

THE CARDENIO PROJECT

A play by
Jesús Eguía Armenteros

*Translation by Carla Della Gatta, Judit Pintér
and Thomas Shelton († 17th Century)*

Inspired by Cervantes' novel
*The History of the Valorous & Witty Knight-Errant
Don Quixote of the Mancha, Part IV*
and by Shakespeare and Fletcher's *Double Falsehood*

Written under the Sponsorship of a Mellon Foundation Grant
for the research project
Cardenio: Cultural Mobility coordinated by
Dr. Stephen Greenbatt for Harvard University (MA-USA)

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Para Yelmo de Mambrino Teatro
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THE AUTHOR & PSYCHOLOGIST.....JUAN DÍAZ
 GREENBLATT.....STEPHEN GREENBLATT
 QUIXOTE.....RAFAEL NAVARRO
 SANCHO.....ERNESTO GIL
 DOROTEA.....MARÍA FELICES
 FERNANDO.....RAMÓN MORENO
 LUSCINDA.....ALBA ALONSO BAYONA

TEXT, DIRECTION & SCENOGRAPHY.....JESÚS EGUÍA ARMENTEROS
 ASSISTANT DIRECTOR.....HELENA GONZÁLEZ
 COSTUME DESIGN.....GEMA RABASCO
 SOUND, SPACE & VIDEO.....SERGIO ÁLVAREZ
 LIGHTING DESIGN.....CARLOS MARCOS
 GENERAL MANAGER.....MARÍA JOSÉ GALLEGO
 GRAPHIC DESIGN.....PULSO S.L.
 PRODUCTION.....YELMO DE MAMBRINO TEATRO

The Cardenio Project is a free vision of the MYTH of Don Quixote of the Mancha and his meeting with the shepherd, Cardenio. Its re-interpretation in our time is the fruit of the same search made by the tragic Greek poets with the Homeric characters.

Some parts of the text, marked by changes of typography, are extracted, fragmented and decontextualized from the infinite novel of the one-armed Lepanto (in Thomas Shelton's translation of 1612).

ACT I: THE LIE**SCENE 1**

Some candles slightly light the scene. The neighbor's MUSIC is DEAFENING. A couple makes love on the floor. From the dark emerges an elongated shadow: a man wearing a raincoat takes out a gun. He gets closer to the lovers. He illuminates them with a lighter. Aims. SHOOTs. Darkness.

SCENE 2

Darkness. In THE AUTHOR's brain echoes a conversation with Harvard Professor Stephen GREENBLATT, coordinator of The Cardenio Project. The words of one and the other are to be heard simultaneously and become mixed.

THE AUTHOR

What is real? I don't know what is real. I don't want to deceive myself. I want to be happy. I don't want to suffer. I want a life worth living, that's it. To be naive, a hypocrite, a lunatic? I don't care about the others anymore. I can't live with her any longer and I have been just asked to write a love story. I don't like her smell. Is that clear? It should be, because you mustn't step back. I'm a coward. I don't want to hurt her.

GREENBLATT

I think it could help you understand the Cardenio Project. Shakespeare and Fletcher's plots were obviously inspired by Cardenio's story, as told in Cervantes's *Don Quixote*.

THE AUTHOR

I've just been asked to write a story about Cardenio, because Shakespeare read Cervantes and wrote Cardenio about one part of the Quixote, however, it was lost or burned - I didn't understand very well - and now someone claims to have found it. The Royal Shakespeare Company? I don't know. I didn't really understand what they want me to write. Harvard University. Whatever I want? That's what he said. I didn't understand very well. My English isn't very good. Ten years ago I could speak the language a lot better. *(in English)*: But I don't know what I must do: maybe I would write a piece

inspired in it, an adaptation of Shakespeare, of Cervantes, of the both at the same time?

GREENBLATT

I'm especially interested in an idea I call "cultural mobility".

THE AUTHOR

Is it going to be published in Spanish? I don't know. I don't understand it very well. It's good money. I shouldn't say no. It's Harvard.

GREENBLATT

... That is, the transmission and transformation of cultural material through time and space. The text should derive its material from the basic source, Cervantes' story, and from our version of Cardenio, to then adapt it to the concerns and theatrical conventions of Spanish culture and society.

THE AUTHOR

Cardenio is a character who fights for love. I don't know how to leave her. I don't want to hurt her. I'm such an asshole. What do they actually want me to do? I didn't understand very well. I don't know what the "theatrical conventions of Spanish culture and society" are. I don't want to feel guilty.

GREENBLATT

Your play will be the answer. I don't know what you have in mind. You're free to do with it as your imagination tells you.

THE AUTHOR

Your play will be the answer. I don't know what you have in mind. You're free to do with it as your imagination sees fit.

SCENE 3

Night. Plaza de España. Two bums, QUIXOTE and SANCHO, running between BEEPING cars. In the distance police car sirens are heard. Quixote's eyebrow is bleeding. Sancho is pulling together his torn up raincoat. Christmas streetlights shine upon their faces.

QUIXOTE

Sancho, I have often heard a saying which is, to be thankful to mankind is like drawing water to the sea.

SANCHO

Fucking hell!

QUIXOTE

Sancho, thou art a natural coward, but, because thou mayst not say that I am obstinate, and that I never follow thine advice,

SANCHO

Shit! Come on!

QUIXOTE (CONT.)

I will take thy counsel this time, and convey myself from that fury which now thou fearest so much: for I'm only thinking that I withdraw myself out of any peril,

SANCHO

Fuck!

QUIXOTE (CONT.)

I am to remain and expect here alone for the Holy Brotherhood and the brethren of the Twelve Tribes.

They run away.

SCENE 4

Evening. A Café belonging to the Aguilar Franchise is full of Christmas decorations. FERNANDO and DOROTEA are sitting at a table, drinking coffee. FERNANDO, 35 years old, Director of Aguilar Group, THE AUTHOR's best friend. DOROTEA, 35 years old, Workplace Security Manager of the Aguilar Group.

DOROTEA

According to the reports we got from the Cultural Section, out of the eight women employed in each center, only three manage to finish the book campaign. I'd like you to take a look at this plan I've...

FERNANDO

You can't leave it for a moment, can you?

DOROTEA

I want to have it done before your friend arrives.

FERNANDO

We'll talk about it tomorrow.

(takes a sip of his coffee)

He's an interesting guy. You'll like him.

DOROTEA

I have a date.

FERNANDO

He's a writer. You used to write too, didn't you?

DOROTEA

I'm meeting someone.

Silence.

FERNANDO

Here nobody knows who we are. You realize that? Just a moment ago, you were talking about their lives, about how we could change their lives to make them more productive and none of them have even noticed. I'm comfortably sitting in a place I own, they all work for me, but they can also make me pay for this coffee, do you understand?

DOROTEA

There are the pictures. You could call the manager and tell him who you are with the pictures.

FERNANDO

What pictures?

DOROTEA

The company's.

FERNANDO

I hate those fucking pictures: as if they all love their jobs, and this employee-of-the-month shit.

DOROTEA

They're necessary in order for the worker to...

FERNANDO

(interrupting her)

For the worker to feel part of a common project. For him to become fond of his company, to believe he is the company. I know that theory. That's how we improve our productivity: making the employee feel he is the company.

DOROTEA

And it works!

Fernando checks the time. Silence.

DOROTEA

I think it would be best to end it.

FERNANDO

What are you talking about?

DOROTEA

I'm your employee. You are my boss. I wouldn't like anyone in the office to...

FERNANDO

They'll never find out. I promise.

(pause)

Please.

(he takes her hand)

DOROTEA

I feel like sucking your dick.

(pause)

What? Nobody knows who we are here.

Dorotea starts touching Fernando beneath the table. Fernando smiles and slightly moves away. Dorotea takes her hand back. Silence.

FERNANDO

Nobody will know, don't worry.

DOROTEA

Give me a kiss.

Dorotea offers him her cheek.

FERNANDO

You must let me fuck you.

DOROTEA

Oh, dear, watch your mouth!

The Author arrives loaded with bags from the supermarket.

THE AUTHOR

(interrupting them)

Sorry to be late.

FERNANDO

¡Anselmo!

They stare at each other.

FERNANDO

You haven't changed.
(introducing them to each other)
Dorotea... Anselmo...

DOROTEA

The writer.

The Author smiles. He looks at them both. There's an awkward silence.

DOROTEA (CONT.)

Pleased to meet you.

THE AUTHOR

I'd rather talk to you alone.
(to Dorotea)
Please excuse me, it's not because of you.

FERNANDO

I didn't know that... She writes as well and I wanted to...

All of them speak at the same time, interrupting each other.

DOROTEA

Don't worry.

THE AUTHOR

I'm sorry. I...

FERNANDO

No, I am sorry. I didn't understand you...

DOROTEA

Please, some other time. Really, I'm fine...

THE AUTHOR

I'm sorry, I didn't mean to...

DOROTEA

Don't worry. It's ok. You haven't seen each other for a long time. We will have the opportunity to get to know each other some other day, really. It's fine. I'll call you later, okay?

FERNANDO

Ok.

Dorotea leaves.

FERNANDO

She works for me. She likes writing and...
You still write, don't you?

THE AUTHOR

Yes. I'm writing a play for Harvard University now.

FERNANDO

Oh, that's great. You've been making the most of your
time, then.

THE AUTHOR

It's an adaptation, I have to write some kind of free
version...

FERNANDO

I'm so glad you're doing well!

THE AUTHOR

... of a Shakespearean play inspired by Quixote.

FERNANDO

I've thought of calling you. This has grown a lot.

THE AUTHOR

I know. I've seen it. Your company is everywhere now.

FERNANDO

Yes.

THE AUTHOR

Luscinda has come to live with me.

FERNANDO

I see, time's really gone by. How could we let it be so
long!

THE AUTHOR

Three years.

FERNANDO

Oh my god... One always leaves things for tomorrow and
then... Well, congratulations. How is she?

(joking)

You're not going to tell me you had a baby now.

THE AUTHOR

No. We haven't had any babies.

FERNANDO

I want you to know nothing's changed between us. I'm still here for anything you may need. If there's something you want...

THE AUTHOR

I also meant to call you.

FERNANDO

When I look at you, it's really as if no time has gone by.

