

EL POETA CALCULISTA
(Translation and notes by James Radomski)

ACTO UNICO.

*Aparece el poeta pensativo al
concluirse la sinfonia.
Acabada esta, se levanta de pronto,
da una palmada, y dice:*

En fin, ya tomé partido;
No hay duda que seguir debo
Carrera que es tan lucida.
Cuando el puente de Toledo
Pasé por la primer vez,
Y en un humilde jumento
Entré en Madrid; ¿quién diría
Que pudiese llegar tiempo
De verme bien colocado,
Y ser hombre de provecho?
Aunque a la verdad no estoy
Todavía en candelero,
Juzgo que no tardaré,
Según el paso violento
Con que hacia mí se dirige
La Fortuna. Examinemos
mi suerte: Yo entré en la corte
En tan dichoso momento
Que a los tres días logré
La plaza, el brillante empleo
De escribiente de un poeta:
Pero ¡qué poeta! al menos
Si comí poco en su casa,
Me hizo aprovechar el tiempo.

CANCION [No. 1]

**Por la mañana en ayunas
Principiaba a trabajar
Él notando, yo escribiendo,
Siete horas sin cesar:
La cabeza despejada
Daba margen a notar.
Ah! cuantas travesurillas
¡Régimen tan sano da!
¡Régimen tan sano da!
Al medio día unas sopas
Era alimento frugal,
Y a la noche un mendrugillo
antes de irnos a acostar.
Con tal régimen vivimos
Sin ninguna enfermedad;
Y a no ser por un quebranto,
Mi señor viviera mas.**

IN ONE ACT.

*Towards the end of the
overture, the poet appears,
lost in thought. When it is over,
he immediately stands, claps,
and says:*

Well, I've made up my mind;
There's no doubt that I should
pursue such a brilliant career.
Who would imagine, when I
crossed the Toledo bridge for the first time,
and, mounted on a humble donkey,
entered Madrid,
that the time would come
when I would find myself
well-established, and a man of profit.
Although, to tell the truth, I'm not
yet living the high life,
I judge that it will not be long,
due to the dramatic step
that Fortune has taken
towards me. Consider
my good luck: I entered the court
at such a fortuitous moment
that after only three days I obtained
a position: the brilliant employment
of being scribe to a poet.
But what a poet! At least,
if I didn't eat much in his house,
he taught me to use my time well.

SONG [No. 1]

**In the morning, before breakfast,
I would begin working:
He dictating, I writing,
seven hours without a break:
His clear thoughts
turned into written words.
Ah! How many strokes of wit
resulted from such a healthy regimen.**

**At noon, some soup
made up our frugal meal,
And at night a crust of bread
before we went to bed.
With such a regimen we lived
without ever getting sick;
And if it were not for a great setback,
My master would still be alive.**

VERSOS

En efecto el pobrecillo,
Después que había compuesto
Varias piezas, que importaban,
ajustando cada verso
Uno con otro a seis cuartos
Sí, hasta doscientos pesos;
Tuvo la gran pesadumbre
Que ni una le recibieron,
Y eso que se las habían
Encargado con intento
De hacerlas en el teatro;
Pero sí⁸ hay tales sujetos,
Que solo por divertirse,
Nos mandan componer versos.
En fin, ya muy sofocado,
Acosado del mas fiero
Apetito que jamás
Saciar pudo, el pobrezuelo
Dispuso todas sus cosas,
Ordenó su testamento,
Y de todos sus caudales
Me dejó por heredero.
Esta triste bancarrota
Fue un pronóstico funesto
De su desastrado fin,
Pues no duró mes y medio.
Aquí tengo mi tesoro;
El caso está ahora en saberlo
Aprovechar....Esto importa.
Calculemos, calculemos.

Música [No. 2]

VERSES

In effect, the poor fellow,
after having composed
various plays, for which he was
owed (taking into account that each
verse was worth 6 *cuartos*)
yes, as much as two hundred *pesos*,
he suffered the great misfortune
that nobody paid attention to a single
one of his plays—even though they had
commissioned them with the intention
of presenting them in the theater.
But, yes, there are those who
tell us to write
just for their entertainment.
Finally, by now desperate,
plagued by the fiercest pangs of
hunger—which he could never
assuage—the poor man
arranged all his possessions,
prepared his will,
and made me the sole heir
of all his wealth.
This sad bankruptcy
was a dark premonition
of his unfortunate end.
For he lasted no more
than a month and a half.
And here I have my treasure;
Now it is a matter of knowing
how to make good use of it...
this is important.
Let's calculate, let's calculate.

Music [No. 2]

*The printed libretto has "si" without the accent and the French translation is "Mais qu'y faire? s'il est dans le monde d'assez plaisans faquins pour nous engager à faire des vers seulement pour en rire." Perhaps the equivalent of "Mais qu'y faire?" ["But what can one do?"] was accidentally omitted from the Spanish text (understandable, given that it was printed in France).

