

Cardenio

by  
Stephen Greenblatt  
and Charles Mee

inspired by a lost play of Shakespeare's

When the lights come up,  
we are on the stone terrace in front of a stone farmhouse  
in Umbria.  
Olive trees  
flowers  
vines.  
Comfortable outdoor chairs scattered on the terrace.

Sound of festive celebration  
coming from behind double doors.  
Music, laughter.  
Will and Anselmo enter,  
glasses of champagne in their hands.  
They wear tuxedos,  
ties loosened, collars opened.

WILL  
What a perfect wedding, Anselmo!  
Absolutely perfect!  
You know  
you're the luckiest person I know  
to have married the woman you have married  
beautiful  
sweet  
so sweet  
and smart  
and full of life

[silence]

ANSELMO  
Right.

WILL [laughs]  
You don't think so?

ANSELMO  
Sometimes  
you know  
I try to block the logical voice that talks  
so relentlessly inside my head

but then I think  
when it comes to something this important  
I ought to pay attention.

WILL  
To...?

ANSELMO  
To the thought that nags  
and nags and nags at me.

WILL  
What's that?

ANSELMO  
I think she's not going to be faithful to me.

[silence;  
then Will laughs]

WILL  
But that's insane.

ANSELMO  
Yes.

WILL  
I mean, that's completely insane, Anselmo.  
She loves you.  
I've never known anyone to love anyone  
as much as she loves you.  
No one is as lucky as you are.

ANSELMO  
Will,  
if you really were my best friend...

WILL  
I am...

ANSELMO  
you would help me.

WILL  
I will.

ANSELMO  
No matter what.

WILL  
No matter what.

ANSELMO

Then do this for me  
see if you can seduce my wife  
so that I will know if I can trust her.

[silence]

WILL [laughing]

Anselmo, please, really.

ANSELMO

You said you were my friend.

WILL

I am your friend.

ANSELMO

And so?

WILL

And so  
as your friend,  
I am telling you to drop this  
so that you don't mess up  
what seems to me  
the best love in the entire world.

ANSELMO

That's what I think, too,  
Or what I desperately want to think.  
But day and night I hear  
A simple little syllogism  
Echoing and reechoing in my head:  
Camila is a woman with a remarkably open heart;  
Open hearts are vulnerable to seduction;  
Therefore Camila will be seduced.

WILL

Stop it!

ANSELMO

I can't stop it.  
Not without the reassurance  
that you alone can safely give me.  
Camila is all the things I am not:  
She is intuitive,  
and trusting,  
and eager to embrace any new experience.

WILL  
not any

ANSELMO  
Look, Will  
she's a YOUNG person.

WILL  
Right. Well.  
And so are you.

ANSELMO  
I think you know what I mean,  
and I think she might well feel  
getting married just now  
before she's had a chance to do all those other things  
she might have wanted to do  
I mean not that she can't still do the things she wants to do  
except, she could come to feel, possibly....

WILL  
You mean love affairs?

ANSELMO  
Well, maybe--  
that is to say, I wouldn't want to be completely reductionist about it

WILL  
but you mean love affairs.

ANSELMO  
And other just life experiences

WILL  
You might be just ever so slightly overly anxious, Anselmo.  
This is your wedding party,  
maybe you're just a little panicky.  
What I think is  
you need to trust what you know,  
and just know that she loves you  
and then, really,  
ease up.

ANSELMO  
I'll ease up when you've done this for me, Will.  
that's when I will  
ease up.

WILL  
Anselmo: really.

[Camila enters.]

CAMILA [sweetly]  
Anselmo! Sweet heart.  
Will you come in for the champagne  
or shall we come out?

WILL  
Oh, I'm sorry, Camila.  
I've kept him here.

[Edmund comes out, bottle and two glasses in hand.]

EDMUND  
Is it nicer out here for the champagne?

ANSELMO  
No, we're just coming in.

[and, as the others come back out:]

CAMILA  
Oh, yes, Anselmo, please!  
Champagne outdoors!

ANSELMO [happily, indulgently]  
Of course. If you'd like that.

CAMILA [calling out]  
Come out, everyone! Come out!  
We are having champagne on the terrace  
underneath the sky!

EDMUND  
Here. Anselmo. Let me pour a glass for you.  
Is that a glass for Will?  
And I will have the first toast.

CAMILA  
I think the first toast goes to Will as best man.

EDMUND  
Fair enough. Fair enough.  
I will have the second toast  
as the what?  
as the husband of the maid of honor.

SALLY  
Matron of honor.

EDMUND  
Oh, my goodness, Sally.

I don't think of you as a matron.  
 Are you a matron already?  
 I'm married to a matron!

DORIS

My God, how charming is this?  
 Champagne on the terrace overlooking the olive trees  
 and the vineyards of Umbria  
 the little stone fortress on the hilltop in the distance  
 and then in a little while  
 we'll have a wedding feast  
 under the Umbrian sun  
 with the olio extra virgine  
 and the free range chickens  
 A person could just scream  
 scream for joy.  
 I mean: you two.

[now, we all see, she is going on too long]

your true wedding from the heart  
 just the way you wanted it  
 joined together forever in matrimony by your dear friend Will  
 saying what you wanted to say  
 none of that stupid stuff priests and justices of the peace say  
 but just saying all your own sort of stupid stuff  
 about letting one another's trees be free to grow  
 and about how neither of you will ever again feel the rain  
 along the winding road....

SALLY

Doris....

[Camila leaves.]

DORIS

Did I say something wrong?

[silence]

WILL

I'll get her.

[Will leaves.]

ANSELMO

Doris

wherever did you get the idea  
 that you're an amusing person at a party?

[Anselmo leaves.]

DORIS

Did I get it wrong about the trees growing?  
 Did they not say that?  
 And I didn't even get around to mentioning how special it is that  
 Anselmo was so,  
 let's face it, frankly  
 obsessed with being married here  
 in his mother's farm house

DORIS

Why his mother's farm house?  
 I mean it's lovely and SO historic  
 I mean  
 Who cares if it's small and if the toilet leaks and the fuses keep blowing?  
 But  
 how is it then that his mother wasn't even invited to come?

I mean,  
 what is that  
 to have his mother's house  
 and not to have his mother  
 to have a mother  
 and not to have her.  
 To have everything both ways.  
 To have and have not.

[Camila returns.]

CAMILA

I think you should leave, Doris.

DORIS

Oh, Camila, dear....

CAMILA

No.

A sister is supposed to be even better than a friend  
 but you turn out, as always, to be worse than anyone.

DORIS

Oh, Camila,  
 I'm so sorry,  
 You know I didn't mean anything by it all.  
 I'm just a superficial person with a sharp tongue.

WILL

Camila, you know,  
 no one takes Doris seriously.

DORIS  
I'm just a conversationalist.

EDMUND  
Everyone always  
at times like these  
feels a little tension.

[silence]

CAMILA  
You're right. You're right.

DORIS  
I'm sorry, Camila.

CAMILA  
I don't know what got into me.  
I might be just on edge because  
you know

[she bursts into tears]

this is my life!

EDMUND  
Exactly! Exactly!  
Come along everyone.  
Let's have our toasts now.  
There's more champagne inside.  
And you, Doris,  
just to show how sweet you are at heart,  
I am going to let you give the second toast.

[everyone leaves  
except Will and Camila]

WILL  
You can't let your sister upset you.

CAMILA  
No.  
I know. Of course.

WILL  
It's been a beautiful wedding, Camila.  
And your husband loves you.  
And your friends are happy for you.



CAMILA  
 Thank you, Will.  
 You're my best friend.

WILL  
 Oh!  
 Well!  
 Thanks!

CAMILA  
 Shall we celebrate with champagne?

WILL  
 Yes! Yes!

CAMILA  
 Come with me. Come on!

[She runs into the house.  
 Anselmo enters from the opposite direction.]

ANSELMO  
 So?

WILL  
 Oh, Anselmo, she's crazy about you.

ANSELMO  
 You tried to...

WILL  
 I tried.  
 I tried to flirt  
 she turned me away every time  
 she pretended she didn't even notice what I was doing

ANSELMO  
 Obviously, you didn't really try at all.  
 What do you think?  
 That I don't have reason to feel some anxiety?  
 I tell you it's poisoning my life.  
 Without some reassurance --  
 Without proof that I can give Camila  
 My absolute trust --  
 I cannot let go.  
 Even in bed  
 I imagine someone else  
 With her, and I cannot breathe.  
 Now I want you to try again  
 and this time  
 to take it seriously!

WILL  
This is completely demented!

[Edmund enters.]

EDMUND  
Anselmo!  
Really!  
This wedding is still going on!  
You're not officially married  
until we've all toasted you!

ANSELMO  
Yes. Yes, we're coming.

[to Will]

Don't let me down!

[they go into the house

Edmund,  
feeling very proud of himself  
does a little dance with his glass held high above his head.]

EDMUND  
Here's to the bride  
and here's to the groom  
Here's to the bride and groom together  
Here's to love  
and here's to marriage  
here's to me

[And, as he dances, he gets more and more into it  
until he is doing a mad solo dance.  
Not just a fleeting moment:  
a full-fledged dance.]

[Simonetta enters.]

SIMONETTA  
Oh, I'm sorry.

EDMUND  
Oh, excuse me.  
I was just  
letting out my:  
enthusiasm.

SIMONETTA

I see.

EDMUND

And you are?

SIMONETTA

I am Simonetta.

EDMUND

Simonetta.

SIMONETTA

Yes.

EDMUND

Like Simonetta Vespucci.

SIMONETTA

I don't know.

EDMUND

You know the Simonetta Vespucci  
who was the lover of Giuliano de Medici  
and she is the woman Botticelli painted over and over again  
as Venus on the half-shell  
naked  
naked and lovely rising from the sea

[he's struck by her in spite of himself]

SIMONETTA

I didn't know.

And you are the bride's brother?

EDMUND

No, no, no.

I am the husband of her maid of honor, Sally.

Her matron of honor.

You know who Sally is?

SIMONETTA

I think so.

EDMUND

She is the nice person  
with the pink dress.  
There is the horrible person  
Doris  
she's the bride's sister,

and then the nice person  
is the bride's best friend  
and she's my wife.

SIMONETTA  
I see.

EDMUND  
And you  
I think of you as a person  
in these paintings that everyone has seen all over the world  
in reproductions

[he didn't intend to say this: it just comes out]

naked and  
gorgeous.

SIMONETTA  
Well, no, I'm not--  
this is not who I am.  
I am the housekeeper  
with my husband Melchiore.

EDMUND  
The cook.

SIMONETTA  
Yes.

EDMUND  
And yet  
for sure  
you are gorgeous.

[they stand silently for a moment;  
she hasn't rejected his  
inappropriate flirtation

all the wedding guests return to the terrace  
with bottles of champagne and glasses]

DORIS  
Edmund, what happened to you?  
Weren't you going to officiate at the toasts?

EDMUND  
Sorry! Yes! Yes!

WILL  
So we will have them here!

Does everyone have champagne?  
Do you have a glass, Sally?  
Yes.

EDMUND  
So, Will, you are first!

WILL [raising his glass]  
To Camila and Anselmo,  
my dear friends,  
may you have happiness forever.

DORIS  
That's it?

EDMUND  
That's your entire toast?

WILL  
Well, what more could you wish for?

EDMUND  
Oh, no. No.  
That's pathetic.

DORIS  
Let's offer a toast to the institution of marriage itself  
which is such a basic institution.  
Because women, as we know,  
because women have menstrual periods  
subject to chronic shortages of iron in their systems  
and so they require constant infusions of meat  
but because they were not hunters  
they were never hunters  
they had to find a way to manipulate men  
with sexual favors  
into bringing home blood-soaked dinners every night  
and if the men were good at it  
then to marry them  
in order to have a steady supply of meat.

EDMUND  
Jesus Christ, Doris,  
what is that?  
Now, it's my turn.  
My turn to give a toast.

To Camila and Anselmo,  
may you be happy forever  
and ever and ever.  
May you be as happy as Sally and I have been.

May you be even happier.  
Not that we have been unhappy.  
We have been so happy.  
Even one might say  
when you are as happy as Sally and I are,  
you don't even worry whether the other person is happy  
even if that person might from time to time  
think, oh,  
what have I done  
marrying this hopeless guy  
this stupid jerk  
when I see all these other men walk by  
and I could run off with one of them  
and no one would ever know  
of course I might come home  
and he would confront me and say  
have you had an affair?  
no. no, I would say.  
of course you would say no. I mean a flirtation.  
no.  
a one night stand.  
no.  
what then? what do you call it?  
i don't call it anything.  
i wouldn't know what to call something i haven't had  
but you think i have.  
don't you see, Sally, if you will tell me,  
maybe we can talk it through,  
but if you don't even start with the truth of things,  
how can we talk about anything?  
and i think, after the time we've been together,  
at least you owe me that.  
how is it you think you can turn the tables on me like this?  
when all along it's you who have had an affair  
do you think I don't know what kind of guy you are  
flirting flirting all the time  
with any woman who comes along  
and you are the one who is always denying it denying it  
probably you think you need to protect  
the person you've been having an affair with,  
maybe she is married, too,  
and so you feel you can't betray her,  
or is she your co-worker?  
is that it?  
and what? you think I will somehow make an issue of it  
so that it will become a scandal for you  
and of course then it bcomes a matter for the whole office  
to somehow deal with  
and you think I would do that to you?  
but you make me feel crazy denying it and denying it  
so that, what?,

your sense of loyalty to me is to make me so uncertain  
 of the ground I stand on  
 that I can't believe anything  
 or know how to begin to feel sane again.  
 what can I tell you that would be true?  
 the truth. that's what you say!  
 that's what i mean,  
 do you see how even now you don't say no, no, no  
 i haven't had an affair of any kind,  
 nothing, not a flirtation, not a one night stand,  
 not anything of any kind at all,  
 you say nothing to reassure me,  
 you just stand there silently.  
 because, Sally, no matter what i say,  
 you won't believe me.  
 flirt? no one flirts with me.  
 no one  
 the truth is I feel like an isolated person  
 alone, always alone  
 the truth is I would rather live in a homeless person's shelter,  
 there would be more warmth and companionship  
 than there is living with you  
 I would rather live in the streets  
 with a shopping cart full of my possessions  
 that would feel like a happier life to me!

