

Fuente Ovejuna

This version of *Fuente Ovejuna* was commissioned by the National Theatre and first performed at its Cottesloe Theatre on 10 January 1989 with the following cast:

Commander Fernando Gomez de Guzman	James Laurenson
Captain Flores	Patriek Drury
Sergeant Ortuno	Jim Barclay
Grand Master Rodrigo Tellez Giron	Mark Lockyer
Laurencia	Rachel Joyce
Paseuala	Joy Richardson
Jacinta	Katharine Schlesinger
Fronoso	Wilbert Johnson
Mengo	Clive Rowe
Barrildo	Jonathan Cullen
Juan Rojo	Tam Dean Burn
Esteban	George Harris
Alonso	Alan Downer
Leonlo	Glyn Pritchard
Cimbranos	Nicholas Blane
Queen Isabella of Castile	Ellen Thomas
King Ferdinand of Aragon	Michael Jayes
Don Manrique	David Beames
First alderman	Simon Needs
Second alderman	Trevor Sellers
The farmer	David Michaels
Soldiers	Trevor Sellers
	Oliver Beamish
	Jo Stone-Fewings
	Tim Mathews
	Sandra Butterworth
	Laura Shavin

A boy
Women

Director Declan Donnellan

Designer Nick Ormerod

Lighting Mick Hughes

Sound David E. Smith

Production Manager Jason Barnes

Stage Manager Sarah Parkin

Deputy Stage Manager Alison Rankin

Assistant Stage Managers Jane Suffling, Peter MacCoy

Costume Supervisor Angie Burns

Publicist Stephen Wood

Music Paddy Cunneen

Director of Movement Jane Gibson

Fight Director John Waller

Design Assistant Simon Basketter

Literal translation Gwenda Pandolfi

Act 1

Scene 1

[An ante-chamber in the house of the MASTER of the Order of Calatrava – a powerful organisation which takes as its insignia a red cross]

[Enter COMMANDER Fernando Gomez de Guzman of the Order. He is dynamic, in his early forties, a successful and ruthless soldier]

[With him are his permanent aides – the young Captain FLORES and the veteran Sergeant ORTUNO. They have been travelling. SOLDIERS stand on guard]

Commander Does the Grand Master know I'm here?

Flores He knows.

Ortuno He's thseventeen, sir.
It's an arrogant age.

Commander Does he know Fernando Gomez is waiting?

Flores He doesn't know much. He's only a lad.

Commander He's old enough to respect my rank.

Ortuno He's one boy surrounded by a hundred advisers.
They're telling him:
Don't play favourites, take your time,
Keep your distance and keep them waiting.

Commander They ought to teach him a few old proverbs:
"Punctuality is the politeness of kings".

Flores Be rude to an equal – that's stupidity.
Be rude to a lesser man – that's tyranny.

Commander Lesser man? Am I less a man
Than this pubescent?

Ortuno He's new to all this, sir. He'll learn.

Commander He'd better learn fast.
Power brings obligations.
When he was eight years old they presented him
With the great sword of Calatrava
And the Red Cross of our Order

Was pinned, in burning rubies, on his breast.
That day alone should have taught our Master
Something about courtesy.

Ortuno If you feel insulted, we'd better leave.

Commander I want to see what the boy's made of.

[Enter the Grand MASTER of Calatrava and his following, which includes GUARDS and ADVISERS.]

Master Commander, I'm sorry, you must forgive me —
Fernando Gomez.

[MASTER embraces COMMANDER]

I've only just been told of your arrival.
For me to keep you waiting —
You must be furious.

Commander Well, I'm used to respect, I value respect
And you, Grand Master, owe me some respect
For my loyalty and my battle-scars.

Master I owe you more than I can ever repay.
I honour you and, once again, embrace you.
Brave Fernando.

[MASTER embraces COMMANDER again]

Commander Well, I have risked my neck for you
And once, that time when the Pope was angry,
I intervened for you.

Master It's true, I remember
And, by the holy crosses on both our breasts,
I honour you as I honour my father.

Commander I'm pleased with you, Rodrigo.
Yes, you seem more mature —

Master — But this is not a social visit . . .
I think your message said — military matters?

Commander Listen to me. I'll explain
What your next move has to be.

Master I'm listening, Commander.

Commander Grand Master, you were raised
To your high office by the worth
Of your illustrious father.

He named you his successor
As the Grand Master of our Order.
As such it is your duty to support
King Alonso of Portugal
In his rightful claim to all Castile.

Master King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella
Claim the same lands, of course.

Commander But their claim's muddy. It's fraudulent.
Besides, you're related to King Alonso.
So I'll presume to offer some advice.
Assemble all the Knights of Calatrava.
Lay siege to the city of Ciudad Real
And capture it, then you'll control
The vital pass which is the gateway
From Andalusia into Castile.
You won't need many men.
You'll only be opposed
By shopkeepers, beggars
And a fistful of minor aristocrats
Pledged to Ferdinand and Isabella.

Don Rodrigo, they say you're just a boy.
They say the red cross is too heavy
For adolescent shoulders.
They are liars. Of course. But you have to prove it.
Remember your great ancestors —
The lords of Uruena and Villena.
Draw your great sword and let it slice
Into the red flesh of our enemies.
When that white sword is running with blood
The whole world will salute you.

Master Fernando Gomez, rest assured —
I will support my kinsman.
Your summary, I think, is a little biased
And yet justice is on your side.

Since Ciudad Real must be captured
I'll take that city like a thunderbolt.

They say I am young.
Yes, I am young.
But my eyes are clear
And my heart is strong.
With the cross on my breast

Into battle I'll ride
And the white of my sword
Shall be reddened by blood.

- Commander, do you have many soldiers?
- Commander** Not many, but they're all hand-picked.
They can fight. I call them my lion-pack.
The men and women of Fuente Ovejuna
Are peasants. They're not trained at all—
Except in the use of sickles, forks and spades.
- Master** Fuente Ovejuna? Is that your headquarters?
- Commander** Just a shabby old town up in the hills.
My country house is there. It's my fortress too.
- Master** Summon my soldiers.
- Commander** Ciudad Real will collapse.
- Master** That's right, Commander. Let's consult the maps.

Scene 2

[The Town Square of Fuente Ovejuna. One public building with pillars. A couple of trees. Benches in the shade. Old houses. A spring which pours into a large drinking trough on wheels]

[Enter LAURENCIA and PASCUALA, two young peasant women, fetching water from the spring]

- Laurencia** I hope we've seen the last of that Commander.
- Pascuala** Now there's a funny thing,
I had the feeling
That you were slightly put about
When he rode off.
- Laurencia** Put about? I hope to God
We're rid of him for good.
- Pascuala** Laurencia, I've seen plenty of women
As proud as you and harder to please,
But their little hearts betrayed them—
Slippery as candle-grease.
- Laurencia** My heart's as dry as an old oak tree
And that's how it's going to stay.
- Pascuala** Come on, it's daft even to think:
There is some water I'd never drink.

- Laurencia** I swear by the sun that I never will,
Though Fuente Ovejuna drinks its fill.
Pascuala, what'd be the point
In going to bed with Commander Gomez?
Is he likely to marry me?
- Pascuala** Not in this world.
- Laurencia** How many of the local girls
Have listened to the Commander's promises,
Taken a walk in the woods and tottered back
All tears and belly?
- Pascuala** I've lost count.
But it'll be a miracle
If you escape that cunning bastard.
- Laurencia** Don't bet on that!
The Commander's chased me for more than a month
And all he's got to show for it is blisters.
His two friends, that Captain Flores
And crafty old Sergeant Ortuno,
Offered me a pair of yellow shoes
And a silver necklace with doves in flight
And a sort of spiderweb silky dress.
They went on and on and on and on
About their wonderful Commander,
On and on till I was scared, **Pascuala**.
But they can't do anything to break me down.
- Pascuala** Where did this happen?
- Laurencia** Down by the river where we wash the clothes.
Down by the river six days ago.
- Pascuala** Laurencia, I wouldn't die of horror
If one day you surrendered.
- Laurencia** You think I'm a spring chicken?
No. I'm a tough little hen.
And I'll chase Commander Gomez out of my backyard.
He can crow somewhere else.
- [Sings]* I'd rather
Get up at daybreak
And light up the fireplace
Stack plenty of dry wood beside it.
And then

Make a tortilla
The size of a cartwheel
With cupfuls of basil inside it.

I'd rather
Set the pot frothing
With rabbit and cabbage
United with garlic and spices.
And then
Fix up a marriage
Between some good bacon
And hundreds of aubergine slices.

I'd rather
Walk in the sunset
And pick me a necklace
Of grapes on the vine
Green and glowing.
And then
Heat up a pork chop
With olives and peppers
And anything else that is going.

I'd rather
Go to bed weary
With belly contented
And heart free of all obligation.
And then
Fall asleep praying
For more food the next day:
Deliver us, Lord, from temptation.

Pascuala –
You know these villains
They wheedle and woo us
And promise their love's to be trusted
And then
Call round at nightfall
Play with us till cockcrow
Then leave us and say they're disgusted.

Pascuala

You're right Laurencia.
When men cease to love you
They become unpleasant
As the ungrateful sparrow
To the generous peasant.

Laurencia So sing me the story, Pascuala.