VERSOS

Formaré primeramente
mi plan: los conocimientos
Que he adquirido, la experiencia
Y el manejo que ya tengo,
Me dictan que poco a poco
Debo al público ir saliendo
con todas mis producciones
Por escala. Este es el cuento.
De las que he heredado, unas
Remendaré; el argumento
Aprovecharé de otras,
Y aun originales luego
Podré componer; mas siempre
Con precaución y secreto
Todas pasarán por mías;
Y he aquí un seguro medio
De llenarme sin trabajo
De gloria, amigos, y pesos.
El Christus de los poetas
Es en el presente tiempo
Las tonadillas; y así
Lo que debo dar primero,
Es una: trazo el asunto.
Una sobrina y un viejo
Que es su tío; sale un majo;
Mientras aquel está dentro,
Sale ella; se dan la mano,
Sienten al tío, y corriendo
El se esconde en cualquier parte.
El tío que lo vio, hecho un perro
Le saca medio arrastrando,
Ella se pone por medio,
Los dos se hincan de rodillas,
Queda el asunto compuesto;
Y para que no le den
Castañas al argumento,
Por ser algo endeble, pongo
Unas coplas de bolero
Por este estilo al final,
Y sale con lucimiento.

Canta boleras. [No. 3]

**El hombre que se encuentra
Con pocos cuartos,
hará de un diablo veinte
Por propagarlos.
Y pues se acaba,
El público perdone
Ya nuestras faltas,
ya nuestras faltas.**

VERSES

First I will make
my plan: the knowledge
that I have acquired, the experience
and savoir-faire that I now have,
tell me that I should present
all my productions to the public
little by little, step by step.
This is what I'll do:
Of the works I've inherited, some
I will revise; of others I'll
only use the plot.
And then I'll even be able to compose
original works—but always,
carefully and secretly:
(all of them I will pass off as my own).
And so I have here a sure means
of filling myself with glory, friends,
and *pesos*—all without any work.
At the present time the poet's primer
consists of writing skits,
and so that's what
I should present first.
Let me sketch the story:
A young girl and an old man
who is her uncle. Enter a *majo*.
While the old man is inside,
the girl comes out; the two hold
hands. They hear the uncle
—and the *majo* runs and hides.
But the uncle, who saw him, and
is furious, grabs him and drags him
out. She throws herself between
them, the couple fall on their knees,
and that's that.
And so that nobody
criticizes the plot—for being
rather trite— at the end
I'll throw in a *bolero*,
or something like that,
and it will be a knock-out.

He sings a bolero. [No. 3]

**The man who finds himself
with only a few coins,
will go to hell and back
in order to multiply them.
And that's all.
May the public pardon
our mistakes.**

VERSOS

¡Grandemente me ha salido!
Desde este instante prometo
Hacer cuantas tonadillas
Se ofrezcan en prosa y verso.
Las acoto. Este es un ramo
De muchísimo provecho.
Ya dí el primer paso. Ahora
Calculemos, calculemos.

***Música* [No. 4]**

VERSES

That was wonderful!
From now on I intend
to make skits
with poetry and prose.
Let me choose. Here's one
that can be very useful.
I've taken the first step.
Now let's calculate, let's calculate.

***Music* [No. 4]**

[VERSOS]

Tomaré un cuarto decente
En juntando algun dinero.
Allí a porfía vendrán
De uno y otro Coliséo
A hacerme encargos; y yo
Para aprovechar el tiempo,
Tomaré un buen escribiente,
Para que copie mis versos;
Y no tiene que ser rana,
Porque los poetas hacemos
Tales borradores, que
Mientras se van escribiendo,
Dios y el autor los entienden;
Pero luego que están hechos,
Solo Dios con su saber
Sabe lo que está allí puesto.
Luego que esté acreditado,
Haré un sainete; que esto
Entre nosotros es como
Poner a un niño pequeño
En calzones, para que
Poco a poco pierda el miedo,
Y principie a hacer pinitos.
Todos estos argumentos
Son fáciles, si se cargan
De chistecillos y cuentos
Con agudas desvergüenzas,
Para el mayor lucimento,
Si se añade alguna cosa
De modo que venga a cuento;
Que él cante a lo Gitano,
Y alborota el gallinero.
¿Qué le pondré? ¿Una tirana?
No, no: ¿un polo? aun...no me acuerdo

¿Cómo se dice?... ¿Una caña?
Tampoco... Será un jaléo;
Que siendo cosa Andaluza,
Gustará, y aunque contemplo
Que música en un sainete
No es muy del caso, ya vemos
Que a muchos se les agrega.
Esto es lo que poner debo.

