

LIFE IS A DREAM

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for a reading produced by Philadelphia Artist's Collective

ACT ONE

MUSIC

A noise off. ROSAURA falls onto the stage. She is dressed as a man.

ROSAURA.

Abandon me! Leave me here, desperate, alone
As I struggle randomly through the tangled hair
On the head of this giant mountain.
Whose furrowed ridges frown at the sun.
And this is Poland! You, vile country!
Viciously greeting this stranger
Writing your greeting in letters of blood.
I've hardly arrived. Such a hard arrival.
Where can I find pity in my pitiless fate
Arriving in anguish. Greeted with hate.

Enter CLARIN

CLARIN.

Wait a minute. 'Where can I find pity?'
What about me? Why not 'Where can we...'
Where can we find pity? That's a better line.
After all, it was the two of us left home,
Looking for adventure, us two,
Sadly and madly reaching this god forsaken place.

ROSAURA.

Listen, Clarin, I didn't mention you in my speech
Because I didn't want to deprive you of your opportunity
To make your own. To lament your misfortune,
Find consolation in your grief. Remember the philosopher
Who said that to complain was such a pleasure
That misfortunes should be looked for, like a moral treasure.

CLARIN.

Lady, your philosopher's an idiot and I wish he was here
So I could kick his head in.
Only then I'd have to hear him
Complaining about my utterly amazing skill in kicking.

ROSAURA.

Is there anyone who's ever seen anything
So utterly extraordinary and strange?
And it could be my eyes are deceiving me
Or my imagination's playing tricks on my fearful mind
But in the faint cold light of the dying day
I think I can see a building.

CLARIN.

That's what I want to see
And if it turns out not to be actually there
I'll destroy the scenery.

ROSAURA.

The mountains are so high
And the building is so low
It's as if the sun's hardly able to see it.
Its construction is so crude
It could be one of the rocks that surround it
Rocks casting such fierce shadows
It's as if they hurt the sunlight.

CLARIN.

Lady, I think we're talking too much here,
Why don't we get a little closer
So that the kind people who live round here
Can welcome us with food and wine?

ROSAURA.

The door --no. I could put that better--
this black mouth...
Its sinister jaws yawn open, and the dark night within
Engenders a deeper darkness.

Chains sound inside.

CLARIN.

Good grief what's that?

ROSAURA.

I cannot move. I'm a block of fire and ice.
Burning with curiosity. Frozen with fear.

CLARIN.

It's just someone been to the loo
And is pulling at the chain

SEGISMUNDO (within)

All I know of life is pain!

ROSAURA.

What sadness in that voice. What desperation!
I'm left struggling with new grief and pain.
Clarín!
Let's run from the terrors
Of this evil and enchanted tower.

CLARIN.

Lady, when it comes down to it,
I'm too petrified to even run.

ROSAURA.

Is that a light, that feeble exhalation,
That pale and trembling star,
That pulse so weakly beating
In so obscure and dubious a dwelling
That, far from lightening,
Appears to darken it.
In its dim light I can barely see
A dark prison lit by a single flame
The burial place of a living corpse.

*SEGISMUNDO is discovered. He is dressed in animal skins,
with a chain on his leg, in such a way that he can get up and walk when his cue comes.
He speaks the whole speech sitting on the ground.*

SEGISMUNDO.

All I know of life is pain
And I don't understand

Why I must live like this.
What crime did I commit?
The worst thing I do is to exist.
When I think of that I understand
A human's greatest crime is to be born!
But there's still something to be explained
The bitter dregs left to be drained.
And I still don't really understand
I must have done something else
For life to treat me like this.
Aren't other beings born?
What privilege is it they possess?
And what is it I so badly lack?
When a bird is born, it is so beautiful
Its feathers like the petals of a flower
It can barely fly before it leaves
The kind safety of its parents nest
And then it's gliding, freely gliding
Through the vast halls of the empty sky.
I have more soul than a bird
When a fish is born, it does not breathe,
It's an abortion of mud and slime.
It can barely swim before it glides
Like a ship of fins and scales
And then it's sailing in immensity
Through the vast cold heart of the endless sea.
I have more freewill than a fish
Why should I have less liberty?
And when I reach this moment
My heart burns like a volcano.
I want to tear it from my chest
And rip it into pieces!
How can it be justified
And how can it be right
For God to give freedom
—Sweet and beautiful freedom—
To give it to a stream, a fish,
A brute and a bird
And deny it to a human being!

ROSAURA.

Your words fill me with pity and fear.

SEGISMUNDO.

Who was it heard me?
Was it Clotaldo?

CLARIN.

Say yes.

ROSAURA.

No. It was a lonely cry of grief
Lost in these cold vaults of stone
Feeling for your sadness.

SEGISMUNDO grabs her.

SEGISMUNDO.

Then I'll kill you.
I know you know my weakness.
Just because you heard me weep
These strong arms of mine
Will tear you into pieces.

CLARIN.

I'm stone deaf. I never heard a word.

ROSAURA.

You were born a human being.
It will be enough to touch your heart
Enough to fall helpless at your feet
For you to free me.

SEGISMUNDO.

Your voice could fill me with tenderness.
Your presence could fill me with... what?
I hesitate; I look at you with... awe.
Who are you? I know so little of the world.
This tower is my cradle and my grave.
Since the day I was born,
If this is really what it is to live,
All I've known is this desert place,
This bare mountain, where I live in misery
Like a skeleton which walks
Like a corpse which breathes.

There's only one man I've ever spoken to or seen.
He feels for me in my misfortune.
He brings me news of earth and heaven.
Be amazed at me, call me a monster,
I'm an animal, and I am a man.
I am a man, and I'm an animal.
Even though I've studied politics
Just by observing the wild beasts
And being taught by the flight of birds,
And though I've measured the perfect circles
Of the motions of the harmonious stars,
I've never seen in anyone
The perfect beauty that I see in you.
What force and what authority
Do you possess since you...
You, you alone have caused to halt
My fury at my wrongs
And filled my ears with pity?
Each time I look at you you amaze me more.
The more I look at you
The more I want to see you again and again.
My eyes must have a kind of rabies
For even when it's death to drink
They want to drink in more and more
And even though I understand
That seeing is a kind of death
I am still dying to see more.

ROSAURA.

It so moves me to hear you
It amazes me to see you
And I don't know what to say to you
And I don't know what to ask you.
All I'll say is that somehow fate
Must have guided me here to find comfort,
If anyone unhappy really can be comforted
In seeing someone more unhappy still.
I know a story of a wise philosopher
Who was so deeply sunk in poverty
That all he could find to eat
Were wild herbs he picked off the roadside.
Can there possibly be anyone, he wondered,
Who's as poor and as wretched as me?

And then he looked back, and then he saw
Another wise philosopher
Eating the leaves that he had thrown away.
And there I was, full of self-pity
Wondering if there could be anyone
So miserable and wretched as I.
And you have given me your sad reply.
For after listening to your story
I find my griefs have disappeared.
You have gathered them, and turned them into happiness.
Perhaps my misfortunes can help relieve your pain.
So I'll tell my story. Take from it
All my superfluous grief. I am--

MUSIC

CLOTALDO.
Guards of this tower,
Are you cowards?
Are you asleep?
Two intruders
Have broken into the tower'

ROSAURA.
Now new confusion fills me.

CLOTALDO.
Stir yourselves! Capture or kill them
Before they can defend themselves!

CLARIN.
Guards of the tower,
Just remember he's offering you a choice
You can capture us or kill us. Capturing is so much easier.

Enter CLOTALDO and SOLDIERS.

CLOTALDO.
Hide your faces. No-one should know us.

CLARIN. Ooh it's a masked ball.

CLOTALDO.

Ignorant fools, you've trespassed
On forbidden ground, broken the king's decree
Which forbids anyone to view or see
This dangerous monster imprisoned here.
Surrender: or this gun, like a metal cobra,
Will spit two balls of poisoned fire
Through the terrified and frozen air.

SEGISMUNDO.

You monster of injustice,
I'll die before I see you touch
Or harm them, I'll tear myself to pieces
With these chains, these rocks,
With my own teeth before I consent
To their suffering or weep for their pain!

CLOTALDO.

God decreed, Segismundo, you should die
Before you were even born. That's how monstrous
Are your misfortunes. You know that.
And you also know you need these chains
To hold back the proud fury of your rage.
So why make idle boasts? Take him back
To his cell: lock him in. Hide him From our sight.

SEGISMUNDO.

God in heaven
How wise you are to deprive me
Of my freedom! For otherwise
I'd tear down the mountains
To build a ladder of stone.
I'd climb up to attack the sky!
I'd be a giant and destroy the sun
And I'd smash heaven's crystal spheres!

They overpower SEGISMUNDO and lock him back in his cell.

MUSIC ENDS

CLOTALDO.

Perhaps it's to prevent you
That you suffer such misfortune.

ROSAURA.

Obviously pride offends you. I'll try humility,
Fall at your feet, and beg for my life.
It would be remarkable cruelty
If humbleness offended you as much as pride.

CLARIN.

I don't expect you to be impressed by either.
Humility and pride are both unbelievably dull,
So I won't be humble, and I won't be proud.
I'm kind of in between the two
And ask you nicely to be kind.

CLOTALDO.

You!

GUARD. My lord!

CLOTALDO.

Take their weapons and blindfold their eyes.

ROSAURA.

This is my sword. It can only be given to you,
For you are the noblest here, and it will refuse
To be taken by anyone of less nobility.

CLARIN.

My sword isn't fussy. Any shit can have it.
You take it.

ROSAURA.