THE AUTHOR

What do you mean?

FERNANDO

Not even one day, almost as if I had seen you yesterday.

(pause)

What would you like to drink?

THE AUTHOR

Don't worry. I'm not in love with her anymore.

(pause)

She arrived a few weeks ago. I asked her to come and she did and left everything. I don't know why I did it, I wasn't thinking straight. Now she's left everything to come to Madrid, to be with me.

FERNANDO

Her job, her life in Berlin?

THE AUTHOR

Everything. That's why I called you.

FERNANDO

Do you need money? You know that it's not a problem for me.

THE AUTHOR

No. It's not that. She left everything to come with me. I was the one who asked her to do so. I don't know why. Maybe it was this cold weather. That's what the cold does. I can't hurt her. I can't tell her it's over just like that. Every year it is getting even colder.

FERNANDO

What the hell is all that about the cold?

THE AUTHOR

I need you to sleep with her again.

FERNANDO

What the fuck are you saying?

Silence.

THE AUTHOR

I know what happened between you. She hasn't told me anything, but I could tell.

FERNANDO

I don't know what you're talking about.

THE AUTHOR

That's why we stopped calling each other. You know it and so do I. That's why we stopped calling each other. But now it's not important anymore. It doesn't matter. I don't love Luscinda, she disgusts me.

FERNANDO

This isn't funny.

THE AUTHOR

I want you to fuck her, again.

FERNANDO

(becoming distant)

I don't know what you're getting at...

THE AUTHOR

Come on, stop pretending. Do you know I wasn't surprised? It hurt and all that, but it turned out to be something positive in the end. It made us grow closer. Now I need you to do it again... to split us up.

FERNANDO

Look, I better go.

THE AUTHOR

Do you remember your first trip to Berlin, when we were sixteen? I hid you in the closet where you could watch us fuck. Luscinda never knew.

FERNANDO

We were just kids.

THE AUTHOR

What did you do with the pictures?

FERNANDO

I gave them to you.

THE AUTHOR

Surely you made some copies.

FERNANDO

No. You burned them all.

THE AUTHOR

You've always been in love with Luscinda.

FERNANDO

You're nuts.

THE AUTHOR

You have to call her again. You owe me that one.

FERNANDO

I owe you nothing.

THE AUTHOR

Yes you do. You were my best friend and you fucked my wife.

FERNANDO

She's not your wife.

Pause.

THE AUTHOR

Did it hurt when she told you she preferred me?

FERNANDO

You don't know what you're saying.

THE AUTHOR

Luscinda isn't well. She's not well. She needs you back. She needs you to fuck her, to feel desired by someone. She isn't well. I cannot hurt her. She did a lot for me, I just can't dump her.

FERNANDO

You are the one who isn't well.

THE AUTHOR

You have to do me this favor.

FERNANDO

I don't know why the fuck you called me again.

Pause.

THE AUTHOR

You're right. I'm not well. This fucking Cardenio play.
Forget everything I said. You're my best friend.

The Author leaves.

SCENE 5

Night. Plaza de España. QUIXOTE and SANCHO hide in the bushes. The sound of the computer keyboard can be heard from The Author's cubicle. Quixote's face is covered with blood.

QUIXOTE

Sancho, I have often heard the saying, that those who are good to mankind can drawn water to a sea. If I had believed what thou saidst to me, I might well have prevented all this grief; but now that is past, patience, and be wiser another time.

SANCHO

You will take warning as much by this, as I am a Turk. But since you say that, if you had believed me, you would have avoided this grief, believe me now, and you shall be greater; to retire is not to fly, and to expect is wisdom, when the danger exceeds all hope; and it is the part of a wise man to keep himself safe today for tomorrow.

Sancho and Quixote hide.

SANCHO

Sancho, thou art a natural coward, but, because thou mayst not say that I am obstinate...

THE AUTHOR

(interrupting them)

No, Sancho, no. That's Quixote's part.

QUIXOTE

Sancho, thou art a natural coward, but, because thou mayst not say that I am obstinate, and that I never follow thy advice, I will take thy counsel this time, and convey myself from that fury which now thou fearest so much: but it shall be on a condition-that thou never tell, alive nor dying, to any mortal creature, that I retired or withdrew myself out of this danger for fear, but only to satisfy thy requests; And do not reply to me, for in only thinking that I withdraw myself out of

any peril; I am about to remain and expect here alone,
not only for the Holy Brotherhood, which thou namest
and fearest,

(he rises from his hiding place)

but also for the brethren of the Twelve Tribes!

Quixote leaves fleeing. Sancho follows him.

SCENE 6

Night. The Author and Luscinda's apartment; Isolated in his cubicle, The Author is typing on his computer. The sound of a HAMMER. He stands up and goes to the living room. LUSCINDA is there – a Berlin woman in her thirties – HAMMERING together pieces of a table she's trying to assemble.

THE AUTHOR

Could you...

LUSCINDA

(interrupting)

I need a hand. I can't do this alone.

The Author goes to help her. He takes the instructions and starts assembling.

LUSCINDA

Hold it here.

The Author does it.

LUSCINDA (CONT.)

Is it straight?

THE AUTHOR

Yes.

Luscinda hammers.

LUSCINDA

Fernando called me.

(keeps hammering)

I didn't know you had seen him.

(silence)

It's been three years since I've heard from him.

A long and tense silence. Luscinda checks the instructions.

LUSCINDA

Hold it here.

The Author holds the table in place. Luscinda hammers.

LUSCINDA

He left me a message. He congratulates us on having moved in together and wants to invite us over for dinner.

THE AUTHOR

Could you be quiet, please? I'm concentrating and I don't wanna lose...

LUSCINDA

(very serious face)

You can go now.

Luscinda stares at him defiantly. The Author takes the screwdriver and starts screwing. Luscinda leaves.

THE AUTHOR

Shit, Lu, it's my mental process. I need silence or else I lose my concentration.

Luscinda comes back with watery eyes.

THE AUTHOR (CONT.)

Don't be upset. Forgive me. I'm sorry; it's just that if you interrupt me I can't concentrate again... Maybe we can make a deal. I don't know... Maybe set aside some time for hammering.

LUSCINDA

Don't ever tell me to shut up again.

THE AUTHOR

I didn't tell you to do anything. I already explained to you that if I lose my concentration, then...

LUSCINDA

I know, I know. You told me already... Your mental process.

THE AUTHOR

I thought it was clear.

LUSCINDA

I'm putting this together, this apartment all alone.

THE AUTHOR

If you want me to quit, I'll quit. I can call them tomorrow and quit. I'll give them the money back and cancel the whole thing. I'll just stop working and that's it.

LUSCINDA

You don't get it, do you?

THE AUTHOR

I don't get what?

LUSCINDA

I can do this alone.

THE AUTHOR

(ironically)

No. What do you mean I don't get it? You're not gonna leave me like this now. Tell me: I don't get what?

LUSCINDA

You're not excited. You're supposed to... I came to live with you and you are supposed to be excited about it. I just asked you to help me for ten minutes.

THE AUTHOR

And here I am. It's not my fault we're not building this bookcase. Should we do it?

Silence. They size each other up.

LUSCINDA

It's a chest.

THE AUTHOR

Fuck! The chest, whatever!

The Author leaves.

LUSCINDA

Don't you talk to me that way. Don't talk to me like that.

The Author returns.

THE AUTHOR

There we go. There you go with your *don't talk to me like that*. I'm not talking to you, in any way. It's always the same thing. Don't talk to you like what? I don't get it. I don't see how I talked to you. That's how we talk in Spain. It's the way we speak. We're very

expressive. I'm not talking to you in a bad way.
Damn it?

LUSCINDA

I wasn't the one, who asked to come live here with you.

Pause.

THE AUTHOR

What does that have to do with it now?

LUSCINDA

I don't know.

THE AUTHOR

I've just begged you for some concentration.

LUSCINDA

And I've just asked you for ten minutes of your time.
Ten minutes!

THE AUTHOR

(leaving)

I think it's best if we left it here.

LUSCINDA

(laughing)

You avoid me.

THE AUTHOR

(returning)

But how do I avoid you? How? It's got nothing to do
with you. I have to work. It's my job. I work at home.
Is it so hard to understand? It's my job!

LUSCINDA

Me, me, me! Can't you talk about anything but yourself?

THE AUTHOR

But, what are we discussing in here? Aren't we talking
about me, my job and how I need to concentrate?

LUSCINDA

About Fernando. I told you he called me and you told me
to shut up.

THE AUTHOR

But... It was only because of the noise.

LUSCINDA

What noise?

THE AUTHOR

My concentration, my mental processes.

LUSCINDA

Look, let's drop it. I'm tired.

THE AUTHOR

What's going on with Fernando?

LUSCINDA

I only said he called me. He wants to invite us over for dinner.

THE AUTHOR

He called you?

LUSCINDA

Yes. No. I didn't even talk to him. He just left a message in my voicemail.

THE AUTHOR

I didn't know he had your number.

LUSCINDA

(hysterical, with the hammer in her hand)
I didn't either! I don't remember him ever having my number. Fuck! I don't even know where the closest supermarket is!

THE AUTHOR

What the fuck are you saying now? Don't fucking scream.

The Author tries to take the hammer away of her but she avoids that.

THE AUTHOR (CONT.)

You're crazy, you're completely crazy.
(trying to calm down)
You can't go on like this. You need some help. This isn't working. You're not well. You need to see a specialist.

LUSCINDA

Don't tell me that I need help.
(she leaves the hammer)
I'm already seeing a specialist. These things are yours. I'm cleaning up your stuff. We've done this because you wanted to.

The Author tries to hug her but Luscinda pushes him violently.

LUSCINDA (CONT.)

I don't need to come to Madrid. I don't need to live with you.

Luscinda collapses. The Author hugs her with passion.

LUSCINDA (CONT.)

I fucking needed your help. I can't do it all by myself.

They interrupt each other.

LUSCINDA

I can't do everything at once. Fucking help me. I don't even know where the fucking closest supermarket is. I need you. I left everything for you, for you. You fucking asked me to. Don't tell me to shut up again.