Caballo [No. 5]

**Yo que soy contrabandista
Y campo por mi respeto,
A todos los desafío,
Pues a nadie tengo miedo.**

[VERSES]

When I get enough money
I'll rent a decent flat.
Thence they will come, persistently,
from one Theatre or another,
to commission works. And,
to make good use of time,
I will hire a fine scribe
to copy my verses.
And he need not be experienced,
because we poets make
such rough drafts, that
while we are writing,
God and the author understands them;
but once they are finished,
only God, with his wisdom, can make
sense out of what's been put down.
After I've made a name for myself,
I'll write a short play; for this,
between you and me, is like
putting a child in trousers,
so that, little by little,
he overcomes fear,
and starts to take his first steps.
All of these storylines
are easy, if they are filled
with jokes and tales,
and acts of daring.
In other words, if what is added works,
they'll have the greatest
success.
How about having the actor sing
gypsy-style? The gallery will go crazy!
What shall I put? A *tirana*?
No, no: a *polo*? Still not right...I can't
remember...

What do you call it?... A *caña*?
No, that's not it, either... It's.. a *jaleo*!
Being typically Andalusian, it's sure
to please. And although I realize
that they don't usually use music
of this sort in plays, we know
for certain that many people like it.
So, this is what I should include.

The Horse [No. 5]

**I who am a smuggler
and fight for my respect,
defy everyone,
because I'm not afraid of anybody.**

Ay, ay, ay jaleo, muchachas,
¿Quién me merca algun hilo negro? **
Mi caballo está cansáo,
Y yo me marchó corriendo.
Ay, ay, ay, que viene la ronda,
Y se movió el tiroteo.
Ay, ay, caballito mío,
caballo mío careto;
Ay jaleo, ay jaleo,
Ay jaleo que nos cogen:
Ay! sácame de este aprieto.

Ay, ay, ay, *jaleo*, * girls.
Who will buy my black thread? **
My horse is tired
and I flee, running.
Ay, ay, ay, there's a roundup,
and the shooting starts.
Ay, ay, my little horse,
my little pinto;
Ay *jaleo*, ay *jaleo*,
Ay *jaleo*, there catching up with us:
Ay! get me out of this mess.

*"Jaleo" has various meanings: it can be a simple shout something along the lines of "yahoo, yipee;" it can suggest having a good time, "raising the roof, having a blast;" it can also suggest being in a predicament, "in a pickle, in hot water".

** In Andalusia the smugglers who sell contraband black tobacco, to fool the police, often cry: "Get some black thread." [from a note in the Paris libretto]

VERSOS

Excelente personaje,
Para mi sainete! Bueno!
Acoto quantas sainetes
Haya que hacer: ya tenemos
Dado un paso mas; y ahora
Calculemos, calculemos.

***Musica* [No. 6]**

VERSES

An excellent character
for my play! Good!
I'll select as many plays
as I need to make. Yes, we've
already taken another step, and now
Let's calculate, let's calculate.

***Music* [No. 6]**

[VERSOS]

Con una comedia grande
Debo emprender: ¡qué argumento
Tan famoso he de ponerle!
Aquí sí que al retortero
Ha de andar todo viviente.
Para que agrade en extremo,
He de criticar en ella
A todo el que venga a pelo.
La cosa es que al que cayere,
No se le ha de dejar hueso
Sano; de este modo mientras
Rabiarán unos, riendo estarán otros.
¡Qué vuelta llevarán ciertos sujetos!
¡Ah pobretes! muchos son
Los proscritos; pues es cierto
Que para una gran tortilla
Se han de estrellar muchos huevos.

Aria Grande

[Recitado]

**Formaré mi plan con cuidado.
Pondré un teatro brillante y pintoresco,**

**Hermoseado de un río caudaloso,
Y entre las arboledas milavecillas**

**Que cantan dulcemente.
Después saldrán por orden
A la escena
Mordaces críticos y escritores,
También varios curiales,
Estafadores de los litigantes,
Con otros personajes que en el mundo
Sirven de estorbo
y todo cuanto dicen
Con inicuas acciones
Contradicen.**

[Aria]

**En mi comedia juntamente
Un currutaco he de poner.
Que baile y diga a su querida:
"Mademoiselle, à votre pie."
Un currutaco he de poner.
Que baile y diga a su querida:
"Mademoiselle, à votre pie."**

**Una muchacha de las muchas
Que se pasean a la oración,
Un caballero* que se para,**

[VERSES]

Now I should undertake
a great drama: what
a terrific plot I must give it!
Yes, here we must run the gamut
of every living thing.
So that it really has success,
I have to satirize
everyone who comes to mind
—and all these will be
picked apart.
In this way, while some in the audience
will be enraged, others will be laughing.
What a railing certain characters
will receive! Ah, poor things! Many
are those who will be attacked: for
it is true that in order to make a great
omelette you have to break a lot of eggs.

