

**The Sword and the Veil:**

**An Annotated Translation of the  
Autobiography of  
Doña Catalina de Erauso**

**by**

**Daniel Harvey Pedrick  
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**We accept this thesis as conforming  
to the required standard**

  
Dr. Gregory P. Andrachuk, Supervisor (Department of Hispanic and Italian Studies)

  
Dr. Elena Rossi, Internal Member (Department of Hispanic and Italian Studies)

  
Dr. Pablo Restrepo-Gautier, Internal Member (Department of Hispanic and Italian Studies)

  
Dr. Phyllis Senese, External Examiner (Department of History)

  
Dr. Emmanuel Hérique, Outside Member (Department of French)

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University of Victoria**

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Supervisor: Dr. Gregory P. Andrachuk

### ABSTRACT

Catalina de Erauso was one of the few women of Counter-Reformation Spain to effectively escape the enclosing and confining strictures imposed on women by the Church and the Crown. Her purported autobiographies, first published in 1625, enjoyed wide popularity and elevated her to the status of national hero. Erauso's relationships with other women, frankly recounted in the autobiographies and mentioned in other contemporary sources, were regarded by most of her male contemporaries as part of an elaborate masquerade feigned in order to achieve the socially acceptable goal of defending the interests of the Spanish Empire as a soldier. This essay, which includes an annotated translation of a version of the autobiography from the original Spanish, takes the position that the popular success of the highly embellished accounts of Erauso's escapades was abetted by the phallogentric view of sexuality commonly held by church authorities and male-dominated society in Counter-Reformation Spain, a view which precluded recognizing, much less understanding, female homosexuality. This attitude blinded most observers to the more probable nature of the brash Erauso, whose own words and deeds, when considered from a modern perspective, suggest that she was most likely homosexual. The style in which she presented herself, in the pages of her books as well as in real life, amounted to a successful survival strategy that won her the approbation of the most influential and powerful men of her time.

#### **Examiners:**

[REDACTED]  
Dr. Gregory P. Andrachuk, Supervisor (Department of Hispanic and Italian Studies)

[REDACTED]  
Dr. Elena Rossi, Internal Member (Department of Hispanic and Italian Studies)

[REDACTED]  
Dr. Pablo Restrepo-Gautier, Internal Member (Department of Hispanic and Italian Studies)

[REDACTED]  
Dr. Phyllis Senese, External Examiner (Department of History)

[REDACTED]  
Dr. Emmanuel Hérique, Outside Member (Department of French)

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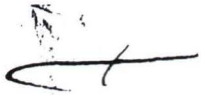
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I would like to thank Gregory P. Andrachuk for his patient and expert assistance in supervising this thesis.

# Frontispiece



  
 La Alférez doná Catalina de  
 Erauso

Bust of Catalina de Erauso (La Monja Alférez) on the grounds of Miramar Palace (the former site of the Dominican convent of el Antiguo), San Sebastián, Guipúzcoa, Spain.

Signature image courtesy of the Archive of the Indies, Seville.

Photo: Barbara Pedrick © 1993

### **Translator's Note**

For this translation I used Joaquín María de Ferrer, *Historia de la Monja Alférez - Doña Catalina de Erauso*, (Madrid: Tipo Renovación, 1918). In transcribing and reformatting the Spanish text I have tried to maintain the paragraphic structure of the original, flawed as it is, except in the few instances of dialogue where, for the sake of clarity, I have re-paragraphed for each change of speaker. Some obvious spelling errors were corrected if they seemed a potential source of confusion. Others were left as found. In formatting the English text I have attempted to arrange paragraphs in contemporary style. As for the translation itself, I have tried to render the writer's words accurately, but with a liberality of interpretation capable of transcending nearly four hundred years of historical, stylistic, linguistic, and psychological evolution, into a readable and lively form. I hope I have succeeded.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "David Hawey Pedraza". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with large, connected letters.

## Introduction

Doña Catalina de Erauso, better known to history as *La Monja Alférez* (The Nun Ensign), was an un-likely heroine of Spain's Golden Age who left a confusing blend of historical and legendary footprints in the Peninsula as well as in Spain's American colonies. The nature of her character and of her alleged exploits caused no small amount of consternation and embarrassment to officials of Church and state at the time of her career. But doña Catalina's story represents perhaps the only truly successful real-life rebellion by a woman against the male-dominated social system of Counter-Reformation Spain for, in the end, doña Catalina had her way, single-handedly defeating the policy of a powerful global empire to subjugate her because of her gender.

The first documented edition of Erauso's purported autobiography still extant was printed in Spanish in 1829, the work of Joaquín María de Ferrer. Ferrer had copied his manuscript from another which had been copied from the original in the Archive of the Indies in 1784 by Juan Bautista Muñoz.<sup>1</sup> Not surprisingly, the authenticity of the autobiography has been unable to completely emerge from the shadow of doubt, remaining in the nether world of quasi-fiction and historical apocrypha as far as modern academic study is concerned.<sup>2</sup>

The work did not appear in English until 1908 when Sir James Fitzmaurice-Kelly published a faithful translation of Ferrer's. Both historians included many footnotes and corroborating documentation which prove beyond a doubt that Erauso really did exist and that many—if not all—of the more bizarre aspects of her story are true.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately this copy has been lost. The original *Relaciones* that appeared in Madrid and Seville very soon after Erauso's return to Spain and the submission of her petition to the Crown in 1624 are more coincident with the details of that petition and less replete with the kind of fabulous details appearing in later versions. No original copies of these survive and historians have had to make do with such re-edited versions as have appeared in other histories. I have used the reprinted versions that appear in J. Ignacio Tellechea I., *Doña Cataliña de Erauso - La Monja Alférez* (San Sebastián: Gráficas ESET), 1992.

<sup>2</sup> This is possibly due to the denigrating opinion of R. Menendez-Pelayo who, apparently without seeing any of the supporting documentation, dismissed the Erauso autobiography as patently false (See Tellechea, 263).

<sup>3</sup> See Joaquín María de Ferrer, *Historia de la Monja Alférez (Doña catalina de Erauso)* (Madrid: Tipo Renovación, 1918), See also James Fitzmaurice-Kelly, *The Nun Ensign, Translated from the*

That Erauso was a transvestite is a well established historical fact. It is also true that she served in Spanish military forces in Chile and Peru.<sup>4</sup> Her purported skill at sword fighting and inclination towards violence perfectly suited the milieu of the events, which was the latter days of the conquest of Spanish America. In her successful petition to Philip IV she admits to a "...particular inclination to take up arms in defense of the Catholic faith and be of service to Your Majesty...".<sup>5</sup> That she was an overt homosexual who made love to women was something that apparently escaped most of her male contemporaries, although a careful reading of her autobiography and related chronicles seems to suggest that very thing.

Erauso became a legend in her own time with at least two editions of her story published shortly after her return from the Americas to Spain in 1624 as well as a popular play.<sup>6</sup> Within three years of her death in Mexico in 1650 a version of her exploits was printed there in what historian Lesley Bird Simpson termed the first novel ever published on the American Continent.<sup>7</sup>

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*Spanish with introduction and notes by James Fitzmaurice Kelly ... Also La Monja Alférez, a play in the original Spanish by J.P. de Montalván* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1908). For the most recent published translation of Erauso's autobiography see Michele Stepto and Gabriel Stepto, trans., *Lieutenant Nun - Memoir of a Basque Transvestite in the New World - Catalina de Erauso*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996). As a source for translating the text, the authors employed the mentioned Tipo Renovación edition, as I did when I began the project in 1982.

<sup>4</sup> Ministerio de Cultura, Archivo General de Indias, *Contratación*, 5408, No. 41. Also, Tellechea, 89-96.

<sup>5</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>6</sup> José Berruezo, *Catalina de Erauso - La Monja Alférez* (San Sebastián: Gráficas Izarra, 1975), 43-59. The original *Relaciones* were the first published offerings of Erauso's story to a public whose appetite for more information had been stimulated by sensational rumors that had accompanied her back to Spain in 1624. They are brief and to the point and no doubt formed the basis for the many versions of the "autobiographies" that followed. From a historical standpoint these earlier accounts are probably the more reliable. The *Relaciones* mention, for example, the historical likelihood that she was in company with her brother Miguel de Erauso in Chile without his being aware of her identity, but do not portray the ironic and tragic event of her killing him by mistake that is one of the colorful but doubtless fanciful episodes of later versions.

<sup>7</sup> Lesley Bird Simpson, *Many Mexicos*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966, 168.

As to the authenticity of Erauso's authorship of any of these accounts, there is no real proof of it. Certainly she may well have participated in their preparation as early editions made much of the phrases "*escrita por ella misma*" or "*dicho por su mesma boca*".<sup>8</sup>

The first-person narrative in Ferrer's book consists of a series of exciting picaresque episodes—some obviously pure fantasy and bordering on the spectacular. These episodes seem to have been based on those that originally appeared in the first *Relaciones* with the addition of more entertaining details. But the narrative, apart from its obviously fictitious sections and often faulty historical accuracy as regards dates (some of which could be attributable to typographical errors) corresponds to many of the details and circumstances of Erauso's petitions to the Crown.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, the work's writing style, if not its content, is distinctly prosaic and as such does not suggest the talents of a professional ghostwriter or forger. Finally, in spite of this lack of literary style and the possibility of generous editorial assistance, a personal touch is perceptible throughout. Therefore, after a careful examination of this literary and historical evidence it seems reasonable to allow that many of the passages in the work translated here are, at the very least, inspired by Erauso's own exploits and adventures.<sup>10</sup>

## **I. Prologue**

### **1. The Cultural Ascendance of the Spanish Church**

Doña Catalina de Erauso has been portrayed as everything from a valiant soldier and a devout nun to a charlatan, an imposter, and even a hoax. But what kind of a person

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<sup>8</sup> Berruezo, 45-47, and Tellechea, 74.

<sup>9</sup> Ministerio, No. 41.

<sup>10</sup> The line between the legendary and the historical has almost always been blurred in works about Erauso, from her own purported autobiographies up until the most recent versions. In Stepto (1996) the reliability of all the details of Erauso's story seems to be accepted without question. If this were so, Erauso would have certainly been defamed for the the number of capital crimes she is portrayed as having committed, but these alleged incidents are without any historical documentation. For a convincing attempt to separate fact from fiction in the life of Erauso see Tellechea, 1992.

was doña Catalina really? Given the ambiguous nature of the literary and historical references that exist, as well as that of the subjects of gender and sexuality (so central to the enduring fascination with Erauso) we may never know for certain. Furthermore, it is not the purpose of this translation to settle the matter unequivocally, but rather to allow readers of English more direct access to primary sources aided by prefatory material and numerous annotations. However, in formulating even a hypothetical answer to this question, it will be helpful to consider the complex social and religious environment that engendered her.

In the Spain of the early and especially later Middle Ages Christians were preoccupied primarily with winning the battle for control of the Iberian peninsula in military terms. Their chief opponents in this struggle were the forces of Islam. This period, known as the *reconquista*, lasted almost seven hundred years. During the *reconquista* strict adherents to established Christian religious practices belonged for the most part to an economic and social elite consisting of the clergy, the nobility, and the Christian segment of the growing artisan/bourgeois class in the towns. The masses, on the other hand, while considering themselves nominally Christian, remained illiterate and untrained in the precepts and values of Christianity and widely embraced superstition and magic.<sup>11</sup> In addition, their moral values and behavior were quite far removed from what Church doctrine prescribed.<sup>12</sup>

This situation existed without too much concern from the clergy until near the end of the fifteenth century. In 1480, by which time the military defeat of Muslim power in Spain was a virtual certainty, the synod of Alcalá issued the first marching orders in a

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<sup>11</sup> Anne J. Cruz and Mary Elizabeth Perry, eds., *Culture and Control in Counter-Reformation Spain*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), 1.

<sup>12</sup> Henry Kamen, *Inquisition and Society in Spain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985). Kamen states on page 205, "In pre-Tridentine Spain, a low level of religious awareness and the persistence of traditional moral practices combined to produce far greater sexual freedom among all age groups than is commonly imagined." I suggest that the behavior of the common Spanish folk, if not their actual moral values, may be perceived in the details of works such as the *Milagros de Nuestra Señora* of Berceo in much the same way as Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* offers a glimpse of the earthy ways of English Medieval peasants.

sweeping catechization campaign soon to be directed towards the Spanish masses and at children in particular.<sup>13</sup> In 1497 the synod of bishop Francisco Ximénez de Cisneros confirmed this policy and introduced the stipulation of mandatory attendance at Sunday mass. The synod of 1536 headed by Cardinal Tavera added more detail to the instruction of children and restricted marriage to those couples who were able to recite the four basic prayers: the *Pater, Ave, Credo, and Salve*. Dedieu writes

Such a requirement at a key moment in life was significant: the synodal decisions were no longer abstract, but were to be carried out. This was the spirit of Trent *avant la lettre*.<sup>14</sup>

The issue of catechism was pursued vigorously at the Council of Trent by Spanish delegates.<sup>15</sup> The clergy of the Spanish Church had pioneered this policy and believed in its value for consolidating its popular influence. The elite groups of the earlier historical period mentioned previously were able to exert greater control over the less educated masses through catechism. This control was strengthened by the strictures already mentioned (*e.g.*, on marrying couples) as well as by later ones that actually required yearly examinations of parishioners. With time, a great degree of religiosity and obedience to authority was inculcated in the peasants of Spain through the aggressive catechist policies the Spanish Church initiated in 1480.

Another arm that was used to enforce the expanding political and cultural authority of the Spanish Church was the Inquisition. Established the same year as the

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<sup>13</sup> Cruz, 3.

<sup>14</sup> Jean Pierre Dedieu, essay entitled "Christianization in New Castile Catechism, Communion, Mass, and Confirmation in the Toledo Archbishopric, 1540-1650", in Cruz, 4. In the synod of 1601, Cardinal Rojas added learning the Ten Commandments and the commandments of the Church to the list of requirements for marrying couples. (*Ibid.*, 5-6).

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 4-5. The ecumenical council known as the Council of Trent opened in that city on 13 December, 1545, and closed there on 4 December, 1563. Its main object was to define the doctrines of the Church in the face of the rise of Protestantism. A further object was a thorough reform of the inner life of the Church by correcting the numerous abuses that had developed within it (which abuses had largely inspired the Protestant Reformation in the first place).

synod of Alcalá began the institutionalization of catechism<sup>16</sup>, the Inquisition was primarily concerned with the matter of heresy. However, the Inquisition's area of jurisdiction was soon increased to include other crimes, such as witchcraft and sexual deviance.<sup>17</sup> This had a profound effect on the relationship of the Holy Office and women.

## 2. The Origins of Spanish Misogyny

Misogyny, rooted deep in human consciousness, is by no means the exclusive province of Christianity. The process of the devaluation of the Feminine is evident in many cultures—including the early Jewish. The social trends which promoted misogyny then were driven by the fear of a dangerous enemy (the “Canaanites” of the Bible) who revered natural life—and the feminine principle—through the exaltation and ritualization of sensual experience. The religious reaction of Jewish patriarchs (and the Christian ones who evolved philosophically from them) to this was the devaluation of natural life, of everyday existence, and of the physical body, in favour of the spirit. The focus of religion shifted to the concept of the immortality of the soul and the means to its salvation (the soul having been the main casualty in the allegedly woman-precipitated Fall from Grace). As the gods of one religious phase were transformed into the devils of the next, the Feminine, as an expression of what Whitmont calls “the inwardness of being in the world,”<sup>18</sup> was rejected. A new order of patriarchy was eventually established which replaced the old matriarchal images of the Goddess—virgin, mother, whore—with the concept of the unitary Father deity. This was accompanied by an attitude that promoted the subjugation of physical nature by the concentrated energy of spiritual consciousness.

Misogynistic themes occur throughout all periods of European literature and can be traced back to the ancient myths of the Jews, the Greeks, and the Romans. One of the earliest examples of misogynistic literature is found in the writings of the Greek, Hesiod. In Hesiod's tale Pandora is cast as the *femme fatale* of Man's Fall from Grace.

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<sup>16</sup> Kamen, 30.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 205-214.

<sup>18</sup> Edward C. Whitmont, *Return of the Goddess*, (New York: Crossroad Publishing Co., 1982).

Pandora was originally the Great Goddess, giver of all things, ruler of gods and men alike. But with the advent of patriarchy came a male-dominated pantheon, and her story was changed to reflect the new psycho-social reality.<sup>19</sup> Hesiod tells how Prometheus stole fire and gave it to men, against the will of Zeus, who planned revenge by creating something so attractive to men that they could not resist—combining in it the seeds of their own moral destruction. Pandora, re-invented and demoted from her former status, is given to Epimetheus who accepts her along with her box of wedding gifts from the other gods. In her first fatal act of wifely disobedience Pandora opens the box and all the evils of the world are released to plague Man forever.

About three hundred years later a version of creation was written with a scenario remarkably similar to Hesiod's tale. This is found in the Biblical book of Genesis where God, almost as an afterthought, creates Eve from Adam's rib. The implication of this anatomical hierarchy seems to be that Woman does not exist in her own right but only as an accessory to Man—an acceptable solution to a problem in the absence of any better one.<sup>20</sup>

The mythical episodes of Pandora and Eve, treating of Man's introduction to Woman and his subsequent Fall from Grace, support the ideological principle of Woman's inherent weakness, deviousness, and propensity for evil. Pandora is warned not to open the box. But, because she has been deliberately created with a deceitful nature, she cannot resist doing so and irrevocable disaster results. Eve listens to the advice of a serpent and convinces her innocent husband to do the same. Adam trusts her, follows her advice, and ends up losing almost everything. If only these men had maintained firmer control over their women, the stories imply, the mother of all catastrophes would have been averted.

It is significant that the Biblical story of the Fall needed no special interpretation to be understood as misogynistic. Its intended moral is obvious all: Woman is

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<sup>19</sup> Robert Graves, *The Greek Myths*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1955), I, 148.

<sup>20</sup> Gen., 2:18-24; 3:1-24.

intrinsically evil and therefore dangerous. Almost all subsequent Christian misogynistic tracts may be seen as derived from the belief that Eve's sin was an expression of Woman's nature and is passed as a hereditary trait to all her daughters. This story more than any other was used by the catechists of Medieval and Counter-Reformation Spain to drive home the point to their flocks: Woman is dangerous in the extreme and must be strictly controlled.<sup>21</sup>

The catechists had many other sources to bolster the arguments given in their sermons during the now obligatory Sunday masses. Many Biblical stories were interpreted in the manner of Hesiod by later commentators to increase their misogynistic value and Spanish preachers relied on them heavily.<sup>22</sup>

This effort by the Church was partly a reaction to the glorification of womanhood that had been the favorite theme of the courtly love poets and medieval troubadours. Later, Renaissance humanists such as Dutch monk Desiderius Erasmus, Spanish expatriate scholar Juan Luis Vives, and martyred civil servant Sir Thomas More wrote treatises rejecting the idea of keeping women in ignorance in favour of elevating them to a more dignified status through education. Erasmus was a most influential writer of this movement—especially in Spain—where his works enjoyed great popularity from 1527 until 1535, encouraged by Catherine of Aragon, daughter of Spain's Catholic Majesties, Ferdinand and Isabella, and later the first wife of Henry VIII of England.<sup>23</sup>

In spite of early acceptance and success in Spain, the Spanish Church succeeded in suppressing Erasmian literature and thinking by linking it to the growing menace of Protestantism. As a result, many Erasmians who had tried to combine careers as high ranking clerics with liberal humanism in Spain fell victim to the Inquisition. Many were

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<sup>21</sup> Katherine M. Rogers, *The Troublesome Helpmate—A History Of Misogyny in Literature* (Seattle: University of Seattle Press, 1966), 41. See also Bettina L. Knapp, *Women in Myth* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), 47-50.

<sup>22</sup> *E.g.*, the Old Testament stories of Samson and Delilah, David and Bathsheba, and Susanna.

<sup>23</sup> Malveena McKendrick, *Women and Society in the Spanish Drama of the Golden Age: A Study of the 'Muger varonil'* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 5-10.

tortured and burned along with their books.<sup>24</sup>

### 3. The Institutions of Enclosure for Women in Counter-Reformation Spain

Control of culture in all its aspects became the cornerstone of public policy in Counter-Reformation Spain. This policy extended to all conceivable realms of culture but by far the most important was the area of religion, where complete integration of the populace into one indivisible church was the unequivocal goal. Among the marginalized groups that were targeted by this policy (*moriscos*, *conversos*, apostates, the un-lettered, etc.) none were of greater concern than women. Deemed morally weak by the misogynistic thinking that pervaded the Church, women were viewed as the greatest threat to Christian morality.<sup>25</sup> Further compounding the problem was the fact that women, unlike the other groups, crossed all lines of social class and ethnicity, were to be found everywhere, and could not be easily separated from the main body of loyal adherents to Church dogma.

The Franciscan monk Juan de la Cerda, in a book published in 1599, exhorted parents to guard their daughters “like dragons,” reflecting a widespread belief in Counter-Reformation Spanish society that virginity and chastity were the most important virtues in women. That virginity was to be protected at all costs indicates the deep concern about limiting the presence of un-chaste women in society as these were seen as a profound threat to the salvation of *men*’s souls.<sup>26</sup> The fact that a number of institutions had to concern themselves with containing and controlling a considerable a population of un-chaste women demonstrates the failure of de la Cerda’s warning. But institutions of enclosure for women in Counter-Reformation Spain included the chaste as well as the un-chaste if we consider the convent and marriage along with the brothel, the Magdalen House, and the prison, for all represent examples of societal control of female sexuality.

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<sup>24</sup> Kamen, 62-100.

<sup>25</sup> Cruz, xvii-xviii.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 124. The threat such un-chaste women might cause to their own souls or to those of other women was apparently of less concern than that which they caused to men’s.

For women who ended up in the enclosure of marriage—and an enclosure it was—domestic security came at a high price. For example, the *Siete Partidas* of King Alfonso X (known as Alfonso the Wise) unequivocally transferred control of whatever wealth may have accrued from a bride's wedding dowries to her husband.<sup>27</sup> Married women were restricted from taking almost any kind of legal action without permission. Mckendrick writes

She could accept, but not reject, any inheritance ex testamento and ab intestado without the permission of her husband; she could not enter or break a contract; she could not go to court either to prosecute or to defend.<sup>28</sup>

In Medieval times it is arguable that women who were unhappily married may have had greater recourse to relieve their frustration by consummating affairs with lovers who offered them diversion, and even leaving their husbands and marrying again without benefit of divorce. The husbands of such women were liable to be involved in such extra-marital shenanigans themselves (a pattern of behavior reflected in the courtly love tradition—the reality of which was more often carnal than platonic) and more likely to forgive an erring wife. Furthermore, then as now, there were many other reasons why marriages might fail. When they did, the attitudes of spouses who had not been heavily indoctrinated towards intolerance were naturally more pragmatic. Poska writes

When late medieval marriages failed, parishioners often took matters into their own hands. Some couples agreed to split up. Others simply abandoned their unhappy lives and moved to other places, where they created new personae and new families. Sympathetic to the plight of unhappily married couples, communities were often complicit

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<sup>27</sup> Alain Saint-Saëns, ed. *Religion, Body and Gender in Early Modern Spain*, (San Francisco: Mellen Research University Press, 1991), 111.

<sup>28</sup> McKendrick, 16-17.

in hiding bigamous relationships.<sup>29</sup>

But, Poska continues

As the sacrament of marriage came under increased attack from Protestant reformers [ ] the Council of Trent formulated more restrictive regulations concerning marriage which, among other things, facilitated the location and prosecution of those persons whose actions desecrated the sacrament<sup>30</sup>

The options of married women were severely curtailed by the expanding power of the Tridentine Church. Ecclesiastical authorities had become extremely concerned with protecting the sanctity of marriage and did not shy away from opportunities to make an example of the wages of mortal sin—especially when it came to female adulterers.

In the society of Counter Reformation Spain, ballads like *la bella malmaridada*, originally popular and folkloric, were absorbed into cultured forms, namely drama. This may well have been because, as the freedom of women became more restricted under the pressure of the Church, their situation became ever more *dramatic* and therefore grist for the mill of playwrights. “The whole debate about woman’s position [in Spanish society] was, after all, full of titillating dramatic possibilities...”<sup>31</sup> Now, not only might they have to face an angry husband but also an ecclesiastical court of the Holy Office where the

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<sup>29</sup> Mary E. Giles, ed. *Women in the Inquisition-Spain and the New World*. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 190.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 190. See also <http://history.hanover.edu/early/trent.htm> and <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15030c.htm>. In the Tridentine decrees from the Twenty-fourth Session, DOCTRINE ON THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY, CANON XII states: “If any one saith, that matrimonial causes do not belong to ecclesiastical judges; let him be anathema.” This corroborates Poska’s assertion that Tridentine decrees “facilitated the location and prosecution of those persons whose actions desecrated the sacrament” in that ecclesiastical courts were given jurisdiction in cases involving matrimony and wielded the power to detain, interrogate, and prosecute delinquents.

<sup>31</sup> McKendrick, 44.

prescribed punishment for adultery was severe.<sup>32</sup>

While women's literary expressions were effectively silenced in this milieu there were some notably sympathetic male voices speaking for the female, such as Marcela's soliloquy in Cervantes' *Don Quijote* and Lope de Vega's *La vengadora de las mujeres*. These, along with such dissident clerics as Fray Luis de León<sup>33</sup> were among the few voices of feminism at the time. But for the rest, marriage, as defined and enforced by the Tridentine Church, became a virtual prison for an unhappy wife, one from which any attempted escape—even a temporary one—could bring ignominious punishment including imprisonment, flogging, or even death.

Another form of enclosure for women was the convent. In the convent, women might at least find freedom from marriage and childbirth. There, many women lived in a complex inner world of feminine spirituality—prayer, sanctity, and good works—away from the distractions of men and sex. In addition, certain forms of self-empowerment were available to nuns as to no one else, namely the opportunity to perform deeds of saintly behavior and acts of asceticism which could enhance their own status and that of their communities. But in response to a reputation for laxity that had existed since medieval times, the Council of Trent made a point of tightening the regulations pertaining to the cloistering of nuns. They did this for the same reasons that they had increased the strictures on marriage: to reduce the opportunities for sexual contact outside of the institution.

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<sup>32</sup> Saint-Saëns, 119. In this essay Anne J. Cruz states, "According to Iberian law, a husband or a father had the right to kill a wife or daughter's illicit sexual partner, but he was also obligated to kill the woman." If he didn't, there was nothing to stop the Church from meting out its own punishment should the case be brought to its attention. If a woman was wronged by an adulterous husband she had no recourse against him, but she could sue his correspondent (See also McKendrick, 15, and Cruz, 154).

<sup>33</sup> Fray Luis de León, in his *La perfecta casada* written in 1583, was the first orthodox cleric to add his voice to literary writers in praise of women. Perhaps the only true feminist of his time, his appraisal of women was realistic rather than idealized. The churchman wrote that, while women are physically and emotionally weaker than men, this does not make them inferior to men. He stressed the principle of women's nobility, dignity, and equality, even suggesting their moral superiority over men owing to the fact that, if it is harder for women to be good due to their inherent weakness, then goodness in women has even greater value than in men (See McKendrick, 10-11).

This reputation for laxity was engendered partly by the tradition of *devotos*, men who appeared to be enthralled by the saintliness of certain nuns and sought opportunities to spend time with them. The true motives of some of these relationships were suspected by some clerical authorities to be more physical than spiritual and this may well have influenced Tridentine delegates. Perry writes:

seduction persisted in the convents of Counter-Reformation Spain despite official attempts to enforce cloistering [ ] and forbid visits of nuns by *devotos*, those men who wooed them in a courtship of sexual tension heightened by presumptions of purity and piety.<sup>34</sup>

Some females were committed to the cloister as children by parents eager to be rid of the responsibility to care for and protect them.<sup>35</sup> As for the adult women who entered convents (such as widows and spinsters), not all professed or even intended to, maintaining the status of resident lay sisters. Their status was profoundly different than that of a professed nun who could not renounce her vows, once taken.<sup>36</sup>

The antithesis of the convent was the brothel. Tolerated as a necessary evil in Counter-Reformation Spain as it had been in medieval times, the brothel was reconciled with the goal of protecting the chastity of women in society by the theory that men, especially younger men, by having access to that incorrigible class of women who chose to sell themselves, would be less likely to attempt to seduce those socially more valued women whose chastity was protected by their families and would later on qualify to become suitable wives. As well, the theory went on, the brothel diverted men from the

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<sup>34</sup> Saint-Saens, 67 and 69, n.11. Cloistering of male orders, although not unknown, was apparently less of a concern, as was the chastity of men in general.

<sup>35</sup> Catalina de Erauso was such an example, as we shall see.

<sup>36</sup> Erauso's case benefitted accordingly when the fact that she had never been a professed nun was unequivocally determined. Had it been otherwise she would have been obliged to return to the life of the religious. The sobriquet "La Monja Alférez" is, therefore, partly misleading; Erauso did achieve the military rank of *alférez* but was never more than a novice in the Dominican order.

even more egregious sexual sins of adultery, incest, homosexuality, and rape.<sup>37</sup>

This policy of allowing prostitution to exist entailed a responsibility on the part of Church and civil authorities to integrate it into the socio-religious order. This daunting task was attempted through laws regulating the activities of prostitutes. These laws were proclaimed and administered by local authorities at the behest of the royal government but most often served to regulate the activities of prostitutes in such a way as to assure that their activities were profitable to brothel administrators. Thus private and independent brothels were suppressed while an effort was made to incorporate the business under the auspices of public brothels, the administrators of which were often favored individuals like Alonso Yáñez Fajardo who was granted a license to operate the brothel of Málaga by the Catholic Kings in gratitude for his services in certain campaigns of the *reconquista*.<sup>38</sup>

Proponents of legalized prostitution argued that the brothel system protected women from the evil exploitation that usually results from association with pimps. This paternalistic assumption served several social functions. It reinforced the position of clerics and civil authority figures in their claim that they were acting with compassion towards these women. As well, subjecting prostitutes to official regulation and control neutralized the danger that such women posed to society in the sense that it portrayed them as weak and vulnerable rather than sexual deviants threatening to the social order. At the same time this notion of vulnerability provided an explanation of why women become prostitutes that was compatible with the philosophy of the Church. Prostitutes who lived within the regulations (which also required them to leave off work and attend church on Sundays) could theoretically count on protection. Those who stubbornly clung to the freelance tradition, however, were considered fair game for the law or for whatever violence might befall them.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Cruz, 126.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 126-127.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 129.

Magdalen Houses, another form of enclosure for women, were established as halfway houses to help women who wanted to quit the life of the whore. Some of these began as convents in which women might become novices and eventually enter a religious order. Others were organized along less stringent lines so as not to discourage women who might have the will to reform but lack the extraordinary self-discipline required to become a full-fledged religious. Nevertheless, life within the Magdalen House could be severe consisting of a regimen of prayer and work that was designed to purge the inmates of their sinfulness. In addition to reforming prostitutes, Magdalen Houses also provided shelter for women who were destitute and lacked the dowry necessary for marriage or convent. Yet other inmates were placed in Magdalen Houses for correction by husbands or fathers.<sup>40</sup>

For those loose, un-chaste women who still remained beyond the reach of these institutions, Philip III called on Madre Magdalena de Gerónimo in 1608 to draw upon her many years in the business of converting prostitutes to direct a women's prison.<sup>41</sup> Madre Magdalena prescribed severe discipline for those women who would not willingly become penitent Magdalens:

The inmates would have their heads shaven and wear only burlap or rough clothing: they would be forbidden to speak together or to have visitors from outside. The five people in charge of the inmates were to guard them vigorously with courage and "a hundred eyes." Inmates who talked would be gagged, and those who tried to run away were to be chained and pilloried. To ensure that this discipline would bring about their conversion to better ways, she recommended that they be held for one or two years and that they be branded when they left the prison so that they could be identified if they should be returned to prison. "This prison will be a warning," wrote the nun, "for many lost women to collect themselves and live well, through the fear

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 140-141.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 135.

and horror of this punishment and pain”<sup>42</sup>

In spite of these measures to enclose un-chaste women and provide charitable support for those who wished to reform, many so-called Jezebels and Magdalens slipped through the cracks of the system and continued to circulate among the general population. The economic decline in Spain, in full swing by the seventeenth-century, most directly affected women, especially abandoned wives, destitute widows, daughters, and single mothers. Many of those among them who chose to sell their bodies probably did so out of dire necessity.<sup>43</sup>

Legalized prostitution in Spain continued until 1623 when Phillip IV decreed an end to brothels throughout his kingdom, thereby pushing the problem back out onto the streets.<sup>44</sup>

#### **4. The Tradition of Transvestism in Medieval and Renaissance Europe**

In the Medieval and Renaissance period there were a number of occasions and circumstances when it was acceptable and even customary for women to dress as men for their personal safety. These included journeys (often undertaken for the purpose of flight), hunting, riots, and concealment from invading troops. In these cases, female transvestism was simply the exercise of a viable option for women who were bent on survival in difficult times.

The most common circumstance that might require such an option was traveling, a dangerous occupation in the best of times, even for men. For women, especially those who might venture to travel alone, it was extremely so. In addition to presenting the figure of a man rather than a vulnerable woman while enroute, male clothing was much more practical for the purpose than long skirts.

Another occasion that allowed female cross-dressing was the carnival and other

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 136.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 141.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 139.

such festivities. ‘*El mundo al revés*’<sup>45</sup> was a powerful image in Counter-Reformation Spain and while the carnival created the opportunity for cross-dressing of the most temporary and frivolous sort, it may well have given some women an opportunity to experience the psycho-erotic power inherent in the practice of transvestism. Having tasted this heady brew, combined with the access to male power and privilege that dressing in male attire could provide, the idea of cross-dressing on a more regular basis may well have taken root in any number of female minds.<sup>46</sup>

The reasons why women might dress as men varied according to social class and position. These ranged from a desperate need to flee from abusive situations and unwanted marriages, practicing criminal activities or carrying on illicit love affairs, to participating in the sport of hunting. Obviously poor women did not concern themselves with hunting for sport any more than women of higher social status pursued careers as highway robbers or muggers. But, some women to whom the advantages and rewards of dressing as men were obvious, deliberately set out to do so. These were sometimes common criminals escaping from the law or simply disguising their identity in order to commit criminal acts with greater freedom. Many of this class make up the historical annals of female transvestites through the existence of court records.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> “*El mundo al revés*” expressed the fear that the social order was being undermined by events and by certain dangerous individuals. An example of the “*el mundo al revés*” motif is found in Lope’s play *Fuenteovejuna*. The play tells the story of the sexual abuse a knight of Calatrava perpetrates on the young women of his village. When a young peasant man prevents him from raping another young girl by threatening him with his own crossbow, the nobleman is incensed by the act which he considers criminal interference with his Rights of Lordship. He complains to his manservant, “*Que a un capitán cuya espada tiemblan Córdoba y Granada, un labrador, un mozuelo ponga una ballesta al pecho! El mundo se acaba, Flores.*” But things get even worse for Lope’s villain. When the lord prepares to hang the offender he is attacked by a group of women-turned-avenging-amazons who finish him off in a scene of bloody mayhem and murder. [Eugenio Suárez-Galbrán Guerra, ed., *Antología del teatro del Siglo de Oro* (Madrid: Editorial Orígenes), 1989, 57-128].

