

OFFENBACH

LA PERICHOLE

English Version by Donald Pippin

ACT I

Scene: a colorful town square in Lima, Peru. On one side, The Three Cousins cabaret; on the other side, the entrance to the Hotel Royale. A boisterous crowd is celebrating the Viceroy's birthday.

CHORUS:

**Long live the Viceroy!
Drinks today are gratis --
So says the ruler of the state.
His every whim is law, whatever that is;
The word today is celebrate!**

**We'd best obey
The wayward ruler of the state.
The word today is celebrate.**

**So take the plunge, small and great.
Come, live it up, by state decree.
Though the king controls our fate,
Never mind, the drinks are free.
Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!**

**Long live the Viceroy,
Model for the masses,
Star of today's unique events.
Hail to his birthday! Neighbors, fill your glasses,
All, by the way, at his expense.**

**So hail the king and star of current events!
His birthday let us honor at his expense.
No need to wait, let's celebrate!**

COUSIN 1:

**We are three cousins, bright and merry;
Here to our cabaret they flock
For our chianti, cider and sherry,**

**Excellent brandy, superb cognac.
Who feels a thirst?
All set to pour.**

**CHORUS:
The first! The first!
Some more! Some more!**

**COUSIN 1:
Who calls for wine? Drink up! Drink up!**

**CHORUS:
For us! For us! A cup! A cup!**

**COUSIN 1:
You will not find in all Peru,
Neither Brazil nor Venezuela
Tavern or cabaret more gala,
Nor a more genial rendezvous
When bound for a friendly round or two.**

**COUSIN 2:
One is taken, signal the second.
If in the din you go unheard,
No need to panic, for if beckoned,
Ready and willing, here comes the third.**

**COUSIN 3:
Three of us, pert, alert and pretty --
Talent has but begun to show.
After a girl has won the city,
Who is to say how far she'll go?**

**TUTTI:
There is no finer cabaret;
Here you can chase your cares away.
Oh, there is no finer cabaret
For whiling a leisurely hour away.**

Don Pedro, mayor of Lima, enters disguised as a street vender.

DON PEDRO: Juicy ripe tomatoes, spring corn, lima beans, succulent, tender . . .

GUADALENA: (*Cousin One*): No strawberries? No melons?

DON PEDRO: What! You don't recognize me?

VIRGINELLA (*Cousin Two*): Good heavens! Don Pedro!

MASTRELLA (*Cousin Three*): The Mayor of Lima!

VIRGINELLA: The Viceroy's right hand!

GUADALENA: In such a get-up!

DON PEDRO: In person. So what's the word? Are people having a good time? Relaxing? Enjoying themselves?

GUADALENA: Oh, thoroughly.

DON PEDRO: Are they happy? Contented?

VIRGINELLA: Couldn't be happier.

DON PEDRO: They'd better be. You know what's at stake. Today is the Viceroy's birthday, and I've ordered the city to celebrate. I want to see happy, smiling faces. And enthusiasm! I insist on enthusiasm. Otherwise the Viceroy will blame the Mayor, and then what happens? The Mayor is out of office.

MASTRELLA: Oh, we wouldn't want that.

GUADALENA: People are having the time of their life.

VIRGINELLA: Listen to that fun-loving crowd!

GUADALENA: Drinking . . .

VIRGINELLA: Flirting . . .

MASTRELLA: Carousing.

DON PEDRO: Remember. Discontent will not be tolerated. Thirty days for a frown, forty days for a scowl, six months for a mutter.

GUADALENA: Fair enough.

DON PEDRO: And what about the entertainers that I ordered? Singers, dancers, jugglers. Where are they?

MASTRELLA: Expected any minute.

DON PEDRO: Well, cousins. Don't just stand there. Fill the glasses. Pour out the wine. Sing! Keep the show going!

(REPRISE)

Panatellas enters, also disguised as a street vender.

PANATELLAS: Home-baked bread, fresh croissants, apple tarts . . .

DON PEDRO: I'll take one loaf of rye . . . Your Excellence!

PANATELLAS: *(disappointed)* Oh, so you recognize me?

DON PEDRO: How could I not? Panatellas, first gentleman of the bedchamber. It's a poor Mayor who doesn't know what's going on in his own backyard.

PANATELLAS: Yes, but I'll bet ten to one you don't know what's going on in the Viceroy's palace.

DON PEDRO: On the contrary. Exactly half an hour ago an unidentified man was seen slipping out by way of the secret side door, through the kitchen garden. In fact, none other than our gracious ruler of the land, the Viceroy of Peru.

PANATELLAS: All right. You win. I suppose you also know what he has in mind. Why he likes to go roaming through the streets of Lima in disguise.

DON PEDRO: Ha ha ha!

PANATELLAS: You laugh?

DON PEDRO: Oh, yes! There's life in the old boy yet. The ball still bounces. And by nightfall, I wouldn't be surprised . . .

PANATELLAS: Yes, yes, of course! His private hotel . . . a rendezvous. But there's more to it than that.

DON PEDRO: I daresay he will take advantage of his little holiday to do some snooping on his own. A few questions here and there. Flattering himself that no human eye can penetrate his artful disguise, he will try to find out what people think of his administration.

PANATELLAS: And you don't find that alarming?

DON PEDRO: Not in the least. People know what to say and I've paid them well to say it. *(Sound of castanets)*

PANATELLAS: What's that?

DON PEDRO: My spies are on the alert. It's the signal. Announcing that His Majesty (*with irony*) is on the way. Step aside. Best if we both stay invisible.

CHORUS:

**In camouflage comes our Viceroy.
A fool would know him well enough,
But better not expose his ploy.
We'll play along, pretend and bluff,
Play along and bluff, bluff, bluff.**

VICEROY:

(making a flamboyant entry disguised as a matador)

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decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

**Discard my crown, disown my castle
To make a stealthy getaway.**

**On the town with a stack to squander,
Alert and in disguise I go.
At large and known to none, I wander
Incognito, incognito.
A bore to be a courtly king
Without a fling philandering
Incognito!**

**With whiskers, cloak and smoky glasses,
At liberty and on my own,
I comb the street for lively lasses
That hanker for a baritone.**

**On the prowl, with purpose single,
I would play the Romeo,
And with the ladies mix and mingle
Incognito, incognito!
I'd waste away and die at court
Without a taste of spice and sport
Incognito!**

VICEROY: Senorita! A glass of chicca.

COUSIN 1: My pleasure. (*with heavy winks to the others*) But I don't believe we've seen you in these parts before.

VICEROY: True, I have just arrived in your magnificent country.

COUSIN 2: We adore good-looking strangers! We see so few of them. What's your name? And what brings you here?

COUSIN 3: And where did you get that gorgeous outfit?

VICEROY: Who am I? Ah, where I come from, you would not have to ask. I am known to one and all as the Great Escargot, matador of Manhattan, and its neighboring boroughs called the Brookline and the Bronco. Stopping for a brief visit to Peru on my way to Madrid.

COUSIN 1: *(with barely suppressed giggles)* But you mustn't leave without introducing yourself to our Viceroy!

COUSIN 2: He would never forgive us for letting you get away.

COUSIN 3: The two of you would have so much in common!

COUSIN 2: So much to talk about.

VICEROY: This Viceroy . . . I hear such wonderful things about him. Loved and admired by one and all, so I'm told.

A GENTLEMAN: *(with minimal enthusiasm)* Long live the Viceroy!

VICEROY: A father to his children. Always wise, always understanding.

ANOTHER GENTLEMAN: Long live the Viceroy!

VICEROY: Seems to be unanimous. But of course, nobody's perfect -- not even your Viceroy. Just between us, if you had to name one little flaw . . .

FIRST GENTLEMAN: The Viceroy has no flaws. He is perfect in every way.

VICEROY: One hundred per cent approval rating. You can hardly do better than that. So who will do me the honor of serving as my escort? *(rejecting the gentleman who steps forward, he points to a pretty girl)* No, not you. You, over there. Come, my pretty. Show me the way.

COUSIN 1: Send us a postcard from Madrid.

COUSIN 2: And if you run into a friend of ours named Carmen, give her our regards. *(The Viceroy leaves.)*

(Music. Perichole and Piquillo, two street singers, enter.)

PIQUILLO: What a crowd!

PERICHOLE: What an audience!

PIQUILLO: With deep pockets, let's hope . . .

PERICHOLE: And in a giving mood. Dearest, before we start, may I make one tiny suggestion?

PIQUILLO: Darling, how can you even ask? You know I'd do anything in the world for you. Just name it.

PERICHOLE: After our song, let *me* pass the hat.

PIQUILLO: No! Anything except that. You know what happens.

PERICHOLE: And I know what doesn't happen when you do it.

PIQUILLO: Our luck is bound to change. And I have a feeling that today's the day. Four piastras, and tomorrow we buy a wedding license and get married!

PIQUILLO: (*announcing*) ***"THE SPANIARD AND THE FAIR INDIAN GIRL"***

**"Fair Indian girl," the Spanish soldier said,
"Though here you stand, a captive under fire,
My upper hand you have no need to dread
For my regard pulls the reins on desire.**

**"Your savage tribe shall live in fear no longer;
We conquer not to wield a ball and chain.
Through tender care and self-control
The hero's hold grows stronger."**

**BOTH:
He knows the way!
None better than
A gallant man of Spain!**

**PERICHOLE:
The more he spoke, the more her heart was stirred.
She raised her eyes but let them fall again.
She tried to speak, but could not say a word,
For she admired much that soldier of Spain.**

**A year goes by; his way has been rewarded.
A baby sleeps beneath a counterpane.
And need I add, proud Mom and Dad
Sing as they gaze transported:**

**BOTH:
He'll find the way!
Second to none,
For he's a son of Spain!**

PIQUILLO: (*passing the hat*) Ladies, gentlemen, a little something for the singers! Support the arts. A few coppers. Friends! Music lovers! Skinflints!

PERICHOLE: You've had your chance. Now it's my turn.

PIQUILLO: Oh, all right. Go ahead, just this once. But I'm keeping an eye on you.