[silence

then the pop of a champagne cork]

WILL

I'm going to open more champagne.

EDMUND

We'll have a champagne cork popping contest!  
 Who can pop the cork the farthest?

SALLY

Edmund....

EDMUND

Or how many corks can you pop at the same time?

SALLY

Edmund, please....

EDMUND

Or I will sing a song.

MELCHIORE

Simonetta has a song.

[Melchiore plays.

Simonetta sings Donizetti's *Il barcaiolo*.  
 (Simonetta, like Melchiore, is an opera singer.)  
 It may be that Edmund is too interested in her singing.]

Voga, voga, il vento tace,  
 pura È l'onda, il ciel sereno,  
 solo un alito di pace  
 par che allegrie e cielo e mar:  
 voga, voga, o marinar:  
 voga, voga, marinar.

Or che tutto a noi sorride,  
 in sì tenero momento,  
 all'ebrezza del contento  
 voglio l'alma abbandonar.  
 Voga, voga, o marinar!, o marinar!

Maybe Melchiore joins her for a duet  
 for the last two stanzas:

Voga, voga, il vento tace,  
 pura È l'onda, il ciel sereno,  
 ed un alito di pace  
 par che allegrie e cielo e mar.

Che se infiera la tempesta,  
 ambedue ne tragge a morte,  
 sarà lieta la mia sorte  
 al tuo fianco vuo spirar,  
 sì al tuo fianco io vuo spirar.

Voga, voga, o marinar,  
 Sarà lieta la mia sorte  
 al tuo fianco vuo spirar.  
 Voga, voga, o marinar.

[And, as they finish singing,  
 Anselmo's parents, Luisa and Alfred, step through the door  
 and onto the terrace,  
 and join the others in the applause and remarks of praise.]

LUISA  
 Bravo! Brava!

ALFRED  
 Exquisite!



LUISA  
What a perfect welcome!

ALFRED  
You couldn't have done better!

ANSELMO  
Mother!  
Dad!

LUISA  
Surprise!

ANSELMO  
Well!  
Yes!  
Yes, it certainly is!

SALLY  
We weren't expecting you.

ALFRED  
No, of course not.  
It wasn't easy for me  
I'll tell you  
to keep my mouth shut.  
But your mother insisted it be a complete surprise!

ANSELMO  
Mother, honestly,  
I don't understand.  
This is our party with our friends.

LUISA  
Yes, we know, dear,  
but we had a very special present for you  
that we wanted to bring to you here  
to be a surprise for you....

ANSELMO  
Yes, but  
that's why we had the courthouse wedding in New York  
so that you could be there for that  
along with Aunt Madge and Uncle Dee  
and Mo Mo  
and everyone else  
so we could come here just with our friends  
to just have our own sort of wedding....

LUISA

Oh, Anselmo, I'm sorry, dear,  
we just wanted so to do something special for you.

ANSELMO

Oh....

DORIS

I don't know, Anselmo,  
if you wanted to escape your mother  
you probably shouldn't have come to your mother's house.

CAMILA

How wonderful to see you, Luisa, Alfred.  
This is so nice, Anselmo, that your parents are here!

LUISA

And we did bring something for you  
that we think you will absolutely love!

ALFRED

Your mother's idea entirely!  
I take no credit  
or blame, either!

LUISA

You know, Anselmo,  
how your father and I have always tried  
not just to take any job that came along  
this movie, that movie, this play, that play  
but always to wait and to look  
for something very special.  
And at last  
we have found the most special thing of all:  
a lost play  
by Shakespeare!

EDMUND

Really?

LUISA

Yes!

DORIS

I didn't know Shakespeare had lost any of his plays.

ALFRED

Well, not quite lost.  
More mislaid.  
Performed, it seems, in his lifetime,  
but never printed....

LUISA  
And so it disappeared....

ALFRED

And then surfaced again in the 18th century...

LUISA  
When it was discovered by a scholar...

ALFRED  
Well, a sort of scholar....

LUISA  
A sort of a charlatan some people thought....

ALFRED  
Not a trustworthy person really

LUISA  
This is part of the controversy

ALFRED  
Whether it really is a play by Shakespeare  
or he just wrote the first bit of it  
the core of it as it were  
and then someone else wrote another bit

LUISA  
and then even the charlatan rewrote it  
and the old manuscript he said he had found  
disappeared  
when the old Covent Garden went up in flames in 1804  
so no one can verify how much Shakespeare is in it!  
But at least the charlatan's version survived.

ALFRED  
And your mother and I are going to perform it  
in a little theatre in Maine.

DORIS  
In Maine.

ALFRED  
In Portland.

LUISA  
But, before we do,  
we wanted to have its premiere here  
just for you!

ANSELMO  
Oh, mother!

LUISA  
No, no, that's alright!  
We were so happy to do it.  
We've brought the script with us.  
And, as an extra surprise,  
we've brought an old friend--  
an old friend of yours I should say,  
you know, Anselmo,  
someone who was with you and Will and Sally in college  
when you all did plays together  
and she, of all of you,  
she has gone into the professional theatre  
can you guess?  
can you?  
yes!  
Susana!

ANSELMO  
Susana?

LUISA  
You remember Susana.  
She was married to that rich young man from  
where was it?  
Philadelphia?  
and now she's divorced.

ANSELMO  
Divorced?  
When was she divorced?

LUISA  
So, we've brought her with us from New York  
to play the lead in the play!  
And we thought you, Will, would play the lead opposite Susana.

WILL  
Oh, Luisa,  
I don't think I want to be acting in a play.

ALFRED  
Now, now, Will....

WILL  
I mean, it's a lovely invitation  
thank you  
and very considerate  
thank you so much

but let me just enjoy being part of the audience and watching it.  
Anselmo can play the part.

ANSELMO

Oh, no, no.

I don't think I'M going to be acting in a play.

LUISA

The truth is, Will,  
we thought it might be an opportunity  
for you to get to know Susana better.

ALFRED

Not that we want to try to be matchmakers at all!

LUISA

Still, here are two lovely young people,  
both single....

ALFRED

Wedding bells in the air and all.

ANSELMO

You know, this isn't....

LUISA

What is it, dear?

ANSELMO

This just isn't...

I mean, what?

Everyone is here to have a party and spend some time together  
and now, suddenly,  
we should interrupt everything  
to put on some old play?

LUISA

Anselmo! A lost play by Shakespeare....

ANSELMO

Well, is it really? I mean do you really know?

And anyway, we thought we would eat and drink,  
and maybe people want to take advantage of being here  
and have a little day trip to Assisi or Gubbio  
or a picnic in the country

I don't know

but I don't think anyone thought they were going to have to be  
putting on a play.

CAMILA

Oh, Anselmo, really....

Luisa, this was so thoughtful of you....  
 Alfred this was such a....

WILL  
 Such a wonderful gift.

EDMUND  
 And a lost play by Shakespeare!  
 How often do we have a chance to see something like that?

CAMILA  
 It's just very sweet of you  
 and we all appreciate it very much.

EDMUND  
 Very much.  
 To think this is something you are going to be doing yourselves  
 in the theatre!

ANSELMO  
 But you know, none of us acts any more.  
 I mean yes, we did that in college,  
 but it's just not something any of us  
 does any more.

EDMUND  
 I'd be happy to take a role myself.

ALFRED  
 You see?

CAMILA  
 And so would I.

SALLY  
 And where have you left Susana?  
 Did she come with you?

LUISA  
 Oh, goodness!  
 [turning back to the door to the house]  
 Susana! Susana, dear!  
 We forgot all about her!

[Susana emerges from the house,  
 happy and uncertain, and flustered  
 and ill at ease and hesitant and flushed with happiness.]

SALLY  
 Susana!

SUSANA  
Hello, Sally.

WILL  
Hello, Susana.

SUSANA  
Hello, Will.

ANSELMO  
Hello, Susana.

SUSANA  
Hello, Anselmo. Congratulations.  
I'm sorry.  
I didn't mean to just  
invade your wedding  
but your mother and father just....

ANSELMO  
Oh, no, you're not invading at all.  
We're all happy to see you.

CAMILA  
Welcome. I'm Camila.

SUSANA  
Camila! Hello!  
I'm happy to meet you.  
I wish you every happiness.

ALFRED  
So.  
Is this a surprise?

ANSELMO  
Yes. Yes, Dad, it is.

LUISA  
Now, then, children,  
here's the play we will do.  
The play is called:  
Cardenio.  
What happens is  
Cardenio, a young gentleman,  
is in love with the lovely and virtuous Luscinda.

But then it turns out that his best friend  
Don Fernando has Cardenio called away on some business  
so that Don Fernando himself

can seduce Luscinda.

DORIS

So, it's a love story.

LUISA

A love story.

Well, a story of betrayal and duplicity and  
and sneakiness.

Because then Don Fernando....

ANSELMO

Mother, why don't...

why don't...

why don't we just remain in suspense,  
and see how it turns out

when you actually put on the play.

LUISA

Oh, yes, alright. Good. Remain in suspense.

So, we can have a few rehearsals,

and then we can put it on here on the terrace  
under the stars.

ANSELMO

All right. Good. Fine.

WILL

Excellent.

EDMUND

Wonderful!

CAMILA

Lovely.

LUISA

Now, here is the cast list:

You will see, as we get into rehearsals,  
there will be some other roles to be given out  
and some doubling.

Everyone will have a chance  
at something they can get their teeth into.

But, for now:

Will is to play the lover, Cardenio.

WILL

Oh, well, okay. Thanks.



LUISA  
Edmund will play Don Fernando, the duplicitous friend.

EDMUND  
Oh, well, thank you.  
I think!

LUISA  
Alfred will play Don Fernando's father, the duke.

ALFRED  
It's the role I will be doing in Portland.

LUISA  
And Susana will play the lovely and virtuous Luscinda, the female lead.

ANSELMO  
Oh, I think Camila should play the lead.

LUISA  
Camila?....

ALFRED  
And yet: that's why we brought Susana.

LUISA  
We thought,  
since she's a professional actress now  
it would be such fun for everyone to see her  
play the lead.

And, you know: opposite Will.

ANSELMO  
If this is meant to be, in part, a wedding present for me,  
then Camila ought to play the lead.  
You know, she is the leading lady for me now.

LUISA  
Oh, well, that's....

ALFRED  
I don't think we can bring Susana all this way  
just to throw her back onto the unemployment rolls.

SUSANA  
No. That's exactly as it should be!  
I'm relieved to tell you the truth.  
And now I will have a chance  
to take a vacation from rehearsals  
and see something of Italy.

ANSELMO

I'll take you for a little drive through the countryside  
to make up for it.

SUSANA

You needn't....

ANSELMO

No, of course,  
you came all this way  
I know you're happy to see old friends  
but, absolutely,  
I'll take you for a special visit to Assisi.

SUSANA

Thank you, Anselmo.

LUISA

And yet, Anselmo, if Camila is to play the female lead,  
then really you ought to play opposite her.

ANSELMO

No, no, mother,  
It's not real life, you know.

ALFRED

No, thank goodness no.

LUISA

Good. All right. That's settled then.  
So. Good.  
Let's get our suitcases in our rooms  
and Alfred will be calling you for our first rehearsal

WILL

May I help you get settled?  
How did you get here from the airport?

ALFRED

We have a rental car.

WILL

I'll bring your bags in from the car.

EDMUND

Let me give you a hand.

[everyone springs into action,  
going off in separate directions]

[everyone is gone  
except Luisa]

LUISA  
Oh, Umbria!  
Umbria!  
The olive trees.  
Bruschette,  
with fresh tomatoes and basil  
gnocchi  
light semolina gnocchi  
and veal with garlic and potatoes  
fried sage  
little little green beans  
still crisp  
still warm  
with fennel and olives  
barlotti  
bracirole  
Camosci, Caprioli, Cervi, Daini, Stambecchi  
Oh!  
Mia Umbria!

the sun setting just over the hills  
sweet hills!  
olive groves and cypresses  
zucchini blossoms  
white peaches  
glorious figs

a glass of wine  
Brunello di Montalcino  
Vino Nobile di Montepulciano  
Sagrantino di Montifalco

Oh, to lift a glass of wine with you  
my love  
your warm voice  
your dark hair  
your hands  
your touch  
my heaven  
my love.

[and then,  
when she is finished,  
she turns and walks, transported,

into the house

Camila and Will enter together  
in the midst of conversation.]

CAMILA

Still,

This is our wedding day.