<sup>46</sup> Dekker, Rudolf M. and van de Pol, Lotte, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism in Early Modern Europe*, London: The MacMillan Press Ltd., 1989, 6-7.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*, 2-3.

## 5. Female Transvestites on the Spanish Stage

The dramatic stage was a common venue for the representation of female transvestites and such characters abounded in the theatre of Golden-Age Spain more than any other. In fact, the *mujer varonil* was a perennial favorite of the Spanish theatre throughout most of its heyday. Plays featuring this kind of character include *El esclavo del demonio* (Mira de Amescua, 1612), *Los hijos de la barbuda* (Luis Vélez de Guevara, 1612), *La condesa bandolera o la ninfa del cielo* (Tirso de Molina, 1613), and *La belígera española* (Ricardo de Turia, 1616), to name only a few. But the greatest creator of this often transvestite character was Lope de Vega, who presented various versions of the *mujer varonil* (not all of them cross-dressers) in more than fifty separate plays.<sup>48</sup> This singular accomplishment may well have been a reflection of the playwright's greatest interest: Lope loved women.<sup>49</sup> In these dramatic compositions Lope expressed strong opinions on woman's role in society and many of his works comprise a serious and sympathetic examination of the subject. His "*bandolera*" character, who appears in a number of his plays, is perhaps the most daring example of a full-blown female rebel against the male dominated society of the time. But, as riveting a character as she may have been, the *mujer varonil* of the stage was a far cry from the real-life male impersonator Catalina de Erauso. The former were invariably products of the male imagination and male prejudices, however talented, liberal, and sympathetic the writer. By the end of the play these characters were usually transformed to a degree of domesticity that satisfied the moral and ideological requirements of the male-dominated society—a state to which the historical doña Catalina de Erauso was never reduced.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> McKendrick, 311. It is significant to note that Catalina de Erauso's life co-incided with this popular theatrical trend.

<sup>49</sup> It might also be said that Lope had more than a passing interest in women of ambivalent sexual nature as well as an awareness of them that far surpassed most of his contemporaries. This is suggested by an excerpt from his letter to the Duke of Sessa: "*Dizenme que estan in Madrid mui quexosas mugeres de que, siendo tan faciles, aya onbres presos por traydores a la naturaleza.*" (McKendrick, 27).

<sup>50</sup> Erauso's legendary persona did suffer this *Taming of the Shrew* sort of fate in *La Monja Alferez*, a play written by Lope de Vega disciple J.P. de Montalván in 1626.

## 6. Transvestism and Sexuality in the Case of Catalina de Erauso

In the present era the very mention of transvestism inevitably provokes questions of sexuality. The connection was not taken for granted in the past—at least as far as women were concerned—for we have seen that the tradition of female cross-dressing comprised a number of different aspects apart from purely sexual ones. Still, it is known that female cross-dressing was undertaken for the purpose of sexual arousal by prostitutes.<sup>51</sup> As well, the great popularity of the female male-impersonator character on the Spanish stage appealed strongly to prurient male interests. “Nowhere but in the theatre could a man publicly enjoy the sight of a female leg clearly outlined from ankle to thigh.”<sup>52</sup>

But these instances represented occasions for the sexual pleasure of men, not of women. The sexual motives women might have derived from cross-dressing are not so easily determined as very few references to homosexuality among women in Counter-Reformation Spain exist.<sup>53</sup> But Dekker postulates,

Nowadays, female homosexuality is not a self-evident reason for changing one’s sex, because women who sexually prefer women to men do not usually reject their female identity. However, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries dressing and living as a man made it possible to legitimise a sexual relationship with

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<sup>51</sup> McKendrick., 8.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 320-321

<sup>53</sup> Kamen writes “The Inquisition was equally harsh to sodomizers (whether of men or of women), but tended to restrict [the prescribed punishment of ] death by burning only to those aged over twenty-five.” (Kamen, 208). This sentence is the only one in Kamens’s study that might conceivably allow for the existence of female sodomizers in Counter-Reformation Spain, and probably doesn’t. Homosexual acts between women in this period seemed to have been either unknown or ignored. For an enlightening and detailed study of a case of female homosexuality in Renaissance Italy see Judith Brown, *Immodest Acts: The Life of a Lesbian Nun* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).

another woman.<sup>54</sup>

Dekker goes on to argue that for lesbian women of the era, transvestism was a necessary psychological step that enabled female homosexual relationships. Based on this logic we may make many inferences in the works portraying the life of Catalina de Erauso and these assume an even greater degree of credibility when the central character is viewed in her historical totality.

### **7. Synopsis of the autobiography of Catalina de Erauso**

The synopsis of Erauso's present autobiography is as follows: In the year 1600, in the Spanish Basque town of San Sebastián, the fifteen year old novice Catalina de Erauso dwells in a Dominican convent of nuns. She has been raised there since the age of four by her mother's sister, the prioress doña Ursula.

On the eve of taking her final vows, enraged by a beating from a professed nun, she seizes an opportunity to escape. Taking a scissors, needle, thread, and some coins, she bolts and hides herself in a nearby grove where she quickly transforms her habit into a the outfit of a typical young lad. Cutting off her hair, she sets off down the road to seek her fortune.

After some initial blunders which cause her to become more acquainted with the ways of the world, she secures employment with certain eminent men as a page. Within a few years she has developed a full-blown masculine persona and succumbs to the irresistible lure of the Indies. After one last incognito visit to her hometown, during which she is taken by almost everyone she meets for a gallant young man, she departs for the Indies as the cabin boy to the captain of a royal galleon.<sup>55</sup>

Arriving in Panama, she steals five hundred pesos from her master and jumps ship, heading off to the Pacific coast and Peru. There she secures employment managing a

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<sup>54</sup> Dekker, 55.

<sup>55</sup> Interestingly, Erauso hints that she was recognized by some of the sisters in her former convent (see last paragraph, Chapter I).

mercator's store in the town of Trujillo. All goes well until she becomes entangled in an intrigue involving her employer and his mistress. Subjected to a public humiliation, she purchases weapons and attacks her foe with bloody effect.

Obligated to slink away from Trujillo, she attempts to start again in Lima but soon is undone by a growing appetite for the company of young women. This time she escapes her troubles by enlisting with the forces being recruited to put down the Indian uprising in Chile. She marches off to Concepción where she finds herself in the company of Captain Miguel de Erauso, her beloved eldest brother.

Attached to the trusting captain Erauso as an aide (who is not aware of her true identity), she soon loses her comfortable posting through another indiscretion and is sent off to the front where she experiences the bitter reality of combat. Distinguishing herself in battle, she is commissioned a lieutenant. When the commander of her cavalry company is killed she is given a temporary captaincy. As the cruel campaign against the Araucano rebels continues, she incurs the wrath of her superiors when she brutally slays a charismatic Indian leader whom the governor wanted taken alive. Passed over for a permanent promotion, she is returned to Concepción and placed on half-pay.

Depressed and suffering from battle fatigue, she begins a pattern of compulsive gambling and brawling. When she seriously wounds an opponent in a disagreement, she seeks sanctuary in a Franciscan monastery to avoid military justice. One night a fellow officer comes in and asks her to act as his second in a duel at midnight. She sneaks out of the convent with her friend and they meet their adversaries in a very dark alley. When the duelists kill each other, she defends herself against the other man's second. As her sword pierces her opponent's chest, she recognizes by his dying cries the voice of her brother Miguel. She runs back to the convent and watches from the choir with anguish as her brother's body is laid out in the chapel.<sup>56</sup>

Insane with grief, she escapes from the convent and takes up with two other deserters heading back up the coast towards Peru. Turning inland, they ascend the

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<sup>56</sup> This episode, like some others in the autobiography translated herein, has no historical basis in fact.

escarpment and soon are lost in the barren Andean highlands. Her starving companions dead, she finally falls exhausted, ready to give up the ghost. Two mestizo ranch hands from the eastern slope discover her nearly lifeless form and take her to the house of their employer where she is cared for and restored. There the unmarried daughter of the family takes a liking to Catalina, who once again is wearing the bloom of health. The family, prosperous owners of land and herds, offers a handsome dowry for the marriage which Catalina accepts. But, when in the town of Tucumán, she manages to get her hands on the greater part of the money and absconds with it.

Wandering from town to town, she soon gambles away the money while earning a reputation as a con artist, a bad loser, and a dangerous outlaw. Arrested and charged with a capital crime in La Paz, she cleverly plays church against state and escapes the gallows.<sup>57</sup>

She travels on to Cuzco and before long crosses swords with a fellow rascal known as the "New Cid". A bloody street fight results in his death and her serious injury. At death's door, she receives the Last Rites and confesses her whole story to a priest. To everyone's surprise she recovers and is quietly taken into a monastery to avoid the law which by now pursues her diligently

Her secret out, she flees once again for Lima but is intercepted at the bridge of the Apurimac by a posse. After a bloody fight she gets away to Guamanga but is cornered again after being recognized by the posters which are now being circulated. Hopelessly surrounded, the Bishop of Guamanga intercedes and persuades her to surrender to him.

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<sup>57</sup> The details of this episode (see Chapter 12, p. 88), whether or not another of the work's fictitious embellishments, are especially interesting as they underline the conflicting jurisdiction of Church and secular authorities in criminal cases in Counter Reformation Spain and its territories. Before Erauso's scheduled execution her confessor arrives and suggests that she might cheat the gallows if, when she receives communion, she spit the Host back out into her hand and shout, "I am the Church!", which she does. The officiating priest orders no one to approach her and, upon finishing the Mass, summons the bishop to the jail. The bishop orders her brought to the cathedral under guard where she is subjected to careful cleansing ritual. Once inside, she claims sanctuary and is beyond the reach of the law. On another occasion (see Chapter 12, p. 88) Erauso's frustration conquers her piety when, wrongly convicted and facing execution, she refuses confession altogether, becoming "a Luther," that most anathematic character to Catholics of the Counter-Reformation.

She confesses all to the Bishop, even submitting to an examination by midwives who pronounce her indubitably female and a virgin to boot.<sup>58</sup>

Catalina is placed in a convent in Lima until word comes from Spain that she was never a professed nun. Released back into the world, she discards her nun's habit once again and sets out for Spain.

Disembarking in Cádiz in 1624, she finds herself hailed by crowds everywhere. She is immediately arrested by Church authorities, but then mysteriously released by order of the Count Duke of Olivares. After an aborted trip to Rome during which she is arrested in France for a Spanish spy, she returns to Spain and appears before Philip IV where she boldly presents the king with a petition outlining her military service and seeking compensation.<sup>59</sup> The king refers her to the Council of the Indies with the result that she receives an annual pension of 800 escudos.

She departs for Rome again, this time by sea. There, Pope Urban VIII indulges her and grants her dispensation to continue dressing as a man, ignoring the criticism his action provokes from scandalized conservatives.

Thus ends the autobiography of doña Catalina de Erauso.

Even without the fictional embellishments contained in her published memoirs, Erauso was clearly one of the few women of Counter-Reformation Spain (very possibly the only one) to effectively escape, in full public view, the enclosing and confining strictures imposed on women by the Church and Crown—and get away with it. The measure of her success is seen in her receipt of a pension for her military service after an interview with Phillip IV, and a dispensation to continue dressing as a man from Pope Urban VIII.<sup>60</sup> Furthermore, she became an extremely popular personality in her home country and abroad, the equivalent of a modern-day superstar. Her narrative is all the

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<sup>58</sup> Erauso's certified virgin status was another boon to her credibility, especially when she stood before the Pope.

<sup>59</sup> Ministerio, 41.

<sup>60</sup> Simpson, 167.

more amazing when taken as the daring and sincere confession of a sexual misfit acting in a rigidly controlled totalitarian society that was so shocked by her revelations that, in this one case, it seems to have transcended its own natural intolerance and vindictiveness and hailed an incorrigible rebel as a conquering hero.

But, given the previous evidence concerning the uncompromising attitude of the Church in Spain towards women and towards sexual deviation it seems highly unlikely that such an offender as Erauso should go unpunished. How did she manage to pull it off? The only explanation can be that female homosexuality was scarcely conceivable to the Spanish male mind. And while Erauso's probable nature may be patently obvious to twentieth-century readers,

It would be both foolish and arrogant automatically to ascribe our own sexual awareness to other societies as if such awareness were a universally static factor; this is particularly true in the case of female homosexuality which throughout the greater part of European society until the present day has been very much, through ignorance and sublimation, a subterranean phenomenon.”<sup>61</sup>

And in Dekker it is further reported that:

The number of cases of lesbian relationships we know of in Europe before the nineteenth century is very small indeed and most of these concerned couples where one of the women dressed as a man. From the negligence of the courts, the general silence of the sources, and the absence of adequate terminology, much can be inferred. Until the end of the eighteenth century love affairs between women were not taken seriously, and perhaps not even noticed at all.<sup>62</sup>

and finally, Brown:

...Europeans had long found it difficult to accept

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<sup>61</sup> McKendrick, 316.

<sup>62</sup> Dekker, 57.

that women could be attracted to other women.  
Their view of human sexuality was phallogentric...<sup>63</sup>

But in the case of Doña Catalina, Spanish society, aside from its ignorance of female homosexuality, actually reacted predictably and consistently as it did towards all women: by de-humanizing her from the status of a person to an intellectual construct—in this case to that of a mythical amazon-warrior. That she bore arms for God and king was enough to justify the praise and acclaim she received, from sovereign and pope on down. The possibility of her homosexuality was simply beyond comprehension.<sup>64</sup>

But the nature of Erauso's sexuality is suggested through citations in her autobiography and other contemporary works about her. Some of these apparently escaped the notice of McKendrick who wrote that these, "...homosexual tendencies [ ] are absent from the autobiography."<sup>65</sup>

The first such passage is found in the autobiography in chapter three. Erauso is entangled in a complex web of sexual intrigue where her employer seeks to marry her off to his mistress. After a vicious brawl Catalina has severely wounded a man and finds herself holed up in the sanctuary of a church under threat of civil and criminal proceedings. Her master offers a way out: that she marry doña Beatriz de Cárdenas, a relative of the injured man. But the narrator explains:

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<sup>63</sup> Judith Brown, *Immodest Acts: The Life of a Lesbian Nun in Renaissance Italy*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 6.

<sup>64</sup> The re-invention of La Monja Alférez by a host of writers, playwrights, and artists, from her own times to the present, is analyzed by Sherry Velasco in *The Lieutenant Nun - Transgenderism, Lesbian Desire, and Catalina de Erauso*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001). Velasco discusses how writers "have manipulated the Lieutenant Nun icon for varying and, at times, opposing ideological purposes" while portraying her as everything from a pious virgin nun with a knack for sword fighting to a monstrous hybrid. This they often did, I aver, in order to enhance their own agendas, ideologies—and pocketbooks, as Erauso herself was the first to do. But given the spectacular quality of Erauso's persona and adventures, along with the fact that so many details are absent in her narrative, the temptation to render a freehanded artistic interpretation of her character has proven irresistible. The result of my own personal effort down this path may be read in Appendix C.

<sup>65</sup> McKendrick, 214.

It is understood that this doña Beatriz de Cárdenas was my master's paramour and he was looking to have us both for keeps, me for business and her for pleasure. It seems that they had both agreed on this plan, for after I was restored to the church, I used to slip out by night to that lady's house. There she caressed me passionately and, feigning fear of the police, begged me not to return to the church but to stay there. One night she even locked me in and declared that in spite of the Devil I had to bed her. She held on to me so tightly that I had to pry her hands loose to get away.<sup>66</sup>

It is obvious in this admission that Catalina frequently risked capture by leaving her place of refuge that she enjoyed the lady's attention, even if she had no intention of making a marriage.

In chapter five Erauso again loses a position over a sexual indiscretion and the impossible prospect of a looming marriage. Here, in Lima, she is comfortably accommodated until

At the end of nine months [my master] informed me that I should seek my living elsewhere. The reason for this was that he had two young maidens living in his house, sisters of his wife, and with whom (and above all with one who was especially fond of me) I used to frolic and fool around. And one day he happened by a window and saw us in the parlour. Reclining in her petticoats, she was combing my hair, our legs entangled. He heard her telling me that I should go to Potosí and earn money so we could get married. He withdrew and summoned me shortly. He questioned me, settled accounts, and I departed.<sup>67</sup>

Again, the inference of a deeply felt inclination to "frolic and fool around" with females (along with an understandable aversion to marriage) is easily made.

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<sup>66</sup> Pedrick, 5.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

In chapter six Catalina ends up stationed with her own un-suspecting brother in Chile where she helps herself to his hospitality as well as his girlfriend.

... I remained with my brother as his aide, dining at his table for nearly three years without his ever realizing anything. I went with him sometimes to the house of a girlfriend he had there. Other times I went there without him. He found out about this and took it hard, telling me to keep away from there. He lay in wait for me and caught me at it again. When I came out he attacked me with his belt and injured my hand.<sup>68</sup>

Along with Catalina's brother, we, too, might well suspect that her interest in the woman was more than platonic.

In chapter seven Catalina ends up rescued from the brink of death high in the Andes and nursed back to health by a prosperous rancher, a widow with an unmarried daughter. And here we have more evidence of Erauso's attitude towards women:

After having me there for eight days, the good woman told me that I could stay there and be master of the house. I expressed much appreciation for the kindness she showed me in my waywardness, and I offered to serve her as best I could. After a few more days she gave me to understand that she would consider it a favor if I would marry the daughter that she had there with her. The daughter was very dark, and ugly as the devil, very contrary to my taste, which was always the pretty faces.<sup>69</sup>

While the foregoing suggests that doña Catalina de Erauso was an active homosexual, such a contention is also supported by the observations of Erauso that appear in the chronicles of certain writers that she encountered along the way. One such was Pietro Della Valle, known as "Il Pellegrino," who wrote an account of his travels in

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 8. This episode of a quarrel between the siblings over a woman appears in the early *Relaciones*, lending it more credibility.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 12. See also Berruezo, 39.

the East which was published in Rome in 1663.<sup>70</sup> Therein Della Valle offers a detailed physical description of Erauso as well as a purported firsthand witnessing of her story that is consistent with what we have already seen. Della Valle observes, in the form of a letter dated June 11, 1626,

On the fifth of June the Basque lieutenant Catalina de Erauso came to my house for the first time, having come from Spain and just arrived in Rome. [ ] Her compatriot Father Rodrigo de San Miguel was my friend and introduced me to her. [ ] Tall and sturdy of stature, masculine in appearance, she has no more bosom than a little girl. She told me she had applied I don't know what method to make it disappear. I believe it was a plaster administered by an Italian; the effect was painful but much to her liking. She is not bad looking, but well worn by the years. [ ] She has the look of a Spanish gentleman and wears her sword as big as life, tightly belted. [ ] Only by her hands can one tell that she is a woman as they are full and fleshy, although large and strong, and occasionally gesture effeminately.<sup>71</sup>

The last great exploit of Catalina de Erauso further clarifies her sexual preferences. This account of an incident after her return to the Indies in 1630 is related by a Mexican historian:

The Nun Lieutenant arrived in Mexico when the Marquis of Cerralvo was governing New Spain and on the trip from Veracruz to Mexico fell in love with a woman whose parents had charged her to deliver to Mexico, aware that doña Catalina was a woman, although dressing as a man. That affair produced great displeasure and she was at the point of fighting the man whom the lady had married. Doña Catalina challenged him in a letter but some

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<sup>70</sup> Tellechea, 125.

<sup>71</sup> Ferrer, vii-viii (my translation from the introduction by José María de Heredia).

influential people managed to prevent the duel.<sup>72</sup>

This report also illustrates the *naiveté* of Erauso's contemporaries in their inability to recognize or comprehend the nature of her sexual inclination. The parents apparently thought that her daughter could have no better protector than—another woman!

### 8. A Note on the Basques

Numerous Basques were counted among the mariners, clerics, and conquistadors who opened up the lands of Spain's new American Empire. In the era of *La Monja Alférez*, sophisticated, educated, and ambitious Basques were moving into the conquered American territories in ever greater numbers to consolidate, administer, and profit from the gains of their daring and flamboyant predecessors.<sup>73</sup> Basques rose to many positions of authority and influence throughout the Spanish Empire, in government, church, and private enterprise, all of which were deeply intertwined.

No better example of Basque political skill and acumen can be found than in the way this people became associated with Castile and later, a united Spain. Before the thirteenth century, the Basques comprised a group of sovereign feudal duchies with a common tongue (various dialects of the language known as Euskera). In the innumerable wars of the period among the kingdoms of northern Spain, a set of circumstances developed with the result that some of these Basque territories, namely Guipúzcoa and Vizcaya, after they ceased to be ruled by Asturias and Navarre, were voluntarily incorporated into the Kingdom of Castile.

In the case of Vizcaya this occurred in 1379 when the Castilian King Enrique II

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<sup>72</sup> Vicente Riva Palacio, *Méjico através de los siglos*, (Mexico: Porrúa S.A. 1946), 166, [my translation.] This famous Mexican episode is also elaborated in Artemio de Valle-Arizpe, *Amores y picardías - Leyendas, tradiciones, y sucesidos del México Virreinal*, (Mexico: 1933), pp. 109-131; likewise in Luis Gonzáles Obregón, *Leyendas de las calles de México*, (Mexico: Aguilar, 1976), 105-113. Obregón points out that the episode appeared in the *Última y tercera relación* (in its various editions) that appeared in Mexico shortly after the death of *La Monja Alférez* there in 1653.

<sup>73</sup> *E.g.*, explorer Juan de Elcano who served as Magellan's navigator, churchmen St. Ignatius of Loyola and St. Francis Xavier, and Lope de Aguirre, a conquistador who defied King Phillip II, to name only a few.

acquired the lordship of the place through marriage (King Alfonso III had peacefully annexed Guipúzcoa in 1200). In both cases the locals did not seem to mind as the alliance amounted to an improvement over previous governments and delivered considerable benefit to both sides: the Castilian kings got the loyalty and support of the fierce Basques who would act as a buffer between Castile and the rival kingdom of Navarre. The Basques got even more. Among other things, all of their ancient traditions and statutes (compiled and called *Fueros* in Castilian) were to be respected as law.

The *fueros* were collections of local laws and customs together with special economic and political immunities underwritten by the kings of Castile (and later Spain) in return for political allegiance to the monarchy.<sup>74</sup>

Indeed, that the king of Castile would defend these to the death was written into the agreements and in such compelling terms that no Castilian monarch could be crowned who had not first sworn to uphold the *Fueros* under the Sacred Oak of Guernika.<sup>75</sup> But the most powerful clause for the Basques was the one which bestowed the status of nobility on every last one of them. This distinction was granted by Castile partly owing to the *Fueros* (which continued to evolve after they were first codified in the thirteenth century) and partly in grateful recognition of the fact that—in the case of the provinces of Guipúzcoa and Vizcaya at least—they had never allowed themselves to be conquered by the dreaded Moors. Concerning the historical development of the *fueros*, Heiberg writes

The culminating achievement of the sixteenth century was the extension of the status of nobility, *hidalguía*, to all native residents of Vizcaya in 1526

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<sup>74</sup>Marianne Heiberg, *The Making of the Basque Nation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 18.

<sup>75</sup> Although the *fueros* were finally rescinded in the aftermath of the Carlist Wars of the nineteenth century, this tradition has been revived symbolically by the present Spanish monarch, King Juan Carlos II. The ancient Sacred Oak of Guernika is now a mummified trunk and decorates the *Casa de Juntas* (legislature) of the Basque Autonomous Region of Spain.

and Guipúzcoa in 1610.<sup>76</sup>

The fact of their noble status contributed greatly to the commercial successes of Basques in the seventeenth century. Their enhanced position in Spanish society fast-tracked them to positions of power and privilege not granted to the majority of citizens from other parts of Spain.<sup>77</sup> For this reason, the plucky Basques were often regarded with unquiet jealousy and resentment by other Spanish ethnic groups. Like the Sephardic Jews of an earlier Spain, they got where they were going by their own natural talent and shrewd business sense. But unlike the ill-fated Sephardim and their *converso* descendants, the Basques were Christians of unquestionable piety, and so there was no basis for attacking them as heretics.

The Basques kept their part of the bargain with Castille and for nearly five centuries remained loyal to the Castilian kings, making contributions of inestimable value to Spain's globe-girdling imperial enterprises.

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 26. See Also see footnote 9.

<sup>77</sup> For example, noble status meant protection from judicial torture, the most common means of obtaining confessions from suspects in criminal cases.

## II. The Autobiography of doña Catalina de Erauso

“Any work which claims to be held authoritative,’ explains Coleridge, “must have had witnesses; this is external evidence. Or it may be its own competent witness; this is called internal evidence.”<sup>78</sup>

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### Chapter 1

—Her homeland, parents, birth, education, escape, and wanderings through various parts of Spain.

I, doña Catalina de Erauso, was born in the year 1585 in the Village of San Sebastián, province of Guipúzcoa, [Spain].<sup>79</sup> I am the daughter of Captain don

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<sup>78</sup> Samuel Taylor Coleridge, “Intercepted Correspondence,” Morning Post, February 3, 1800, quoted in David V Erdman, “The Case for Internal Evidence (6): The Signature of Style,” Bulletin of the New York Public Library, LXIII, n.2 (February, 1959), p. 88.

<sup>79</sup> The baptism of Catalina de Erauso is recorded as February 10, 1592 in the ledger of the parochial church of San Vicente Martir in San Sebastián, Guipúzcoa. This is the first of many dates in this version of her adventures that do not coincide with such historical dates as are verifiable. This discrepancy is probably attributable to the fact that this edition of her adventures was several generations removed from the original *relaciones* thus creating the opportunity for many errors, typographical and otherwise (See Tellechea, 11-13, Fitzmaurice-Kelly, xvi, Ferrer, 1, no.1, and others).

**CAPITULO I**

—Su patria, padres, nacimiento, educación, fuga y carreras por varias partes de España.

Nací yo, doña Catalina de Erauso, en la villa de San Sebastián, de Guipúzcoa, en el año de 1585 hija del capitán don

Miguel de Erauso and doña María Pérez de Galarraga y Arce, natives and residents of the town. My parents raised me in their home with my other brothers and sisters until I was four years old. In 1589 they placed me in the Dominican convent of San Sebastián el Antiguo, in the aforementioned village, with my aunt doña Ursula Unzá y Sarasti, who was my mother's sister and prioress of the convent.<sup>80</sup> I was raised there until the age of fifteen, at which time I undertook to enter the Dominican order.

Near the end of my novitiate year I had a quarrel with a professed nun named doña Catalina de Aliri (a widow who entered and took the vows). She was a strong woman and I but a girl. She beat me and I took it hard. On the night of March 18, 1600, on the eve of St. Joseph, the convent arose at midnight to pray. I entered the choir and found my aunt kneeling there. She summoned me, and giving me the key to her cell, asked me to fetch her breviary. I left to go get it, opened the door and picked it up. Seeing the keys to the hanging there on a nail, I left her cell door unlocked and returned the key and prayer book to my aunt. By now all the sisters were in the choir beginning the matins with solemnity.

After the first verse, I went to my aunt and asked to be excused because I was ill. Touching my forehead, she said, "Go on, go to bed." I left the choir and, taking a light, went to my aunt's cell. There I grabbed some scissors, a needle and thread, some pieces of eight<sup>81</sup> that were there, and the keys to the convent. Then, I left. I went along, opening doors and shutting them, and in the last one I left my scapular. I went out into the street (which I had never seen before) not knowing which way to turn nor where to go.

I don't know where I headed but I ended up in a chestnut grove out behind the rear of the convent. There I hid out for three days tracing and

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<sup>80</sup> Catalina is first mentioned in the account book of the Dominican convent of San Sebastián el Antiguo in 1605 when she would have been thirteen years old (Tellechea, 57)

<sup>81</sup> "Pieces of eight" or "*reales de a ocho*" were large silver coins grooved to break easily into eight sections.

Miguel de Erauso y de doña María Pérez de Galarraga y Arce, naturales y vecinos de aquella villa. Criáronme mis padres en su casa, con otros mis hermanos, hasta tener cuatro años. En 1589 me entraron en el convento de San Sebastián el Antiguo, de dicha villa, que es de monjas dominicas, con mi tía doña Ursula de Unzá y Sarasti, prima hermana de mi madre y priora de aquel convento, en donde me crié hasta tener quince años, en que se trató de mi profesión.

Estando en el año de noviciado, ya cerca del fin, me ocurrió una reyerta con una monja profesa llamada doña Catalina de Aliri, que, siendo viuda, entró y profesó. Era ella robusta y yo muchacha; me maltrató de mano y yo lo sentí. A la noche del 18 de marzo de 1600, víspera de San José, levantóse el convento a media noche a maitines. Entré en el coro y hallé allí arrodillada a mi tía, la cual me llamó, y dándome la llave de su celda, me mandó traerle el breviario. Yo fui por él. Abrí y lo tomé, y viendo en un clavo colgadas las llaves del convento, dejéme la celda abierta y volvíle a mi tía su llave y el breviario. Estando ya las monjas en el coro y comenzados los maitines con solemnidad, a la primera lección llegué a mi tía y le pedí licencia, porque estaba mala. Mi tía, tocándome con la mano en la cabeza, me dijo: "Anda, acuéstate." Salí del coro, tomé una luz y fuíme a la celda de mi tía; tomé allí unas tijeras, hilo y una aguja; tomé unos reales de a ocho que allí estaban, y tomé las llaves del convento y me salí. Fui abriendo puertas y emparejándolas, y en la última dejé mi escapulario y me salí a la calle, que nunca había visto, sin saber por dónde echar ni adónde ir. Tiré no sé por dónde, y fui a dar en un castañar que está fuera y cerca de la espalda del convento. Allí acogíme y estuve tres días trazando,

cutting clothing. I made myself a pair of trousers from a skirt of blue cloth that I had, and a shirt and leggings from the green shift that I wore underneath. Not knowing what to make of the rest of my habit, I left it there. I cut off my hair and threw it away.

On the third day, anxious to be off, I left for parts unknown, choosing a road that brought me to Vitoria, twenty leagues from San Sebastián. I arrived footsore and weary, having eaten no more than a few herbs which I picked along the way.

I entered Vitoria not knowing where I would stay. In a few days I met the doctor don Francisco de Cerralta, a professor there. Without knowing me, he freely took me in and clothed me. He was married to a cousin of my mother, as I soon discovered, but I didn't give myself away.

I was with him about three months. During this time he became more fond of me, and, on seeing that I read Latin well, wanted to tutor me but I refused. He argued and insisted to the point of laying his hands on me. With this, I decided to leave him and did so. I took some money from him and, for twelve *reales*, I set out with a muleteer who was bound for Valladolid, forty-five leagues away.

In Valladolid, where the Court was located then, I soon hired on as a page with don Juan de Idiáquez, secretary to the king, who outfitted me well. There I called myself Francisco Loyola and was well off for seven months.

Near the end of that time I was standing at the doorway with another page one night when my father arrived asking us if don Juan was at home. My companion replied that he was. My father asked if we would please tell him that he was here. My companion went up leaving us alone. We spoke not a word between us and he didn't recognize me. The page returned saying to go on up and he did, with me following behind.

Don Juan came out onto the stairway and embracing him said, "Captain, what a welcome visit this is!" My father spoke in such a manner

acomodando y cortando de vestir. Híceme, de una basquiña de paño azul con que me hallaba, unos calzones, y de un faldellín verde de perpetuán que traía debajo, una ropilla y polainas: el hábito me lo dejé por allí, por no saber qué hacer con él. Cortéme el pelo, que tiré, y a la tercera noche, deseando alejarme, partí no sé por dónde, calando caminos y pasando lugares, hasta venir a dar en Vitoria, que dista de San Sebastián cerca de veinte leguas, a pie, cansada y sin haber comido más que hierbas que topaba por el camino.

Entré en Vitoria sin saber adónde acogerme. A los pocos días encontré al doctor don Francisco de Cerralta, catedrático de allí, el cual me recibió fácilmente, sin conocerme, y me vistió. Era casado con una prima hermana de mi madre, según luego entendí; pero no me dí a conocer. Estuve con él cosa de tres meses, en los cuales, viéndome él leer bien el latín, se me inclinó más y me quiso dar estudio; pero como yo rehusara, me porfió y me instaba hasta ponerme las manos. Yo, con esto, determiné dejarle, e hícelo así. Cogíle unos cuartos, y concertándome en doce reales con un arriero que partía para Valladolid, que dista cuarenta y cinco leguas, partí con él.

Entrado en Valladolid, donde estaba entonces la Corte, me acomodé en breve por paje de don Juan de Idiáquez, secretario del rey, el cual me vistió luego bien. Allí me llamé Francisco Loyola y estuve bienhallado siete mesas. Al cabo de ellos, estando una noche a la puerta con otro paje compañero, llegó mi padre, preguntándonos si estaba en casa el señor don Juan.

Respondió mi compañero que sí. Dijo mi padre que le avisase que estaba él allí, y subió el paje, quedándome yo con mi padre, sin hablarnos palabra ni él conocerme. Volvió el paje, diciendo que subiese, y subió, yendo yo tras de él. Salió don Juan a la escalera, y, abrazándole, dijo: "¡Señor capitán, qué buena venida es ésta!" Mi padre habló de modo que

that don Juan knew he was upset. Dismissing a visitor whom he was with, he returned and sat down, asking him what was the matter. My father told him about how his daughter had run away from the convent and his search had brought him into this vicinity. Don Juan expressed great sympathy for my father's trouble, as he also was fond of me, and of that convent as well, of which he was a patron (founded as it was by his ancestors, he himself being a native of there).<sup>82</sup>

Hearing this conversation and my father's sentiments, I went back to my room. I gathered up my clothes and left, taking the eight doubloons or so that I had. I went to a tavern to spend the night and met a mule driver there who was leaving in the morning for Bilbao. I made an arrangement with him and we departed the next day. I didn't know what to do nor where to go, and so I let myself drift like a feather in the wind.

After a long journey of what seemed to me forty leagues, I entered Bilbao where I found no accomodation and did not know what to do with myself. Meanwhile, some boys noticed me and surrounded me until, annoyed, I picked up some rocks and injured one of them (I don't know where because I didn't see). They arrested me and kept me in jail for one long month until he healed and they released me, with a little money remaining after my expenses.

As soon as I left there, I went on to Estella in Navarre which might have been about twenty leagues, or so it seemed to me. In Estella I hired on as a page to don Carlos de Arellano (a knight of Santiago) in whose home and service I remained for two years, well treated and well dressed.

Finally, on a whim, I left that comfortable position and went back to my home town of San Sebastián, ten leagues away. There I

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<sup>82</sup> It is entirely possible that the Erauso family was acquainted with don Juan de Idiáquez, the Basque secretary to King Phillip II, but I am unaware of any proof of it.

que él conoció que traía disgusto, y despidiendo una visita con que estaba, volvió y sentáronse, preguntándole qué había de nuevo. Mi padre dijo cómo se le había ido del convento aquella muchacha, y esto le traía por los contornos en su busca. Don Juan mostró sentirlo mucho, por el disgusto de mi padre y por lo que a mí me quería, y de otra parte, por aquel convento, de donde él era patrono por fundación de sus pasados, y por lo que tocaba a aquel lugar, de donde era él natural.