Grand Aria

[Recitative]

**I will form my plan carefully.
I'll place here a theatre—
brilliant and picturesque,
enhanced by a flowing river.
And, among the trees,
a thousand little birds,
which sing sweetly.
Afterwards, of course, there will
enter the scene
biting critics and writers.
Also, various nit-picking
swindling lawyers,
with other characters who
in the world make themselves
a nuisance. And whatever
they say they contradict with
their iniquitous actions.**

[Aria]

**At the same time, I must place
in my drama a dandy.
Let him dance and say to his
beloved: "Mademoiselle à votre
pie."**

**A girl, one of the many who
pass by at the time of prayer.
A gentleman* who stops.**

* There is some confusion here as to who pulls whom. The printed libretto gives "A un caballero" [to a gentleman] suggesting that it is the woman who says "Chis, chis" and who pulls the coattails of the gentleman ("faldón", skirt, can refer either to men's or women's clothing)—but this clarification is lacking

Chis, chis.....
Le tira...del faldón.
Un viejo hipócrita que siempre
Declama en contra del amor
Y es en el fraude sorprendido,

Mas no le causa algún rubor:
Un tar- ta-ta-ta-ta-mudo.
Que aún no-no-no-no puede. . .
De- de-de-de-de-cir. . .
Tu-tu-tu-tu-vé. . .
ra-ra-ra-ra-zón.
También un loco que bocea:
Yo soy el Marqués, el Rey soy yo.

En mi comedia juntamente
un currutaco es de poner.
Que baile y diga a su querida:
"Mademoiselle à votre pie."

Un viejo hipócrita
que siempre declama
en contra del amor.
Un tar- ta-ta-ta-ta-mudo
Que aún no-no-no-no puede
Decir tu-tu-tu-tu-
Tu- -ve-ve-ve
Ra- -ra-ra-ra- zón.

También un loco que bocea:
"Yo soy Marqués,
El Rey soy yo."
Una señora muy llorosa
"Jun jun," no para de llorar.
Otra que alegre se presenta
Siempre está ja ja ja ja ja ja
ja ja ja ja ja ja.

Un tar- ta-ta-ta-ta-mudo
que no puede.
Decir tu-tu- tu-ve ra-ra-zón.

"Yo soy Marqués . . . El Rey soy yo."

Con estos y otros personajes,
mi producción asombrará.
Y en adelante todo el mundo,

"Hey..."
She pulls him...by his coattail.
An old hypocrite who always
rants and raves against love.
And in this fraud he is taken
by surprise,
but it causes him no shame.
A stu-tu-tu-tu-tu-tutterer
Who can no-no-no-no-not
Sa- sa-sa-sa-sa-say
I wa-wa-wa-wa-was
Ri-ri-ri-ri-ri-right.
Also a madman who cries:
I'm a marquis, I'm the king!"

At the same time, I must
place in my comedy a dandy.
Let him dance and say to his
beloved: *"Mademoiselle à
votre pie."*

An old hypocrite
who always rants and raves
against love.
A stu-tu-tu-tu-tu-tutterer
Who can no-no-no-no-not
Sa- sa-sa-sa-sa-say
I wa-wa-wa-wa-was
Ri-ri-ri-ri-ri-right.

Also a madman who cries:
I'm a marquis,
I'm the King!"
A lady weeping,
"Alas," she unceasingly sobs.
Another who happily appears,
Always with a "ha, ha, ha."

A stu-tu-tu-tu-tu-tutterer
Who cannot
Say I wa-wa-wa-wa-was
Ri-ri-right.
"I'm a marquis . . . The King am I!"

With these and other characters,
My production will be amazing.
And henceforth everyone

in the manuscript. Perhaps this was the original intention, but it may also have been that the idea of the gentleman pulling the woman by the skirt was too risqué and García was obliged to change the original. If the woman is a prostitute, suggested by "one of many who pass by at the time of prayer [i.e. in the evening]," then the man pulling her by her skirt would, indeed, make sense. On the other hand, caballero, in the original meaning of the term, refers to a horseman. Pulling the coattail of a man on horseback would also make sense.

**el gran poeta me dirá.
Sí, me dirá.**

**will call me "the great poet."
Yes, they'll call me "the great poet."**

VERSOS

Así juzgo que voy bien:
Lo que después hacer debo,
Es recargar a las partes
Principales el empeño
De mi función, porque estas
Teniendo arreglado el verso
A la cuerda, aunque lo hagan
Picaramente, contento
Dejan al pueblo, y la pieza
No decae: ya tenemos
Dado otro paso; y ahora
Calculemos, calculemos.