We haven't even had our wedding dinner

and he's gone off with Susana to Assisi for the afternoon?

What does it mean?

WILL

I don't think it means anything.

He just, you know,

he was so surprised

for his parents to show up suddenly

and Susana

and I think he felt somehow

as the host

he ought to entertain her.

CAMILA

He could have asked you to take her for a drive.

[silence]

WILL

Yes. He could have.

CAMILA

Did he know her in college?

WILL

Know her?

CAMILA

Did he date her?

WILL

Oh, no, no.

You mean: did he know her?

No. Of course, I mean, he knew her,

but he didn't know her.

I mean he knew her as a friend

or not even a really very good friend

just someone else who was doing plays in college

in fact, if anything,

I think there was some tension between them

I don't think

I'm pretty sure they were never even in a play together.

CAMILA  
Oh.

[silence]

WILL  
I'm sorry.

CAMILA  
Of course, it's not your fault.

WILL  
I feel  
as Anselmo's best friend  
there were things probably I could have done....

CAMILA  
Oh, Will, you know,  
I don't blame you for anything.

WILL  
If only you would tell me  
what you think I could do.

CAMILA  
You could stay  
someone I can count on

WILL  
Yes. I will.

CAMILA  
The truth is, sometimes I wish he had some of your qualities.

WILL  
Oh, I don't....

CAMILA  
Just your warmth and your dependability.

WILL  
Oh, I....

CAMILA  
You know, not exciting qualities.

[has he just been inadvertently insulted?]

WILL  
Right.

CAMILA

I mean, not that you don't have exciting qualities  
I'm sure you do  
but what I mean is  
Anselmo is all sort of fire and darting  
"oh, Camila, look here," he will say out of nowhere  
"you see the way in Luca della Robbia's renderings of the virgin  
she is a young girl  
a very young girl  
no more than ten!  
because he was perhaps the only Renaissance artist  
who really understood  
she wasn't a virgin at all  
the point is--"  
he will say, because he's gotten so excited--  
"the point is in Aramaic the word is 'almah'  
which was mistranslated in the Greek bible as virgin  
whereas she was just a very young girl  
that's all it's saying in the Aramaic  
this is what was shocking  
omigod, a ten year old girl  
and pregnant  
how can this be?  
it must be a miracle...."

instead of just sitting with me in a cafe  
not saying much  
looking at the passersby  
holding my hand  
maybe saying something nice to me about my hair  
I mean, not that I think my hair is so interesting  
or that I am so interested in my hair  
but just to sit quietly with me  
just be with me  
as you are now.

CAMILA

Just to sit in a cafe in the afternoon  
and you think  
everywhere you look it's beautiful  
everything you touch feels good

WILL

you think: it's the air

CAMILA

or: it's the way there are flowers everywhere

WILL

or, even, you think:

it's the way they hang laundry everywhere in Italy

so that, everywhere you look

it feels relaxed, and so much at home

CAMILA

and you think:

the Italians know how to take pleasure in the every day

in a piece of bread with olive oil

WILL

so that every moment you are alive

is a pleasure

CAMILA

you relish every moment

WILL

Yes.

Right.

[She slumps in a chair.

He looks around, uncertain what to do,

whether or not to sit.

At last, he, too, sits in a chair.

They are silent.

He looks at her, while she is not looking at him.

She looks at him, while he is not looking at her.

He gets up,

looks around,

sits back down

looks at the floor.]

CAMILA

How's your Latin?

WILL

My Latin?

CAMILA

You're still teaching Latin, aren't you?

WILL

Oh, yes! Of course!

CAMILA

I love that.

WILL

That I teach Latin?

CAMILA

Yes. I love that.

WILL

You know,  
when I meet people--  
like at cocktail parties or dinner parties  
everyone always wants to know what you do  
they always define you by what you do--  
and they will say to me, what do you do,  
and I will say I teach Latin in high school  
and they will say oh!  
and then they turn away from me  
and start to talk to someone else.

[silence]

Camila, I have to tell you....

CAMILA

Yes?

WILL

This will sound strange to you,  
in a way  
I need to confess  
but also I think  
if you think about it,  
and I think it will be reassuring to you.

CAMILA

Yes?

WILL

You see, Anselmo asked me to flirt with you  
and see if I could seduce you  
so that Anselmo would be sure  
that you are faithful to him.

CAMILA

What?

WILL

I guess because I don't know  
but he has been feeling insecure



maybe he feels he's not a lovable person  
and so  
he wanted me to test you  
to see if you would remain faithful to him.

CAMILA  
To test me?  
Is that what you've been doing?

WILL  
No. No, absolutely not.  
I'm not going to do that.  
I don't want to do that  
that's what I told him,  
and I'm not going to do that.  
Never.

CAMILA  
This is completely insane!  
You're supposed to test me?  
On my wedding day?  
And he thinks this is who I am  
that I would take up with someone else on my wedding day?  
That I would what?  
Suddenly fall in love with another man?

WILL  
Right.

CAMILA  
Is he crazy?  
Does he think I'm crazy?  
That I would just: what?  
Hang out with a guy  
spend some time with a guy  
and find him so  
what?  
compatible?  
so sensitive?  
so like-minded in some way?  
so simpatico  
or caring towards me  
that against my will  
I would find myself just falling in love with him  
maybe without even knowing it?  
just sinking deeper and deeper into a sort of what?  
comfort level?  
and finally just deep deep communion?

WILL  
Well, he can be a little hare-brained from time to time.

CAMILA  
A little hare-brained!  
Nobody ever heard of such a crazy thing.  
Now I think  
do you know what I think?  
my god!  
I think: Who is this person I just married?

[She gets up,  
while he sits looking at the floor.

He gets up,  
as though to go to her,  
moves, stops,  
goes to a different chair,  
sits.  
Gets up,  
returns to his original chair.  
Stands there.  
Sits.

Doris enters.]

DORIS  
Will, Alfred's blown all the fuses in the house.  
Everything has gone off.  
Can you help him?

WILL  
Help him?

DORIS  
You know, help him find the fuses  
and put a new fuse in the  
what do you call it?  
fuse box?

WILL  
Oh, sure. Sure.  
I'll be back.

[he leaves]

DORIS  
So Anselmo's left you already.  
It seems so thoughtful of him  
not to leave you in suspense for years and years

but just to ditch you right away  
and get it over with.

CAMILA  
What?

DORIS  
Frankly  
if it were my husband who ditched me like that  
I'd sleep with someone else right away  
put him on notice  
and why not anyway?  
everyone is unfaithful these days eventually  
you might as well get to it  
not be naive  
because this is how your life will be from now on  
as everyone knows  
this is how it is to be married  
what are the percentages?  
50% of men have love affairs?  
80%?  
And women, too.  
I always wonder  
why should newlyweds have some brief period  
of self-deception  
rather than begin at once to live like adults?

CAMILA  
What?  
What are you saying to me, Doris?  
What did you say?  
Are you completely out of your mind?  
This is the advice  
you give me on my wedding day?

DORIS  
You wish I would be nice  
you want me to lie to you  
but what's the use of that?  
It's better you know now,  
Right away,  
And not learn the way I did,  
Taken by surprise, unprepared.  
More than anything, I resent  
Being the last to know,  
The sucker who actually believes  
All the polite lies.

To be honest, I've never understood  
Why I shouldn't tell the truth?  
I mean the assumption that this is beneficial to the world

to be nice, to be pleasant,  
is just unproven

[is she suddenly close to tears?]

difficult people are always the ones who advance civilization

[she turns and storms out  
just as Sally enters]

SALLY  
Camila?

CAMILA  
Oh, Sally, god  
I just  
you know what Doris is telling me?  
if Anselmo is just going to go off somewhere on our wedding day  
with Susana  
why don't I just have a love affair?

SALLY  
Oh.  
A love affair.

I don't know why anyone would want to have a love affair.

Because I think Edmund has been sleeping with someone  
and he thinks I have

and I still love him  
and I wish everything would feel good again  
and I only slept with that guy  
to get back at Edmund  
so I wouldn't just be angry at him all the time

I would feel we were even  
and then I could feel OK  
but it didn't work that way  
and now I'm not even sure he did have an affair

CAMILA  
Edmund.

SALLY  
You'd think  
if you go to law school  
you'd learn to think clearly  
and think things through  
you'd see your starting points

and you'd be able to reason your way  
 through to the end.  
 And then it turns out  
 you can't.  
 And what you should have known from the beginning  
 you only discover in the end  
 that infidelity  
 is a terrible terrible thing.

And now I think  
 I can't imagine ever beginning to want to have an affair with anyone,  
 I'd rather be left alone in peace.  
 I don't see how it's worth it.  
 I can masturbate.  
 I can get a vibrator.  
 They have the most wonderful vibrators these days,  
 like saddles, you can sit on them like a horse  
 and ride and ride all you want to;  
 it doesn't buck, it doesn't whinny,  
 it doesn't talk,  
 you turn it on whenever you want,  
 and when you're tired of it,  
 you just push its button and it stops.  
 If you like you can get a little one  
 that fits right in your undies,  
 and you make it go with a little remote control  
 you can carry in your purse  
 so that while you're out to lunch  
 or at a wedding party  
 you can be masturbating  
 while you're in the middle of a conversation,  
 and when the conversation's over  
 no one has any hard feelings.

[she turns and runs into the house;  
 Camila runs after her]

CAMILA  
 Sally! Sally!

[both Will and Doris rush on  
 from opposite sides of the stage]

WILL  
 Doris!

DORIS  
 Oh, Will!  
 I was looking for Camila.

WILL

Doris, the fuses weren't blown.

DORIS  
They weren't?

WILL  
The lights were all working.

DORIS  
Oh. Good.

WILL  
I thought you said the fuses were blown.

DORIS  
I thought they were.

WILL  
Were you trying to get rid of me?

DORIS  
Oh, Will, how can you say such a thing?  
I was looking for Camila.

WILL  
So was I.

DORIS  
She's so upset.

WILL  
I know.

DORIS  
Anselmo is such a jerk.  
I know he's your friend.

WILL  
He's...  
he's I guess feeling a little  
I don't know.

DORIS  
Exactly.  
And this is hardly the time for that.

WILL  
No.

DORIS  
This is a moment she needs a friend.

WILL

Yes.

DORIS

And I don't think she needs me.

And I don't think Sally is a help.

WILL

Why do you say that?

DORIS

It's just a feeling that I have.

I'm glad she has you for a friend now, Will.

Because I know you can help her

and

at the same time

I'm sure it's really helpful to Anselmo

to have a friend who can help Camila at a time like this

for you to be really close to her.

WILL

Close to her?

DORIS

I think it would be consoling.

[Doris leaves.

Rudi, an Albanian carpenter, enters.]

RUDI

Where shall I put it?

WILL

Put it?

RUDI

Look.

Look at me.

Where shall I put it?

WILL

Oh. I don't know.

What is it?

RUDI

This is the lumber for the stage.

WILL

What stage?

RUDI

I am not the planner

I am not the boss

I am not the person with the answer.

I am the carpenter.

I am coming to build the stage.

I am told: build the stage on the terrace.

This is the terrace?

WILL

Yes. This is the terrace.

RUDI

So.

I'll put it here, then.

WILL

Oh, no. I don't think you can do that.

This is where the wedding banquet will be.

RUDI

And so?

WILL

And so, this is where there will be a table  
and a large party of people.

RUDI

When is this?

WILL

Very soon.

RUDI

OK, then.

I don't build the stage until tomorrow.

I just bring the lumber today.

I put it here.

WILL

Yes. No. Put it over there

Here. Let me help you.

[they stack the lumber]

RUDI

It's a lot of lumber.

I have more.

I can bring it tomorrow.

Because with these things



you need solid structure.  
 If people will stand on it  
 has to be solid.  
 You know?

WILL  
 Yes.

RUDI  
 Some people don't understand  
 you need--  
 I'm not bullshitting you  
 this is not philosophy--  
 but you need an honest structure  
 simple, if you can  
 basic  
 I don't say all the world's a stage  
 I say it SHOULD be a stage  
 strong, simple,  
 you don't want a structure  
 that trips you up  
 you fall through it to the bottom  
 it makes you stand crooked all the time  
 and you get a crick in your neck  
 no  
 you want a structure  
 that lets you breathe  
 that lets you be a free man  
 and have children  
 and have food  
 and have love  
 because if you are always falling over to the side  
 how can you have love  
 How can a woman think  
 oh, this is a strong man  
 I can count on him  
 no  
 you can't  
 or a strong woman  
 I can count on her  
 no  
 you can't  
 because she is always falling over.

I'm not saying, what I do,  
 it's like God  
 but almost.

[Luisa enters.]

LUISA

Rudi! You've brought the stage.

RUDI  
OK. Contessa!

LUISA  
We have just a few things we want, Rudi.

[turning back to the house, calling out]

Alfred! Rudi is here!

[Alfred enters.]

ALFRED  
Rudi. Rudi. Good to see you.  
So  
the players have returned!  
Another season is about to open!

RUDI  
A season?

ALFRED  
Well, no, not a whole season this year.  
Just a special event.  
Limited run.  
One night only!  
A lost play of Shakespeare's!

RUDI  
Shakespeare?

ALFRED  
Well, not lost exactly.  
But lost and found, and lost and found.  
Not performed, as far as anyone knows,  
for centuries!  
And this will be its Italian premiere!

RUDI  
Excellent! Yes. Good. Excellent!