PERICHOLE: Good. But stay out of it. (*With dazzling smile*) Gentlemen, give the nice singer a little encouragement. Something from the pocket. Come on, dig deep.

A GENTLEMAN: And how about some nice encouragement from the little singer?

PERICHOLE: Oh, that might be more than you can afford.

PIQUILLO: Let go of that hand. Do you want a punch on the nose?

GENTLEMAN: All right, all right. Just being friendly.

ANOTHER GENTLEMAN: I've got something for you, sweetheart. (*Makes a kissing sound*)

OTHERS: Me, too! Lots of 'em.

PIQUILLO: What's the idea? I'm warning you. Keep your distance.

PERICHOLE: Piquillo, stop growling! As if I needed a watchdog. (*to the retreating gentlemen*) Come back, he doesn't bite. (*to Piquillo*) So that was my big chance to pass the hat. It looks like we'll have to start all over.

PIQUILLO: Sure! The first song was just a warmup! (*announcing*) **"THE MULE DRIVER RIDES TOO FAST,"**

PIQUILLO:

Has no one said before --
And hang me if I trifle --
Has no one said before
You're quite a gorgeous eyeful?

PERICHOLE:

A thousand times or more --
Too many for a rundown --
A thousand times or more
And mainly after sundown.

PIQUILLO:

But why do you resist --
Why meander and stall? Oh,
But why do you resist
The delights that can follow?

PERICHOLE:

There's one important twist
That escapes your attention,
There's one important twist
That you fail yet to mention.

PIQUILLO:

Fail to mention?

PERICHOLE:

Fail to mention!

PIQUILLO:

Giddyap, my pretty bronco!
Come along, there's room for two.

PERICHOLE:

Slow down your pretty bronco,
Sir, if I'm to ride with you.

PIQUILLO:

Hurry up, the way is long. Oh,
Quick! The time is slipping past.

PERICHOLE:

If you want me along, oh

Sir, you're riding far too fast.

BOTH:

Hop la, hop la, hop la!

PIQUILLO:

**Then would you be content --
The point I don't disparage --
Then would you be content
If I suggested marriage?**

PERICHOLE:

**Exactly what I meant --
I see you understand, sir.
Exactly what I meant:
The altar is the answer.**

PIQUILLO:

**So kiss me then, my sweet,
For we've come rather far. Oh,
So kiss me then, my sweet,
And I'll wed you tomorrow.**

PERICHOLE:

**Hold on, turn off the heat,
Sir, watch out where you're headed.
Hold on, turn off the heat,
For I'm already wedded.**

PIQUILLO:

You are wedded?

PERICHOLE:

I am wedded.

PIQUILLO:

Giddyap, my pretty bronco! etc.

PIQUILLO: What about it, friends? Keep art alive. Reach into your pockets. (to a gentleman) Sir, please!

A NEWCOMER: A delightful performance! Refreshing young talent! Well done. Thoroughly enjoyable. (He is digging into his pockets, about to put money into the hat that Piquillo eagerly extends, when . . .)

ANNOUNCER: Ladies and gentlemen, we present for your amusement and amazement the new wonder of the world – dancing dogs!

CROWD: (*variously*) Dancing dogs! Now that's something worth watching. Not to be missed! Talk about talent!

CROWD:
See the latest now on display.
Dancing dogs! Hurry up! This way.
That's a show I don't want to miss.
Dancing dogs -- to hell with this.

(The crowd rushes out to seek the latest diversion.)

PIQUILLO: So that's what they mean by going to the dogs. Ridiculous! You'd think it was the Russian ballet.

PERICHOLE: It looks like no supper tonight.

PIQUILLO: You don't really mind, do you?

PERICHOLE: Mind? I'm used to it.

PIQUILLO: We still have each other. We're together. That's the important thing.

PERICHOLE: Yes, yes, I know . . .

PIQUILLO: I love you, you love me . . . don't you?

PERICHOLE: Of course I do! But I'm beginning to wonder if we will ever be able to get married.

PIQUILLO: The minute we can scrape up four piastras!

PERICHOLE: Four piastras . . .

PIQUILLO: What a system! What a pack of thieves! Four piastras for a simple marriage license, a piece of paper! Four measly piastras stand between us and happiness. Come on!

PERICHOLE: Where are you going?

PIQUILLO: To follow the crowd. The day isn't over yet. Miracles can happen. Let's keep at it!

PERICHOLE: Not now. I'm hungry, I'm tired, and frankly I've had enough

for today. I just want to lie down and close my eyes. Think of all one can dream about. Fried fish, roast chicken, iced melon, honey cake, oysters . . .
(*her voice trails off*)

PIQUILLO: Sleep on, my love. I'll be back. Maybe with four piastras. (*goes off humming "We'll find the way . . ."*)

VICEROY: What a glorious country to live in! Everybody laughing, smiling, not a word of complaint. And how they adore their Viceroy! But am I hearing the truth, the naked truth?

PERICHOLE: (*half-awake*) What an awful country to live in! Struggle, starvation, no future . . .

VICEROY: Ah, a different voice! Can it be the voice of truth? (*seeing {Perichole}*) My, my! Not as naked as I would wish, but beautiful, ravishing . . .

PERICHOLE: (*sitting up*) It's no use. Dreaming of dinner is no match for the real thing.

VICEROY: Fire and thunder! Chaos, confusion, havoc, pandemonium! So this is what they call love at first sight. (*he staggers*)

PERICHOLE: Oh, sir! Are you not well? You'd better sit down . . .

VICEROY: No, no, it's my heart! It throbs, it races, it leaps, it explodes, it melts . . .

PERICHOLE: Good heavens, call a doctor!

VICEROY: No use, it goes beyond the power of medicine. Tell me your name.

PERICHOLE: Perichole.

VICEROY: Perichole! What a lovely name! And what do you do, Perichole?

PERICHOLE: I'm a singer.

VICEROY: A singer! Enchanting!

PERICHOLE: A street singer.

VICEROY: Ah, out-chanting!

PERICHOLE: (*witheringly*) Most amusing.

VICEROY: But why aren't you celebrating with everyone else?

PERICHOLE: What is there to celebrate?

VICEROY: Poor thing! Where are all your sweethearts? A pretty girl like yourself must have dozens of them.

PERICHOLE: A pretty girl like myself may have other things on her mind.

VICEROY: And have you no husband to look after you?

PERICHOLE: I look after myself, sir.

VICEROY: But dear girl! You need protection, security -- not to mention a taste of the finer things in life. Jewels, silken gowns . . . Yes, I have come at the right time.

PERICHOLE: To take me away from all this?

VICEROY: Far, far away! There is a place for you at the palace of the Viceroy.

PERICHOLE: In the kitchen, I suppose. No, thank you. I prefer outdoor work.

VICEROY: Ah, but you misunderstand! We are not speaking of work. A titled position . . . Lady in Waiting to the Queen!

PERICHOLE: But I was told that the Queen . . .

VICEROY: Alas, too true. She passed away seven years ago. But I have tried to keep her dear memory alive . . . a few ladies in waiting to remind me . . .

PERICHOLE: You? You? Then you must be . . .

VICEROY: Ah, clever girl! Yes, I have blurted out the truth. As you have so shrewdly guessed, I am none other than . . .

PERICHOLE: The Viceroy! And I am Queen Isabella. Go away, and stop teasing a girl who's not as stupid as you take her for.

VICEROY: You want proof? I'll show you. Take a look at this. *(He takes a coin from his pocket.)*

PERICHOLE: A piastra?

VICEROY: Coin of the realm. Observe the profile. Notice anything?

PERICHOLE: Well?

VICEROY: It's me!

PERICHOLE: True, there is a slight resemblance. And what does that prove?

VICEROY: You want more proof? Watch this. (*shouts*) Down with the Viceroy!
Want to join in?

PERICHOLE: It would do my heart good.

VICEROY: Together, now . . .

BOTH: Down with the Viceroy! Down with the Viceroy! (*Panatellas and Don Pedro rush in from opposite directions.*)

PANATELLAS: Subversives! Radicals! Seize them!

DON PEDRO: You're under arrest . . . Oh, Your Highness! Forgive me, I should have known.

PERICHOLE: Your Highness!

PANATELLAS: We never dreamed . . . How stupid of us!

DON PEDRO: Who else would even think of crying, "Down with the Viceroy"?

PANATELLAS: Only you would play such an amusing little prank.

VICEROY: (*to Perichole*) Was that convincing?

PERICHOLE: Convincing enough for me.

VICEROY: And you will come with me to the palace? You accept my offer?

PERICHOLE: (*after a moment of hesitation*) All right. Just as you wish. But first I must have . . .

VICEROY: Name it! Gold, jewelry, a new wardrobe . . .

PERICHOLE: Time to write a letter.

VICEROY: A letter? Why don't I like the sound of that? To whom?

PERICHOLE: To my grandmother.

VICEROY: But of course! Granny will be delighted at your good fortune!

PERICHOLE: I'll need pen and paper. And perhaps a few of those handsome profiles you were showing me a while ago.

VICEROY: They're in the bag. *(He hands her a small bag. Perichole withdraws.)*

PANATELLAS: Your Highness, what are you proposing to do with this young lady?

VICEROY: Didn't you hear? I'm taking her to the palace to be lady in waiting.

DON PEDRO: But you can't be serious. *(to Panatellas)* He's not serious.

PANATELLAS: A girl off the street?

DON PEDRO: That appalling dress?

PANATELLAS: Is she even wearing shoes?

DON PEDRO: And what about the regulation? There's no getting around Article Seventy Six B.

VICEROY: Regulations! Regulations! Whoever said that I was a regular viceroy?

PANATELLAS: Unless you want to start a revolution in the palace, a lady in waiting must be a married woman.

DON PEDRO: The law is unequivocal.

PANATELLAS: So I suggest that you look elsewhere, in a more suitable environment.