All I ask is that you take good care of it
For the sake of the man who once wore it.

When CLOTALDO takes ROSAURA's sword, he is disturbed.

CLOTALDO (*aside*).

(God help me, I know this sword.
Holding it fills my heart with pain.
And it's hard to believe that this is true
And not part of some appalling dream.)
Who are you?

ROSAURA.

A foreigner.

CLOTALDO.

Obviously, since you did not know
This place was forbidden you.

ROSAURA.

Even if I had known it, there was nothing I could do.
This mad horse of mine tried to be some kind of bird,
Threw me of its back and left me stranded in misfortune.

CLOTALDO.

Where you from?

ROSAURA.

Moscow.

CLOTALDO.

I have many ties
With that nation. Why have you come?

ROSAURA.

I have been insulted. I lost my self-respect.
I have come to seek revenge.

CLOTALDO.

(Oh God
Each new moment adds to my unhappiness.)

ROSAURA.

And so I beg you, keep this sword safe; for if
By any freak of chance I am spared this sentence
And allowed to live, then this sword will regain
My honor; for although I do not understand
What secret this sword contains, I know
It holds one. Though it could well be
That I deceive myself, and only value it
Because it is the only object I possess
That was once my father's.

CLOTALDO.

Who was he?

ROSAURA.
I never knew him.

CLOTALDO.
How do you know
This sword contains a secret?

ROSAURA.
The one who gave it me said: 'Go to Poland
Be secret, careful, skilful, and make sure
The leaders there see you with this sword.
For I know that one of them will show you favour
And will safeguard you. Or will, if he still lives.
But for now, in case he's dead, I'll hide his name in silence.'

CLOTALDO.
(I gave this sword to my lover,
The beautiful Violante, and I told her
Anyone who wore it would find me
A kind and loving father to my own son.
But I don't know what favor or help
I can give him, when I'm supposed to drive
The sword's point into his chest.
What can I do? What can I do?
If I take him to the king
I am taking him to die.
But that is what my duty commands.
My hands are tied by duty,
My heart is driven by love.
But I should be in no doubt.
They say that loyalty to the king
Matters more than honor, more
Than life itself. So let duty live,
Let love die. *(Pause)*
What else can anyone do?
He is my son, his boldness proves it.
What can I do? Take courage!
The best thing is to take him to the king,
Tell him he's my son and should be killed.
Perhaps the extreme loyalty I'll show him
Will oblige him to show mercy;
if not, If the king is constant in his cruelty, then the boy
Will die without knowing he is my son.)

Foreigners, come this way, and don't imagine
You're alone in your misfortunes.
In dilemmas like these it's hard to tell
Which is the greater misfortune: to die or live.

Exit.

A sound of trumpets and drums.

MUSIC.

Enter; on one side, ASTOLFO accompanied by SOLDIERS, and ESTRELLA on the other accompanied by WOMEN.

ASTOLFO.

Your eyes are like comets, madam.
They announce the death of kings.
Your exquisite beauty inspires these trumpets.
To greet you they become metal birds.
Their mouthpieces sprout feathers
And fly through the air. Cannons salute you
As empress; the palace fountains greet you
As the goddess of spring; the trumpets
Greet you as the goddess of war, and the birds
Greet you as the goddess of dawn.
Day has come to send the night to exile
But you are more radiant still
In joyfulness you are the dawn
In beauty you are the spring
In anger you are war itself
And you are the ruler of my soul.

ESTRELLA.

Don't flatter me in such courteous terms
When your words are so plainly contradicted
By your obvious preparations for war.
The flatteries I hear do not correspond
To the hostility I see before me. Remember,
Prince, how vile it is to flatter with the tongue,
But kill with the intention.

ASTOLFO.

Estrella you are ill-informed

If you doubt that I'm sincere
In praising you. I beg you listen.
When the last king of Poland died
He left two daughters and his son
Basilio to inherit the throne.
Your mother was the eldest daughter,
Mine the youngest. She married in Moscow,
Of whose state I am now Prince.
As for Basilio, he is the victim
Of advancing old age; and he has always cared
More for his studies than for women or vice.
Since he is childless, we are both entitled to inherit:
You as the offspring of the elder child,
And myself because I am a man.
We told our uncle of our competing claims
And he promised to meet us here, today,
And satisfy us both. That is why I left Moscow,
That is why I came here; not to make war on you
But so you could lay loving siege to my heart.
Dear princess, I pray the god of love be wise
And that the common people, the only true astrologer,
May bless this union and crown you queen
—Queen, that is, of my tender heart.

ESTRELLA. Such extraordinary courtesy is exactly
What my high rank deserves, and of course
It would be the most enormous pleasure
For me to gain the imperial crown,
Solely to hand it over to you.
But I know you have come here to deceive me
Because the flattery of your words
Is undermined by the girl
Whose portrait you wear round your neck.

A drum beats.

MUSIC

ASTOLFO.
How greatly I regret that sound
For it prevents me explaining
And proclaims the arrival of the King!

Drums beat.

MUSIC

Enter KING BASILIO, an old man, and his court.

ESTRELLA.

Allow me to tenderly embrace

ASTOLFO.

Allow me to tenderly entwine

ESTRELLA.

My arms around your feet in humble coils.

ASTOLFO.

My arms like ivy round your majestic trunk.

BASILIO.

Nephew, niece, embrace me. I know you
love me,
Because you have faithfully obeyed
My loving request with such kind words
And I want to leave neither unsatisfied
And both of you on equal terms.
You know my knowledge has earned me
The title of Basilio the wise.
The sciences I love the most
Are those which foretell the future,
Which steal the function of passing time
To tell us what happens with each day that comes.
But I wish to God that my own life
Had been the first target of the heaven's anger,
Long before I learnt to interpret its messages
And learnt to understand its signs.
For when a man is unfortunate
Even his gifts slab him in the back
And a man whose knowledge harms him
Murders his own self!

(Pause)

Clorilene my wife gave birth to a son.
The omens of his birth were so many, and so dreadful
They exhausted the skies. While the baby still lay
In the womb's living grave, far from the beautiful light
Of day, she dreamt again and again of her belly torn open
By a monster in the shape of a man.

And on the day that he was born, the sun itself
Engaged in blood-soaked battle with the moon
With the earth as the battlefield. This was the worst eclipse
The world has suffered since weeping for the death of Christ.
And it was under this sign
My son Segismundo was born.
He foretold his future in the manner of his birth,
For in being born he killed his mother
And so boasted with male ferocity:
'Look: I am human and this how
We humans repay those who do us good.
I ran to my books, and in them I read
Segismundo would be the most brutal man,
The cruelest prince, the most vicious monarch.
That under him his kingdom would become
Divided, split, torn by civil wars:
I saw him inspired by fury.
I saw him driven on by rage.
I saw him defeat and overcome me.
I saw me lying vanquished at his feet.
I saw me humiliated, helpless,
And forced to be his wretched slave.
His feet –and how it shames me to confess it –
Would make a carpet out of my white hairs.
We know that evil is far more likely to occur than good
And good endings are never as plausible as bad.
I had to believe such frightening predictions
I had to see if wisdom can help a human overcome the stars.
So I prepared a tower, hidden in the mountains,
Where the daylight scarcely dares enter.
I forbade anyone to enter
And I had it announced that the prince was born dead.
There Segismundo lives, chained like a beast,
Only Clotaldo has spoken to him and seen him;
And been the only witness of his unhappy life.

Three things must be considered here. The first
That I love my country, and I must do all I can
To rescue it from the prospect of a cruel vindictive king.
The second is that we are talking of my son.
He has the right to freedom, he has the right to rule.
To deprive him of these rights would be a crime,
A crime I cannot justify,

Even if what I intend is the good of all.
The third is that we know we should not too easily believe
That what is predicted will unavoidably occur.
Even the most evil omen, even the worst horoscope
Can only incline the will. It cannot force it.
And so my friends you must imagine me
Struggling for many months with these dilemmas
Until today, when I have finally found
A solution that will utterly amaze you.
Tomorrow I will place my son on the throne
I will not tell him that he is my son, or that he is your king
But he will govern you, and you will swear obedience.
Now think what that this achieves.
It resolves the three issues I have set before you.
One: I love my country, and if I give you a king
Who rules with justice, wisdom and goodwill
Then the stars' predictions are defeated, and you enjoy
The government of your rightful king.
Second: I will not commit a crime
Because if he acts unjustly, cruelly,
Gives free rein to viciousness and vice
Then I can depose him and imprison him again
And that will not be cruelty but just punishment.
Third, if the horoscope is right it can all still be remedied
If I marry Estrella to Astolfo, set them on the throne
And give you rulers who will be worthy of the task.
This I command you as your king
This I ask you as a father,
This I request you as a philosopher
And if what Seneca said is really true,
And the king really is the slave of his own kingdom
Then this I humbly beg you as your slave.

ASTOLFO.

It is my duty to reply to this
As the one whose interests are most at stake
In the name of all I say:
Bring us Segismundo, for he is your son.
And that is enough for all of us.

ALL.

Give us our Prince for we ask him to be our king!

BASILIO.

Vassals, I respect and thank you
For this generous act. Accompany
These two pillars of the state to their rooms
For tomorrow you will see him.

ALL.

Long live the great king Basilio!

Exit all. Before the KING exits, CLOTALDO enters with ROSAURA and CLARIN and stops the KING

CLOTALDO.

Can I speak to you?

BASILIO.

Oh Clotaldo, you are most welcome!

CLOTALDO.

Coming into your presence, majesty,
Always fills me with joy, but today
An angry twist of vicious destiny
Has robbed a law of its privilege
And a custom of its joy.