THE AUTHOR

Honey, I'm sorry. Please forgive me. I've been so selfish. Oh, shit, I'm sorry. I don't know what to say. It's all my fault. That fucking Cardenio Project is driving me crazy. I'm really sorry. Everything's going to change. Don't worry.

THE AUTHOR (CONT.)

I help you. I don't leave you alone. I'm not going to leave you alone. I love you. I'm with you.

(he kisses her)

We're going to build a home together. We should have done this a long time ago.

LUSCINDA

Forgive me for not letting you work.

THE AUTHOR

Don't say that. Please don't say that. It's all my fault. I'm the one who is crazy. Forgive me.

(he kisses her)

Forgive me.

The Author lays her down on some blankets that protect the floor. They kiss. The Author begins to undress her.

THE AUTHOR

I'm with you. I am with you.

SCENE 7

Nightfall. Luscinda wakes up but The Author is not with her anymore: he has returned to his computer. Luscinda leaves.

The Author, wearing his pajamas and looking scruffy, takes an old suitcase out of his desk and hides it among the bushes of ...

Parque del Oeste of Madrid. Quixote and Sancho go deep into a wooded area. The Author goes back to his cubicle. He TYPES.

SANCHO

And know, although I be but a rude clown, yet I do really, understand something of which men call good government.

QUIXOTE

Fool, be advised of one thing from now on (to the end to abstain, and carry thyself more respectfully in thy over-much liberty of speech with me), that is as many books of chivalry as I have read, which are infinite, I never found that any squire spoke so much with his lord as thou dost with thine.

Quixote notices a ruined suitcase that protrudes from the bushes. Sancho is reaching for it but Quixote stops him with his spear.

QUIXOTE (CONT.)

So that from this day forward we must proceed with more respect...

Quixote pricks the suitcase with his spear and keeps Sancho at a safe distance of the treasure, threatening him with the tip of his spear.

QUIXOTE

...trying to hide his interest; for the rewards and benefits that I have promised thee will come in their time; and if they don't, thy wages cannot be lost, as I have already said to thee. Sancho, take the bag and look at what is inside.

Quixote throws the bag to Sancho who begins looking through it like a wild boar who is searching the garbage carefully.

SANCHO

(opening it)
Some shirts...

While moving the suitcase, a wallet falls out.

SANCHO (CONT.)

Blessed be Heaven!

(he opens the wallet finds it full of money)

For once adventure that is beneficial is presented to us!

Sancho starts to count the money in the wallet. When Quixote stops looking at what he is doing Sancho keeps some of the money for himself.

QUIXOTE

I think, Sancho (there is no other explanation), that some traveler, must have passed through this mountain, and have encountered by thieves, they must have killed him, and buried him in this secret place.

Sancho shows Quixote three bills, the rest he kept for himself.

SANCHO

It cannot be so, for, if they were thieves, they would not have left this money behind them.

QUIXOTE

Thou sayst true, and therefore I cannot conjecture what it might be.

(looking through the suitcase with caution)

But stay a while:

(finding a notebook)

we will see whether in these pages of this note book, what we are able to find out.

(he opens it)

A letter...

Quixote reads to himself.

SANCHO

Excuse my ignorance, m'Lord, for I cannot read and we could both know better, what this sonnet may say if I could read it out loud...

QUIXOTE

This is prose, and seems to be a letter of love.

SANCHO

I pray you, therefore, read it aloud enough; for I take great delight in these things of love.

QUIXOTE

(he reads)

«Thy false promise, and my certain misfortune, do carry me to such a place, as from thence thou shalt sooner receive news of my death than reasons of my just complaints. Thou hast disdained me, O ingrate! for one that hath more, but not for one that is worth more than am I. That which thy beauty erected, thy works have overthrown. Rest in peace, and let Heaven work so that the world deceits remain still concealed.

Sancho loses interest in the letter and turns back to the suitcase and continues to empty it. He is taking some pants, pajamas, shirts...

The Author comes out of his Cubicle and slowly gets closer to Quixote.

QUIXOTE (CONT.)

»I have nothing left. Not even my memories. The time for words is gone and I don't even know how to write to you. It's time to admit my mistakes. It is best to forget myself.» We can collect less by this than by this letter what the author is, some disdained lover, that the enamoured was some man of worth, whom the disdain and rigour of his lady had conducted to some desperate terms.

Quixote sees The Author, as if he were Cardenio: a madman in love and ragged.

QUIXOTE

Sir! Wait!

The Author feels that he has been discovered and leaves running. Sancho looks up, but sees nobody.

QUIXOTE

Sancho, I believe this man whom we saw even now, doubtlessly can be none other than the owner of our booty.

Sancho grabs the suitcase.

QUIXOTE (CONT.)

Follow me by little and little, or as thou mayst, and make of thine eyes two lanterns, for I shall not

despair of finding him although this spend me a whole year therein among these mountains.

Sancho holds back Quixote with full strength.

SANCHO

I saw no one, but in such case, it would be much better not to find him; in case he should be the owner of this money...

QUIXOTE

Thou deceivest thyself, Sancho, therein, for, seeing we are fallen already into suspicion of the owner, we are bound to search and restore it to him; and when we would not seek him out, yet the vehement presumption that we have of it hath made us possessors mala fide, and renders us as culpable as if he whom we surmise were verily the true lord. So that, friend Sancho, be not grieved to seek him, in respect of the grief whereof thou shalt free me if he be found and known whether there might be any kind of remedy found for the grief that this his so unusual a kind of life argues doth possess his soul; and, if it were requisite, to search it out with all possible diligence; and when his disasters were known of those which clap their doors in the face of comfort, I intended in that case to bear a part in his lamentations, and plain it with the doleful note; for it is a consolation in affliction to have one that condoles in them, so does the profession of knight-errant oblige you to. As these are the obligations of knight errantry.

Quixote leaves. Sancho follows him, but... The RING of a MOBILE PHONE stops him. It's his! He looks at it. Checks who is calling him. Smiles. He does not answer it. He leaves behind Quixote.

SCENE 8

Night. Fernando's photography studio. Pictures of Dorotea are on the walls. Fernando and Dorotea come in laughing.

DOROTEA

You should go up and excuse yourself.

FERNANDO

Are you crazy?

DOROTEA

Do you think he saw my face?

FERNANDO

No.

DOROTEA

Maybe he saw my reflection on the mirror. I saw his.

FERNANDO

Don't worry. He didn't have enough time.

DOROTEA

This is the last time I will come here.

FERNANDO

I'm telling you he didn't see you. Stop thinking about it. The only thing he saw was your hand... on my dick.

(he laughs)

That's for sure what he saw.

DOROTEA

I don't think it's funny.

(pause)

You can bet he's jerking himself off now in the bathroom, thinking about us. He must have said nothing to his wife, and just walked straight past her to lock himself up in the bathroom.

Dorotea begins feeling up Fernando.

FERNANDO

I'm the one who lives here and wants to be discreet.

DOROTEA

That's not what it felt like back in the elevator.

FERNANDO

(playfully)

No?

DOROTEA

No.

Fernando begins kissing Dorotea's neck. She groans effusively from the pleasure and Fernando tries to undress her.

FERNANDO

Look how hard it is. Shit, it even hurts with you.

Dorotea stops Fernando.

DOROTEA

Those are inappropriate things to say to a lady.

FERNANDO

Let me make love to you.

DOROTEA

No.

FERNANDO

I'm in love with you.

DOROTEA

You have to learn to respect me. You know that, don't you? The first time must be a special one. We must wait.

FERNANDO

Today's special.

DOROTEA

Shhh...

Fernando pulls himself away from Dorotea.

FERNANDO

Why are you playing with me like that?

DOROTEA

(touching him)

I'm not playing. I just want you to learn to respect me.

FERNANDO

(cold)

Touching my dick.

DOROTEA

Fernando!

FERNANDO

You can't jerk me off in elevators and then expect me to treat you like a virgin. I'm gonna start thinking you just want a promotion.

DOROTEA

What if I did? What would happen?

(feeling him up)

You're going to stay still now and do as I tell you.

FERNANDO

Yes.

Dorotea touches him. Fernando puts his hand on her crotch and she slaps his face.

DOROTEA

Treat me like a lady!

Dorotea takes her handbag and walks towards the door. Fernando stops her.

FERNANDO

Dorotea... Sorry. Don't leave, please.

(pause)

We'll do as you like.

Dorotea looks at him in the eyes and hugs him leaning his head on her chest.

DOROTEA

Shhh... Don't cry, baby. I'll forgive you, because I know deep down you're just an unruly child.

FERNANDO

Yes.

DOROTEA

But I know you can't live without me.

FERNANDO

Yes. I don't know how to live without you anymore.

DOROTEA

Shhh... Don't worry. Today we're going to go to bed and fall asleep lying down together like good kids. Did you know that when you sleep with someone without actually having sex it's because you're with somebody very special?

FERNANDO

Yes.

DOROTEA

You must be patient.

FERNANDO

I don't want you to leave.

DOROTEA

The best stew is the one that's cooked slowly. Did you know that? I desire you a lot too, but we have to be patient.

Dorotea pushes him away, looks at him and kisses him. Fernando looks calm. Dorotea goes in, takes off her coat and leaves her handbag.

DOROTEA (CONT.)

Now you'll drink a hot chocolate to warm up before you go to bed.

FERNANDO

Yes.

Dorotea begins to pull his zipper down.

DOROTEA

And I'll give you a reward for being such a good boy.

Fernando stays quiet. Dorotea kneels down and begins to give him a blowjob. After a few moments, Fernando lifts Dorotea and starts kissing her neck passionately. Dorotea tries to resist.

DOROTEA

Stop, stop, baby. Not like this, not like this.

FERNANDO

(firm)

Shut the fuck up.

Fernando grabs her strongly and holds her against a table.

DOROTEA

Hey! What are you doing? Baby? Stop. Stop. Not like this, not like this.

Dorotea tries to get away unsuccessfully. Fernando pulls up her skirt.

DOROTEA (CONT.)

(scared)

Don't, don't, really. What are you doing? Please. Don't, not like that, not like that, baby. Please.

FERNANDO

(violently)

Shut up. I know this is what you wanted, isn't it? You wanted your man to show you what he is capable of, didn't you? You'll see now.

DOROTEA

Stop!

Fernando covers her mouth and holds her by the neck, suffocating her. Dorotea cannot scream and hardly can breathe.