ALFRED  
Will, you've met Rudi?

WILL  
Yes.

ALFRED

Rudi is an Albanian refugee!

WILL  
Really?

ALFRED  
Now, Rudi,  
we want something that suggests the outdoors  
you know,  
for Shakespeare.  
This is not Ibsen. This is not O'Neill.  
This is not an indoor play.  
Shakespeare, as you know,  
takes place in the world  
in the universe  
not cramped up in a drawing room somewhere.

LUISA  
Although we do want a boudoir.

ALFFED  
Although we do want a boudoir.  
So what we want is a design  
that is indoors and outdoors at the same time!

RUDI  
I can do that.

ALFRED  
It should be beautiful  
but simple

RUDI  
And strong.

ALFRED  
And strong.

LUISA  
Shall we call the rest of the cast on stage?

ALFRED  
Yes. Good. I'll call them.  
Is the baby monitor still working?

WILL  
The baby monitor?

LUISA  
We had baby monitors installed all through the house  
when Anselmo was little

so we would always know that he was okay.

WILL  
Oh.

ALFRED [talking into a baby monitor attached to the wall]  
All the cast members on stage please?  
All cast members on stage!

RUDI  
A structure is a beautiful thing  
by itself  
already without the play on top of it

ALFRED  
Absolutely.  
Absolutely right.

[Alfred is moving terrace furniture around,  
to get it out of the way of the performers when they arrive.  
Will, without a word, helps him.  
And then Luisa makes small adjustments.  
They are all engaged in this  
while Rudi goes on and on  
and they only politely, inattentively listen to him.]

RUDI  
Because a structure  
has proportions  
it has harmonious relationships  
it has the qualities  
that you would like to see in all human relationships  
balance  
sensitivity one element for the other  
accommodation  
at times it seems  
almost compassion

[the "actors" have begun to arrive on stage]

ALFRED [who hasn't been listening to Rudi at all]  
Extraordinary. Extraordinary.  
Absolutely.  
I know exactly what you mean.

[now everyone has assembled,  
Alfred, Luisa, Will, Rudi,  
Doris, Sally, Edmund, Camila  
Simonetta and Melchiore  
and Alfred, moving in right over Rudi's talk,

takes hold of the event again]

ALFRED

Now, then, people,  
 what are we doing here?  
 What has brought us together?  
 Why are we here today?  
 We are making art.  
 A place to live  
 where we have never had the occasion to live before  
 and with people whose acquaintance we have not previously made.  
 And why?  
 So we can see  
 what it is to be a human being.  
 That's all.  
 Nothing more.  
 But, certainly, nothing less.

LUISA

And so, as actors,  
 we won't want you to be just  
 wallowing in your own private worlds  
 your own childhoods and first loves  
 and experiences of daily life today  
 thinking that it is not your job to become the character you portray  
 but rather to make that character become who you are  
 to have your manners  
 your turns of phrase and gesture  
 your feelings about life and love  
 no, no, no  
 you are not film actors  
 this is not about you  
 Cardenio is not you  
 Luscinda is not you  
 Don Fernando is not you  
 rather you will become Cardenio, Luscinda, Don Fernando  
 and we  
 in the audience  
 will be the witness to a miracle.

Now then  
 speak the speeches simply  
 as the playwright wrote them

ALFRED [very grandly]

trippingly on the tongue:  
 but if you mouth it, as many of your players do,  
 I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines.  
 Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus,  
 but use all gently;  
 for in the very torrent, tempest,

and, as I may say, the whirlwind of passion,  
 you must acquire and beget a temperance  
 that may give it smoothness.  
 Oooooooooooooooooooooo,  
 it offends me to the soul....

[Luisa "shushes" him with a hand gesture, and goes on.]

LUISA  
 speak the speeches  
 so that you can be heard in the last row of the audience  
 that's all  
 never mind the posturing  
 the getting ready to begin to consider thinking about the possibility of starting almost  
 to feel something  
 no  
 speak the speech  
 the feeling will follow.  
 Questions?

SALLY  
 Will we need to memorize all the lines?

EDMUND  
 I don't think I can memorize all the lines.

DORIS  
 Is there a rehearsal schedule?

LUISA  
 The schedule will be posted in the kitchen.  
 We have time only for three rehearsals.  
 You won't need to memorize the lines.  
 Anything else?

ALFRED  
 Good.  
 Let's just run through one of the scenes to get the hang of it.

LUISA  
 Camila,  
 perhaps you and Will  
 would give us a little of  
 Act 1 Scene 4.  
 Where the lovers are parting from one another.  
 Do you see where I mean?  
 At line 324.  
 Yes. Good.

ALFRED

Good.

LUISA

Just give it a try  
to put us all in the mood.

[silence for a moment  
as Camila and Will focus]

CAMILA AS LUSCINDA

O Cardenio, let me whisper  
What, but for Parting, I should blush to tell thee:  
My heart beats thick with Fears, les the gay Scene,  
The Splendors of a Court, should from thy Breast  
Banish my Image.

WILL AS CARDENIO

O let Assurance, strong as Words can bind,  
Tell thy pleased Soul, I will be wond'rous faithful;  
And when I swerve, let Wretchedness o'ertake me,  
Great as e'er Falshood met, or Change can merit.

LUSCINDA

Enough; I'm satisfied: and will remain  
Yours, with a firm and untir'd Constancy.  
Make not your Absence long.

CARDENIO

Fear not, but I with swiftest Wing of time  
Will labour my Return. And in my Absence,  
My noble Friend, and now our honor'd Guest,  
The Lord Fernando, will in my behalf  
Hang at your Father's Ear, and with kind Hints,  
Pour'd from a friendly Tongue, secure my Claim;  
And play the Lover for thy absent Cardenio.

LUSCINDA

Is there no Instance of a Friend turn'd false?  
Take Heed of That: no Love by Proxy, Cardenio.

CARDENIO

Fernando is the man I most do trust;  
He is my other self, my inmost friend.

LUSCINDA

I liked not how his eyes did fondle me,  
For it is thee alone, Cardenio,  
Whom I desire.

[Silence.

Everyone is quiet.  
Luisa's breath has been taken away.

She is almost shocked by what she has seen.]

LUISA  
Oh, yes,  
well.  
Good.  
ALFRED  
Good.

LUISA  
It seems you have almost  
some chemistry.

ALFRED  
Chemistry.  
Yes.

SALLY  
That was wonderful.  
I thought that was wonderful.

[Camila and Will seem almost shy with one another.]

LUISA  
Well, I think that's enough rehearsal for today.

[Anselmo and Susana are just offstage.]

ANSELMO  
Mother! Hello!

LUISA  
Anselmo?

[Anselmo and Susana burst on stage.]

ANSELMO  
Oh, hello!  
Have you had a rehearsal?

LUISA  
We just did.

ALFRED  
Did you have a good drive?

ANSELMO  
Oh, wonderful! We had the best time!

SUSANA



The countryside is so beautiful  
 the little villages and the farm houses  
 and the tiny little castles on the hilltops!  
 And we saw the most beautiful Luca della Robbia  
 it was so amazing  
 and Anselmo said:  
 "you see the way in Luca della Robbia's renderings of the virgin  
 she is a young girl  
 a very young girl  
 no more than ten!  
 because he was perhaps the only Renaissance artist  
 who really understood  
 she wasn't a virgin at all  
 the point is  
 the point is in Aramaic the word is 'almah'  
 which was mistranslated in the Greek bible as virgin  
 whereas she was just a very young girl  
 that's all it's saying in the Aramaic

I mean who would have ever thought of such a thing!  
 He's an amazing person, your son,  
 he's so

DORIS  
 Bright.

SUSANA  
 Bright, yes. Brilliant.  
 I'd forgotten, you know.  
 We haven't seen each other since college.

LUISA  
 Not since college, no.

SUSANA  
 And then he took me to see the Piero della Francesca's  
 in this tiny little museum  
 where was it Anselmo?

ANSELMO  
 Monterchi.

SUSANA  
 Monterchi.  
 The pregnant virgin  
 and Anselmo said it used to be in a little chapel  
 out in the middle of a field  
 and now it was here  
 all blue  
 the sweetest blue dress  
 and two angels

one on either side of her  
holding back a drape  
as though presenting her pregnant belly  
and the story is  
if you visit this painting  
then you will get pregnant, too.

[a moment's silence]

ALFRED  
Extraordinary.

SUSANA  
Yes, it was.  
We had the best time.

MELCHIORE  
Now, I don't want to interrupt anything  
but  
if this is a good time for you  
everything is ready for your wedding feast  
we can bring it from the kitchen.

ALFRED  
Ah, perfect!

LUISA  
We will all help you bring things out.

WILL  
And Edmund, if you will give me a hand with the table....

EDMUND  
Certainly.

RUDI  
I can help.

ALFRED  
Shall we bring more chairs from inside?

SUSANA  
I'll bring some chairs.

[so everyone is scattering to set up the table and chairs  
spread a tablecloth  
and put dishes and dishes and dishes of things on the table  
as they talk and fuss]

ALFRED  
Now, then,

as for the seating arrangements,  
 I think everyone can sit wherever they please,  
 but the bride and groom must sit at the center of the table  
 bride on the right,  
 groom on the left.

LUISA  
 No, I think bride on the left,  
 groom on the right.

ALFRED  
 Are you sure, Luisa?

LUISA  
 Bride on the left,  
 groom on the right.

ALFRED  
 Do you mean stage left  
 or audience left?

LUISA  
 Stage left. Stage left.

ALFRED  
 Ah, yes, of course. Good.  
 Bride on the left, groom on the right.

Now everyone else  
 just take any seat, whatever you like.

If you are having an Italian wedding feast  
 everything is already perfect.

ALFRED  
 Now, Luisa,  
 where are you, Luisa?  
 We should be together at the table.  
 You should come and sit with me.  
 Because we are the model of married bliss.  
 Married thirty five years  
 and as happy as we were on our honeymoon.  
 Just to prove  
 it can be done.  
 Come, Luisa, sit here with me.  
 MELCHIORE [bringing in plates of pasta]  
 Here you are.  
 This would be your festive  
 Pasticcio di Tortellini all'Emiliana

classic pasta

following the Renaissance tradition  
 of a little sweet--in the crust--  
 and a little salty--in the filling

three hours and forty minutes

it has the  
 lean pork loin  
 the turkey breast  
 the mortadella di bologna  
 prosciutto  
 Parmigiano of course  
 and so forth

and for the sauce

the pancetta  
 the onion  
 carrot, celery  
 the beef  
 the veal  
 just a bit of dry red wine  
 and so forth

very simple  
 very fresh

I hope you will like it.

ALFRED  
 Oh, this is extraordinary!  
 Imagine that!

SIMONETTA {setting another plate of pasta on the table}  
 And this is Melchiore's famous Cannelloni all'Etrusca

MELCHIORE  
 Another wonderful pasta!

Parmigiano  
 Pecorino  
 Prosciutto  
 very simple  
 very simple  
 but all very fresh ingredients

the Pecorino of course I make myself  
 so you can say months in the making  
 or  
 if you count the lifetime of the sheep who made the cheese

years in the making

this is what you need  
 very simple  
 very fresh

[as another dish is brought in]

ALFRED  
 And what is this?

MELCHIORE  
 This is another pasta

very civilized

if you are the sort of person who will have this pasta  
 then you are the sort of person who will never  
 make love with your socks on

here you have the  
 uncut fresh black squid ink pasta dough  
 FRESH porcini mushroom  
 the egg yolk  
 the ricotta cheese  
 the fresh chopped parsley of course

and this is to be served  
 with a mild four cheese sauce  
 (minimal gorgonzola)  
 and freshly grated  
 romano cheese

very simple  
 delicious  
 for the person who eats his food  
 with his tongue  
 not his teeth

SALLY  
 And I have brought....  
 What have I brought?

MELCHIORE  
 Ah!  
 This is another pasta.

ALFRED  
 So: pasta.  
 Extraordinary.  
 We have pasta.

MELCHIORE

Ravioli di Nonna Ersilia.  
 Very interesting.  
 Very unexpected.  
 Laced with cinnamon.  
 Here you have the ricotta  
 the marjoram  
 a little bit of lemon  
 and, of course, the cinnamon

simple  
 simple  
 simple  
 very simple

MELCHIORE

This is Fazzoletti  
 it means little handkerchiefs

this is a pasta  
 very simple  
 you can make it larger or smaller if you like  
 but it must have  
 FRESH chopped basil  
 FRESH grated Parmigiano  
 FRESH tomato sauce

The basil I picked wild by the side of the road this afternoon.  
 The tomatoes, of course,  
 I grow myself.

Very simple.

RUDI

Simplicity.  
 This is what I always say:  
 simplicity.

MELCHIORE

And fresh!  
 And then everything is like heaven.

RUDI

And simple.

MELCHIORE

Very simple.

[they conclude their simplicity talk

as the guests settle down at the table]

ALFRED

Thank you, Melchiore,  
thank you for our wedding feast.

ANSELMO

I would like to propose a toast to Camila,  
my bride,  
because  
in truth  
she is a wonderful person  
an amazing person  
I have to admit  
I thought at first she was a whimsical person  
and then, I learned, as time went on  
no, this was not whimsy  
this was a person  
unafraid of who she was  
what she loved

I have always been such an overly complicated person  
looking at things from this angle and that angle  
not just thinking but always re-thinking  
for a person like myself  
I always thought  
it's not possible for me  
to just abandon myself to my instincts

and yet that's exactly where Camila took me  
I have discovered with her  
what deep pleasure there is  
in just committing yourself to the truth of your heart  
what deep pleasure there is  
in that fearlessness  
and I thank you for that, Camila, forever  
for showing me the way to happiness.