Yo, que oí la conversación y sentimiento de mi padre, salíme atrás y fuíme a mi aposento. Cogí mi ropa y salí, llevándome cosa de ocho doblones con que me hallaba, y fuíme a un mesón, donde dormí aquella noche y donde entendí a un arriero que partía por la mañana a Bilbao. Ajustéme con él, y partimos a otro día, sin saberme yo qué hacer ni adónde ir, sino dejarme llevar del viento como una pluma.

Pasado un largo camino, me parece como de cuarenta leguas, entré en Bilbao, donde no encontré albergue, ni comodidad, ni sabía qué hacerme. Entretanto dieron allí unos muchachos en reparar en mí y cercarme, hasta que viéndome fastidiado, hube de hallar unas piedras y hube de lastimar a uno, no sé dónde, porque no lo ví. Prendiéronme y me tuvieron en la cárcel un largo mes, hasta que él hubo de sanar y me soltaron, quedándose por allá unos cuartos sin mi gasto preciso.

De allí, luego que salí, me pasé a Estella, de Navarra, que distará veinte leguas a lo que me parece. Entré en Estella, donde me acomodé por paje de don Carlos de Arellano, del hábito de Santiago, en cuya casa y servicio estuve dos años, bien tratado y bien vestido. Pasado este tiempo, sin más causa que mi gusto, dejé aquella comodidad y me pasé a San Sebastián, mi patria, diez leguas distante de allí, y donde me

was, well dressed and gallant, and no one recognized me. One day I even heard mass in my convent with my own mother there in attendance. She looked right at me without knowing me. At the conclusion of the mass, some nuns called to me from the choir. Pretending not to understand, I answered them very courteously and left. This was now into the year 1603.<sup>83</sup>

From there I went to the port of Pasajes, a league distant, where I found Captain Miguel de Berroiz, outbound with his own ship for Seville. I asked him if he might take me on, and for forty *reales* I embarked and we departed.

We arrived well and quickly in Sanlúcar. Disembarking there, I set out to see Seville. Although I was tempted to linger, I stayed there only two days, returning right away to Sanlúcar. There I met Captain Miguel de Echarreta, a native of my homeland. He was attached to a tender of galleons commanded by General don Luis Fernández de Córdoba, in the armada with which don Luis Fajardo departed for Punta de Araya in the year 1603. I enlisted as a cabin boy in the galleon of Captain Esteban Eguiño (my uncle, my mother's cousin), who lives today in San Sebastián. I embarked, and we set out from Sanlúcar on Holy Monday 1603.

## Chapter 2

—She departs Sanlúcar for Punta Araya, Cartagena, Nombre de Diós, and Panamá.

I went through some hard times along the way, being new at my job. Although he didn't know me, my uncle took a liking to me and showed me some

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<sup>83</sup> In 1603 Catalina was eleven years old. The more likely date for this departure is 1607. As for her parents in San Sebastián, they would not see her again. A waiver of her claim to any further inheritance from their estate in favor of her sister Mariana was signed and filed in San Sebastián on September 26, 1629. (Tellechea, 58 & 183; Berrueto, 36-38). This document, signed *el Alférez doña Catalina de Erauso*, establishes that Erauso returned at least once to her homeland before leaving Spain forever the following year.

estuve, sin ser de nadie conocido, bien vestido y galán. Y un día oí misa en mi convento, la cual misa oyó también mi madre, y vide que me miraba y no me conoció, y acabada la misa, unas monjas me llamaron al coro, y yo, no dándome por entendido, les hice muchas cortesías y me fuí. Era esto entrado ya el año de 1603.

Paséme de allí al puerto de Pasajes, que dista una legua, donde hallé al capitán Miguel de Berroiz, de partida con un navío suyo para Sevilla. Pedíle que me llevase, y ajustándome con él en cuarenta reales, embarqué y partimos, llegando bien en breve a Sanlúcar. Desembarcado en Sanlúcar, partí para ver Sevilla, y aunque me convidaba a detenerme, estuve allí sólo dos días, volviendo luego a Sanlúcar. Hallé allí al capitán Miguel de Echarreta, natural de mi tierra, que lo era de un patache de galeones, de que era general don Luis Fernández de Córdoba, y de la armada, don Luis Fajardo, año de 1603, que partía para la Punta de Araya. Senté plaza de grumete en un galeón del capitán Esteban Eguiño, tío mío, primo hermano de mi madre, que vive hoy en San Sebastián, y embarqué y partimos de Sanlúcar, Lunes Santo, año de 1603.

## **CAPITULO II**

—Parte de Sanlúcar para Punta Araya, Cartagena, Nombre de Dios y Panamá.

Pasé algunos trabajos en el camino por ser nuevo en el oficio. Inclínóseme mi tío sin conocerme, y haciéndome

favor, having heard where I was from and the supposed name of my family which I had given. In him I had a great protector.

We arrived at Punta Araya and found an enemy force fortified ashore which drove our armada off. Finally we arrived in Cartagena where we remained for eight days. There I was promoted from general cabin boy to the personal service of my uncle, the Captain. From there we went on to Nombre de Dios, where during the next nine days many of our people took sick and died, which caused us to leave there quickly.

Then, having loaded our cargo of silver ready to return to Spain, I struck my uncle a hard blow, relieving him of five hundred pesos. At ten o'clock at night when he was asleep, I went out and told the guards that the captain was sending me on an errand. As they knew me, they readily let me go and I jumped ashore. But they never saw me again, for within the hour they weighed anchor and set sail.

The fleet having departed, I took up with Captain Juan de Ibarra (a factor in Panama who is still alive today). From there, in five or six days, we left for Panama where he lived. There I stayed with him for about three months. He offered me little in the way of comfort; he was so stingy I had to spend most of what I had taken from my uncle until I hadn't a bit left. Finally I said good-bye to seek my fortune elsewhere.

Seeing my chance, I then met a merchant from Trujillo, Juan de Urquiza, with whom I moved in. I got along well with him and stayed in Panama three more months.

### **Chapter 3**

—From Panama she goes with her master Urquiza, a merchant of Trujillo, to the Port of Paita and on to the village of Saña.

From Panama I departed with my employer, Juan de Urquiza, in a frigate for the port of Paita, Peru, where he had a large cargo. At the port of

agasajos, oído de dónde era y el nombre supuesto de mis padres, que yo dí, tuve en él gran arrimo. Llegamos a Punta de Araya y hallamos allí una armadilla enemiga fortificada en tierra, y nuestra armada la echó. Arribamos finalmente a Cartagena de las Indias, y estuvimos allí ocho días. Híceme borrar de la plaza de grumete y pasé a servir al dicho capitán Eguiño, mi tío. De allí pasamos a Nombre de Dios, donde estuvimos nueve días, muriéndonos en ellos mucha gente, lo cual hizo dar mucha prisa a salir.

Estando ya embarcada la plata y aprestado todo para partir de vuelta a España, yo le hice un tiro cuantioso a mi tío, cogiéndole quinientos pesos. A las diez de la noche, cuando él estaba durmiendo, salí y dije a los guardas que me enviaba a tierra el capitán a un negocio. Como me conocían, dejáronme llanamente pasar, y salté a tierra; pero nunca más me vieron. De allí a una hora dispararon pieza de leva y zarparon hechos a la vela.

Levada ya la flota, me acomodé allí con el capitán Juan de Ibarra, factor de las cajas de Panamá, que hoy vive. De allí a cuatro o seis días nos partimos para Panamá, donde él residía y donde estuve con él cosa de tres meses. Hacíame poca comodidad, que era escaso, y hube allí de gastar cuanto de mi tío había traído, hasta no quedarme ni un cuarto, con lo cual me despedí para buscar por otra parte mi remedio.

Haciéndome mi diligencia descubrí allí a Juan de Urquiza, mercader de Trujillo, y acomodéme con él, y con él me fué muy bien, y estuvimos en Panamá tres meses.

### **CAPITULO III**

—De Panamá pasa con su amo Urquiza, mercader de Trujillo, al puerto de Paita y a la villa de Saña.

De Panamá partí con mi amo Juan de Urquiza, en una fragata, para el puerto de Paita, donde él tenía un gran cargamento. Llegando al puerto de

Manta we took on such a load that it capsized our ship. Those of us who could swim, like me, my employer and others, made it to shore. The rest perished. From Manta we embarked again in a royal galleon which we encountered there. We departed as paying passengers and arrived at the port of Paita where my master found all his stuff as he hoped, stowed aboard the ship of Captain Alonso Cerrato. He left, leaving me in charge of it all, which was to be forwarded on by number.

I immediately set to the job he gave me, unloading and forwarding the lots by their numbers. My employer in Saña (which is some seventy leagues from Paita) received it, and finally, with the last shipment, I left Paita and arrived in Saña.

There my employer received me with great affection, pleased with how well I had done everything. In his gratitude he made me a gift of two fine suits, one black and one of color. He put me to work in his store in charge of textiles and other goods worth more than one hundred and thirty thousand pesos, for which I was to keep strict accounts. He provided two slaves to help me, a black woman to cook for me, and three pesos daily spending money.

Having done this, he loaded the rest of his cargo and sailed away with it to Trujillo, a distance of thirty two leagues.

He also left me a list of people who had established accounts with him and who could charge goods, for which I was to keep a careful record under accounts receivable. He especially informed me about the Señora doña Beatriz de Cárdenas as being a person of his complete satisfaction and obligation. Then he left for Trujillo.

I remained in Saña with my store, abiding by the rules he had left me, writing down the details of every transaction, every day, every week, every month.

My lady doña Beatriz de Cárdenas began to charge goods in such great amounts that I began to have my doubts. Without letting her know, I wrote a

Manta, nos cargó un tiempo tan fuerte que dimos al través, y los que supimos nadar, como yo, mi amo y otros, salimos a tierra: los demás perecieron. En el dicho puerto de Manta nos volvimos a embarcar en un galeón del rey que allí hallamos y costó dinero, y en él partimos y llegamos al puerto de Paita, donde halló mi amo toda su hacienda, como esperaba, cargada en una nao del capitán Alonso Cerrato, y dándome a mi orden de que toda, por sus números, la fuese remitiendo allá, partió.

Yo puse luego por obra lo que me mandó, y fuí descargando la hacienda por sus números, y por ellos fuíla remitiendo. Mi amo, en Saña, que dista de Paita unas sesenta leguas, fué recibiéndola, y a lo último, con las últimas cargas, yo partí de Paita y llegué a Saña.

Llegado a Saña, me recibió mi amo con gran cariño, mostrándose de lo bien que lo había hecho, y con todo buen trato, hízome luego al punto dos vestidos muy buenos, uno negro y otro de color. Púsome en una tienda suya, entregándome por géneros y por cuenta mucha hacienda, que importó más de ciento treinta mil pesos, poniéndome por escrito en un libro los precios a cómo había de vender cada cosa. Dejóme dos esclavos que me sirviesen y una negra que me guisase, señalándome tres pesos para el gasto de cada día, y hecho esto, cargó él con la demás hacienda y se fué con ella a Trujillo, distante de allí treinta y dos leguas.

También me dejó escrito y advertido en el dicho libro las personas a quienes podía fiar la hacienda que pidiesen y quisiesen llevar, por ser de su satisfacción y seguras, pero con cuenta y razón y asentando cada partida en el libro. Y especialmente me advirtió esto, para en cuanto a mi señora doña Beatriz de Cárdenas, persona de toda su satisfacción y obligación. Fuése él a Trujillo y yo me quedé en Saña con mi tienda, vendiendo conforme a la pauta que él me dejó, y cobrando y asentando en mi libro, con día, mes y año, género, varas, nombre de compradores y precios: de la misma suerte con lo fiado.

Comenzó mi señora doña Beatriz de Cárdenas a sacar ropas, prosiguió y fué sacando tan largamente, que yo llegué a dudar, y sin dárselo a ella a entender, se lo escribí

full account of it to my master in Trujillo. He wrote back and assured me that everything was all right. Furthermore, in the case of this particular lady, I was to give her the entire store if she asked for it. Therefore, I kept the letter to myself and continued to oblige her.

Who could have told me that this serenity would be short-lived and soon I should have to undergo such hard times? One holiday I had just taken a seat in the theatre when, without warning, this so-and-so Reyes came in and placed his seat in front of me, so close that it blocked my view. I asked him if he might move aside a little and he responded discourteously. I responded in kind. He told me to get out or he would slash my face. I found myself unarmed except for a dagger, and so I left, very upset, accompanied by some friends who calmed me down.

The next morning—Monday—I was in my store selling when Reyes passed by the doorway twice. I noticed this and closed the store. I grabbed a knife and went to find a barber. I had him sharpen it and file the edge like a saw. I put on my sword, the first I ever wore. I saw Reyes strolling with another fellow in front of the church. I walked up to him from behind saying, "Uh, Señor Reyes!" He turned around and said, "What do you want?" I said, "This is the face that's getting slashed!", and gave him a slice across the face worth ten stitches.

He threw his hands to his wound. Drawing his sword, his friend came at me and I at him. We struck at each other, I ran him through the left side, and he fell.

Immediately I ran into the church which was right there, but right behind me came the sheriff (don Mendo de Quiñones, a knight of Alcántara) and dragged me back out. He took me to jail (the first I was ever in)<sup>84</sup> and clapped me in stocks and shackles.

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<sup>84</sup> In chapter two (see page 31) the narrator recounts serving a month-long stint in jail in Spain for assault. Perhaps this second incident is her first incarceration in the Americas.

todo por extenso al amo a Trujillo. Respondióme que estaba muy bien todo, y que en este particular de la señora, si toda la tienda entera me la pedía, se la podía entregar; con lo cual, y guardando yo esta carta, proseguí.

¡Quién me dijera que esta serenidad me durase poco tiempo y que presto de ella había de pasar a grandes trabajos! Estando un día de fiesta en la comedia, en un asiento que había tomado, y sin más atenciones, un fulano Reyes, vino y me puso otro tan delante y tan arrimado que me impedía la vista. Pedíle que lo apartara un poco, respondió desabridamente, y yo a él, y díjome que me fuera de allí o me cortarían la cara. Yo me hallé sin armas, sólo una daga, y me salí de allí con sentimiento, atendido por unos amigos, que me siguieron y sosegaron. A la mañana siguiente, lunes, estando yo en mi tienda vendiendo, pasó por la puerta el Reyes y volvió a pasar. Yo, que reparé en ello, cerré la tienda, tomé un cuchillo y fuíme a buscar a un barbero e hícelo amolar y picar el filo como una sierra, y poniéndome luego mi espada, que fué la primera que ceñí, vide a Reyes delante de la iglesia paseando con otro, y me fuí a él, diciéndole por detrás: "¡Ah, señor Reyes!" Volvióse él, y dijo: "¿Qué quiere?" Dije yo: "Esta es la cara que se corta", y dile con el cuchillo un refilón que le valió diez puntos. El acudió con las manos a la herida; su amigo sacó la espada y vine a mí y yo a él con la mía. Tiramos los dos, y yo le entré una punta por el lado izquierdo, que lo pasó y cayó.

Al punto me entré en la iglesia, que estaba allí; pero al punto entró el corregidor, don Mendo de Quiñones, del hábito de Alcántara, y me sacó arrastrando y me llevó a la cárcel, la primera que tuve, y me echó grillos y me metió en un cepo.

I informed my employer Juan de Urquiza, who was in Trujillo, thirty-two leagues from Saña. He came at once, spoke to the magistrate, and did other effective measures which resulted in some relief in prison. He kept at it until some three months later, by a procedure taken through the bishop, I was restored to the church from which I had been taken out. Things were in such a state, when my master told me he had been thinking of a convenient way to get out of this jam without being banished and having to live with the fear of assassination. It was, that I should marry doña Beatriz de Cárdenas whose niece was married to that so-and-so Reyes whose face I slashed. With this, everything would be straightened out.

It is understood that this doña Beatriz de Cárdenas was my master's paramour and he was looking to have us both for keeps, me for business and her for pleasure. It seems that they had both agreed on this plan, for after I was restored to the church, I used to slip out by night to that lady's house. There she caressed me passionately and, feigning fear of the police, begged me not to return to the church but to stay there. One night she even locked me in and declared that in spite of the Devil I had to bed her. She held on to me so tightly that I had to pry her hands loose to get away.

Right away I told my master that I could not consider such a marriage nor would I for all the world. He insisted, and promised me mountains of gold, stressing the beauty and talents of the lady, and that it was a way out of a serious difficulty, etc. Nevertheless I held firm to what I said. In view of this, he offered to transfer me to Trujillo with the same duties and benefits and this I accepted.

#### **Chapter 4**

—From Saña she goes to Trujillo. She kills a man.

I went to the city of Trujillo, a suffragan bishopric of Lima, where my master had a store for me. I took it over and went on doing business as in

Yo avisé a mi amo, Juan de Urquiza, que estaba en Trujillo, treinta y dos leguas de Saña. Vino al punto, habló al corregidor e hizo otras buenas diligencias, con que alcanzó el alivio de las prisiones. Fué siguiendo la causa y fuí restituido a la iglesia, de donde fuí sacado después de tres meses de pleito y procedimiento del señor obispo. Estando esto en tal estado, dijo mi amo que para salir del conflicto y no perder la tierra y acabar con el sobresalto de que me mataran, había pensado una cosa conveniente, y era que me casase yo con doña Beatriz de Cárdenas, con cuya sobrina estaba casado aquel fulano Reyes a quien corté la cara: con esto se sosegaría todo.

Es de saber que esta doña Beatriz de Cárdenas era dama de mi amo, y él miraba a tenernos seguros: a mí para servicio y a ella para gusto. Y parece que esto, tratado entre los dos, lo acordaron, porque después que fuí restituido a la iglesia, salía de noche e iba a la casa de aquella dama, y ella me acariciaba mucho, y con son de temor a la justicia, me pedía que no volviera a la iglesia de noche y me quedase allá. Y una noche me encerró y declaró que a pesar del diablo había de dormir con ella; apretándome en esto tanto, que tuve que alargar la mano y salirme. Luego dije a mi amo que de tal casamiento no había que tratar, porque por todo el mundo yo no haría, a lo cual él porfió y me prometió montes de oro, representándome la hermosura y prendas de la dama, y la salida de aquel pesado negocio y otras conveniencias, sin embargo de lo cual persistí en lo dicho. En vista de ello, trató mi amo de pasarme a Trujillo con la misma tienda y comodidad, y vine en ello.

#### **CAPITULO IV**

—De Saña pasa a Trujillo. Mata a un hombre.

Pasé a la Ciudad de Trujillo, obispado sufragáneo de Lima, adonde me tenía tienda mi amo. Entré en ello y fuí despachando en la misma conformidad que en

Saña, keeping accounts in another ledger like the previous one.

It must have been two months later when, one morning around eight o'clock, I was in my store cashing a cheque of my master's for some twenty-four thousand pesos. A negro came in and told me that there were some men at the door who seemed to be wearing bucklers. This put me on my guard. I hurried my customer and got a receipt. I sent for Francisco Zerain who came right away, and he recognized the three men who were there as he came in. They were Reyes, that friend of his whom I dropped with a sword-thrust in Saña, and another. We went out into the street, ordering the negro to shut the door and a moment later they rushed us.

We met them fighting. In a few moments it was my luck to run a point into Reyes' friend and he fell. With blood drawn on both sides we continued fighting two against two. Then the sherrif (don Ordoño de Aguirre) arrived with two deputies and grabbed me. Francisco Zerain took to his heels and ran into a sanctuary. The sherrif himself was carrying me off to jail, asking me who I was and where I was from. When he heard I was a Basque he told me in our tongue that as we passed by the cathedral I should loosen my belt, by which he had a hold of me, and save myself. I took the hint and did so. I ran into the cathedral while he stood there blustering.

Safe inside, I advised my employer in Saña. He came right away and tried to plead my case, but no way was found, because to the murder charge I don't know what all else was added. The only way to resolve it was to flee to Lima. I settled my accounts with my master. He gave me two suits of clothes, twenty-six hundred pesos, a letter of recommendation and I set out.

## **Chapter 5**

—She goes from Trujillo to Lima.

Having departed Trujillo and travelled more than eighty leagues, I entered the city of Lima, capital of the wealthy kingdom of Perú, which

Saña, y con otro libro como el pasado, con razón del modo, precios y fiados. Sería pasados dos meses cuando una mañana, como a las echo, pagando yo en mi tienda una libranza de mi amo de unos veinticuatro mil pesos, entró un negro y me dijo que estaban a la puerta unos hombres que parecían traer broqueles. Dióme cuidado. Desperté al cobrador, tomando carta de pago, y envié a llamar a Francisco Zerain, que vino luego, y reconoció al entrar a tres hombres que allí estaban, y que eran Reyes, aquel su amigo a quien en Saña derribé de una estocada, y otro. Salimos a la calle, encargando al negro cerrar la puerta, y luego al punto se nos arrojaron. Recibímoslos y fuimos bregando, y a poco rato quiso mi mala suerte que al amigo de Reyes le entrara yo una punta no sé por dónde, y cayó. Con sangre de ambas partes seguimos batallando dos a dos.

A este tiempo llegó el corregidor, don Ordoño de Aguirre, con dos ministros, y echóme mano. Francisco Zerain se valió de los pies y entró en sagrado. Llevándome el propio corregidor a la cárcel, que los ministros se ocupaban de los otros, íbame preguntando quién era y de dónde, y oído que vizcaíno, me dijo en vascuence que al pasar por la iglesia mayor le soltase la pretina, por donde me llevaba asido, y me acogiese. Yo tuve buen cuidado e hícelo así: entréme en la iglesia mayor y él quedó braveando. Acogido allí, avisé a mi amo, que estaba en Saña. Vino en breve y fué tratando mi despacho; pero no se halló camino, porqué al homicidio agregaron no sé qué cosas, con lo que hubo de resolverse en que pasara a Lima. Dí mis cuentas, y mi amo hízome dos vestidos, dióme dos mil seiscientos pesos y carta de recomendación, y partí.

## **CAPITULO V**

—Parte de Trujillo a Lima.

Partido de Trujillo a Lima, y andadas más de ochenta leguas, entré en la cludad de Lima, cabeza del opulento reino del Perú,

comprises one hundred and two Spanish cities, not counting many villages, twenty-eight bishoprics and arch-bishoprics, one hundred thirty-six magistrates, and the royal district courts (Audiencias) of Valladolid, Granada, Charcas, Quito, Chile, and La Paz. Lima has an archbishop, a cathedral (like the one in Seville although not as large) with five bishops, ten canons, six full prebendaries and six halves, four priests, seven parishes, twelve convents of friars and nuns, eight hospitals, a hermitage, an office of the Inquisition (there is another in Cartagena), a university... It has a viceroy and a royal council which governs the rest of Perú, and other grandiosities.

I gave my letter to Diego de Solarte, a very wealthy merchant (who is now mayor of Lima) and to whom Juan de Urquiza recommended me. He received me right away in his home with much courtesy and kindness, and in a few days placed me in charge of his store at six hundred pesos a year.

At the end of nine months he informed me that I should seek my living elsewhere. The reason for this was that he had two young maidens living in his house, sisters of his wife, and with whom (and above all with one who was especially fond of me) I used to frolic and fool around. And one day he happened by a window and saw us in the parlour. Reclining in her petticoats, she was combing my hair, our legs entangled. He heard her telling me that I should go to Potosí and earn money so we could get married. He withdrew and summoned me shortly. He questioned me, settled accounts, and I left.

I founded myself evicted and very much out of favor. At that time there were six companies being raised up to campaign in Chile. I presented myself and enlisted in one as a private soldier and right away received two hundred and eighty pesos salary which they advanced me. My master, Diego de Solarte, regretted it very much when he found out. It seems he didn't mean what he said. He offered to make an effort with the officers that they might erase my name from the roster and return the money I received. But I didn't

que comprende ciento dos ciudades de españoles, sin contar muchas villas, veintiocho obispados y arzobispados, ciento treinta y seis corregidores y las Audiencias reales de Valladolid, Granada, Charcas, Quito, Chile y La Paz. Tiene Lima arzobispo, iglesia catedral parecida a la de Sevilla, aunque no tan grande, con cinco dignidades, diez canónigos, seis raciones enteras y seis medias, cuatro curas, siete parroquias, doce conventos de frailes y de monjas, ocho hospitales, una ermita (inquisición y otra en Cartagena), Universidad... Tiene virrey y Audiencia real, que gobierna el resto del Perú, y otras grandiosidades.

Dí mi carte a Diego de Solarte, mercader muy rico, que es ahora cónsul mayor de Lima, y a quien me remitió Juan de Urquiza, el cual me recibió luego en su casa con mucho agrado y afabilidad, y a pocos días me entregó su tienda, señalándome seiscientos pesos al año, y allí lo fuí haciendo muy a su agrado y contento.

Al cabo de nueve meses me dijo que buscasse mi vida en otra parte, y fué la causa que tenía en casa dos doncellas, hermanas de su mujer, con las cuales, y sobre todo con una que más se me inclinó, solía yo jugar y triscar. Y un día, estando en el estrado peinándome acostado en sus faldas y andándole en las piernas, llegó acaso a una reja, por donde nos vió y oyó a ella que me decía que fuese al Potosí y buscasse dineros y nos casaríamos. Retiróse, y de allí a poco me llamó, me pidió y tomó cuentas, y despidióme y me fuí.

Hallábame desacomodado y muy remoto de favor. Estábanse allí entonces levantando seis compañías para Chile; yo me llegué a una y senté plaza de soldado, y recibí luego doscientos ochenta pesos, que me dieron de sueldo. Mi amo, Diego de Lasarte, que lo supo, lo sintió mucho, que parece que no lo decía por tanto. Ofrecióme hacer diligencias con los oficiales para que me borrasen de la plaza y volver el dinero que recibí; pero no vine

agree to it, saying that it was my inclination to travel and see the world. Finally, I was assigned to the company of Captain Gonzalo Rodríguez. I departed Lima in a troop of sixteen hundred men under the command of Diego Bravo de Sarabia, bound for Concepción five hundred and forty leagues away.

## **Chapter 6**

—She arrives in Concepción, Chile, and finds her brother there. She goes to Paicabí and finding herself in the battle of Valdivia, earns a commission. She returns to Concepción and kills two men including her own brother.

After twenty days traveling we arrived at the port of Concepción.<sup>85</sup> It is a city of moderate size, bearing the title "noble and loyal", and has a bishop. We were well received given the lack of people that there were in Chile. Immediately came orders from the governor, Alonso de Ribera, to disembark, carried by his secretary Captain Miguel de Erauso.

As soon as I heard his name I brightened up and saw that he was my brother. Although I didn't know him and had never seen him (because he left San Sebastián for these parts when I was two) I was aware of him if not of his residence. He took the roster and went along asking each one his name and place of birth. Coming to me and hearing my name and hometown, he dropped his pen and embraced me, asking about his father and his mother, brothers and sisters, and his dear Catalina the nun. I answered as best I could, without giving myself away to him or his becoming suspicious. He carried on with the list. Upon finishing, he took me to his house and I sat down to eat.

He told me that this fort at Paicabí where I was headed was hard duty for soldiers and that he would speak to the governor so that he might

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<sup>85</sup> Although Erauso does not specifically say so, this long journey must have been made by sea to have been completed within the relatively short period of twenty days.

en ello, diciendo que era mi inclinación andar y ver mundo. En fin, asentada la plaza en la compañía del capitán Gonzalo Rodríguez, partí de Lima en tropa de mil seiscientos hombres, de que iba por maestro de campo Diego Bravo de Sarabia, para la ciudad de la Concepción, que dista de Lima quinientas cuarenta leguas.

#### **CAPITULO VI**

—Llega a la Concepción de Chile y halla allí a su hermano. Pasa a Paicibí, y hallándose en la batalla de Valdivia, gana una bandera. Vuelve a la Concepción, mata a dos y a su propio hermano.

Llegamos al puerto de la Concepción en veinte días que se tardó en el camino. Es ciudad razonable, con título de *noble y leal*, y tiene obispo. Fuimos bien recibidos por la falta de gente que había en Chile. Llegó luego orden del gobernador, Alonso de Ribera, para desembarcarnos, y trájola su secretario el capitán Miguel de Erauso. Luego que oí su nombre me alegré y ví que era mi hermano, porque aunque no le conocía ni había vista porque partió de San Sebastián para estas partes siendo yo de dos años, tenía noticias de él, si no de su residencia. Tomó la lista de la gente, fué pasando y preguntando a cada uno su nombre y patria, y llegando a mí y oyendo mi nombre y patria, soltó la pluma y me abrazó y fué haciendo preguntas por su padre, y su madre, y hermanos, y por su querida Catalina, la monja. Yo fuí a todo respondiendo como podía, sin descubrirme ni caer él en ello. Fué prosiguiendo la lista, y en acabando me llevó a comer a su casa y me senté a comer. Díjome que aquel presidio que yo llevaba de Paicabí era de mala pasadía de soldados que él hablaría al gobernador para que me mudase

change my orders. After dinner he got up to go and see the governor, taking me with him. He informed him of the arrival of the troops, and asked as a favor if he might transfer to his company this young lad who had come from his hometown, as he had seen no other since he left there.

The governor ordered me to come in. Upon seeing me, he said that I could not transfer (I don't know why). My brother left disappointed. However, the governor called him back right away and said that it could be as he asked.

So, when the companies marched off, I remained with my brother as his aide, dining at his table for nearly three years without his ever realizing anything. I went with him sometimes to the house of a girlfriend he had there. Other times I went there without him. He found out about this and took it hard, telling me to keep away from there. He lay in wait for me and caught me at it again. When I came out, he attacked me with his belt and injured my hand. I was forced to defend myself and Captain don Francisco de Aillon, hearing the fracas, came and broke it up.

I ran into the Franciscan church, as I feared the governor who was a hard man, and proved so in this case. Although my brother interceded, he banished me to Paicabí, and with no other recourse I had to go.

After having lived so pleasantly, I had to go off to Paicabí and undergo some hard times for three years. We were always with our weapons in hand owing to the great invasion of Indians there. Finally the governor (Alonso de Sarabia) arrived with all the forces in Chile. We linked up with him and bivouaced in open country on the plains of Valdivia, five thousand men in bitter discomfort.

The Indians attacked and took the town of Valdivia. We counter attacked and did battle with them three or four times, beating them back and punishing them always. The last time however, their re-inforcements arrived

me mudase de plaza. En comiendo subió a ver al gobernador, llevándome consigo. Dióle cuenta de la gente que venía y pidió de merced que mudase a su compañía a un mancebito que venía allí de su tierra, que no había vista otro de allá desde que salió. Mandóme entrar el gobernador, y en viéndome, no sé por qué, dijo que no me podía mudar. Mi hermano lo sintió y salióse; pero de allí a un rato llamó a mi hermano el gobernador, y díjole que fuese como pedía.

Así, yéndose las compañías, quedé yo con mi hermano por su soldado, comiendo a su mesa casi tres años sin haber dado en ello. Fuí con él algunas veces a casa de una dama que allí tenía, y de ahí, algunas otras veces, me fuí sin él, y alcanzó a saberlo y concibió mal y díjome que allí no entrase. Acechéme y me cogió otra vez, y esperándome, al salir me embistió a cintarazos y me hirió en una mano. Fué forzoso defenderme, y al ruido acudió el capitán Francisco de Aillón, y metió paz; pero yo me hube de entrar en San Francisco por temor al gobernador, que era fuerte y lo estuvo en esto, aunque mi hermano intercedió, hasta que vino a desterrarme a Paicabí, y sin remedio hube de irme, y estuve allí tres años. Hube de salir a Paicabí y pasar allí algunos trabajos por tres años, habiendo antes vivido alegremente. Estábamos siempre con las armas en la mano, por la gran invasión de los indios que allí hay, hasta que vino finalmente el gobernador Alonso de Sarabia con todas las compañías de Chile. Juntámonos otros cuantos con él y alojámonos en los llanos de Valdivia, en campaña rasa, cinco mil hombres, con harta incomodidad. Tomaron y asaltaron los indios la dicha Valdivia. Salimos a ellos, y batallamos tres o cuatro veces, maltratándolos siempre y destrozándolos; pero llegádoles la vez última socorro,

and it went badly for us. They killed many of our troops and officers, including my lieutenant, and made off with our flag. Seeing it borne away, myself and two other mounted soldiers ran after it, right into the middle of the mob, trampling, killing, and receiving some damage. Soon, one of our three fell dead. The two of us pressed on and reached the flag, but my comrade was felled by a spear. Now badly wounded in the leg, I killed the chief who carried the flag, took it from him, and spurred my horse on, trampling wounding, and killing to infinity. But I was badly hurt, pierced by three arrows and a spear in my left shoulder, which I sorely felt. Finally I made it back to my own people and fell right off my horse. Some people came to my aid, and among them was my brother whom I had not seen and was a great comfort to me.

They cured me and we remained encamped there nine months. At the end of that period, my brother got me back that flag I won from the governor, and I was commissioned a lieutenant in the company of Alonso Moreno.<sup>86</sup> This company was soon given to Gonzalo Rodríguez, the first captain I had served under, and I was very pleased.

I was a lieutenant for five years. I found myself in the battle of Purén, where my said captain died, leaving me in command of the company for six months. During those months I had various encounters with the enemy and several arrow wounds. In one of these, I ran up against a wealthy, Christianized captain of the Indians called Francisco Quispiguaucha, who kept us pretty excited with various tricks that he played on us. Battling with him, I knocked him from his horse and he surrendered to me. I immediately had him

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<sup>86</sup> In the Spanish military forces the rank of *alférez* (from the Arabic for “flag” or “ensign”) corresponds to that of lieutenant or ensign. It was the duty of this junior commissioned officer in a company of troops to carry the company’s banner. So, the statement “got me back that flag I won from the governor” is a bit of a play on words: Catalina recovered the company flag from the enemy and, for her valor, and on the implied recommendation of her brother, received another “flag” from the Governor in the form of a battlefield commission to the rank of ensign.

nos fué mal y nos mataron mucha gente, y capitanes, y a mi alférez, y se llevaron la bandera. Viéndola llevar, partimos tras ella yo y dos soldados de a caballo, por medio de gran multitud, atropellando y matando y recibiendo daño. En breve cayó muerto uno de los tres. Proseguimos los dos y llegamos hasta la bandera; pero cayó de un bote de lanza mi compañero. Yo, con un mal golpe en una pierna, maté al cacique que la llevaba, se la quité y apreté con mi caballo, atropellando, matando e hiriendo a infinidad; pero malherido y pasado de tres flechas y de una lanza en el hombro izquierdo, que sentía mucho; en fin, llegué a mucha gente y caí luego del caballo. Acudieronme algunos, y entre ellos mi hermano, a quien no había vista y me fué de consuelo. Curáronme y quedamos allí alojados nueve mesas. Al cabo de ellos, mi hermano me sacó del gobernador la bandera que yo gané, y quedé alférez de la compañía de Alonso Moreno, la cual poco después se dió al capitán Gonzalo Rodríguez, el primer capitán que yo conocí y holgué mucho.