FERNANDO

Shhh... You'll see now.

(trying to penetrate her from behind)

This is what you wanted, isn't it? You know I love you. I do, I'm crazy about you. Keep your pussy tight, hold it tight. Try to resist it.

Fernando achieves penetration.

FERNANDO (CONT.)

Fuck, you're such a whore. Let's see if you can set yourself free. You fucking turn me on. Let go. Harder, fuck. Look how I fuck you.

Fernando rapes Dorotea.

He comes quickly and releases Dorotea, who falls down the floor snuggled up, trying to get her breath back. Fernando pulls up his zipper.

He moves away.

He is looking for something to drink. There is a long silence.

FERNANDO

Did you like it?

Dorotea doesn't answer.

FERNANDO

Would you like some juice?

Dorotea breaks out crying. Fernando runs to her and tries to hug her.

DOROTEA

No. Don't touch me. Don't touch me.

FERNANDO

What's wrong? What's wrong with you? Shit, what's wrong with you?

Dorotea starts to SCREAM and Fernando covers her mouth.

FERNANDO (CONT.)

Shut up. Shut up, damnit. Because nothing happened, do you hear me? Nothing happened. Will you stop screaming?

(Dorotea stops screaming)
We both know that's what you wanted, so stop all that shit.

(threatening)
Are you going to stop screaming?

Dorotea nods. She is terrified.

FERNANDO

All right. Calm down.

Fernando releases Dorotea slowly. Dorotea, shaken, does not dare to cry. Fernando looks at her and after a few seconds moves away to the other side of the room. He drinks. Silence.

FERNANDO

I think it's best if you leave.

Silence.

FERNANDO (CONT.)

It's best if you go home and relax a little. Nothing happened here that we both didn't want to happen.

Silence.

FERNANDO (CONT.)

We both know this was a game and it wasn't me who started playing.

Dorotea gets up slowly and tries to dress herself.

FERNANDO (CONT.)

You knew it was going to end up like that, so don't act as though you didn't.

(pause)
You are in my apartment. A neighbor just saw you jerk me off in the elevator.

Dorotea looks for her handbag.

FERNANDO (CONT.)

Yes, it's better if you go now.

(pause)
You're making this look as if I'd raped you.

Dorotea finds her handbag and leaves quietly, as though silently asking Fernando for permission. Fernando remains alone. After a few seconds he starts kicking the wall.

FERNANDO (CONT.)

Shit! Shit! Shit! Damn it.

The RING of his mobile phone can be heard. Fernando stops. He checks who's calling. Not answers the phone. The mobile keeps ringing. The mobile stops ringing.

ACT II: THE TRUTH**SCENE 1**

Night. Casa de Campo Park. Quixote and Sancho walk. Sancho is freezing and trying to wrap himself in his torn up rain-coat.

SANCHO

Of what worth is it to you, my Lord, to learn the life of a madman to whom per adventure, after he is found, will return a desire to finish not of your head but my ribs? I am not afraid to know other men's lives. Let those affirm any such thing, eat that lie and swallow it with their bread; I come from my vineyard; I know nothing; for he that buys and lies shall feel it in his purse. How much more, seeing I was born naked, and am now naked, I can neither win nor lose! A man is but a man, though he have a hose on his head; but how so ever, what is that to me? And many think there is a sheep where there is no fleece. But who shall bridle a man's understanding, when men are profane?

QUIXOTE

Good God! How many fools hast thou inserted here! and how wide from our purpose are those proverbs which thou hast recited! Honest Sancho, hold thy peace; and understand, with all thy five senses, that what ever I have done, do, or shall do, is wholly guided by reason, and conformable to the rules of knighthood, which I know better than all the other knights that ever professed them in the world. For thou must wit that the desire of finding the madman alone brings me not into these parts so much, as that which I have in my mind to achieve a certain adventure, by which I shall acquire eternal renown and fame throughout the universal face of the earth; and I shall therewithal seal all that which may render a knight errant complete and famous.

SANCHO

What is it you mean to do in these remote places? I'm just asking because after our last adventure I was left without the coat that did me much good.

QUIXOTE

Be patient, Sancho, and strong too for I promise thee a warrant in exchange, with which my niece, when she sees it after we come out of these mountains, shall give

thee as many **coats** as thou mayst wish **or whatever you want**. But all consists in thy diligence.

SANCHO

In my diligence?

QUIXOTE

Yes, for if thou returnest speedily from the place whereunto I mean to send thee, my pain will also end shortly, and my glory commence very soon after. I would have thee to know, Sancho, for I mean to emulate Amadis de Gaul, the north star and the sun of valorous and amorous knights, by playing here the despaired, wood, and furious man to imitate likewise the valiant Orlando, where he found the tokens by a fountain that Angelica the fair had abused herself with Medozo; for grief whereof he ran mad, and plucked up trees by their roots, troubled the waters of clear fountains, slew shepherds, destroyed their flocks, fired the sheepfolds, overthrew houses, trailed mares after him, and committed a hundred thousand other insolences, worthy of eternal fame and memory.

SANCHO

I believe, that the knights which performed the like penances were moved by some reasons to do the like it; but, good sir, what occasion hath been offered unto you to become mad? What lady hath disdained you? Or what arguments have you found that the Lady Dulcinea of Toboso hath ever dallied with Moor or Christian?

QUIXOTE

There is the point, and therein consists the perfection of mine affairs; for that a knight-errant do run mad upon any just occasion deserves neither praise nor thanks; the wit is in waxing mad without cause, whereby my mistress may understand, that if dry I could do this, what would I have done being watered? So that, Sancho, I would not have thee lavish time longer in advising me. I am mad, and will be mad, until thou return again with answer upon a letter, which I mean to send with thee to my Lady Dulcinea; and if it be such as my loyalty deserves, my madness and penance shall end; but if the contrary, I shall run mad in good earnest, and be in that state that I shall apprehend nor feel anything.

SANCHO

And, in good sooth, sir Knight of the Ill-favoured Face, if my departure and your madness be in good

earnest, and I should take this letter to thy lady Dulcinea, it will be needful to take as well that warrant thou promised me so that I may replace my coat, for it will shorten the time of my travel, other ways this cold could force me to prolong my stay in the city and thus delay the answer of my lady Dulcinea to you.

QUIXOTE

Let it be as thou likest, for thy design displeaseth me nothing; and therefore I resolve that thou shalt depart from hence after three days; for in the mean space thou shalt behold what I will do and say for my lady's sake, to the end thou mayst tell it to her. Therefore I must yet tear mine apparel, throw away mine armour, and beat my head about these rocks, with many other things of that kind that will strike thee into admiration.

SANCHO

Let me beseech you, see well how you give yourself those knocks about the rocks; for you might happen upon some one so ungracious a rock, as at the first rap would dissolve all the whole machina of your adventures and penance; and, therefore, I would be of opinion that you content yourself with striking it on the water, or on some other soft thing, as brushwood, and leave to my charge the exaggeration thereof; for I will tell to my lady that you strike your head against the point of a rock which was harder than a diamond.

QUIXOTE

I thank thee, Sancho, for thy good will, but I can assure thee that all these things which I do are no jests, but very serious earnest; for otherwise we should transgress the statutes of chivalry, which command us not to avouch any untruth, on pain of relapse; and to do one thing for another is as much as to lie.

SANCHO

But I request you, moreover, to make account that the terms of three days is already expired and your follies I declare them already for seen and go write your letter, and despatch me the warrant as soon as possible, because. I am overtaken by a desire to free thee of this purgatory wherein I leave you.

QUIXOTE

Thou hast reason, but how shall I write the letter?

SANCHO

And the warrant.

QUIXOTE

All shall be inserted together... But, now that I remember myself, I know where we may write our mind well: in the fool lover's tablets...

(takes out a bic pen)

... for I have a quill I always carry when I travel.

Sancho quickly takes Cardenio's notebook out of his loose bundle and hands it to Quixote.

SANCHO

Put, then, in that leaf, the warrant, and firm it with a legible letter that they may know it at the first sight.

QUIXOTE

Amadis was never wont to subscribe to his letters.

SANCHO

Ay, but the warrant must forcibly be subsigned; that if it not be subsigned, they would say the former is false, and so I shall rest without my coat.

QUIXOTE

The warrant needs no seal, but only my rubric, which is as valuable as if it were subscribed not only for a coat, but also for three hundred.

SANCHO

My trust is in you. But give me the letter, and farewell; for I will change.

Quixote sits down and starts writing.

QUIXOTE

I write you well the marks, and I will endeavour to keep here about.

SCENE 2

Night. Luscinda and The Author's apartment. In his Cubicle, The Author records himself with his mobile phone, while he is observing Quixote and Sancho writing the letter.

THE AUTHOR

Did Cervantes really believe in love? The only pure love in his novel is the one Don Quixote feels for Dulcinea of Toboso, a woman who doesn't even exist, just a product of his imagination. Is our imagination the only possible place for love? To know the other and to die.

(pause)

To know the other and to destroy our dreams. That's why Shakespeare killed Romeo and Juliet in six days to give them enough time to dream but not to know each other? Is that how real love is?

Sancho leaves with the letter and the warrant in hand.

THE AUTHOR (CONT.)

Miguel de Cervantes creates Don Quixote, a character who needs to build up a dream world to make his life worth living. Shakespeare's last creation is Prospero, a magician who needs to invent a fantasy world on a desert island. Both of them fail and return to their real worlds disenchanted. What is Cardenio's story about, really? Cut. Block three.

The recorder stops.

THE AUTHOR

What the hell am I doing?

SCENE 3

Dawn. Room of Dorotea. RINGTONE.

STAFF MANAGER (OFF.)

Staff.

DOROTEA (OFF.)

Hello, this is Dorotea Quijana, from the department of Workplace Security. I won't be able to go to work today, I'm feeling sick.

STAFF MANAGER (OFF.)

Ok. Just a second. I'll report it. Dorotea Quijada.

DOROTEA (OFF.)

Could you please cancel a meeting I had at twelve o'clock with Mister Aguilar?

STAFF MANAGER (OFF.)

Yes, I'll check that out and send a notice to his secretary.

DOROTEA (OFF.)

Thank you.