BASILIO.

What troubles you?

CLOTALDO.

A misfortune, your majesty, has occurred;
Although it should have been a source of joy.

BASILIO.

Go on.

CLOTALDO.

This young man, your majesty,
And it is hard to repress my tears
He entered the tower, and saw the prince.
And he is--

BASILIO.

Do not trouble yourself Clotaldo.

Even if this happened through carelessness
You have no need to excuse it
I have just revealed the secret
And it does not matter he should know it.
See me afterwards, because I have much to tell you
And there is much for you to do for me;
For I must tell you you are to be the instrument
Of the most amazing event the world has ever seen.
As for these prisoners, so that you know
I do not punish in them your carelessness
I forgive them. Let them go.

Exit BASILIO .

CLOTALDO.
Great king, may you live a thousand centuries!
(My poor heart, the first ordeal is over.
Now let the next ordeal begin.)
Foreign travelers, you are free.

ROSAURA.
I kiss your feet a thousand times.

CLARIN.
I'll make do with a couple of hundred.
A few kisses more or less
Won't matter between friends.

ROSAURA.
My lord, you have given me my life.
I will for ever be your grateful slave.

CLOTALDO.
You're wrong. I never gave you life.

ROSAURA. Why not!

CLOTALDO.
A man of noble birth who's been dishonored
Does not truly live. And since you have come
To avenge an insult, that obviously applies to you.
I could not have given you life
For living in dishonor is no life at all.

(I hope that I encourage him to speak.)

ROSAURA.

I admit for now I have no proper life
But when I take my revenge I will regain my self-respect.
My life then without any doubt at all
Will seem like a gift from you.

CLOTALDO.

Don't go without a weapon.
Take this sword you brought
For I know it will suffice for your revenge
And will be stained with your enemy's blood;
For this blade will know how to revenge you
I know, for it once was mine –or rather,
Mine for this instant, for this brief time
I have held it in my power.

ROSAURA.

And so for the second time in your name
I put on this sword and swear to obtain revenge
However powerful my enemy may be.

CLOTALDO.

And is he?

ROSAURA.

So powerful, I will not disclose his name;
For I would not wish to lose your friendship.

CLOTALDO.

But if you were to tell me
It would strengthen my concern for you,
For it would make it impossible
For me to help your enemy.
(Oh I wish I knew who it was.)

ROSAURA.

So you do not think I place a low value on the trust
You place in me, you must know my enemy
I no less than Astolfo, the duke of Moscow.

CLOTALDO.

(It's hard not to be overcome by grief.
The affair is far worse than I imagined.
Let's investigate a little further.)
If you were born a Muscovite
Then your natural lord could not insult you
Even if (anxiety will drive me mad!)
He called you a liar in public.

ROSAURA.
I know that even though he was my prince
He could still offend me.

CLOTALDO.
He could not, even though he slapped you in the face.
(My God!)

ROSAURA.
What I suffered was far worse!

CLOTALDO.
Then tell it now, because you cannot say more
Than what I already imagine.

ROSAURA.
I look at you with a respect I do not
understand.
And I hold you in such great esteem,
That I hardly dare tell you
That how I appear is a disguise,
That I am not whom I appear to be.
Be alert; reflect; If I am not who I seem
And Astolfo came here to marry Estrella,
Think how he could offend me.
I have already said too much.

Exit ROSAURA and CLARIN.

CLOTALDO.
Stop wait come back!
What tangled labyrinth is this
Where reason cannot find the thread?
My honor is offended;
The enemy is powerful;

I am his vassal; she is my daughter.
May heaven find some solution
Although I doubt it can
In so deep a pit of confusion
The whole sky is an omen
The whole world a prodigious portent.

Exit.

End of Act One.

ACT TWO

CLOTALDO.

Everything you ordered
Has been accomplished.

BASILIO.

Tell me what happened.

CLOTALDO.

This is how it was.
You ordered me to make a tranquillizing drink,
A drink made of herbs whose secret power
Is to deprive a man of reason, to rob
And dispossess him of awareness and of conscious will.
In short: transform him to a living corpse.

(Pause)

I went down to Segismundo with the drink
In which were mixed opium, henbane and belladonna,
And there, in his small cell, I spoke to him
Of the human knowledge taught him by dumb nature,
Nature his mother, who in these learned solitudes
Has taught him the politics of the beasts and birds.
When I saw how this occupied his mind
I toasted him with the potion, and hardly
Had the liquid passed from glass to stomach
When he surrendered his strength to the power of sleep.
A cold sweat ran down through his veins and limbs,
So cold, that if I had not known this was pretended death,
I would have feared for his life.
At that moment the people came

In whom you have entrusted
The secret of this experiment.
They carried him to a coach, and then to your room
Where is prepared the greatness and majesty
Merited by his position. There they put him to bed
And there, once the drowsiness has lost its power,
There they will serve him as they would serve you,
Just as you ordered. And if having obeyed you in every respect
Makes me worthy of any slight reward
Then all I would ask you
—forgive my indiscretion—
Is that you tell me what you intend
In bringing Segismundo here to the palace.

BASILIO.

Clotaldo, that is a very good question
And to you alone will I answer it in full.
You already know that the influence of the stars
On my son Segismundo threatens us all
With endless misfortunes and tragic events.
But I want to examine whether it is possible
For the heaven to relent a little or mitigate their harshness
Or to see whether with boldness and prudence
They can be contradicted, whether human beings
Have power over their own destiny.
This is what I want to investigate,
And this is why I have brought him here:
So he may be told he is my son,
And to have his ability put to the test.
If he has the greatness of spirit to overcome himself,
Then he will be king; but if he shows himself to be cruel,
Or indulges in the abuse of power,
I'll return him to his chains.
Now you're going to ask, why, to determine this,
Was it necessary to drug him first?
I want to satisfy you in every respect.
If he knew now today that he was my son,
And then tomorrow saw himself reduced again
To prison and to misery, it is certain that he would
Despair in his condition. For having known who he really is
What consolation could he possibly find?
I wanted to leave him a remedy for future misery
By telling him that everything he saw

Was no more than a dream. So this achieves two ends:
Firstly his disposition, since while he is awake
He behaves exactly as he imagines and thinks.
Secondly his consolation, because even though he sees himself
Obeyed now and then returned to his chains,
He could still believe he dreamt it all
And that will be a good understanding for him to have,
Because in this world, Clotaldo,
Everyone who lives is dreaming.

CLOTALDO.

And he is coming this way.

BASILIO.

I shall withdraw; you are his tutor,
You go up to him. His mind will be full of confusion.
So tell him the truth.

CLOTALDO.

You mean tell him who he is?

BASILIO.

Yes; for it could be if he knows it
He will recognize his danger
And be more inclined to overcome himself.

Exit BASILIO.

INTERMISSION

Enter CLARIN.

CLARIN.

Getting in here isn't cheap is it?
This man standing at the door
Wanted to see my ticket. I said
You won't catch me buying one of those.
The price they are nowadays
Do you think I'm stupid?
I don't need a ticket. I've got' my eyes.
Keep them wide open
And you can see anything.

CLOTALDO.

Clarín, what's new?

CLARIN.

What's new, sir, is that your enormous kindness
Always so ready to avenge Rosaura's wrongs,
Has advised her to dress as her own sex.

CLOTALDO.

Of course. So as not to cause a scandal.

CLARIN.

And what's also new sir is that she's changed her name,
And is now known as your niece.

CLOTALDO.

I'm taking responsibility for her reputation.
What else?

CLARIN.

Now she's a lady in waiting for the
Extraordinary Estrella, and she's waiting for you
To find the time and place to achieve her revenge.

CLOTALDO.

That's as it should be. For all these things
Will be set right in time.

CLARIN.

And the other thing, sir, is that she is living
In luxury, she is being treated like a queen
And is the favorite of the princess,
Whereas I, her faithful companion and friend
Am dying of hunger, and everyone forgets me
And forgets that I'm Clarín, and that Clarín
—For the benefit of the ignorant —means trumpet.
It's from the Latin. Clarínus. Or clarion.
As in call. Clarion call. And I could call
The king, Astolfo, and Estrella, to tell them
Just what is going on and just who your niece
Really is and what she's hoping to do here.

CLOTALDO.

I think I understand you, and I'm sure
That we'll get on. You work for me,
And here's an advance on your wages.

CLARIN.
And here comes Segismundo.

MUSIC. Enter as many as can be afforded, dressing SEGISMUNDO, who is now wearing beautiful clothes. He is amazed by everything, and walks around while the MUSICIANS sing.

SEGISMUNDO.
God help me! What do I see?
What do I touch!
Me in this beautiful palace!
Me wearing satin and silk!
Me surrounded by all these
Elegant looking servants!
I can't be. I'm dreaming;
I know I'm awake.
Aren't I still Segismundo?
What could have happened
To me while I was fast asleep?
What is it that I'm seeing now?
Well, whatever it is, why should
That bother me? Why worry?
I'll just let myself be waited on
And then just see what happens.

SERVANT 1.
He's so preoccupied.

SERVANT 2.
After what's happened to him
Who wouldn't 't be?

CLARIN. I wouldn't be.
I'd be jumping for joy.

SERVANT 2. Should they sing again?

SEGISMUNDO.

No. I don't want any more singing.

SERVANT 2. I just wanted to entertain you. You seem so preoccupied.

SEGISMUNDO.

No, I don't think music helps me, really.
All I like are brass bands.

CLOTALDO.

Your Highness, Great Lord,
Allow me to kiss your hand.
I will be honored to be the first
To swear obedience to you as Lord.