VICEROY: Look elsewhere? Nonsense! The solution is obvious. We find a husband for Perichole. The job I hand over to you. I shall expect news of your success in exactly one hour. *(to Don Pedro)* And your assignment is to round up a notary to perform the ceremony -- two notaries! We'll make this a gala event -- an outdoor wedding for all the world to see. Gentlemen, we meet here at five o'clock sharp. *(exit)*

DON PEDRO: But Your Highness . . .

PANATELLAS: *(wringing his hands)* A husband! Where can I find a husband? *(A passing gentleman turns sharply.)*

DON PEDRO: Two notaries in one hour! *(They both exit, in separate directions.)*

PERICHOLE: *(returning with letter in hand)* Poor, darling Piquillo! But it has to be! It has to be!

PERICHOLE: *(reading)*

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decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

**But too long we've struggled together,
Too long we've been ragged and poor.**

**No use to deny or delay it --
The words I must wring from my heart.
The time has come -- how can I say it?
Perhaps we'll do better apart.**

**Can lovers remain fond and tender
When forced to go hungry to bed?
Who can embrace in shared surrender
When craving a morsel of bread?**

**I am weak, and only human.
I had hoped with my final breath
To bear out my pledge as a woman,
My hand in yours unto death . . .**

**So our dreams lie torn now in tatters . . .
I know it well . . . what can I do?
Within my own heart where it matters,
Forever I'll belong to you.**

**Oh, my darling! I share your sorrow,
And can find no words to console.
Far apart though we be tomorrow,
Think kindly of your Perichole.**

PERICHOLE: *(to Guadaluena)* Please, give this letter to the young man who sang with me here not long ago.

GUADALENA: And I daresay a good stiff drink to wash it down.

PERICHOLE: Wait! Give him this little bag, too. *(exit Guadaluena)*

VICEROY: Well, my dear, let's celebrate your new life with a delicious meal. Just you and me. What about it?

PERICHOLE: You mean sitting down at a table? Plates? Napkins?

VICEROY: And crystal goblets!

PERICHOLE: *(to herself)* It's not too late. Oh, Piquillo! Even now, if you came back . . . No, no! I'd better hurry before I change my mind. *(with a dazzling smile to the Viceroy)* Order the banquet!

VICEROY: We'll start with caviar! Or would you prefer oysters? *(They enter the Hotel Royale)*

GUADALENA: Well, cousins. We have a letter to deliver and a bag of money. What shall we do?

VIRGINELLA: It seems obvious to me.

MASTRELLA: We deliver the letter exactly as she said.

GUADALENA: Of course.

VIRGINELLA: And the bag of money?

MASTRELLA: Is our tip.

GUADALENA: Fair enough.

PIQUILLO: *(returning)* Another fiasco! Nothing but an empty hat. And a few empty words. Poor Perichole! Another day of disappointment. Like yesterday, and the day before . . . Ha, where is she? Not sleepwalking, I hope.

GUADALENA: *(entering from the cabaret)* Sir, a letter from the young lady.

PIQUILLO: A letter? Why would she write to *me*?

GUADALENA: And a little drink to go with it . . . on the house.

PIQUILLO: Not now, not now.

GUADALENA: I'll leave it here. You may need it.

PIQUILLO: *(opens the letter and reads)* Well, well, Piquillo. It's all over. There's nothing left. You have sung your last song. Only one thing to be done. Why put it off? A strong cord will do the trick. *(takes cord from Perichole's guitar)* And here we are, ready for use. Now we make a tight noose – I was always good at tying knots. Now to find a nail. And what could be more convenient? We stand on a stool, which happens to be the right height, fasten the cord to the nail, put the

noose around the neck – it’s all so easy – then kick over the stool. Hm, that’s the hard part. Well, here goes: one two, *three* -- four, five, six, seven . . .

PANATELLAS: (*comes out rapidly, knocks over the stool; the cord snaps; Piquillo falls on him*) Robbers! Assassins! Help, help! Police!

THREE COUSINS: (*rushing to the rescue*) What’s happened? What’s the matter?

PANATELLAS: This maniac leaps onto my back, throws me to the ground. . . .

PIQUILLO: No, no! I was only trying to hang myself.

PANATELLAS: Then you have obviously bungled it. But wait! Don’t go away. Look here, young man. It appears that you have nothing to lose. What would you say to getting married?

PIQUILLO: There’s only one girl I want to marry.

PANATELLAS: Oh, let’s not be narrow minded. Come inside, let’s talk. Ladies, fill the glasses. Keep filling them. Brandy, liqueur, the best in the house. It will not be the first time that drink has paved the way to matrimony. Go sit down, I’ll join you. (*With a shrug, Piquillo enters the cabaret*)

VICEROY: (*entering from the hotel*) Another bottle of champagne, if you please! Ah, Panatellas! Have you found your man?

PANATELLAS: A promising candidate, but he needs persuasion. I’ve ordered brandy.

VICEROY: The lady, too, seems to be having some slight reservations. Ah, the champagne! I’ll take it to her myself.

DON PEDRO: (*entering*) Two glasses of port! At once!

PANATELLAS: Don Pedro! Have you found two notaries?

DON PEDRO: Finally! But they’re being difficult. Grumbling about this and that. It’s a holiday. They don’t work on holidays. I thought maybe a little drink . . .

PANATELLAS: You’re on the right track. Ply them with port. (*exit*)

(Throughout, the three cousins have been bustling about)

GUADALENA: Ah, governor! Is it true? A wedding right here in front of our own cabaret?

DON PEDRO: That remains to be seen. There's still work to be done.

VIRGINELLA: Never have we had such a busy day! Too exciting for words!

MASTRELLA: And the best is yet to come! (*Panatellas reappears*)

DON PEDRO: What's happened?

PANATELLAS: I've got the man, but he's giving me a rough time. Can you imagine? A fellow in despair, about to hang himself, and he refuses a helping hand. Money doesn't do the trick. Ah, but Madeira might. Waitress! Some Madiera, if you please!

DON PEDRO: And now to soften up the notaries. (*exit*)

VICEROY: Cognac, that should do it! Well, my friend, we're making progress. She's warming up. Her eyes sparkle. How is the young man?

PANATELLAS: Difficult. Still resistant.

VICEROY: Offer him a title. Baron, Marquis – no, let's raise it to Count of Tabago. Who could resist that? Talk to him some more. Throw in a few Your Lordships. And I'll inform the lady that she's about to become a Countess. (*exit*)

DON PEDRO: (*returning*) More sherry! These notaries! Talk about prima donnas! A simple ceremony, and you'd think they were performing the Ring Cycle. Here, I'll take it myself. (*exit*)

(*Panatellas and the Viceroy return simultaneously.*)

VICEROY: Victory! The lady has agreed! She says, "Let's take a look."

PANATELLAS: Eureka! The man says, "Why not? To hell with women!"

VICEROY: The marriage will proceed. Quick, before the lady changes her mind.

PANATELLAS: Quick, before the gentleman passes out.

VICEROY: Call for some witnesses. Spread the word. Bring on the notaries!

CHORUS:

**Hurry up! Come along! Let's go!
Step this way to see the show.
To entertain us, I've heard said,
Comes a couple about to wed.**

**We'll toast the bride and then carouse,
For the drinks are on the house.**

**COUSIN 1:
Here come the notaries! The pair
Are both a bit the worse for wear.**

**COUSIN 2:
These dignitaries of the court . . .**

**COUSIN 3:
Each grabbing for support.**

**NOTARIES: (*entering*)
Hold on to me and don't let go.
Stop the scene from turning so.
Hold on! Hold on!
We've not too far to go.**

**NOTARY 1:
The sherry was superb, old sport.**

**NOTARY 2:
Frankly, I preferred the port.**

**NOTARY 1:
Did you sample that Madeira?**

**NOTARY 2:
A vintage from another era.**

**NOTARY 1:
Great champagne, and not too dry .**

..

**NOTARY 2:
Claret worth a second try.**

**NOTARY 1:
Pinot followed by campari .**

..

**NOTARY 2:
There I started feeling sorry.**

**CHORUS:
The two are tipsy, I believe.**

NOTARIES:

**Hold me up, for heaven's sake!
Handle gently, not to break.**

CHORUS:

The courtly couple wind and weave.

NOTARIES:

**Careful, careful! Don't let go.
Stop the scene from turning so.**

CHORUS:

**Ah! They are tipsy, all aglow.
The courtly couple can't say no.**

DON PEDRO:

**Come on, you two -- let go my arm.
A steady hand is what you need.**

VICEROY: (*entering*)

Are all the preparations made?

DON PEDRO:

The wedding's set to go. Proceed.

VICEROY:

**And here's the bride to be.
She appears slightly lit --
No harm in that with me.**

CHORUS:

**Indeed she's had a bit --
No harm in that, says he.**

PERICHOLE: (*entering, indeed somewhat tipsy*)

**Oh, what a feast! The way they dine!
And what a most extraordinary wine!
I had a lot -- well, quite a bit.
As a result, I must admit
I'm on the wing, all merry and mellow,
But shush! There's no need to tell! Oh,
Shush! No need to tell. (*spoken*) Shush!**

**And if my pitch begins to sag,
And if I zig when I'm supposed to zag;
If I should wink more than I ought,**

Oh, give it not a second thought.
I'm on the wing, all merry and mellow,
But shush! There's no need to tell! Oh,
Shush! No need to tell. (*spoken*) Shush!

VICEROY:
What a delicate dish!

PERICHOLE:
For my fare -- say again, sir,
What repayment you wish.

VICEROY:
A trifle! You are to marry.

PERICHOLE:
No, no! I flatly refuse!

VICEROY:
On the price you agreed.

PANATELLAS:
On the price you agreed.

PERICHOLE:
Then . . . from hunger half dead,
I consented to wed.
But now, having royally dined,
I discover I've changed my mind.

VICEROY:
Do you forget my rank?
Do you dare so presume?

PERICHOLE:
Of course! To be perfectly frank.

PANATELLAS:
We'll change her mind once more.

VICEROY:
Go and send for the groom.

DON PEDRO:
He awaits at the door.

CHORUS:

Everyone but me is tipsy, yet
I dare you to take a bet.