STAFF MANAGER (OFF.)

You're welcome. Remember to bring your sick note.

DOROTEA (OFF.)

Yes.

STAFF MANAGER (OFF.)

I hope you get better. Have a nice day.

DOROTEA (OFF.)

Thank you. You too.

They hang up the phone.

SCENE 4

Dawn. Casa de Campo. Quixote is alone and starts forcing himself to cry. He jumps and falls against the ground on purpose; then beats himself with whatever he finds around. He cries. He begins to undress. When he's half-naked he stops and stays still, thinking.

QUIXOTE

No. I do not know. I cannot decide. Which will be better: to imitate Orlando in his unmeasurable furies or Amadis in his melancholy moods? If Orlando was so valorous and good a knight as men say what wonder, seeing in fine he was enchanted, and could not be slain, if it were not by clapping a pin to the sole of his foot, and therefore did wear shoes still that had seven folds of iron in the soles? Although these his draughts stood him in no stead at Roncesvalles against Bernardo del Carpio, which, understanding them, pressed him to death between his arms. But, leaving his valour apart, let us come to the losing of his wits, which it is certain he lost through the signs he found and by the news that the shepherd gave unto him, that Angelica had slept more than two noontides with the little Moor, Medoro of the curled locks, him that was page to King Argamante. And if he understood this, and knew his lady had played beside the cushion, what wonder was it that he should run mad. But how can I imitate him in his

furies, if I cannot imitate him in their occasion? For my Dulcinea of Toboso, that all the days of her life she hath not seen one Moor, I should do her a manifest wrong, if, upon any false suspicion, I should turn mad of that kind that did distract furious Orlando. On the other side, I see that Amadis de Gaul, without losing his wits, or using any other raving trick, gained as great fame of being amorous as any one else whatsoever. For that which his history recites was none other than that, seeing himself disdained by his lady Oriana, he retired himself to the Poor Rock, and there crammed himself with weeping, until that Heaven assisted him in the midst of his greatest necessity. And this being true, as it is, why should I take now the pains to strip myself all naked, and offend these trees, which never yet did me any harm? Let the remembrance of Amadis live, and be imitated by Don Quixote of the Mancha. But... How could I make a Rosary?

Something emerges from the shadows: Sancho, hiding, takes photos of Quixote with his mobile phone.

SCENE 5

Dawn. Luscinda and The Author's apartment; living room. There is an airbed on the floor with a disheveled comforter on it. Luscinda is having breakfast in her pajamas. The Author comes out also wearing his pajamas not taking his eyes off of the book he reads. He sits with her and pours himself a cup of coffee. He reads, takes notes.

LUSCINDA

I went out last night.

THE AUTHOR

I know.

Silence.

LUSCINDA

I didn't want to disturb you.

THE AUTHOR

It's fine.

LUSCINDA

I told him you were very busy.

Silence.

THE AUTHOR

That's good.

LUSCINDA

Did you make good progress with your play?

THE AUTHOR

Yes, up to half of the second act.

LUSCINDA

Fernando is the only person I know in Madrid.

THE AUTHOR

You don't have to justify yourself. You can go out with anyone you want.

LUSCINDA

I'm not justifying myself.

(pause)

When I came back home you were still writing.

(pause)

He's really looking forward to seeing you. That thing you told me the other day...

THE AUTHOR

What thing?

Luscinda is thinking about that.

LUSCINDA

Will you see him again?

THE AUTHOR

Of course, he's my best friend.

LUSCINDA

He wants to take some pictures of me. He has this studio and, well, he asked me if he could take some photos. Did you know he was into photography?

THE AUTHOR

No, I had no idea.

(pause)

Do you want to do it?

LUSCINDA

I didn't say I did.

THE AUTHOR

You don't have to feel guilty about it. They're just pictures.

LUSCINDA

I don't. I've just never posed for a picture like that,
in a studio.

(pause)

Anselmo, you know I love you, don't you?

THE AUTHOR

It's all right. They are only photos. They do not
signify anything.

(pause)

Do it.

Luscinda smiles. She gets up. Leaves him alone.

THE AUTHOR (CONT.)

I love you too.

SCENE 6

*Evening. A subway tunnel. Sancho is waiting for someone.
His raincoat is all torn up. Fernando arrives. They talk
without looking at each other.*

FERNANDO

I thought you had disappeared for good.

SANCHO

(ironically)

I went on vacation.

Fernando stares at Sancho's destroyed raincoat.

FERNANDO

I see. *On safari?*

SANCHO

Ok, enough joking.

(serious)

I have something new for you.

Fernando nods.

SANCHO (CONT.)

A lunatic. Fifty years old. Long bearded and bony-
skinny, just like you like them.

FERNANDO

Where is he?

SANCHO

And nobody will miss him.

Silence.

FERNANDO

What do you mean a lunatic?

SANCHO

I mean a lunatic, completely crazy. He thinks he is Don Quixote.

FERNANDO

Where is he?

SANCHO

Wherever I want to take him. Right now he's under "love penance" for his lady Dulcinea Of Toboso.

FERNANDO

¿Don Quixote of La Mancha?

SANCHO

Yes, he believes to be Don Quixote of La Mancha. I have him half-nude and all beaten up: fucking great.

(serious)

Five hundred euros.

FERNANDO

How wounded is he?

SANCHO

It depends.

FERNANDO

Depends on what?

SANCHO

On how much you want to spend.

We can see Quixote in the forest, on his knees, praying an Ave Maria.

SCENE 7

Evening. This scene is divided into two different, alternating SPACES by The Author standing on the division line performing the PSYCHOLOGIST too. Lucinda interrupts him continuously.

SPACE A:

THE AUTHOR

«Rape and Sexual Violence Support Center; a doctor's office. Dorotea is sitting in front of a female PSYCHOLOGIST. The psychologist listens to her carefully»

DOROTEA

Doctor, I'd like to ask you about some assumptions.

PSYCHOLOGIST

Ok, I'm listening to you, Miss Quijada.

DOROTEA

You see, I'm a scriptwriter. I'm working on this film now and, well, I need to find out what makes a case a sexual harassment case.

SPACE B: Luscinda and The Author's apartment; living room. Some half-assembled pieces of furniture.

LUSCINDA

(interrupting her)

I'm going to have my old furniture delivered from Berlin.

THE AUTHOR

What furniture?

LUSCINDA

Two marble end tables and two old chairs that belonged to my granddad. Oh, and a white dresser for the bedroom. They're from the Prussian War era.

Swap to SPACE A:

PSYCHOLOGIST

There are many conflicting opinions about what constitutes a sexual assault. Whenever a woman is forced to have sexual relations without her consent, no matter what the conditions are, we're facing a case of rape.

DOROTEA

Yes, but, for instance, what about married couples? I've read articles about instances of rape in marriages where the husband rapes the wife. I mean... how could you ever prove that?

PSYCHOLOGIST

This is a case of sexual harassment. Another thing is to get the rapist convicted. The case you mentioned, Miss Quijada, would be a complicated one. First of all, she would be pressed with a lot of tough questions and she'd find that not everyone's willing to support her or even believe her.

DOROTEA

Doctor, I don't get it.

PSYCHOLOGIST

Look, Miss Quijada, what I mean is that he'd hire a lawyer and then they would attack her, they'd try to discredit her, asking her about every little detail, every single one. She's the one who has to prove what really happened.

Swap to SPACE B:

LUSCINDA

We could place the dresser right here, beside the bed. And the two chairs... I thought maybe they could go there, by the window.

THE AUTHOR

Are you actually taking our room into consideration?

LUSCINDA

Why do you say that?

Swap to SPACE A:

PSYCHOLOGIST

A violation does not have to leave signs of violence. Considering her safety, sometimes it is worse to resist. This is influenced by a number of factors. There are many kinds of evidence: DNA tests, psychological reports, previous charges... that could make all the difference. That's why it's so important to report it.

DOROTEA

But what if there are no previous charges?

PSYCHOLOGIST

That may not be found out until the specific case is reported. It's the judge who has the last word in convicting him or not.

DOROTEA

Just like that, Doctor, whatever the judge decides?

PSYCHOLOGIST

Well, we like to think they're not too subjective about matters concerning the law.

DOROTEA

But it would be almost impossible to prove him guilty in a case like that, wouldn't it?

PSYCHOLOGIST

Yes. Changing that is one of our goals here in the Center.

Swap to SPACE B:

THE AUTHOR

I don't see what you need to consider.

LUSCINDA

Well, we'll have to see how.

THE AUTHOR

Look, it's just common sense. It's how it looks. All that stuff you want to bring over won't fit.

LUSCINDA

I can't understand why you have to be so inflexible. We haven't measured anything yet, and we haven't looked at the layout to see if the furniture will fit or not.

THE AUTHOR

I just think it's ridiculous to bring all that stuff from Berlin when it's gonna end up in the junk room.

(pause)

This is my apartment too, isn't it??

Swap to SPACE A:

DOROTEA

In the film, there's this couple who just started dating, but they haven't had sex yet. Well they do have sexual relations, but without penetration.

PSYCHOLOGIST

And she's forced to do something she doesn't want to?

DOROTEA

Yes, but she's always provoking him. Whenever she has the chance to turn him on, she does it. Anywhere, even

in public places, she likes to jerk him off. That's her character's role; she needs her man to desire her in every moment. She needs her man to desire her all the time.

PSYCHOLOGIST

Look, a woman's behavior is never the reason behind a sexual assault. That's what I meant before about the clichés surrounding the issue of rape. The rapist's intention is always to assault, to harass, to hurt, not just to have sex. A previous relationship between the victim and the aggressor can never justify rape, whatever kind of relationship it is. Whatever kind.

Swap to SPACE B:

THE AUTHOR

Do you mean here and the other one here? Two wooden chairs that occupy all the space, right here where I get up from bed and right in front of the window to nicely block the view which was our reason for choosing this apartment? Perfect, we moved in because of the view and we're not gonna see a fucking thing.

LUSCINDA

I can't bear your attitude any longer.

THE AUTHOR

I just think it doesn't make sense to spend all that money bringing over those chairs if we don't even have room for them.

LUSCINDA

(breaks out crying)

You're just doing anything you can to make things difficult and bitter for me. Why do you say we don't have room for two chairs?