SEGISMUNDO. (That's Clotaldo. What's he doing?
Why's he being so polite? When I was in prison he treated me like a pig.
What is happening to me?)

CLOTALDO.

Your life has so suddenly changed
And your heart and mind will be filled
With confusion and doubts.
And if I can, I want to help you understand.

He becomes grave.

You are Prince of Poland.
You will inherit the throne.
You've been hidden in a tower
Because the stars foretold
A most terrible tragedy
Would occur when you were crowned.
But if he makes use of the power
Of reason a good-hearted man
Can overcome the stars
We must trust that truth.
And that is why, while you were sleeping
You were taken from the tower
And brought to this palace.

SEGISMUNDO.

You wicked foul betrayer
I've got pride now, I've got power

And I know you betrayed your country
Because you hid me and you denied me
My rightful place in the world!

CLOTALDO. (Oh no!)

SEGISMUNDO.

You broke the law, you lied to the king
And you were cruel to me. And so
We all agree, the king, the law, and me
That you're condemned to death.
And I'm going to kill with these hands.

SERVANT 1.

My lord!!

SEGISMUNDO.

Don't try to protect him. Don't waste your time
And listen, you, I swear to God,
If you get in my way
I'll chuck you out the window.

SERVANT 2.

Clotaldo run!

CLOTALDO.

You sad deluded fool, so savage in your pride
Without understanding that you're dreaming!

Exit CLOTALDO.

SERVANT 2.

Just take note—

SEGISMUNDO. You keep out of this!

SERVANT 2. He was only obeying orders.

SEGISMUNDO. You shouldn't obey orders when they're wrong.

SERVANT 2.

But it wasn't up to him to think
He just did what he was told.

SEGISMUNDO.

So why don't you do the same?
Instead of answering me back all the time!

CLARIN.

Everything the Prince says is completely right
And everything you say is completely wrong!

SERVANT 2.

Who said you could speak like this?

CLARIN.

I did.

SEGISMUNDO.

Who are you?

CLARIN.

I poke my nose into palaces.
I step on official's toes.

SEGISMUNDO.

In this strange new world
You're the only one I like.

CLARIN.

My lord, I'm the greatest Segismundo-pleaser
In the whole wide world.

Enter ASTOLFO.

ASTOLFO.

Happy a thousand times this august day
Dear prince, when you arrive to fill the world
From west to east with joy and gladness.
You rise like the sun from behind the savage mountains
Rise then; and although the laurel wreath

He puts on his hat.

Is crowning your Imperial self a little late
May its freshness be as late in fading.

SEGISMUNDO.

You there,
Come here, tell me, who is that?
That gorgeous woman, that divine beauty
Even the sun itself must bow down
To kiss her amazingly beautiful feet.

CLARIN.

That's your cousin, lord. Her name's Estrella.
That means star.

ESTRELLA.

We are all of us eager to greet you, Highness,
And accept you as our king; and we hope
That in spite of difficulties, you are King
Not simply for years but for many centuries.

SEGISMUNDO.

I thank you for making me welcome
But the best thing that's happened to me
Has been seeing you. I could forgive my father
If I'd had you in the mountain with me.
What could possibly be more cruel
Than deny a man the joy of seeing a woman?
Especially of seeing you, Estrella, you star
Whose rising puts the sun in the shade.

ESTRELLA. I think you should show a little more tact.

ASTOLFO.

(If he says he loves her, then I am done for.)

SERVANT 2.

My lord, you shouldn't say Estrella
Pleases you, because she's to marry Astolfo—

SEGISMUNDO. Didn't I tell you to keep out my way?

SERVANT 2.

Yes, but—

SEGISMUNDO.

That's enough!

SERVANT 2.

All I'm saying is what I know is right—

SEGISMUNDO.

It can't be right if I don't like it!

SERVANT 2. But I thought I heard you tell me—

SEGISMUNDO.

I thought I also told you
That anyone who angered me
Would be chucked out the nearest window!

SERVANT 2.

But you can't do that to people like me.

SEGISMUNDO.

Oh can't I? Let's find out!

He picks him up and exits with him, returning soon after.

SEGISMUNDO.

Thank you God it could be done.
He fell from the balcony into the sea.

ASTOLFO.

Nonetheless you should take more care
And think before committing a cruelty.
A mountain is not the same as a palace.
A human is not the same as a beast.

SEGISMUNDO.

Perhaps you should take more care as well
Or you'll find you don't have a head to put a hat on.

Exit ASTOLFO and ESTRELLA.

Enter the KING.

BASILIO.

What's happened?

SEGISMUNDO.

Nothing. Someone made me angry.
I chucked him out the window.

CLARIN.

Careful. This is the king.

SEGISMUNDO.

So what?

BASILIO.

On your first day you kill a man!

SEGISMUNDO.

He told me it couldn't be done.
So I proved him wrong.

BASILIO.

It saddens me to see you
Acting with such cruelty.
I was hoping that you'd conquered destiny
And would be standing like an enlightened man
Triumphant over the prediction of the stars.
How can I come and embrace you now
When I know your hands are stained with blood
Is there anyone here who wouldn't be afraid?
It's like seeing a dagger that's carried out a murder.
It's like seeing the spot where someone's been killed.
It makes you shiver.
I was going to embrace you,
But now I turn my back, frightened and appalled.

SEGISMUNDO.

Why should I care if you don't embrace me?
I've had to live without it up to now,
With a father who brings me up with such cruelty
And tries to have me killed. Your embraces really
Do not count for much. What matters is
You stopped me being human!

BASILIO.

I wish to God I'd never given you life

So I wouldn't have to hear your voice

SEGISMUNDO.

If you'd never given me life I wouldn't be complaining.
But you gave me life and then took it away from me.

BASILIO.

You used to be a poor and helpless prisoner.
Now you're a rich and powerful prince.
Why don't you show some gratitude?

SEGISMUNDO.

What have I to be grateful for?
You took away my freedom.
And now you're old and tired and dying
And all you're giving me is what is already mine.
You're my father, you're my king,
So although I'm now a prince
That's nothing to do with you.
That's the law of nature. I'm not
In debt to you, you're in debt to me!
You owe me all the years you took away from me
Remember: You owe me. You be grateful.
Be grateful I don't make you pay.

BASILIO.

You shameless barbarian. You proud, ignorant fool.
You're everything the stars predicted.
And even though you know who you are
And find yourself preferred above all
Remember this: you be humble, you be kind
Perhaps you're dreaming, as you'll find
When you wake up in your right mind.

Exit BASILIO.

Enter ROSAURA, dressed as a woman.

ROSAURA (*aside*).

(I've come in search of Estrella
And I'm terrified of meeting Astolfo
For Clotaldo wants him not to see me
And not to know who I really am
Clotaldo, to whom I owe this comfort,

This safety, this soft life.)

CLARIN.

Of all the things you've seen and admired
What's the one that has pleased you most?

SEGISMUNDO.

Nothing has amazed me at all;
For I was ready for everything
But if there's one thing I admire in this world
It has to be woman's beauty. I read once,
In one of the books I was given,
That in the whole creation the one thing
God worked the hardest to make was man,
Because man is the whole world in miniature.
But I think he must have worked harder creating woman
Because women are much more beautiful,
Women are a replica of heaven.
Especially when she's the woman I see now.

ROSAURA (*aside*).

(The prince is here; I must go back.)

SEGISMUNDO.

Wait woman, stop! Don't run away.
Don't be sunrise and sunset both at once.
Night shouldn't come as soon as the sun rises
Or the days would be unbearably short.
(But who is this?)

ROSAURA.

(I can't believe what I am seeing. Yet I must...)

SEGISMUNDO. (I have seen this beauty somewhere else.)

ROSAURA. (I have seen this power in chains.)

SEGISMUNDO.

(I have found my life.)
Woman ... just to call you woman
Is the greatest compliment I can pay you.
Who are you, for I know
I've never seen you before, and yet

I know that once you felt something
For me, and I felt joy in seeing you?

ROSAURA.

(It's important I hide who I am.)
I'm a sad lady, waiting on Estrella.

SEGISMUNDO.

Don't say that; Estrella's just a star,
But you're the sun itself. She gets her light from you.
When I looked at the beautiful kingdom of flowers
I saw them governed by the beauty of the rose.
When I looked at the academy of stones
I saw them led by the brilliance of the diamond.
When I looked at the unquiet republic of stars
I found Venus to be the brightest of planets.
And when I looked at the harmony of planetary spheres
I saw the sun was the most beautiful of all.
So when I look at you, I just don't understand
How you, amidst flowers, amidst stars
Amidst spinning planets and precious stones
Could be serving someone of less beauty,
When you are the most beautiful
Diamond, sun, Venus, rose.

Enter CLOTALDO.

CLOTALDO (*aside*).

(I want to help Segismundo see reason.
I brought him up. I feel responsible.
But what's happening now?)

ROSAURA.

I'm moved by your compliments, but
May silence make a speech for me.
My reasoning feels clumsy, lord,
And silence must be my best reply.

SEGISMUNDO.

No. Wait, you mustn't go away.
Why do you want to leave me in darkness?

ROSAURA.

I ask permission to do so from your Highness.

SEGISMUNDO.

If you're going to ask permission
You should wait for my reply.
For leaving before I give it, isn't
Asking permission, but taking it.

ROSAURA.

If you're not going to give permission
Then I will take it.

SEGISMUNDO.

Then you'll make me change.
Instead of being courteous, I'll be violent.
Resistance is a poison kills my patience.

ROSAURA.