He is tipsier by far
Than all others here together are.

PERICHOLE:

(recognizing Piquillo, as he attempts to stagger in)
My own! My Piquillo!

VICEROY:

Speak up, dear. Don't be shy.

PERICHOLE:

Sir, don't be cross at me.
Oh, of course I'll comply, I'll comply!

PIQUILLO:

My friends, hip hip hooray!
A magnificent night,
Or is it day?
The cause I can't explain,
But I'm high as a kite,
In the clouds, and feeling no pain.

Having drunk enough for two,
I expect to find the bill now due.
A fellow said that I'm to wed,
Though I'm about to pass out instead.

CHORUS:

He is tipsier by far
Than the rest put together are.

PIQUILLO:

They tell me I'm to marry, though
To whom or why I do not know.
To the slaughter! Where's the victim?

COUSINS:

Your bride, your wife to be . . .

PANATELLAS:

Bow to fair Mademoiselle.

(He presents Perichole to Piquillo, who is too far gone to recognize her behind the wedding veil.)

PIQUILLO:

**One and the same to me -- what the hell?
You're the unlucky girl?**

PERICHOLE:

I am! I am!

PIQUILLO: *(trying to pull himself together)*

**My dear, if you'll allow --
Before we go ahead,
Before ahead we go,
Before we tie the knot,
Before we take the vow,
There's something I have got,
A something that you ought to know --
A plain and simple fact or two
That could be of concern to you,
A fact that you should know**

**My dear, I'd better warn you flatly
Before you say, "I do, I do",
I love another woman madly
And cannot stand the sight of you.**

**Though some may find you most appealing,
My inner beast
You do not stir up in the least.
For you I've not a shred of feeling,
And when we wed,
I see ahead some other bed.**

PERICHOLE:

**Sir, I can model after you.
You plan to wander, I can wander, too.**

PIQUILLO:

Play false with me?

PERICHOLE:

**I'll wait and see.
So onward! I'm waiting to see.**

PIQUILLO:

I've got a nasty, ghastly temper --
A wretched fault, we all admit.
Though coarse and brutal, do remember
I'm also dull and slow of wit.

If I appall you and repel you,
You yet may find
There still is time to change your mind.
But never say I did not tell you
That as my wife
Expect a miserable life.

PERICHOLE:

Your ugly temper I can match;
You try to slug me, I know how to scratch.

PIQUILLO:

Play rough with me?

PERICHOLE:

I'll wait and see.
So onward! I'm waiting to see.

VICEROY:

My God! Enough preliminary!
Come, let the happy couple marry.

CHORUS:

Let them marry, let them marry!
Hurry up, too long they have tarried.
Full speed ahead, and get them married.

PERICHOLE:

Give me your hand and we can start.

PIQUILLO:

My hand I give, but not my heart.

PERICHOLE:

You seem to be a little tight.

PIQUILLO:

My dear, you're absolutely right.

BOTH:

The same could well be said of both
As we proceed to take the oath.

VICEROY:

The vows are made, the knot is tied,
And I'm the first to claim the bride.

DON PEDRO:

I must promote the current throb,
For otherwise I lose my job.

COUSINS, NOTARIES:

Let's keep it simple, short and plain
So we can pour the drinks again.

PANATELLAS:

My handling of his current throb
Should push me to a better job.

TUTTI:

Oh, here's to mad celebration --
Let the trumpets blare.
A solid credit to the nation
That can produce the perfect pair.

Hearts grow light and mellow
When they pour the wine.
Hail, well met, good fellow!
A grouch is no friend of mine.

NOTARY 1: (to Piquillo)

You take this woman by your side
To be your lawful, wedded wife?

PIQUILLO:

I do, do, do, do, do, do, do.

CHORUS:

Do, do, do, do, do, do.

NOTARIES:

I now in turn address the bride:
Do you accept this man for life?

PERICHOLE:

I do, do, do, do, do, do, do.

CHORUS:

Do, do, do, do, do, do.

NOTARIES:

**That is that! Brief and rather fun.
United by law, two become as one.**

CHORUS:

United by law, the two now are one.

**Oh, here's to mad celebration --
Let the trumpets blare.
A solid credit to the nation
That can produce the perfect pair.**

**Hearts grow light and mellow
When they pour the wine.
Hail, well met, good fellow!
You're all friends of mine.**

PERICHOLE:

Since I'm your wife, give me your hand.

CHORUS:

A round of cheers to you!

PIQUILLO:

My dear, I would if I could stand.

CHORUS:

Let's all get married, too!

PERICHOLE:

You're more than just a little tight.

PIQUILLO:

You're abolutely-lutely right.

PERICHOLE:

**I fear the same is true
Of me as well as you,
But we have said I do, I do.**

PIQUILLO:

I fear the same is true
Just possibly of you,
But we have said I do, I do.

VICEROY:

Conduct them to the palace straight.
No time nor need for fond farewells.

PANATELLAS: (*to Viceroy*)
To separate rooms?

VICEROY:

Of course, how else?

TUTTI:

The night is dark, the hour is late,
But not for you the bridal bed.
Be off! You'd best cooperate;
There may come better days ahead.

PER. & PIQ.

A year has past; his way has been rewarded.
A baby sleeps beneath a counterpane.
And need I add, proud Mom and Dad
Sing as they gaze transported:

He'll find the way!
Second to none
For he's a son of Spain.

(They are borne off in opposite directions.)

ACT II

Scene: an elegant room in the Viceroy's palace. Tarapote, a courtier, has fainted into an armchair, surrounded by ladies who are frantically trying to revive him.

LADIES:

Noble Lord, recover, I pray!
Look alive and notice (observe) the day.
Open those eyes, before so bright,
For we grieve in utter dismay
To behold you out like a light.
Noble Lord! Noble Lord!
Look alive, look alive, we pray.

FIRST LADY:
Countess, at once! My bottle of salts!
Give him some air, hold up his head.

SECOND LADY:
Dear, I'm told that for all of your faults,
Your scream would awaken the dead.

THIRD LADY:
But see! One eye comes open half way,
And soon the other will follow suit.

FOURTH LADY:
A sorry state of disarray!
I fear Milord's been on a toot.

TUTTE:
On a toot, on a toot, on a toot!
Noble Lord, recover, I pray. etc.

TARAPOTE: *(still overcome with emotion)* A street singer! Residing in the palace! Sharing *our* table! Breathing the same air! My smelling salts again, please.

FIRST LADY: My dear Marquis! Surely no Viceroy in his right mind . . .

TARAPOTE: Ah, there we may have hit upon the crux of the matter.

SECOND LADY: But are you certain? How do you know?

TARAPOTE: Late last night, as I tiptoed past the newly occupied chamber at the head of the hallway, I distinctly heard snatches of a song that could only make me start to wonder. "He knows the way, he knows the way".

THIRD LADY: A tune that would hardly be sung by a lady.

FOURTH LADY: Ladies do not sing.

TARAPOTE: A servant has confirmed my suspicions. He reports that the girl has been seen more than once in front of a questionable establishment called The Three Cousins.

FIRST LADY: Entertaining the public?

TARAPOTE: My case rests.

SECOND LADY: And why is she here, contaminating the palace?

TARAPOTE: Brace yourself. She is about to become the new maid of honor – Countess of Tabago, if you can believe it. Just married.

FOURTH LADY: Outrageous!

FIRST LADY: And what of the Count? Some barefoot beggar, I presume.

TARAPOTE: Also a new resident of the palace. Directly after the wedding ceremony, he was carried – by necessity, let me add – to separate quarters in the west wing, from which he is unlikely to emerge for several days. (*Piquillo appears, rubbing his eyes*)

THIRD LADY: The Viceroy will see that his wife is not lonely.

SECOND LADY: Imagine! A husband putting up with such an arrangement!

FOURTH LADY: Despicable!

PIQUILLO: Hm, some place! Some clothes, too! Who would even recognize me? And who are these people? Where am I? What's happened? All I remember is putting a rope around my neck, climbing up on a stool, kicking over the stool . . . Good Lord! This must be heaven! The angels don't look any too friendly. I'd better introduce myself. (*to one of the ladies*) Good morning, Miss Angel. Nice day. (*She turns her back to him; he tries another.*) Buenos dias, los angeles . . . (*They also turn away disdainfully.*) Delighted, I'm sure . . .

FIRST LADY: He's a lunatic!

SECOND LADY: No, just a smart aleck who needs to be brought down a peg.

THIRD LADY: Oh, I think we can manage that!

FOURTH LADY: (*with heavy irony*) Our compliments to Madame!

FIRST LADY: We do hope that Madame slept well.

SECOND LADY: But of course you wouldn't know, would you?

PIQUILLO: Madame? What Madame? Who are you talking about?

THIRD LADY: The new Countess of Tabago.

TARAPOTE: They are referring, I believe, to your wife.

PIQUILLO: My wife! Good grief, that's what I couldn't remember. I got married!

FIRST LADY:

They say her smile is sheer perfection;
Her beauty's praised by friend and foe,
Acclaimed by all, with one exception --
Of course, the husband's last to know.

SECOND LADY:

Of her complexion all are jealous;
Her blush is likened to the rose.
But you, I fear, could hardly tell us --
You might inquire of one who knows.

PIQUILLO:

Such petty spite! Such brainless prattle!
Their empty heads collide and rattle.

LADIES:

Lucky husband, bought for a price!
But have you seen your wife today?
Should you meet her, take my advice:
Look the other way.
Take warning! Look the other way.

THIRD LADY:

Some rumors echo through the halls
About the king and you know who.
I dare not ask if true or false --
And frankly, don't you wish you knew?

FOURTH LADY:

How clumsy to remind you of it --
Perhaps we've put you on the spot.
A match can bring a pretty profit --
Here you could tell us quite a lot!

PIQUILLO:

They nearly choke on their own malice,
The petty puppets of the palace!

LADIES:

Hail the husband, one of a kind!
A man so giving of his bride!
Should perchance you meet, never mind.