THE AUTHOR

Why the hell are you crying now? Just do whatever you like with the stupid chairs.

Swap to SPACE A:

DOROTEA

Well, in this case it's really as though he couldn't control himself. It's not like he's an aggressor or anything. She's the one who went too far this time.

PSYCHOLOGIST

Denying reality is what we usually do when we've been abused by someone close. Our mind plays tricks on us. This is the way to protect us. That's why it's so important to refuse any opinions which blame the victim directly or indirectly. I hope you make your story clear about that point.

(pause)

Miss Quijada, you have to report it.

DOROTEA

Excuse me Doctor, I think you misunderstood me.

Swap to SPACE B:

LUSCINDA

Why can't you let me live in peace?

THE AUTHOR

You're fucking nuts. We're just talking about two chairs.

LUSCINDA

I've already told you the story of those two chairs. They're the only memory I have left of my granddad. I've told you about them a million times.

THE AUTHOR

Why do you get crazy like that?

Swap to SPACE A:

PSYCHOLOGIST

If we deny what happened and we do not report it, the consequences will be worse.

DOROTEA

He's a normal man.

PSYCHOLOGIST

Scientific studies have proven that levels of mental illness in rapists are similar to levels of mental illness among the rest of the population. Sexual assaulters are normal people. Miss Quijada, you must report it.

DOROTEA

But, Doctor, you just said I wouldn't be able to prove anything.

PSYCHOLOGIST

If we don't do anything, then he could do it again.

DOROTEA

No, Doctor, he couldn't.

PSYCHOLOGIST

Look, Miss Quijado, you must report it.

DOROTEA

Doctor, you yourself said I won't be able to prove anything.

PSYCHOLOGIST

That's not what I said, Dorotea.

DOROTEA

Did you just call me by my first name?

Pause.

PSYCHOLOGIST

Yes.

Swap to SPACE B:

LUSCINDA

I get the impression I know nothing about you.

THE AUTHOR

Haven't you considered that maybe I feel the same way about you?

They look at each other in the eyes. Swap to SPACE A:

PSYCHOLOGIST

Miss Quijada, if you want to get over this, it's essential to admit you're not responsible for what happened.

DOROTEA

Why are you addressing me so formally again?

Swap to SPACE B: The Author enters his cubicle. Luscinda stays in the living room. Swap to SPACE A:

PSYCHOLOGIST

Reporting what happened to you is also a gesture of solidarity with other women. Now you are responsible, Dorotea, for what may happen to others. Someone else could need that report in the future.

DOROTEA

Doctor, do you think I care about what some other woman may need?

PSYCHOLOGIST

Miss Quijana, why do you think I'm sitting here?

Pause.

DOROTEA

You close at eight, don't you?

PSYCHOLOGIST

That's unfair.

SPACES A and B simultaneously:

SPACE B: Luscinda is about to cry. She receives a text on her mobile phone. Fernando? She reads it and smiles. She stops smiling. She doesn't know whether to smile or not.

SPACE A: Silence. Dorotea stands up. The Psychologist stands up too and gives Dorotea her card.

PSYCHOLOGIST

I'll write my number down on the back. My name is Patricia.

DOROTEA

Thank you.

SCENE 8

Night. Luscinda and Anselmo's apartment; The Author's cubicle. The Author is having a video call with Stephen Greenblatt.

GREENBLATT

All these questions are common in the literary genre. I don't see why you're "blockade".

THE AUTHOR

In the novel of Quixote, Cardenio is the first one to tell us Fernando forced himself on Dorotea. Then, how was Cardenio able to leave Luscinda with Fernando? I mean, in the fable, Cardenio apparently loses Luscinda because Fernando fools him to get him out of town and then asks for her hand first. But, if you really think about it, you realize Cardenio is leaving Luscinda

alone, knowing that his friend, Fernando, is a rapist. Why in the world would Cardenio do such a thing?

GREENBLATT

Again, it's a convention in the literary genre.

THE AUTHOR

But I cannot pose rape as a convention and neither can I pose Cardenio's behavior as a convention.

GREENBLATT

Why not?

THE AUTHOR

But what motivates Cardenio? My hypothesis is that he didn't love Luscinda anymore. He didn't love her, but he didn't have the courage to leave her either. It's as simple as that. And if Cardenio doesn't abandon Luscinda, there's no need to feel guilty either.

GREENBLATT

So what you're saying is that Cardenio's story is a version of the story of *El curioso impertinente*?

THE AUTHOR

Exactly. That would also explain why Cervantes introduces that little tale in Cardenio's story. It's what Victor Hugo proposed as the hallmark of the 16th. century: mirroring. "The action that drags its own mirror," "the unity split in two." Therefore, one story would explain the other: Beside the Atlantic's tempest there is the tempest in a glass of water. *The curious impertinent* is there to tell us that Cardenio's story is its mirror, that they're actually the same thing and we need to understand them together to get the moral idea. Each shows what the other hides.

GREENBLATT

Victor Hugo. I like this idea.

THE AUTHOR

But the idea that results is immoral. Cervantes, Shakespeare and Fletcher thought that the right thing for a raped woman to do was to publicly go on her knees and beg the rapist to marry her. A raped woman down on her knees begging to be married! And that's not what interests us the most in the story, it's the immorality, this brutal individualism where each character interprets the world just how he needs to.

GREENBLATT

I'm very interested in reading your version of Cardenio.

SCENE 9

Night. A room in a public hospital. Quixote lies on a stretcher seriously wounded. Sancho, wearing a new rain-coat, sits by his side trying to control his drunkenness. Quixote, recovering his consciousness, grabs his arm with fury.

QUIXOTE

But tell me, Sancho keepest thou charily yet the helmet of Mambrino?

SANCHO

You're still bothered with that helmet of Mambrino nonsense. Here, I have your precious chamberpot. It's a little dented, but it can still withstand a good piss.

QUIXOTE

Behold, Sancho, I do likewise swear that thou hast the shallowest pate that ever any squire had or hath in the world. Is it possible that, in all the time thou hast gone with me, thou couldst not perceive that all the adventures of knights-errant do appear chimeras, follies, and desperate things, being quite contrary? And this is by reason that we are still haunted by a crew of enchanters, which change and transform our acts, making them seem what they please, according as they like to favour or annoy us; and so this, which seems to thee a **chamberpot** or a barber's basin, is in my conceit Mambrino his helmet, and to another will appear in some other shape. And it is doubtlessly done by the profound science of the wise man my friend, to make that seem a basin or another thing which, because that, in being so precious a jewel, all the world would pursue me to deprive me of it. But what really and verily proves it to be the one and only helmet of Mambrino is that, despite that stone those demonds threw at my head, I am still alive to adore and worship my lady Dulcinea del Toboso.

SANCHO

I'll shut up, I won't say anything, You have reason. Fuck it. It sucks that your grace has to spend as much penance for Dulcinea del Toboso, also known as Aldonza

of the slum of Celsa. But when I chew the cud, I can understand it isn't easy to find better ho to get wasted with that cheap. I know from good sources how they've been getting a free pass lately. And in my fine body, I don't need no diets when a hit of some good shit does the work for me.

QUIXOTE

I have oft told thee, Sancho, many times, that thou art too great a prattler and although thou hast but a gross wit, yet now and then thy frumps nip; but, to the end thou mayst perceive the faultiness of thy brain, and my discretion, I will tell thee a short history, which is this: There was once a widow, fair, young, free, rich, and withal very pleasant and jocund, that fell in love with a certain round and well-set servant of a college. His regent came to understand it, and therefore said on a day to the widow, by the way of fraternal correction, «Mistress, I do greatly marvel, and not without occasion, that a woman so principal, so beautiful, so rich, and specially so witty, could make so ill a choice, as to wax enamoured on so foul, so base, and foolish a man as such a one.» But she answered him thus, with a very pleasant and good grace: «You are, sir, greatly deceived, if you deem that I have made an ill choice in such a one, let him seem never so great a fool; for, to the purpose that I mean to use him, he knows as much or rather more philosophy than Aristotle.» And so, Sancho, is likewise Dulcinea of Toboso as much worth as the highest princess of the world, for the effect I mean to use her. And thus it is also sufficient for me to believe and think that the good Aldonza Lorenzo is fair and honest and I make account of her as of the greatest princess in the world, for none can equal her in fairness, and few come near her for a good report. And, for a final conclusion, I imagine that all that which I say is really so, without adding or taking aught away. And I do imagine her, in my fantasy, to be such as I could wish her as well in beauty as principality, and neither can Helen approach, nor Lucrece come near her. And let every one say what he pleaseth; for though I should be reprehended for this by the ignorant, yet shall I not, therefore, be chastised by the more observant and rigorous sort of men.

Before finishing his speech, Sancho has already left the room.

SCENE 10

Dawn. Luscinda and The Author's apartment. The living room is dark; the only light comes from the computer and the reading lamp on the desk in the cubicle. The Author is sleeping on the airbed in the living room. Luscinda comes in, takes off her shoes and tip toes through the apartment. She tries to not wake him up. She stops by the airbed and looks at him. As she sits down on the airbed, he opens his eyes.

THE AUTHOR

What time is it?

LUSCINDA

It's late.

THE AUTHOR

Come, lie down.

The Author turns around and tries to sleep. Luscinda lies down on the airbed still dressed. Silence.

LUSCINDA

Put your arms around me.

The Author turns around again and puts his arms around her, but keeps his eyes closed. Luscinda begins to kiss him. He kisses back but half asleep. Luscinda kisses him more passionately and hugs him tight. The Author tries to detach himself from her.

THE AUTHOR

What happened?

LUSCINDA

Nothing.

Luscinda tries to seduce him again, but he stops her.

THE AUTHOR

It's late.

Luscinda is persistent and kisses The Author while trying to take his pajamas off.

THE AUTHOR

I have to get up early.

Luscinda stops, stares at him, gets up and goes to the bathroom. The Author remains alone. He sits up, then lies down again.

A mobile phone vibrates: the one in Lucinda's handbag. The Author sits up. He stares at the bag. He gets up. He opens the bag, takes the mobile phone, checks who is calling and puts it back on its place. He meditates. The mobile phone is still VIBRATING. The Author goes back to bed. The mobile phone stops vibrating.