This poison may well destroy
All patience and self-restraint,
Charged with fury, inhumanity
And rage. But it wouldn't dare
Force my consent. Nor could it.

SEGISMUNDO.

Perhaps I could.
I'm getting curious to see.
You're making me
Lose all respect and fear of your beauty.
Besides, I love doing what they tell me
Can't be done. And only today
I threw a man out the window
Because he told me I couldn't do it.
And right now I feel most inclined
To throw your honor out the window too.

CLOTALDO.

(The situation's getting worse.
What can I do, for heaven's sake)

ROSAURA.

They were obviously right to prophesy your cruelty
And say that if you ruled this poor kingdom, it would suffer

Betrayal, murder, treachery and civil war.
But what else do you expect from a man
Human only in name,
So vicious, violent and unrestrained,
A man born and bred among wild animals?

SEGISMUNDO.

I didn't want you to insult me like that.
And I was trying to be courteous.
I thought that might make you treat me better.
But now you call me an animal
And I didn't deserve that. But now,
By Christ! I'll show you what it means.
Get out. Leave us alone. Let no-one in. Bolt the door!

Exit CLARIN.

ROSAURA.

Listen.

SEGISMUNDO.

I'm an animal, remember? I'm not human any more.
It's no use trying to make me change my mind.

CLOTALDO.

(What a dreadful situation. Even if he kills me,
I must still prevent him.) My Lord, wait, think...

SEGISMUNDO.

You feeble mad old man
You're provoking me again.
Do you really think so little of my cruelty and rage?
How did you get in here?

CLOTALDO.

This voice called me. That's what brought me here.
I came to tell you not to be so proud
Not to be so wild. If you want to be king,
Rule peaceably. You may think you're the master here
But don't be cruel. It may turn out to be a dream.

SEGISMUNDO.

When you talk of ending illusions,

When you talk of ending dreams,
You touch a kind of light in me
And it maddens me with rage!
But I know how I'll find out if this is true.
I'll find out by killing you.

*As he pulls out his dagger;
CLOTALDO stops him and falls onto his knees.*

CLOTALDO.
This is how I'll save myself.

SEGISMUNDO.
Let go!

CLOTALDO.
Until people come
Who can restrain
Your anger and rage
I won't let go!

SEGISMUNDO.
Let go, feeble mad old man
Or I'll kill you.

They struggle.

ROSAURA.
Quick, someone!
The prince is killing Clotaldo!

*Exit ROSAURA.
Enter ASTOLFO just as CLOTALDO falls at his feet. He stands between him and
SEGISMUNDO.*

ASTOLFO.
What are you doing, Prince?
Staining your noble sword
With an old man's cold blood?
Put your sword away.

SEGISMUNDO.
Only when I see it stained

With this man 's filthy blood.

ASTOLFO.

He's fallen at my feet.

He's asked for sanctuary.

I'll make sure it does him good.

SEGISMUNDO.

All it'll do is cause your death.

And I'll get my revenge

On the way that you insulted me.

ASTOLFO.

This isn't treason. This is self-defense.

They draw their swords. Enter BASILIO and ESTRELLA.

CLOTALDO.

Astolfo, don't attack him.

BASILIO.

Are these drawn swords?

What happened?

ASTOLFO.

Nothing, my lord, now you are here.

SEGISMUNDO. This isn't nothing, even if you are here.

I was trying to kill this old man . . .

BASILIO.

Have you no respect for his age?

SEGISMUNDO. You expect me to respect old age?

Don't waste your time. Even you, old fool

You could find yourself one day

Begging for mercy at my feet.

You brought me up so cruelly

One day I'll get revenge.

Exit SEGISMUNDO.

BASILIO.

Before that day comes

You'll go back to sleep
And when you wake up
You'll believe everything
You've seen and felt
Like all the world's good things
Were just a dream.

*Exit BASILIO and CLOTALDO.
ESTRELLA and ASTOLFO remain.*

ASTOLFO.
My dear Estrella, how sad life is.
When a horoscope predicts
Misfortunes, it's generally correct:
Any evil it predicts is certain:
Any good it predicts is dubious.
This can be absolutely proven
In the case of Segismundo and myself,
For the opposite was predicted for each.
For him was foretold unpleasantness, misfortune
Deaths. And we can see for ourselves
How all of it is coming true.
The prognosis was bad, its accuracy excellent.
As for myself, I was predicted
Good fortune, happiness, pleasure, glory.
But one glance from your extraordinary eyes
Whose brilliance dims the sun and makes even the sky
A pale reflection of its former glory
Make me understand, dear lady, all too well,
The prognosis was excellent, but its accuracy dubious.

ESTRELLA.
I'm absolutely sure these flatteries
Are utterly and totally sincere
But meant for someone else.
Perhaps for the lady whose portrait
You carried round your neck
When you first came to see me.

Enter ROSAURA, where the other characters cannot see her.

ROSAURA (*aside*).

(My misfortunes have reached the
absolute limit!
And thank god for that, for any lover who sees this happen
Has seen the worst and has nothing more to fear.)

ASTOLFO.

In the presence of an emerald
A poison loses its venom
And, confronted with the sun,
A star loses its splendor.
And so, my lady, that portrait
When it came and saw you, lost
All strength, power and loveliness
Because your beauty conquered it.

ESTRELLA.

If I had really conquered it Astolfo ,
It would run away when it saw me
For the vanquished always run
From the place where they are defeated.

ASTOLFO.

Then I will ensure it leaves this place
And then, like a defeated slave,
Kneels and kisses your delightful feet.
(Beautiful Rosaura, forgive me
For demeaning you. But for men and women
Who are separated, this is faithfulness.)

Exit ASTOLFO.

ROSAURA (*aside*).

(I was so worried about being seen
I never heard a thing!)

ESTRELLA.

Astrea.

ROSAURA.

My lady.

ESTRELLA.

I'm so pleased it is you.

For you are the only one
To whom I dare entrust this secret.

ROSAURA.
My lady, you honor me.
Tell me your wish.

ESTRELLA.
Well...
To be brief... my cousin Astolfo...
he is to marry me.
Or at least he will if the world allows
One piece of good fortune to remove
So many other sources of grief.
It hurt me to see hanging round his neck
The portrait of another lady.
I asked him for it courteously;
He is polite and wishes well.
He went to fetch it and will bring it here
It will embarrass me if he comes here
And gives it to me face to face.
Please tell him to give it you, and...
I'll say no more. You are beautiful
And you are also discreet.
You know what love is very well.

Exit ESTRELLA.

ROSAURA.
And I wish I didn't know a thing about it!
God help me!
After the first misfortune
There is no happening or event
That isn't another source of grief.
Someone said once that misfortunes
Are cowards because you never see any
On their own. I say they're brave.
They always keep advancing
And never turn their back.
Clotaldo tells me to keep quiet,
My shame tells me to wait.
Estrella tells me to be a go-between,
Love tells me to sort it out.

And I know jealousy's
Something it's impossible to conceal.
So what can I do to straighten out
Such a tangled knotted mess!

Enter ASTOLFO.

ASTOLFO.
This is the portrait, my lady. . .

ROSAURA.
Why does your highness hesitate?
Why does your highness stand amazed?

ASTOLFO.
Amazed to see you, Rosaura, and to hear you speak.

ROSAURA.
Why are you calling me Rosaura?
Your Highness is mistaken, and takes me
For some other lady. For I am Astrea,
And in my humble state do not deserve
The great happiness of seeing you so perturbed.

ASTOLFO.
Rosaura, that's enough deception
The soul never lies
And although I see you as Astrea
I love you as Rosaura.

ROSAURA.
All I can tell you is that Estrella
But perhaps I should call her Aphrodite!
—Asked me to await you here
And to tell you on her behalf
To hand over that portrait
Of the lady who once passed through your life.

ASTOLFO.
However hard you try, Rosaura,
How badly you pretend! Tell your eyes
To harmonize their music with your voice;
For it's an instrument that's out of tune,

Full of discord and dissonance,
Trying in vain to conceal the gulf
Between the falsehood that it speaks
And the deep truth it feels.

ROSAURA.

All I can say to you is
That I'm waiting for the portrait.

ASTOLFO.

Well if you wish to continue this deception
I'll continue it in my reply.
Astrea, you will tell the princess
That I so greatly esteem her that
When she asked me for a portrait
It seemed to me so small a thing
To send it on its own, and so,
Because I esteem and value her,
I'm sending the original.

ROSAURA.

I came for a portrait, and
I refuse to leave without it.

ASTOLFO.

But how do you propose to take it
If I don't intend to give it?

ROSAURA.

Like this.

She tries to take it from him.

I swear to God I'll never see it
In that woman's hands!
I'd rather die!

ASTOLFO.

You're frightening.

ROSAURA.

You're disgusting!

Enter ESTRELLA.

ESTRELLA.

Astrea, Astolfo, what is this?

ASTOLFO.

(Oh God, here comes Estrella!)

ROSAURA.

(God of love be kind. Give me cunning.)

If you want to know what's happening, my lady, I will tell you.

ASTOLFO.

(Now she's done for!)

ROSAURA.

You asked me to wait here

For Astolfo, and ask him for a miniature.

I was alone for a moment, and since in the mind

One thing leads to another so easily,

As you spoke of miniatures,

I remembered I had one of my own in this sleeve.

I wanted to see it for when one's alone.

It's always trivial things that pass the time.

It fell from my hand onto the floor.

Astolfo, coming to give you the other miniature,

Picked it up, and is so unwilling to give you

The thing you ask of him, that instead of giving

One picture, he wished to take another.