[cheers and applause and lifted glasses]

RUDI

I, too, would like to make a toast.  
We have, in Albania,  
an old wedding custom  
a toast we give to newlyweds all the time  
that brings good luck  
good fortune  
long happiness.  
And I will give it to you here:

NdonËse ligji s'kish

"nen"  
 pîr "punî tî detyruar",  
 gjithî tî dînuarit u dîrguan  
 me kamzhik nîpîr minierat e vdekjes,  
 qî tî nxirrinin krom e bakîr dhe nîpîr

[as the toast goes on,  
 people start looking at one another,  
 rolling their eyes,  
 unable to believe their ears]

kîneta ku pîr tî hapur toka pjellore  
 i piu balta dhe i hîngri mushkonja.  
 Djemtî thinjeshin si pleq dhe pleqtî  
 vdisnin befas para kohe.  
 Kish tî dînuar qî dhe vetîvrasjen  
 s'e quanin dobîsi.

[Melchiore,  
 to top Rudi,  
 or to rescue him from his (unknowing) embarrassment,  
 or simply to carry on after him,  
 stands and begins to sing and dance.

Hands held high in the air,  
 he dances and sings,  
 and others rise to join him,  
 both in the singing and the dancing,  
 until everyone is on their feet,  
 and a wild bacchanalian event has coalesced around him.  
 He might be singing  
 Rossini's La danza:

Gi† la luna È in mezzo al mare,  
 mamma mia si salter†,  
 l'ora È bella per danzare  
 chi È in amor non mancherà.

Presto in danza a tondo,  
 donne mie venite qua,  
 un garzon bello e giocondo  
 a ciascuna toccherà,  
 finchÈ in ciel brilla una stella  
 e la luna splenderà.  
 Il pi˘ bel con la pi˘ bella  
 tutta notte danzera.

(Mamma mia, mamma mia,  
 gia la luna È in mezzo al mare,  
 mamma mia, mamma mia,  
 mamma mia si saltera.



Frinche frinche frinche frinche  
 mamma mia, si saltera,  
 La la ra la ra...)

Salta, salta, gira, gira,  
 ogni coppia a cerchio va,  
 gia s'avvanza si ritira  
 e all' assalto tornera.

Serra, serra colla bionda  
 collabruna va qua e la,  
 colla rossa va a seconda  
 colla smorta fermo sta!  
 Viva il ballo a tondo a tondo  
 sono un RÈ, sono un Bascia,  
 È il pi~ bel piacer del mondo  
 la pi~ cara volutta.

(Mamma mia, mamma mia,  
 gia la luna È in mezzo al mare,  
 mamma mia, mamma mia,  
 mamma mia si saltera.  
 Frinche frinche frinche frinche  
 mamma mia, si saltera,  
 La la ra la ra...)

Or not.

He might be singing something else.

And, just as Melchior and Simonetta  
 have been cast for their great voices,  
 maybe Edmund and Sally, or Rudi and Sally,  
 should be extraordinary dancers,  
 so they can dominate the dancing now  
 with amazing choreography,  
 both duets and solos.

In any case, the party is in full swing  
 and full voice,  
 when, above the voices of everyone

we hear the clear, pure, beautiful, soaring, soprano  
 of Susana

and, gradually, everyone stops,  
 and turns  
 and listens to her.  
 She, too, has the voice of an opera singer.

She sings and sings,

as all the guests are silenced,  
and, one by one, awestruck, take their seats again  
except one:

Anselmo.

He remains on his feet,  
transfixed and transported by Susana.

End of Act One.

Act Two

[A stage has been built on the stage,  
a simple trestle stage.  
Led by Alfred and Luisa, everyone enters helter skelter  
and chatting with one another.]

LUISA  
Alright, everyone!  
Everyone!  
We'll have our dress rehearsal.

Is everyone in costume?

RUDI  
I don't have a costume!

LUISA  
Oh, you ought to have a costume, Rudi!

RUDI  
Evidently there has been some mistake.  
I have been given a dress.

LUISA  
Yes.

RUDI  
A dress.

LUISA  
Yes, exactly.  
You remember you have been rehearsing Dorothea?

RUDI  
And?

LUISA  
And?

RUDI  
And do you say  
Dorothea is a woman?

RUDI  
I am to play a woman?

[Luisa, in desperation, turns to Alfred.]

ALFRED  
It's a big part, Rudi.

LUISA

There are not many big parts.

ALFRED

And we thought you should have a big part.

RUDI

It's a big part.

LUISA

Yes.

RUDI

I see.

Yes. Well. Of course. A big part.

But you didn't say I should be a woman!

Of course, it is true,

I have the range for it.

ALFRED

Just as we thought.

RUDI

I will do it with such delicacy and restraint

such tenderness

that you will weep for me.

ALFRED

Excellent. Excellent.

RUDI

Also

I could play Fernando, too.

LUISA

Ah, but we have Edmund to play Fernando.

RUDI

Yes, I know.

I am only saying

perhaps he could play some other role

because I think I can do both parts.

LUISA

And yet, then, we don't have enough parts to go around  
for Edmund to have a role.

You wouldn't want to take all the roles.

RUDI

Of course not. Of course not.

Of course I could!

I could!

The one man show!  
 But, no, I understand, of course,  
 you want everyone to have some part  
 even if...  
 I don't know what sort of experience Edmund has had on the stage  
 it could be he would feel more comfortable  
 in some smaller role  
 and I could help to take the burden  
 relieve the pressure from him  
 as well as offer him some coaching in the role he undertakes  
 but no, no  
 this is an opportunity for him  
 I understand.

And yet, as we go along  
 if you feel it would be better for the play  
 for me to step in  
 I can do it.

ALFRED  
 Thank you, Rudi. Thank you.

[Rudi suddenly turns to storm out.]

RUDI  
 Forget about it then!  
 If this is how I am to be treated!  
 It seems I am not loved!

LUISA  
 Rudi!

[Everyone rushes after Rudi.]

EVERYONE  
 Rudi! Rudi! Wait!  
 Come back.  
 Don't go, Rudi!  
 Rudi!

[He has been turned around  
 at just the moment he has gotten offstage.  
 Both Luisa and Alfred have their arms around his shoulders,  
 leading him back onto the stage.]

LUISA  
 We gave you this part because we thought  
 no one else can do it!

ALFRED  
 No one!

This is the most challenging role in the play, Rudi.  
 What do you think?  
 We weren't thinking when we cast it?

RUDI  
 Well, then.

LUISA  
 We have been counting on you, Rudi.  
 We can't do the play without you.

RUDI  
 There, there. It's OK.  
 If you insist.  
 If you insist,  
 I will do it!

ALFRED  
 Thank God.  
 Thank you, Rudi.

RUDI  
 No, no, it's nothing.  
 I am happy to do it.

LUISA  
 Good. Good.  
 Let's plunge right in, then, everyone!  
 Are you ready?  
 Is everyone ready?

[Silence: the random chatter comes to a halt.]

Now then:  
 You've all read the play, have you?

[Silence.]

but at least you know what the play is about, yes?

[silence;  
 Luisa groans]

LUISA  
 Ah!  
 Alfred, can you tell them what the play is about?

ALFRED  
 Of course, to be sure.  
 Although, in truth, I think it would be better for you to do it.

LUISA  
Right.  
This is a play  
about love.

ALFRED  
Exactly.  
And about jealousy and betrayal  
and heartbreak and lying.

LUISA  
Love.

ALFRED  
Exactly.

LUISA  
It begins with a young couple in love, Cardenio and Luscinda.

They want to marry.  
But before they can get their fathers' consent,  
Cardenio is called away to the court of a powerful nobleman.  
And while he is at court,  
he becomes good friends with the powerful nobleman's son,  
Don Fernando.

ALFRED  
So here you have mixed in with the story of love,  
the story of friendship.

LUISA.  
Ah yes, and, as we will see, false friendship.  
Because Cardenio brings Don Fernando home with him,  
and no sooner does he introduce his new friend to his beloved Luscinda  
than Don Fernando falls in love with her.

ALFRED  
These things happen.

LUISA  
when Cardenio has to be away from town,  
Don Fernando asks Luscinda's parents for their daughter's hand,  
and,  
despite her protests,  
her parents agree.  
Luscinda desperately writes to Cardenio  
who hurries home,  
arriving only in time to witness the marriage ceremony,  
or what he thinks is the marriage ceremony,  
from behind a curtain.  
Cardenio rushes away in despair

and wanders  
raving like a lunatic in the mountains --

ALFRED  
Like Lear on the heath....

LUISA  
Where he encounters a woman, Dorotea,  
who is also wandering in despair.

RUDI  
This would be where I enter.

LUISA  
Right.  
And you tell Cardenio that Luscinda hasn't really married Fernando,  
and that Luscinda, too, has fled to the wilderness,  
and also Fernando,  
and that all four of you are now wandering around in these same mountains.

RUDI  
I have the speech right here.

ALFRED  
Not now, Rudi.  
Not now.

SALLY  
And this is the end of the play?

LUISA  
Almost, almost.  
Cardenio and Dorotea go to an inn  
where someone finds an old story and decides to read it out loud.

DORIS [aside]  
This is absurd.

LUISA  
The story is about a friend who seduces his best friend's wife.  
And the story ends for everyone in despair and death.

SALLY  
And this is the end of the play?  
I thought it was a comedy.

LUISA  
Not quite the end! Not quite!  
There is a sudden reversal!  
By a fantastic coincidence  
Fernando and Luscinda also wind up at the same inn.



Dorotea reproaches Fernando for seducing and abandoning her....

RUDI.

It's a great speech; I have it right here.

ALFRED

Not now, Rudi.

Not yet.

LUISA

And when Dorotea reproaches him,  
 Fernando is ashamed and agrees to marry her.  
 And so  
 that allows Cardenio at last to have Luscinda.  
 And so, of course:  
 there is general rejoicing.

SALLY

And that's the end of the play?

LUISA

Yes!

ALFRED

It's a great love story.

DORIS

Exactly.  
 About jealousy and betrayal  
 and heartbreak and lying.

LUISA.

All right now, people.  
 Can we begin to rehearse?  
 Let's start here, near the beginning,  
 a little bit before the scene we already ran through before.

Will, that is to say: Cardenio--  
 you come in from stage left, looking upset.  
 You have been hesitating to approach your father,  
 To get his consent for your marriage.  
 You are afraid that Luscinda's feelings toward you are cooling,  
 And now you have to tell her that you have been called away to court.

Is there music?

MELCHIORE

Oh, yes. Sorry.

[he plays]

LUISA

And enter Cardenio, alone.

WILL AS CARDENIO

I do not see that Fervour in the Maid,  
Which Youth and Love should kindle. She consents,  
As 'twere to feed without an Appetite;  
Tells me, She is content; This Affection  
Is such a faint One, as will break untouch'd;  
while mine,  
Like to a Clime beneath Hyperion's Eye,  
Burns with one constant heat....

LUISA

Enter Luscinda.

WILL AS CARDENIO

See how her Beauty doth enrich the Place!  
O, add the Musick of thy charming Tongue  
Sweet as the Lark that wakens up the Morn,  
And make me think it Paradise indeed.  
I was about to seek thee, Luscinda,  
And chide thy Coldness, Love.

CAMILA AS LUSCINDA

What says your Father?

CARDENIO

I have not mov'd him yet.

LUSCINDA

Then do not, Cardenio.

CARDENIO

Not move him? Was it not your own Command,  
That his Consent should ratify our Loves?

DORIS

[Groan]

LUISA

You know, Doris, this is not helpful at all.

DORIS

I thought Shakespeare invented the human.  
This doesn't speak very well for humans.

SALLY

The truth is

I have to admit:  
I never did like Shakespeare.

ALFRED  
People!  
Really!  
Suddenly everyone's a critic!  
And a Shakespeare scholar, too, it seems!  
A little modesty, I think,  
would be in order.  
in some things  
like the law of gravity  
there is a true and there is a false  
but in other things  
there are tastes  
and there are unknowables  
there are mysteries  
there are ineffables  
there are simply what one person loves  
and what another person loves  
and when it comes to love  
as my father always used to say  
de gustibus non disputandum est.

LUISA  
Thank you, Alfred.

ALFRED  
You're quite welcome.

LUISA  
Now, Will,  
if you will resume from where you left off.

[after a moment's pause to collect himself,  
Will continues]

CARDENIO  
Not move him? Was it not your own Command,  
That his Consent should ratify our Loves?

LUSCINDA  
Perhaps, it was; but now I've chang'd my Mind.  
You purchase at too dear a Rate, that puts you  
To woo me and your Father too; Besides,  
As he, perchance, may say, you shall not have me;  
You, who are so obedient, must discharge me  
Out of your Fancy:

CARDENIO

O heavens! From what a Spirit comes this?  
 I now perceive too plain, you care not for me.  
 Duke, I obey thy Summons, be its Tenour  
 Whate'er it will:  
 Since Luscinda has pronounced my Doom.

LUSCINDA  
 What do you mean? Why talk you of the Duke?