Fuí alférez cinco años. Halléme en la batalla de Purén, donde murió el dicho mi capitán y quedé yo con la compañía cosa de seis meses, teniendo en ellos varios encuentros con el enemigo, con varias heridas de flechas, en uno de los cuales me topé con un capitán de indios, ya cristiano, llamado don Francisco Quispiguaucha, hombre rico, que nos traía bien inquietos con varias alarmas que nos tocó, y batallando con él, lo derribé del caballo y se me rindió. Yo lo hice al punto

hanged from a tree, a thing which displeased the governor afterwards, as he wanted him taken alive. For that reason, it was said, he did not give me command of the company. Instead he gave it to Captain Casadevante, making me a half pay ensign and promising to consider me for the next opportunity.

The troops withdrew from there, each company to its base. I transferred to Nacimiento, pleasant in name only, and murder for the rest, with weapons in hand at all hours. I was there for only a few days when along came Colonel Alvaro Núñez de Pineda with orders from the governor, taking from there and from other garrisons nearly eight hundred mounted troops to campaign in the Valley of Purén. Among these went I, along with other officers and captains. For the next six months we lay waste wherever we went, cutting and burning crops. Afterwards, the governor gave me leave to return to Concepción. I took up my post in the company of Francisco Navarrete, and there I was.

Lady Luck played with me turning my joys into sorrows. I was staying quiet in Concepción. Finding myself in the barracks one day, I went to a nearby gaming house with another lieutenant friend. We set to playing and the game was rolling along when, in a difference which arose—and with many others present—he said I lied like a cuckold. I pulled my sword and plunged it into his chest. So many people accosted me and came in at the commotion that I couldn't move. One deputy in particular had hold of me. The Auditor General, Francisco de Párraga, came in and took hold of me also, shaking me and asking me I don't know what all questions. I told him that I would enter my plea in front of the governor.

My brother came in at this time and told me in our tongue that I better try to save myself. The Auditor had me by the collar of my jacket. I, dagger in hand, told him to release me. I shook myself and struck him a blow piercing his cheeks. He still had a hold of me. I struck him again and he let go. I drew my sword. Many of them charged me and I retreated towards the

colgar de un árbol, cosa que después sintió el gobernador, que deseaba tenerlo vivo, y diz que por eso no me dió la compañía, y se la dió al capitán Casadevante, reformándome y prometiéndome para la primera ocasión. Se retiró de allí la gente, cada compañía a su presidio, y yo pasé al Nacimiento, bueno sólo en el nombre y en lo demás una muerte, con las armas en la mano a todas horas. Allí estuve pocos dias, porque vino luego el maestro de campo Alvaro Núñez de Pineda con orden del gobernador, y sacó de allí y de otras guarniciones hasta ochocientos hombres de a caballo para el valle de Purén, entre los cuales fuí yo, con otros oficiales y capitanes. Adonde fuimos, en seis meses hicimos muchos daños de talas y quemas de sembrados. Después, el gobernador Alonso de Ribera me dió licencia para volver a la Concepción, y volví con mi plaza a la compañía de Francisco Navarrete, y allí estuve.

Jugaba conmigo la Fortuna, tornando las dichas en azares. Estábame quieto en la Concepción, y hallándome un día en el campo de guardia, entréme con otro amigo alférez en una casa de juego allí junto. Pusímonos a jugar, fué corriendo el juego, y en una diferencia que se ofreció, presentes muchos alrededor, me dijo que mentía como cornudo. Yo saqué la espada y entrécela por el pecho. Cargaron tantos sobre mí, y tantos que entraron al ruido, que no pude moverme; tenía me en particular asido un ayudante. Entró el auditor general, Francisco de Párraga, y asíome también fuertemente y zamarreábame haciéndome no sé qué preguntas. Yo decía que delante del gobernador declarararía. Entró en esto mi hermano, y díjome en vascuence que procurase salvar la vida. El auditor me cogió por el cuello de la ropilla; yo, con la daga en la mano, le dije que me soltase; zamarreóme y le tiré un golpe, atravesándole los carrillos; tenía me aún, y le tiré otro y me soltó. Saqué la espada; cargaron muchos sobre mí, y me retiré hacia la

door, levelling a barricade there, and ran out and into the Franciscan convent which was nearby, and where I knew would be the dead lieutenant and the auditor.

The governor, Alonso García Remón, responded by surrounding the church with soldiers and kept them there for six months. He issued a decree promising a reward to whomever might capture me, barred anyone from giving me passage from any port, advised all forts and presidios, and took other measures. Until, with time (which heals all wounds) this rigor was eased, intercessions were made, the guard was lifted, and the fear ended. I was feeling more relieved, with friends visiting me, and it was beginning to be viewed as a case of extreme provocation of one whose life was threatened.

At this time my friend don Juan de Silva (a full-pay lieutenant) came one day, among others, and told me that he had had words with don Francisco de Rojas (a knight of Santiago) and had challenged him to a duel at eleven o'clock that night. Each was to bring a friend, and he had no other for it but me. I became a bit suspicious, thinking that it might be some ruse to capture me. Sensing this he said to me, "If it does not appear seemly to you, so be it, I will go alone for I trust no one else at my side." I considered this and I accepted.

During the sermon I slipped out of the cathedral and went to his house. We dined and chatted until ten. On hearing the bells, we took our capes and swords and set out for the appointed place. It was so very dark that we could not see our hands. Observing this, I suggested to my friend that we each tie our kerchief to our arm, so that we wouldn't fail to recognize each other in whatever might transpire.

The other two arrived and one spoke, his voice recognized as that of don Francisco de Rojas. "Don Juan de Silva?"

Don Juan Answered, "I am here." They both reached for their swords and clashed while the other one and I stood still. They were struggling and

puerta, allanando algún embarazo que había, y salí, entrándome en San Francisco, que estaba cerca, y donde supe que quedaban muertos el alférez y el auditor. Acudió luego el gobernador, Alonso Garcia Remón, y cercó la iglesia con soldados, y así la tuvo seis meses. Echó bando prometiendo premio a quien me diese preso y que en ningún puerto se me diese embarcación, y avisó a los presidios y plazas e hizo otras diligencias, hasta que con el tiempo, que lo cura todo, fué templándose este rigor, y fueron arrimándose intercesiones, y se quitaron las guardas, y fué cesando el sobresalto, y yo, quedándome más desahogado y hallando amigos que me visitaron, y se fué cayendo en la urgente provocación del principio y en el aprieto encadenado de lance.

A este tiempo, y entre otros, vino un día don Juan de Silva, mi amigo, alférez vivo, y me dijo que había tenido palabras con don Francisco de Rojas, del hábito de Santiago, y lo había desfiado para aquella noche, a las once, llevando cada uno a un amigo, y que él no tenía para eso sino a mí. Yo quedé un poco suspenso, recelando si habría allí forjada una treta para prenderme. El, que lo advertió, me dijo: "Si no os parece, no sea; yo me iré sólo, que a otro no he de fiar mi lado." Yo me dije que en qué reparaba, y acepté.

En dando la oración, salí del convento y me fuí a su casa. Cenamos y hablamos hasta las diez, y en oyéndolas tomamos las espadas y capas, y salimos al puesto señalado. Era la obscuridad tan suma que no nos veíamos las manos; y advirtiéndolo yo, hice con amigo, para no desconocernos en lo que se pudiera ofrecer, que nos pusiéramos cada uno en el brazo atado su lenzuelo.

Llegaron los dos, y dijo el uno, conocido en la voz por do Francisco de Rojas: "¿Don Juan de Silva?"

Don Juan respondió: "¡Aquí estoy!" Metieron ambos mano a las espadas y se embistieron, mientras estábamos parados él y yo. Fueron bregando, y

and shortly I noticed that my friend was feeling a wound he had received. I immediately placed myself at his side and the other did likewise at the side of don Francisco. We fought two against two and shortly don Francisco and don Juan both fell. My opponent and I continued fighting and I stuck him, as it seemed afterwards, just below the left nipple. I felt it passing right through his double jacket and he fell.

"Ah, traitor, you have killed me!" he said. I tended to recognize his voice, although I could not see him. I asked him who he was. He said, "Captain Miguel de Erauso."

I was stunned. He and the others were asking to give confession. I went running off to the Franciscan monastery and sent two friars who heard their confessions. Two of them died right away. They carried my brother to the house of the governor, whose war secretary he was. They summoned a doctor and a surgeon who did as much as they could. Right away the law interviewed him, asking him the name of the murderer. He clamored for a little wine. Doctor Robledo denied him, saying it would be no good. He insisted, but the doctor refused. He said, "you treat me more cruelly than Lieutenant Diaz!", and shortly after, he expired.

The governor responded to this by surrounding the convent and barged inside with his guard. The friars and their Provincial (Fr. Francisco de Otaola who lives today in Lima), resisted and argued fervently, until some friars told him that he better watch himself, for if he once came in he might never leave again. With this he calmed down and withdrew, leaving the guards.

They buried the deceased Captain Miguel de Erauso in the convent, as I watched from the choir with God only knows what grief. I remained there eight months meanwhile, pursuing the case in contempt, there being no opportunity offered for me to appear. With the support of don Juan Ponce de León, who gave me arms and a horse, I found occasion to depart Concepción.

a poco rato sentí que se sintió mi amigo la punta que le había entrado. Púseme luego a su lado, y el otro al lado de don Francisco. Tiramos dos a dos, y a breve rato cayeron don Francisco y don Juan; yo y mi contrario proseguimos batallando, y entréle yo una punta, según después pareció, por bajo de la tetilla izquierda, pasándole, según sentí, colete de dos antes, y cayó. "¡Ah, traidor,—dijo—que me has muerto!" Yo quise reconocer el habla de quien yo no conocía; preguntéle quién era, y dijo: "El capitán Miguel de Erauso." Yo quedé atónito. Pedía a voces confesión, y pedíanla los otros. Fuí corriendo a San Francisco, y envié dos religiosos, que los confesaron. Dos expiraron luego; a mi hermano lo llevaron a casa del gobernador, de quien era secretario de guerra. Acudieron con médico y cirujano a la curación, e hicieron cuanto alcanzaron; luego hízose lo judicial, preguntándole el nombre del homicida; y como él clamaba por un poco de vino y el doctor Robledo se lo negaba, diciendo que no convenía, él porfió, el doctor negó y él dijo: "Más cruel anda usted conmigo que el alférez Diaz"; y de ahí a un rato expiró.

Acudió en esto el gobernador a cercar el convento, y arrojóse dentro con su guardia; resistieron los frailes, con su provincial, fray Francisco de Otaloza, que hoy vive en Lima, y altercóse mucho sobre esto, hasta decirle resueltos unos frailes que mirase bien, que si entraba no había de volver a salir, con lo cual se reportó y retiró, dejando los guardas. Muerto el capitán Miguel de Erauso, lo enterraron en el dicho convento de San Francisco, viéndolo yo desde el coro, ¡sabe Dios con qué dolor! Estuve allí ocho meses, siguiéndose entretanto la causa en rebeldía y no dándome lugar el negocio para presentarme. Hallé ocasión con el amparo de don Juan Ponce de León, que me dió caballo y armas y avivó para salir de la Concepción,

At his urging I left for Valdivia and Tucumán.

## **Chapter 7**

—She departs Concepción for Tucumán.

I began to travel all along the sea coast, experiencing hard going and lack of water, of which I found none there at all. I ran into two other renegade soldiers on the way and the three of us continued on together, determined to die before allowing ourselves to be captured. We had our horses, swords and firearms, and the great providence of God. We followed the high cordillera, climbing more than thirty leagues without so much as a mouthful of bread and rarely water in all that distance. Nor did we in the three hundred more that we covered, with only a few little animals, herbs, and roots and such to maintain ourselves on, and seeing the odd fleeting Indian. We killed one of our horses to make jerky of it but found it all bones and hair. And, in the same manner, travelling little by little, we did likewise with the others, ending up on foot unable to hold on. We came into a cold region, so much so that we froze. We ran into two men leaning against a boulder, and were heartened. We approached them, shouting greetings and asking them what they were doing there, but they didn't respond. We got there but they were dead, frozen and open-mouthed, as in laughter, which filled us with dread.

We continued on. The third night, leaning against a rock, one of us gave up and died. We two continued on. On the following day around four in the afternoon, my weeping companion fell unable to walk any further, and died. I found eight pesos in his pocket.

Without seeing where, I continued on my way armed with an arquebus and the piece of jerky that was left, expecting the same fate as my comrades. Imagine my condition: exhausted, shoeless, and bleeding feet. I leaned against a tree and wept and I think it was the first time I did so. I recited the rosary and commended my soul to the Holy Virgin and her glorious husband Saint

y partí a Valdivia y a Tucumán

## CAPITULO VII

—Parte de la Concepción a Tucumán.

Comencé a caminar por toda la costa del mar, pasando grandes trabajos y falta de agua, que no hallé en todo aquello de por allí. Topé en el camino con otros dos soldados de mal andar y seguimos los tres el camino, determinados a morir antes que dejarnos prender. Llevábamos nuestros caballos, armas blancas y de fuego y la alta providencia de Dios. Seguimos la cordillera arriba, por subida de más de treinta leguas, sin topar en ellas, ni en otras trescientas que anduvimos, ni un bocado de pan, y rara vez agua; algunas yerbezuelas y animalejos y tal o cual raizuela de que mantenernos, y tal o cual indio que huía. Hubimos de matar uno de nuestros caballos y hacerlo tasajos; pero hallémosle sólo huesos y pellejo; y de la misma suerte, poco a poco y caminando, fuimos haciendo de los otros, quedándonos a pie y sin podernos tener. Entramos en una tierra fría; tanto, que nos helábamos. Topamos dos hombres arrimados a una peña, y nos alegramos. Fuimos a ellos, saludándolos antes de llegar, y preguntándoles qué hacían allí, no respondieron. Llegamos allá, y estaban muertos: helados, las bocas abiertas, como riendo, y causónos eso pavor.

Pasamos adelante, y la noche tercera, arrimándonos a una peña, el uno de nosotros no pudo más, y expiró. Seguimos los dos, y el día siguiente, como a las cuatro de la tarde, mi compañero, llorando, se dejó caer sin poder más andar, y expiró. Halléle en la faltriquera ocho pesos; sin ver adónde, proseguí mi camino, cargado del arcabuz y del pedazo de tasajo que me quedaba, esperando lo mismo que vi en mis compañeros. Ya se comprenderá mi aflicción, cansado, descalzo y lastimados los pies. Me arrimé a un árbol y lloré, y pienso que fué la primera vez que lo hice; recé el rosario, encomendándome a la Santísima Virgen y al glorioso San José, su esposo.

Joseph.

I rested awhile, got up and continued on. It seemed that I left the Kingdom of Chile and entered into that of Tucumán, according to the difference in the temperature which I noticed.

I went walking on. On the following morning, as I lay on the ground overcome by fatigue and hunger, I saw two mounted men approaching. Not sure if they were savages or men of peace, I didn't know whether to rejoice or despair. Although unable to lift it, I primed my arquebus. They rode up and asked me where I was going in such a wilderness. I told them that I was lost and didn't know where I was and that I found myself overcome, nearly dead of hunger, and without the strength to get up. I saw that they were Christians and the sky opened up.

It hurt them to see me and, dismounting, they gave me what they had to eat. They put me on a horse and took me to a farm three leagues from there where they said their mistress lived. We arrived about five o'clock in the afternoon.

The lady was a half-breed, the daughter of a Spaniard and an Indian. She was widow and a good woman who, upon seeing me and hearing of my plight and helplessness, pitied me and kindly took me in. She put me in a reasonable bed, fed me well, and allowed me to rest and sleep, with which I restored myself.

On the following morning she gave me a good lunch. Seeing that I was totally lacking, she gave me a decent woolen suit, and went on treating me very well and generously. She was comfortably well-off and had many pack animals and cattle.<sup>87</sup> Few Spaniards passed through there and it seems she wanted me as a spouse for her daughter.

After having me there for eight days, the good woman told me that I

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<sup>87</sup> These were likely llamas and vicuñas.

Descansé un poco, volvíme a levantar y a caminar, y parece que salí del reino de Chile y entré en el de Tucumán, según el temple que reconocí.

Fuí caminando, y a la mañana siguiente, rendido en aquel suelo de cansancio y de hambre, vi venir dos hombres a caballo: no supe si afligirme o si alegrarme, ignorando si eran caribes o si gente de paz; sin poder con él, previne mi arcabuz. Llegaron y preguntáronme adónde iba por allí tan apartado. Conocí que eran cristianos, y vi el cielo abierto. Díjeles que iba perdido y no sabía dónde estaba, y que me hallaba rendido, muerto de hambre y sin fuerzas para levantarme. Doliéronse de verme, y, apeándose, diéronme de comer lo que llevaban, subiéronme en un caballo y me llevaron a una heredad tres leguas de allí, donde dijeron que estaba su ama y adonde llegamos como a las cinco de la tarde.

Era la señora una mestiza, hija de español y de india; viuda y buena mujer, que, viéndome y oyendo mi derrota y desamparo, se condolió y me recibió bien, y, compadecida, me hizo luego acostar en razonable cama, me dió bien de cenar y me dejó reposar y dormir, con lo que me restauré. A la mañana siguiente me dió bien de almorzar, y, viéndome totalmente falto, me dió un vestido razonable de paño, y fué así tratándome muy bien y regalándome mucho. Era bien acomodada y tenía muy muchas bestias y ganados, y como parece que aportan por allí pocos espanoles, parece que me apeteció para su hija.

Al cabo de ocho días que allí me tuvo, me dijo la buena mujer que me quedase

could stay there and be master of the house. I expressed much appreciation for the kindness she showed me in my waywardness, and I offered to serve her as best I could. After a few more days she gave me to understand that she would consider it a favor if I would marry her daughter that she had there with her. The daughter was very dark, and ugly as the devil, very contrary to my taste, which was always the pretty faces.

I showed great happiness at such good favor, undeserving as I was, and I offered myself at her feet, saying that she might dispose of me as her own private property taken in defeat.

I served her as best I knew how. She dressed me gallantly and virtually handed over her house and property to me. Two months later we went to Tucumán to effect the marriage. I was there for two months more, stalling, in fact, on various pretexts, until I could defer no longer. Taking a mule, I departed and they saw no more of me.

Another thing happened to me at this time in Tucumán, and it was like this. In those two months I was trifling with the Indian girl, I became casual friends with the secretary of the bishop. He entertained me and took me to his house a few times where we gambled. There, I also got to know don Antonio de Cervantes, a canon of the church and the bishop's confidante. He also took a liking to me and fondly wined and dined me several times. Finally he declared his intentions, saying that he had a niece at home, a young lady about my age, talented and with a good dowry, and that he was disposed to offer her to me and happily so.

I appeared overwhelmed by his favor and good will. I took a look at the girl and she seemed fine. She then sent me a fine velvet suit, a dozen shirts, six pairs of Rouen cloth trousers, some Dutch collars, a dozen kerchiefs, and two hundred pesos, on a platter. All this was intended as a gift and not part of the dowry. I received it with great appreciation, and composed a reply as best I could, abiding her coming to kiss her hands and place myself

allí para gobernar la casa. Yo mostré grande estimación de la merced que me hacía en mi descarrío y ofrecíme a servirla cuanto bien yo alcanzase. A pocos días más me dió a entender que tendría a bien que me casase con su hija, que allí consigo tenía; la cual era muy negra y fea como un diablo, muy contraria a mi gusto, que fué siempre de buenas caras. Mostréle gran alegría de tanto bien sin merecerlo yo, y, ofreciéndome a sus pies para que dispusiese de mí como de cosa propia adquirida en derrota, fuí sirviéndola lo mejor que supe; vistióme muy galán y entregóme francamente su casa y su hacienda. Pasados dos meses, nos vinimos al Tucumán, para allí efectuar el casamiento. Y allí estuve otros dos meses, dilatando el efecto con varios pretextos hasta que no pude más, y, tomando una mula, me partí, y no me han visto más.

Sucedióme en este tiempo, en Tucumán, otro caso, y fué de esta manera: que en aquellos dos meses que estuve entreteniéndome a la india me amisté casualmente con el secretario del obispo, el cual me festejó y me llevó a su casa varias veces, y allí jugamos, y allí vine a introducirme también con don Antonio de Cervantes, canónigo de aquella iglesia y provisor del obispo, el cual también se me inclinó y acarició y regaló y convidó varias veces a comer; finalmente vino a declararse, diciéndome que tenía una sobrina en casa, mocita de mi edad, de muy relevantes prendas y con buen dote, y que le había parecido desposarla conmigo, que también le había agradado.

Yo me mostré muy rendido al favor y a la voluntad. Vide a la moza y parecióme bien, y envióme un vestido de terciopelo bueno, doce camisas, seis pares de calzones de ruán, unos cuellos de Holanda, una docena de lenzuelos y doscientos pesos en una fuente; todo esto de regalo y galantería, no entendiéndose dote. Yo recibílo con grande estimación, y compuse la respuesta lo mejor que supe, remitiéndome a la ida a besarle la mano y ponerme

at her feet.

I concealed as much as I could from the Indian woman, and for the rest gave her to understand that it was all to solemnize my marriage to her daughter, of which that gentleman was well acquainted and highly approving, he being so fond of me. Then came the part where I mounted the horse and disappeared, and I never learned what became of the negress and the canon's niece afterwards.

### **Chapter 8**

—She departs Tucumán for Potosí.

Having departed Tucumán, as I said, I headed straight for Potosí, which stood about five hundred and fifty leagues from there.<sup>88</sup> I spent more than three months travelling through cold and mostly unpopulated country. A short way along I ran into a soldier heading that way. I liked him, so we made the journey together. A short way from there, three men with hunting caps and shotguns jumped us from some bath houses that were beside the road, demanding what we had. There was no way to stop them nor to make them believe that we had nothing to give. We got down and faced them, shooting at each other. They missed, two of them fell, and the other one fled. We remounted and continued on.

Finally, after more than three months of much traveling and undergoing a few troubles, we arrived in Potosí. We didn't know anybody, and we each went our own way. I ran into Juan López de Arguijo, an alderman of the city of La Plata in the province of Charcas. I took a position with him as a ramrod (which is like a major-domo) for a salary he offered me of nine hundred pesos yearly. He placed me in charge of twelve thousand

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<sup>88</sup> This is probably a typo as the distance is not nearly so long.

a sus pies. Oculté lo que pude a la india, y en lo demás dile a entender que era para solemnizar el casamiento con su hija, de que aquel caballero había sabido y estimaba mucho, habiéndoseme inclinado. Y hasta aquí llegaba esto cuando monté a caballo y me desaparecí. No he sabido cómo se hubieron después la negra y la provisora.

### **CAPITULO VIII**

—Parte de Tucumán a Potosí.

Partido de Tucumán, como dije, enderecé hacia Potosí, que dista de allí como quinientas cincuenta leguas, en las que tardé más de tres meses, caminando por tierra fría y de lo más despoblada. A poco andado, topé con un soldado que tiraba hacia allá, y me alegré e hicimos el viaje juntos. De allí a poco, de unos baños que estaban en el camino nos salieron tres hombres con monteras y escopetas, pidiendo lo que llevábamos. No hubo modo de detenerlos ni de hacerles creer que no llevábamos qué dar; hubimos de apearnos y hacerles cara, tirándonos unos a otros. Ellos erraron, y cayeron dos; el otro partió huyendo, y volvimos a montar y proseguir.

Finalmente, andando mucho, y pasados varios afanes, llegamos, al cabo de más de tres meses, al Potosí. Entramos sin conocer a nadie, y cada uno echó por su lado, haciendo su diligencia. Yo me topé con Juan López de Arguijo, veinticuatro de la ciudad de la Plata, provincia de las Charcas, y acomedéme con él de camarero, que es como mayordomo, con salario, que él me señaló, de novecientos pesos al año; entregóme doce mil

pack animals<sup>89</sup> and eighty Indians, with which I set out for Charcas. My employer went also. Soon after arriving, a dispute with some men involving my employer arose in which there were rows, arrests, and embargoes. With this I took my leave and returned.

Back in Potosí, the rebellion of Alonso Ibañez occurred while don Rafael Ortiz (a knight of Santiago) was magistrate. He formed a posse, among which went I, to put down the rebels who numbered more than one hundred. Going after them, we encountered them in the street of Santo Domingo one evening. The sheriff called to them in a loud voice, "Who goes there?"

They didn't answer and withdrew. He called to them again as before and some responded, "Liberty!"

The sheriff and many with him shouted, "Long live the king!", and charged towards them, we following with blades and bullets. They defended themselves the same way but we trapped them in an alley, attacking their rearguard from the other opening, and charged them so that they surrendered. Some got away, but we took thirty-six prisoners including Ibañez. We found eight of theirs dead, two of ours, and many wounded on both sides. Some of the prisoners were tortured and admitted to planning an uprising in the town that very night. Right away three companies of Basques and mountain folk were raised up to guard the city. In fifteen days all the rebels were hanged and the city was left quiet.

After this, perhaps because of something I did then, or maybe because of something I did previously, I was given the office of deputy to the sergeant-major, in which I served for two years. While thus serving there in Potosí, the Governor (Pedro de Legui, a knight of Santiago) gave orders to raise up troops to go to Chuncos and El Dorado. Five hundred leagues from Potosí, it was a land rich in gold and gems and populated by warlike Indians. Bartolomé de

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<sup>89</sup> By their sheer number it is understood that these beasts of burden would have been llamas, capable of carrying only a fraction of the load a mule or an ass could carry.

carneros de carga, de la tierra, y ochenta indios, con los que partí para las Charcas, y fué allí también mi amo. A poco de llegados se le ofreció allí a mi amo disgusto y ciertas contiendas con unos hombres, en que hubo reyertas y prisiones y embargos, con lo que yo hube de despedirme y volverme.

Vuelto a Potosí, aconteció allí poco después el alzamiento de Alonso Ibáñez, siendo corregidor don Rafael Ortiz, del hábito de Santiago, el cual juntó gente para ir contra los alzados, que eran más de ciento, entre la cual gente fuí yo; y saliendo a ellos, los encontramos en la calle de Santo Domingo una noche. Preguntóles el corregidor en alto voz: "¡Quién vive!" No respondieron, y se retiraban. Volvió a preguntar lo mismo, y respondieron algunos: "¡La libertad!"

Dijo el corregidor, y muchos con él: "¡Viva el rey!", y avanzó a ellos, siguiéndole nosotros, a cuchilladas y balazos. Ellos se defendieron al mismo peso, y fuímosles apretando en una calle, cogidas las espaldas por la otra boca, y cargámoslos de manera que se rindieron. Escapados algunos, prendimos a treinta y seis, entre ellos el Ibáñez; de ellos hallamos muertos siete, y de los nuestros, dos; heridos muchos de ambas partes. Dióse tormento a algunos de los aprehendidos, y confesaron pretender alzarse con la ciudad aquella noche. Levantáronse luego tres compañías de gente vizcaína y de las montañas para guardar la ciudad, y, pasados quince días, se dió horca a todos ellos, con lo que quedó la ciudad quieta.

De aquí, por algo que acaso hube de hacer o acaso por algo antes hecho, se me dió el oficio de ayudante de sargento mayor, que estuve sirviendo por dos años. Allí, en Potosí, estando sirviendo, dió orden el gobernador, Pedro de Legui, del hábito de Santiago, para levantar gente para los Chuncos y el Dorado, población de indios de guerra, a quinientas leguas de Potosí; tierra tan rica de oro y pedrería. Era maestre de campo Bartolomé de

Alba was the commanding officer who oversaw the preparation and departure. All completed, we set out from Potosí within twenty days.

## **Chapter 9**

—She departs Potosí for Los Chuncos.

Having left Potosí for Los Chuncos, we arrived at a town called Arzaga, which was of peaceful Indians and where we remained for eight days. We took on some guides to find the way but got lost nonetheless, and ended up in bitter confusion on the brink of some ledges, from which fell twelve of our men and fifty of our mules loaded with supplies and ammunition.

Crossing into the interior, we discovered some plains covered to infinity with almond trees like those in Spain, and olives and fruits. The Governor wanted to plant crops there to make up for what we lacked in our supplies, but the soldiers didn't agree to it, saying that we didn't come there to sow, but rather to conquer and get gold. They said we could forage for our sustenance.

We continued on, and on the third day we discovered a village of Indians who immediately took up arms. We went in and, feeling the arquebus, they scattered leaving some dead. We went into the place without having been able to seize an Indian who knew the way. On the way back out, the commanding officer Bartolomé de Alba, weary of his helmet, took it off to wipe off the sweat. A demon of a boy about twelve years old, who was blocking our exit up in a tree, fired an arrow which knocked him over. He was so badly hurt, unfortunately, that he died the next day. We cut the boy into ten thousand pieces.

The Indians, meanwhile, were returning to the village, about ten thousand of them. We attacked them with such fury and wreaked such havoc among them that a gutter of blood like a river flowed down through the place. We pursued them, slaughtering them until past the Dorado River. Here the

Alba; puso en ejecución el apresto y la partida, y, aviado todo, nos partimos del Potosí a los veinte días.

### **CAPITULO IX**

—Parte del Potosí a los Chuncos

Partidos de Potosí a los Chuncos, llegamos a un pueblo llamado Arzaga, que era de indios de paz, donde estuvimos ocho días; tomamos guías para el camino, y perdímonos, sin embargo, y nos vimos en harta confusión sobre unas lajas, de donde se despeñaron cincuenta mulas, cargadas de bastimentos y municiones, y doce hombres.

Pasando tierra adentro descubrimos unos llanos llenos de infinidad de almendros como los de España, y de olivares y frutas. Quería el gobernador sembrar allí para suplir la falta que llevábamos de bastimentos, y no vine la infantería en ello, diciendo que allí no íbamos a sembrar, sino a conquistar y a coger oro, y que el sustento lo buscaríamos. Pasamos adelante, y al tercer día descubrimos un pueblo de indios, los cuales luego se pusieron en armas. Llegamos, y en sintiendo ellos el arcabuz, huyeron desatinados, quedando muertos algunos. Entramos en el lugar sin haber podido coger un indio de quien saber el camino, y al salir, el maestro, de campo, Bartolomé de Alba, fatigado de la celada, se la quitó para limpiarse el sudor, y un demonio de un muchacho como de doce años, que estaba enfrente a la salida encaramado en un árbol, le disparó una flecha y se la entró por un ojo y lo derribó, lastimado de tal suerte que expiró al tercer día. Hicimos al muchacho diez mil añicos.

Habíanse entretanto los indios vuelto al lugar, en número de más de diez mil. Volvimos a ellos con tal coraje e hicimos tal estrago, que corría por la plaza abajo un arroyo de sangre como un río, y fuimos siguiéndolos y matándolos hasta pasar el río Dorado. Aquí

Governor ordered us to withdraw, and we did so reluctantly, for in the houses of the village more than seventy thousand pesos in gold dust were found. Along the edge of the river, much more was found, and they filled their hats with it. We learned later that the ebbing waters left the ground covered three fingers deep. For this reason, many later asked the Governor permission to conquer that land. For his own reasons, he would not grant it, so many of us, including me, stole away by night and deserted. By the time we reached a Christian settlement, we all went our separate ways. I went to Santiago, and from there to the province of Las Charcas with a few *reales* which, little by little, I soon lost.

## Chapter 10

—She goes to the city of La Plata.

I moved on to the city of La Plata and hired on with captain Francisco de Aganumen, a Basque and a very rich miner with whom I remained for several days. I then quit his service because of a dispute which I had with another Basque, a friend of his. Meantime, while I fitted myself out, I took lodgings at the house of a widow named doña Catalina de Chaves, said to be the most capable and prominent woman there. I happened to get friendly with her servant, and he offered to put me up there for a while.

It happened then, on Holy Thursday, that this woman was going to her devotionals and ran into doña Francisca Marmolejo (wife of don Pedro de Andrade, a nephew of the Count of Lemos). Although in church, they had words, and doña Francisca stuck doña Catalina with a clog, raising a great commotion and crowd of people.

Doña Catalina went to her house, where the matter was furiously discussed by her family and friends who gathered there. The other woman remained in the church with her family, not daring to leave until her husband came at nightfall. He was accompanied by don Rafael Ortiz de Sotomayor

nos mandó el gobernador retirar, e hicimoslo de mala gana, porque en las casas del lugar se habían hallado unos más de sesenta mil pesos en polvo de oro, y en la orilla del río hallaron otros infinito, y llenaron los sombreros. Supimos después que la menguante suele dejarlo allí en más de tres dedos; por lo cual, después, muchos pedimos al gobernador licencia para conquistar aquella tierra, y como él, por razones que tendría, no la diese, muchos, y yo con ellos, nos salimos de noche y nos fuimos, y llegados a poblado de cristianos, fuimos tirando cada uno por su cabo. Yo me fuí a Centiago, y de allí a la provincia de las Charcas, con algunos realejos, que poco a poco, y en breve, vine a perder.

#### **CAPITULO X**

—Pasa de la ciudad de la Plata

Pasé a la ciudad de la Plata y acomodéme con el capitán Francisco de Aganumen, vizcaíno, minero muy rico, con quien estuve algunos días, y desacomodéme por cierto disgusto que con otro vizcaíno amigo del amo se me ofreció; acogíme, entretanto que me aviaba, a casa de una senora viuda, llamada doña Catalina de Chaves, la más principal y calificada, según decían, que había por allí, la cual, por medio de un su criado con quien acaso me amisté, me prometió acogerme entretanto allí. Sucedió, pues, que el Jueves Santo, yendo a las estaciones esta señora, se topó en San Francisco con doña Francisca Marmolejo, mujer de don Pedro de Andrade, sobrino del conde de Lemos, y sobre lugares se trabaron de palabras, y pasó dona Francisca a darle a dona Catalina con un chapín, levantándose de aquí un ruido y agolpamiento de gente.

Fuése doña Catalina a su casa, y allí acudieron parientes y conocidos, y se trató ferozmente el caso. La otra señora se quedó en la iglesia con el mismo de los suyos, sin atreverse a salir hasta que vino don Pedro, su marido, ya entrada la noche, acompañado de don Rafael Ortiz de Sotomayor,

(the sheriff and a knight of Malta who is presently in Madrid) and his deputies and constables. They escorted her to her house with torchlights.

While going down the street which runs from the Franciscan convent to the plaza, suddenly the sound of clashing blades was heard, towards which the magistrate and his deputies ran off leaving the woman and her husband alone. At this moment an Indian came rushing by toward the sound of the fighting. On passing Señora Marmolejo, he struck her a blow across the face with a knife, slashing her from one side to the other, and kept on running. It happened so quickly that her husband don Pedro didn't realize it for a moment. When he did, the ensuing riot, noise, confusion, more slashing, and arrests, were horrendous, and nobody understood anything. Meanwhile the Indian went to the house of doña Catalina and said to her grace as he entered, "It is done."

The case continued amid fears of grave consequences. Something resulted from the investigation, and on the third day the sheriff entered the house of doña Catalina and found her sitting on her couch. She took an oath and then he asked her if she knew who cut the face of doña Francisca Marmolejo. She answered in the affirmative. He asked her who it was and she said, "A knife and this hand." With that he left, leaving her under guard.

He went on examining the rest of the household. He came to an Indian, tortured him on the rack, and the low-life declared that he saw me leave the house in an Indian costume and wig that his mistress gave me. He said that the Basque barber Francisco Ciguren brought me the knife, and that he saw me return and heard me say, "It is done."