Pascuala

[Sings]
In winter, when the fields are ice
The sparrow longs to eat.
He flies down from the roof and lands
Beside the peasant's feet.
He opens up his trembling beak
And calls the peasant "sweet".
Sweet! Sweet!
He calls the peasant sweet.

That's how the sparrow earns his crumbs
Amid the snow and sleet,
But when the springtime swings around
And all the world's on heat,
The sparrow dances on the roof
And calls the peasant "cheat".
Cheat! Cheat!
He calls the peasant cheat.

And men are sparrows when they long
To lay us on a sheet.
We are their life, their everything,
Their soul and their heartbeat,
But when they're cooler, they begin
To call the woman "cheat".
Cheat! Cheat!
And things I'll not repeat.

Laurencia I remember a line from some ancient poem:
Don't trust men farther than you can throw 'em.

[Enter three young peasant men from the town – FRONDOSO, who is in love with Laurencia, BARRILDO and MENGÓ, who is somewhat stout. MENGÓ takes a bottle of wine which he has previously left to cool in the drinking trough, uncorks it, swigs and passes it round among his friends]

Fronadoso Give up, Barrildo, he'll never give in.

Barrildo Well, here's a pair of qualified judges.
They're always ready to say what's right,
Or, more likely, what's wrong.

Mengó Before you ask them, let's make a deal.
If they decide I'm right,
You both have to give me some sort of prize
For winning the debate.

- Barrildo** Done. But, Mengo, suppose you lose.
What've you got to give to us?
- Mengo** My little pipe. [*Produces penny whistle*]
It's worth more than a full granary –
It gives me more pleasure, anyway.
- Barrildo** I'll shake on that.
[*BARRILDO and MENGO shake hands*]
- Fronoso** Beautiful morning, lovely ladies!
- Laurencia** Fronoso, are you calling us ladies?
- Fronoso** It's just the modern manner of speech –
All students today are called "intellectuals".
Misers are "economical"
And the deaf are "hard of hearing".
If you're loudmouthed, they say you're "powerful",
The busybody "cares about people",
A bully is "strong-willed"
And a raving maniac is "so original".
So if you catch the pox, call it a "cold sore".
If you're a hunchback, call yourself "round-shouldered".
That's the fashion and I'm in the fashion
Up to my neck when I call the pair of you
"Ladies". Ladies, shall I go on.
- Laurencia** I suppose, Fronoso, that in the city
People would frame that speech and hang it on their walls.
Well, I'm just a peasant and I wouldn't feed it to the pigs.
- Fronoso** Explain to me where I'm wrong, learned Laurencia.
- Laurencia** You're looking at it the wrong way up.
Let me tell you how people are judged.
A serious person is called "boring".
Those who seek justice are "heretics".
You keep your promise – you're "old-fashioned".
Be polite – "what an awful crawler!"
You give to a beggar – "hypocrite".
You're generous to everyone – "Ostentatious!"
If a woman tells the truth
She's called a bitch
But if she won't go to bed with you –
Call her a snobbish whore.
And a wife who's faithful – but that'll do.
Fronoso – have I silenced you?

- Mengo** The devil's got into her tongue.
- Barrildo** She's as tough as leather
And cold as scandal.
- Mengo** Send for a priest
With a bell, book and candle.
- Laurencia** What was your famous debate about?
- Fronoso** I'll tell you, but can you listen?
- Laurencia** There's no wax in my ears.
- Fronoso** But seriously – we must settle a bet.
- Laurencia** What's the wager?
- Fronoso** Barrildo and I say Mengo's wrong.
- Laurencia** And what does Mengo say?
- Barrildo** Mengo denies the existence of something
Which is obviously indispensable.
- Mengo** No. I simply say that it doesn't exist
Because I know it doesn't exist.
- Laurencia** Please – somebody translate from Mengoese.
- Barrildo** He says there's no such thing as love.
- Laurencia** Most people find they can't manage without it.
- Barrildo** Love is a madness, but I agree.
Without love, the world would shut up shop.
- Mengo** In the old days, they used to imagine
That before the world came, there was Chaos.
Now Chaos was made up of whizzing atoms
And all the atoms were fighting each other.
But one day Love crept in the back door
And Love linked all the atoms together
And that was the end of Chaos.
Do you follow me?
- Barrildo** And so everything in this world
Harmonised with everything else.
Which proves my point, for harmony
Is only another word for love.
- Mengo** One moment, Barrildo. Listen to this.
First let me say I don't deny
The existence and importance of self-love.

Self-love rules the universe,
 Self-love maintains the balance of nature.
 No, I've never denied, not for one minute
 That we all have a kind of love we're born with
 Which helps us to survive.
 If you try to thump me on the nose
 My hand flies up automatically,
 My eyelashes slam their shutters
 To protect my eyes
 And my feet start sprinting away
 To save my invaluable hooter.
 But all this is self-love, not love itself.

- Pascuala** Where does that leave the argument?
Laurencia Up a fig tree.
Mengo No, my point is, there's no greater love
 Than that of man for his own self.
Pascuala Sorry, Mengo, but you're wrong.
 The passion with which a man loves a woman
 Or a lion loves a lioness
 Or a buck rabbit loves a doe —
 That passion's real, you can't deny it.
Mengo But that's not love at all.
 That's what I call self-love.
 Tell me, Laurencia, what is love?
Laurencia To love is to desire
Mengo Good. To love is to desire what?
Laurencia To desire beauty.
Mengo Beauty — yes — but why should love want beauty?
Laurencia To enjoy it.
Mengo Precisely.
 And this enjoyment the lover hopes to have —
 Is it not for himself?
Laurencia It is.
Mengo Therefore, because he loves himself
 He pursues beauty, hoping to catch it,
 So it will make him happy?
Laurencia That is true.

- Mengo** Since this is so,
 The love we're talking about
 Is the love I pursue
 For my own pleasure.
 It's all for me, myself. Self-love. You see?
- Barrildo** The other day Father Oliver preached
 About another thinker like you called Plato.
 Now Plato had a great deal to say
 On the subject of love and what to do about it:
 Plato saved all of his love for the soul
 And the virtue of the person he loved.!
- Pascuala** Yes, there are colleges in the cities
 Overflowing with similar old men
 Who spend all day and half the night
 Discussing love. They're called philosophers
 And they get paid for it.
- Laurencia** I will pronounce my verdict.
 Barrildo's right about Barrildo
 And Mengo's right about himself.
 Mengo, thank your lucky stars
 That you don't know what love is.
- Mengo** Laurencia, do you love anybody?
- Laurencia** Oh I love my virtue. I'm just like Plato.
- Fronoso** May God punish you for that remark
 By striking you with jealousy.
- Barrildo** Who won the debate?
- Mengo** Who won the bet?
- Pascuala** Take your problem to Father Oliver,
 I think he knows something about love.
 But if he can't oblige, write a nice letter
 To Don Plato at the university.
 Laurencia's never been in love
 And I've only a passing acquaintance with it —
 So how can we be judges?
- Fronoso** By making fun of us poor men.
 Oh it's a wicked business when
 The sheet of paper mocks the pen.
- [Enter Captain FLORES]

- Flores Beautiful morning, ladies and gentlemen.
- Pascuala Here comes the Commander's ploughboy.
Master comes later to sow the seed.
- Laurencia Sir, you're a polite sort of vulture today –
Where have you flown in from?
- Flores From the battle, sweetheart, isn't that obvious?
- Laurencia Will Commander Gomez be coming back?
- Flores He's well. The fighting's finished with now.
But it cost us plenty in blood and friends.
- Fronadoso What happened, Captain?
- Flores I saw it. I was there.
Our mission was to capture Ciudad Real.
The Grand Master assembled his forces:
Two thousand vassals as soldiers on foot.
Three hundred Brothers of the Order
Riding on horseback, red crosses blazing.
- Our brave young Master rode out that day
In a green cloak embroidered with gold
Fastened with silken cords over his bright armour.
A magnificent horse, well-fleshed and firm,
A dappled silver-grey like a gale-born cloud,
A steed raised on the clear water of the Betis river
And the deep rich grasses of its meadowbanks,
Its tail was covered by plaited strips
Of cunningly-worked leather, and its mane
Tied in tight curls with whitest ribbons
Which matched the snow-flake marks
Flecking his pale grey flanks.
- At his right hand rode Commander Gomez,
Your overlord, upon a sturdy
Stallion the colour of crystallised honey,
With a jet-black mane and tail, but a white underlip.
The Commander wore a cloak
Of flowing, orange-coloured silk
With golden tracery and milky pearls.
His white-plumed helmet seemed to be
Bursting with orange blossom, and he bore
That famous pine-tree of a lance
Before which proud Granada trembles.
- We advanced, through the dust, towards Ciudad Real.

The city fathers were stubborn.
They took up arms
Shouting "For Ferdinand and Isabella!"
They fought hard, but we beat them down.
Our young Master gave his orders.
Rebel leaders were beheaded.
Their followers were gagged and flogged through the streets.
Now the city fears him, the city admires him,
For a youth so suddenly turned conqueror
Will surely grow into a giant
Who will become the scourge of Africa
And overcome a million crescent moons
With his triumphant cross of blood.

He has been generous, too,
Heaping rare gifts upon us,
And he let us plunder the city as freely
As if it were his private property.

But here comes our Commander. Greet him joyfully.
Your smiles and cheers must crown his victory.