CARDENIO  
 How the Duke took note of me I know not.  
 But he doth write for me, requiring  
 My instant Service, and Repair to Court.

LUSCINDA  
 When go you?

DORIS  
 Honest to god this is tedious.

EDMUND  
 I do find my mind is wandering a little bit.

DORIS  
 My mind wanders to jumping off a cliff.  
 You begin to think  
 how can I get out of here?  
 Can I just get up and walk out in the middle?  
 Is this too rude?  
 Can I climb over people?

LUISA  
 Let's skip to the end.

LUISA  
 Cardenio and Luscinda.  
 At last, after all your trials –  
 Luscina's desperate flight from Don Fernando,  
 Cardenio's mad jealousy --  
 You have been reunited.  
 This is the moment of ecstasy.  
 Come now.  
 No more rhubarb rhubarb.  
 Let's see if you can all be a model audience just for a moment  
 and give the players the respect that they deserve.

Enter Cardenio.  
 Enter Luscinda.

[They embrace.]

WILL AS CARDENIO

What bright star, taking beauties for me upon her,  
In all the happy lustre of heavens glory,  
Has drop'd downe from the Skye to comfort me?

[as the scene goes on,  
everyone gets quieter and quieter,  
more and more attentive,

so that the entire scene is played without any interruption at all]

CAMILA AS LUSCINDA

My gracious Lord, no deity dwells here.  
The servant to your will affects no flattery.

WILL AS CARDENIO

Can it be flattery to sweare those eyes  
Are loves eternall lamps he fires all hearts with?  
That tongue the smart string to his bow? those sighes  
The deadly shafts he sends into our soules?  
Oh let me press these balmy Lips all day,  
And bathe my Love-scorch'd Soul in thy moist Kisses.  
Now by my Joys thou art all sweet and soft,  
And thou shalt be the Altar of my Love,  
Upon thy Beauties hourly will I offer,  
And pour out Pleasure and blest Sacrifice,

CAMILA AS LUSCINDA

Stay, stay and hide,  
The blushes of the bride;  
Stay gentle night, and with thy darkness cover  
The kisses of my lover

[they kiss and kiss  
and, finally,  
they kiss,  
a long, lingering kiss

that is astonishing]

DORIS

Well! The play might not be any good  
but the lovers certainly are!

ALFRED

Absolutely!  
Bravo. Brava.

LUISA

Very good. Very good.

DORIS  
Obviously  
when the leading actors are in love with one another  
they can play a love scene well  
even if the scene isn't very well written!

CAMILA  
What?

WILL  
What are you saying?

DORIS  
The proof is in the kiss.  
As it always is.

WILL  
I'm sorry?

ANSELMO  
I don't understand.

DORIS  
Well, you see how they behaved with one another.

ANSELMO  
Yes.  
Yes, I did.

DORIS  
I don't think you can hide any longer,  
you two.  
Clearly you're--  
entangled with one another.

CAMILA  
Entangled?

DORIS  
Sleeping with one another.

CAMILA  
Sleeping with one another?

ALFRED  
This is a play!

WILL  
What's happening?

DORIS  
Exactly! What is happening?

ANSELMO  
I think it must be true.

CAMILA  
What's true?

ANSELMO  
You two:  
you're in love after all!

LUISA  
Anselmo!

ANSELMO  
Did you see them kiss?

ALFRED  
Here, here.  
This is a mistake people often make--  
thinking what they see on stage is real.

ANSELMO  
I asked you, Will, for a favor.  
I didn't ask you to sleep with my wife!

WILL  
And I didn't!

ANSELMO  
I think you did!

DORIS  
Obviously you did.

WILL  
Anselmo,  
I say this as your friend:  
you are completely crazy.

DORIS  
Marriage!  
Everyone thinks they can just get married  
and all their worries will be over  
but they never are.  
They say I love you, I love you,  
how did I ever find you  
what luck at last to have found you

I've waited all my life for you  
 what kind of miracle is this  
 they say this and they say this  
 five minutes before they go out  
 and grab hold of some other woman  
 and take her with them to bed.  
 Because men will cheat on you every chance they get  
 time and time and time and time and time and time again  
 and the sooner everyone knows this  
 and admits it  
 the better off they will be!  
 Do you think I'm glad about this?  
 No! No, I'm not! No!

[Doris storms out.]

LUISA  
 Now, now, Doris,  
 oftentimes it seems a person has been unfaithful  
 whereas, in truth, they haven't been at all!

[but Doris is already gone,

and, from here on,  
 many of the lines are spoken on top of one another  
 or all at once]

SALLY  
 That's so true.

LUISA  
 Now, children....

SALLY  
 People always make something out of nothing!

EDMUND  
 Are you speaking to me  
 is this how you manage to speak to me  
 in some roundabout fashion?

SALLY  
 What?

EDMUND  
 Was that remark meant for me?

SALLY  
 What remark?

EDMUND



What you just said!

SALLY

I don't remember what I just said.

CAMILA

I'm not going to just stand here and let you  
accuse me of being unfaithful  
when you are the one who went off to Assisi  
on our wedding day with Susana.

SUSANA

Excuse me!

CAMILA

And then you come back and tell me  
I have somehow betrayed you???

WILL

Camila....

LUISA

I don't think Anselmo....

ANSELMO

I went on a drive in the country  
but it seems, while I was gone,  
and you were in rehearsals of a love scene  
you went ahead and fell in love!

LUISA [to Alfred]

People can't tell the difference any more  
between the real world....

CAMILA

I was here doing what you asked me to do  
and it seems you were off on a drive through the country  
flirting with another woman  
or falling in love yourself  
and then you come back and accuse me of doing something wrong?

SUSANA

I don't think I'm part of this.  
If you will excuse me.

[she leaves]

ANSELMO

Susana!

[he turns back to Camila]

I'm not going to be accused of something I didn't do!  
I'm not going to just stand here and take it!

[he leaves]

CAMILA [calling after him]  
Something YOU didn't do!

LUISA  
Children!

[she goes after Anselmo]

Anselmo!

ALFRED  
Luisa!  
Let's not all fly off the handle!

[he leaves]

SALLY  
If you want to accuse someone of something  
then why don't you just accuse yourself!

[she leaves]

EDMUND  
Sally!

[he goes off after her]

Sally!

[Edmund is gone]

silence

Melchior and Simonetta stand there,  
looking awkward]

MELCHIORE  
If you will excuse us  
perhaps we will just  
leave you alone....

[they leave]

so that Will and Camila are left alone on stage]

WILL

I'm sorry, Camila.

CAMILA

Oh, no, it's not your fault.

WILL

And yet

I think it is.

And I apologize for that.

Because I never wanted in any way  
to cause you pain  
or really even any discomfort at all.

CAMILA

I know.

WILL

The truth is,

this time--

these rehearsals we've had for the play--

these conversations we've had

just having time to be together a little bit

as we never have before--

I've just

begun to feel such sympathy for you

such regard

such admiration and

such warmth really

to be honest

it seems

even

tenderness.

I think

it could even be

when I think back on it now

when Anselmo first began dating you

and we first met

I thought at the time

oh

oh

what a wonderful person

and, of course,

because Anselmo was my best friend

is my best friend

it never occurred to me

that is

I guess I just

filed my feelings away  
as feeling good that my friend  
had found someone  
that I liked, too,  
as a friend  
and so I didn't notice  
how I felt about you myself.  
And I'm sorry  
because the last thing I ever meant to do  
was complicate things for Anselmo  
or for you.  
But the truth is  
I love you.

[silence]

CAMILA  
I love you, too.

WILL  
What?

CAMILA  
I find I just feel comfortable with you  
and I remember at first I thought, too,  
oh, good,  
I'm glad I feel really friendly towards Anselmo's friend  
so we can be friends, too,  
and now of course it's turned out  
I feel uncomfortable with Anselmo  
it just makes me anxious whenever he comes into the room  
whereas, whenever you come into the room,  
I feel relaxed  
I feel good  
I feel I can be myself  
and who I am is acceptable

And I've come to think  
this time we've had together here  
just being with you  
it seems to me:  
you're wonderful.

WILL  
Oh.

CAMILA  
And really warm.

And it would feel good  
just to be inside your arms.

And to be in your arms for a long time.

And to be in your arms while we were lying in bed.

WILL

Oh.

CAMILA

I'd like to be with you all the time  
and go places together  
come home together  
make love  
I wish we could  
have children together.

WILL

Oh.

CAMILA

And then I ask myself:  
where did that come from?  
And I don't know.  
But I think:  
well, that decides it.

WILL

Right.

CAMILA

Would you like to have children with me?

WILL

Oh, yes, yes, I would.  
Didn't I  
didn't I just say that?  
That's just what I was thinking.

I love you and love you, Camila.  
I just love the way you are.  
I love the way you move  
I love the way you think  
I love the way you just say what you mean  
and I think  
if we could spend all our time together  
I'd just like to talk and talk and talk with you  
because you know  
I love your sentences  
and I love your clauses

CAMILA  
My clauses?

WILL  
and your verbs!  
and I think  
I don't know  
is this because I love Latin?  
or now I think:  
do I love Latin because that's how you are  
and I somehow always knew, when I found you  
you would be just like Latin?  
because a language is a complicated thing  
and a beautiful thing  
just the way you are  
you are the person I've looked for all my life  
and I was fairly certain I'd never find you  
and I know it's a miracle I did.

CAMILA  
But, Will,  
I don't think I can do it.  
I don't think we can just be together  
all of a sudden like this.

WILL  
No. No. You don't. Of course not.  
This isn't the sort of person you are  
otherwise I wouldn't have fallen in love with you.  
You've just gotten married.

I'm sorry, Camila.  
I don't know what I was thinking.  
I apologize all over again.  
I didn't mean to presume  
or intrude  
or whatever it is I've done.  
I'm just awfully embarrassed.  
the thing is  
the best thing is  
probably  
I should leave.

CAMILA  
Yes.  
I think you should.

[silence]

WILL  
I mean not just the terrace

but Italy altogether  
 maybe you would tell the others  
 I've suddenly become ill  
 or I had a call.

CAMILA  
 I don't know.

WILL  
 No, of course not.  
 That's ridiculous.  
 That's completely stupid.  
 I'll go inside and I'll say  
 I'll say  
 I don't know  
 yes, well, of course,  
 I'll say this whole thing was a terrible misunderstanding  
 and I think the best thing would be for me to leave  
 leave you and Anselmo here  
 to straighten things out

CAMILA  
 Yes. Right.  
 Thank you, Will.  
 I think this is best.

WILL  
 Right.

[silence]

So, I'll say goodbye.

CAMILA  
 Goodbye, Will.

[he leaves  
 and returns]

WILL  
 Still,  
 what does this mean?  
 That I am really leaving?  
 Is that what I'm doing?  
 Do you think this is the best?  
 Is this what I have to do.  
 Because I have to tell you:  
 I treasure you, Camila.

I'm sorry.

I'm sorry to have said so.  
I'm sorry to feel it, to tell the truth.

I'm sorry about everything really.

CAMILA

I...

I just think I shouldn't speak.

I'm just afraid I will say all sorts of things that I shouldn't say  
as a woman who is married to someone else.

WILL

I understand.

And, you know,

I wish you all the happiness a person could possibly have in life  
because

I love you.

I mean

because I have felt such closeness to you  
and all I wish is for your happiness.

CAMILA

And I wish for your happiness, too, Will,  
with all my heart.

WILL

So

I'll say goodbye.

CAMILA

Goodbye.

WILL

Goodbye.

[she turns and walks out;

he stands, disconsolate, for a moment,

and then he turns and walks out in a different direction;

Susana comes in from yet another direction,

followed by Anselmo]

ANSELMO

I'm sorry, Susana.

SUSANA

It's alright.



It was just a little embarrassing.

ANSELMO

But, I'm so sorry,  
for sure you didn't need to be embarrassed in that way.  
There's nothing you've done to deserve it.

SUSANA

Really.  
You owe me no apology, Anselmo.

[silence]

ANSELMO

And yet  
I think I do.  
It's embarrassing  
and what's worse, I'm afraid  
just horrible for Camila.

And then I think  
even worse than that  
I should have known.  
And then, of course, I think: I did.  
I always thought  
oddly enough  
from the beginning  
that Will was a better match for Camila than I was.

SUSANA

And yet  
you married her!

ANSELMO

Yes!  
I was drawn to her  
she seemed to make my life make sense  
and she awoke in me a feeling  
that I guess, as it turns out, I mistook for love.

SUSANA

Mistook for love?

ANSELMO

And then, now  
this is so strange  
because I think  
Camila showed me how it was for people to trust their instincts  
and I must have known I needed to know how to do that  
in order to be any kind of human being at all

because obviously  
 I've been fleeing from my instincts all these years  
 I think this is what has made me such a confused person  
 Since  
 Well  
 Ever since we were together in college.

SUSANA  
 Together in college?  
 We were never together in college.  
 You didn't know me in college.  
 You didn't know me the littlest bit in college.  
 You hardly even spoke to me in college.

ANSELMO  
 Well, you were dating that guy whatshisname.

SUSANA  
 Richard.

ANSELMO  
 Right.  
 Richard.

And then  
 this is the extraordinary thing  
 I heard you sing  
 and suddenly I felt my head go completely clear  
 and there I was: no longer thinking about anything at all  
 this is what Camila meant all that time  
 just going where your heart took you  
 trusting your feelings above all  
 and I just lost myself inside your voice  
 I thought: suddenly here is the whole world  
 inside your voice  
 this is where I want to live.