Música [No. 8]

VERSES

So, things are going well.
What I still have to do is
assign roles to the
best actors; because,
if the lines are arranged to their
liking, even though they
might speak them in a
picaresque manner, they
will please the public—and
the play will not fail. Yes,
we've taken another step. And now...
Let's calculate, let's calculate.

Music [No. 8]

VERSOS

Después a cosa más fuerte
Debo pasar; no hay remedio.
¿Y cuál será? Una tragedia
Original y en buen verso.
Para entonces ya me hallo
En un estado opulento.
Una mañana temprano,
Ya que mi plan he dispuesto,
Y después de haber tomado
El chocolate, comienzo
A dictar a mi escribiente:
Pon ahí. Aparece muerto
Un enano, y Holofernes
Estará fiero y sangriento,
Sacándole los riñones;
Después tomará un veneno,
Y furibundo y sañudo
A cuantos vayan saliendo,
Horridamente les da a beber,
Y van cayendo
Como chinches. Ah, ¡qué entrada!
¡Qué espectáculo sangriento!
Después él desesperado
Se ahorca; y luego su abuelo
Bebe plomo derretido.
¡Qué sanguinario argumento!
¡Cómo me enajena! Juzgo
Que en el Parnaso estoy viendo,
Como decía mi amo,
A la ninfa: no me acuerdo
Como la llamaba.... En fin,
A la que empuña el flamenco.
También deberé añadir
Unos, tres, o cuatro versos
Que adornen los entreactos;
Y cante algún corifeo
Con cadencia estrepitosa
Por este estilo: probemos.

Canta [No. 9]

**Ah qué monstruo feroz!
Su negra saña
Ya despeñó
Al horrido sepulcro
Mil y mil víctimas.
Con tanta sangre
Como vertió
Su criminal cuchilla,
Puede hacerse un quintal,
Sí, de morcillas.**

VERSES

Then I should move on to something
more serious: I can't help it.
And what should that be? An original
tragedy, in beautiful verse.
Then I will find myself in a
state of opulence.
Early in the morning,
since I've set forth my plan,
and after having had some
chocolate, I begin to dictate
to my scribe: "Write this down."
There appears a dead dwarf,
and Holofernes
will be fierce and bloody,
ripping out his entrails.
Then he will take poison,
and furiously and cruelly
to whoever appears, he will horridly
force them to drink,
and they will start dropping
like flies. Ah, what a spectacle!
What a bloody sight!
Then he, desperate,
hangs himself; and then his grandfather
drinks boiling lead.
What a gory plot!
How it enraptures me!
"I feel as if I am on Mt. Parnassus, gazing at
that nymph*—as my master used to say
(what was her name?—anyway,
the one who drew
the dagger).
Also, I should add
Some three or four verses
to the choruses;
And the lead singer
will sing something shocking
along these lines: let me try.

**Ah, what a ferocious monster!
His dark rage
has already hurled
into their horrid tombs
thousands of victims.
With so much blood
as has been spilt
by his criminal blade,
you could make a ton,
yes, of blood sausages.**

* Perhaps Psyche?

VERSOS

Eso sí que salió bien,
Y a mi gusto: estoy contento.
Sólo me queda que hacer,
Para ser el más completo
Poeta de nuestros días,
Una grande ópera. En esta
Sí que llevaré ventaja
A todos, pues mi proyecto
Es, después de hacer las letras,
Juntarme con un maestro
De música y explicarle
La substancia, el pensamiento,
La fuerza de lo que dice,
Y estimularle, si puedo,
A que pinte en la armonía
La naturaleza, el nervio
De lo mismo que se canta.
El ha de retratar diestro
Lo que indican las palabras,
Haciendo los instrumentos
Un sonido semejante
A lo que se pinta. Exemplo:
Si yo le pongo en la letra:
Ahora está ladrando un perro,
Han de ladrar los violines,
Y si no, nunca irá bueno.
¡Oh! yo le daré los tonos,
Que también un poco entiendo
De música, y de este modo
Saldrá todo con arreglo.
Formaré un plan excelente.
Calculemos, calculemos.

Música [No. 10]

VERSES

That really turned out well
and to my taste: I'm content.
There only remains for me to make,
in order to be the most complete
poet of our times,
a grand opera. In this I certainly
will have an advantage over others,
because my plan is, after writing
the libretto, to hook up with some
master musician and explain to him
the substance, the meaning, and the
force of what it says, and inspire him,
if I can, to paint in harmony the
nature, the core of what is
being sung.

He must skillfully paint that which is
suggested by the words,
with the instruments making
sounds that are similar to what
is being painted. For example:
If I put into the libretto
"Now a dog is barking,"
the violins must bark,
and if they don't, it will never work.
Oh! I will give him the melodies,
for I also know something about
music. And in this way, everything
will turn out well.
I will make an excellent plan.
Let's calculate, let's calculate.