[Enter the COMMANDER with Sergeant ORTUNO, SOLDIERS, MUSICIANS,
local councillors including JUAN ROJO, and the joint Mayors
of Fuente Ovejuna, ALONSO and ESTEBAN. Esteban is also Chief
Magistrate and is the father of Laurencia]

People of Fuente Ovejuna

[Sing]

Welcome the Commander
Who killed our enemies
Welcome the Commander
For he beat them to their knees

Long live Commander Gomez
Who is terrible in war
But in peacetime he is peaceful
May he live for evermore

Long live Commander Gomez
Our mighty overlord
For he cut up the rebels
With his celebrated sword

Now he comes back to Fuente
For this is where his home is
We hope he stays for ever
Long live Commander Gomez!

- Commander** People of Fuente Ovejuna
I thank you with all my heart
For the affection you have shown today.
- Alonso** Commander, our town has only shown
A little part of its true feelings.
- Juan Rojo** Commander, Senor Esteban,
Who is our Chief Magistrate
And joint Mayor with Alonso here
Would like to make a presentation.
- Commander** I am obliged to him. Proceed.
- Mengo** [TO ESTEBAN]
Here's the speech I wrote for you.

[ESTEBAN *clears his throat and reads from the piece of paper, gesturing towards a cart loaded with presents*]
- Esteban** I speak for Fuente Ovejuna, I start
By begging, from the bottom of my heart,
You to accept the presents in this cart.

Baskets shallow and baskets deep,
Blankets bright enough to make you weep,
A set of dinner plates painted with sheep.

Your courage the whole town celebrates
With strings of onions, boxes of dates
And oranges burning in their crates.

Preserved in brine you'll find delicate young
Piglets and calves – kidneys, brains, heart, lung
And there's our speciality – jellied tongue.

Sheepskins black and sheepskins white
And Mengo made this lamp – it shines as bright
As any angel. And it lasts all night.

We can't offer gold watches or works of art
Only the contents of this cart
And the golden love of the people's heart

And that's fine gold, and to show you how fine
Here are three hundred gallons of wine
To renew your courage whenever you dine

Your popularity is proved by these
Heart-felt tokens. Accept them, please.
And, may I recommend the local cheese?

- [*Applause*]
- Commander** I'd like to thank you and the town council.
[TO SOLDIERS] Take the cart to my country house.
- Alonso** Sir, you deserve a holiday.
You are welcome back to Fuente Ovejuna.
May the nearest tree to your house be struck by moonlight
And bear diamonds big as oranges.
- Commander** Let's hope it does. I'll see you soon.

[*Exit COMMANDER into the door of the public building. MUSICIANS strike up and the PEOPLE of Fuente Ovejuna, apart from LAURENCIA and PASCUALA, march away with them*]
- People of Fuente Ovejuna**
[*Sing*]
Now he comes back to Fuente
For this is where his home is
We hope he stays for ever
Long live Commander Gomez!

[*COMMANDER looks out of the window of the public building*]
- Commander** You two. Stay here.
- Laurencia** What can we do for you, sir?
- Commander** The other day you were rude to me
Just before I had to go
And risk my life on the battlefield.
- Laurencia** Pascuala, were you rude to him?
- Pascuala** I'm never rude to men, poor things.
- Commander** You both insulted me.
Listen. Who rules this district?
- Laurencia** The power's in your hands, Commander.
- Commander** And therefore you are in my power. Correct?
- Pascuala** Certainly, sir, politically speaking,
But not in any other sense.
- Commander** I'd like a word with you both in here.
Plenty of people around, don't worry.
- Laurencia** My father the Mayor will be back soon.
When he goes into the Council Offices
I will go in as well . . .

Commander Captain Flores!

Flores [*Appearing in the Square*] Sir!

Commander What's wrong with these women?
Why won't they do what they're told?

Flores Come on, ladies, in we go.
[*LAURENCIA and PASCUALA fight off FLORES during the following exchanges*]

Laurencia Keep your monkey claws off me.

Flores Come on, ladies, let's be sensible.

Pascuala Not a chance.
You'd barricade us in with the Commander.

Flores He only wants you to take a look
At what he's brought back from the wars.

Commander [*Appearing at window*]
When they come in, lock the door behind 'em.
[*COMMANDER disappears*]

Laurencia Out of our way, Captain.
[*Enter ORTUNO. He joins in the struggle*]

Ortuno Weren't you two presented to us
Along with all the other rubbish on the cart?

Pascuala I'll bite your bloody nose off.

Flores Let 'em go. They're hopeless.

Laurencia Isn't your Commander satisfied
With all that wine and meat?

Ortuno It's your meat he's after.

Laurencia He'd choke on it.
[*Exit LAURENCIA and PASCUALA*]

Flores How can we face him empty-handed?
He'll curse us purple.

Ortuno Part of the job, sir; if you can't take
An officer's abuse!
Better quit the army and live as a beggar
On fishbones and lemon juice.
[*Exit FLORES and ORTUNO*]

Scene 3

[*The Palace of KING Ferdinand and QUEEN Isabella. KING, QUEEN, Don MANRIQUE their minister, and their following enter*]

Queen My lord, we must move straight away.
The King of Portugal's troops are poised to strike.
At any moment they may cut off your army.
Cuidad Real must be recaptured.

King We can rely on Navarre and Aragon?

Queen Of course.

King I've been reorganising
My Castillian battalions.
We'll need them too.
Be patient, Isabella. We must think ahead.

Queen Your majesty's convinced
That we have time for thinking?

Manrique Your majesties, two aldermen
Escaped from the massacre at Cuidad Real.
They're here, begging to see you.

King We'll see them now.

Manrique You may come in.
[*Enter, travel-weary, two ALDERMEN*]

Queen Let's hear your news.

First Alderman King Ferdinand, Queen Isabella,
Whom Heaven sent to help us.
We are humbly here from Cuidad Real
To plead for your protection.
Once we were proud and lucky men
Because we were your subjects.
But now we've lost that honour.

The Grand Master of Calatrava
Is greedy for more lands.
He is a lion of courage
Though a mere cub in years.
He laid siege to our city –
A most bitter siege.
All of us fought back so angrily
That every white-washed street

Was smeared with the blood of the dead.
 In the end he conquered us
 But he never could have done it
 Without Commander Gomez
 Who gave support, advice and soldiers.
 Now the Grand Master rules Ciudad Real
 And we're his sullen slaves.

King Where are your fighting men?

Second Alderman

Some, sir, are prisoners.
 And some are maimed and some are dead.
 We have no other fighting men.

Queen

We must strike now.
 We must, or the Portuguese
 Will swarm all over our territories.

King

Don Manrique, march on Ciudad Real.
 Take two companies with you.
 Show no mercy to our enemies.

Manrique

I'll put an end to this boy's adventures
 Or die in the attempt.

Queen

You will not die. I have no doubts at all.

King

Where is Commander Gomez now?

First Alderman

In Fuente Ovejuna, sire.
 That's where he has his house
 And what he calls his seat of justice.
 And there he grabs, with his bony hand,
 Their goods, their women and their land.

[*Exeunt ALL*]

Scene 4

[*A wood near Fuente Ovejuna. Enter LAURENCIA and FRONDOSO*]

Laurencia

Fronoso, you've made me climb all this way,
 Leaving my washing half wrung out
 Down by the stream. Sweet Jesus, what a climb,
 And all so we can talk together
 Without the town exploding with gossip.

You're such a trouble to me, Fronoso.
 The town's talking anyway:
 "He fancies her, you know", "She's after him".
 Just because you're quick on your feet
 And, some of my friends say, quite good-looking,
 Well, not deformed, and just because
 You're generally slightly better dressed
 Than most of the shepherds on the hill
 And just because you've not been elected
 To be this year's village idiot –
 There's not a boy or a girl in the whole of Fuente Ovejuna
 Who's not certain as sin that we're lovers already
 And they're simply counting the days until
 Father Oliver stops playing his old bassoon
 And mutters warnings to us from the pulpit.
 They've decided how many children we'll have –
 The whole business is out of control.

Fronoso

What do you feel about marrying me?

Laurencia

I don't feel much, one way or the other.

Fronoso

Please, Laurencia,
 I'm in such a state,
 I risk my life
 Whenever I dare
 Look into your eyes
 Or listen to your voice.
 You know I want to marry you
 So why do you laugh at me?

Laurencia

I'm sorry, but little things make me laugh.

Fronoso

Aren't you upset that I'm so upset?
 When I close my eyes, I see your face.
 I can't sleep or eat or even drink.
 How can an angel be so cruel?
 God's honour, but you're driving me mad.

Laurencia

So go see a doctor, Fronoso.

Fronoso

You're the only doctor who can cure me.

Laurencia
 We'll be like two doves
 Gliding side by side
 Over the mountains

Laurencia
We'll be like two doves
Perching on a branch
And cooing harmonies.

Laurencia - Have a quiet word with my uncle and my father.
It's not that I'm lovesick, but I'm beginning
To feel some of the symptoms.

Fronoso Christ! It's the Commander.

Laurencia He's out hunting deer.

Fronoso Hide here.

Laurencia There's no room. I'll hide over here.

[LAURENCIA and FRONOSO hide separately. Enter the COMMANDER
carrying a crossbow. He spots LAURENCIA and grabs her wrist,
dragging her into the open]

Commander Looks like my day.
I go out deer hunting
And catch a little doe.