Luscinda comes in with her pajamas on.

THE AUTHOR

Your phone just rang.

Luscinda takes her bag.

THE AUTHOR(CONT.)

It was Fernando.

Luscinda doesn't reply. She takes her mobile phone out and turns it off.

She lies down on the airbed. Silence.

LUSCINDA

Can I turn off the light in your room?

After a few seconds, The Author gets up, goes into the cubicle and turns off the reading lamp and the computer. Everything goes dark.

The Author goes back to bed. He lies down, with his back facing Luscinda. Silence.

LUSCINDA

Anselmo, I'm pregnant.

ACT III: THE MIRROR**SCENE 1**

Night. A room in a public hospital. There is a strange RACKET: it is Christmas Eve. Quixote, still severely wounded, and now with a trimmed beard, rests on his stretcher. Dorotea peers into the room and observes Quixote for a few seconds. She finally goes in.

DOROTEA

Hi.

Quixote looks at her. He is scared and does not say a word.

DOROTEA (CONT.)

You don't remember me?

(pause)

I got a call from the hospital. My number was the only one in the directory under that name.

Quixote seems to get nervous.

DOROTEA (CONT.)

Clam down.

Dorotea walks to the bed and hugs him. Quixote does not seem to understand what is happening.

DOROTEA

It's ok now. Don't worry.

(she cries)

Hug me. Say something. Don't you recognize me?

(she leans back)

Do you really not know who I am? It's been... fifteen? Fifteen years already?

(pause)

I was having dinner when I got the call. I would have never expected it. I thought this year I'd be eating alone.

(pause)

I brought you a present.

Dorotea takes out a little present wrapped in Christmas paper. Quixote doesn't look at her face.

DOROTEA (CONT.)

Aren't you going to open it?

Dorotea opens the packet: It's a Santa hat.

DOROTEA (CONT.)

These nice Ecuadorian women were selling them down in the street.

Silence.

DOROTEA (CONT.)

Let's see how it fits you.

Dorotea puts the hat on Quixote. Silence. Dorotea touches his cheek. Quixote looks at her, smiles and his eyes become watery.

DOROTEA (CONT.)

Now do you know who I am? We're not going to have to eat alone on Christmas Eve anymore. I'm here with you. I'm your niece, do you recognize me?

Quixote smiles.

DOROTEA (CONT.)

Who could have ever guessed that you'd come to Madrid? We imagined you'd be lost in some mountain living like a hermit, or something like that, anyway. In Madrid...

(pause)

In Madrid... Maybe we've bumped into each other without knowing. Can you imagine it? Walked by each other without even realizing.

Silence. Quixote is still quiet.

DOROTEA (CONT.)

We were searching for you all the time. When you left, all these people kept coming to the house looking for you. They came to grandma's every day. It was unbearable. They all wanted their money. Grandma didn't want anything bad to happen to you, and they kept saying that if they found you... It could have happened, believe me, if they had found you, it would have happened.

(her tone changes)

I'm sorry. We must look ahead to the future. It's important to remember that we must look ahead. If not... We should feel happy for not being alone anymore, shouldn't we? It's Christmas time.

(pause)

Don't you have anything to say?

Quixote looks away trying to find Sancho.

DOROTEA (CONT.)

You were her favorite, did you know that? She was so proud of her little boy. Every day they'd come to the door. She ended up paying all your debts. After that, we had nothing left. She even pawned her pension. I had to quit college to pay your fucking debts. Did you know grandma couldn't stop smiling the day she realized you sold her jewelry? It was horrible. She was afraid to stop smiling. She was very nice to me.

QUIXOTE

Sancho.

DOROTEA

I thought at least you'd show up at her funeral. Nobody saw you. I'm happy you ended up like this.

QUIXOTE

Sancho! Sancho! This is not an inn, it is a castle!

DOROTEA

If you were really that fucked up, you should have shot yourself instead of ruining everyone else's lives.

Quixote jumps off the stretcher and begins knocking over everything around him.

QUIXOTE

Nothing shall ever defeat the bravest of all knights-errant! Sancho, my weapons!

DOROTEA

(grabbing him)

Did you know you were her favorite son? Her favorite son.

QUIXOTE

(hits her)

Get away from me, shameless Morgana, thou Hex!

DOROTEA

Hey! I'm your niece! Your dear niece Dorotea, do you remember me?

QUIXOTE

Sancho! Sancho! My name is Don Quixote of La Mancha, also known as the Knight of the Ill-favoured Face, undoer of wrongs, the shadow and remedy of the afflicted, devoted servant of the peerless Dulcinea of Toboso! And I do not know who thou art! Hecate! Your

tricks and enchantments are useless against me! Sancho!
My weapons!

Amidst all the screaming, Dorotea leaves the room. Sancho is hiding and has watched the whole scene.

SCENE 2

Evening. Luscinda and Anselmo's apartment. The reading lamp and the computer in the cubicle are turned on. Fernando and Luscinda are assembling a table. Silence.

FERNANDO

Why do you leave that light on?

LUSCINDA

It's his laptop. If he leaves it on, he feels as though he hasn't stopped writing.

Silence. They continue assembling the table. Fernando stops, goes to the cubicle.

LUSCINDA

What are you doing?

Fernando tries to turn the computer off.

FERNANDO

It requires a password.

Fernando switches the lamp off and tilts down the laptop screen. He goes back to the living room. They are staring at each other. Silence.

FERNANDO

Anselmo invited me to dinner on New Year's Eve.

Silence.

LUSCINDA

I hate this table. This is the second time I tried putting it together.

FERNANDO

Don't worry. It's almost done.

Fernando inserts one of the table legs.

FERNANDO (CONT.)

I got your pictures developed. Would you like to see them?

Silence.

LUSCINDA

No.

Silence. They continue assembling the table.

SCENE 3

Evening. A café belonging to the Aguilar franchise. Everything is full of Christmas decorations. "LOUIS ARMSTRONG AND FRIENDS Christmas Songs" is playing. Dorotea is sitting at the same table as in ACT I. She waits for someone. She sips her coffee. Fernando arrives wearing his business suit with a necktie. They nod to each other. Fernando sits facing Dorotea. Tense silence.

DOROTEA

Shall I speak first?

FERNANDO

Go ahead.

DOROTEA

I want you to transfer me to another office or fire me... with compensation.

FERNANDO

There aren't any vacancies in any other center.

DOROTEA

Fire someone, then.

FERNANDO

I can't do that.

DOROTEA

You've done it before.

FERNANDO

I can't do it.

DOROTEA

Well, fire me, then.

FERNANDO

No. You're on sick leave. You could sue me for an unfair dismissal. I couldn't prove the reasons.

DOROTEA

(bursting out)

What the hell would you have to prove?! That you raped one of your employees? What would you have to prove?

FERNANDO

You better calm down.

DOROTEA

If you don't do what I'm saying, I swear to god I won't stop until everyone at work knows you are a fucking rapist.

FERNANDO

(laughing)

How can you be so ridiculous? Everybody at work knows we were together. Do you really think they didn't notice or that nobody saw us? Now that you're on sick leave, everybody is talking.

(pause)

I never thought you'd be so immature. The best thing you can do is go back to work before everyone starts thinking you're nuts.

(loving and caring)

Dorotea, I think you need to visit a psychologist. You need help.

Fernando tries to caress her face.

DOROTEA

Don't touch me! Don't you touch me, son of a bitch!

Silence. They stare at each other. Underneath the table, Dorotea takes out a gun and points it at Fernando without him noticing. They look at each other in a challenging stare. Tense silence. Dorotea remains still.

FERNANDO

As you wish.

Fernando stands up.

FERNANDO (CONT.)

I'll get the check.

Fernando leaves. Dorotea stays alone, completely still, with the gun in her hand. After a few seconds, she reacts

and puts the gun back in her bag. She makes sure nobody has noticed. She puts her hair up, breathes in, then re-does her hair.

SCENE 4

Morning. Luscinda and Anselmo's apartment. The Author prepares the hospital stretcher for Quixote.

THE AUTHOR

Penultimate scene.

Quixote goes out, he walks with difficulty in the direction of the stretcher.

THE AUTHOR (CONT.)

Dorotea pretends to be princess Micomicona. Dorotea pretends to be princess Micomicona and makes Quixote do what she wants. Just as in the novel. Just like Cervantes's text.

Quixote lays on his stretcher. Through one of the corners Dorotea comes in the room of the hospital. Sancho stops her, and asks something with his hand. Dorotea gives him 200€. Sancho lets her pass through.

THE AUTHOR (CONT.)

In the novel, she takes advantage of Don Quixote because the priest and the barber asked her to. She pretends to be princess Micomicona because she needs the priest and the barber's help. Here, nobody can get something for nothing just like in the novel.

Dorotea wakes up Quixote, while Sancho puts on his shoes.

THE AUTHOR (CONT.)

Dorotea won't care about helping Quixote; she'll just use him for her own interests. That's it. Like Cervantes, like Don Quixote's novel.

Dorotea makes Quixote stand up. Sancho puts his new rain-coat on Quixote in order to hide his hospital pajamas.

THE AUTHOR (CONT.)

In the penultimate scene, Dorotea has to pretend to be princess Micomicona. Sancho will be an accessory to her plan, as he is in the novel. All lovers need Quixote to solve their love stories.

Dorotea and Sancho take Quixote out of the room. Before leaving the room Dorotea takes the gun out of her bag and puts it in the pocket of Quixote's raincoat.

THE AUTHOR (CONT.)

They think they're using him but it's actually the other way around. At the end, he is the one, who brings meaning to their lives. That's it. Copy Cervantes, copy Quixote.

SCENE 5

Night. Luscinda and The Author's apartment. Finally the apartment is completely furnished. Luscinda and The Author are ready to eat their twelve New Year's Eve's grapes. On the TV, someone announces that the QUARTERS are about to begin. Luscinda is mistaken, and starts to eat her grapes before its time. Fernando runs in and takes his bowl of grapes. Luscinda realizes her mistake. The bell chimes TWELVE times. They eat their grapes and... Happy New Year!

ALL

(with their mouths full)
Happy new year!

The Author kisses Luscinda.

THE AUTHOR

Happy new year, love.

LUSCINDA

Happy new year.