They arrested me and the barber, throwing us in prison, well apart and secure. A few days went by like this, when one night a justice from the Royal Audiencia who had picked up the case (I don't know why) arrested some constables and came to the prison. He tortured the barber who declared himself completely innocent. The justice turned to me and received

corregidor, que hoy está en Madrid, caballero de Malta, y de los alcaldes ordinarios y ministros, con hachas encendidas, y la sacaron para su casa.

Al ir por la calle que va de San Francisco a la plaza, sonó en ésta un ruido de cuchilladas, al cual el corregidor partió, con los alcaldes y ministros, quedando sola la señora con su marido. A este tiempo pasó corriendo un indio hacia el ruido de cuchilladas, y al pasar por junta a la señora doña Francisca Marmolejo le tiró un golpe a la cara con cuchillo o navaja, y se la cortó de parte a parte, y prosiguió corriendo; lo cual fué tan repentino que el marido, don Pedro, por el momento, no lo advirtió. Advertido, fué grande el alboroto, el ruido, la confusión, el concurso, las cuchilladas de nuevo, las prisiones, y todos sin entenderse.

Entretanto fué el indio a la casa de la señora doña Catalina y dijo a su merced al entrar: "Ya está hecho." Fué prosiguiendo la inquietud y los temores de grandes daños; hubo de resultar algo de las diligencias, y al tercer día el corregidor se entró en casa de doña Catalina y la halló sentada en su estrado. Recibíale juramento y preguntóla si sabía quién habia cortado la cara a doña Francisca Marmolejo, y respondió que sí. Preguntóle quién fué; respondió: "Una navaja y esta mano." Y con esto se salió, dejándola guardas.

Fué examinando la gente de la casa; llegó a un indio, atemorizóle con el potro, y el menguado declaró que me vió salir de casa con aquel vestido y cabellera de indio, que me dió su señora, y que la navaja la trajo Francisco Ciguren, barbero vizcaíno, y que me vió volver y oyó decir: "Ya está hecho." Pasó y nos prendió a mí y al barbero, cargándonos de prisiones, bien separados y retirados. Así pasaron algunos días, cuando una noche un alcalde de la Real Audiencia que había recogido la causa y preso a ministros, no sé por qué, entró en la cárcel y dió tormento al barbero, en el cual él, luego, declaró lo suyo y lo ajeno, con lo cual el alcalde pasó a mí y recibió

confession. I completely denied knowing anything about the affair.

Immediately he ordered me stripped and placed on the rack.

A solicitor came in and alleged that I was a Basque and therefore no one had the right to torture me for reason of traditional privilege. It made no effect with the justice and he continued. They turned the screws and I stood firm as an oak tree. They continued turning the screws and asking questions, when a letter arrived (as I later found out) from doña Catalina de Chaves, which the justice opened and read. Then he stopped and looked at me for a bit and said, "Get that lad out of here!" They took me out and returned me to the lockup and he returned to his house.

The dispute continued, (I will not say how) until I came out of it sentenced to ten years labor in Chile without pay. The barber got two hundred lashes and six years in the galleys. We appealed this decision together as countrymen. The case continued (I will not say how) until one day a verdict was handed down in the Royal Audiencia which set me free, and condemned the lady doña Francisca in costs. The barber also went free. Thanks to perseverance these miracles often happen in such cases, especially in the Indies.

## **Chapter 11**

—She goes to Charcas.

Having escaped from this predicament, I couldn't wait to get out of La Plata so I went to Charcas which stood sixteen leagues from there. I again found there the aforesaid Juan López de Arguijo, the alderman. He put me in charge of ten thousand llamas to pack with and about one hundred or so Indian drivers. He gave me a large amount of money to go to the plains of Cochabamba, buy wheat and mill it, and take it to Potosí where it was scarce and valuable.

confesión. Yo negué totalmente saber del caso; luego pasó a mandarme desnudar y poner en el potro; entró un procurador, alegando ser yo vizcaíno y no haber lugar, por tanto, a darme tormento, por razón de privilegio. El alcalde no hizo caso, y prosiguió. Empezaron las vueltas, y yo estuve firme como un roble. Iban prosiguiendo las preguntas y vueltas, cuando éntranle un papel, según entendí después, de doña Catalina de Chaves, que abrió y leyó, y estuvo después mirándome parado un rato, y dijo: "Quítese ese mozo de ahí." Quitáronme y volviéronme a mi prisión, y él se volvió a su casa.

El pleito se fué siguiendo, no sabré decir cómo, hasta que salí sentenciado en diez años, de Chile, sin sueldo; y el barbero, en doscientos azotes y seis años de galeras. De eso apelamos, agenciando paisanos, y se fué siguiendo, no sabré decir cómo, hasta que salió un día sentencia en la Real Audiencia, en que me dieron por libre; y a la señora doña Francisca la condenaron en costas, y salió también el barbero. Que estos milagros suelen acontecer en estos conflictos, y más en Indias, gracias a la *bella industria*.

## **CAPITULO XI**

—Pásase a la Charcas

Salido de este aprieto, no pude menos que ausentarme de la Plata, y paséme a las Charcas, distante diez y seis leguas de allí. Volvíme a hallar allí al ya dicho Juan López de Arguijo, veinticuatro; entregóme diez mil cabezas de carneros de la tierra para con ellos trajinar, con ciento y tantos indios. Entregóme una gran partida de dinero para que fuese a los llanos de Cochabamba y comprase trigo y, moliéndolo, lo llevase al Potosí, donde hacía falta y tenía valor.

I went there and bought eight thousand *fanegas*<sup>90</sup> at four pesos. Loading it on the animals, I went to the mills at Guilcomayo, milled three thousand five hundred, and took those to Potosí. I sold them right away there for fifteen and a half pesos and returned to the mills. There I found the rest partly milled and buyers for all of it. I sold it all for ten pesos and returned to Charcas with the accounted money to look for my employer. When he saw the good return, he sent me as before to Cochabamba.

Meanwhile, having nothing to do in Charcas one Sunday, I went to gamble at the house of don Antonio Calderón, nephew of the bishop. The vicar was there, the archdeacon, and a merchant from Seville who had married there. I sat down to play with the merchant. The game was going along, when at one hand the merchant, now annoyed, said, "I raise."

"What do you raise?" I said.

"I raise," he said again.

"What do you raise?" I said again.

He threw a doubloon and said "I raise a *cuerno* ." <sup>91</sup>

"I'll see that and raise you the one you have left," said I.

He threw the cards and pulled out his dagger, and I mine. Those present grabbed and parted us and the subject of the conversation was changed. Well after nightfall I left to go home. A short way along I run into him and he takes out his sword and comes at me. I drew my sword and we fought. After a short while I got my point into him and he fell. People gathered at the commotion, and so did the police who wanted to arrest me. I resisted, and received two wounds. Retreating, I sought refuge in the church, the cathedral. I was there a few days, warned by my master to take care, until one night, seeing the time was right, I escaped to Piscobamba.

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<sup>90</sup> A measure of grain, the equivalent of which varies from place to place.

<sup>91</sup> The phallic expression *Cuerno* is used here as a vulgar pronoun for doubloon.

Fuí y compré ocho mil fanegas, a cuatro pesos; carguélas en los carneros, víneme a los molinos de Guilcomayo, molí tres mil quinientas y partí con ellas al Potosí. Vendílas luego allí a quince pesos y medio, y volvíme a los molinos; hallé allí molido parte del resto, y compradores para todo. Vendílo todo a diez pesos, y me volví a las Charcas con el dinero contado a buscar a mi amo, el cual, vista la buena ganancia, me volvió a mandar a lo mismo a Cochabamba.

Entretanto, en las Charcas un domingo, no teniendo qué hacer, me entré a jugar en una casa de don Antonio Calderón, sobrino del obispo. Estaban allí el provisor, el arcediano y un mercader de Sevilla, allí casado; sentéme a jugar con el mercader, fué corriendo el juego, y a una mano dijo el mercader, que estaba ya picado: "Envido."

Dije yo: "¿Qué envida?"

Volvió a decir: "Envido."

Volvíle a decir: "¿Qué envida?"

Dió un golpe con un doblón, diciendo: "¡Envido un cuerno!"

Digo yo: "¡Quiero, y reviro el otro que le queda!" Arrojó los naipes y sacó la daga; yo, la mía, y asiéronnos los presentes, apartándonos, y fué mudando conversación hasta bien entrada la noche. Salí para irme a casa, y a poco andado, al volver una esquina, doy con él, que saca la espada y se viene a mí. Yo saqué la mía, y nos embestimos; tirámonos un poco, y a poco rato le entré una punta y cayó. Acudió gente al ruido, acudió justicia, que me quiso prender; yo resistíme, y recibí dos heridas, y, retirándome, vine a coger iglesia, la mayor. Allí me estuve unos días, advertido de mi amo que me guardase, hasta que una noche, bien reconocida la sazón y el camino, me partí a Piscobamba.

## Chapter 12

—She goes from Las Charcas to Piscobamba.

When I arrived in Piscobamba I put up in the house of a friend, Juan Torrico de Zaragoza, where I remained for a few days. One evening while dining, a little game was started with some friends who came in. I sat myself down with a Portuguese fellow, Fernando de Acosta, who was betting freely. He threw a hand at fourteen pesos each suit. I threw sixteen against him. Seeing that, he gave himself a slap in the face saying, "Save me from this incarnation of the Devil!"

I said, "Until now, what have you lost to rave so?"

He stretched his hands out near to my face and said, "I have lost the *cuernos* of my father!"<sup>92</sup> I threw the cards at him and pulled my sword, and he his. Those present jumped to break us up and calm us down, marvelling and laughing at the piques of the game. He paid up and left, seemingly tranquil.

Heading home from there three nights later, I spied a man waiting. I opened my cape, pulled my sword, and made my way towards him. As I drew near he rushed me, slashing at me and saying, "Cuckold rascal!" As we began to fight, I recognized his voice. I stabbed him and he fell dead.

I stood a moment thinking of what to do. I looked around and didn't feel that anyone had seen us. I went to the house of my friend Zaragoza, kept my mouth shut, and went to bed. The next morning bright and early the sheriff came, got me up, and took me away. I went into the jail and they locked me up. About an hour later he returned with a notary and took down my plea. I denied knowledge of any such thing. After, they interrogated me but I still denied it.

They presented evidence and laid their charge. I made my defense and

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<sup>92</sup> Again, the popular *Cuerno* is used to salt the speech of the ineloquent with profanity.

**CAPITULO XII**

—Parte de Las Charcas a Piscobamba

Llegado a Piscobamba, me acogí en casa de un amigo, Juan Torrico, de Zaragoza, donde estuve unos pocos días. Una noche, en cenando, se armó juego con unos amigos que entraron. Sentéme con un portugués, Fernando de Acosta, que paraba largo; paró una mano a catorce pesos cada pinta; eché diez y seis pintas contra él, y, viéndolas, se dió una bofetada en la cara diciendo: "¡Válgame la encarnación del diablo!"

Yo dije: "¿Hasta ahora, qué ha perdido usted para desatinarse?"

Alargó las manos hasta cerca de mi cara, y dijo: "¡He perdido los cuernos de mi padre!"

Tiréle la baraja a la suya y saqué la espada; él, la suya. Acudieron los presentes y detuviéronnos y nos compusieron, celebrando y riendo los piques del juego. El pagó y fuése, al parecer bien tranquilo. De allí a tres noches, viniéndome para casa, como a las once, en una esquina divisé a un hombre parado; tercié la capa, saqué la espada y proseguí mi camino hacia él. Llegando cerca, se me arrojó, tirándome y diciendo: "¡Pícaro cornudo!" Conocido en la voz, fuímonos tirando, y entréle una punta y cayó muerto.

Quedéme un poco pensando qué haría; miré por allí y no sentí quien nos hubiese vista. Fuíme a casa de mi amigo Zaragoza, callando mi boca, y acostéme. A la mañana vino el corregidor, don Pedro de Meneses, bien temprano, e hízome levantar y llevóme. Entré en la cárcel y echáronme prisiones. A cosa de una hora volvió con un escribano y recibióme declaración. Yo negué saber tal cosa; después me recibieron confesión, y negué. Púsose a acusación, recibióse a prueba, hice mi probanza, y

it was recorded. They brought out witnesses that I had never even seen, and a sentence of death was handed down. I appealed, but the order was to execute nevertheless.

I found myself in utter despair. A friar came to hear my confession but I refused. He insisted but I held firm. There was a flood of monks hounding me, but I was a Luther. They dressed me in taffeta and put me on a horse. The magistrate had decided, in response to those monks who were pleading, that if I wanted to go to Hell it made no difference to him. They took me from the jail through back streets, for fear of the frairs. We arrived at the gallows. The judge drove the monks away from me with shouts and shoves, and made me walk up the four steps. The one who was grieving over me the most was a Dominican, fray Andrés de San Pablo (with whom I spoke this year in Madrid in the College of Atocha). I mounted the last step. They put the *volatín* on me, which is the thin cord that they hang you with. The greenhorn didn't put it on right and I said, "Drunkard! Get it right or take it off! I've had enough of these monks!"

At this moment a post came flying up from the city of La Plata, sent by the secretary by order of the President (don Diego de Portugal) at the insistence of Martín de Mendiola, a Basque. He knew of my plight, and a document was handed to the sheriff (before a notary) which ordered the execution of the sentence be stayed and the prisoner handed over to the authority of the Royal Audiencia, which stood twelve leagues from there.

The cause of this was rare and demonstrates the mercy of God. It seems that those eyewitnesses who testified against me in the killing of the Portuguese fellow, fell into the hands of the law in La Plata (I don't know for what crimes) and were sentenced to hang. Condemned, they declared that they were induced and paid without even knowing me, and that they had sworn falsely against me in the murder trial. Therefore the Audiencia, at the insistence of Martín de Mendiola, was changed of mind and reprieved me.

hecha publicación, vi testigos que no conocí. Salió sentencia de muerte; apelé, y mandóse ejecutar, sin embargo. Halléme afligido. Entró un fraile, y yo me resistí; él porfió, y yo, fuerte. Fueron lloviendo frailes, que me hundían; yo, hecho un Lutero. Vistiéronme un hábito de tafetán y subiéron en un caballo, porque el corregidor se resolvió, respondiendo a los frailes que le instaban que si yo quería irme al infierno, eso a él no le tocaba. Sacáronme de la cárcel, lleváronme por calles no acostumbradas, por recelo de los frailes; llegué a la horca, quitáronme los frailes el juicio a gritos y arrompujones, e hiciéronme subir cuatro peldaños. El que más me afligía era un dominico, fray Andrés de San Pablo, a quien habré un año vi y hablé en Madrid, en el colegio de Atocha. Hube de subir más arriba; echáronme el volatín, que es el cordel delgado con que ahorcan, el cual el verdugo no me ponía bien, y le dije: "¡Borracho, pónmelo bien o quítamelo, que estos padres bastan!"

Estando en esto entró corriendo un posta de la ciudad de la Plata, despachado por el secretario, por mandato del presidente, don Diego de Portugal, a instancia de Martín de Mendiola, vizcaíno, que supo el pleito en que yo estaba, y entregó en su mano al corregidor un pliego, ante un escribano, en que le mandaba la Audiencia suspender la ejecución de justicia y remitir al preso y los autos a la Real Audiencia, que dista doce leguas de allí. La causa de esto fué rara, y manifiesta la misericordia de Dios. Parece que aquellos testigos de vista que depusieron contra mí en el homicidio del portugués cayeron en manos de la justicia de la Plata, por no sé qué delitos, y fueron condenados a horca, y estando en ella al pie declararon, sin saber el estado mío, que, inducidos y pagados y sin conocerme, habían jurado falso contra mí en aquel homicidio, y por eso la Audiencia, a instancia de Martín de Mendiola, se conmovió y remitió.

The dispatch arrived at such a moment that the joy of the sympathetic crowd was tremendous. The sheriff ordered me taken from the gallows and back to the prison, from which I was taken under guard to La Plata. I arrived there and saw the end of the process with those men at the foot of the gallows. Nothing further resulted against me and I was set free in twenty-four days. I stayed there a few more.

### **Chapter 13**

—She goes to the city of Cochabamba and returns to La Plata.

From La Plata I went to the city of Cochabamba to settle some accounts of the said Juan López de Arguijo with one Pedro de Chavarría, a native of Navarre but a resident there. He was married to doña María Dávalos, daughter of Captain Juan Dávalos (now deceased) and doña María de Ulloa, a nun in a convent in La Plata which she herself founded there.

We settled the accounts, and it resulted that there were one thousand pesos against the account of Chavarría to the favor of Arguijo, my master. He very kindly paid me immediately, and was good enough to invite me to dinner, putting me up for two days. Then I said good-bye and departed, charged by his wife to visit her mother for her (the nun in La Plata) and give her best regards.

Having left there, I was detained in some little matters that came up with some friends until practically the end of the afternoon. I left finally, and had to again pass by the door of the said Chavarría. Going by I saw people in the entrance hall and heard noise coming from inside. I stopped to see what it might be, and at that moment doña María Dávalos called to me from the window, "Captain! Sir! Take me with you! My husband wants to kill me!" So saying she jumped down.

At this, two monks came up and said to me, "Take her, for her husband found her with don Antonio Calderón, the bishop's nephew. He has killed him

Llegado este despacho a tal punto, fué grande la alegría del pueblo compasivo. Mandóme el corregidor quitar de la horca y llevar a la cárcel, y remitióme con guardas a la Plata. Llegado allí, y vista el proceso, anulado por aquellos hombres al pie de la horca, y no resultando otra cosa contra mí, fuí mandado soltar a los veinticuatro días, y estúveme allí otro poco.

### **CAPITULO XIII**

—Pasa a la ciudad de Cochabamba y vuelve a la Plata.

De la Plata me pasé a la ciudad de Cochabamba, a fenecer allí unas cuentas del dicho Juan López de Arguijo con Pedro de Chavarría, natural de Navarra, allí residente, casado con doña Maria Dávalos, hija del capitán Juan Dávalos, ya difunto, y de doña María de Ulloa, monja en la Plata, en que ella allí fundó. Ajustámoslas, y resultó alcance de mil pesos contra el dicho Chavarría a favor de Arguijo, mi amo, los cuales luego me entregó con mucha bondad y agrado, y me convidó a comer, hospedándome dos días. Luego me despedí y partí, yendo encargado por su mujer de visitor de su parte a su madre, monja en la Plata, y darle muchos recados.

Partido de allí, hube de detenerme, en cosillas que se me ofrecieron con amigos, hasta ya el cabo de la tarde; partí en fin, y hube de volver a pasar por la puerta del dicho Chavarría. Al pasar vide gente en el zaguán, y sonaba ruido dentro. Paréme a entender qué fuese, y en esto me dice doña María Dávalos desde la ventana: "¡Senor capitán, lléveme usted consigo, que quiere matarme mi marido!" Y diciendo y haciendo, se arroja abajo. A esto llegaron dos frailes, y me dijeron: "Llévela usted, que la halló su marido con don Antonio Calderón, sobrino del obispo, y lo ha muerto,

and wants to kill her and has her confined."<sup>93</sup> Saying this they put her on behind the mule I was riding and I went on.

I didn't stop until eleven o'clock that night when I arrived at the River Plate. On the way we ran into a servant of Chavarría who was coming from La Plata. Although I tried to get back and hide, he recognized us and told his master, according to the story.

Arriving at the river, I despaired of getting across as it was running deep and it seemed impossible. She said, "Go on! Cross! There is no other way! God help us!" I got down and tried to find a spot, but my suspicions were confirmed. I remounted with my troubled lady on behind and plunged in. We went in deeper, God did help us, and we made it over.

We arrived at a roadside inn we encountered there, and I awakened the innkeeper. He was startled to see us at that hour and on that side of the river. I took care of my mule so that it could recuperate. He gave us some eggs, bread, and fruit. We tried to wring out and dry our clothes. We departed again, and at daybreak, after about five leagues, we saw the city of La Plata. We were somewhat consoled by this when, all of a sudden, doña María grabbed me tightly saying, "Ay! Señor! My husband!" I turned around and saw him coming on a horse which seemed exhausted. Amazed, I didn't know how this could be, because I left Cochabamba first while he remained in his house. Without pausing a moment, I travelled to the river, crossed it, got to the inn where I stayed about an hour, and left again. Besides, that servant that I ran into on the road (and who must have told him) had to arrive sometime later, and then it must have taken Chavarría some time to mount up leave. How then, did he catch me on the road? I don't know how, unless maybe I took a more roundabout route than he did not knowing the way.

Finally, from about thirty paces away, he fired a shotgun at us but

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<sup>93</sup> For some background into this kind of legalized murder see footnote No. 31.

y a ella la quiere matar y la tiene encerrada." Y diciendo esto, me la pusieron a las ancas y yo partí en la mula que llevaba.

No paré hasta que, a las once de la noche, llegué al río de la Plata. Había topado en el camino a un criado del dicho Chavarría, que venía de la Plata, y nos hubo de conocer, por más que yo procuré retirar y encubrir, y que avisó a su amo, según la cuenta. Llegado al río me afligí, porque iba grande y me pareció imposible de vadear. Dijo ella: "¡ Adelante; pasad, que no hay otro remedio, y ayúdenos Dios!" Apeéme y procuré descubrir vado. Resolvíme al que me pareció y volvíme a montar, con mi afligida a las ancas, y entré. Fuimos entrando, ayudó Dios, y pasamos. Llegué a una venta que topé allí cerca; desperté al ventero, que se espantó de vernos a tal hora y pasado el río. Cuidé de mi mula y que descansase; diónos unos huevos, pan y frutas; procuramos torcer y exprimir las ropas, y volvimos a partir y andar, y al romper el alba, a cosa de cinco leguas, descubrimos la ciudad de la Plata.

Ibamos en ello algo consolados, cuando, de repente, doña María se ase más fuerte de mí, diciendo: "¡Ay, señor; mi marido!" Volví y vídelo que venía en un caballo, al parecer cansado. No sé, y me admira, cómo pudo ser esto. Porque yo partí de Cochabamba primero, quedando él dentro de casa, y sin detenerme un punto anduve hasta el río, pasélo y llegué a la venta, y me detuve allí como una hora y volví a partir. Fuera de esto, aquel criado que topé en el camino y se lo hubo de decir, algo tardó en llegar y algo tardó él en montar a caballo y partir. ¿Pues cómo él, en el camino, me salió al encuentro? No sé cómo, si no sea que traje yo más rodeo, no sabiendo el camino, y él menos. En fin, desde unos treinta pasos nos disparó una escopeta, y nos erró,

missed, the pellets passing so close we could hear them whistle. I spurred my mule down a brushy slope and saw him no more, at which point his horse must have collapsed. About four more leagues from there I arrived in La Plata, tired and worn out. I went to the convent of St. Augustine and delivered doña María Dávalos to her mother.

I went back to my mule, when I ran right into Pedro de Chavarría who, sword in hand, rushed at me leaving no time for explanations. It upset me to see him all of a sudden, because of the fatigue which gripped me, and I pitied his delusion in taking me for a wrongdoer. I pulled out my sword and tried to defend myself. We entered the church in the struggle, and he must have been good for he struck me twice in the chest without my having touched him. I smarted and pressed him driving him back to the altar. There he struck a stout blow to my head. I parried with my dagger and stuck him a palm's depth between the ribs. So many people had gathered by now that it could not continue. The police came and wanted to take us out of the church. At this moment, two friars of the Franciscan monastery, which is right in front of there, took me inside, assisted by the connivance of the chief of police (Pedro Beltrán, brother in law of my master, Juan de Arguijo). In the Franciscan convent, well received and cared for by those fathers, I lay secluded for five months.

Chavarría was also many days recuperating from his wounds, clamoring incessantly that they bring his wife to him. Investigations and proceedings were made concerning the matter with her countering by claiming the manifest risk to her life. The bishop, the President of the Audiencia, and other dignitaries became involved here and they arranged things such that both would enter religious orders and profess, she where she was and he wherever he wished.

My case still remained. My master Juan López de Arguijo came and informed the bishop (don Alonso de Peralta), the President, and the other

pasando las balas tan cerca que las oímos silbar. Yo apreté a mi mula y bajé un cerro embreñado, sin verlo más; que a la cuenta su caballo se le hubo de rendir. Corridas como cuatro leguas largas, desde aquí llegué a la Plata bien fatigado y cansado. Fuíme al de San Agustín, a la portería, y entregué a doña María Dávalos a su madre.

Volvíame a tomar mi mula, cuando topé con Pedro de Chavarría, que, con la espada en la mano, se arrojó a mí, sin dar lugar a razones. Dióme gran cuidado verle, por el repente, por el cansancio con que me cogió y la compasión al engaño con que me tenía por ofensor. Saqué mi espada y hube de procurar la defensa. Entramos en la iglesia con la brega, y allí me entró dos puntas por los pechos sin haberlo yo herido, que debía ser diestro. Sentíme y apreté y fuílo retirando hasta el altar. Tiróme allí un gran golpe a la cabeza; parélo con la daga y entréle un palmo de espada por las costillas. Acudió ya tanta gente, que no se pudo más, y acudió la justicia y queríanos sacar de la iglesia. En esto, dos frailes de San Francisco, que es allí enfrente, me pasaron y entraron allá, ayudando a ello disimuladamente don Pedro Beltrán, alguacil mayor, cunado de mi amo, Juan López de Arguijo. En San Francisco, recogido por caridad y asistido en la curación por aquellos padres, estuve retraído cinco meses.

Chavarría se estuvo también curando de sus heridas muchos días; clamando siempre sobre que le entregaran su mujer, sobre lo cual se hicieron autos y diligencias, resistiéndose ella con el manifiesto riesgo de su vida. Aquí acudieron el obispo y el presidente con otros señores, y ajustaron que ambos se entrasen en religión y profesasen: ella, donde estaba, y él, donde quisiese.

Quedaba mi querella. Vino mi amo, Juan López de Arguijo, e informó al arzobispo, don Alonso de Peralta, y al presidente y señores,

members, of the truth. He spoke of the good will and sanity with which I had acted in the matter, so different than what was understood by that man Chavarría. He said that I had done nothing more than help a woman who suddenly flung herself upon me, fleeing for her life, delivering her to the convent with her mother as she asked. All this verified and recognized, the process was stayed and the two proceeded with their entry into religion. I left my seclusion and settled my accounts. Many times I visited my nun, her mother, and the other ladies there, who, in their gratitude, regaled me handsomely.

#### **Chapter 14**

—She goes from La Plata to Piscobamba and Mizque.

I tried to find a suitable occupation for myself. My lady doña María de Ulloa, grateful for how I served her, secured a commission for me from the President and the Audiencia to go to Piscobamba and the plains of Mizque to investigate and punish certain crimes reported there. For this they assigned me a notary and a constable and we set out.

I went to Piscobamba, issued a warrant, and arrested Lieutenant Francisco de Escobar, a married resident there. He was charged with having treacherously killed two Indians in order to rob them, and burying them under his house in a quarry. I had it excavated and I found them, pursuing the investigation until it was complete in all its details. I passed sentence on the defendant, condemning him to death. He appealed and I granted it, and the case proceeded in the Audiencia in La Plata with the defendant. They upheld my verdict and hung him. I went on to the plains of Mizque and took care of the matter that brought me there. I returned to La Plata, explained what I had done, delivered the writs concerning Mizque, and stayed there a few days afterwards.

en la verdad y casualidad sana y sin malicia con que obré en el caso, tan diferente de lo entendido por aquel hombre, y que no había más que haber socorrido repentinamente a aquella mujer que se me arrojó, huyendo de la muerte, pasándola a convento con su madre, como ella lo pidió. Lo cual verificado y reconocido, se satisfizo y cesó la querrela y prosiguió la entrada en religión de los dos. Salí de la reclusión, ajusté mis cuentas, visité muchas veces a mi monja y a su madre y a otras señoras de allí, las cuales, agradecidas, me regalaron mucho.

#### **CAPITULO XIV**

—Pasa de la Plata a Piscobamba y a la Mizque.

Traté de buscar alguna ocupación en que entender. Mi señora, doña María de Ulloa, afecta por lo que la serví, me alcanzó del presidente y Audiencia una comisión para Piscobamba y los llanos de Mizque, para la averiguación y castigo de ciertos delitos de allí denunciados, para lo cual se me señalaron escribano y alguacil, y salimos. Fui a Piscobamba, escribí y prendí al alférez Francisco de Escobar, residente allí y casado, contra quien resultó haber muerto a dos indios alevosamente por robarlos y enterrádoslos dentro de su casa, en una cantera, donde hice cavar y los hallé. Fui sentenciando la causa por todos sus términos hasta tener estado, y, conclusa y citadas las partes, dí sentencia condenando al reo a muerte. El apeló; otorguéle la apelación, y fué el proceso a la Audiencia de la Plata, con el reo. Allí se confirmó, y lo ahorcaron. Pasé a los llanos de Mizque y ajusté a lo que iba; volví a la Plata, dí razón de lo obrado, entregando los autos de Mizque, y estuve después allí unos días.

## Chapter 15

—She goes to the city of La Paz and kills a man.

I went to La Paz where I lived quietly for a few days. Without a care in the world, I stopped one day by the gate of don Antonio Barraza, a magistrate, to chat with a servant of his. The Devil doing his work, it ended up with his lying to me and smacking me in the face with his hat. I pulled my dagger and he fell dead right there.

So many people charged me that, wounded as I was, they seized me and put me in jail. They healed and prosecuted me at the same time. The charge was substantiated, some others thrown in, and the magistrate sentenced me to death. I appealed but was condemned nevertheless.

I spent two days confessing. The second day, mass was said in the jail. The holy priest having partaken, he gave me Communion and turned back towards the altar. At that moment I spit out the Host which I had in my mouth into the palm of my right hand shouting, "I am the Church! I am the Church!" Everyone rose up, scandalized, and called me a heretic. The priest turned around at the commotion and ordered that no one come near me. He finished his mass, and then the bishop (Domingo de Valderrama, a Dominican) came in with the governor. Clerics and many others gathered around, lighting candles and setting up a canopy. They carried me in a procession to the sanctuary, and with everyone kneeling all around, a priest took It from my hand and placed It inside the tabernacle. I didn't notice what he put It in. Afterwards they scraped my hand and washed and dried it several times. Then they cleared the church, including the officials, and I remained there.

This plan was given to me by a holy Franciscan monk who had counselled me in jail and who lastly heard my confession. For about a month the governor had the church surrounded and I was locked in there. At the end of that period he withdrew the guards. A holy priest there—I assume on

**CAPITULO XV**

—Pasa a la ciudad de la Paz, y mata a uno.

Paséme a la Paz, donde me estuve quieto algunos días. Bien ajeno de disgusto, me paré un día a la puerta de don Antonio Barraza, corregidor, a hablar con un criado suyo, y aventando la traza el diablo, vino ello a parar en desmentirme y darme con el sombrero en la cara. Yo saqué la daga, y allí cayó muerto. Cargaron sobre mi tantos, que, herido, me prendieron y entraron en la cárcel. Fuéronme curando y siguiendo la causa al mismo peso, la cual, sustanciada y en estado, acumuladas otras, me condenó el corregidor a muerte. Apelé, y mandóse sin embargo ejecutar.

Estuve dos días confesando; el siguiente se dijo la misa en la cárcel, y el santo clérigo, habiendo consumido, me comulgó y volvióse al altar. Yo al punto volví la forma que tenía en la boca y recibíla en la palma de la mano derecha, dando voces: "¡Iglesia me llamo, Iglesia me llamo!" Alborotóse todo y escandalizóse, diciéndome todos hereje. Volvió el sacerdote al ruido y mandó que nadie llegase a mí. Acabó su misa, y a esto entró el señor obispo, don fray Domingo de Valderrama, dominico, con el gobernador. Juntáronse clérigos y mucha gente; encendiéronse luces, trujeron palio y lleváronme en procesión, y llegados al sagrario, todos arrodillados, me cogió un clérigo de la mano y la entró en el sagrario. No reparé en qué la puso. Después me rayeron la mano y me la lavaron diferentes veces y me la enjugaron; y despejando luego la iglesia y los señores principales, me quedé allí. Esta advertencia me la dió un santo religioso franciscano, que en la cárcel había dádome consejos y que últimamente me confesó. Cerca de un mes tuvo el gobernador cercada aquella iglesia, y yo allí guarnecido; al cabo del cual quitó las guardias, y un santo clérigo de allí, según yo presumí por

orders of the bishop—seeing that the coast was clear, gave me a mule and some money and I departed for Cuzco.

### **Chapter 16**

—She departs for the city of Cuzco.

I arrived in Cuzco, which has no advantage over Lima in population or wealth. It is the head of a bishopric, with a cathedral dedicated to the Ascension of Our Lady, served by five monsignors, eight canons, eight parishes, four convents of monks (Franciscans, Dominicans, Mercedarians, and Augustinians), four colleges, two convents of nuns, and three hospitals.

While there, another quite serious fracas befell me, one truly not deserved because I was totally blameless, if not well thought of. It happened one night unexpectedly, the murder of don Luis de Godoy, a magistrate of Cuzco, a gentleman of great ability and one of the most qualified thereabouts. One Carranza killed him, so it was discovered later, over certain piques too long to tell. As he was not found out right away, the sheriff (Fernando de Guzmán) seized and arrested me, holding me in despair for five months. After this time, it was the will of God that the truth was discovered and my total innocence of it. With that I went free and left there.

### **Chapter 17**

—She goes to Lima. From there she attacks the Dutch, is defeated, and taken aboard their fleet. They put her ashore on the coast of Paita and from there she returns to Lima.

I returned to Lima during the time don Juan de Mendoza y Luna, the Marquess of Montes Claros, was viceroy.

The Dutch were attacking Lima with eight warships and the city was in arms. We counter-attacked them from the port of Callao with five warships,

orden del señor obispo, reconocido el alrededor y el camino, me dió una mula y dineros, y partí al Cuzco.

#### **CAPITULO XVI**

—Parte a la ciudad del Cuzco.

Llegué al Cuzco, ciudad que no reconoce ventaja a Lima en vecinos ni en riqueza; cabeza de obispado, dedicada su Catedral a la Ascensión de Nuestra Señora, servida por cinco dignidades, ocho canónigos, ocho parroquias, cuatro conventos de religiosos franciscanos, dominicos, mercedarios y agustinos; cuatro colegios, dos conventos de monjas y tres hospitales.

Allí estando, me sucedió a pocos días otro fracaso bien pesado, y en realidad y verdad no merecido, porque me hallé ajeno totalmente de culpa, si bien mal opinado. Sucedió allí una noche, impensadamente, la muerte de don Luis de Godoy, corregidor de Cuzco, caballero de grandes prendas y de lo más calificado de por allí. Matólo, según se descubrió después, un fulano Carranza, por ciertos piques largos de contar, y como luego no se descubriese, me lo echaron a mí y me prendió el corregidor, Fernando de Guzmán, teniéndome cinco meses bien afligido, hasta que quiso Dios, pasado ese tiempo, que se descubriese la verdad y mi total inocencia en ello, con que salí libre, y partí de allí.

#### **CAPITULO XVII**

—Pasa a Lima. De allí sale contra los holandeses. Piérdese y acógese a su armada. Echanle a la costa de Paita, y desde allí vuelve a Lima.