Laurencia I've just had a rest
After doing my washing.
I'll be off back down to the stream.
So good morning to you, Commander.

Commander Shame that your manners aren't
As pretty as your face.
You're a peculiar creature, aren't you?
You've given me the slip
Several times in the town
But way out here -
In this lonely, secret wood,
Why, you're at bay, Laurencia,
You're trapped, Laurencia.
The only woman in Fuente Ovejuna
Too high and mighty to look in the eyes
Of her lord and master.
The other women like me, Laurencia,
Respectable married ladies and all.
You know Sebastiana?
Pedro Redondo's wife?
We did it together, Laurencia.
And Martin del Pozo's bride,

What was her name?
Just two days after she married him
We did it together, Laurencia.

Laurencia Yes, I do know those women, Commander.
They've always been most generous
To men of every kind.
You know, if you weren't wearing that cross
I'd take you for the devil himself.
Go chase your deer and God be with you.

[COMMANDER puts down his crossbow]

Commander I'm going to teach you a lesson, Laurencia,
With my arms and with my hands
And with my naked body.

Laurencia You'd rape me? You're crazy!

[FRONOSO creeps out of hiding and takes the crossbow]

Commander It's no use. I've got you. Here. Come on.

Laurencia Get off me, you bastard!

Commander Come on. You want it, don't you?
Come on. There's nobody here.

[FRONOSO pokes COMMANDER in the back with the crossbow]

Fronoso Let her go, Commander.
Let her go or I'll be forced to
Aim at the red cross on your chest
And shoot your heart out.

Commander Get out, you scruffy dog.

Fronoso There's no dog here.
Laurencia, run for it.

Laurencia Be careful, Fronoso.

Fronoso Run to your father's house.

[Exit LAURENCIA]

Commander I put the crossbow down, you know.
I didn't threaten her with it.

Fronoso All I have to do
Is press my finger - here -
And you're a dead Commander.

- Commander** She's got away. You know this is treason?
Lay down that crossbow, you bastard.
- Fronoso** And let you shoot me?
I'm warning you – I love Laurencia –
And I'm as angry as a scorpion.
- Commander** Oh I see, so a gentleman
Is expected to walk away
Offering his back as a target
To a mad young peasant?
All right, you son of a rat,
Shoot me – and then watch out for yourself.
- Fronoso** Oh no, Commander, I don't shoot my betters.
I have this strange ambition
To become an old peasant one day.
So I think I'll take your crossbow away.
- [Exit FRONOSO]
- Commander** To be insulted by a slave
And fall for a surprise attack!
I swear to God I'll pay him back
And I'll teach that little bitch how to behave
By screwing her on her sweetheart's grave.
- [End of Act One]

Act 2

Scene 1

[The Town Square. ESTEBAN and ALONSO sitting on bench]

- Esteban** We've got to think of the public good.
We mustn't draw on our reserve stocks of grain.
It looks like a bad year. Time to hang on
Whatever the rest of the council say.
- Alonso** I'm with you. Caution's always been my policy.
That's why this town's such a peaceful place.
- Esteban** We'll appeal to Commander Gomez about it.
We mustn't be fooled by these astrologers
Who know less than lizards about the weather
But try to convince us, with their turgid language,
They know secrets hidden from God himself.
They talk like bishops with hangovers. You've heard 'em:
"The past and the future form one great mystic circle".
All very fine, but if you ask
About something that matters here and now
Like where to lay drains or a sick donkey
They're about as much use as a woollen bucket.
Do you think, in their studies, there are stars and planets
And miniature galaxies whizzing around?
How else can they know what's happening in the skies
So they can peddle us their cheapjack prophecies?
While we're out sowing the fields,
They're indoors, doing their calculations:
Let's order a crop of so much wheat, barley, cereals,
So many tons of mustard, so many cucumbers –
Look, I've grown pumpkins with better brains on 'em.
The prophets announce: "A brown horse shall expire" –
And behold, it comes to pass – in Transylvania.
Or they tell us: "Lo, there shall be much beer
In Germany and verily behold
There will be cheese in Holland and rain in Scotland".
I'm not clairvoyant, but this I will say:
After April next year, with some luck, we'll have May.

[Enter LEONELO, a student newly returned from the University of Salamanca, talking with BARRILDO]

Leonelo Enough, Barrildo, that's more than enough.
I can't keep up with all the local gossip.

Barrildo What's it like in Salamanca?
How do they treat you at the University?

Leonelo That's a long story.

Barrildo You'll be very learned now?

Leonelo I know a lot less than Pedro the barber
And that's true of most of the other students.

Barrildo Go on. They must have taught you a lot.

Leonelo I'm beginning to learn what really matters.

Barrildo Now they've started printing all these books
The whole country's suddenly full of great thinkers.

Leonelo So many books – and so much confusion!
All around us an ocean of print
And most of it covered in froth.

Barrildo But books are good. Everyone knows, Leonelo.

Leonelo You know that printing was invented
In Germany by Gutenberg?
So far so good. What happened then?
All the most famous men in Europe
Rushed into print, but once they were published
Their ignorance was obvious to all.
Next there arrived, like a swarm of fleas,
The bawdy scribblers and the gallows hacks
Writing any old cabbage for the sake of cash.

Barrildo Leonelo, printing's essential.

Leonelo We managed without it for thousands of years.
In this great age of printing we haven't seen
Any new author reach the heights
Of Homer or Saint Augustine.

Barrildo Leave it at that. Sit down. You're just being awkward.
A holiday from thinking
Is what you badly need.
Whatever you say against printing
I wish I was able to read.

[Enter JUAN ROJO and another middle-aged FARMER]

Juan Rojo If you sold four farms and their stock
You couldn't raise a dowry for your daughter,
Not after the taxmen take their whack.
You want to know why? The men who rule us
Don't know there's any difference between
Trying to grow corn out of dusty rock
And selling necklaces in Madrid.

Farmer What's the latest on the Commander?

Juan Rojo Pesters the life out of my niece, Laurencia.

Farmer What a shit! I'd like to see
Him swinging from an olive tree.

[Enter the COMMANDER, FLORES and ORTUNO]

Commander Another lovely evening, gentlemen?

Alonso Sir.

Commander Please – sit yourselves down.

Esteban Commander – be seated wherever you like.
We would prefer to stand.

Commander But I'd prefer you to be seated.

Esteban And I prefer to choose
The company I keep.

Commander Sit down, Chief Magistrate,
I want a word with you.

[ESTEBAN sits]

Esteban Did you see my greyhound racing yesterday?

Commander No, but the Captain tells me
It has an astonishing turn of speed.

Esteban Yes, an incredible animal.
You know, I think it can move as fast
As a wanted criminal on the run
Or the tongue of a coward under torture.

Commander I'd like to take that greyhound of yours
And set it on the trail of a hare
Which keeps eluding me.

Esteban Of course. And where's this hare?

Commander In your daughter's shoes.

- Esteban** My daughter?
- Commander** Yes.
- Esteban** The daughter of a small-town Mayor . . .
Surely she's not good enough
For a Commander?
- Commander** You'd better teach her the way of the world.
- Esteban** What do you mean?
- Commander** She's been upsetting me.
You see that woman – over there –
Looks cold and snobbish, doesn't she?
I scribbled her a little note.
She was warming up my bed
Before the ink was dry.
- Esteban** If she did, she shouldn't have,
And neither should you boast about it.
- Commander** A preaching peasant! Captain Flores,
Please order for Senor Esteban
A copy of Aristotle on Politics. He needs it.
- Esteban** Sir, here in Fuente Ovejuna
We like the quiet life.
We're good citizens, we pay our taxes
And you should treat us with respect.
- Leonelo** It's outrageous.
- Commander** Oh dear, have I said something
That's upset you, boy?
- Leonelo** You mustn't talk to us like that.
It's not right for you to insult
The honour of our town.
- Commander** Oh, you have honour, do you?
Are you my brothers in arms
In the great Order of Calatrava?
- Leonelo** Some wearers of the Cross of Calatrava
May be less honourable than cattle.
- Commander** And am I dirtying the muck of your cowshed
By walking through it, boy?
- Leonelo** You're not making it any cleaner.

- [COMMANDER *strikes* LEONELO. ORTUNO *restrains* LEONELO]
- Commander** Is that so? Well, I'm honouring your cows by serving them.
Now get your slimy face out of my town.
If you ever come back I promise you
An interesting death.
- Leonelo** You'll –
- Commander** Out of my town!
- [ORTUNO *forces* LEONELO *out of the Square and off*]
- Esteban** Commander, you dishonour yourself.
- Commander** These yokels are pathetic.
Life in the cities is so much freer –
No-one stops a man having his fun
So long as he's a gentleman.
City husbands are perfectly happy
For their wives to entertain me.
- Esteban** No they're not. You want us to ignore
What's going on under our noses.
There is still such a thing as love in this town.
There is still such a thing as jealousy.
There is still such a thing as brutal lust.
There is still such a thing as sudden revenge.
- Commander** [To SOLDIERS] Clear the Square!
[To TOWNSPEOPLE] Get out of here!
- Esteban** You mean just us two,
Or the entire population of the town?
- Commander** Out of this square!
Everybody out of this square!
- Esteban** Don't worry, we're going.
- Commander** Not in a mob like that! Disperse them!
- Flores** Easy does it, sir.
- Commander** These peasants imagine
They can gang up on me
As soon as my back's turned.
- Ortuno** [Returning]
I think it's best if we all keep calm.
- Commander** I'm absolutely calm.
Back to your nasty little homes!