**Simply step aside.
So giving! Simply step aside.**

PIQUILLO: They are being sarcastic. I can figure that one out. But no use getting steamed up. I'll just stand back and listen. Who knows? I might even find out who I'm married to.

**CHORUS OF MEN:
A disgrace and a scandal!
An abominable thing!
He has married the mistress
Who is kept by the king.**

PIQUILLO: Well, now I know one thing. I'm married to the king's mistress. Fine with me. But I'd better do some explaining . . . you see, it was like this . . .

**CHORUS OF MEN:
Like a leech, he is after
The reward it will bring --
So he married the mistress
Who is kept by the king.**

PIQUILLO: Hey, look, fellas, you've got it all wrong. It happened because . . .

**CHORUS OF MEN:
Oh, the cur and the coward!
By the neck let him swing!
For he married the mistress
Who is kept by the king.**

PIQUILLO: Now cut it out! That's enough of that! But don't go away. (*to Panatellas, who stays behind with Don Pedro*) Don't I know you from somewhere? Yes, you're the one who got me into this. What's the big idea? Taking advantage of a weak moment . . .

PANATELLAS: Reproaches?

DON PEDRO: Recriminations?

PIQUILLO: No, it's my own fault. Now it's beginning to come back to me. You offered me one thousand piastras if I would get married. One thousand smackers! Married with no strings attached. And I can leave my wife any time and go my merry way. What a crazy idea! I don't know why I went along with it. Well, yes, I do. It was the money. Hand it over.

DON PEDRO: You'll get it. Why so impatient?

PIQUILLO: Because I need it right now. I've got to find someone . . .

PANATELLAS: Someone?

PIQUILLO: The only person in the world that matters to me, the person I love more than life itself.

PANATELLAS: Even if she did walk out on you?

DON PEDRO: He did it for a woman!

PANATELLAS: For a woman!

PIQUILLO: Why do men do everything?

ALL THREE: Women!

PIQUILLO:



**Come, make a frank and free confession,
And tell me what you cherish most.**

**Oh, women! Dear women! Goddesses all!
Long may they reign victorious
Until the stars from heaven fall.**

**Men out for power, melancholy,
Look down on love as mortal sin.
It's we good fellows, hail and jolly,
That carry off the heroine.**

**Oh, women! Dear women! Goddesses all!
Long may they reign victorious
Until the stars from heaven fall.**

**Now here's a test for those inclined:
Stop every man that happens by;
Inquire of each what's on his mind.
Nine out of ten will then reply,**

**Oh, women! Dear women! Goddesses all!
Long may they reign victorious**

**Until the stars from heaven fall.
Oh, long may they reign!**

PANATELLAS: Enough talk about women. Let's talk about us.

PIQUILLO: Us?

PANATELLAS: Yes, us. As you know, my friend Don Pedro de Hinojosa is the Mayor of the city. I am the first gentleman of the Viceroy's bedchamber. You are the husband of the Viceroy's mistress. We are therefore the three highest dignitaries in Peru.

PIQUILLO: You, you and me?

DON PEDRO: That's right. We have the three prize government positions.

PANATELLAS: So naturally it is up to us to split the riches, the honors . . .

DON PEDRO: The perks . . .

PANATELLAS: Of course, we could easily have left you out of all this, but . . .

DON PEDRO: Honest to a fault, we said to ourselves, "Before we divvy up, let's find the Count of Tabago."

PIQUILLO: What's he got to do with it?

PANATELLAS: That's you.

DON PEDRO: So, gentlemen that we are . . . What are you asking for?

PANATELLAS: Bearing in mind how recently you were just a beggar.

DON PEDRO: A nobody.

PANATELLAS: A panhandler.

DON PEDRO: A wand'ring minstrel.

PANATELLAS: And when it comes to sharing the spoils, a wand'ring minstrel should be satisfied with a wand'ring minstrel's share.

PIQUILLO: I just want to take the fee you promised me and get out of here.

PANATELLAS: *immensely relieved*) I think we might be able to allow that.

DON PEDRO: Yes, we could live with that. (*aside to Panatellas*) Is he out of his mind? Passing up a fortune, he just wants to get out of here. Yes, I see no problem, seeing that you really want to leave. (*gives him a purse*)

PIQUILLO: Goodbye then. I've got to hurry. Every minute counts.

PANATELLAS: Not quite so fast. First, there's one more little task.

DON PEDRO: A small formality. One of our usual court ceremonies.

PANATELLAS: Strictly protocol.

DON PEDRO: It's tradition.

PIQUILLO: A ceremony? What do I have to do?

PANATELLAS: You merely present your wife to the Viceroy.

PIQUILLO: That's the tradition in Peru? A husband presents his wife to the Viceroy?

DON PEDRO: It can be quite touching.

PIQUILLO: But I wouldn't even recognize my wife if I saw her.

PANATELLAS: A scene with amusing possibilities.

DON PEDRO: There's no way around it. It's part of the deal. And it needn't take long.

PIQUILLO: All right, but keep it short. I admit, I'm a sort of curious to see what she looks like!

The Viceroy enters, with entourage.

CHORUS:

**So obliging! Oh, what a sport!
Comes the husband, fresh, newly wed.
He'll present his wife to the court
So the king can take her to bed.**

**VICEROY: (*to Piquillo*)
My new-made Count!**

**PIQUILLO:
Who, I? Your Highness!**

VICEROY:
Now as a man of rank,
Present me to your Countess.

CHORUS: (*mockingly*)
Of course, the Countess!

VICEROY: (*severely*)
Of course, the Countess!

CHORUS:
Ha, ha, ha! The barefoot Countess, fancy that!
The tart has turned aristocrat.

VICEROY:
They've not an atom of respect.

DON PEDRO & PANAT.
A note of scorn we too detect.

CHORUS:
Ha, ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha, ha!
A bride to grace the king's boudoir.

SERVANT: (*spoken*)
The Countess of Tabago!

CHORUS:
So obliging! Oh, what a sport!
Comes the husband, fresh, newly wed.
He'll present his wife to the court
So the king can take her to bed.
He presents the bride newly wed
And with the king she goes to bed.

PANATELLAS: (*to Piq.*)
The manners of the court . . .
You must have heard of some.

PIQUILLO:
I'll bow and scrape.

PANATELLAS:
And when in doubt, be deaf and dumb.

PIQUILLO:
Ah, no escape!

DON PEDRO:
Come in, my lady.

Perichole enters, attired in splendor.

PERICHOLE:
I'm coming, sir.

PIQUILLO:
God! Her voice! My Perichole!

PERICHOLE:
Surprise!

PIQUILLO:
How can it be? You! My wife!

PERICHOLE:
That's how it stands.

PIQUILLO:
The light begins to dawn.

PERICHOLE:
Stay mum! Be still! I can explain.

PIQUILLO:
I know more than enough.
Very clear indeed!
So the king wants a comedy,
And it's you he has picked for the lead.
But where does that leave me?

PERICHOLE:
Oh, do be still! And do stay mum!

CHORUS:
Ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha!
The brilliant Countess, ho, ho, hum.

VICEROY: *(to Don Pedro & Panatellas)*
It's up to you to handle this.

DON PEDRO & PANAT.
The courtly scene has gone amiss.

CHORUS:
Ha, ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha, ha!
A bride to grace the king's boudoir.

PERICHOLE: (*to Viceroy*)
Sir, no reason to frown.
He's upset, God knows why.
I'll calm him down
If you'll give me a try.

(*to Piquillo*) Now hear me out, as I'm your wife.
Do not interrupt, on your life, on your life!



My word! The way you carry on!

Sir, why this fit of childish rage?

Invited to a grand salon,
Instead of acting your own age,
Must you take over center stage?

To raise a row at my expense
While I pursue your good alone!
So help me God!
Your head is solid bone, bone, bone.

You men, you men!
My God, you men are dense!
So help me, men are dense!

Our only chance you nearly spoil,
And throw a scene for all to see.
Good Lord! My blood begins to boil --
Have you no confidence in me,
To overturn my strategy?

Go back and show a grain of sense,
A tiny bow before the throne.
So help me God!
Your head is solid bone, bone, bone.

You men, you men!
My God, you men are dense!
So help me, men are dense!

Oh, you men are dense!

PIQUILLO:

My fault! Forgive the sudden storm.
But come, my duty I'll perform.

May I present to you, O king,
You lords and ladies that fill the halls,
This form and face so ravishing,
A woman fair as she is false.

Her whispered words are melody,
Her eyes and lips intoxicate.
A deadly lie! A cruel mockery!
I see it now, rather late.

May I present to you, O king,
And all you others that stand and stare,
A beauty past imagining,
A woman false as she is fair.

She'll swear her love to you alone --
You poor fool, don't be so naive!
Take it from someone who has known --
But who? Who could look and not believe?

You're next in line to be her lover,
But beware! Now you know the score.
Stay on your guard; I hand her over.
Not for me -- no, she's mine no more.
No, no, no, no! She's none of mine!

He pushes Perichole to the Viceroy.

VICEROY:

Pounce on the punk! Haul him away,
Nab him, grab him, drag him away.

OTHERS:

Pounce on the punk! Give him a clout.
Clobber, club him, knock him about.

VICEROY:

Right with a punch, left to the jaw!
Show the mighty arm of the law.

OTHERS:

First with a left, then with a right.
Put the bastard out like a light.

PERICHOLE:

He deserves it, give him a cuff.
Does the fool forget who I am?
I have taken more than enough.
For one so dumb I don't give a damn,
Don't give a damn.

VICEROY:

Turn on the heat, turn on the heat!
Pounce on the punk! Haul him away,
Nab him, grab him, drag him away.

OTHERS:

Head for the feet, down with a dive!
Take the turkey dead or alive.

VICEROY & CHORUS:

Join the attack, hunt with the pack.
The stag we'll bring to bay.
The lonely beast has got to pay.
The hunted stag is brought to bay.

PIQUILLO:

A pack of dogs! A herd of swine!

D. P. & PANATELLAS:

They've got the guy;
Now what to do?
O king, reply:
It's up to you.

CHORUS:

O king, what shall we do?