Music [No. 10]

VERSOS

Una hermosa sinfonía,
 Unas arias, un quinteto,
 Un trío, cinco polacas,
 Y un duo, un duo muy tierno,
 Que sirve de introducción.
 Aquí es donde poner debo
 El mayor conato, pues
 Como salga bien, no hay medio,
 Se entusiasma el auditorio,
 Da un aplauso muy completo,
 Los actores cobran brío,
 Y lo hacen como jilgueros.
 La dama y bufo lo cantan,
 Que se amarán con extremo;
 El compositor se arregla
 A lo que es mi pensamiento,
 Y hacemos un duo a duo
 Así poco más o menos.

Canta [Duo, No. 11]

Anegado en tanta dicha
 Al ver a mi dueño amado,
 Mis pesares he olvidado
 Pues que ya la voy a hablar,
 Sí, sí, la voy a hablar.
 Pues que ya la voy a hablar.
 [Tiple]
 Oh ¡qué instante tan dichoso!
 A mi querido estoy viendo.
 Cuánto he estado padeciendo,
 Viéndole es felicidad.
 [Bajo]
 Cara Elisa.
 [Tiple]
 Amado mío.
 [Bajo]
 Cese tu amoroso llanto.
 [Tiple]
 No suspires por mí más.
 [Bajo]
 En mis brazos ya reposas.
 [Tiple]
 ¡O momento deseado!
 [Bajo]
 Ya mi amor está premiado,
 Tú a mi pecho el premio das,
 [Los dos]
 Ah, ah, ah, ah.
 Tú a mi pecho el premio das, El premio das.
 [Bajo]
 Cara Elisa, [etc.]

VERSES

A beautiful overture,
 some arias, a quintet,
 a trio, five polacas,
 and a duet—a very *tender* duet,
 which will serve as an introduction.
 Here is where I have to put
 all my effort, for if it comes off well,
 the success will be without limit:
 the audience will be enthusiastic,
 the applause will be complete,
 the actors will be inspired,
 and they will sing like canaries.
 It will be performed by the prima donna
 and the basso buffo—who are deeply in love.
 The composer will arrange
 my ideas, and as a "duo"
 we will make a duo.
 A little like this, more or less.

He sings [Duo, No. 11]

Drowned in such bliss,
 on seeing my beloved master*,
 I've forgotten my cares.
 So I will speak of it,
 Yes, yes, I will speak of it.
 So I will speak of it.
 [Soprano]
 Oh, what a happy moment,
 seeing my beloved.
 How much I've been suffering.
 Seeing him is happiness.
 [Bass]
 Dear Elisa,
 [Soprano]
 My beloved.
 [Bass]
 Cease your amorous weeping.
 [Soprano]
 Sigh for me no more.
 [Bass]
 You rest now in my arms.
 [Soprano]
 Oh moment desired.
 [Bass]
 Now is my love rewarded.
 You give the reward to my breast.
 [Both]
 Ah, ah, ah, ah.
 You give the reward to my breast.
 [Bass]
 Dear Elisa, [etc.]

* Both the printed libretto and the manuscript have "dueño amado" which seems strange: one would expect the bass to be singing about his "dueña amada"; perhaps the opening is intended to be the voice of the poet.

VERSOS

¡Hermoso duo! Esta pieza
Promete un fin lisongero
A mi opera: ¿qué tal?
¡Esto si que es entenderlo!
Según lo que he calculado,
Me parece que estoy viendo
A la fortuna trayendo
A mi bolsillo doblones,
Y una porción de sujetos
De mucha suposición,
Todos a porfía queriendo
Ser mis íntimos amigos
Porque tuve tanto acierto.
El uno me ofrece coche
Para salir a paseo;
Otro me regala fino
Un vestido muy soberbio,
Otro una repetición,
Otro... En fin ya lo voy viendo:
Tantas serán las finezas
Que me veré pronto hecho
Un Milord, un Parisien*
En tertulias y paseos.
Y yo para darles gusto,
Y merecer sus obsequios,
¿Qué otra cosa debo hacer?
Calculemos, calculemos.

Música [No. 12]

VERSES

A beautiful duet! This piece
assures a pleasing end
to my opera. How are things?
I really know what I'm doing!
According to my calculations,
it is as if I were watching
Fortune filling my pockets with
doubloons,
—and drawing to me a number of
gentlemen of great distinction,
all trying to be close
friends with me
because I have had such success.
One offers me a carriage,
to go for a drive,
another presents me
with a suit of the finest clothes,
another a clock with chimes,
another...well, I see it:
so many favors that soon
I will see myself become
a "Milord", a "Parisien"*
at receptions and on promenades.
And I, to please them
and merit their praise,
what else should I do?
Let's calculate, let's calculate.