[*Exeunt all the TOWNSPEOPLE*]

Commander Back to their holes, like mice.

Ortuno Don't hide your feelings do you sir?

Commander What d'you mean, Sergeant?

Ortuno You don't like 'em not liking you.

Commander I don't give a damn –
But they fancy they're as good as me.

Flores Not really, sir.

Commander What about that damn peasant?
Are you going to let him keep my crossbow?

Flores Last night we had him cornered
Outside Laurencia's door.

Ortuno I tripped him up,
Gave him a good kicking.

Flores I started to whip him, then I saw
It wasn't the right peasant.

Ortuno Had the same build.

Flores All look alike.

Ortuno Must've taught him something.

Commander Where's this damned Frondoso?

Flores The word is that he's still around.

Commander Tries to kill me – and he's still around?

Ortuno Fish are attracted magically
Towards the wriggling bait.
All an angler has to do
Is hold his rod and wait.

Commander A shepherd threatens a Commander!
Flores, what's the world coming to?

Flores Love causes all the trouble.

Ortuno And the lover's still alive.

Commander I'm a very patient man, Sergeant,
Otherwise I'd have taken my sword
And carved Laurencia's name
All over his stupid body.

But I've been trained to hold myself back
Till the best moment for an attack.
[*Consults a list*]
Well, I'll take Pascuala.

Flores Pascuala's very sorry –
Says she's getting married.

Commander I've no objection to that.

Flores To tell you the truth, I think she's dead scared –
But we'll talk her round to it eventually.

Commander What about Olalla?

Ortuno That one likes a laugh.

Commander Yes, she's a lively little creature.
What does Olalla say?

Ortuno Her brand-new husband hides her away
Like wheat inside a bin
But she says as soon as she can get out
You shall be first man in.

Commander Well done, Ortuno!
But her husband's watching her.

Ortuno And he's got a temper
Like a rhinoceros with gout.

Commander And Ines?

Flores Which Ines?

Commander Ines with the – you know – Anton's wife.

Flores Pop round any day
Between nine and four
Please bring a bottle
Use the back door.

Commander She's not much better
Than a marketday whore.
If only women
Esteemed themselves more.

Flores There's nothing sweeter than the pain
Of delayed satisfaction.
If they give in too easily you miss
Drinking the wine of anticipation
Which makes us stagger with love.

- Commander** When I get all worked up
It's great if they give in.
But how can you value a woman much
If she opens up at the very first touch?
- [Enter CIMBRANOS, a messenger]
- Cimbranos** Where's the Commander?
- Ortuno** Use your eyes.
- Cimbranos** O brave Commander Gomez,
Put on your white-plumed helmet and bright armour.
Cuidad Real, won with so much blood and pain,
Is in the greatest danger.
All round its walls they're closing in
Lit by a thousand smoky torches,
The Master of Calatrava is at bay.
Mount your horse now, sir, for the sight of you
Will rout our enemies and save our Master.
- Commander** Enough. Ortuno, have the bugle sounded.
How many horsemen do I have?
- Ortuno** Fifty-four, sir.
- Commander** Tell them to mount and join me.
- Cimbranos** They must be quick or Cuidad Real will fall
To Ferdinand and Isabella.
- Commander** Have no fear of that.
- [EXEUNT]
- [Enter LAURENCIA, MENGO and PASCUALA, running]
- Pascuala** Stay with us, Mengo.
The Commander's out to get us.
- Mengo** What can I do?
- Laurencia** The more we stay together
The harder things are for the Commander.
- Mengo** He's a devil.
- Laurencia** He's a curse on the town.
- Mengo** God send a thunderbolt
And split him down the middle.

- Laurencia** He's worse than arsenic and the Black Death
Rolled into one.
- Mengo** Is it true that Frondoso, out in the woods,
Pointed a crossbow at his chest
So you could run away?
- Laurencia** I used to hate all men,
But that moment changed my mind.
I'm scared they'll kill him for it.
- Mengo** Well he'd better get out of Fuente Ovejuna.
- Laurencia** I tell him that, although I love him.
But it makes him angry. He insists on staying
And the Commander has sworn
To string him up by one foot
And then skin him alive.
- Pascuala** That Commander needs strangling.
- Mengo** Stoning would be better.
I use a sling to guard my sheep.
You can bet your boots
That, if I let fly at him with a stone,
The leather thong would no sooner creak
Than his forehead would burst open like an egg.
- [Enter JACINTA, running]
- Jacinta** Jesus Christ, help me!
- Laurencia** Jacinta! What's the matter?
- Jacinta** Some of the Commander's men
Broke down our front door with clubs.
They said the Commander wanted me.
They're after me now.
- Laurencia** We'd all better hide. God help you Jacinta.
- [Exit LAURENCIA]
- Pascuala** He's after both of us as well.
- [Exit PASCUALA]
- Mengo** Men are supposed to fight, I suppose.
Well, I've got a man's name and a man's body.
Jacinta, stand behind me.

- Jacinta** If only we had a gun.
- Mengo** We'll have to use stones.
[MENGO produces his sling. Enter FLORES and ORTUNO]
- Flores** I see – you thought you'd run away?
- Jacinta** Mengo – it's them.
- Mengo** Excuse me, sir.
These poor country girls . . .
- Ortuno** What's this then?
Are you standing up for her?
- Mengo** Well, I'll stand up with words.
Sir, I'm Jacinta's cousin, so I must
Protect her if I can.
- Flores** Get him, Sergeant.
- Mengo** Listen, if I lose my temper
And let fly with my slingshot
You'll bleed enough to fill a horse trough.
[Enter COMMANDER and CIMBRANOS]
- Commander** Must I dismount to deal with brawlers?
- Flores** One of the peasants from this filthy town
Which you should have burned down long ago
In my humble opinion, sir.
He was obstructing us, disobeying orders
And finally threatening us.
- Mengo** Commander, sir, if you care about justice,
You ought to punish these soldiers of yours.
They've tried to carry off a country girl
From her own parents' home.
Please let me take her back to them.
- Commander** I'll let my men
Take their revenge on you.
Drop that sling.
- Mengo** [Doing so] Sir!
- Commander** Flores. Ortuno. Cimbranos.
Use it to tie his hands together.

- Mengo** Is this the way you defend the peace?
- Commander** Tell me, lad,
What do the peasants of Fuente Ovejuna say about me?
- Mengo** Sir, how have I offended you.
How has Fuente Ovejuna offended you?
- Flores** Shall we kill him, sir?
- Commander** Don't waste your bullets.
You'll need them at Ciudad Real.
- Ortuno** What shall we do with him?
- Commander** Tie him to that oak tree.
Strip him naked.
Use your horse's reins
And whip him –
- Mengo** Mercy!
- Commander** Whip him until his back
Is one dripping pattern of bright red and dark red.
- Mengo** God!
[Exit FLORES, ORTUNO and CIMBRANOS with MENGO]
- Commander** Jacinta, why were you running away?
- Jacinta** Give me back to my father and mother!
- Commander** You're safe with me, Jacinta.
I belong to an order of chivalry.
- Jacinta** My father is an honest man.
You're far more rich and powerful
And your parents may be aristocrats,
But my father is much better than you –
He always acts in an honourable way.
- Commander** Jacinta, you're being insolent.
That's not the way to pacify
A soldier when he's angry.
Over there with you.
I'll give it to you here and now.
[Sounds of whipping and MENGO's cries offstage]
- Jacinta** Watch what you're doing.

[JACINTA fights off the COMMANDER, scratching his face]

Commander

All right, Jacinta, I understand.
You'll be pleased to know I don't want you now.
I'll hand you over to my troops –
They'll queue up and screw you one by one.

Jacinta

I'll kill myself.

Commander

You'll love it, peasant.

Jacinta

Please, Commander, show some mercy.

Commander

I don't have any of that stuff.

Jacinta

God will take his revenge on you.

Commander

That's up to him.

[Exit COMMANDER forcing JACINTA before him, her arm twisted behind her]

[Enter LAURENCIA and FRONDOSO]

Laurencia

My love, please, it's too dangerous.

Fronoso

I love you completely.
I had to tell you.
I saw you in the square
And I wasn't scared any more.

Laurencia

The Commander –

Fronoso

Let's hope the people of Ciudad Real
Finish off that bastard.

Laurencia

Don't say that.
They say when you wish a man should die
He usually lives to be
A great-great grandfather.

Fronoso

Then I hope he lives a thousand painful years –
And that takes care of him.
Laurencia – I have to know –
How do you feel about me and my love?
You know how the town talks about us?
They always couple our names together –
Fronoso-Laurencia, Laurencia-Fronoso –
And they wonder why we aren't coupling too.
Darling is it yes or no?

Laurencia

I think there's only one of us.

Fronoso

Kiss me Laurencia.

[They kiss]

I feel as if I've just been born.

Laurencia

No time for speeches.
Go talk with my father,
That's the important thing.
There he is, strolling with my uncle.
Don't worry, they'll be for the marriage.

Fronoso

God help me, I hope so.

[LAURENCIA moves out of sight, but within hearing. Enter ESTEBAN, with ALONSO]

Esteban

The way he behaved . . .
There was nearly a riot.
He's just a bully. Everyone was shocked.
And as for poor Jacinta . . .