VICEROY: *(after a moment's reflection)*

Put him away and lock the door,
A lesson for all that rave and rant.
Tie him up well
In that dungeon cell
We reserve for

**Married men RE, married men CAL,
Married men CI, married men TRANT.
For married men RECALCITRANT,
Married men, married men
RECALCITRANT.**

PIQUILLO: (to Perichole)
**So now the king becomes your lover,
A marble palace your domain,
Your new domain.
I wish for you a life of clover,
And that I never see you again.
Nevermore! May I never see you again!**

OTHERS:
**Go lock him up! Show him the way
We train a husband to obey.
Within the blackest hole extant
There let the rascal rave and rant.
Let the rascal rage and roar
In the cell kept ready for**

**The husband RE, the husband CAL
The husband Ci, the husband TRANT
The husband RECALCITRANT
RECAL RECALCITRANT TRANT TRANT.**

Don Pedro and Panatellas drag Piquillo off.

ACT III SCENE ONE

Scene: a dark dungeon cell. An old prisoner emerges from the wall, with bassoon.

OLD PRISONER: I made it! The old prisoner is free again! After twelve years of digging through six feet of solid stone – just me, my bassoon, and my handy little penknife – here I am! (*looking around*) Hm, looks like I've dug through the wrong wall. Ah, well, that's life. Live and learn. What's twelve more years? Freedom! Here's the wall I want. This time I'll get it right. Practice makes perfect. Not a minute to lose. (*he eagerly attacks the wall*) What do I hear? Footsteps approaching. Quick! Back to the old cell. You can't be too careful. (*He scuttles out; the Jailer brings in Piquillo, escorted by Panatellas and Don Pedro.*)

JAILER: Here we are! Just the place for the young prisoner starting his career. A home away from home. Snug, cozy, no clutter, easy to maintain, perfect privacy. And three square meals a week.

PANATELLAS: I daresay the eyes will get used to it. Not that there's all that much to look at.

JAILER: Quietest room in the palace. Never a sound from upstairs.

DON PEDRO: So this is the cell for recalcitrant husbands?

JAILER: Reserved exclusively.

DON PEDRO: It looks clean, at any rate.

JAILER: It ought to. First time we've ever had to use it.

PIQUILLO: So I have the honor to be the first husband to stand up to the Viceroy?

PANATELLAS: And quite possibly the last.

PIQUILLO: So I'm thrown in prison for being an honest man.

DON PEDRO: We'd better leave you to settle in.

PANATELLAS: You'll want to fix things up your own way.

DON PEDRO: We'll drop in every few years.

PANATELLAS: But before leaving, there's one thing we want to tell you.

DON PEDRO: Hold on-- is anybody listening? *(to jailer)* Check the hallway. *(Jailer exits; Don Pedro whispers.)* Young man, we are proud of you!

PANATELLAS: Mighty proud! You acted like a man.

DON PEDRO: You showed spunk.

PANATELLAS: A real Spaniard!

DON PEDRO:
Other husbands, all compliant,
Show no more courage than a cat.
You alone, stalwart as a giant,
Have dared to cry "To hell with that!"

BOTH:

**Sir, your manly indignation
Sets a standard for the population.
And as a recompense
We would extend warmest compliments.
Man of mettle, you must settle
For words of admiration.**

PANATELLAS:

**Not for a moment overpowered
By the urge to survive.
Oh, no, you are not a coward.
You're the biggest fool alive!**

BOTH:

**Sir, your manly indignation
Sets a standard for the population.
And as a recompense
We would extend warmest compliments.
Man of mettle, you must settle
For words of admiration. *(They leave.)***

PIQUILLO: *(alone)* Manly spunk! Look what it's got me -- a stone floor to sleep on and barely enough room to turn around. If I had played along, if I had said, "Here, take my wife, don't mention it," I'd be sleeping on feathers. You can't help but wonder . . .

PIQUILLO:

**They tried to make me knuckle under;
I stood my ground, so here I am.
Forgive me if I start to wonder:
Is maybe virtue just a sham?**

**My dear wife, my darling!
This very moment, where are you?
My dear wife, my darling,
Could you be thinking of me, too?**

**While you are clad in gold and glitter
And lift a glass of champagne,
I make a bed of straw and litter
And sigh, and wait,
And chew my nails in vain. Ah!**

My dear wife, my darling!

**This very moment, where are you?
My dear wife, my darling,
Could you be thinking of me, too?**

**Now the king appears, he advances,
He shuts the door to her boudoir.
Coming toward her with tender glances,
He takes her hand, et cetera . . .
He draws her close, et cetera . . .**

**My dear wife, my darling!
When I implore, do you not hear?
My dearest, my darling,
So far away and yet so near.**

**But what's the good of jealous fever
Inside a dark and lonely cell?
In sleep perhaps my thoughts can leave her,
And dreams can float me out of hell.**

**Though I try, sleep will not come near me.
My eyes stay open, come what may.
My darling, my darling, hear me . . .
Are you thinking of me now?
So close, yet so far away,
So far away, so far away . . .**

(Piquillo falls asleep. the jailer opens the door for Perichole, who is still gorgeously attired.)

PERICHOLE: *(to jailer)* Leave me alone with the prisoner. Don't worry. I will call if there's any trouble. *(prodding Piquillo)* Piquillo, wake up! It's me, Perichole.

PIQUILLO: Perichole! What are you doing here? *(turning away)* You've got what you want. I want to sleep.

PERICHOLE: Open your eyes. Listen to me. I'm here for a purpose.

PIQUILLO: I suppose you want to find out if my bed is comfortable. All right. Take a look. Feel it. Go back upstairs. Have some more champagne. Tell the Viceroy I'm doing fine.

PERICHOLE: Piquillo, you've got it wrong.

PIQUILLO: Because I wanted you for myself? Sorry, my mistake.

PERICHOLE: Listen. I told you I had a reason for being here. Make a guess.

PERICHOLE:

**My goal a dungeon cell
Down dark and dismal hallways . . .
Piquillo! Piquillo!
Can you not figure out
The motive that compels,
That guides my footsteps always
And holds my course in tow?
My purpose can you doubt?**

PIQUILLO:

**No hidden mystery!
The reason's rather clear.
You come to thumb your nose at me.**

PERICHOLE:

**Oh, no, my dear! Oh, no, my dear!
I come to speak my heart.**

PIQUILLO:

For that you venture here?

PERICHOLE:

**Yes, this I swear and mean to show --
I seek no more than that,
My dearest Piquillo.**

PIQUILLO:

**Say your piece, go ahead,
Countess of Tabago.**

PERICHOLE:

Let me speak.

PIQUILLO:

Go ahead.

PERICHOLE:

Make not a sound till all is said.

PIQUILLO:

No, not a word till all is said.

PERICHOLE:

QuickTime™ and a
decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

**Men of the world, those on the rise,
Would cast you in a dreadful light.**

**As for skill, or a trace of talent,
To put it plainly, you're a mess.
For charming manners, smooth and gallant,
You draw a blank. Nonetheless . . .**

PIQUILLO:

Nonetheless?

PERICHOLE:

Nonetheless . . .

**You are all that I want,
I'm ashamed to confess.
I adore you and live only for your caress.
You are all that I want,
You're the rogue I adore!
In your arms I desire nothing more.**

**Three meals a day I'm not above --
At court they serve a rich repast!
Roaming with you, living on love,
A crust of bread was meant to last.**

**Here I have luxury untold,
A score of servants -- yes, oh yes!
Furs and flowing gowns, rings of gold,
Necklaces of pearl, nonetheless . . .**

PIQUILLO:

Nonetheless?

PERICHOLE:

Nonetheless . . .

**You are all that I want,
I'm ashamed to confess.**

**I adore you and live only for your caress.
You are all that I want,
You're the rogue I adore!
In your arms I desire nothing more.**

**PIQUILLO:
If I could know for certain,
There's nothing I would trade it for.
Is it really true?**

**PERICHOLE:
'Tis you that I adore.**

**PIQUILLO:
You love me?**

**PERICHOLE:
I love you.**

**PIQUILLO:
This is not a lie?**

**PERICHOLE:
Cross my heart and hope to die.**

**PIQUILLO:
You love me?**

**PERICHOLE:
I love you.**

**BOTH:
Rapture supreme
Way up in a dream!
Tra la la la! Tra la la la!
Et cetera, et cetera!**

**PIQUILLO:
My joy would be complete, my dear,
Located any place but here.
My joy would in fact be greater far
If only we, if only we
Were some place but the place we are.
Is it really true?**

PERICHOLE:

'Tis you that I adore.

PIQUILLO:
You love me?

PERICHOLE:
I love you.

BOTH:
Oh, joy supreme!
Oh, happy you and happy me!
Oh, happy we!

PIQUILLO: You love me, I love you, we love each other! That's all that matters.

PERICHOLE: Oh, no, it's not! We've got to get you out of here, and I know how to do it. Look -- gold, jewels, from the Viceroy!

PIQUILLO: (*immediately suspicious*) From the Viceroy! In exchange for what?

PERICHOLE: In exchange for absolutely nothing. That's the point, silly. As long as I give him nothing, he gives me everything. See this diamond? Think hard -- what can we do with it?

PIQUILLO: I suppose you can wear it, or sell it . . .

PERICHOLE: (*helping him out*) Or . . .

PIQUILLO: (*not getting it*) Or?

PERICHOLE: Or bribe a jailer with it. We get him to hand over the keys . . .

PIQUILLO: (*The light turns on.*) And he can have the keys back as soon as we are done with them!

PERICHOLE: (*all admiration*) Dearest! How did you think that up, all by yourself? Jailer! Jailer! Where are you? Come back!

(*The Viceroy enters disguised as a jailer with a thick beard, carrying a large ring of keys.*)

VICEROY:
I am jolly jailer Jim,
With a fine mustache and a beard to boot
I refuse to prune or trim.

Who could hope for a finer crop of fruit?