And when I asked him, and tried to persuade him

To return it me, he refused point blank.

I became angry and impatient

And tried to take it.

That's my portrait he holds in his hand;

ESTRELLA.

Astolfo, give me that picture!

She takes it from him.

ASTOLFO.

My lady!

ESTRELLA.
It's flattering.

ROSAURA.
Is it not mine?

ESTRELLA.
What doubt could there possibly be?

ROSAURA.
Well, since this picture's mine,
Tell him to give you the other one.

ESTRELLA.
Take your picture and be gone.

ROSAURA. (I've got my picture back; I don't care what happens now.)

Exit ROSAURA.

ESTRELLA.
Now you give me the picture
That I asked from you.

ASTOLFO.
Lady, please take note.

ESTRELLA.
There's nothing I have to note.
You have to give me the picture.

ASTOLFO.
(How can I get out of this?)
Beautiful Estrella, I would dearly love
To serve you and obey you, I still cannot
Give you the portrait, because...

ESTRELLA.
How gross! I don't want you to give it to me now
I don't ever want you to remind me
That I ever asked you for it.

Exit ESTRELLA.

ASTOLFO.

No stop, listen, wait!
When, where and how, Rosaura,
Have you managed to come here
To destroy us both!

Exit ASTOLFO.

*SEGISMUNDO is discovered as at the beginning, dressed in skins, bound with chains,
asleep on the ground.*

Enter CLOTALDO

CLOTALDO .

Look at him now returned
To his old state of misery.
He is restless.
He's speaking in his sleep.

BASILIO.

What will he be dreaming of?
Let's listen.

SEGISMUNDO (in his dreams).
A good king should punish injustice.
It's my duty to kill Clotaldo.
I must make my father my slave.

CLOTALDO.

He wants to kill me.

BASILIO.

He wants me to be his slave.

SEGISMUNDO.

Returning to stage by popular demand,
Featuring in the great theatre of the world
The courageous prince Segismundo
Who takes revenge on his wicked father!

He wakes up.

SEGISMUNDO.

Supposing that it was a dream
I won't tell you what I dream, Clotaldo.
I'll tell you what I saw.
I woke up and found myself -
And this was a lie, Clotaldo
A cruel and flattering lie! Because
I was in a bed so brightly colored
It could have been a bed of flowers
A thousand nobles bowed down to me,
Called me their prince, and served me
With perfumes, jewels, and fine clothes.
My senses were in turmoil;
You turned them into joy
By telling me my good fortune.
For even though this is how I am
There I was a Prince of Poland.

CLOTALDO.

And did you reward me for this good news?

SEGISMUNDO.

No. Because you were a traitor
I summoned up all my bold courage
And I killed you twice.

CLOTALDO.

You hated me so much?

SEGISMUNDO.

I was lord of all
And took my revenge on everyone.
I only loved one woman
And I think that Jove was true
Because everything else ended.
But that Jove goes on and on.

Exit the KING.

CLOTALDO.

(The king was moved by what he heard, and left.)
It's because we spoke about

That eagle, you dreamt of empires;
But even dreaming it's a good idea to treat me well
Because I've done my best to bring you up
And Segismundo, even when you're dreaming.
The good you do is never lost.

Exit.

SEGISMUNDO.

What if he's right? What if we suppressed
This ferocity, this ambition and this rage
Just in case it is a dream.
Yes, let's do that, for this life's so strange
Living it is just a dream.
Everyone who lives is only dreaming
Who they are till they awake.
The king dreams he is a king, and lives
Governing under this deception,
Making laws and ruling;
And the applause, which he receives,
He gets it as a loan, and it's written in the wind
And death turns it all to ashes.
And that's such a terrible thing!
Is there anyone who'd want to rule
Knowing that they must wake up
Wake up in the sleep of death!
The rich man dreams of his riches
Which just offer him more cares.
The poor man dreams he suffers
His misery and poverty.
The one who tries to get on in life is dreaming
The one who ambitiously and obsessively strives
The one who hurts, insults and offends
And in this world, in the end,
Everyone dreams they are who they are
Although no-one understands this.
I dream that I am here
Bound down by these heavy chains
And I dreamed that once I lived differently
And was happy.
What is life? A frenzy.
Life's an illusion. Life's a shadow, a fiction,
And the greatest good is worth nothing at all,

For the whole of life is just a dream
And dreams . . . dreams are only dreams.

End of Act Two.

ACT THREE

Enter CLARIN, on his own, in the dark.

CLARIN.

Here I am. Locked up in a magic tower
Imprisoned for what I know.
So what about what I don't know?
What'll they do to me for that?
They'll kill me. They're killing me already.
For someone as hungry as me
Is slowly but surely dying.
I feel sorry for myself.
I know you're all going to think '
Well I'm not at all surprised'
And you're right. It's all terribly predictable.
It's terrible to have a name like Clarin
And be silent. Clarin. You know. From the Latin.
And I'm all alone with no-one to talk to
But spiders and rats. And their conversation
Leaves a lot to be desired.
And my poor head's full of dreams.
I keep dreaming of trumpets.
And people whipping themselves
In processions, and other people
Watching them and fainting.
And some go up and some go down
And I just stay in the same place
Fainting for lack of food.
I'm on a starvation diet
And it's worse than the diet of Worms.
If I were a philosopher,
I'd be in the anorexic school of thought.
And I don't get any holidays or feast days
Or anydays but hungry days.

There's a sound of drums within, and shouting.

SOLDIER 2.

Here he is. This is the tower.

Kick in the door!

Come on in.

CLARIN.

Christ they must be looking for me.

They've just said here I am.

What do they want me for?

Are these people looking for me?

Enter as many SOLDIERS as possible.

SOLDIER 1. Come on!

SOLDIER 2. Here he is!

CLARIN. No he isn't.

ALL. Your majesty!

CLARIN. Are they drunk?

SOLDIER 2.

You are our Prince

For we don't want and we won't accept

Anyone except our own real prince

And we don't want any foreigner.

ALL. Long live our great prince!

CLARIN.

I think they really mean it!

Maybe in this kingdom it's the custom

Maybe they take someone every day, make him prince

And then lock him up again?

They did it yesterday. I saw them.

So this is them doing it today.

I'd better play the part.

SOLDIERS.

Allow us to kiss your feet.

CLARIN.

No I can't do that, I haven't washed them.
Anyway they're my feet and I like them.
Don't want anyone fooling around with them
Footling around with them.
It would be footless. Fruitless.
But thank you anyway.

SOLDIER 2.

We all went to your father and we told him
You're the only prince we'll recognize
And not that foreigner from Moscow.

CLARIN.

Are you telling me you were rude to my dad?
You're a lot of rotten shits.

SOLDIER 1.

We only did it out of loyalty.

CLARIN.

Oh well if it was loyally, I forgive you

SOLDIER 2.

Come out and restore your Empire!
Long live Segismundo!

ALL. Long live Segismundo!

CLARIN.

Are they calling me Segismundo?
Oh well. Obviously they call all their fake princes Segismundo.

Enter SEGISMUNDO.

SEGISMUNDO.

Who calls for me?

CLARIN.

That's the end of me as prince.
Now I'm the artist formerly known as Blank.

SOLDIER 2.

So who is Segismundo?

SEGISMUNDO. Me

SOLDIER 2.

So what were you doing, you stupid, rash fool
Calling yourself Segismundo?

CLARIN.

How dare you. I never did. Call myself Segismundo . . .
You were the ones who were Segismundo-ing me.
So you're the ones who's stupid and rash.

SOLDIER 1.

Great prince Segismundo
Your father, king Basilio, was afraid
Of some prophecy which said
He would find himself helpless at your feet.
He wants to take away from you your power
And your right to rule
And give it all to Astolfo, Duke of Moscow.
That's what he told his court, and the people got to know of this
And once we knew we have a real king
We don't want to be ruled by a foreigner.
And so we've come to find you
Where they're keeping you prisoner.
We bring you weapons and an army
So you can lead a revolution
To depose a tyrant and restore yourself
As rightful ruler. Come then:
For out in this wasteland a huge army
Is waiting to acclaim you.
Freedom awaits you Prince:
Hear its shouts.

VOICES (within).

Long live Segismundo!

SEGISMUNDO.

Yet again am I supposed to dream
Another vision of greatness and power

Which will be destroyed by time?
Yet again am I supposed to feel
The pain of disillusionment and loss
That all human power is subject to
And must humbly live and already watch for?
I won't do it. I won't. I won't!
Go away you figments! You illusions
I don't want false power.
I don't want false majesty!
You're like the blossom on the almond tree
Who flowers so foolishly soon
And then withers, fades, and loses
From its rosy buds all beauty,
All delight, all ornament,
Blown away by the first breath of winter wind.
You see I know you now
Now there's no way I can be deceived
My eyes are opened, I have no illusions
And I know life is just a dream.

SOLDIER 2.

You think we're fooling you
And it just isn't true. Turn your eyes
And look up at that proud mountain.
You'll see there's a crowd of people there
Waiting to do whatever you tell them.

SEGISMUNDO.

I saw all that before, and it looked
As clear and as distinct
As everything that I see now
And it was all a dream.

SOLDIER I.

When great things happen, lord, they always come with premonitions
And that's what that was, if you dreamed it first.

SEGISMUNDO.