The truth is,  
 Susana,  
 I love you.

SUSANA  
 You what?

ANSELMO  
 I love you.

SUSANA  
 You love me?  
 You love me?  
 Oh, Anselmo,

this is  
this is horrible.

ANSELMO  
That's what I've been saying.

SUSANA  
Oh, oh, well, you know  
this just won't do at all.  
I mean it turns out  
you are a completely dangerous person!  
I mean we don't know each other at all.  
We don't know each other.  
You hardly spoke to me in college.

ANSELMO  
Because you were with....

SUSANA  
Richard, yes, Richard!

And now I'm a person who's just recently been divorced  
and I'm feeling a little fragile to tell you the truth  
a little cautious about  
love  
or  
men  
or  
well,  
life really.

ANSELMO  
You need a little time off.

SUSANA  
Yes. Yes, I do.

ANSELMO  
Of course. Of course.  
I beg your pardon.  
I didn't mean to just jump on you.

It's just that, when I heard you sing, I thought:  
I love you.

SUSANA  
Anselmo, really!  
I mean  
I really enjoyed our drive in the country  
and when we sat in that café in  
that sweet little town

what was that town?

ANSELMO  
Spedalicchio.

SUSANA  
Spedalicchio.  
Right.  
But, Anselmo,  
probably you've forgotten  
but you've just been married.

ANSELMO  
Right. Right. No,  
I haven't forgotten.

SUSANA  
And I've just been in a car wreck of a marriage.  
I'm all crushed and dented and smoking.  
Give me a break.  
I haven't even been towed into the garage yet.

ANSELMO  
Right. I beg your pardon.  
I'm so sorry, Susana.

SUSANA  
You know, Anselmo,  
people have impulses all the time.  
But they don't need to act on them!

ANSELMO  
Unless, otherwise, their lives will turn out to be a tragedy!

SUSANA  
Even then! Even then!  
What are you saying?  
Sometimes life IS a tragedy.  
There's nothing to be done about it.  
Even the happiest lives end up in graves.

ANSELMO  
And doesn't that make you think  
OK, then,  
if my life is going to end up in a grave  
at least let it be happy till then?

SUSANA  
No.

ANSELMO  
It doesn't?

SUSANA  
No!

ANSELMO  
That's what it makes me think.  
I'll miss it enough when it's over  
I don't want to miss it now.  
I'm asking you to marry me, Susana.

SUSANA  
You're asking me to marry you?????  
You ARE married, Anselmo!  
You can't ask a person to marry you  
when you just got married!

ANSELMO  
In the whole of your life  
have you ever had such perfect ride in the country?

SUSANA  
What?  
What the fuck are you talking about?  
A perfect ride in the country????

ANSELMO  
Susana, now that I've found you at last  
after all these years  
I'm not going to walk away from you.

SUSANA  
Anselmo.  
I'm going to walk away from you.

ANSELMO  
What?

SUSANA  
I'm going to walk away from you!  
I am going to walk away from you, you crazy fucker!!!!

[she throws up her hands

and storms out]

ANSELMO  
How can you do that?  
Susana! Susana!!!

[he stands for a moment, undone,  
then turns and leaves in the other direction.]

Simonetta enters,

pursued by Edmund.]

EDMUND

The point is, Simonetta:  
I look at you  
and I am thrilled.

SIMONETTA

Oh, but.  
I'm married.  
You're married.

EDMUND

Yes.  
It fills me with such conflicting feelings.

SIMONETTA

Being married.

EDMUND

And then seeing you.  
I see you and  
I think I could change everything.  
My life, your life.

SIMONETTA

You want to sleep with me  
and then you'll leave  
and that's enough for you.

EDMUND

No.

SIMONETTA

That's what you mean.  
I think that's what you mean.  
Because I am the servant woman,  
that's how you'll be with me?

EDMUND

Oh, no. No, not at all.  
That's not what I meant at all.  
No, just the opposite in a way.

SIMONETTA

That's how some men are.  
 But that's not how I am.  
 When I think, what do I want today?  
 my day lasts for forty years.

EDMUND  
 Right. Right.  
 Forty years.  
 Extraordinary.  
 What a thought.  
 What a wonderful thought really.  
 I think of having a day of forty years myself.

and then I think  
 it may be I've already caused enough damage in my life  
 I've caused a lot of pain  
 but I haven't caused much happiness.  
 I think  
 maybe I'm not such a good person

I think of you having a happy life with your husband.

And  
 I'd rather not be a careless person.

And yet, I see you,  
 I think, oh, this could be my chance  
 for something quite amazing

SIMONETTA  
 Because in nature things happen so suddenly sometimes  
 suddenly there's a flood  
 your neighbor has a baby  
 her husband falls from a tree  
 You wonder  
 why do we try so hard to control our lives;  
 when we think back  
 so much has been because of chance.  
 And, if you try to avoid chance  
 you're avoiding life itself.

EDMUND  
 So that you think  
 you shouldn't just try to avoid something  
 you can't control  
 or you will never live.

SIMONETTA  
 Yes.  
 That's what I think is true.

EDMUND

Although  
 maybe I shouldn't encourage someone else  
 to make the mistakes I've made in my life  
 because she hasn't caused as much damage as I have  
 she doesn't know  
 and so maybe she would take the chance this time.  
 And then, a year from now, or two  
 she will hate me  
 for having taken her away from a life  
 that could have brought her happiness  
 for another forty years, fifty years, forever.

.  
 Right.  
 I wish you  
 every happiness.

[silence]

SIMONETTA  
 Thank you.

[she leaves.

He looks around,  
 Pats his pockets,  
 Looks around.  
 Goes out.

Camila enters,  
 looks around,  
 leaves.

Will enters,  
 looks around,  
 leaves.

Camila enters  
 pursued by Will]

Camila enters,  
 pursued by Will]

WILL



You know  
this just makes no sense to me, Camila.  
I don't think I can leave.

[turning to him]

CAMILA  
You can't?

WILL  
No.

CAMILA  
No.

No.  
Thank god.

WILL  
Because I love you, Camila.

CAMILA  
I love you, Will.

WILL  
I could pretend to leave.

Does that seem like a good idea?  
I could say I am leaving  
but not leave at all.  
Or I could leave actually.  
And then, when we get back to New York,  
you could tell Anselmo that you need some time alone to think.  
And you could take some time.  
And then we could get together.  
Although, this leaves all the burden on you, I'm afraid.

CAMILA  
That's okay.  
I think this is a good idea.  
Although, really, this is really just incredibly dishonest  
to pretend I'm taking time to think about things  
when I'm not going to think about things at all.

WILL  
Right.  
I think it is a little bit dishonest.

CAMILA  
I mean that would be really contemptible.

WILL  
Right. No.  
You couldn't do that.

CAMILA  
We have to think about other peoples' feelings,  
Not just our own.

WILL  
Right.  
All the same, I love you  
And I will never love anyone else.

[silence]

CAMILA  
I don't think I can just go back with Anselmo  
and live with him  
and you and I would be lovers.

WILL  
No.  
No.  
Well, I mean, you don't, do you?

CAMILA  
No.

WILL  
Because if that's what you really would like to say....

CAMILA  
No.  
No, I couldn't do that.

WILL  
No, thank god.  
Neither could I.

It seems to me  
if I were the sort of man I've never wanted to be  
I'd know just what to do now  
I'd just take you and leave with you  
and to hell with everyone

CAMILA  
Right.  
Or you could kill Anselmo.

WILL  
What?

CAMILA  
You know,  
you could kill him.

You could take him hunting  
and there could be an accident.

WILL  
A hunting accident.

CAMILA  
Has he ever gone hunting?

WILL  
No. I don't think so.

CAMILA  
All the more reason for an accident to occur.

WILL  
He could fall into a ravine.

CAMILA  
Or you could just go out hunting for mushrooms  
and you would bring back a poison mushroom for his pasta.

WILL  
or there could be a dreadful automobile accident  
on the way back from hunting.  
I would have had to stop off someplace.  
Or I could take my bike to ride back,  
and his steering wheel could be disconnected  
and he would go right off a mountain road  
and plunge into the river.

CAMILA  
The point is:  
whatever happens, it could be worse.

WILL  
Right.  
Whatever happens he'll still be alive  
with lots of chances to make a life for himself  
a happier life than one  
married to a woman who loves someone else.

CAMILA  
This is true.

WILL

Right.

Probably what we should do  
is what Anselmo asked me to do:

I should flirt with you

But I should flirt with you  
in such a way that everyone can see me do it  
and everyone can see you turn me down.

So that will be established  
that you are faithful to Anselmo.

And then everyone can leave.

And then

when we get back to New York  
you can speak privately to Anselmo  
and we can be together then  
and even though everyone will look back  
and realize that we were lying  
in a way that's as thoughtful as we can be  
of everyone else's lives.

I think it's the most considerate thing to do.

CAMILA

We can do it in the kitchen  
when everyone is out on the terrace  
and we can turn on the baby monitor  
so that everyone will hear us on the terrace  
and you can flirt with me  
and I can turn you down  
and then I can run out on the terrace  
and be surprised to find everyone standing there.

CAMILA

Amazed.

WILL

Amazed

and dumbfounded

and convinced that what they've heard is the truth.

[silence

and then, after a moment,

they kiss;

after a moment,

she turns and runs into the house,

and Will,  
 disoriented by the discovery of his love,  
 finally goes out in a different direction.

After a moment, Rudi enters, alone.]

RUDI  
 I build them a good stage  
 Solid, strong, honest, simple.  
 What happens?  
 Everyone goes crazy.  
 And why?  
 Because  
 The play:  
 It is not all in one coherent psyche.

But, if you have the one man show  
 Everything is perfect.  
 One actor.  
 To put on THE WHOLE SHOW

First it may be he plays Luscinda.

RUDI AS LUSCINDA.  
 Is there no Instance of a Friend turn'd false?  
 Take Heed of That: no Love by Proxy, Cardenio.

Then he plays Cardenio.

RUDI AS CARDENIO  
 Do not fear, Luscinda,  
 Thou mayst give Fernando, as I have done,  
 Thy absolute trust. He is my other self.  
 I must, alas, obey the duke's command.  
 And hie to court. Adieu, my love, adieu.

Then he plays Luscinda.

RUDI AS LUSCINDA.  
 I do not know why thou dost leave me so,  
 Alone, unfriended, on the day you promised  
 To ask my father for my hand. [weeps]

RUDI AS RUDI  
 Then you have coherence.

And then everyone cries at the same time with my weeping.  
Luisa, she can put tissues on every seat.

And then:  
Fernando, that weasel, comes in –

[enter Rudi as Fernando]

RUDI AS FERNANDO  
Why weepest thou, Luscinda dear? Hark now,  
I have brave news I hope will cheer thy heart.

RUDI AS LUSCINDA  
What news, Fernando?

RUDI AS FERNANDO  
Thy gracious father has given his consent.  
Thou art to marry, and at once.

RUDI AS LUSCINDA  
At once? But Cardenio has ridden hence.

RUDI AS FERNANDO  
Well then, our wedding he will have to miss.

RUDI AS LUSCINDA  
Our wedding? Whose wedding?

RUDI AS FERNANDO  
Why, thine and mine, my dearest, dainty duck.  
Tis I thy father grants will be thy husband.

RUDI AS LUSCINDA  
Nay.

RUDI AS FERNANDO  
Yea.

RUDI AS LUSCINDA  
Nay, I say.

RUDI AS FERNANDO  
I say yea. We are to wed this very night.  
What! Think you that the paltry Cardenio,  
That whining, pigeon-livered, tim'rous boy,  
Deserves the fair Luscinda? Why did he leave,  
Abandoning his prize, did he not want  
A stronger man to seize her? Thou art mine.

RUDI AS LUSCINDA  
[faints]

[RUDI falls heavily to the floor; then, realizing his mistake, sits up.]

RUDI AS RUDI

No. No.

Not like that.

Get up. Get up.

A lady does not faint like that.

A lady must fall like a flower petal,

Not like a sack of iron.

Never mind that women, just like men,

Are made of clay

And in truth may fall to the earth like a man.

On stage it must be different.

Like this:

[He faints again with exaggerated gentleness. Then quickly jumps up.]

And then?

What next?

Fernando carries off Luscinda.

How does he do this?

[Tries to carry himself off stage. ]

No. No.

Because:

It's not funny.

It's a dramatic moment.

[he tries again]

No. Rudi. Concentrate. Focus.

A tragic moment.

[he carries himself off]

[he reenters in Cardenio's hat and cloak]

Now they are gone.

And now

the moment the audience has been waiting for – Cardenio's mad scene.

Just like, as it happens, when Anselmo almost went mad

When he saw Will kiss Camila.

“I asked you, Will, for a favor.

I didn't ask you to sleep with my wife!”

A coincidence:  
 A play!  
 That is just like real life!  
 As though one held up a mirror....