**A ting ting ting ting ting --
My keys I keep upon a ring.
A ting ting ting ting ting --
We sing in keys but my keys sing.**

ALL:

**A ting ting ting ting ting --
The keys are kept upon a ring.
A ting ting ting ting ting --
Enjoy the genial song they sing.**

VICEROY:

**Prisoners all
Leap when I call;
The daily crust of bread I supply.
Though I appear
Stern and severe,
I'm really not that kind of guy.
Sing it again!**

PER. & PIQ.

Sing it again!

VICEROY:

Song of the chain.

PER. & PIQ.

Song of the chain.

ALL:

**A ting ting ting ting ting --
They sing from morn till evening.
A ting ting ting ting ting --
They sing as they swing on the ring.**

PIQUILLO:

Man of my heart!

PERICHOLE:

Kind, you can tell.

PIQUILLO:

The pride and glory of the cell.

PERICHOLE:
Warm, gentle eyes . . .

PIQUILLO:
He'll sympathize.

PERICHOLE:
Charming and wise.

BOTH:
So wise, so wise!

PERICHOLE:
He's a man with heart and sympathy.

PIQUILLO:
Furthermore, the man who's got the key.

BOTH:
Tinga linga linga, tinga linga.
A ting ting ting ting ting --
The only song they ever sing.
A ting ting ting ting ting --
They sing as on the ring they swing.

VICEROY:
Ring out once more.

PER. & PIQ.
Tinga linga, tinga-ling. Encore!

PIQUILLO: What a nice jailer!

PERICHOLE: So understanding!

PIQUILLO: So underpaid, too, I bet.

PERICHOLE: A man who lives by the golden rule.

PIQUILLO: Speaking of gold . . .

PERICHOLE: No, let's speak of diamonds. (*producing a diamond*) What do you think this one is worth?

VICEROY: A fortune.

PIQUILLO: And who does it belong to?

VICEROY: To the lady, I daresay.

PERICHOLE: No, to you! In exchange for a small favor.

VICEROY: A favor? What do I do to get the diamond?

PIQUILLO: Lend us your keys – lend, mind you, not give.

PERICHOLE: For no more than a minute.

PIQUILLO: And the diamond is yours!

VICEROY: So you want me to help you escape?

PERICHOLE: That's one way of putting it.

VICEROY: And what about you? What will you do after he slips out the door?

PERICHOLE: I'm slipping out the door, too.

VICEROY: What! (*struggling to contain himself*) Leaving the poor Viceroy high and dry?

PERICHOLE: The poor Viceroy will get over it.

PIQUILLO: The poor Viceroy can go to blazes!

VICEROY: But he loves you, he adores you! Or so I'm told.

PERICHOLE: No matter. I belong with Piquillo, and I want to spend the rest of my life by his side. That is my only wish. Dear jailer, you can make it come true.

PIQUILLO: Sweet, kind jailer!

VICEROY: So I can! And that's just what I mean to do. Take another look. (*he rips off the false beard*) Guards! This way! Tie them up. Fasten the chains with good strong locks, the gentleman on the left, the lady on the right. Side by side, just the way they wanted it. Two turtledoves in a cage, with lots and lots of time to talk about love.

PIQUILLO: The Viceroy!

PERICHOLE: Don Andres!

VICEROY: So it is! The poor Viceroy who has not practiced the art of incognito for nothing. *(to guards)* That will be all, gentlemen. Further services will not be needed. *(guards leave)* So, have you anything more to say to the Viceroy?

PERICHOLE: Plenty!

PIQUILLO:
King, but less than lowest peasant!

PERICHOLE:
Who are you to push and shove?

PIQUILLO:
You backward ape . . .

PERICHOLE:
. . . in human shape.

PIQUILLO:
Worm and weasel, though less pleasant.
Can't you see?

PERICHOLE:
Can't you hear? We are in love!

BOTH:
Can you not see we are in love?
Can you not hear we are in love?

VICEROY:
Despair is gnawing at my vitals,
And jealousy tears me in two.
My fortune and my worldly titles
I would trade for a love sincere and true.

TRIO: *(with adjusted pronouns)*
Despair is gnawing at his vitals,
And jealousy tears him in two.
His fortune and his regal titles
He'd trade for love sincere and true.
He'd trade for a love ever true.

PER. & PIQ.
Our love will not be held in check --
The tyrant we can brave.
Though he may hang us by the neck,

Our hearts he'll not enslave.

VICEROY: (*approaching Perichole*)
Ah, my beauty!

PIQUILLO:
The beast prowls near my darling!
What is going on? Get away from there!

BOTH:
Get away from there!

VICEROY:
A word . . . I would whisper in your ear.

PIQUILLO:
What does he say?

VICEROY: (*seductively*)
Later on, when you return to reason,
When thaw has brought a milder season,
Sing low that tender song
You sang so well of late.
Then I shall come. Hush!
Answer not for now . . . I'll wait.

PERICHOLE:
Not for diamonds, not for rubies!

PIQUILLO:
What does he say, that evil spider?

PERICHOLE:
King of donkeys, king of boobies!

PIQUILLO:
What does he whisper there beside her?

BOTH:
King of donkeys, king of boobies!

TRIO: (*with adjusted pronouns*)
Despair is gnawing at his vitals,
And jealousy tears him in two.
His fortune and his regal titles

He would trade all for love. (exit Viceroy)

PIQUILLO: That's telling him.

PERICHOLE: Now he knows what we think of *him!*

PIQUILLO: About time somebody put him in his place.

PERICHOLE: And it *would* have worked, except for one thing.

PIQUILLO: What's that?

PERICHOLE: When you're corrupting an officer of the law, you have to be first in line.

PIQUILLO: If it hadn't been for that beard!

PERICHOLE: Well, here we are, back where we started.

PIQUILLO: Except now it's both of us.

PERICHOLE And in chains, too!

PIQUILLO: Got any more ideas?

PERICHOLE: There has to be some way . . .

PIQUILLO: What was it the Viceroy whispered in your ear on his way out?

PERICHOLE: Nothing. Nothing at all.

PIQUILLO: Then why did he whisper? When you say nothing, you say nothing.

PERICHOLE: Piquillo, is this the time to be jealous?

PIQUILLO: Boy, what a place to spend a honeymoon!

PERICHOLE: Listen! Do you hear it?

PIQUILLO: Troops to the rescue. You're imagining things.

PERICHOLE: But it's coming out of the wall!

PIQUILLO: Cockroaches! (*The Old Prisoner emerges*)

OLD PRISONER: Hush!

PERICHOLE: Heaven help us! A visitor!

PIQUILLO: A ghost!

OLD PRISONER: Don't be afraid! I'm not a monster, just a next door neighbor. And I bring you freedom!

PERICHOLE & PIQUILLO: Freedom! Thank God! Salvation!

OLD PRISONER: Twelve years and we're out!

PERICHOLE & PIQUILLO: (*crestfallen*) Twelve years?

OLD PRISONER: Provided that my calculations are correct, and if my little penknife holds up. To work! (*He tackles the wall*)

PERICHOLE: Listen, old man. We can put that knife to better use. Look: here are two locks waiting to be picked. Can you do it?

OLD PRISONER: (*with quiet pride*) Can I do it? It was my outstanding skill with locks that got me where I am today. (*As he approaches Perichole, he grabs her and starts to kiss her.*)

PERICHOLE: Sir! What are you doing?

OLD PRISONER: Sorry, couldn't help myself. It's been twelve years since . . . twelve years!

PERICHOLE: Then you can wait a little bit longer. The shackles! (*The Old Prisoner succeeds in freeing her*)

OLD PRISONER: And now . . . (*again attempting to embrace her*)

PERICHOLE: No, no! Business first. Release him, too. (*Old Prisoner does so*)

PIQUILLO: Thanks, old boy. (*grabbing him*) And I'll thank you to mind your manners.

OLD PRISONER: (*sheepishly*) Sorry, twelve years. But now to work! With all three of us pitching in, we could be out in four!

PERICHOLE: No thanks! There's a quicker way. Listen carefully. As he was leaving, the Viceroy whispered in my ear . . .

PIQUILLO: Aha! You mean when he said nothing?

PERICHOLE: Don't interrupt. He said that if I changed my mind about living in chains, I need only sing the song I sing so beautifully -- his words, not mine. When he comes, we shall be prepared. Piquillo, back where you were, hands behind you. Old man, into the corner. Everybody in position. And when the door opens . . .

PIQUILLO: We pounce on him!

OLD PRISONER: We tie his hands!

PIQUILLO: We grab the keys!

OLD PRISONER: We put him in chains!

PERICHOLE: You understand me perfectly.

(singing) **I adore you, I'm wild about you.
On my love you can always count.
La la la . . .**

VICEROY: *(instantly reappearing)* The signal! The answer is yes! That girl is crazy about me. For a moment I was beginning to doubt. I suppose I'm over-sensitive.

PERICHOLE: Is that you, Don Andres? Andy?

VICEROY: Just as I promised, my pet. So my pretty songbird has had time to smooth her feathers. She has come to her senses.

PERICHOLE: Yes, I've done some thinking . . .

VICEROY: And she didn't mean all those naughty words?

PIQUILLO: *(leaping out, along with the Old Prisoner)* Here's what she means! How do you like this? *(They pounce on the Viceroy and chain him to the cell wall.)*

VICEROY: Riot! Revolution! Help! Guards! Save me! Quick! Hurry! I forgot . . . They're all gone. I sent them away. Oh, women! Women!

PERICHOLE: Right you are, Don Andres. Women!

PERICHOLE: *(then joined by Piquillo)*

What crafty creatures for a lover

**Would lead a mighty monarch on,
Entice a Viceroy, work him over,
And turn a pig into a pawn?**

**Oh, women! Dear women!
Goddesses all!
Long may they reign victorious
Until the stars from heaven fall.**

**Oh, women! Dear women!
Goddesses all!
Until the stars from heaven fall,
Oh, long may they reign!**

VICEROY: Women! What chance does a man have? Help! Help! Somebody do something! Get me out of here!

(He is left helplessly in chains as the three prisoners dash merrily out the door.)