Music [No. 12]

* "Parisien" was likely added for the Paris premiere. A modern-day performer might consider adding a term appropriate to the place of performance.

VERSOS

Juntamente una polaca
Para mayor lucimiento
A mi ópera añadiré,
Y sale todo completo.
En siendo por este estilo
Me parece que lo acierto.

Polaca [No. 13]

**En tan dichoso instante
Mi vida yo arriesgara
Si ingrata, la que amara,
Me fuese con rigor.**

**¡O dulce prenda mía!
Aprecia mi cariño,
Que ya me hirió el Dios niño,
Y muero por tu amor.**

**Recibe de mi pecho
Un tierno sentimiento,
Y llena de contento
Mi amante corazón,
Y llena de contento
Mi amante corazón.**

En tan dichoso instante [etc.]

O dulce prenda mía! [etc.]

Recibe de mi pecho [etc.]

En tan dichoso instante [etc.]

**O dulce prenda mía! [etc.]
Y muero por tu amor,
Y muero por tu amor,
Por tu amor.**

VERSES

At the same time, to assure the
greatest success, I'll add a *polacca*
to my opera,
and then it will be complete.
With a work of this sort
I can't help but triumph.

Polaca [No. 13]

**In such a joyful moment,
I would risk my life
if she whom I love
were thanklessly cruel towards me.**

**O my sweet loved-one,
esteem my affection.
For I've been wounded by the
child-god, and I die for your love.**

**Receive from my breast
my tender feelings
and also, full of contentment,
my loving heart.**

In such a joyful moment [etc.]

O my sweet loved-one! [etc.]

Receive from my breast [etc.]

In such a joyful moment [etc.]

**O my sweet loved-one! [etc.]
And I die for your love,
And I die for your love,
For your love.**

VERSOS

¡Muy bien que lo he discurrido!
Ya con todo lucimiento
He concluido mis planes.
Justamente me contemplo
Por el más afortunado
Del mundo. Tengo dinero,
Amigos, honor, criados,
Hermosa casa, selectos
Vestidos; pues ya ¿qué más
Desearé? ¡Cuán discreto
Estuve, cuando emprendí
Esta carrera! No quiero
Ser más que lo que soy.
Muchacho, traeme al momento
El espadín y la bolsa,
Que es tarde, y me voy corriendo
A la Corte... ¿qué hora es?
Pero la muestra no encuentro.
¿Si estará en el buró?...
Mas ¡qué es lo que digo! ah necio
¡Pues si todavía estoy
En mi guardilla! ¿yo sueño?
Pero no: ¿es que estoy loco?
¡Ah! ¡qué bien que me dijeron
Mis amigos muchos veces!
"Si eres poeta, tememos
Que Toledo o Zaragoza*
Ha de ser tu paradero."
Entonces yo me burlaba,
Pero ya lo voy creyendo,
Pues tan solo en un instante
De cálculos y proyectos,
He perdido la cabeza
De tal modo que me creo
Ser un grande personaje
En el más crítico tiempo
De mi vida miserable.
Calculemos, calculemos.

Música [No. ?]

In the manuscript score there is no interlude given here, although it can be seen that the "No. 14" of the finale was originally "No. 15" (a 4 being marked over the original 5—easily done with the old convention for making 5: a narrow "S" almost appearing as a vertical line) suggesting that García originally planned another "No. 14" which would be an interlude instead of the finale. Since annotations in the manuscript are in French, it suggests that these were indications for the Paris performances. Thus it is interesting that the *libretto* prepared for those performances should indicate an interlude ["Music"] here. Nos. 13 and 14 are both in the key of G, suggesting that they follow each other closely. But, if a performer desires an interlude at this point, one of the others might be repeated. In a note in the autograph sketch García indicated No. 2 to be used for No. 14 (as well as for No. 10), but No. 8, which previously preceded the mock "tragedy" and which has a poignant climax in G major, might fit effectively as regards harmony between Nos. 13 and 14.

