature, so that

even if I'd been born gentle

and sweet-tempered,

such bizarre treatment, such upbringing,

would have been enough to turn me

into a wild animal.

Strange, because this was what

he wanted to avoid!

If any man were told,

"One day you'll be murdered

by some inhuman monster,"

would he deliberately go

and rouse the sleeping beast?

But this all happened to the man

who, feeling threatened by a brute,

went and woke it up; and, though my rage
were like a sleeping beast,
my latent fury like a sword still
sheathed, my hidden violence a sea
becalmed-no vengeance nor injustice
would alter the course of fate,
but, if anything, would incite it.
And so, the man who wishes
to control his fate must use
judgment and be temperate.
He cannot keep an injury
from happening, even though
he sees it coming. Let this strangest
of spectacles, this most amazing
moment, this awesome, prodigious scene
serve as an example. Because
nothing better shows how,
after so much had been done
to prevent its happening,
a father and a king lies subject
at his own son's feet. For such was
Heaven's verdict and, do what he might,
he could not change it. How then can I,
with fewer white hairs, less courage,
and less knowledge, conquer fate
when he could not?
[to the KING] Rise, Sire,
and give me your hand. Now
that Heaven's disabused you
of the illusion that you knew the way
to overcome it, I offer myself up to you. Take
your vengeance. I kneel before you.

All. Long, long live Segismundo!

SEGISMUNDO. If my valor is destined
for great victories, the greatest
must be the one I now achieve
by conquering myself.
Astolfo, take Rosaura's hand.

You know the debt of honor due her.
I mean to see it paid her now.

ASTOLFO. Though it's true I've obligations
to her, let me point out that she
does not know who she is.
It would be base and infamous
for me to marry a woman who ...

CLOTALDO. Enough, don't say another word now.
Rosaura is your equal in nobility, Astolfo,
She's my daughter-and that's enough.
But until I saw her married, nobly
and honorably, I would not
reveal the fact. It's a long story,
but it ends with this: she's my daughter.

SEGISMUNDO. And now,
not to leave Estrella downcast,
since she has lost this brave
and famous prince, I offer her
my own hand in marriage,
with the virtues and fortune
that go with it, and though
they do not exceed, at least
they equal, his. Give me your hand.

ESTRELLA. I gain by meriting this good fortune.

SEGISMUNDO. For Clotaldo, who served
my father loyally,
my gratitude waits to grant
whatever wish he has.

Soldier 1. If you're about to honor someone
who treated you dishonorably,
what about me, who incited
this kingdom's overthrow,
and took you out of that tower
you were in? What'll you give me?

SEGISMUNDO. The tower. And-so that you'll never
leave it till you die-a constant guard.
Once the cause of treason's past,
there's no need to keep the traitor.

[speaking together]

BASILIO. Your judgment astonishes us all.

ASTOLFO. What a changed disposition!

ROSAURA. What prudence, what discretion!

SEGISMUNDO. Why are you surprised? What's there
to wonder at, if my master in this
was a dream, and I still tremble
at the thought that I may waken
and find myself again locked in a cell?
Even if this should not happen,
it would be enough to dream it,
since that's the way I've come to know
that all of human happiness
must like a dream come to an end.