ACT III, SCENE II

We are back at the Square of Act I -- in other words, square one. Guadaleña is setting up the cabaret for happy hour. Virginella and Mastrella come running in from opposite sides.

VIRGINELLA: Have you heard?

GUADALEÑA: Heard what? Why are you running? What's the big hurry?

VIRGINELLA: The town is buzzing!

MASTRELLA: Three prisoners . . .

VIRGINELLA: Escaped!

MASTRELLA: Disappeared

VIRGINELLA: Vanished into thin air.

MASTRELLA: Not a trace of them. Not a clue.

VIRGINELLA: After knocking out the Viceroy.

MASTRELLA: Then tying him up.

VIRGINELLA: And leaving him stark naked.

MASTRELLA: They're on the run.

VIRGINELLA: The police, the army, the militia, the national guard . . .

MASTRELLA: All out looking for them.

GUADALENA: Where can they be?

VIRGINELLA: Lying low some place.

MASTRELLA: Out of the country by now.

(The three escapees creep in)

PERICHOLE & PIQUILLO: Cousins! Friends!

GUADALENA: Perichole!

VIRGINELLA: Piquillo!

MASTRELLA: The criminals!

PERICHOLE: Don't give us away. Help us out . . . They're after us.

VIRGINELLA: You'd better run.

PERICHOLE: Yes, but where?

PIQUILLO: We're surrounded.

GUADALENA: This way . . . inside . . . hurry! *(The cousins hustle the fugitives into the cabaret as Panatellas and soldiers enter)*

PANATELLAS & SOLDIERS:

Look ahead, look about!

Soldiers, look around.

Look to the right, look to the left --

They must be found.

PANATELLAS:

We'll scour the town from top to bottom;

From door to door we'll hunt the prey,

Pursue the rogues until we've got 'em,

To smoke 'em from their hideaway.

TOGETHER:

**Look ahead, look about!
Soldiers, look around.
Look to the right, look to the left --
They must be found.**

**Better dead,
They have fled,
Flown the coup
In a group --
The graybeard, the wench and her lover.**

**Up and down
Through the town,
Back and front
Let us hunt --
Their hideout we're bound to discover.**

**On with the chase! Hunt, comb the quarters;
Head them off by land or sea.
Check at the ports, secure the borders,
Hot on the trail, find the three.**

DON PEDRO & SOLDIERS: (*entering*)

**Look ahead, look about!
Soldiers, look around.
Look to the right, look to the left --
They must be found.**

**Indeed, we cut a foolish figger --
The crowd has put us on the spot.
They sing with a sneer and snigger:
"They've caught 'em, they've caught 'em not."**

The cousins re-emerge from the cabaret.

COUSINS:

**What a mess! What a plight!
Disappeared! Taken flight!
Of course, Perichole is to blame.
Gaudy gowns made of silk
For a girl of her ilk,
And favors I shudder to name.**

But alas! Such a child!

**Merely weak, merely wild,
Her punishment's surely been ample.
Though I add, by the by,
That I trust you and I
May profit from her sad example.**

**COUSIN 1:
For if the king with melting glances . . .**

**COUSIN II:
Should the king someday indeed . . .**

**COUSIN III:
Come to me to try his chances,
On his knees to beg and plead --**

**COUSIN 1:
I would allow no hesitation . . .**

**COUSIN II:
No unease would I betray . . .**

**COUSIN III:
With a gesture of slight vexation
I'd send the sovereign on his way.**

**COUSIN 1:
Splendor and glory soon are over.**

**COUSIN II:
Then the price she'll have to pay.**

**COUSIN III:
All too quickly will she discover
That her reign has lasted but a day.**

**SOLDIERS:
Eyes alert and ears to the ground,
We'll comb the town for miles around
Until the culprits all are found.**

**COUSINS:
What a mess! What a plight!
Disappeared! Taken flight!**

SOLDIERS:

**Better dead, they have fled,
Disappeared in the night.**

VICEROY: (*entering in a rage, confronts Panatellas and Don Pedro*) Miserable worm! Ass! You nincompoops! I suppose you think you're doing a heck of a job. Have you found them? Where are they?

DON PEDRO: But Your Highness . . .

VICEROY: You've succeeded?

PANATELLAS: Almost, Your Highness. We're hot on the trail, Your Highness, hot on the trail!

VICEROY: Hot on the trail, are you? Which means . . .

DON PEDRO: Ready to pounce!

VICEROY: It means that you've found nothing at all. It means that you don't know a bloody thing. It means that you couldn't find a tennis ball in a teacup. So, two measly beggars are allowed to lay hands on my sacred body. They are allowed to string me up like a sausage . . . my sacred body! They get away scot free, leaving me waving my hands like a scarecrow in the wind. The crime of the century! And when I inquire of you, the Mayor of the city, and you, First Gentleman of the Bedchamber, if these two animals are caught, you have the gall to reply, "We are hot on the trail, hot on the trail."

DON PEDRO: (*on the verge of tears*) But Your Highness! We have scoured the palace. We have scoured the town, the shops, the hotels, the cabarets, the theatres, the cellars, the attics . . .

VICEROY: (*shutting him up with a hand over his mouth*) And you, Panatellas . . .

PANATELLAS: (*in despair*) Sir, believe me, we've left not a turn unstoned.

VICEROY: And what have you to show for it? Nothing! Nothing at all! (*noticing the cousins*) Cousins! What about you? Those infamous young street singers . . . You know them well. Don't deny it.

GUADALENA: No, no! Only slightly, Your Highness! Ever so slightly!

VICEROY: Where are they You must have seen them.

GUADALENA: Seen them? No, not that I recall. Cousin, have you seen them lately?

VIRGINELLA: (*vaguely*) Street sweepers?

MASTRELLA: Perichole and Piquillo, I think he means.

VIRGINELLA: Heavens, they wouldn't dare come here!

With the Old Prisoner, Perichole and Piquillo emerge boldly from the cabaret, dressed as in the beginning of Act I. The crowd falls back with gasps of astonishment.

PANATELLAS: Look! There they are! It's them!

MASTRELLA: Perichole!

GUADALENA: Piquillo!

PIQUILLO: Ladies! Gentlemen! Cousins, with your permission.

PERICHOLE: What a wonderful crowd!

PIQUILLO: What a distinguished audience!

PERICHOLE: So quiet! So attentive!

PIQUILLO: For two ragged street singers . . .

PERICHOLE: Who can only hope to live up to their expectations . . .

PIQUILLO: And that they will be generous, *very* generous.

PERICHOLE: (*to Piquillo*) But this time, *I* am passing the hat.

VICEROY: You intend to *sing*?

PANATELLAS: (*coming out of shock*) And you suppose we have time to listen?

DON PEDRO: Police! Arrest them!

PANATELLAS: Drag them back to the cell!

VICEROY: No! I want to hear the song. (*indicating the Old Prisoner*) Who's the back-up? (*suddenly recognizing him as he toots on the bassoon*) Why, if it's not the Marquis of Santarem. Where have you been spending these twelve years? (*The Old Prisoner plays a descending scale on his bassoon by way of reply*) Say no more. Let's hear the song.

PERICHOLE: Your Highness! Our song is called "*The Mercy of a Great Ruler.*"

VICEROY: Never heard of it.

PIQUILLO: A story in three verses.

PERICHOLE:

**Listen well, Americans all,
From Alaska to Peru.
It will cost not even a sou.
Here's a story I well recall
Of two young lovers in despair,
Now with hearts as light as air.**

PIQUILLO:

Two so in love, close to despair . .

BOTH:

Lovers, alas! In great despair.

PIQUILLO:

**Oh, the Viceroy in his fury
For a reason strange to tell
Had them locked inside a cell.
They escaped, O kindly jury,
Thanks to a sentimental tune
With an old bird on the bassoon.**

PERICHOLE:

With an old bird . . .

PIQUILLO:

On the bassoon.

BOTH:

Thanks to a bird that played bassoon.

PERICHOLE:

**They are caught, the girl and boy --
To what power can they appeal?
Whereupon they humbly kneel
Before that same viceroy.
Surely no wiser sovereign lives!
Father to both, he forgives.**

PIQUILLO:

Father to both . .

PERICHOLE:
Father to both . . .

BOTH:
Father to both, the king forgives.

PERICHOLE: Friends! A little something for the street singers. Help us out. Be generous. *(Coins fall into the hat as she circulates. As she approaches the Viceroy, she adds her diamonds to the lot, then addresses him simply and sincerely.)* Your Highness, I'm sorry if I offended you. I never meant to. It was just that I couldn't give you what you asked for. I am in love with someone else and we belong to each other. I'm returning your diamonds . . . everything. But please, sir, don't have us hanged or imprisoned. We just want to live. That's all I ask for.

VICEROY: Don Andres of Ribiera, Viceroy of Peru, is not in the habit of taking back what he has given. The diamonds are yours . . . Countess.

CROWD: *(with gasps of astonishment)* Countess!

VICEROY: Your behavior has been so . . . so magnificent, so courageous, so beautiful, that if I didn't control myself I'd be b-b--bawling like a baby. Both of you! You are both to go free. *(trying to control his sobs)* No f-f-f-father could be prouder.

Cheers and applause from the crowd.

PERICHOLE: And what about the old prisoner?

VICEROY: That's going too far! You want me to be father to him as well? . . . All right. Anything you say.

More cheers from the crowd.

PERICHOLE: Piquillo, we're free, and rich beyond our wildest dreams! You see what happens when you let *me* pass the hat?

PIQUILLO: My darling, neither you nor I will ever have to pass the hat again!

PIQUILLO:
We birds of song, at times with drooping feather,
Have flown the course from hell to paradise.

PERICHOLE:

**But from the spot that brought us first together
The time has come for tears and goodbyes.**

PIQUILLO:

**So now we leave, like swallows in September;
To other skies we wing our way again.**

PERICHOLE:

**And as we go, and as we go,
We'd like you to remember:**

BOTH:

**We're on the way!
We're on the way!
We're on the run
To make a son for Spain!**

ALL:

**You're on the way!
You're on the way!
You're on the run
To make a son for Spain!**

THE END