[he is distracted a moment as he looks into the mirror of his hand]

So  
 Cardenio speaks:

[astonishingly, Rudi grows into the role as he goes,  
 finally delivering a great Shakespearean performance—  
 which only collapses at the very end back into Rudi himself]

#### RUDI AS CARDENIO

I asked you, Fernando, for a favor.  
 I didn't ask you to steal my wife!  
 How could it be? How could it be? My friend!  
 The man I called my other self -- and now  
 Foresworn, a snake, my mortal enemy.  
 I had once seen the Bird of Paradise,  
 Alone I knew her haunts, and where she built  
 Her spicy nest: 'till like a credulous fool,  
 I shewed the treasure to a friend in trust,  
 And he hath robbed me of her. – Trust no friend:  
 Keep thy heart's counsels close. – Hast thou a mistress?  
 Give her not out in words; nor let thy pride  
 Be wanton to display her charms to view;  
 Love is contagious, and a breath of praise,  
 Or a slight glance, has kindled up its flame,  
 And turned a friend a traitor. – 'Tis in proof;  
 And it has hurt my brain. But hold, 'tis I,  
 I am the traitor. Fernando, my friend,  
 Was but my agent; he did my bidding.  
 I am the one who must be punished.  
 Take that, you dolt! Take that! And that!

[Hitting himself violently,  
 in a paroxysm of self-loathing,  
 Rudi makes an increasingly loud racket,  
 perhaps knocking over furniture—

Luisa and Alfred and Susana all rush out on stage.]

[suddenly we hear broadcast over the baby monitor:

WILL'S VOICE  
 Still, Camila,



I love you  
as Anselmo doesn't and as he never will.  
I will treasure you  
and treasure you forever.

CAMILA'S VOICE

No....

WILL'S VOICE

Yes.  
You can count on me  
as you would count on the earth itself.

CAMILA'S VOICE

But, Will,  
you know I will always be as faithful to Anselmo  
as he has been to me.  
I would only ever be as honest  
as true  
as steadfast as he has been to me.

WILL'S VOICE

And yet I love you  
as no one has ever loved you before.

CAMILA'S VOICE

Will, try to understand:  
There is one vow I intend to keep in my life  
and that is  
I will be absolutely faithful to my one true love.

WILL'S VOICE

But, Camila,  
come away with me now.

CAMILA'S VOICE

No, Will.  
No!  
Let go of me, Will!  
Let go!

[we hear the sounds of scuffling]

WILL'S VOICE

Camila!  
Camila!

[Camila bursts out onto the terrace,  
looking flushed and a little disheveled.]

DORIS  
So, it is true!  
Just like the play!

CAMILA  
What is true?

DORIS  
You and Will:  
behind everybody's backs!

CAMILA  
No!

ALFRED  
Certainly not Camila!  
You heard her saying no, no!

[Will rushes in,  
seemingly surprised to find everyone on the terrace.]

DORIS  
Will, you liar!

WILL  
What?

DORIS  
All this time,  
pretending to be so thoughtful  
so sensitive  
so considerate  
thinking of nothing but Camila's feelings for Anselmo  
and your dear friend Anselmo's best interests  
while all the time  
you're trying to take her away from him!

ANSELMO  
It's OK.  
It's OK, Will.  
I can explain everything.  
We heard you and Camila on the baby monitor.

WILL  
No!

ANSELMO  
Yes.

And I heard you were completely faithful to me, Camila.

CAMILA  
Of course I was, Anselmo.

ANSELMO  
And the truth is:  
I put Will up to it.

LUISA  
What?

ANSELMO  
When Camila and I were married,  
I was afraid she wouldn't be faithful to me,  
that's all,  
it's as simple as that,  
and then I did something just absolutely deranged.  
I asked Will, as my friend,  
to try to seduce her  
to see if she would be faithful to me.

ALFRED  
What?

LUISA  
Oh, Anselmo, on your wedding day!

DORIS  
This is completely disgusting.

ANSELMO  
Yes. Yes, it is.  
But, meanwhile,  
as if this weren't bad enough,  
I've been a worse person even than this.  
Because,  
while I was doubting whether Camila would be faithful to me,  
I've been unfaithful to her.

CAMILA  
You what?

WILL  
What's this?

LUISA  
Anselmo!

ANSELMO

I can't go on  
without being completely truthful with all of you,  
my good friends,  
or you have been until this moment,  
and perhaps now  
you never will be again.  
But I have fallen in love with Susana.

CAMILA

Susana?

LUISA

Susana!

ALFRED

Oh my god.  
See what we've done, Luisa?

LUISA

How could this have happened?

ALFRED

Anselmo....

ANSELMO

I'm sorry, Dad.  
I apologize to everyone, really,  
but especially to you, Camila.  
But, since this has happened,  
as terrible as it is,  
I thought it would at least be best  
for me to be honest with you now.

To say,  
as dreadful a thing as it is to say,  
I can't go ahead with our marriage.

CAMILA

No.

LUISA

No!

ANSELMO

I apologize and apologize to you, Camila.  
and I have been nothing but dishonest  
and confused  
and so manipulative  
and cruel

and thoughtless  
 while all this time you have been so  
 generous and forgiving  
 all a person would hope to find in another person  
 I am so sorry, Camila.  
 I'm not asking for your forgiveness  
 some things in life just should never be forgiven  
 that's just the way it is

LUISA  
 And, what?  
 What does Susana say  
 after Alfred and I brought you here?  
 Are you in love with Anselmo?

SUSANA  
 I told Anselmo  
 I've just come from a ruined marriage myself.  
 I can't think of just suddenly falling in love  
 just throwing myself into someone else's arms  
 as though I were a teenager.

CAMILA  
 No. Of course not.  
 But do you love him?

[silence]

SUSANA  
 Yes.  
 I've always loved him.

SALLY  
 And will you marry him?

SUSANA  
 Yes. I will.

LUISA  
 Will you marry Susana, Anselmo?

ANSELMO  
 Yes. Yes, I will.

DORIS  
 Well, there's a mature decision!  
 What are the odds here, Anselmo,  
 that your second marriage will last as long as your first?

LUISA  
 Doris!

CAMILA

Doris, I wish you had left  
before you ever came.  
As badly as everyone has behaved  
I think you've been the worst  
because, of everyone, you are the only one  
who just wants everything to turn out badly  
because that will prove  
that you have always been right about everything  
all the time.

DORIS

Camila....

CAMILA

You should leave now, Doris.  
Before you ruin something else.  
I'm sorry this is how you are,  
but you are a kind of curse.

DORIS

Camila....

CAMILA

I mean it.

WILL

I think it would be best for you to leave, Doris,  
really: for everyone.

ALFRED

The truth is, you haven't been a very positive presence.

SALLY

You've been a bitch on wheels  
if you want to know the truth.

EDMUND

No one likes you, Doris.  
If you want to know the truth  
what people say behind your back  
is that they can't stand you  
and they never could.

LUISA

I'm sorry, Doris.  
But I think you need to go.

DORIS

OK.  
 Good. Fine.  
 I see, in any case,  
 that none of you needs a malicious person  
 to throw your lives into turmoil  
 when you do such perfect job all by yourselves.  
 But don't think  
 just because I make things convenient for you now  
 I'm not going to come back into your lives.  
 You can't get rid of me.  
 I am your sister, Camila.  
 You haven't seen the last of me,  
 any of you.

[she turns and leaves]

LUISA  
 Well.

ALFRED  
 So.

ANSELMO  
 Perhaps, really,  
 it's time for all of us to leave.  
 It may be we could all use  
 a little time by ourselves  
 to put things back together.

In any case,  
 I think probably it would be best  
 for me to leave with Susana  
 and leave the rest of you in peace.

CAMILA  
 Anselmo,  
 I don't want you to slink away in shame.  
 A person should never be ashamed of love  
 however it may have come to them  
 whatever promises they've had to break  
 whatever things they've done that they wish they hadn't  
 when a person finds the love  
 they believe will be their lifelong love  
 I know  
 the choice is no longer theirs.  
 But, even if it's the biggest gamble you have ever taken  
 and no one knows if it can last  
 a person has to take it.  
 Because if you're not going to gamble on love,  
 what should you gamble on?

And so  
I wish you every happiness.

ANSELMO  
Thank you, Camila.

SUSANA  
Thank you.

EDMUND  
Well, we ought to be on our way, too,  
don't you think, Sally?  
It's been a, well,  
one thing for sure I've never been to a wedding like this.  
I mean I, of course,  
I had a wonderful time.  
Weddings!  
The things they make a person think about!  
For me, I think,  
the experience we've had  
it makes me feel more than ever

[turning to Sally]

how much I love you, Sally,  
how I treasure you  
how happy I am we'll be together forever.

And I thought, perhaps,  
maybe we could go to Siena.

SALLY  
Siena?

EDMUND  
Find a little hotel there  
And have some time together  
just the two of us.

SALLY.  
Are you crazy, Edmund?  
You think you can flirt and flirt and flirt  
with every woman who crosses your path  
and you think no one notices?  
no one pays any attention?  
Because everyone's what?  
Drunk on Umbria?  
Intoxicated with the local perfume?  
You think that universal love juice has been sprinkled on everyone's eyes,  
and all the rules are suspended?



And you can just behave like a hamster  
 because this is nature  
 and you can just sniff all the women, like a dog,  
 and there is no moral responsibility in life  
 no accountability?  
 No one is ever going to say to you:  
 no, Edmund, no,  
 no you can't do this  
 no you can't just go from woman to woman to woman  
 and everyone will think oh  
 how natural!  
 how spontaneous!

how romantic!  
 how adorable!  
 what a happy ending!  
 No. No.  
 No, Edmund.  
 That's not how it is!

[she turns and runs out at full speed]

EDMUND  
 Sally!  
 Sally!  
 I love you, Sally!

[she is no sooner out the door  
 than she is back in again  
 weeping  
 and she runs to Edmund  
 and puts her arms around him  
 sobbing on his shoulder]

SALLY  
 I love you, Edmund!  
 Oh, god I love you.

[sobbing]

I just love you and love you and love you  
 I can't be without you

[sobbing and sobbing]

and yes I want to go to Siena with you  
 I want to

[sobbing and sobbing and sobbing]

Let's go to Siena, Edmund.  
Please let's go to Siena  
and we'll be together forever.

EDMUND  
Forever.  
Forever and ever, Sally.

[silence]

LUISA  
Well, Alfred and I were planning on leaving, too,  
weren't we, Alfred?

ALFRED  
Oh, yes! Yes, indeed we were.

LUISA  
If rehearsals are to begin next week in Maine  
we are going to need to be getting on our way.

ALFRED  
Yes. Yes, it's true.  
We're travelling players, that's all.  
Travelling players, all of us, in a sense.

LUISA  
Still.  
I can't leave without saying:  
I feel Alfred and I ought to apologize to all you young people.  
It seems to me  
it's all our fault.  
I see now  
if only we hadn't brought the play  
none of this would have happened.  
It may be we should have known  
our own lives have been so transformed by the theatre

ALFRED  
Oftentimes we forget  
what an impact it can have.  
We think, Luisa and I,  
it's just a play  
just an evening in the theatre  
just a piece of light entertainment  
and then it turns out  
so often  
it finds its way into someone's soul.

LUISA  
The power of the theatre.

ALFRED

The power of the art of the theatre.  
Disruptive.  
Transformative.  
Apocalyptic.

So.

We will pack our bags, and we will be off.

LUISA

Camila, dear,  
I know this has been a terrible ordeal for you.  
Probably all you'd like is just to get back home,  
but you should know  
if you would like  
just to stay on a while here  
let things settle a little bit  
before you go on with things  
you would be so welcome to stay.  
Melchiore and Simonetta will be here  
and they can care for you,  
and Alfred and I would be so happy to know  
that someone is here enjoying the house  
for just as long as you would like.

ANSELMO

And I know, Will,  
this has hardly been a pleasant vacation  
for you, but  
if you don't have anything else you need to get to  
if you happen to be free to stay on as well  
to keep Camila company  
so that she doesn't feel alone

WILL

Thank you.

CAMILA

Thank you.

WILL

Well. Perhaps we will then.  
Would you like that?

CAMILA

Oh, yes.  
I think I would.  
I think that I would love it.

LUISA

All right then, children.  
 Here we go.  
 Everyone has their rental cars.  
 Do you have the tickets, Alfred?

ALFRED  
 I've left them in my jacket pocket.

LUISA  
 All right, then.  
 Goodbye, Edmund. Nice to see you.

EDMUND  
 Goodbye.

LUISA  
 Sally, dear....

SALLY  
 Luisa....

[everyone saying their goodbyes....]

Ciao, Simonetta!  
 Ciao, Melchiore.

MELCHIORE  
 Ciao, contessa!

OTHERS  
 Ciao! Ciao! Ciao!  
 Buon viaggio! Arrivederci!  
 Buona fortuna.  
 Ciao!  
 Ciao!  
 Ciao, bella!

[Everyone is gone  
 except for Camila and Will  
 and Simonetta and Melchiore.  
 Melchiore picks up his guitar  
 and plays and sings,  
 and maybe Simonetta joins him at some point  
 for a duet.

And while they sing,

Camila and Will dance.

MELCHIORE SINGING

this or something else:

Fair angel of England, thy beauty most bright  
Is all my heart's treasure, my joy and delight;  
Then grant me, sweet lady, thy true love to be,  
that I may say, welcome, good fortune, to me.

The turtle, so true and so chaste in her love,  
By gentle persuasions her fancy will move;  
Then be not entreated, sweet lady, in vain,  
For nature requirest what I would obtain.

The Phoenix so famous, that liveth alone,  
Is vowed to chastity, being but one;  
But be not, my darling, so chaste in desire,  
Lest thou, like the Phoenix, do penance in fire.

The End.