Alonso

A terrible thing.
Such a gentle girl.

Esteban

And poor old Mengo beaten.

Alonso

They whipped him raw. Disgraceful.

Esteban

And we're the Council.
But what's the point of having a Council
When he kicks us all around like this?
I heard that just the other day
He caught Pedro Redondo's wife
Down by the waterside
And when he'd finished with her
He gave her to his Captain
Who took his turn, then passed her to the Sergeant,

Alonso

Just a moment. Who's that?

Fronoso

Only me. Can I have a word?

Alonso

Of course, Fronoso,
You're my favourite nephew.

Fronoso

Well, I want to ask you a favour, sir.

Esteban

Has that Commander Gomez
Given you trouble?

Fronoso All kinds of trouble.

Esteban I thought as much.

Fronoso The love you show me gives me the courage
To tell you this: I love Laurencia.
I want to marry her.
I'm sorry if you think this is too abrupt,
Blurting it out like this –

Esteban Not at all, Fronoso, your timing is perfect.
There's been a splinter of dread in my heart
But you've removed it and saved my life.
I'm grateful to God for your love for Laurencia.
I have always been a lucky man.

Alonso Shouldn't you ask Laurencia first?

Esteban Don't worry your head about that, Alonso.
Laurencia must have said yes
Or he wouldn't have dared to ask me.
Let's settle the question of the dowry.
Gold coins, I thought.

Fronoso I don't need any dowry.

Alonso You're a lucky man, Esteban,
He'll take her as nature made her.

Esteban I'll see what she has to say about dowries.

Alonso That'd be just as well.

Fronoso Certainly. I don't want
To trample on anyone's feelings,
Particularly hers.

Esteban Daughter! Laurencia!

[Enter LAURENCIA]

Esteban What an obedient daughter!
I call and she appears.

Laurencia I was shopping at the fruit-stall.

Esteban Laurencia,
I have been asked for your opinion.
Come over here please.
D'you think it's a good idea

For Fronoso here to get married
To your curly-haired friend Gila?
He is the most intelligent young man
In Fuente Ovejuna –

Laurencia Gila's getting married?
To Fronoso?

Esteban D'you think she's good enough for him?

Laurencia Too good if anything.

Esteban Very generous. But I don't agree.
Fronoso could do better for himself.
He might, for instance, marry you.

Laurencia You will have your awful little joke, won't you?
Even at your age.

Esteban Do you want this boy?

Laurencia I've always liked him.
He's always liked me.
I was biding my time.
But now, because of you know who –

Esteban Shall I say yes?

Laurencia You say it for me, sir.

Esteban Consider it said.

Alonso Come, let's go look
For Fronoso's father.

Esteban My son, about the dowry.
It'll be in gold.

Fronoso I'd rather not, sir,
I'd be insulted.

Esteban Swallow that insult, or you'll find instead
You're swallowing crusts of mouldy bread.

[Exit ESTEBAN and ALONSO]

Laurencia Tell me, Fronoso, are you happy?

Fronoso I'm too happy to say anything at all.

[Exit LAURENCIA and FRONOSO]

Scene 2

[Outside the city of Ciudad Real. A battle raging off-stage]

[Enter the MASTER of Calatrava, COMMANDER Gomez, FLORES and ORTUNO]

- Commander** Only one thing to do now, sir – take flight.
- Master** The city walls were flimsy.
Our enemies are mighty.
- Commander** It's cost them more men than they can count.
- Master** But they will never boast of winning
The standard of Calatrava.
- Commander** All your ambitions, Master,
Trampled in the mud.
- Master** What could I do? Fortune decides.
One day she lifts you to the throne;
Next day, down to the dungeons.
- Voices** [Off] Ferdinand and Isabella!
Victory! Victory!
Ferdinand and Isabella!
- Master** They're lighting beacons on the battlements.
Down from the windows of high towers
Their banners unroll like the tongues of dragons.
- Commander** An expensive celebration – paid for in blood.
- Master** Fernando Gomez,
I shall return to Calatrava.
- Commander** And I'll go back to Fuente Ovejuna.
You must make up your own mind
Whether to fight on in this cause
Or bow your knee to Ferdinand and Isabella.
- Master** I'll write to you about these matters.
- Commander** Time will advise you.
- Master** I am still young. I can't tell what will be.
But time's already tricked me cruelly.

[Exeunt]

Scene 3

[The Town Square in Fuente Ovejuna. The square is decorated for the celebration of a wedding. Music. Enter the wedding party for LAURENCIA and FRONDOSO. MUSICIANS, MENGO, FRONDOSO, LAURENCIA, PASCUALA, BARRILDO, ESTEBAN, JUAN ROJO, ALONSO, the priest FATHER Oliver etc. Villagers launch into a mocking song in which individuals improvise alternate lines to answer chorus lines]

- All** [Sing]
Viva! Viva! The newly-weds!
May they never sleep in different beds.
Viva! Viva! The happy pair!
Twenty-one children may they bear.
Viva! Viva! The happy bride!
She's not the one who is terrified!
Viva! Viva! The happy groom!
May his little pistol go boom boom boom.
Viva Laurencía!
Viva Frondoso!
Viva Laurencia!
Viva Frondoso!

[ALL dance]

- Mengo** What a lot of dog-eared doggerel.
- Barrildo** I'd like to see you make up a better song.
- Frondoso** Mengo knows more about whips than he does about song-making.
- Mengo** Just to wipe that grin off your face Frondoso,
Let me tell you this.
I know a man lives down the valley –
The Commander took him –
- Barrildo** – Shut up, Mengo.
Just hearing the name of that butcher
Puts a blight on the day.
- Mengo** One hundred strokes they gave me
For lawful possession of a slingshot.
But this man down the valley –
The Commander had him given
An enema of purple dye and pebbles.
I won't say the man's name

But he's highly respected by everyone.
How can we live with that sort of thing?

Barrildo It's 'the Commander's idea of a joke.

Mengo Enemas are no laughing matter.

Fronadoso Come on, Mengo, give us the song
You made up for our wedding.

Mengo [Sings]
I wish the bride and bridegroom
May live a cheerful life
And never hit each other
With frying pan or knife

May they have many children
And lots of meat and wine
And may they live forever
Or till they're ninety-nine

This is the song of Mengo
For two of his best friends
I do hope they'll be happy
And so my ditty ends.

[LAURENCIA *kisses* MENGO]

Fronadoso If you're a poet, I'm the Pope.

Barrildo And he made it up as he went along!

Mengo I'm so glad you like it. I'll do you another.
A song about cooking fritters.

[Sings]
Have you seen a fritter fryer
When he's frying fritters?
The fat in the frying pan,
The pan upon the fire.
The fritter fryer takes some batter
When the fat is fizzing,
He flings it in the frying pan
And blows the fire higher.

When the fritter fryer takes the
Fritters from the fryer,
They're different shapes and sizes –
Like a squid or like a ball.
There's pretty ones and ugly ones and

Some are quite disgusting
They're frizzled to a frazzle
Or they're hardly fried at all.

That's how I think of poets
Making up their verses.
Their batter is their matter
And the paper is their pan.
There's pretty ones and ugly ones and
Some are quite revolting,
And nobody can swallow them
Unless the poet can!

Barrildo That's enough clowning.
Silence for the bride!

Laurencia I'm going to kiss you all.

[Applause]

Esteban Please God
Give my daughter and her husband
A life as beautiful
As a deep lake in autumn time
Reflecting golden trees.

Fronadoso To us and all of you as well.

[Applause]

Father Oliver Now they are man and wife –
Give us more music!

Barrildo [Sings]
There was a maiden from the hill
Went walking by the stream
There came a knight from far away
He followed in a dream

She hid herself among the leaves
For she was young and shy
He sought her down the waterside
And he began to cry:

"Why do you hide yourself from me
O fairest of them all?
My love is long, my love is strong
And it breaks down every wall."

His sword it cut through bush and briar
Towards her hiding place.
She drew a branch in front of her
To hide her lily face.

But when he pulled that branch away
A bright snake did appear.
The snake did bite that lusty knight
And whispered in his ear:

"Why do you hide yourself from me,
O fairest of them all?
My love is long, my love is strong
And it breaks down every wall."

[Enter COMMANDER, FLORES, ORTUNO and SOLDIERS]

Commander Please don't stop the celebrations –
Not on my account.

Juan Rojo We are happy to obey you, sir, in this.
Perhaps you'd care to join our party?
How did your battle go?
Did you win? But what a question!

Fronoso I'm as good as dead.

Laurencia Fronoso – run!

Commander Oh no. Arrest him. Tie his hands.

Juan Rojo Give yourself up, lad.

Fronoso You want to see me killed?

Juan Rojo What do you mean?

[SOLDIERS seize and bind FRONOSO]

Commander I'm not the kind of soldier
Who shoots down unarmed peasants.
If I was these men of mine
Would've skewered this hooligan by now.
He goes to jail – and his father-in-law
Can sit in judgement on him.
Take him away.

[SOLDIERS drag off FRONOSO]

Pascuala But Commander, what's he done?

Commander He stole my crossbow.
Tried to murder me.

Pascuala Sir, he's just getting married.

Commander Fancy that, he's just getting married.
There are plenty of other louts in the town
The bride can marry instead.

Pascuala Please be generous, Commander.
Let him off this time.