Paséme a Lima en el tiempo en que era virrey del Perú don Juan de Mendoza y Lana, marqués de Montes Claros.

Estaba entonces el holandés batiendo a Lima con ocho bajeles de guerra que allí tenía, y la ciudad estaba en armas. Salimos contra él del puerto del Callao cinco bajeles y embestimosles,

and for a great while it was going well for us. But then they attacked our vice-admiral's ship and sent her to the bottom. Only three men escaped. We saved ourselves by swimming to an enemy ship which picked us up. We were: myself, a barefoot Franciscan friar, and a soldier. They treated us badly with jokes and insults, All the rest of the flagship's crew perished.

In the morning our four ships (of which don Rodrigo de Mendoza was in command), returned to the port of Callao missing nine hundred men, among which I was counted as I was on the flagship.

I was in the hands of the enemy for twenty-six days, believing that they would take me to Holland. At the end of this period, they put me and my companions ashore on the coast of Paita, about one hundred leagues from Lima. From there, a few days later, having passed through a great deal of hardship, a kind man who pitied our nakedness, dressed and outfitted us and guided us back to Lima.

I stayed in Lima some seven months, managing there as best I could. I bought a horse, which worked out well and was not too expensive. I rode him for a few days as I prepared to leave for Cuzco. One day as I was ready to leave, I passed through the plaza and a constable came up to me and told me that the Justice of the Peace (don Juan de Espinosa, a knight of Santiago) wanted to see me. I went to see His Honor. There were two soldiers there, and as soon as I arrived they said, "This is it, Sir. This horse is ours. We lost it and we will prove it."

The deputies gathered around me, and the Justice said, "What are we going to do about this?"

Taken by surprise, I didn't know what to say. Vacillating and confused, I must have seemed guilty, when suddenly it occurred to me to take off my cape and with it I covered the horse's head saying, "I beseech Your Honor, that these gentlemen tell which eye this horse is missing, the right or the left. It may be another animal and these gentlemen may be mistaken."

y por un grande rato nos iba bien; pero cargó sobre nuestra almiranta de forma que la echó a pique, sin que pudiesen escapar más que tres hombres, que nadando nos acogimos a un navío enemigo, que nos recogió. Eramos: yo, un fraile franciscano descalzo y un soldado, a los cuales ellos nos hicieron mal tratamiento, con burlas y desprecios. Toda la demás gente de la almiranta pereció.

A la mañana, vueltas al puerto del Callao nuestras cuatro naves, de que era general don Rodrigo de Mendoza, se echaron de menos novecientos hombres, entre los cuales me contaron a mí, que iba en la almiranta. Estuve en poder de los enemigos veintiséis días, teniendo yo para mí que me llevarían a Holanda. Al cabo de ellos, a mí y a mis dos compañeros nos echaron en la costa de Paita, cosa de cien leguas de Lima, de donde unos días después, y pasados muchos trabajos, un buen hombre, compadecido de nuestra desnudez, nos vistió, nos encaminó y avió a Lima, y vinimos. Estúveme en Lima unos siete meses, ingeniándome allí lo mejor que pude. Compré un caballo, que me salió bueno y no caro, y andúveme en él unos pocos días, tratándome de partir para el Cuzco. Estando de partida, pasé un día por la plaza, vine a mí un alguacil y me dijo que me llamaba el señor alcalde, don Juan de Espinosa, caballero del Orden de Santiago. Llegué a su merced; estaban allí dos soldados, y así que llegué dijeron: "Este es, señor. Este caballo es nuestro y nos ha faltado, y de ello daremos luego bastante información."

Rodeáronme ministros, y dijo el alcalde: "¿Qué hemos de hacer en esto?"

Yo, cogida de repente, no sabía qué decir; vacilante y confuso, parecía delincuente, cuando se me ocurre de pronto quitarme la capa y tapéle con ella la cabeza al caballo, y digo: "Señor, suplico a vuestra merced que estos caballeros digan cuál de los ojos le falta a este caballo, si el derecho o si el izquierdo. Que puede ser otro animal y equivocarse estos caballeros."

The Justice said, "Well said. Both of you say at one time which is the missing eye in that horse." They were confused. "Say it at the same time," said the Justice.

"The left," said the one.

"The right," said the other, "I mean the left."

"You have made a bad case," said the Justice, "and you do not agree."

They replied together, "The left. The left, we both say and no mistake."

"Sir," I said, "there is no proof here, because one says one thing and the other another."

The one said, "We are saying one thing, that he is missing his left eye, and that's what I was going to say but I made a mistake without meaning to, but immediately I corrected myself and I say it is the left."

The Justice paused and I said, "Sir, what does Your Honor wish me to do?"

The Justice said, "If there is no more proof you may go with God on your journey."

Then I pulled off the cape and said, "Then see, Your Honor, how neither is correct in this case. My horse is sound and not missing an eye."

The Justice got up and came over to the horse and looked at him. "Mount up and go with God," he said. Turning back to the others he took them into custody. I mounted up and left, and I didn't learn how that affair ended up, because I left for Cuzco.

## **Chapter 18**

—She kills the "New Cid" in Cuzco and is left wounded.

I returned to Cuzco again and stayed for a few days in the house of the treasurer Lope de Alcedo. One day I went into a friend's house to gamble.

Dijo el alcalde: "Dice bien; digan ustedes a un tiempo de cuál ojo es tuerto ese caballo."

Ellos se quedaron confusos. Dijo el alcalde: "Díganlo ustedes a un tiempo."

Dijo el uno: "Del izquierdo."

Dijo el otro: "Del derecho; digo, del izquierdo."

A lo que dijo el alcalde: "Mala razón han dado ustedes y mal concordante."

Volvieron ellos, juntas, a decir: "Del izquierdo, del izquierdo decimos ambos, y no es mucho equivocarse."

Dije yo: "Señor, aquí no hay prueba, porque uno dice uno, y otro, otro."

Dijo uno: "No decimos sino una misma cosa: que es tuerto del ojo izquierdo, y eso iba yo a decir y me equivoqué sin querer; pero luego me emmendé y digo que del izquierdo."

Paróse el alcalde, y dije yo: "Senor, ¿qué me manda vuestra merced?"

Dijo el alcalde: "Que si no hay más prueba, se vaya usted con Dios a su viaje."

Entonces tiré de mi capa, y dije: "Pues vea vuestra merced cómo ni uno ni otro están en el caso, que mi caballo no es tuerto, sino sano."

El alcalde se levantó y llegó al caballo y mirólo y dijo: "Monte usted y váyase con Dios." Y volviéndose a ellos, los prendió. Yo monté y me fuí, y no supe en lo que paró aquello, porque me partí para el Cuzco.

#### **CAPITULO XVIII**

—Mata en el Cuzco al nuevo Cid, quedando herida.

Volvíme a pasar al Cuzco. Hospedéme en casa del tesorero Lope de Alcedo, y allí me estuve unos días. Entréme un día en casa de un amigo a jugar;

We two friends sat down and the game was rolling along. The "New Cid" came up to me. He was a dark hairy man, very tall, and of frightening appearance. They called him "el Cid."

I continued my game and won a round. "El Cid" stuck his hand into my money, took some pieces of eight, and withdrew. He returned shortly, stuck his hand in again, grabbed another handful, and placed himself behind me. I got my dagger ready, and continued on with the game. He reached out again for my money but I felt him coming and spiked his hand to the table with my dagger. I got up and drew my sword and the bystanders drew theirs. Other friends of "el Cid" rushed me and pressed me hard, dealing me three wounds. I ran into the street, fortunately, otherwise they'd have cut me to pieces.

The first one out behind me was "el Cid." I gave him a jab and noticed that he was encased like a watch.<sup>94</sup> Others came out and pressed me. At this time, two Basques happened to pass by, hastened to the commotion, and placed themselves at my side, seeing that I was one against five. The three of us were getting the worst of it, retreating down a whole street until we got to an open area near a Franciscan convent. "El Cid" stabbed me from behind with his dagger such that it pierced my shoulder right through. Another one stuck a palm's depth of sword blade into my side and I dropped to the ground spewing a sea of blood.

With this, some of the others fled. I got up in mortal agony and saw "el Cid" at the door to the church. I went at him and he at me, saying, "You dog! Are you still alive?" He made a thrust at me but I blocked it with my dagger and gave him another. By chance I pierced his stomach right through and he fell begging for confession. I fell also.

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<sup>94</sup> *I.e.*, wearing a metal breastplate under his garments.

sentémonos dos amigos, y fué corriendo el juego; arrimóse a mí el nuevo Cid, que era un hombre moreno, velloso, muy alto, que con la presencia espantaba, y llamábanle el Cid. Proseguí mi juego, gané una mano, y el Cid entró la suya en mi dinero, sacóme unos reales de a ocho y fuése. De allí a poco volvió a entrar y volvió a entrar la mano; sacó otro puñado y púsoseme detrás. Previne la daga, proseguí el juego, volvíome a entrar la mano al dinero, sentílo venir, y con la daga clavéle la mano contra la mesa. Levantéme, saqué la espada, sacáronla los presentes, acudieron otros amigos del Cid, apretárome mucho y diéronme tres heridas; salí a la calle, y tuve ventura, que si no, me hacen pedazos. Salió el primero tras de mí el Cid; tiréle una estocada, y advertí que estaba armado como un reloj. Salieron otros, y fuéronme apretando. A este tiempo acertaron a pasar dos vizcaínos, que acudieron al ruido y pusieronse a mi lado viéndome solo y contra cinco; llevábamos lós tres lo peor, retirándonos toda una calle hasta salir a ancho. Llegando cerca de San Francisco, me dió el Cid por detrás con la daga una puñalada, que me pasó la espalda, por el lado izquierdo, de parte a parte; otro me entró un palmo de espada por el lado izquierdo, y caí en tierra echando un mar de sangre.

Con esto unos y otros se fueron; yo me levanté con ansias de muerte y vi al Cid a la puerta de la iglesia; fuíme a él y él se vino a mí, diciendo: "Perro, ¿todavía vives?" Tiróme una estocada y apartéla con la daga y tiréle otra, de tal suerte, que se la entré por la boca del estómago, atravesándolo, y cayó pidiendo confesión. Yo caí también;

People gathered at the scene of the fracas, including some friars and the sheriff (don Pedro de Córdoba, knight of Santiago). Upon seeing the deputies take hold of me he said, "There is nothing else for them but to make their last confession." The other one expired right there.

Some caring persons carried me to the house of the treasurer and put me in a bed. The surgeon didn't dare treat me until I confessed, in case I died first. That grand fellow father Luis Ferrer de Valencia came and heard my confession. Seeing myself about to die, I told him my whole story. He was amazed and absolved me, and proceeded to encourage and console me. The Holy Viaticum arrived and I received it and then I seemed to feel stronger.

Then the treatment of my injuries began, and with the pain and loss of blood I passed out. I was out for fourteen hours and in all that time that saint of a father Ferrer never left me. God bless him.

I awoke calling to Saint Joseph. Through it all I had great help, which God provides in need. Three days went by, then five, which brought me hope. Then, to provide legal sanctuary, they took me one night to the Franciscan monastery, to the cell of the friar Martín de Aróstegui, a relative of my friend Alcedo. I stayed there for the four months that my recuperation lasted.

When the sheriff learned of this, he was blustering mad and posted guards around the place and blocked the roads. Better now, and with the certainty that I could not remain in Cuzco (fearing the hatred of certain of the dead man's friends), I determined to relocate, with the help and counsel of friends. Captain Gaspar gave me a thousand pesos, the aforesaid treasurer Lope de Alcedo three mules and weapons, and don Francisco de Arzaga three slaves. With this, and two trusted Basque friends, I departed Cuzco one night and headed for Guamanga.

## **Chapter 19**

—She leaves Cuzco for Guamanga. She crosses the bridge of Andahuailas and Guancavélica.

al ruido acudió gente y algunos frailes y el corregidor, don Pedro de Córdoba, del Hábito de Santiago, el cual, viendo a los ministros asirme, les dijo: "¿Aquí qué hay que hacer sino confesarlo?" El otro expiró luego. Lleváronme caritativos a casa del tesorero, donde yo paraba; acostáronme; no se atrevió un cirujano a curarme hasta que confesara, por recelo de que expirase. Vino el padre fray Luis Ferrer de Valencia, gran sujeto, y confesóme; y viéndome yo morir, declaré mi estado. El se admiró y me absolvió, y procuró esforzarme y consolarme. Vino el Viático, y lo recibí, y desde allí me pareció sentir esfuerzo.

Entró la curación, y sentíla mucho, y con los dolores y el desangre perdí el sentido. Estuve así por catorce horas, y en todo aquel tiempo aquel santo padre Ferrer no se apartó de mí. Dios se lo pague.

Volví en mí llamando a San José; tuve para todo grandes asistencias, que provee Dios en la necesidad; fuéronse pasando los tres días; luego, los cinco, y concibiéronse esperanzas. Luego me pasaron una noche a San Francisco, a la celda del padre fray Martín de Aróstegui, pariente de mi amigo Alcedo, por recelo de la justicia, y allí estuve cuatro meses que me duró la enfermedad. Lo cual, sabido por el corregidor, braveó y puso guardas en los contornos y previno los caminos. Ya mejor, y con certidumbre de que en el Cuzco no podía quedar, determiné, con ayuda y consejos de amigos, mudar tierra, recelando el encono de ciertos amigos del muerto. Dióme el capitán Gaspar de Carranza mil pesos; el dicho tesorero Lope de Alcedo, tres mulas y armas, y don Francisco de Arzaga, tres esclavos; con lo cual, y con dos amigos vizcaínos de satisfacción, partí del Cuzco una noche para Guamanga.

#### **CAPITULO XIX**

—Parte del Cuzco para Guamanga. Pasa por el puente de Andahuailas y Guancavélica.

Having left Cuzco, as I said, I came to the bridge on the Apurimac and ran right into the police and the friends of the deceased "el Cid" who were waiting for me. The deputy said to me, "You are under arrest," and went to seize me, assisted by eight others. We five spread out and a fierce fight broke out. Soon one of my negroes fell. One of the other side cried out and then another. The other negro fell and I dropped the deputy with a pistol shot. On hearing firearms, his troops bolted leaving three of their number on the ground.

The jurisdiction of the Cuzco authorities ran to the said bridge, but no further. Therefore, my comrades accompanied me that far and then returned, leaving me to continue on my own way. I got to Andahuailas and right off ran into the sheriff who, very kind and courteous, offered to take me into his house to dine. However I did not accept because I was suspicious of such politeness, and I left.

I came to the city of Guancavélica, put myself up at an inn, and stayed a couple of days looking around the place. I came to a little plaza at the foot of Mercury Hill, and there was Doctor Solórzano, a justice of the court of Lima, performing duties for the governor don Pedro Osorio. I saw a constable go up to him (whom I later learned was named Pedro Xuárez), and he turned his face around and looked at me. He took out a paper and looked at it, looked at me again, and I saw a constable and a negro set off towards me. I walked off as though I didn't have a care, but in fact I had a great deal. In a few more steps the constable passed in front of me and tipped his hat to me, and I to him. The negro came up from behind and grabbed me by the cape. I pulled out of it and drew my sword and a pistol as the two attacked me with swords. I fired and the constable fell. I struck at the negro and shortly he fell of a stab wound. I fled and ran into an Indian leading a horse which I later learned belonged to the justice. I took it from him and mounted it, leaving there for Guamanga, fourteen leagues away.

Partido del Cuzco, como digo, llegué al puente de Apurímac, donde topé a la justicia con amigos del muerto Cid, que me estaban esperando. Dijome el ministro: "Sea usted preso", y fuéme a echar mano, asistido de otros ocho. Desenvolvímonos nosotros cinco, y trabóse de unos a otros una fiera contienda. Cayó de los míos a breve rato un negro; quejóse de allá otro y a poco otro; cayó el otro negro, y de un pistoletazo derribé al ministro, cuya tropa, al escuchar armas de fuego, huyó, dejando allí a tres tendidos. Hasta el dicho puente llega la jurisdicción del Cuzco y no pasa de allí; por eso hasta allí me acompañaron aquellos mis camaradas, de allí se volvieron, prosiguiendo yo mi camino. Llegué a Andahuailas y topé luego con el corregidor, el cual, muy afable y muy cortés, se me ofreció con su casa y me convidó a comer; pero yo no acepté porque me recelé de tanto comedimiento, y partí.

Llegué a la ciudad de Guancavélica; apeéme en un mesón y estúveme un par de días viendo el lugar. Lleguéme a una plazuela que está junto al cerro del Azogue, y estaba allí el doctor Solórzano, alcalde de corte de Lima, tomando residencia al gobernador don Pedro Osorio. Vi que llegó a él un alguacil, que supe después llamarse Pedro Xuárez, y él volvió el rostro y me miró, y sacó un papel y mirólo, y volvióme a mirar, y vi luego partir hacia mí el alguacil y un negro. Yo me quité de allí como sin cuidado y con mucho; cuando a poco andado pasa delante el alguacil y quítame el sombrero y yo a él, y llega el negro, y áseme de la capa. Yo suéltosela y saco la espada y una pistola y embístenme los dos con espadas. Descerrajo y cae el alguacil; tírole al negro, y en breve cae de estocada; parto, y encuentro a un indio que traía del diestro un caballo, que supe después ser del alcalde; quítoselo y monto, y parto de allí a Guamanga, distante catorce leguas.

Just past the Balsas River, I dismounted to rest my horse a bit. While there I saw three men reach the river which they forded to the midway point. I don't know what prompted me, but I asked them, "Where to, gentlemen?"

One answered me back, "To arrest you, Captain, Sir."

I took out my weapons, cocked two pistols, and said, "You won't take me alive. You have to kill me first, and then arrest me."

Another said, "Captain, Sir, we are under orders and could not avoid coming, but we want only to help you" (all this while standing in the middle of the river).

I congratulated them for their wise decision. I left them three doubloons on a rock, mounted up, and with many compliments went on my way to Guamanga.

## **Chapter 20**

—She enters Guamanga, and what happens to her there until discovered by the Lord Bishop.

I entered Guamanga and went to an inn. I met a soldier passing through there who fancied my horse so I sold it to him for two hundred pesos. I went out to see the city which seemed a fine one with good buildings, the best I saw in Peru. I saw three monasteries—a Franciscan, a Mercedarian, and a Dominican—a convent of nuns, and a hospital. There were many Indian residents and many Spanish. Situated on a plain, it has a fine climate, being neither too hot nor too cold. They grow great crops of wheat, wine, fruits, and seeds. It has a good church with three deacons, two canons, and a holy archbishop (an Augustine friar don fray Augustin de Carvajal who was my salvation). Sorely missed, he died suddenly in the year '20. They say he had been there since the year '12. I stayed there a few days and to my disgrace I went to a gambling house a few times. While there one day, in came the sheriff don Baltasar de Quiñones. Seeing me but not recognizing me, he asked

Pasado el río de Balsas, me desmonté para descansar un poco al caballo, y estando así, veo llegar al río tres hombres a caballo, que lo vadean hasta la mitad. No sé qué me dió el corazón, y preguntéles: "¿Adónde bueno, caballeros?" Díjome uno: "Señor capitán, a prender a usted." Saqué mis armas, previne dos pistolas, y dije: "Prenderme vivo no podrá ser. Primero me han de matar y luego prenderme"; y me acerqué a la orilla. Dijo otro: "Señor capitán, somos mandados y no pudimos excusar venir; pero con usted no queremos más que servirle." Todo esto parados en medio del río. Yo estiméles el buen término; púseles sobre una piedra tres doblones, monté y con muchas cortesías partí a mi camino para Guamanga.

## **CAPITULO XX**

—Entra en Guamanga, y lo que allí se sucedió hasta descubrirse al señor obispo.

Entré en Guamanga y fuíme a una posada. Halléme allí a un soldado pasajero, que se aficionó al caballo y vendíselo en doscientos pesos. Salí a ver la ciudad, que parecíame bien, de buenos edificios: los mejores que vide en el Perú. Vi tres conventos, de franciscanos, mercedarios y dominicos; uno de monjas y un hospital; muchísimos vecinos indios y muchos españoles; bello temple de tierra, fundada en un llano, sin frío ni color; de grandes cosechas de trigo, vino, frutas y semillas; buena iglesia, con tres dignidades y dos canónigos y un santo obispo, fraile agustino, don fray Agustín de Carvajal, que fué mi remedio; aunque faltó, muriendo de repente el año veinte, y decían que lo había sido allí desde el año doce.

Estuve allí unos días, y quiso mi desgracia que me entrara unas veces en una casa de juego, donde estando un día entró el corregidor, don Baltasar de Quiñones, y mirándome y desconociéndome, me preguntó

me where I was from. I said from Biscaya. He said, "Where are you coming from recently?"

I said, "From Cuzco."

He paused for a bit looking at me and said, "You are under arrest."

I said, "Gladly!" and drew my sword, backing towards the door. He called for help in the name of the king and I encountered such resistance in the doorway that I could not get out. I pulled a three-barreled pistol and escaped, disappearing into the house of a friend I had made there. The sherrif went and seized my mule and I don't know what other little things that I had at the inn.

I stayed there a few days, having discovered that my friend was a fellow Basque. Meanwhile nothing was heard about the case and I did not feel that the law was pursuing the matter. Still, it seemed imperative to us that I should relocate inasmuch as I had the same problem as I had elsewhere. As a result of this, I left one day at nightfall and in a short while it was my bad luck to run into two deputies. They asked me, "Who goes there?"

I replied, "Friends." They asked me my name and I said (but shouldn't have said), "The Devil!" They came forward to seize me and I pulled my sword causing a great commotion.

They called out, "Help in the name of the law!" and a crowd gathered. The sheriff, who was in the bishop's house, came out. More deputies advanced on me and, hard pressed, I fired a pistol and dropped one. My situation grew worse and I found that Basque friend of mine at my side and some others with him. The sheriff was yelling that they should kill me. Shots were fired from both sides until the Bishop came out and walked right into the middle of it. His secretary Juan Bautista de Arteaga lead him up to me.

He reached me and said, "Lieutenant, Sir, give me your weapons."

I said, "Sir, I have many enemies here."

He said, "Give them to me! You are safe with me and I give you my

de donde era. Dije que vizcaíno. Dijo: "¿De dónde viene ahora?" Dije: "Del Cuzco." Suspendióse un poco mirándome, y dijo: "Sea preso". Dije: "De buena gana"; y saqué la espada, retirándome a la puerta. El dió voces pidiendo favor al rey, y hallé en la puerta tal resistencia que no pude salir. Saqué una pistola de tres bocas, y salí y desaparecíme, entrando en casa de un amigo que me había hallado. Partió el corregidor y embargóme la mula y no sé qué cosillas que tenía en la posada. Estúveme allí unos días, habiendo descubierto que aquel amigo era vizcaíno. Entretanto no sonaba ruido del caso ni sentía que la justicia tratarse de ello; pero todavía nos pareció ser forzoso mudar tierra, pues tenía allí lo mismo que en otra parte. Resuelto a ello, salí un día a boca de noche, y a breve rato quiere mi desgracia que tope con dos alguaciles. Pregúntanme: "¿Qué gente?" Respondo: "Amigos." Pídenme el nombre, y digo, que no debí decir: "El diablo." Vanme a echar mano, y saco la espada, armándose gran ruido. Ellos dan voces diciendo: "¡Favor a la justicia!", y acude gente. Sale el corregidor, que estaba en casa del obispo; avánzanme más ministros, hállome afligido, disparo una pistola y derribo a uno. Crece más el empeño, y hállome al lado aquel vizcaíno mi amigo y otros paisanos con él. Daba voces el corregidor que me matasen; sonaron muchos traquidos de ambas partes, hasta que salió el obispo con cuatro hachas y entróse por media, encaminándolo hacia mí su secretario, Juan Bautista de Arteaga. Llegó y me dijo: "Señor alferez, déme las armas." Dijo: "Señor, hay aquí muchos contrarios." Dijo: "Démelas, que seguro está conmigo, y le doy

word to get you safely out of this even though it may cost me what I am."

I said, "My Lord, when we are in the church I will kiss your holy Lordship's feet." At this moment four of the sheriff's slaves attacked and took hold of me, throwing me about so fiercely with no respect for his Lordship's presence that, defending myself, I struck one of them with my hands and knocked him down. The Bishop's secretary and other members of his staff, with sword and buckler, rushed up to me, loudly protesting the disrespect in front of his Lordship and the struggle abated somewhat.

His Lordship took hold of my arm, took my weapons from me, and placing me at his side took me with him into his house. Right away he ordered that a small wound I had be treated, that I be given food and a bed, locked up, and the key taken away. Then the sheriff came and he and his lordship had an altercation and a long conversation about this, so I learned later.

The next morning at around ten his Lordship had me brought into his presence and asked me who I was, whose child, and the whole course of my life, and the ways and means wherefore I came to end up there as I did. As he was minutely examining my story, he was throwing in good advice about the risks of life, the terror of death were it to take me unprepared, and he urged me to settle down and kneel before God, which made me feel very small.

He was such a holy man, I seemed in that moment to be in the very presence of God, and I revealed myself to him saying, "Sir, all this I have told your Lordship is not so. The truth is this: that I am a woman; that I was born in such-and-such a place, daughter of such-and-such man and woman; that I was placed at a certain age in such-and-such a convent with my aunt so-and-so; that I grew up there, took the habit and became a novice; that, about to take the vows, I ran off; that I went to such-and-such a place, stripped, dressed myself as a man, cut off my hair, travelled here and there, went to sea, roamed, hustled, corrupted, maimed, and murdered, until coming

palabra de sacarle a salvo, aunque me cueste cuanto soy."

Dije: "Señor ilustrísimo, en estando en la iglesia besaré los pies a V. S. ilustrísima." En esto me acometen cuatro esclavos del corregidor, y me aprietan, tirándome ferozmente, sin respeto a la presencia de su ilustrísima; de modo que, defendiéndome, hube de entrar la mano y derribar a uno. Acudióme el secretario del señor obispo con espada y broquel, con otros de la familia, dando muchas voces, ponderando el desacato delante de su ilustrísima, y cesó algo la puja. Asíome su ilustrísima por el brazo, quitóme las armas, y poniendome a su lado, me llevó consigo y entróme en su casa. Hízome luego curar una pequeña herida que llevaba, y mandóme dar de cenar y recoger, cerrándome con llave, que se llevó. Vino luego el corregidor, y tuvo su ilustrísima larga conversación y alteraciones con él sobre esto, lo cual después entendí. A la mañana, como a las diez, su ilustrísima me hizo llevar a su presencia, y me preguntó quién era y de donde, hijo de quién, y todo el curso de mi vida y causas y caminos por donde vine a parar allí. Y fuí en esto desmenuzando tanto, mezclando buenos consejos y los riesgos de la vida y espantos de la muerte y contingencias de ella, y el asombro de la otra si no me cogía bien apercebido, procurándome sosegar, y reducir, y arrodillarme a Dios, que yo me puse tamañito. Y viéndolo tan santo varón, pareciéndome estar ya en la presencia de Dios, descúbrome y dígole: "Señor, todo esto que he referido a V. S. ilustrísima no es así. La verdad es ésta: Que soy mujer, que nací en tal parte, hija de Fulano y Zutana; que me entraron de tal edad en tal convento, con Fulana mi tía; que allí me crié; que tomé el hábito y tuve noviciado; que estando para profesar, por tal ocasión me salí; que me fuí a tal parte, me desnudé, me vestí, me corté el cabello, partí allí y acullá; me embarqué, aporté, trajiné, maté, herí, maleé, correteé, hasta venir

to end up here at his Lordship's feet.”

During this tale, which lasted until one o'clock, the holy lord was spellbound, listening to me without speaking or blinking, and remained so after I had finished, although shedding tears profusely. Afterwards he sent me to eat and rest. He rang a bell, which caused an ancient chaplain to appear, and sent me to his oratory where they set up a table and cot for me, and locked me in. I lay down and slept.

In the afternoon around four, the Lord Bishop called me again and spoke to me with great kindness of spirit, directing me to give thanks for the mercy shown me, and causing me to see the lost road I was taking straight to eternal suffering. He exhorted me to re-examine my life and make a good confession, which I had already done for the most part, so the rest would be easy. Afterwards, God would help us to see what should be done. And on this, and other sage points, the afternoon came to an end. I withdrew, they fed me well, and I went to bed.

The next morning the Lord Bishop recited mass, which I heard, and afterwards gave thanks. He withdrew for a breakfast and took me with him. He continued his discourse, and came to tell me that he considered this the most remarkable case of its type he had ever heard of in his life. He finished by saying, "Once and for all—is it really so?"

"Yes, my Lord," I replied, "It is not surprising that its singularity strains credibility... but it is true, and to remove all your Holy Lordship's doubts I will submit to an examination by midwives."

He said, "It pleases me to hear that, and I accept your offer." And then I withdrew as it was his time to give audience.

I ate at midday and afterwards rested for awhile. In the afternoon around four, two midwives came in and examined me and were satisfied. Afterwards they swore before the Bishop, under oath, that they had looked at me as much as was necessary to be certain, and had found me to be a virgin,

a parar en lo presente, y a los pies de su señoría ilustrísima".

El santo señor, entretanto que esta relación duró, que fué hasta la una, se estuvo suspenso, sin hablar ni pestañear, escuchándome, y después que acabé se quedó también sin hablar, llorando a lágrima viva. Después me envió a descansar y a comer. Tocó una campanilla, hizo venir a un capellán anciano, y enviéme a su oratorio, donde me pusieron la mesa y un trasportín, y me encerraron; yo me acosté y me dormí. A la tarde, como a las cuatro, me volvió a llamar el señor obispo, y me habló con gran bondad de espíritu, conduciéndome a dar gracias a Dios por la merced usada conmigo, dándome a ver el camino perdido que llevaba derecho a las penas eternas. Exhortóme a recorrer mi vida y hacer una buena confesión, pues ya por lo más la tenía hecha y me sería fácil; después, Dios ayudaría para que viésemos lo que se debía hacer. Y en esto y en cosas ocurrentes se acabó la tarde. Retiréme, diéronme bien de comer, y me acosté.

A la mañana siguiente dijo misa el señor obispo, que yo oí, y después dió gracias. Retiróse a un desayuno, y me llevó consigo. Fué moviendo y siguiendo su discurso, y vino a decirme que tenía éste por el caso más notable, en este género, que había oído en su vida, y remató diciendo: "En fin, ¿esto es así?"

Dije: "Sí, señor."

Replicó: "No se espante que su rareza inquiete a la credibilidad."

"Señor—dije—, es así, y que si quiere salir de dudas V.S. ilustrísima por experiencia de matronas, y me allano."

Dijo: "Conténtame oírlo y vengo en ello." Y retiréme por ser la hora del despacho. A medio día comí, después reposé un rato, y a la tarde, como a las cuatro, entraron dos matronas y me miraron y se satisficieron, y declararon después ante el obispo, con juramento, haberme visto y reconocido cuanto fué menester para certificarse, y haberme hallado virgen

intact as the day I was born.

His Lordship was touched. He dismissed the women and had me brought in. In front of the chaplain who came with me he stood up, embraced me tenderly, and said, "Daughter, now I believe without doubt what you told me, and I will believe whatever you tell me from now on. I respect you as one of the most remarkable persons in this world and promise to help and care for you however I can, for your own benefit and for the service of God."

He ordered me put up in a decent room, and I remained comfortably therein preparing my confession which I did as quickly as I could. Afterwards his Lordship gave me communion. It seems that word of the matter leaked out, and a huge crowd gathered, there being no way to deny entry to any person, as much as his Lordship and I regretted it.

Finally after six days, his Lordship decided to place me in the convent of the sisters of Santa Clara—there being no other there—and I was put in a habit. His Lordship came out of his house, taking me by his side. There was such a huge throng that there must not have been a person in the city who did not come, and we were therefore late in arriving. We finally arrived at the gatehouse, for at the church, where the Bishop was thinking of going first, it was not possible, the crowd having filled it in anticipation of his plan.

The whole convent was there with lighted candles. There they wrote out a document in which the convent promised to deliver me up to his Lordship or his successor whenever he might ask. His Lordship embraced me giving me his blessing, and I went in. They took me in procession to the choir and I prayed there. I kissed the hand of the abbess and she and the other nuns embraced me. They took me to a lecture room where his Lordship was awaiting me. There they gave me good advice and exhorted me to be a good Christian woman, to give thanks to God our Lord, and to frequent the sacraments, his Lordship himself offering to come for that purpose, as he often did. As he was leaving, he freely offered me anything else that might be

intacta, como el día en que nació. Su ilustrísima se enterneció, despidió a las comadres y me hizo comparecer, y delante del capellán, que vino conmigo, me abrazó enternecido, en pie, y me dijo: "Hija, ahora creo sin duda lo que me dijisteis, y creeré en adelante cuanto me dijereis; os venero como una de las personas notables de este mundo, y os prometo asistirlos en cuanto pueda y cuidar de vuestra conveniencia y del servicio de Dios."

Mandóme poner cuarto decente, y estuve en él con comodidad y ajustando mi confesión, la cual hice en cuanto pude, y después, su ilustrísima me dió la comunión. Parece que el caso se divulgó, y era inmenso el concurso que allí acudió, sin poder excusar la entrada a personajes, por más que yo lo sentía y su ilustrísima también.

En fin, pasados seis días, acordó su ilustrísima entrarme en el convento de monjas de Santa Clara de Guamanga, que allí de religiosas no hay otro, púsome el hábito. Salió su ilustrísima de casa, llevándome a su lado, con un concurso tan grande, que no hubo de quedar persona alguna en la ciudad que no viniese; de suerte que se tardó mucho en llegar allá. Llegamos finalmente a la portería, porque a la iglesia, donde pensaba su ilustrísima entrar antes, no fué posible; entendido así, se había llenado. Estaba allí todo el convento, con velas encendidas, y otorgóse allí, por la abadesa y ancianas, una escritura en que prometía el convento volverme entregar a su ilustrísima o prelado sucesor cada vez que me pidiesen.

Abrazóme su ilustrísima echóme su bendición, y entré.

Llevaronme al coro en procesión e hice oración allí. Besé la mano a la señora abadesa, fuí abrazando y fuéronme abrazando las monjas, y llevaronme a un locutorio, donde su ilustrísima me estaba esperando. allí me dió buenos consejos y exhortó a ser buena cristiana y dar gracias a Dios Nuestro Señor y frecuentar los sacramentos, ofreciéndose su ilustrísima a venir a ello, como vino muchas veces, y ofrecióme largamente todo cuanto hubiese

necessary.

The news of this happening spread everywhere, and those who saw me before and afterwards and knew of my deeds throughout the Indies, were amazed. Within five months, in the year 1620, my Holy Bishop died suddenly and I missed him very much.

## **Chapter 21**

—By order of the Lord Archbishop and wearing a nun's habit, she goes from Guamanga to Lima and enters the Convent of the Holy Trinity. She leaves there, returns to Guamanga and continues on to Santa Fe de Bogotá and Tenerife.