The Author and Fernando hug.

FERNANDO

Happy new year, buddy.

THE AUTHOR

Happy new year.

Luscinda kisses Fernando on both cheeks.

FERNANDO

Happy new year, Luscinda.

LUSCINDA

Happy New Year. Well, let me open the bottle of champagne our guest brought.

Luscinda takes a bottle of Moët & Chandon out of an ice bucket. FIREWORKS can be heard in the background. She opens the bottle.

LUSCINDA

Let's make a toast.

(filling the glasses)

To us... and may this New Year in Madrid bring us all much happiness.

THE AUTHOR

To us.

FERNANDO

To us.

They toast and drink.

LUSCINDA

Give me a second to get ready and we can go.

The Author holds Dorotea's waist.

THE AUTHOR

Give me a kiss.

The Author kisses Luscinda. Fernando looks away, drinks champagne. Luscinda goes to the restroom. The Author goes closer to Fernando.

THE AUTHOR

Is it far?

FERNANDO

No, fifteen minutes.

THE AUTHOR

I want you to stop seeing my wife.

FERNANDO

What are you talking about?

(pause)

I don't think this is the right time.

THE AUTHOR

Stop that bullshit.

FERNANDO

You were the one who asked me to.

THE AUTHOR

I didn't ask you to do anything.

FERNANDO

She's not your wife.

THE AUTHOR

I'm asking you now to stop seeing her.

FERNANDO

I can't. It's too late.

THE AUTHOR

What the fuck are you talking about?

FERNANDO

She's in love with me.

THE AUTHOR

Look, the game's over. I want you to vanish, out of our lives.

FERNANDO

She doesn't love you any more.

THE AUTHOR

(pushing him violently)

That's my business. I want you to step the fuck out of our lives for good.

FERNANDO

Alright, alright. Calm down. Don't get mad at me. I'll leave right now.

THE AUTHOR

You're a son of a bitch.

FERNANDO

I thought I was your best friend.

THE AUTHOR

Get out of my house.

Luscinda returns.

LUSCINDA

Ten minutes. I'll be ready in ten more minutes!

FERNANDO

I'm sorry. I have to leave.

LUSCINDA

What's wrong?

FERNANDO

My brother called. He wants me to celebrate with them.
I'll see you guys at the party.
(takes his coat)
I'll meet you both there later.

Fernando leaves. The Author takes the champagne, two glasses and serves some champagne for Luscinda.

THE AUTHOR

Here, love, take your glass: to us and to our new life.
(looks at her with love)
New year, new life.

They toast. The Author drinks. Luscinda doesn't.

LUSCINDA

It's best if you stay home.

THE AUTHOR

I'm sorry?

LUSCINDA

Yes. Stay here. I'm going with him.

THE AUTHOR

What are you talking about?
(pause)
Luscinda?

Silence. Luscinda doesn't answer.

THE AUTHOR (CONT.)

I want us to have that baby together. Maybe I haven't been quite on top of things lately, but that's going to change from now on. I'm completely in love with you. I want to be with you. I love you. Everything's going to be different from now on... New year, new life.

LUSCINDA

Why did he leave?

THE AUTHOR

I asked him to.

LUSCINDA

I see.

THE AUTHOR

Whether or not you've fooled around with him, I don't mind...

(silence)
I don't mind...

Luscinda laughs and turns her back on him. Quixote appears in the back and goes through the scene slowly, observing the scene.

THE AUTHOR

I want you to know I don't mind. Whatever you did doesn't matter now. I forgive you. I'll forgive anything. I was the one who asked Fernando to seduce you. It was me. He only... It was the biggest mistake of my life. I wanted to test you. But I forgive you now. I forgive you for everything you did. I know what happened between you two three years ago.

Luscinda stares at him. Quixote observes them from the desk of The Author.

LUSCINDA

I love you.

QUIXOTE

(interrupting them)
No, Anselmo, you know that this isn't true.

Luscinda slaps him on the face.

LUSCINDA

You don't need to forgive me for anything. You wanted to test me, huh? You know that wasn't your reason.

THE AUTHOR

I wasn't sure... I wasn't sure whether I loved you or not. I'm sorry. This month has been the worst of my whole life. This play... This Cardenio Project has driven me crazy. He misunderstood me. I didn't even ask him to do it.

Quixote leaves the scene slowly.

LUSCINDA

Yes you did.

THE AUTHOR

I can't live without you.

LUSCINDA

You asked him. Yes, you did ask him.

THE AUTHOR

We must forget all this, forget Fernando. New year, new life.

LUSCINDA

Stop saying that.

THE AUTHOR

I'm in love with you. I want to have that baby with you. New year, new life.

LUSCINDA

Stop repeating that. There is no baby.

They are staring at each other. Luscinda goes in to her room.

THE AUTHOR

Fernando isn't the person you think he is. He's never been my friend. He never was. All he does is abuse others. Has he told you how he managed to get all he has, how he became the owner of the company? He hasn't gone to his brother's. His brother doesn't talk to him. His brother is a poor man he managed to ruin. You know nothing about him.

Luscinda comes back with her new high-heeled shoes in her hand. She puts her shoes on.

THE AUTHOR (CONT.)

Has he told you what he likes? Has he really talked to you about what he actually likes?

(he laughs)

You have no idea.

LUSCINDA

You are pathetic.

(checks the look of her new shoes)

Did you know I always knew you used to hide Fernando in your closet when we fucked?

Luscinda gets closer to the mirror. Takes her coat. Observes herself in the mirror while she buttons up the coat: she looks wonderful.

LUSCINDA (CONT.)

In Berlin, when we were young, remember? Every time you hid him in the closet to see us fuck... I never said anything to you...

(looks at him like saying good bye)

I loved it when he watched me.

(goes in the direction of the door, stops)
 You know nothing about me.

Luscinda leaves. The living room darkens. The Author goes into his cubicle, sits down and writes.

THE AUTHOR

The end. The end of the play. Luscinda takes the car. She goes to Fernando's studio. They don't call each other. They don't need to arrange it on the phone. She knows Fernando will be there. Fernando knows Luscinda will go there. They know. It's the end: them making love at the studio.

SCENE 6

Dawn. Fernando's studio. Some candles slightly light the half-dark room. Some DEAFENING MUSIC from the neighbor's New Years Eve party plays in the background. Luscinda and Fernando go into the studio kissing each other passionately. Fernando pulls off Luscinda's clothes. They move onto the floor. The Author is observing them from his desk.

THE AUTHOR (CONT.)

He's lost. The Author is lost. He's not Cardenio or Anselmo, he is both simultaneously. The Author is both characters, Anselmo as well as Cardenio. Each explains the other. They are a mirror. *The curious impertinent* is the mirror to Cardenio's story. "The action that drags its own mirror," "the unity split in two;" the hallmark of the 16th century. I am the hallmark of the 16th century.

From hiding in the darkness of the studio, Quixote comes out, wearing his new raincoat. Luscinda and Fernando make love. The DEAFENING MUSIC makes it impossible for them to hear the intruder.

THE AUTHOR (CONT.)

Shakespeare mirrors Cervantes. I am the hallmark of the 16th century. Everything's lost. The Author has lost.

Quixote walks slowly towards the lovers.

THE AUTHOR (CONT.)

Luscinda makes love to Fernando. Quixote hides in the shadow.

Quixote takes out a gun from his raincoat. He lights a lighter. Aims.

THE AUTHOR

The action that drags its own mirror. The unity split in two. Quixote is the unity split in two. Quixote I am.

Quixote SHOOTS Fernando in the head. Everything is lightened with a powerful white light. The DEAFENING MUSIC from the party next door keeps on. Everything is static.

The Author leaves his Cubicle and walks toward Quixote. Quixote and The Author look at each other.

The music stops. In absolute silence Fernando and Luscinda get up and walk out of the scene.

Quixote drops the gun to the floor, in front of The Author.

Sancho and Dorotea walk in. They are leaning on the desk of The Author.

The Author grabs the gun. Aims it at Quixote. Stares at him. Changes his mind, moves the gun and aims at his own head.

THE AUTHOR

Quixote I am.

The four characters (Sancho, Dorotea, Fernando and Luscinda) observe Quixote and The Author with a grotesque smile.

LAST SCENE

Dark. We can see the whole life of Quixote projected, everything what happened in the reality, or how he wanted to be. The whole play in its real scenes. We are in the Mind of Quixote: The Author and Quixote think about what happened: they are the same person: the same mind.

THE AUTHOR & QUIXOTE

What is real? I don't know anymore... A few seconds in his mind. I was just a few seconds in his mind. Somebody asked me to write a story... Sometimes I'm able to see my whole life in a moment. Is it true? Is what I just lived real? It doesn't matter anymore. I'd rather deceive myself. I don't mind being naive, a hypocrite

or a lunatic. I don't care about the others any more. Somebody claims to have found it, Shakespeare's lost play, and now they ask me to write... I don't know. I didn't get what they wanted me to do exactly... I need to get my English back. Why can't I be the ingenious nobleman of La Mancha? I'm already fifty years old, like him. Why can't I forget everything and reinvent myself? I don't want to be what I was again, a bum, a writer, a son of a bitch who wants to erase his past life. What if I actually am a memory? A memory: the unity split in two. The action that drags its own mirror. Whenever I spend some time with someone, I end up taking after them. I've always felt so. Who is the blank start of all of us? Who is telling the truth: Quixote or the rest? But if the rest are right and Quixote just imagines his story, won't he also be imagining them, all the other characters? What if he is the true Author of all this, even of Cervantes himself, of all of us? What if real life only exists in Quixote's mind and we are nothing but simple spectators imagined by him, by Don Quixote of La Mancha? In this play, I'm just a memory of that man, of that bum: the unity split in two, the action that drags its own mirror, some neurons interconnected by nerve endings that make a bum remember his past life the way he wants it to be. I'm a neuron. Quixote is all of us and I am a neuron, the memory of a lunatic. That's it. I got it. That's the end of my play. The end of my play. I JUST WANT TO BE HAPPY. I DON'T WANT TO SUFFER. I WANT TO HAVE A LIFE WORTH LIVING. WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO IN MY LIFE, IN ALL OF MY LIFE, TO HAVE IT MAKE SENSE?

THE END