* In the early nineteenth century, there were insane asylums in Valencia, Zaragoza, Sevilla, Toledo and Valladolid. The one in Zaragoza was founded in 1425 (it lasted until destroyed by French troops on 3 August 1808); that of Toledo in 1430. [Luis Fernando Barrios Flores, "El internamiento psiquiátrico en España: de Valencia a Zaragoza (1409-1808)," *Rev Cubana Salud Pública* 2002; 28 (2)]

VERSES

How fine has this journey been!
I have now, with the most complete
success, accomplished all my plans.
Truly I consider myself to be
the luckiest man in the world.
I have money, friends,
honor, servants, a beautiful house,
beautiful clothes; what more
is there for me to desire?
How wise I was when I
embarked upon this career!
I don't wish to be anything other
than what I am.
Boy: bring me my sword
and my bag,
for it is late, and I must hurry off
to Court... What time is it?
But I can't find my pocket watch?
Is it on my desk?
But what am I saying? Ah, you fool!
For here I am still in
my garret! Have I been dreaming?
No. Then am I crazy?
Ah! How many times have my
friends told me:
"If you become a poet, we fear
that you'll end up in
an insane asylum."*
So I was deceiving myself,
and starting to believe it.
And just for an instant, in the
midst of my calculations and plans,
I lost my mind
in such a way that I really believed
myself to be someone great
at this most critical moment
of my miserable life.
Let's calculate, let's calculate.

Music [No. ?]

VERSOS

Ciertamente voy errado.
 ¡Terrible alucinamiento
 Ha sido el mío! Discurrí
 Que me hallaba componiendo,
 Después de haber tomado
 El chocolate, y me encuentro
 En ayunas sin un cuarto,
 Ni esperanzas de tenerlo,
 ¡Que es lo peor! A mi sastre
 Soy deudor de unos remiendos
 Que me ha echado ultimamente;
 Estoy debiendo al casero
 Veinte reales de dos meses;
 El alquiler también debo
 De esta mesa, y sin más ropa
 Que la que sobre mí llevo.
 Ah ¡qué rigor! ¡Y que un hombre
 Tan habil y tan dispuesto
 Que es capaz en solo un día,
 Si le sopla bien el viento,
 De componer cinco piezas,
 Se halle así! ¿Dónde está el premio?
 ¿En donde la protección?
 ¿Dónde los humanos pechos?
 Mar ya caigo de mi burro:
 Desde este instante confieso
 Que he vivido equivocado,
 Y de verdad me arrepiento.
 Huid de mí para siempre,
 Poéticos pensamientos:
 Me seduxisteis, sí; ya
 Os conozco: en el momento
 Buscaré mejor destino;
 Hoy la plaza de sereno
 Pretenderé; que si es fresca,
 Ganaré al menos dinero
 Para pan con más honor,
 Y de noche en el silencio
 Gritaré: "*Si ahora no llueve,
 Mis ojos riegan el suelo,
 Porque intenté ser poeta.*"
 Pero no se pierda el tiempo.
 Conozco me he distraído,
 Y que es tarde: voy corriendo
 Antes que la hora pase,
 A tomar en un convento
 La guilopa, pues no hallo
 Otro recurso, otro medio
 De comer hoy un bocado.
 Aqueste es el justo premio
 De un poeta calculista,
 De un poeta a lo moderno.
 Vengan pues los que desputan
 A mirarse en este espejo,
 Y verán, sí están medrados

VERSES

Truly I have been wrong.
 What a terrible awakening this
 has been! I dreamed that
 I was composing, after having that
 chocolate, and now I find myself
 starving and without a *cuarto*,
 nor with any hope of getting one
 — which is the worst of it!
 I owe my tailor for some mending
 he did for me recently,
 I owe my landlord
 20 *reales* for
 two months' rent.
 I even owe for the rent of
 this table, and without any clothes
 but those I've got on.
 Ah, how hard life is! And that
 a man, so talented and willing,
 who can, in only one day,
 if the wind is favorable, compose
 five plays, should end up
 this way! Where is his reward?
 Who will protect him?
 Where are those human hearts?
 I've fallen from my donkey to the depths.
 From this moment I confess
 that I have lived in error,
 and truly I repent.
 Flee from me forever,
 dreams of poetry:
 you seduced me, yes; but now
 I know who you are.
 And now I will seek a better destiny:
 Today I'll look for a position
 as night watchman. For, if it be
 cold, at least I'll earn the money
 for my bread with more honor.
 And at night, in the silence,
 I will cry: "*If now there is no rain,
 let my eyes flood the earth,
 for I tried to be a poet.*"
 But let's not lose time.
 I know I've been distracted,
 and it is late: I'll hurry off to a
 monastery, before another hour
 passes, to beg for some soup.
 For there is nothing else I can do,
 I have no other means
 of getting a bite to eat today.
 This is the just reward
 for a calculating poet,
 for a modern-day poet.
 Come, those of you who are just
 starting out: look into this mirror,
 and you will see how well-off

Los que intentan hacer versos.

Final [No. 14]

Y así arrepentido

Mi locura canto,

Y a quien me haya oído,

Con mucho dolor

Suplico rendido

Perdone mi error,

Perdone mi error.

FIN

are they who try to write poetry.

Finale [No. 14]

And so, repentant,

I sing of my madness,

And to those for whom

listening to me has been painful:

I humbly beg that you

pardon my failings.

THE END