Soon after the death of his Lordship of Guamanga, the metropolitan Archbishop of Lima sent for me (his Lordship don Bartolomé Lobo Guerrero, which office he held from 1607 until he died on the twelfth of January, 1622). The nuns handed me over with much regret and I left in a litter accompanied by six priests, four monks, and six swordsmen. We entered Lima after nightfall but nevertheless could not avoid the many curious people who came to see the "Nun Lieutenant". They let me down at the home of the Lord Archbishop where I was anxious to get in.

I kissed the hand of his Lordship who regaled me greatly and put me up there for the night. On the following morning they took me to the palace to see the viceroy (don Francisco de Borja, count of Mayalde, prince of Esquilache, who served there from 1615 until 1622) and I dined that day in his home. In the evening I returned to the home of the Archbishop where I had a good dinner and a comfortable room.

The next day his Lordship said I should look and choose which convent I would like to stay in. I asked his permission to see them all and he granted it. I went and viewed all of them, staying four or five days in each. Finally I came to choose the Convent of the Holy Trinity, which is of the

menester. Corrió la noticia de este suceso por todas partes, y los que antes me vieron y los que antes y después supieron mis cosas en todas las Indias, se maravillaron. Dentro de cinco meses, año de 1620, repentinamente, se quedó muerto mi santo obispo, que me hizo gran falta.

#### **CAPITULO XXI**

—Pasa de Guamanga a Lima, por mandato del señor arzobispo, en hábito de monja, y entra en el convento de la Trinidad. Sale allí, vuelve a Guamanga y continúa para Santa Fe de Bogotá y Tenerife.

Muerto el ilustrísimo de Guamanga, en breve envió por mí el arzobispo metropolitano de Lima, ilustrísimo señor don Bartolomé Lobo Guerrero, que lo era el año 1607 y murió en 12 de enero de 1622. Entregáronme las monjas, con mucho sentimiento, y fuí en una litera, acompañada de seis clérigos, cuatro religiosos y seis hombres de espada.

Entramos en Lima ya de noche, y sin embargo no podíamos valernos de tanta gente curiosa que venía a ver a la Monja Alférez. Apeáronme en casa del señor arzobispo, viéndome en las hieles para entrar. Besé la mano a su ilustrísima, regalóme mucho y hospedóme allí aquella noche. A la mañana siguiente me llevaron a palacio a ver al virrey, don Francisco de Borja, conde de Mayalde, príncipe de Esquilache, que asistió allí desde el año de 1615 hasta 1622, y comí aquel día en su casa. A la noche volví a la del señor arzobispo, donde tuve buena cena y cuarto acomodado.

Díjome su ilustrísima al día siguiente que viese y eligiese el convento donde quisiese estar. Yo le dí licencia para verlos todos, y concediómela, y fuí entrando y viéndolos todos, estándome cuatro o cinco días en cada uno. Finalmente vine a elegir el de la Santísima Trinidad, que es de

Commandresses of San Bernardo. It is a large convent, which has a hundred nuns in black veils, fifty in white, ten novices, ten lay sisters, and sixteen servants.

There I remained for exactly two years and five months until sufficient proof came back from Spain that I was not nor had ever been a professed nun. With this I was allowed to leave the convent amid the universal regret of all the nuns and I set out on the road to Spain.

Straight away I went back to Guamanga to see those sisters of Santa Clara. They kept me there for eight days with much kindness, and gifts, and tears of farewell. I continued my journey to Sante Fe de Bogotá in the kingdom of New Granada. I saw the Archbishop don Julian de Cortázar who strongly urged me to stay there and enter the convent of my order. I told him that I had no order nor religious obligation and that I was trying to get back to my native land where I would do whatever seemed best for my salvation. With this, and with a fine gift that he gave me, I took my leave.

I went on to Zaragoza along the upper Magdalena River. It seemed to me a bad place for Spaniards for I fell ill there and was at death's door. After a few days of convalescing somewhat, and before I really had a hold of myself, a doctor ordered me to leave and I departed downriver for Tenerife where I soon recovered.

## **Chapter 22**

—She embarks in Tenerife and goes to Cartagena, and from there leaves for Spain with the fleet.

There, finding the fleet of General Tomás Larraspuu outbound for Spain, I embarked on his flagship in the year 1624. He received me with great kindness, entertained me, and seated me at his table. He treated me so until we had passed two hundred leagues beyond the Bahamian Channel. Then, in a game one day, there arose a squabble in which I gave somebody a nick in the

comendadoras de San Bernardo; gran convento, que sustenta cien religiosas de velo negro, cincuenta de velo blanco, diez novicias, diez donadas y diez y seis criadas.

Allí me estuve, cabales, dos años y cinco meses, hasta que volvió de España razón bastante de cómo no era yo ni había sido monja profesa; con lo cual se me prometió salir del convento, con sentimiento común de todas las monjas, y me puse en camino para España.

Partí luego a Guamanga, a ver y despedirme de aquellas señoras del de Santa Clara, las cuales me detuvieron allí ocho días, con mucho agrado y regalos y lágrimas a la partida. Proseguí mi viaje a Santa Fe de Bogotá, en el reino de Nueva Granada; vi al arzobispo, don Julián de Cortázar, el cual me instó mucho a que me quedase allí en convento de mi Orden.

Yo le dije que no tenía yo Orden ni religión, y que trataba de volverme a mi patria, donde haría lo que pareciese más conveniente a mi salvación.

Y con esto y con un buen regalo que me hizo, me despedí. Pasé a Zaragoza por el río de la Magdalena arriba. Caí allí enferma, y me pareció mala tierra para españoles, y llegué a punto de muerte. Después de unos días convaleciendo algo, antes de poderme tener, me hizo un médico partir, y salí por río y fuíme a Tenerife, donde en breve me recobré.

## **XXII CAPITULO**

—Embárcase en Tenerife y pasa a Cartagena, y de aquí parte para España en la flota.

Allí, hallándose la armada del general Tomás de Larráspuru de partida para España, me embarqué en su capitana, año de 1624, donde me recibió con mucho agrado y me regaló y me sentó a su mesa, y me trató así hasta pasadas doscientas leguas, más allá del canal de Bahama. Allí, un día, en el juego, se armó una reyerta, en que hube de dar a uno un arrechucho en la

face with a little knife I had. A considerable row resulted, and the general felt obliged to remove me from there and hand me over to the vice-admiral's ship where I had countrymen.

This idea pleased me and I asked his leave to go on board the tender "San Telmo", the dispatch boat of which don Andrés de Otón was captain, and I did. However, we went through some hard times for she was taking on water and we were in danger of drowning.

Thank God, we arrived in Cadiz on the first of November, 1624. We disembarked, and I remained there for eight days. General of the Armada Fadrique de Toledo offered me much kindness there. He had two brothers of mine in his service, whom I met. He honored me by taking one onto his personal staff and giving the other a promotion.

### **Chapter 23**

—She departs Cadiz for Seville; from Seville to Madrid, to Pamplona, and to Rome; but robbed in Piamonte, returns to Spain.

From Cadiz I went to Seville and stayed there fifteen days, hiding myself as much as I could and fleeing from the crowds who gathered to see me dressed in male clothing. From there I went on to Madrid and stayed there twenty days without revealing myself. There they arrested me by order of the Vicar—I don't know why—and was ordered released immediately by the Count of Olivares. I lodged there with the Count of Javier, who was leaving for Pamplona. I went along and served him for about two months.

Leaving the Count of Javier, I departed Pamplona for Rome, it being the year of the Grand Jubilee. I took my way through France and ended up in serious trouble. Passing through Piamonte to Turin, they arrested me for a Spanish spy, taking from me what little money and clothing I had. They kept me in jail for five days. Having made investigations which I presume did not result in anything against me, they let me go. But, they did not allow me to

cara con un cuchillejo que tenía allí, y resultó mucha inquietud. El general se vió obligado a apartarme de allí y pasarme a la almiranta, donde yo tenía paisanos. Yo de esto me alegré, y pedíle paso al patache "San Telmo", del que era capitán don Andrés de Otón, que venía de aviso, y pasóme; pero pasamos trabajo, porque hacía agua, y nos vimos en peligro de anegarnos.

Gracias a Dios, llegamos a Cádiz en primero de noviembre de 1624. Desembarcamos, y estuve allí ocho días. Hízome allí mucha merced el señor don Fadrique de Toledo, general de la armada; y teniendo allí en su servicio dos hermanos míos, a los que allí conocí, les hizo, por honrarme, mucho favor, teniendo al uno consigo en su servicio, y dándole al otro una bandera.

### **CAPITULO XXIII**

—Parte de Cádiz a Sevilla; de Sevilla, a Madrid, a Pamplona y a Roma; pero habiendo sido robada en el Piamonte, vuelve a España.

De Cádiz me fuí a Sevilla y estuve allí quince días, escondiéndome cuanto pude y huyendo del concurso que acudía a verme vestida en hábito de hombre. De allí pasé a Madrid, y estuve veinte días sin descubrirme. Allí me prendieron por mandato del vicario, no sé por qué, e hizome luego soltar el conde de Olivares. Acomodéme allí con el conde de Javier, que partía para Pamplona, y fuí y le asistí cosa de dos meses. De Pamplona, dejando al conde de Javier, partí a Roma, por ser el año santo del grande Jubileo. Tomé por Francia mi camino, y pasé grandes trabajos, porque, pasando el Piamonte y llegando a Turín, achacándome ser espía de España, me prendieron, quitándome el poco dinero y vestidos que llevaba, y me tuvieron en prisión cinco días, al cabo de los cuales, hechas, presumo, sus diligencias y no resultando cosa contra mí, me soltaron; pero no me dejaron

continue on the route I was taking, ordering me to turn back under pain of the galleys. I was bound to return with great difficulty, destitute, on foot, and begging.

I arrived in Tolouse, France, and presented myself before the Count of Agramonte, viceroy of Pau and governor of Bayonne. Coming by before, I had brought him letters from Spain. On seeing me, the good gentleman felt pity and ordered that I be given clothing. He gave me one hundred escudos and a horse for the journey, and I left.

I came to Madrid and presented myself before His Royal Majesty, requesting of him that he might reward my services. This I expressed in a formal petition which I placed in his royal hand.<sup>95</sup> His Majesty referred me to the Council of the Indies. I went there and presented the papers that remained with me after the disaster. Those gentlemen viewed me favorably, and with the consultation of His Majesty, awarded me a lifetime pension of eight hundred escudos, which was a little less than I asked for. This was in the month of August, 1625.

Meanwhile some things happened to me while at court which, being of little importance, I shall omit. His Majesty departed for the Courts of Aragon and arrived in Zaragoza in the first days of January, 1626.

## **Chapter 24**

—She leaves Madrid for Barcelona.

I set out on the road to Barcelona with three other friends who were going there. We arrived in Lérida, rested a little, and resumed our way on the afternoon of Holy Thursday. Close to Velpuche around four in the afternoon, we were travelling along contentedly and without a care, when nine men jumped us from a thicket by the right side of the road where it turned. With

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<sup>95</sup> See appendix B.

proseguir el camino que llevaba, mandádonle volver atrás, so pena de galeras. Hube de volverme con mucho trabajo: pobre, a pie y mendigando. Llegué a Tolosa de Francia y presentéme ante el conde de Agramonte, virrey de Pau y gobernador de Bayona, para el cual, a la ida, yo había traído y entregado cartes de España. El buen caballero, en viéndome, se condolió y me mandó vestir y me regaló; me dió para el camino cien escudos y un caballo, y partí.

Víneme a Madrid, y presentéme ante Su Majestad, suplicándole me premiase mis servicios, que expresé en un memorial que puse en su real mano. Remitióme Su Majestad al Consejo de Indias, y allí acudí y presenté los papeles que me habían quedado de la derrota. Viéronme aquellos señores, y favoreciéndome, con consulta de Su Majestad, me señalaron ochocientos escudos de renta para mi vida, que fueron poco menos de lo que yo pedí. Esto fué en el mes de agosto de 1625. Sucediéronme entretanto en la corte algunas cosas que, por leves, aquí omito. Partió después Su Majestad para las Cortes de Aragón, y llegó a Zaragoza a los primeros de enero de 1626.

#### **CAPITULO XXIV**

—Parte de Madrid a Barcelona.

Púseme en camino para Barcelona con otros tres amigos que iban para allá. Llegamos a Lérida, reposamos un poco, y proseguímos nuestro camino el Jueves Santo por la tarde. Llegados cerca de Velpuche, y como a las cuatro de la tarde, caminábamos bien contentos y ajenos de azar, cuando, de una vuelta y breñal al lado derecho del camino, nos salen de repente nueve hombres, con

muskets cocked, they surrounded us and ordered us to dismount. We couldn't do anything else and we were lucky just to get down alive. Dismounted, they took our weapons, horses, clothing, and all we carried, not leaving us more than our papers, for which we begged their mercy to let us keep. After looking at them, they gave them back to us without leaving us another thread.

We continued on our way afoot, naked and embarrassed, entering Barcelona on Holy Saturday, 1626, not knowing (at least I not knowing) what to do. My companions went off to seek their own remedy, I don't know where. From there, I went from house to house wailing about the robbery. I acquired some nasty clothing and an old cloak to cover me. As nighttime was coming on, I took shelter under a portal where I found some other miserable beings. I learned that the king was in town and he had with him in his retinue the Marquess of Montes Claros, a good and caring gentlemen whom I had met and spoke to in Madrid. The next morning I went to him and told him of my debacle. It pained him to see me so, and right away he ordered that I be dressed and brought into the presence of His Majesty, the good gentleman arranging an audience for me.

I went in and related to His Majesty how the event had befallen me. He listened to me and said, "Well, how did you allow them to rob you?"

I answered, "Sir, I could do nothing else."

He asked me, "How many were they?"

I said, "Nine, Sir, with cocked muskets. They took us by surprise as we passed a thicket." His Majesty indicated with his hands that he wanted to see my memorandum. I kissed his hand as I handed it to him and he said, "I will look into it." He was by then on his feet and went out.

I left, and shortly received a dispatch in which His Majesty authorized me to receive four rations of a first lieutenant's pay plus thirty ducats for assistance and costs. With this I bid farewell to the Marquess of Montes

sus escopetas, los gatillos levantados, y nos cercan y mandan apearse. No pudimos hacer otra cosa, y aun tuvimos a merced el apearnos vivos. Desmontados, quitáronnos las armas y los caballos, los vestidos y cuanto llevábamos, sin dejarnos más que los papeles, que les pedimos de merced, y que después de vistos nos dieron, sin dejarnos otra hilacha.

Proseguimos nuestro camino a pie, desnudos y avergonzados, entrando en Barcelona el Sábado Santo de 1626, en la noche, sin saber, a lo menos yo, qué hacer. Mis compañeros tiraron no sé por dónde a buscar su remedio; yo, por allí, de casa en casa, plañiendo mi robo, adquirí unos malos trapos y una mala capilla con que cubrirme. Acogíme, entrada más la noche, debajo de un portal, donde hallé tendidos otros miserables, y llegué a entender que estaba el rey allí y que estaba en su servicio el marqués de Montes Claros, buen caballero, caritativo, a quien conocí, y hablé en Madrid. A la mañana siguiente me fuí a él y contéle mi fracaso; dolióse de verme, y luego me mandó vestir e hizo entrar a presencia de Su Majestad, agenciándome el buen caballero la ocasión.

Entré y referí a Su Majestad mi suceso como me pasó. Escuchóme, y dijo: "¿Pues cómo os dejasteis robar?" Respondí: "Señor, no pude más." Preguntóme: "¿Cuántos eran?" Dije: Señor, nueve, con escopetas, altos los gatos, que nos cogieron de repente al pasar unas breñas." Mostró Su Majestad con las manos querer el memorial. Se la besé y púseselo en ella, y dijo Su Majestad: "Yo lo veré." Estaba entonces Su Majestad en pie, y fuése. Yo me salí, y en breve hallé el despacho, en que mandaba Su Majestad darme cuatro raciones de alférez reformado y treinta ducados de ayuda y de costa. Con lo cual me despedí del marqués de Montes

Claros, to whom I owed so much, and embarked on the galley "San Martin"—the new one from Sicily—which was departing there for Genoa.

## **Chapter 25**

—She departs from Barcelona to Genoa and from there to Rome.

We departed from Barcelona in the galley and soon arrived in Genoa where we stayed for fifteen days. During that time I decided one morning to go and see the Inspector-General (Pedro de Chavarría, knight of Santiago) and I went to his house. It seems that I was early and the house wasn't yet open so I went for a walk thereabouts to kill time. I sat down on a stone bench across from the doorway of the Prince of Doria. While there, a well-dressed and gallant soldier came along and also sat down. He had a fine head of hair, and by his accent I knew he was Italian. We greeted each other and began a conversation. He said to me, "You are a Spaniard." I answered that I was and he responded, "Accordingly you must be overbearing because Spaniards are, and arrogant too, although they are not equal to their boasts."

I said, "I see them all as pretty well what they say they are."

He said, "I see them all pretty well as turds."

Getting up, I said, "Don't speak that way, for the sorriest Spaniard is better than the best Italian."

He said, "Will you back up what you say?"

I said, "Yes, I will."

"Right now, then," he answered.

"So be it," said I, and together we went out behind some nearby water tanks. We drew our swords and began to fight, when I saw someone else take his side. They were both slashing but I jabbed, struck the Italian, and dropped him. The other remained, and I was driving him back when another lame but testy fellow (who must have been his friend) came along, took his side, and pressed me. Another fellow came up and took my side, perhaps because he

Claros, a quien tanto debí, y embarqué en la galera "San Martín", la nueva de Sicilia, que de allí partía para Génova.

#### **CAPITULO XXV**

—Parte de Barcelona a Génova, y de allí, a Roma.

Partidos de Barcelona en la galera, llegamos en breve a Génova, donde estuvimos quince días. En ellos, una mañana se me ofreció ver a Pedro de Chavarría, del hábito de Santiago, veedor general, y fuí a su casa. Parece que era temprano, y no había abierto, y andúveme por allí haciendo hora. Sentéme en una peña a la puerta del príncipe Doria, y estando allí llegó también y sentóse un hombre bien vestido, soldado galán, con una gran cabellera, que conocí en el habla ser italiano. Saludámonos y trabamos conversación, y me dijo: "Usted es español." Díjele que sí, y respondió: "Según eso, será usted soberbio, porque los españoles lo son, y arrogantes, aunque no de tantas manos como blasonan." Dije: Yo a todos los veo muy hombres para cuanto se ofrece." Dijo: "Yo los veo a todos que son una *merda*." Dije, levantándome: "No hable usted de ese modo, que el más triste español es mejor que el mejor italiano." Dijo: "¿Sustentará lo que dice?" Dije: "Sí haré." Dijo: "Pues sea luego." Dije: "Sea." Y salimos tras unos depósitos de agua allí cerca, y él conmigo. Sacamos las espadas y empezamos a tirar, y en esto veo a uno que se pone a su lado. Ambos jugaron de cuchilla; yo, de punta, y entréle al italiano una estocada, que cayó. Quedábame el otro, e íbalo retirando, cuando llegó en esto un hombre cojo, con buen brío, y púsose a su lado, que debía ser su amigo, y apretábame. Vino otro, y púsose al mío, quizá por

saw I was alone. So many others then joined in that the whole thing became rather confusing. Fortunately I withdrew without anyone noticing, went back to my ship, and knew no more of the matter. There I treated a small wound I had on my hand. At this time the Marquis of Santa Cruz was in Genoa.

I departed Genoa for Rome. I kissed the foot of His Holiness Urban VIII, and related to him as best I could the story of my life and travels, my sex, and my virginity. His Holiness showed himself to be astonished by such a tale, and kindly granted me permission to continue my life dressed as a man, charging me to live honestly henceforth and to abstain from offending my neighbor, attaching the threat of the wrath of God to his order, "*Non Occides*."<sup>96</sup>

The matter became quite notorious there, and it was a noteworthy group I began to see around me: well known personalities, princes, bishops, cardinals. Wherever I found myself it was open house, and such was my luck that during the month and a half that I remained in Rome, there was seldom a day that I was not regaled by princes.

One Friday in particular I was invited and entertained by some gentlemen by the express order and at the expense of the Roman Senate, and they placed my name in a book as an honorary Roman Citizen.

On the day of St. Peter, June 29, 1626, I was taken into the chapel of St. Peter where I saw the cardinals and witnessed the ceremonies they celebrate on that day. All, or almost all of them, showed me great kindness and affection, and many conversed with me. In the afternoon, I found myself in a circle of three cardinals. One of them, who was Cardinal Magalon, told me that the only fault with me was being a Spaniard, to which I replied, "It seems to me, sir, under the correction of your most illustrious Lordship, that that is the only good thing about me."

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<sup>96</sup> "Don't blow it." (My translation)

verme solo, que lo conocí. Acudieron tantos, que se hubo de confundir la cosa, de suerte que, buenamente, sin que nadie reparara, me retiré y me fuí a mi galera, y no supe más del caso. Allí me curé de una leve herida en una mano. Estaba entonces en Génova el marqués de Santa Cruz.

Partí de Génova a Roma. Besé el pie a la Santidad de Urbano VIII, y referíle en breve y lo mejor que supe mi vida y correrías, mi sexo y virginidad. Mostró Su Santidad extrañar tal cosa, y con afabilidad me concedió licencia para proseguir mi vida en hábito de hombre, encargándome la prosecución honesta en adelante y la abstinencia de ofender al prójimo, teniendo la *ulción* de Dios sobre su mandamiento *non occides*. Hízose el caso allí notorio, y fué notable el concurso de que me vi cercado: personajes, príncipes, obispos, cardenales. Dondequiera me hallé lugar abierto, de suerte que en mes y medio que estuve en Roma fué raro el día en que no fuese convidado y regalado de príncipes; y especialmente un viernes fuí convidado y regalado por unos caballeros, por orden particular y encargo del Senado romano, y me asentaron en un libro por ciudadano romano. El día de San Pedro, 29 de junio de 1626, me entraron en la capilla de San Pedro, donde vi los cardenales y las ceremonias que se acostumbran aquel día. Todos, o los más, me mostraron notable agrado y caricia y me hablaron muchos. A la tarde, hallándome en rueda con tres cardenales, me dijo uno de ellos, que fué el cardenal Magalón, que no tenía más falta que ser español, a lo cual le dije: "A mi me parece, señor, debajo de la corrección que se debe a vuestra señoría ilustrísima, que no tengo otra cosa buena."

**Chapter 26**

—From Rome She Goes to Naples.

Having spent a month and a half in Rome, I departed from there to Naples on the fifth of July, 1626. We embarked in Ripa. While strolling along the wharf in Naples one day, I perceived the loud laughter of two girls who were chatting with a couple of boys. We stared at each other and one said to me, "Where to, Lady Catalina?"

I answered, "To give you a hundred whacks on the head, my lady whores, and a hundred slashes to whomever may wish to defend you!" They shut up and slipped away.

THE END

## CAPITULO XXVI

—De Roma viene a Nápoles.

Pasado mes y medio que estuve en Roma, me partí de allí para Nápoles, el día 5 de julio de 1626. Embarcamos en Ripa.

En Nápoles, un día, paseándome en el muelle, reparé en las risotadas de dos damiselas que parlaban con dos mozos. Me miraban, y mirándolas, me dijo una: "Señora Catalina, ¿adónde se camina?"

Respondí: "Señoras p..., a darles a ustedes cien pescozones y cien cuchilladas a quien las quiera defender." Callaron y se fueron de allí.<sup>97</sup>

FIN

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<sup>97</sup> Here Erauso seems to take offense when these youngsters refer to her as a female. Yet she does so herself, intermittently, throughout the text, using the Spanish feminine adjectival form on a number of occasions and the masculine form on others. On page 36 she is "*cansada*" (tired) after her long walk from her hometown to Vitoria. But just two paragraphs later she is "*bienhallado*" (well-off) in a new employment as a page. On page 102 she is "*cogida de repente*" (taken by surprise) during an interrogation but is "*solo contra cinco*" (alone against five) in a swordfight four pages later. When she reveals her true sex to the Bishop of Guamanga she reverts to the female form e.g., "*acompañada*" (escorted) on page 121. But, in another swordfight on page 134 finds her "*solo*" again. The pattern seems to be that when she finds herself feeling vulnerable (as she admits to doing when in the presence of the Bishop of Guamanga) she automatically refers to herself in the female form. I submit that this peculiarity of Spanish grammar illustrates Erauso's chameleon-like gender switching to be a psychological adaptation amounting to a survival strategy. It is the very essence of Erauso's character and the whole underlying reason for her success and her fame.

### III. Conclusion

The world into which Doña Catalina de Erauso was born, near the end of the sixteenth century, was one in which women were severely restricted and controlled by a male-dominated society. This came about after the success of the *reconquista* and the expulsion of the Jews, as the Spanish power structure (*i.e.*, the Church and the Crown) focused its attention on the complete integration of the populace into the “One True Faith” of the Catholic Church. This required the catechization of the mostly un-educated masses as well as the systematic rooting out of apostates and false converts. This was attempted through the institution of the Holy Office of the Inquisition, a body that achieved an infamous reputation for the cruelty of its methods and the barbarity of its punishments.

To a Church hierarchy that was overwhelmingly misogynist in its thinking, women presented a special problem in the effort to establish absolute control over Spanish society. Unlike the Jews and the *moriscos*, they could not be expelled. The Church responded to this perceived threat by strengthening the existing institutions of enclosure for women (e.g., marriage and convents) as well as by creating additional ones in the form of licensed brothels, Magdalen Houses, and women’s prisons.

Transvestism has been regarded as a psycho-sexual phenomenon only since relatively recent times. Even more recently has cross-dressing come to be regarded as a conscious and deliberate life-style. In Medieval and Renaissance Europe female cross-dressing carried no such cachet but there were a number of occasions and circumstances when it was acceptable and even customary for women to dress as men.<sup>98</sup> These included traveling and concealment from invading troops.

The dramatic stage was a common venue for the characterization of female transvestites in the theatre of Golden-Age Spain, although real-life examples were few there, likely because Spanish society was, in many ways, the most repressive in Europe. The sexual motives real-life women might have derived from cross-dressing are not easily

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<sup>98</sup> Male cross-dressing was virtually unknown in Europe during this period except among actors on the stage where, with the unlikely exception of Spain, the custom of female actors was prohibited.

determined as very few references to homosexuality among women in Counter-Reformation Spain exist.

The story of Catalina de Erauso presents a truly exceptional case. Erauso was one of the few women of Counter-Reformation Spain to effectively escape the enclosing and confining strictures imposed on women by the Church and Crown. Her autobiography may be read as a daring and sincere confession of a sexual misfit acting in a rigidly controlled totalitarian society that was so shocked by her revelations that it transcended its own stubborn propensity for intolerance and exalted her as a hero—if only because such a reaction was much easier to achieve for her contemporaries than a true understanding of her character. The main reason that this is so is due to the phallogentric view of sexuality that pervaded the misogynist Church authorities and male society in general in the Spain of that period: *i.e., that there could be no sex without a penis*. Therefore, Erauso's attraction to women was viewed as simply part and parcel of her masquerade, justifiable in order to achieve her real and respected goal of defending the interests of the Spanish Empire as a soldier.<sup>99</sup>

This attitude blinded all but a very few sophisticates (such as Lope de Vega) and made it possible for Erauso to win the approbation of the most influential and powerful men of her time—including king and pope, for her daring feats of arms, her hazardous adventures, and her indomitable spirit. After her successful trip to Rome, not even the dreaded Holy Office could touch *La Monja Alférez*.

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<sup>99</sup> This misapprehension continued long after the era of Erauso. But Ferrer, in this footnote referring to the most explicit sexual encounter described in his edition of Erauso's autobiography, comes a bit closer to the heart of the matter: *It is not, as will be seen further on, the last time this singular woman has the inclination to woo maidens, perhaps because she came to entertain the false hope that she was a man, or perhaps because she made use of this trick to further conceal from people her true sex*. (See Ferrer, 20, footnote1, [my translation]). The incident appears on page 52 of the present work.

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## Appendix A

### **Historical Timeline of Verifiable Data Re: Catalina de Erauso**

1592 - The baptism of Catalina de Erauso is recorded on February 10 in the ledger of the parochial church of San Vicente Martír in San Sebastián, Guipúzcoa. The parents are listed as El Capitán Don Miguel de Erauso and Doña María Pérez de Gallárraga y Arce.

1605 - Catalina de Erauso is recorded in the account book of the Dominican convent of San Sebastián el Antiguo.<sup>100</sup>

1608 - Catalina de Erauso is again recorded in the account book of the Dominican convent of San Sebastián el Antiguo as having been present until March 1607, after which time she seems to have mysteriously disappeared.<sup>101</sup> At this time Erauso would have been fifteen years old. This is the likely date of the beginning of her adventure.<sup>102</sup>

1608 - Catalina de Erauso is mentioned in the affidavit of Capitán Don Francisco Pérez de Navarrete (sworn December 17, 1624) as having been observed serving as a soldier under Capitán Guillén de Casanova in the fort of Arauco, Kingdom of Chile.<sup>103</sup>

1626 - *La Monja Alférez* is interviewed by Pietro della Valle in Rome.<sup>104</sup>

- *La Monja Alférez* has her portrait painted by Crescentio in Rome (original lost).

1629 - On September 26, in San Sebastián, *El Alférez doña Catalina de Erauso* signs a waiver of her claim to any further inheritance from the estate of her parents in favor of her sister Mariana.

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<sup>100</sup> Tellechea, 57.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 318.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 75, footnote (3).

<sup>103</sup> Ferrer, 127-129.

<sup>104</sup> See page 27.

1630 - El Capitán Don Domingo de Urbiru, the chief bailiff of the *Contratación de Sevilla* notes in his journal (citing a list of passengers) that *La Monja Alférez* embarked to New Spain in 1630 in the fleet commanded by El Capitán Don Miguel de Echazarreta and had traveled to the Indies as a cabin boy under the same commander some years earlier (“en años pasados”).<sup>105</sup>

- *La Monja Alférez* has her portrait painted by the Sevillian artist Pacheco, the son-in-law of Velásquez. This dated and signed oil portrait currently rests in San Sebastián in the collection of the La Caixa Trust.

1645 - A testimonial given on October 10, 1693, in the Capuchin monastery of Seville, by Fr. Nicomedes de Rentería, to Fr. Diego de Sevilla, states that: “that in the year 1645, before he became a religious, he served with the galleons of General don Pedro de Ursua, and several times in Veracruz saw and encountered The Nun Ensign, doña Catalina de Erauso—who there and then was called don Antonio de Erauso—and that she had a string of mules in which she, along with some negroes, carried clothing to various places. Thereby and therewith she transported the clothing that she carried to Mexico and she was regarded there as very valiant and capable individual. She went about in male clothing and carried a sword and dagger decorated in silver; she seemed then about fifty years of age, husky, olive complexion, with a few little hairs for a moustache.”<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Ferrer, 111-112.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 112-113, [My translation.] The Capuchins are a branch of the Franciscan Order.

## Appendix B

### **Petition of Catalina de Erauso**

Catalina de Erauso made at least three petitions to King Phillip IV between 1626 and 1630.<sup>107</sup> The first was to ask for compensation for her years of military service in America and was accompanied by an impressive array of personal testimonials in the form of sworn affidavits as well as live witnesses. A draft of a petition that currently rests in the Archive of the Indies also asks for compensation for losses and suffering when captured and prosecuted as a spy in France. Erauso presented her petition in the court at Madrid very soon after the fiasco in France, which had left her nearly penniless. The later petitions requested royal permission to travel to New Spain and were granted in the form of a *cédula*. Permission to return to the Americas was asked for in the draft petition presented here but was not mentioned in the version that was submitted and which resulted in the award of a pension.<sup>108</sup> All three of Erauso's petitions to the crown were successful. I have thought it useful to render this draft in translation as it provides a reasonably credible summation of her adventures.

March, 1626.

Lord:

The Ensign doña Catalina de Erauso, resident and native of the village of San Sebastián, province of Guipúzcoa, states: that during the last nineteen years, fifteen have been employed in the service of Your Majesty in the wars in the Kingdom of Chile and in the Indian lands of Peru, having traveled to those parts in male clothing for a particular inclination that she had to bear arms in defense of the Catholic Faith and to be of service to Your Majesty, by which [guise], in the said Kingdom of Chile, in all the time she was

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<sup>107</sup> These petitions are filed in the Archive of the Indies in Seville where I was able to examine and obtain copies of them in 1993. A photocopy of the one translated here follows. Its lack of a royal stamp and general messiness suggest that it was an early draft.

<sup>108</sup> Good legal counsel might well have advised against putting too much on the royal plate at one time.

there, she might be taken for a man, until some years afterward, in the kingdoms of Peru, she was discovered to be a woman (forced by an event that would be out of place to recount here); and, being in the company of Ensign Miguel de Erauso, her legitimate brother, in the Kingdom of Chile, never revealing herself to him, although she knew him to be such a brother. And this she did in order remain un-discovered, denying the ties of blood. And in all the time she served in war, and in the company of field master don Diego de Sarabia, she showed exemplary valor in sustaining the discomforts of the military like the strongest of men (by which in every move she was taken for one), and for her acts came to merit Your Majesty's Ensign [battlefield promotion to rank of Ensign] serving as ensign of the infantry company of Captain Gonzalo Rodríguez, under the name she gave herself, Alonso Díaz Ramírez de Guzmán. And in the said period she was singled out for exceptional stoutness and valor, receiving wounds, particularly in the battle of Purén; and having been promoted officially to a half-pay ensign, transferred to the company of Captain Guillén de Casanova, commander of the fort of Arauco, and was selected from there, by reason of valor and soldierly bearing, to campaign against the enemy. As all of this and more is confirmed by the certifications and sworn statements of don Luis de Céspedes, Governor and Captain General of Paraguay (who was in the infantry in Chile), of don Juan Cortés de Monroy, Governor and Captain General of Veraguas (who was also in the infantry in Chile), and by don Francisco Pérez de Navarrete, all three of whom (and other gentlemen who were their officers and field-masters) are present today in court, and know her very well for having seen her serve Your Majesty, and know her to have served as temporary captain in the said Kingdom of Chile and in that of Peru. And furthermore, that the foregoing does not end there, for having arrived in these realms of Spain in the past year of 1624 she tried, in the year 1625, to travel to Rome to kiss the feet of His Holiness (it being a Holy Year) and, traveling through the Kingdom of France, encountered a troop of French Cavalry in Piamonte. And, as she traveled on horseback with a servant and other Spanish pilgrims who accompanied her, they arrested her (as she stood out among the others in their pilgrim costume, and calling herself Ensign Antonio de Erauso). And immediately they

seized her and took her for a spy of Your Majesty, and said as much; and after having ransacked her of two hundred doubloons that she carried for her expenses, they cast her in prison where she remained fourteen days shackled in chains. And, for having heard some things she responded to with reverence about your Majesty, they abused her in word and deed; and if they realized that she was a woman, or confirmed her as a spy, they would surely have taken her life. Afterwards they released her but would not allow her to continue on to Rome, and so, has returned to this court, with this particular information (with three eyewitnesses, and without others who heard about it). For this, therefore, and as well for the services of Captain Miguel de Erauso her father, and the said Ensign Miguel de Erauso and Francisco de Erauso (who served in the armada of Lima with don Rodrigo de Mendoza), and Domingo de Erauso, (who went with the armada that sailed against Brazil, and upon returning from there was one of those who perished in the “flagship of the four Villages” which was burned), and that all three were her brothers, she asks that it may please Your Majesty to order her services and long journeys and valiant deeds be rewarded, showing in that your greatness, as well as that which is manifestly deserved for the singularity and prodigiousness which comes to your attention, keeping in mind that she is the daughter of noble and loyal parents, leading citizens of the village of San Sebastián; and more, for the security and rare purity with which she has lived and lives, the testimony of which can be taken here and now; for which she might receive mercy of that which may be given, a pension of seventy pesos of twenty-two *quilates* per month, in the city of Cartegena de las Indias, and an allowance of costs to allow her to go there, in which she will obtain that which Your Majesty and your highness foresee.