You're right; it was a premonition
(And so just in case it is true
And since life is a dream, Let's dream, my soul,
Let's dream again but this time with attention
And bearing in mind that at some fine time

We're going to wake up from this pleasure.
So, taking this precaution,
And knowing that all power is on loan
Let's dare to do everything.)
Friends, I appreciate your loyalty. You'll find in me
Someone clever enough and brave enough
To free you from foreign rule.
Call to arms! Prepare to march!
I will fight my own father and defeat him!
I will make the prophecy come true!
And he will be lying helpless at my feet!
(But if before this I wake up
wouldn't it be better not to say it
since I'm not going to do it?)

ALL.
Long live Segismundo! Long live freedom'

Enter CLOTALDO.

CLOTALDO.
What is this?

SEGISMUNDO.
Clotaldo!

CLOTALDO.
My lord!
(I expect I'll be the first target of his cruelty.)

CLARIN.
(I bet he throws him off the mountain.)

Exit.
CLOTALDO.
I kneel before you. I know I shall die.

SEGISMUNDO.
Father, get up, don't stay on your knees.
I want you to guide me
In what I have to do. I know I owe my upbringing
To your love and loyalty. Embrace me.

CLOTALDO.

What are you saying?

SEGISMUNDO.

I am dreaming and I want to do good.
For the good you do is never lost,
Not even in dreams.

CLOTALDO.

Well, my lord, if doing good
Is what you now intend, then obviously
It won't offend you if I try to do the same.
You are about to make war on your father;
I can't advise you in a war against my king
Or be of any use to you.
Here I am at your feet: kill me.

SEGISMUNDO.

You peasant, you wretch, you traitor,
(God I need to control myself!
I'm not even sure if I'm awake!
It's like putting a brake on all my rage
This thought that I'm going to wake up
And find myself without this power!)

SOLDIER 2.

All this loyalty's a waste of time.
What you're really doing is ignoring the common good.
We're the ones that are loyal because we're making sure
That it's our real prince who governs us.

CLOTALDO.

That would be fine once the king was dead
But the king is still alive and must be obeyed

SOLDIER 2.

Well we'll soon see Clotaldo
How much this loyalty is worth.

SEGISMUNDO.

That's enough!

Clotaldo, I envy you your bravery
And I'm grateful for it. Go and serve the king.
We'll meet on the battlefield. But let's not argue
Whether it's a good thing or a bad.
We all have our sense of honor.

CLOTALDO.

I won't forget my gratitude.

Exit.

SEGISMUNDO.

You, beat the drum for war
And march in good order.
Head for the king's palace!

ALL.

Long live our great prince!

SEGISMUNDO.

Fortune, we're going to be king.
Don't wake me up, if I'm dreaming;
If it's real, then don't send me back to sleep.

MUSIC. They exit. Drums beat.

Enter BASILIO and ASTOLFO.

BASILIO.

When a horse goes mad and starts to run
Is there anyone strong enough to halt it?
Can anyone stop a raging river on a slope
Tumbling wildly down jagged rocks to the sea?
All these things would be easier to control
Than the fierce energy of the common people.
All we see and hear attests this truth.
The shouts of opposing factions echo across the valleys.
Some call out 'Segismundo' some 'Astolfo'.
The throne room has become a side show
A dismal theatre, an empty auditorium
Where fortune mounts tragedies no-one wants to see.

ASTOLFO.

All rejoicing has to be post-poned,
All applause brought to a sudden halt

For if Poland –which I hope to rule-
Now resists the obedience it owes me
It is simply so I can earn the right to it.
Bring me a horse, and, full of pride,
I'll boast like thunder and descend
Like a bolt of lightning.

Exit ASTOLFO.

BASILIO.

Nothing can be done against the infallibly true.
There is great danger in tampering with the foreseen.
If something has to happen, nothing can prevent it,
And the more you try to stop it
The more you make it actually occur.
How harsh a law. How terrifying a fact. How cruel a universe.
Anyone who thinks they are avoiding a risk
Is in fact walking right into it. Trying to save myself,
I have dug my own grave.
I tried to save my country
And I have destroyed it.

Enter CLOTALDO.

BASILIO.

Clotaldo! What news of Segismundo?

CLOTALDO.

For the second time, he finds himself honored
And treated like a king, and has sworn
To dethrone you, fiercely declaring
That he will make heaven's prophecies come true.

BASILIO.

Then bring me a horse, and my weary old age
Will ride out to subdue a rebellious son.
And when it comes to defending my throne,
Perhaps where science failed, violence will prevail.

Exit BASILIO and CLOTALDO.

*They beat the drum,
and enter SEGISMUNDO, dressed in skins,
with CLARIN and MARCHING SOLDIERS.*

SEGISMUNDO.

I wish the Roman Emperors could see me now
Dressed like an animal, leading an army
Ready for anything! I could defeat the sky!
No. Wait, don't get too ambitious. Don't aim so high
Don't make it all disappear, or this dream of greatness
Will hurt me when I wake up and find it gone.
The less I have to lose, the less I suffer when it disappears.

CLARIN.

There's a man with his eyes wide open
But still living in the dark. It's madness.
He can see everything, but can't make sense of it.
And I'm as bad. Here 's me, seeing him,
And not making sense of him at all.

SOUND. A clarion call within. Drums.

SEGISMUNDO. What's that?

CLARIN.

A swift horse. And, I'm sorry,
But I have to describe it. It's my cue.
It's a monster of fire, water, wind and earth,
A piebald monster, dappled all over, bridled and spurred
By the person who's riding her
And who doesn't just gallop but flies
Into your presence and is a woman

SEGISMUNDO.

Whose beauty blinds me.

CLARIN.

For goodness sake it's Rosaura!

Exit CLARIN.

SEGISMUNDO.

Fate has brought her back to me.
Everything I dreamed of is coming true.

Enter ROSAURA wearing a gorgeous dress, a sword and a dagger.

ROSAURA.

Segismundo, noble prince,
I am a woman in need of assistance.
This is the third time you have seen and admired me.
Yet the third time you do not know me
For each time we meet I have appeared
In a different shape, dress and form.
The first time you saw me you were held in chains.
You saw me in your prison and you thought me a man
And you helped me through a time of dark misfortune.
The second time you saw me you were treated as a king.
I was dressed as a woman, you were admiring of my beauty
In your illusory dream of power and majesty.
Today is the third time and I'm a kind of monster
Carrying man's weapons, but wearing women's clothes
And so that you may now take pity
And be spurred on the better to help me
I must tell you my sad story.

They say beauty and misfortune go hand in hand.
My mother was unfortunate enough
To be most beautiful. She was a noble Muscovite;
A man fell in love with her,
A man I cannot name because I do not know it.
And in my grief at the circumstance of my birth
I would imagine him to be a kind of god,
Those you find in the ancient stories
And whose victims weep, like Danae, like Leda,
Because gods, like men, forget the women
Who once gave them pleasure.
My mother was as beautiful as any
And as unhappy as them all.
It was a promise of marriage,
That same old stupid story,
Which took such a hold on her mind.
The promise of marriage is like a knot
That's been badly tied, it does not bind,
It gives no shelter nor protection,
But I was born from it. Born so like my mother
If not in beauty, then at least

In how I lived and suffered
And what I allowed happen to me.
The man who wrecked my reputation
And destroyed my self-respect
Is...Astolfo. My face flares up,
And the simple act of naming him
Fills my heart with anger and with rage
Which is exactly what you would expect
When you name a vicious enemy.
He betrayed me and left for Poland
Aiming for another conquest,
This time with the beautiful Estrella.
He lied to me. He insulted me
And left me drowning in madness and grief.
I never spoke of this. Some griefs
Are best spoken of in silence.
Until one day alone with my mother,
I broke down their prison door
And they try all burst out at once.
She took pity on me in my tears,
Consoled me with her own and forgave me.
Forgiveness is easy when you have also sinned.
Learning is a lesson from her own life story
So she thought it best that I follow Astolfo
And having found him, force him to repay his debt.
Brave Segismundo, now that fate
Has set you free from your dark prison,
Now you have the chance to take revenge.
And seeing this, I have decided to join you,
Wearing both the gorgeous dress of Aphrodite
And the god of war's impenetrable steel.
Both adorn me as we meet for this third time.
And I've come both to oblige you and assist you
To help you to regain your throne
As a woman I come to inspire your pity,
As a man I come to serve you with courage
As a woman I come so you can rescue me
In my insult and my dishonor
And as a man I have come to fight for you
With my sword and my fierce presence.
And so it seems to me that today
If I fall in love with you as a woman
As a man I will die for you

Fiercely defending my honor.
It matters to us both brave leader,
That this arranged wedding does not take place.
It matters to me so the man
Who calls himself my husband does not marry;
It matters to you because you need to prevent
The union of their powers which may put in doubt
Our own inevitable victory.
As a woman, I come to persuade you,
To take up arms in defense of my honor
As a man I come to encourage you
To recover your lost scepter.
If you love me as a woman
As a man I'll fight to the death
To regain honor and self-respect,
I'll be a woman and fill your heart with tenderness
And I'll be a man to gain respect.

SEGISMUNDO.