Commander Pascuala, it's not up to me.
His offence was against the Order which I serve
And against the Grand Master, God protect him.
This man must be punished as an example
Or Fuente Ovejuna will breed more rebels.
He pointed a crossbow at my chest.

Esteban I'm his father-in-law.
Let me try to excuse him.
It's not amazing that a man who's a lover
Should occasionally forget himself.
You tried to take his wife away.
Wasn't it natural to defend her?

Commander Esteban – you're an idiot.

Esteban For your reputation's sake –

Commander – I never tried to take his wife.
The boy wasn't even married.

Esteban Yes, you did. Don't argue with me.
In Castile now a King and Queen
Are bringing peace to all the people
And stamping out petty tyrants.
When they have won the last of their battles
They will do well to cut down any man
Who preys upon the helpless.
Let King Ferdinand wear the red cross
For that insignia was made
Only for noble breasts.

Commander Remove his chain of office.

Esteban [Handing it over]
Take it, sir, you're welcome.

Commander [To FLORES and ORTUNO]
Use this chain. Beat the magistrate.
The way I do when I break a horse.

Esteban You are our overlord. Do what you like.

Pascuala You'd beat an old man?

Laurencia You only beat him because he's my father.
Why him? Why not me?

Commander Later perhaps. Take them both away.
I want a guard of ten soldiers on them.

[Exit COMMANDER and SOLDIERS with ESTEBAN and LAURENCIA under arrest]

Pascuala The wedding's turned into a funeral.
[Exit PASCUALA]

Barrildo Is nobody man enough to stand up to him?

Mengo I've had one whipping already.
My bruises are still ripe.

Barrildo Let's all speak out together.

Mengo Let's all keep quiet. They have the weapons.
I can still hear that leather crack
And I look like a raw steak from the back.

[End of Act 2]

Act 3

Scene 1

[A modest meeting room. A hot day. Enter ESTEBAN, ALONSO and BARRILDO]

Esteban Just look who's turned up for the meeting!

Barrildo Nobody.

Esteban Pathetic.

Barrildo Everybody in town was told.

Esteban Frondoso chained up in the jail.
Leonelo thrown out of town.
Laurencia taken God knows where.
Great God Almighty!

Barrildo And they beat you too.

[Enter JUAN ROJO and a FARMER]

Juan Rojo Keep your voices down.
It's meant to be a secret meeting.

Esteban It's a wonder we're not screaming.

[Enter MENGO]

Mengo Is this the secret meeting?

Esteban Sit down, Mengo.
Fellow citizens,
I speak as an old man
So pardon an old man's tears.
We ought to be in mourning
For the honour of our beloved town.
Which has been nailed into its coffin
And stuck in the cold depths of the earth.
How can we go on living, when all of us
Have been insulted by this thug?
Tell me, is there one man here
Whose life he hasn't wrecked?
You see, it's a disaster.

Juan Rojo Worse than an earthquake.

Esteban But who can help us?

Juan Rojo King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella
Have turned Cordoba into a peaceful place.
Let's send two council members
To ask them to save us.

Barrildo King Ferdinand's too busy fighting battles
To worry about Fuente Ovejuna.

Farmer If anyone wants to know what I think,
I think we should abandon the town,
That's what I think.

Alonso They steal our wives and daughters.
They treat us like slaves.

Juan Rojo So what can the town do?

Alonso Kill these soldiers before they kill us.
There's plenty of us – not many of them.

Mengo They can always get more.
We can't.

Barrildo Let's share out the few weapons we have – and fight!

Esteban God and the King and Queen – they're our only rulers –
Not these strutting military men.
What have we got to lose?

Mengo Now just a moment, sir, hang on.
Let's show a little caution, shall we?
I represent the ordinary shepherd
And he's always the one who comes off worst
When important people fight it out.
I would suggest that we wait and see –
Speaking on behalf of the ordinary shepherd, that is.

[Enter LAURENCIA, *disbevelled*]

Laurencia Out of my way and let me in
To this all-wise, all-male Council meeting.
You may not allow a woman to vote
But you can't stop her yelling.
Don't you know me, for God's sake?

Esteban Yes, you're my daughter.

Juan Rojo Laurencia!

Laurencia Hard to recognise me, isn't it,
The state I'm in?

Esteban My daughter!

Laurencia Don't call me that.

Esteban Why not?

Laurencia For lots of good reasons –
The chief ones are these:
Because you let those soldiers take me
Without lifting a finger.
Because you left it to Frondoso
To protect me when that's a father's job
Till after the wedding night.
For, even if you buy a diamond ring
It isn't yours till it's on your finger.
So why did Frondoso have to run
The gauntlet of those vicious troops?

Esteban They beat me too, you know, when I protested.

Laurencia They did, yes, I'm sorry, yes they did, but these others –
When the Commander took me off
You stood and goggled like cowardly shepherds
While the wolf ran off with your lamb.
Oh, did they hold you back with swords?
Well, they held me down with violent abuse,
With violent threats, with violent hands,
With every kind of violence
So he could violate me.

Doesn't my hair tell its own story?
Can you see the blood on my skirt?
Can you see the bruises
Where they clutched me?
Where they hit me?
Can you see anything at all?

Call yourselves respected councillors?
Call yourselves my kinsmen?
Your guts should burst out of your bellies
To see Laurencia like this.

Fuente Ovejuna – the spring for sheep.
Sheep, that's all you are, a flock of sheep.
Sheepspring's the right name for this town.
Give me your weapons

You're a heap of stones,
A shelf of plaster idols,
A knot of cold-hearted snakes –
No, that's not fair on snakes –
A snake at least
Follows the hunters who steal its eggs
And lashes out, biting into their legs,
Injecting venom before they can reach
The safety of their saddles.

You gang of rabbits – stay down your holes!
Ancient cockerels, loafing round the dunghill
While other men screw your wives.
Give me your swords.
Take my sewing needles.

My God, do we women have to show you
How to smash those bastards
And wash yourself clean in a trough of their blood?

Stones! Rabbits! Sheep! Eunuchs!

Tomorrow we women will dress you up
In our best skirts and blouses.
We'll paint and powder you prettily
And lead you round the houses.

Listen, the Commander has made up his mind
To murder Frondoso at his headquarters.
There'll be no trial. There'll be no verdict.
And maybe his body will be found in the river.
And maybe his body will never be found.

And when the Commander takes the rest of you,
One by one, week by week, and strings you up
While your fellow-councillors hold secret meetings –
I'll be laughing my head off – little boys!
O when he's killed all the men of this town
Then the age of Amazons will return
And women will show the world what courage means.

Esteban Laurencia, I won't swallow those insults.
I'll go out alone to fight, even though
An army of devils marches against me.

Juan Rojo I'm scared, it's true.
But I'll come too.

Alonso Let's risk everything and die together.

Barrildo Tie a rag to the top of a stick,
Hold it high in the wind.
We'll kill those monsters.

Juan Rojo What sort of order shall we march in?

Mengo Just kill 'em, don't worry about what order.
Stamp along in a thumping great mob,
All of the townspeople, all together.

Esteban Take crossbows, lances,
Kitchen knives, hammers –

Mengo Slingshots?

Esteban Anything that can cut or batter.

Mengo Long live our lords—
The King and Queen,
Ferdinand and Isabella!

All Long live the King and Queen!

Mengo Death to all traitors!
Death to all tyrants!

All Death to all traitors!
Death to all tyrants!

[Exit all but LAURENCIA. She goes to the window]

Laurencia When sheep march out to the attack
It's terrible news for the wolf-pack.
[Shouts]

Women of Fuente Ovejuna!
Come and win your good names back!
Women of Fuente Ovejuna!
Everyone of you is needed!

[Enter PASCUALA, JACINTA and other WOMEN]

Pascuala What's up? What are you shouting about?

Laurencia Don't you see the men are marching out
To assassinate Commander Gomez?
Men, young lads and little boys,
All rushing out to finish him off.
D'you think it's right for the men of the town
To tackle this alone?
They've suffered less
Than any of us women.

- Jacinta** What can we do?
- Laurencia** Form up in ranks and take part in an action
Which will shake the world.
Jacinta, because of what they did to you,
You shall march at the head of our column.
- Jacinta** They hurt you as much as me.
- Laurencia** Pascuala, you be standard bearer.
- Pascuala** Just give me a moment to hoist
The flag up on a pole.
I'll bear it proudly, just watch me.
- Laurencia** No time for embroidering banners.
Hold up your shawls, let them flow in the wind.
- Pascuala** We ought to elect a captain.
- Laurencia** No.
- Pascuala** Why not?
- Laurencia** Because we can fight bravely enough
Without a leader telling us how to die.

Laurencia and the Women*[March and sing]*

The hands of ladies and gentlemen
Are soft as Chinese silk.
The hands of ladies and gentlemen
Are white as purest milk.
But we're not ladies or gentlemen
And we're not soft or white,
For we are women with peasants' hands
And our hands can caress or fight.

For our hands fight the tough old soil
With hoe and spade and plough.
They light the fires and pour the oil
And they milk the goat and cow.

And our hands help old lives to end
And they help new lives to start.
And they show affection to our friends
And put courage in our lover's heart,
And put courage in our lover's heart.

The hands of ladies and gentlemen
Are soft as Chinese silk.
The hands of ladies and gentlemen
Are white as purest milk.
But we're not ladies or gentlemen
And we're not soft or white,
For we are women with peasants' hands
And our hands can caress or fight.