El Alferoz Dña Catalina de Senauso Vecina y natural de la Villa  
 de San Sebastian provincia de Guipuzcoa = dice que en tiempo de diez y  
 nue años a esta parte, los quince ha empleado en servicio de V. Mage.  
 en las guerras del Reyno de Chile y Indias del Piru Saviendo passar  
 do a aquellas partes en arribo de Barón por particular inclinacion  
 que tuvo de exercitar las armas en defensa de la fe catolica y emple  
 arse en servicio de V. Mage. sin que en el dicho Reyno de Chile todo el tpo  
 que asistió fuese conocida, sino por hombre hasta algunos años despues  
 en las Reynas del Piru fue descubierta ser muger forçada de un cacico  
 mienta que no ha fe a proposito el decir aqui, y con estar en compañía  
 del Alferoz Miguel de Senauso su hermano legitimo en el Reyno de  
 Chile nunca se descubrió al avnque ella le conocia por tal humana  
 y esto solo por no ser descubierta negando la afición de sangre, y en todo  
 el tiempo que vivió en la guerra y en la compañía del maestro de campo  
 Don Diego Bravo de Saravia fue con particular Valor resistiendo a las  
 incomodidades de la mar, como el mar fuerte Barón, sin que en  
 acción ninguna fuese conocida sino por tal y por sus echos vino a me  
 necer tener V. Mage. de V. Mage. viviendo como vivió de Alferoz de  
 la compañía de Infanteria del capitán gonçalo Rodriguez con nombre  
 que se puso de hombre llamándose Alonso diaz Ramirez de guzman  
 y en el dicho tiempo se señaló con mucho esfuerzo y Valor resistiendo a  
 heridas particularmente en la Batalla de Quen y haviendo sido  
 reformado para la compañía del capitán guillen de Carranobas  
 Castellano del castillo de Arauco y fue en brevecado della por Valien  
 te y buen soldado para salir a campaña al enemigo como todo lo qual  
 y mas consta por las Certificaciones y feos de don Luis de Cepedillo



governador y Capitan general de paraguay que fue de ynfanteria  
 en Chile de don Juan Cortes de Monroy governador y Capitan general  
 de Beraguas que tambien fue de ynfanteria en Chile y de don  
 Francisco Perez de Navarrete asi bien Capitan de ynfanteria en el dho  
 Reyno de Chile y en el del peru que todos tres y otros Cavalteros que  
 han sido sus oficiales y maasres de campos se hallan y actualmente  
 en esta Corte y le conocen muy bien por su uale bisto ser uia de Villag  
 y ademas de lo referido no queda su tragedia en lo dho, por haviendo  
 llegado a estos Reynos de España el año pasado de 1624 traxo de y  
 el de 625. a la corte Romana, a Verca el pie a su Santidad por ser  
 el año Santo y caminando por el Reyno de Francia en piamonte en  
 concho con vna tropa de Cavalleria francesa y como ella yba a cavallo  
 con vna ciudad y otros peregrinos Españoles que yban en su compania  
 la prendieron a ella como a quien yba señalado entre los demas en  
 auto de peregrino nombrandose, el Alferes Antonio de Seraus  
 y luego que asieron de ella la traxeron por uia de Villag y dixerón  
 que por tal le prendian y despues de su uale verbalizado y quitada  
 la dha cantidad de oblonos de oro que llebaba para su gasto la echaron en vna  
 carcel, donde estuvo catorce dias cargada de cadenas y porque su uale  
 ydo algunas cosas su uale respondido ondicano y Reuerencia de Villag  
 la maltrataron asi de palabra como de mano y si acara la su uale  
 conocido que sea mujer con firmacion sen es pia, con lo qual sin duda  
 la quitaron la vida, y despues que la soltaron no la quisieron dar paso  
 para Roma y asi ha buuelto a esta corte, que tambien este particular  
 parece por ynfomacion con tres testigos con testes sin otros de oidas  
 por tanto y porque asi bien ynterpone los seruicis del Capitan Miguel  
 de Seraus su padre y del dho Alferes Miguel de Seraus y de  
 Fran. de Seraus que siruio en la armada de Lima con don Rodrigo  
 de Mendoca y Domingo de Seraus se fue en la armada que salio  
 para el Brasil.

en la almiranta de las quatro Villas que se guerno que coortres fue  
con sus Germanos.

Supp<sup>ca</sup> a V<sup>ca</sup> Mag<sup>d</sup> se siva de mandar premiar sus seauçios y largas  
peregrinaciones y echos Valerosos mostrando en ella su grandeca  
assi por lo que tiene merecido, como por la singularidad y prodigio  
que viene a tener su discurso teniendo a tencion a que es hijo  
de padres nobles hidalgos y personas principales en la Villa de  
San Sebastian y mas por la singularidad y rara limpieza, con que  
ha vivido y vive, el testimonio de lo qual se puede sacar del mismo  
tiempo, por lo qual Recivira vna vida de que se le de vno treynta y cinco  
de setenta pesos de a veinte y dos quilates, almes en la Ciudad de  
Cartaxena de las Indias y vna ajuda de costa para poderse yr  
en que conuenga la gente de las Villas y su grandeca espere de

*[Faint, mostly illegible handwritten text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]*

*[Large, dark, illegible handwritten scribbles or signatures.]*



Appendix C**La Monja Alférez Reconstructed—****FREAKS OF NATURE****A One Act Play****by Daniel Harvey Pedrick****- CAST -**

Catalina/Antonio de Erauso - A Basque woman in her late thirties, a male impersonator who goes by the name of Antonio.

Lope de Vega Carpio - A debonair gentleman his late sixties, a very famous playwright, a notorious womanizer, and now, a priest.

Count Duke of Olivares - A large, imperious grandee in his fifties, a wealthy and powerful advisor to King Philip IV, a patron of the arts, a bon vivant.

Juan Perez de Montalván - Lope's young disciple.

Bernardino de Guzmán - A book publisher from Seville.

Doña Clara - The fifteen-year old daughter of the Duke of Bolarque.

Doña Sol - The seventeen-year old daughter of the Duke of Bolarque.

Waiter/Servant - A young man in livery.

Guests/Others

**SCENE 1**

Madrid, Spain, A.D. 1626

The action takes place in the patio of a grand house belonging to the Count Duke of Olivares. In the middle of the stage is a fountain. Arched porticoes line the perimeter with a number of large, potted plants adjacent to the columns. On stage left is a small table piled high with new books. Beyond the table and under the porticoes are two doors leading offstage.

Catalina/Antonio de Erauso is about to arrive at a special reception and book-signing arranged by her publisher, Bernardino de Guzmán, and hosted by the Count Duke of Olivares. Minor royals, military officers, clerics, literary luminaries, wives, hangers-on, etc., are in attendance. They are chatting with each other and about to greet Catalina/Antonio as the Lion of the Season. By turns, singly and in small groups, the guests then approach Catalina/Antonio with a fresh copy of her new book for her to sign. This she does with polite small talk.

Catalina/Antonio is dressed as a typical *caballero* with a silver mounted Toledo sword belt and rapier around her waist. Although she is dressed completely in male attire, she does not swagger; her stance, her gait, and her gestures are vaguely suggestive of her true sex.

GUESTS (Conversing in an upbeat, party mood, tinkling glasses, laughter)

GUZMAN (Seated at book table, selling books to guests.)

WAITER (Serving GUESTS with glasses of sherry.)

Enter OLIVARES AND ERAUSO

OLIVARES Ladies and gentlemen, your attention please! Quiet please! Please! (Pause.) Allow me to present our guest of honour... Antonio de Erauso, La Monja Alférez.

GUESTS (Fall silent, stare at ERAUSO.)

ERAUSO (Steps forward, gazes at GUESTS for a moment, bows gallantly.)

GUESTS (Break out in polite applause, crowd around ERAUSO, some holding out newly purchased books for her to sign. They thank her audibly.)

ERAUSO (Signing books with polite small talk.)

OLIVARES (Chatting with GUESTS.)

SERVANT (Approaches OLIVARES and whispers in his ear.)

OLIVARES (Startled) Lope is here? (Rubs his hands together in anticipation.) Splendid! Splendid! For once the great Lope de Vega's not going to be the centre of attention. We're in for some fun now. Show him in. No, wait! I'll do it myself. (Walks quickly offstage.)

Exit OLIVARES

Enter OLIVARES, LOPE, and MONTALVAN

OLIVARES (Leading the elderly but spry LOPE by the hand, plunges into the tight circle of admiring GUESTS around ERAUSO.

MONTALVAN (Follows LOPE like a spaniel.)

OLIVARES (To LOPE) Now remember, don Lope, address my guest of honour as don Antonio, not doña Catalina. I don't want this affair to turn into a brawl.

(To OTHERS) Make way, everyone! I have a very important introduction to make to don Antonio!

OTHERS (Doffing hats, pulling back to make room, breaking into applause.) Hurrah! Lope!

OLIVARES Señor Antonio de Erauso, allow me to present my distinguished friend, Señor Lope de Vega Carpio.

ERAUSO & LOPE (Bow stiffly to each other.)

OTHERS (More applause and shouts.)

LOPE Don Antonio, what a welcome pleasure this is! I shall write a play about you!

ERAUSO (Drily) Take care that I don't hand you another lawsuit!

OTHERS (Raucous laughter.)

LOPE (Smiles good-naturedly as laughter dies down.) I should be more worried that you might challenge me to a duel if it were not to your liking!

ERAUSO (Smiles) Why? I would hardly be the first to do that, either.

OTHERS (More laughter) Oh! Ho!

LOPE (Taking ERAUSO'S arm) No, you certainly would not. But don't worry. My play could only express my complete admiration for you. (Leads ERAUSO away from the OTHERS to the opposite side of the fountain from the book table.) After all, you have done more to turn this society on its ear than all my plays put together. (Lights

focus on the pair.)

OTHERS (Socializing with each other, buying books from GUZMAN at his table, and occasionally approaching ERAUSO with book and pen for her to sign.)

ERAUSO (A sad smile.) Nonsense, don Lope. I have simply had some extraordinary luck. The Pope could have burned me, after all. Instead he absolved me and granted me dispensation. I'm not sure why. Certainly not because he understands me. No one really does that.

LOPE Don't be so sure. Our Holy Father knows quality well enough when he sees it.

MONTALVAN (Obsequiously.) I'll say! He just awarded Lope the Cross of St. John. Did you know?

LOPE (Modestly raises his hand to silence MONTALVAN.) As for understanding you my dear, uh, chap... Well, I must do so myself if I am to do you justice with my pen. But I must admit I am surprised to see you here tonight.

MONTALVAN (Annoyed.) Yes, I thought this was supposed to be a party for you, don Lope!

LOPE (Raising his hand again.) Juanito, please. (Takes the impetuous MONTALVAN aside.) Just be quiet will you?

MONTALVAN But you said this was our big chance to ask the Count Duke for a grant!

LOPE And it may be yet, if you don't make such a scene that we're thrown out!

MONTALVAN And if El Cid there hasn't beat you to it! (Gestures towards ERAUSO.)

LOPE Quiet, or she'll slice you to ribbons! (Pushing him away.) Go! Mix with the others. And keep your ears open and your mouth shut!

MONTALVAN (With a withering sneer for ERAUSO, begins mingling and gossiping with GUESTS.)

LOPE (Turns back to ERAUSO.) Your book is certainly the talk of the town, don Antonio. And really--I've only glanced at it--but it seems to shed no light on what it

is that drives you to be what... who you are. That's the part that interests me.

ERAUSO I was not inclined to discuss that when I was writing it down for the first time, don Lope. I learned a long time ago that the answer to such a question can be worth one's life. (Shrugs.) Now, since I saw the Pope, it's no longer such a problem.

LOPE All right, but how did you discover for the first time the danger of being too frank?

ERAUSO I was just a tiny girl of four years. My mother asked me if I would like to be a nun, like my Aunt Ana. I said, "But I'm going to be a soldier, like my brother Miguel." She was mortified. She took me to the convent the very next day.

LOPE For good?

ERAUSO It was my home for the next eleven years. My mother's sister was the prioress, you see. They wanted to make a Dominican nun out of me, they thought I was such a tom-boy.

LOPE Were you indeed?

ERAUSO (Slightly exasperated) Of course, don Lope. There has always been a side of me that is... highly impatient and rambunctious--passionate.

LOPE (Strokes his moustaches) Yes, yes, go on.

ERAUSO Anyway, I escaped just before I was to take my final vows. I grabbed the keys and bolted in the middle of the night. I hid out in the forest while I cut my hair and made breeches and a jerkin of my habit. (Laughs) I was the best-dressed young man in San Sebastian when I finally came out.

LOPE Then What did you do?

ERAUSO I walked all the way to Vitoria. No sooner did I get there when some kids started pestering me. I threw stones at them and hurt one pretty badly. Next thing I knew I was in jail for assault.

LOPE And still no one knew you were... a girl?

ERAUSO I was determined not to tell a soul until they put the noose around my neck. But they never did. The brat got better and they let me go.

LOPE By the saints! However did you manage in jail?

ERAUSO As soon as I went in, the meanest fellow in the place came up to me and threatened me with a piece of glass. I figured I was dead anyway so I just hit him as hard as I could. He was so surprised... he just stood there holding his nose so I hit him again a couple of times and he fell over. Suddenly I owned the place. The others couldn't do enough for me. I had discovered the key to success: strike, don't speak.

LOPE Incredible! You know, I also found myself in jail as a youth.

ERAUSO Really? What for?

LOPE A friend and I decided to leave school and make our way to the Indies. We walked all the way from Madrid to Segovia, where we bought a horse. We were running low on money so I tried to pawn this gold chain I had. The pawnbroker thought we had stolen it and called the police. We sat in jail for several days waiting for the magistrate. What misery! I hated it.

ERAUSO And then?

LOPE The judge had known my father. He sent us back to Madrid under guard with a warning to continue our studies. That was my first and last attempt to reach the Indies. (They both laugh.) It was not, I regret to say, my last visit to the jailhouse.

GUEST (Approaches LOPE with book and quill.)

ERAUSO (Autographs book.)

MONTALVAN (Approaches LOPE and takes him aside.) She's done it! She petitioned the Count Duke for an audience with the King! He's agreed to give her eight hundred a year--for life!

LOPE (Distraught. ) God in heaven! (Recovering.) Good work, Juanito. Go see what else you can find out. Hopefully there's still something left for us. (Pushes him back toward GUESTS. )

WAITER Approaches the pair and offers glasses of sherry. Each takes a glass and raises it in salute.)

ERAUSO To your good health, don Lope.

LOPE A long life, don Antonio. (They quaff their glasses.)

WAITER (Turns to leave.)

ERAUSO (Detains WAITER, takes another glass from the tray, and polishes it off.)

LOPE (Watches ERAUSO with interest.)

WAITER (Offers another glass to LOPE who takes it. Bows and leaves.)

LOPE (Downs his glass like ERAUSO.) But you made it to the Indies, don Antonio, and still no one penetrated your disguise?

ERAUSO For the most part, no. At least, not until the end when I confessed everything to the Bishop of Guamanga. It was either that or be hanged.

LOPE An easy choice to make, I should think.

ERAUSO Yes, and no. I lost my freedom. I found myself once again in a convent wearing a nun's habit. They didn't know what else to do with me. Finally they called for me to be sent back here where the matter could be decided once and for all. But as soon as I left that convent I was back in breeches and boots; and that's how I appeared before His Holiness in Rome just a short time ago. Fortunately for me he liked what he saw.

LOPE And now that your masquerade is ended, what will you do?

ERAUSO (Annoyed by the question, his hand instinctively moves to the handle of his sword.) What the devil do you mean, 'masquerade'?

LOPE I mean... so the Pope gave you leave to continue dressing as Antonio, and we all respect you for your daring... but surely, everyone knows your true history by now. Who is there left to fool?

ERAUSO (Disgusted, shakes his head.) "I would understand you myself," you said, but you are no different than any of the others. A playwright! I should have known. You're the one who lives in a land of make-believe, don Lope, not me. Yes, my masque has been removed, but I'm the same person I always was. It's you who has some kind of a problem with who--or, as you say, what I am.

LOPE What ever can you mean? When you say you are the same person you always were, do you mean that you are the devout and serious Basque female headed for the life of a religious? Or do you mean the conquistador of your book, beating the bushes of the Indies for El Dorado? It has to be one or the other, doesn't it?

ERAUSO (Sighs.) Look. This is not one of your shadow plays about dim-witted damsels and lascivious lords. I am a real person. I was born, I grew up, I faced each problem as it came along. I had to become a male person in order to survive. And in spite of a few bad moments it has worked out rather well. So, to answer your question, I intend to continue to live my life as... as a man of strength... a man of action.

LOPE (Clapping.) Bravo! Bravo! You are truly incorrigible, I can see. No wonder the Pope and his cardinals wouldn't take you down. You're one of them.

ERAUSO Perhaps. As for the book, I will admit that Guzmán has given it his own touch in many places. I don't complain too much, though, because he pays me well. Still, as much of it is true as is false.

LOPE Ahh! So your character is, to some degree, contrived.

ERAUSO The book is a glorified representation of some of my exploits and adventures. It is not a window to my soul, as you have noted.

LOPE But in truth you are a woman. I don't need a window on your soul to know that. That's the whole underlying reason for your fame.

ERAUSO Yes, I suppose it is. But my life is more than a masquerade. That is what I wish you to know, don Lope. I am not just play-acting at being a man. As I said, there is a part of me that has always been... impatient and rambunctious--like most men are! But I remain well aware that I am not a man--and glad of it, I might add. (Pause.) It is simply that my masculine aspect, if you will, is the part I have chosen to show to the world. And if I were to stop showing it tomorrow, that's when I would lose my hard won freedom.

LOPE Hmm. (Pause.) Alright, don Antonio, you showed this masculine side, this "impatient and rambunctious" alter ego to the world--and aside from the fact that I still don't understand how in Heaven's name you were able to conceal your true sex from those you came in contact with--what about love? Did you not long for it?

ERAUSO Of course, don Lope. And I still do.

LOPE Well then, how did you...

GUZMAN (Approaches with two young women in tow. They carry a copy of Erauso's book, and a quill.) Excuse me, gentlemen. May I present doña Clara and doña Sol, the daughters of the Duke of Bolarque?

LOPE & ERAUSO (They bow, ERAUSO much more gallantly than LOPE.

DOÑA CLARA (Ignoring LOPE.) We intend to read your book as soon as possible, Señor. But first, will you sign it for us?

ERAUSO It will be a pleasure, my doves, to serve such winsome ladies as yourselves. (Winks at LOPE and signs the book with a flourish.) There you are!

DOÑA CLARA & DOÑA SOL (Curtsey.) Thank you, Señor!

DOÑA CLARA (Grabs ERAUSO'S hand and kisses it.)

DOÑA SOL (Swats her sister and shrieks.)

DOÑA CLARA & DOÑA SOL (Run away, giggling)

ERAUSO (Ogles the girls lasciviously.)

LOPE (Astonished) Well, I never! I suppose you are going to ask Bolarque for the hand of one of them.

ERAUSO I'd be much happier just to meet them behind the cathedral.

LOPE (Incredulous.) Are you going to tell me that you actually make love to women?

ERAUSO Of course, don Lope. Don't you?

LOPE (Exasperated.) Certainly! But...

ERAUSO Even though you are a priest and a Familiar of the Holy Office besides?

LOPE (Speechless.) Well, I... I...

ERAUSO So you are not exactly what you seem either, then.

LOPE My dear don Antonio, as adults we learn to accept a certain... incongruity to life's realities. But what you are implying goes too far. (Pause.) I can't help but believe that there is much of the actor in you, and you are performing for my benefit.

ERAUSO I'll take that as a compliment, coming as it does from the Great Dramaturge. Anyway, it is probably just as well that a Familiar of the Holy Office like yourself should think so, for my sake. Of course I suppose I am rather proof against

burning, with the Pope's blessing so fresh upon my crown.

LOPE I should not wish to see you burn in any case, don Antonio, unless you were to start writing bad poetry about me, like some others I could name. I simply want to know how you reconcile your allegedly male heart with your admittedly female body.

ERAUSO Alright. Well... it was the hardest when no one knew anything about me. They just accepted me as a young man. I met many young ladies who were eager and willing. I would carry them along up to a point, then I had to flee.

LOPE That sounds terribly frustrating.

ERAUSO It was, but it was exciting too. Often I had to fight over these girls, which was half the fun, let me tell you. (He rattles his sword.) Finally I met a young *mestiza* in Chile. Her parents were dead and although she had a bit of money, I had no rivals for her, which seemed strange. She was very sweet. (Sotto voce) One night she begged me to stay and make love to her. At first I made ready to bolt again, but there was something about her that gave me pause. Then I decided, what the hell, why not? I got her all worked up into a frenzy of passion, then I told her the truth, point blank. (Pause.) I expected her to start screaming. But to my utter amazement, she didn't seem all that surprised--and she certainly didn't mind! Everything went really well after that. For the first time in my life I felt like a whole person. We became inseparable.

LOPE Good Lord! (Grimacing.) I still don't see how you...you...

ERAUSO For God's sake, don Lope, I thought you had a fertile imagination? I swear, you men can think of only one thing when you think of love, namely, that ridiculous part of you that you revere as though it had a life of its own. There are so many more possibilities that men don't even know exist.

LOPE (Aghast.) This is outrageous! *Lesbia* in the Indies!

ERAUSO Shut up, and hear me out. You wanted to know, so I'm telling you. I never expected that a man of your reputation would react to these revelations like some yokel from Trujillo. Maybe Góngora and the others are right.

LOPE Góngora? Don't tell me he's going to show up here tonight!

ERAUSO I couldn't say. But Olivares was telling us about your ongoing duels with your literary rivals. I finally asked, "Why doesn't he use his position with the Holy Office to rid himself of some of them?"

LOPE What did he say to that?

ERAUSO He replied, "Because Lope portrays their characters in his plays, and therein inflicts whatever tortures and humiliations he wishes upon them."

LOPE (Sighs.) It's true. I wouldn't condemn my worst enemies to those devils in the Inquisition. I'll vanquish my rivals with wit or not at all! What else did Olivares tell you?

ERAUSO Well, he appreciates your prodigious talent and believes you have no equal--certainly when it comes to the writing of popular plays. But, frankly, he said you have become a corrupt old reprobate of uncertain means and that you have dedicated several of your literary creations to him and to his wife as of late in an attempt to win his patronage.

LOPE (Winces.) Damn! (Pause.) It seems that we both place a high value on His Excellency's favour, don Antonio. I heard about how he helped you with that matter of a royal pension. Eight hundred a year! Not Bad. I only hope I can do as well.

ERAUSO Well, Olivares certainly has the King's ear. Even so, I had to present the most compelling proofs of my military service--testimonials, notarized affidavits, even witnesses. Then I had to settle for the rate of a half-pay ensign even though I served as a captain for six months. Of course I never would have seen a single *maravedi* if the Pope had not come down on my side. These courtiers are all such tightwads! He said one more thing, by the way--

LOPE Shhh! Here comes His Lordship now!

OLIVARES (Approaches with WAITER in tow who carries a tray with cups of hot chocolate.) Gentlemen! I am glad to see you two getting on so well! Refresh yourselves, please. This chocolate is from my own estates in Mexico.

ERAUSO (Taking a cup.) It is there I would soon go myself, my Lord.

OLIVARES Excellent, don Antonio! I will recommend you to the Viceroy. (Pause.) The stuff is good, is it not? I've applied for an exclusive license to market it here.

LOPE (Takes a cup and sips it.) It is positively delicious, your Lordship. And what a clever idea! I am sure that with Your Lordship's astute guidance the venture cannot fail to be a great success.

OLIVARES How kind of you to say so, don Lope.

LOPE & ERAUSO (Bow politely.)

OLIVARES & WAITER (Leave.)

LOPE (To ERAUSO) I don't know where he would put any more money. It is rumoured that the King himself owes him more than he can ever repay. (Pause.) Yes, don Antonio, I admit I'm looking for a patron. You see, it's a tough business I'm in. It doesn't matter what you've done before--and God knows I've done a lot--you've got to keep producing, or perish. I sometimes wish I had not become a priest. I could use another wealthy wife, these days.

ERAUSO I'm afraid it's too late for you, don Lope. That was the whole question that kept my own case in doubt for so long. It had to be determined that I was never a professed religious. Otherwise I would not have been so easily forgiven.

LOPE (Sighs.) Yes. That much is the same for man or woman.

ERAUSO It's about the only thing that is.

LOPE (Annoyed by the remark.) Well I dare say, don Antonio, you seem to have the best of both worlds at present.

ERAUSO Thanks to the Grand Design. But tell me. I seem to have struck a tender nerve when I mentioned Góngora. Do his jibes still sting you?

LOPE Góngora? That bald-headed lunatic! He suffers from a demented, obsessive love for himself and a fixation with birds. Do you know, he represents our Saviour as a pelican and himself as the Swan of Córdoba? A Swan! Can you believe it? A Gander is more like it. He belongs in the madhouse.

ERAUSO But Olivares thinks he is a great poet, maybe the best in Spain today.

LOPE Ugh! (Lowering his voice) Alright, he is rather good in some ways, but hardly the greatest. He is certainly the most difficult, the most obscure. But what is the good of that if no one can understand what the devil he's talking about? Who is his art for, anyway?

ERAUSO (Shrugs.)

LOPE Listen. I've written hundreds of plays and comedies. I've written epic poems, ballads, sonnets, novels, you name it. And I've earned plenty of praise and a living besides. Góngora gained a lot of his attention when he wrote a few lines ridiculing my family crest. Why? Because he envies my prodigious talent, my popular acclaim, my

beautiful women.

ERAUSO Oh! Tell me more!

LOPE Of course, I cater to the popular taste! Why shouldn't I? The people love me for it. They fill my belly and warm my winters with their applause. That's art as art should be, not some obscurantist nonsense that only the cleverest of people can decipher. Among which I am not, apparently. I've been reading this "new poetry" for years now and I can't make hide nor hair of it.

ERAUSO You may be right, don Lope. I haven't read Góngora myself. I prefer more traditional and exciting fare. But do tell me more about your beautiful women.

LOPE Ahh! Well, I'm pretty well an old man now...

ERAUSO Not to say a priest.

LOPE That only prevents my from marrying. I only mention women to show how they are part and parcel of my genius. You see, the same creative force that drives the pen in my hand drives me to their comforting embrace. I give men what they want with my plays. I give women what they want, too: my love. All I need is Eve's apple, a bundle of quills, and a bottle of ink. Alas, that's the way God made me.

ERAUSO Are you saying you could not write without the love of women?

LOPE Hmmph! Let's just say I couldn't imagine trying.

ERAUSO But don Lope, your affairs have been tumultuous, as often as not ending up in the law courts for all to see. You have been banished, imprisoned, attacked. It would seem that your romantic liaisons have provided more in the way of distraction than inspiration.

LOPE You're looking only at the down side of it. I have fathered many beautiful children, some of whom God was pleased to take from me. Others serve Him in convent and monastery. No, it was worth it, believe me. (Pause.) Listen. Don't you ever feel like taking that sword belt off and fulfilling the biological destiny that was meant for you?

ERAUSO (Aside) Here we go again. (To LOPE) No, I don't, because my destiny is to bear arms for the glory of God and King, not to bear children for some unsufferable lout who can't even bend over to put on his own shoes. (Mocking tone.) "Alas, that's the way " God made ME ," don Lope.

LOPE And as long as you keep saying that, you know you are safe. Incredible!

Who would have thought it? (Pause.) Don Antonio, you say you are glad not to be a man, and yet you have tried harder to achieve and maintain your manly status than any fellow I have ever met. Explain that to me, if you can.

ERAUSO Well, I don't try as hard as I used to. I don't have to anymore, thanks to His Holiness. But to answer your question, it is simple. Men are never satisfied with what they achieve. If they win silver, then it's gold they want. The most beautiful woman in the world becomes less so the moment they possess her. Even a king's crown loses its brilliance, and he bristles to conquer another's domain. Women, on the other hand, want only to see their men satisfied and have things stay on an even keel. That way, they can pursue their own interests without distraction.

LOPE But I can think of many exceptions to your rule, yourself not the least of them!

ERAUSO True, there are always exceptions and I certainly am one. But what you say about your women and your creative urge shows that you are not. The general rule holds sway. In most cases the caprices of men bring endless grief to themselves and to those around them. I can think of no better parable that attests to it than the episode in Cervantes' tale--

LOPE Cervantes! May the saints preserve me from that... that mountebank! If there ever was one person I should have liked to condemn to the *quemadero* it was he!

ERAUSO (Ignoring him.) ..."The Man who was Too Curious for his Own Good."

LOPE (Getting furious.) He stole that! He stole all of that stuff!

ERAUSO From you?

LOPE From somebody. What does it matter? He was a highway robber among plagiarists! That man didn't have a creative bone in his body. In the time it took him to write that nonsense, I wrote and sold over three hundred plays. I can't believe this. All the attention he got for one stupid book!

ERAUSO Two books.

LOPE The second was even worse.

ERAUSO Some say you wrote that one.

LOPE You refer to the false edition of the second part. I have no idea who wrote

it, but Cervantes shouldn't have complained. He needed all the help he could get.

ERAUSO You must admit, Don Quixote is funny.

LOPE No it isn't. It's boring and idiotic.

ERAUSO I was about to say, my favorite episode is "The Man who was Too Curious for his Own Good."

LOPE Spare me, please!

ERAUSO (Ignoring him.) In that episode I am reminded of why I am glad I am not a man. Two very handsome young lads are inseparable friends. They come of age. One marries a beautiful maiden and the two friends must live apart. But the husband asks his friend to make a pass at his wife while he is away. Just to see what will happen, he says. To test her loyalty. The friend is appalled but finally allows himself to be cajoled into trying it. At first the wife refuses him. The husband returns and urges his friend to keep on trying. Finally she consents to lay with him. Before long, the new lovers are plotting against the husband and they all descend into a web of intrigue and murder.

LOPE (Groans) He stole it, I tell you. That tale is as old as the hills.

ERAUSO It is clear that what the husband really wanted was to retain his first love, his boyhood friend. But the intrigue he caused created an impossible situation for the others that could only end in chaos.

LOPE Well, your interpretation of it is certainly novel--not surprising, really. But why does it remind you that you are glad you are not a man?

ERAUSO Because it shows how men's eternal dis-satisfaction and risk-taking undermine whatever tranquillity life may offer. The husband character brought disaster down on all their heads because he couldn't be honest with himself or the others about what he really wanted. His friend eventually became his enemy in order to justify his behaviour with the wife. The wife, like most women, as I said before, simply wanted tranquillity, so in the end she chose to cast her lot with the man who seemed the most stable. She was pure and innocent until she was drawn into the mess those two men made.

LOPE Very well, then. Let us suppose that it was two women and one man. How might it have come out differently?

ERAUSO Let's put it this way, don Lope: if it had been as you say there would

likely have been no tale to tell. Most women have enough sense to keep their mouths shut.

LOPE And what if you had been one of the women?

ERAUSO That's no good. I am an exception to the rule. Remember?

LOPE (Shaking his head.) I am afraid any play I write about you will have to wait. I am no closer to understanding you now than I was before we met.

ERAUSO As I told you, no one does.

MONTALVAN I do! Let me write the play about her, don Lope!

ERAUSO (Draws her sword and menaces MONTALVAN.) About who, you little guttersnipe?

MONTALVAN Eeeek! (Hides behind LOPE.)

LOPE (Pushes MONTALVAN away, annoyed.) So, what will you do now, don Antonio?

MONTALVAN (Scurries away to join other GUESTS who are now departing.)

ERAUSO (Replacing her sword.) I'm going back to the Indies, to Mexico, perhaps. There is a place where a person can be what they are--unlike here, where everyone pretends that they are something they are not, conveniently ignoring the fact that they are starving to death. I will be a merchant and carry my goods with my own mule train. As long as I can take care of myself and handle my sword, no one will dare to treat me with disrespect. There I can have what I've always wanted: the freedom to be myself!

LOPE (Gives ERAUSO a long look, then looks away.) If what you say is true, then I envy you.

ERAUSO (Takes his arm.) Come to the Indies, don Lope! It's a great place! You could be the founder of the theatre of the New World.

LOPE No, no. It is too late, don Antonio. My tomb is already waiting for me, here in Madrid.

ERAUSO So, leave it for someone else's bones to fill. Your greatest accomplishments may yet lie before you.

LOPE (Shakes his head negatively.) I hardly think so.

GUZMAN (Approaches ERAUSO and LOPE and bows politely.) Gentlemen. Don Antonio, we must be away. We have more business to attend to.

ERAUSO (Sighs and bows politely to LOPE.) Good-bye, don Lope.

LOPE Wait! What were you about to tell me when Olivares came?

ERAUSO Oh, yes. He told me that your rival Cervantes once called you a freak of nature. As fellow renegades, then, Olivares thinks you and I should be great friends.

LOPE (Agitated.) Damn the impertinence of the fellow! I wish the Count Duke were not so blasted important to my plans! And damn Cervantes, too! All that fuss over one book! (Turns and looks long at ERAUSO.)

ERAUSO (Gazing back at LOPE with an amused smile.)

LOPE Freaks of nature, eh? (Long pause. Paces back and forth, in deep thought.) I don't know. I must say, there is something I like about the cut of your jib, don Antonio, even if I can't really understand what kind of a wind fills your sails. You took on the entire Holy Roman Empire singlehanded until you had it at your feet. Who could not fail to admire that? (Pause.) Whatever Olivares means, he is right about this: we should be great friends. (Extends his hand to ERAUSO.)

ERAUSO (Clasps LOPE's hand.) And so we shall. The best of luck to you, don Lope. I shall never forget you or this day.

ERAUSO & LOPE (Embrace as men.)

LOPE (As they begin to part, LOPE gives ERAUSO a tender peck on the cheek.)

ERAUSO (Pushes LOPE away with annoyance.) Cut that out, will you! (Rubs her cheek with the back of her hand.)

LOPE (Grins.)

GUZMAN (Tugging at ERAUSO's sleeve.) Let's go!

ALL (exit, chatting among themselves. Lights fade slowly to darkness.)

Curtain

VITA

Surname: Pedrick

Given Names: Daniel Harvey

Place of Birth: Scranton, Pennsylvania, USA

Educational Institutions Attended:

University of Scranton (Jesuit)	1967-1968
British Columbia Institute of Technology	1975
University of Victoria	1992-2002

Degrees Awarded:

B.A. (Honours)	University of Victoria	1998
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Honours and Awards:

Premio del Embajador de España en Canada	1997
Departmental Fellowship	1998 to 2000

Publications:

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