God if it's true I'm dreaming
Then stop me remembering
For it's not possible for so many things
All to fit into the one dream!
God help me! Is there anyone
Who could solve all those dilemmas
Or else turn his back on all of them!
All the things she said . . . !
If I was really dreaming I was king
Then how come that woman saw me
And can tell me about it in such detail?
So it has to have been true. It can't have been a dream.
But if it was true, then it just makes
Everything far more confusing.
Because how come I think
My life's a dream? I mean,
Are wonderful experiences so like dreams
That what's real can be utterly dreamlike
And what's unreal can be taken to be true?
Which means, which means it must be obvious
That this dream is what life is
And that this life is really just a dream.
So if that's true, and all this greatness
All this majesty, all this power,

If it's all going to disappear as if it never was
The thing to do is make the most of what we've got.
I've got Rosaura in my power
And I love her incredible beauty
So let's make the most of it.
It's true she trusts me, she expects me to help her
But I want her. And love and desire
Break all rules of confidence and trust.
If everything's just a dream,
Then let's dream, my soul,
Let's dream of happiness
Because we know it will soon be grief.
But I've just gone and made myself
Change my mind. There has to be
A kind of happiness that lasts for ever.
And who'd want to destroy that
Just for a moment's pleasure?
Every past happiness is just a dream.
Is there anyone here who hasn't
Thought back to some happy time
And thought: 'It all feels like
It was just a dream? There's a thought
That kills all illusion, there's a thought
Makes every pleasure seem like a candle flame
Easily blown out by the first breath of wind.
I have to look for more than that
I have to look for something that lasts for ever
Some living, ever-burning flame
Where happiness never ends
And great things are not forgotten.
And anyway, when I look at Rosaura.
I'm more in love with her than ever,
But I don't know... Her story's placed
Some kind of poison in my soul.
It's the thought her body's already been enjoyed
By someone else. What a vile thing
It must be in this world to love
Someone another has forgotten, to love
Someone another still enjoys! Besides,
Rosaura has been dishonored.
A good prince should not dishonor her more
A good prince should give her honor back.
For God's sake, that's what I should try to regain

That's more important than gaining power!
But I'll have to turn my back on this opportunity
Because it's just so very attractive . . .
Sound to arms! We'll fight the battle today!
To arms! To arms!

ROSAURA.

Why do you turn your back on me?
Don't all my troubles even earn
A single word? How can you bear
To turn your back on me? Not to look at me or hear me?
Won't you even turn a moment ç
Won't you even give me a single glance?

SEGISMUNDO.

Rosaura, I want to show you pity
So for now I must be cruel.
I want to answer with my actions
I dare not answer with my voice.
I cannot look at you because
In such uncertain, dangerous times
Anyone who wants to think about your honor
Cannot afford to gaze upon your beauty.

Exit SEGISMUNDO and the SOLDIERS.

ROSAURA.

Oh for god's sake! What's that supposed to be about!
After all I've gone through
And I've still got to cope
With such incomprehensible replies?

Enter CLARIN.

CLARIN.

My lady, can I see you?

ROSAURA.

Oh Clarin! Where have you been?

CLARIN.

Locked up in a tower.

Playing cards with death.
She almost played me a nasty trick
And I was very nearly disappeared.

ROSAURA.
Why?

CLARIN.
Because I know the secret of who you are
And your father is. And that is. . .

MUSIC (SOUND). Drums beat within.

But what is that appalling noise?

ROSAURA.
What can it be?

CLARIN.
Oh it's just an armed regiment coming out
Of the besieged palace to try to beat
The fearsome army of fierce Segismundo.

ROSAURA.
Then what am I doing standing here like a coward?
Why aren't I out there fighting beside him
Scandalising the entire world
When there's so much violence and cruelty
Tearing the world apart without order and law?

Exit.

WITHIN SOME VOICES.
Long live our King!

WITHIN SOME OTHER VOICES.
Long live our freedom!

CLARIN.
Long live our freedom! And long live the king!
Let them both live very happily together
Because nothing's going to bother me at all
Just as long as I'm on the winning side at the end.

But just for now I think I'll make myself scarce.
I don't fancy playing a soldier at all.
I think I'll play Nero instead.
I'll just buy a violin second hand
And play fiddle while Poland burns.
And I really won't care what happens
Just as long as it all leaves me alone.
There's a little snug crevice here
In among these rocks.
To hell with death. She'll never find me here.

*He hides. We hear the sound of clashing weapons, and then enter the KING, CLOTALDO
and ASTOLFO, all running away.*

BASILIO.
Was there ever a more unfortunate king?
Was there ever a more mistreated father?

CLOTALDO.
Your defeated army flees without order or discipline.

ASTOLFO.
The battlefield belongs to the rebellious traitors.

BASILIO.
In battles like these, Astolfo,
The loyal subjects are those who win
The rebellious traitors are those who lose.

A shot within. CLARIN falls, wounded, from where he is.

BASILIO.
Who is it?

ASTOLFO.
Who is this wretched soldier
Falling at our feet
Wounded and covered in blood?

CLARIN.
I'm someone who wanted to run from death
But all I did was find it...
That's how it is; you run

From the thing you're afraid of
And you run right into it.
You try to avoid it, but
Instead you make it happen.
You're trying to escape death
On the battlefield by running
Deep into the deserted mountains
But turn back. Turn back!
You're safer among gunshots
In less danger from sword thrusts
Than in the remotest valley.
There is nowhere safe, nowhere
To escape the reach of death.
Remember you're going to die
If God says your hour has come.

He falls within.

BASILIO.

Remember that you're going to die
If God says your hour has come.
Oh God how well this speaking corpse
How well this wounded bleeding mouth
Persuades us of our ignorance and error.
His trail of blood is like a tongue
Teaching us that when we try to resist a higher power
Everything we do is wasted effort.
I tried to prevent my country suffering
Rebellion bloodshed and civil war
And all I've done is to create the very suffering
I worked so hard to try to prevent.

CLOTALDO.

My lord, it's true that death knows every path
But a good Christian does not despair
And say there's no escaping evil destiny.
It isn't true; the wise and prudent man
Can control his destiny, can control his fate.
At the moment you are not at all protected
From danger and calamity; so you must take steps
And find a place where you can be safe.

ASTOLFO.

Clotaldo, my lord, speaks to you
As a prudent man of advancing age.
I speak to you as a brave young man
Who has kept a fast horse hidden in the mountain.
It's a swift abortion of the dawn:
Take it and ride away on it;
For I will guard your back.

BASILIO.
If God has decreed I die
Or if death lies in wait for me
I want to meet it here
And meet death face to face

Weapons clash; enter SEGISMUNDO and the whole COMPANY

CLOTALDO.
Your majesty, run!

BASILIO.
Why?

ASTOLFO.
What do you intend to do?

BASILIO.
Get back Astolfo!
CLOTALDO.
What do you intend?

BASILIO.
To do the thing I must to do.
If it's me you're looking for
Then here I am. I kneel before you.
I lie on the ground and I'm helpless at your feet.
Here I am. Use me as your slave.
And after so many attempts to evade it
Let will the fate be done
Let the decree of heaven be fulfilled.

SEGISMUNDO.
Famous court of Poland
Witness of so many amazing events

Listen to me: I speak to you as your Prince.
God writes our stories with letters of silver and gold
On the beautiful azure of heaven's mysteries.
God never lies; the man who lies,
The man who deceives,
Is the man who deciphers these mysteries
And then makes wrong use of them.
Look at my father, who feared my rage
And then did everything to provoke it.
He made me wild beast, a brute, when
Everything in my heritage
Predisposed me to be gentle and courteous.
But because he treated me like an animal
I became a savage beast.
What kind of wisdom was that!
If someone said to you:
'Be careful of that animal. Its lucky it's sleeping
Because it's savage and cruel
And would certainly kill you
If you wake it.' Would it be wise
To take a sharpened stick and poke it?
If someone said to you:
'Be careful of that sword you're wearing
Or its sharp blade will kill you'
Would it be wise to unsheathe it
And hold its naked point against your chest?
My rage was that sleeping beast
My fury that sheathed sword
If life threatens you with evil,
It cannot be overcome
By acting with injustice and cruelty
It can only be defeated
By courage intelligence and strength,
Daring to meet evil face to face.
All of you: observe the downfall of this king
Witness this extraordinary spectacle
My father did everything he could
To escape an evil that threatened him
And failed. So how can I
Not so old as he, not so brave and not so wise
How can I do any better?
Father please get up, don't lie there on the ground.
Give me your hand, and now

Heaven and the world have shown you your mistakes
I bow my head, I kneel at your feet
And I place myself at your mercy.

BASILIO.

My son, in your nobility you are reborn.
Your achievements give you victory.

ALL.

Long live Segismundo!

SEGISMUNDO.

There are more victories I need to win
And they all require great courage.
I'll start with the hardest: to overcome myself.
I have decided to restore Rosaura's honor:
So Astolfo you must marry her at once.

ASTOLFO.

Although it's true I owe her obligations
I have to say her father is unknown.
Clearly it would be baseness and infamy
For me to marry such a woman.

CLOTALDO.

Stop. That's enough, don't go on.
For Rosaura is as noble as you are,
And my sword will defend her in a duel.
She's my daughter. That's all that need be said.

ROSAURA.

In one day, I've found a double happiness.

SEGISMUNDO.

And so I need to marry Estrella
To a Prince of equal rank and worth.
I'll marry you myself. Give me your hand.

ESTRELLA.

I seem to have got myself a better husband.

SOLDIER I.

So if you're rewarding all these people

Who fought against you and did you harm
What will you give me, who started this rebellion
Set you free from the tower and made you king?

SEGISMUNDO.

The tower. And there you'll stay
Chained up until you die.
For once the moment of betrayal's past
It's important to get rid of the traitor.

BASILIO. What statesmanship!

CLOTALDO. How much you've changed!

SEGISMUNDO.

Why are you all so amazed? I still live in dread
I'm going to wake up and find myself in prison again.
My teacher was a dream
dream that destroys illusions
And tells me life's just a sweet lie
And when we wake up from it
We find it's nothing. Empty air.
It's how it is for an actor,
One minute he's a king
And the next he's at your mercy.
When the play comes to its end
He humbly begs your pardon
And asks you to forgive mistakes.

End.