And our hands plant the corn you eat
And weave the clothes you wear,
And scrub the floors and cook the meat
And they comb the children's hair.

But if a wolf attacks our flocks
Our hands will take its life
With crossbows and with well-aimed rocks,
With a sickle and a carving knife,
With a sickle and a carving knife.

Oh the hands of ladies and gentlemen . . .

[LAURENCIA and the WOMEN march out of sight]

Scene 2

[Inside the Commander's country house. Enter FRONDOSO, his hands bound, led by FLORES and ORTUNO and followed by the COMMANDER]

Commander String him up on the beam
And then we'll have some fun with him.

Flores Right you are, Commander.

Fronadoso They all call you Commander.
I know a better name for you.

[COMMANDER hits FRONDOSO]

Commander Rope over the beam,
Haul him up backwards by the arms.
Drop him a few times.
And then we can begin.

Fronadoso I could've killed you that day.

[Sounds of off-stage singing and marching]

Flores What's happening out there?

Ortuno We're going to be interrupted.
[*Looks out of the window*]
They're breaking down the gates, sir.

Laurencia [Off]
Break it down!
Tear it down!
Burn it down!

Ortuno It's a mutiny, sir.
The whole damn town.

Commander Rebelling against me?

Flores They're armed. They're out for blood.
The gates are down, sir.

Commander Untie the lad.
Fronodoso, you've got to go
And calm them down.
[FLORES *unties* FRONDOSO]

Fronodoso I'll do what I can.

Commander What's the problem?
What's got into them?

Fronodoso Love.
[*Exit* FRONDOSO]

Mengo [Off]
Long live Ferdinand and Isabella!
Death to all traitors!

Flores For Christ's sake, sir,
Don't let them corner you.

Commander There's guards outside.
They'll never get in.

Flores When people are pushed so far
That they take up arms
They don't give them up till they've tasted blood.

Commander We'll shoot them down.

Ortuno Too many of them, sir.

Fronodoso [Off]
Long live Fuente Ovejuna!

Commander They're mad. But I can cure them.

Flores We're mad if we stay here.
[*Enter* TOWNSPEOPLE *including* ESTEBAN, JUAN ROJO, PASCUALA, LAURENCIA, JACINTA, MENG0, FRONDOSO, BARRILDO *etc.*, *all armed with weapons and farming implements*]

Esteban The tyrant and his apes!
Long live Fuente Ovejuna!
Death to all traitors!

Commander Now just a minute . . .

Laurencia We've no time to waste.
We're here to put things right.

Commander Just tell me your complaints:
If I've made some mistakes, I'll do my utmost
To make up for them - I just want to say -

Townspeople Fuente Ovejuna! Fuente Ovejuna!
Death to rapists! Death to traitors!

Commander Listen to me! I'm talking to you.
I'm the Commander of this district.

Laurencia Our only commanders are the King and Queen.

Commander Wait. Let me -

Townspeople Fuente Ovejuna! Fuente Ovejuna!
Death to the Commander!

Commander I must appeal to the women of the town -

Laurencia We're not women - we're soldiers now.

Pascuala Come on, let's drink his blood.

Jacinta Cut him up for mincemeat!

Pascuala Blood and mincemeat!
[TOWNSPEOPLE *have closed in on the* COMMANDER, FLORES *and* ORTUNO]

Esteban Try this, Commander!

Commander You're killing me.
Have pity, Esteban. Mercy!

Barrildo Here's Captain Flores.

Mengo Let him have it.
He gave me two thousand lashes.

- Fronoso** I won't be happy until he's dead.
- Laurencia** Let me at him.
- Pascuala** Easy now. Make sure they don't escape.
- Barrildo** Don't give me prayers!
Don't give me I'm so sorry!
You're a toy soldier!
- Laurencia** Pascuala, I'm going in for the kill.
My knife's so thirsty that it's shaking.
- Barrildo** I've found that Sergeant.
- Fronoso** Carve him up.
[FLORES *breaks out of the mob*, MENGO *after him*]
- Flores** Mengo, have mercy.
I was under orders.
- Mengo** It wasn't just my flogging.
You pimped for the Commander.
- Pascuala** Let him go, Mengo.
The women want him.
- Mengo** Take him, you're welcome.
- Pascuala** I'll pay him for your whipping.
- Mengo** Carry on.
- Jacinta** Kill the bastard!
- Flores** Torn to pieces by women!
- Pascuala** Thought you liked women?
- Jacinta** Cut his throat.
- Flores** Ladies! Mercy!
[ORTUNO *breaks out of the mob*, *chased by* LAURENCIA]
- Ortuno** It wasn't me. It wasn't me!
- Laurencia** I know who you are.
Down on your knees.
Women, here's one more.
- Pascuala** I'll kill him if it kills me.
- Townspeople** Long live Fuente Ovejuna!

[TOWNSPEOPLE *kill* ORTUNO. FLORES, *badly wounded*, *manages to escape as* TOWNSPEOPLE *crowd round* COMMANDER'S *corpse*]

Scene 3

[*The Palace of* FERDINAND *and* ISABELLA. *Enter* KING *Ferdinand*, QUEEN *Isabella* *and* Don MANRIQUE]

- Manrique** We moved at the right time, your majesties.
We won the day with little opposition.
Now our forces occupy Ciudad Real
In case the enemy attacks again.
- King** Well done. We shall send reinforcements.
That city commands the pass to Portugal.
We intend to hold it forever –
A bastion against the Portuguese.
[FLORES *is helped on*, *wounded*]
- Flores** Your majesties. Bad news.
The worst atrocity.
- Queen** Tell us.
- Flores** Your majesty, my wounds.
I can't hold out much longer.
They brought me here from Fuente Ovejuna.
The people of that town, the men and the women,
Murdered Commander Gomez.
They worked themselves up
Over nothing at all –
Tore him to shreds, sir.
The whole damned town,
Fuente Ovejuna,
Shouting: Down with the tyrant!
Got so excited by their own shouting
They broke down their doors of his house
And in they burst
And they took no notice when he swore on his honour
To repay anything he owed them,
They took no notice and they struck him down,
Stabbing right through the red cross on his breast
With a thousand vicious gashes,
And they picked him up and sent him flying down
From a high window

And a mob of howling women underneath
Caught his body on the points of pitchforks,
Tossed him, caught him,
Tossed him, dropped him,
Dragged him into a barn.
They fought each other to pull out his hair,
Scratched his face to pieces with their nails.
It was hysteria, your majesties,
So bad that when they'd finished hacking him
The biggest pieces left were his two ears.
They burned his coat of arms.
They sacked his house and looted it.

I was mobbed too,
But managed to find a hiding place.
From there I watched and saw all this.
Later I escaped, was found by your soldiers
And brought here.

Your majesties, punish these barbarians.
The Commander's blood cries out for justice.

King Captain Flores, you may rest assured
They will not go unpunished.
Don Manrique, I appoint you Judge.
Go find out all the facts of the case
And punish the offenders.

Queen Send a strong troop of soldiers with the Judge.
He'll need protection in such a place.

King Bind up this soldier's wounds and give
Him all your care —

Flores —I do not want to live.

[*Exeunt*]

Scene 4

[*The Town Square at Fuente Ovejuna. Enter TOWNSPEOPLE and MUSICIANS celebrating, with The Commander's head stuck on a pole*]

Townspeople [*Sing*]
Have you seen our Commander
With his boots and medals on?
Have you seen our Commander?
No I think our Commander's gone.

Barrildo Frondoso — sing your verse.

Frondoso Here goes — and if you don't like it,
You make up a better one.

[*Sings*]

The first time I saw the Commander
He was strutting down the street.
The last time I saw the Commander
He looked like sausage-meat.

Townspeople —Have you seen our Commander
With his boots and medals on?
Have you seen our Commander?
No I think our Commander's gone.

Laurencia — Your turn, Barrildo.

Barrildo Listen carefully.
Took a long time to compose this.

Pascuala Well, sing it slowly then.

Barrildo [*Sings*]
The first time I saw the Commander
He was courting someone's wife.
The last time I saw the Commander
He was pleading for his life.

Townspeople Have you seen our Commander?
With his boots and medals on?
Have you seen our Commander? —
No I think our Commander's gone.

Laurencia Mengo's turn.

Frondoso Come on, Mengo.

Mengo My verse is very tasty.

Pascuala Like tripe.

Mengo The first time I saw the Commander
He was whipping me half-dead.
The last time I saw the Commander
The Commander lost his head.

Townspeople Have you seen our Commander
With his boots and medals on?
Have you seen our Commander?
No I think the Commander's gone.

Esteban Take his head away and give it decent burial.

Mengo Yes, he's a miserable looking sod.
 [ALONSO *brings out two glorious coats of arms*]
 Pascuala What are those for?
 Alonso They are the coats of arms of our true lords – King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella.
 Esteban Hang them here, each side of the Town Hall door.
 [JUAN ROJO *brings out a simple plaque painted with a sheep rampant and a fountain*]
 Juan Rojo And here's Fuente Ovejuna's coat of arms.
 Frondoso It's a fine piece of work. Who painted it?
 [MENGO *tries to look modest*]
 Laurencia Hang it between the other two.
 A new day is dawning for Fuente Ovejuna.
 Esteban But it won't be long before the dark arrives.
 Mengo What do you mean?
 Esteban The King and Queen are sending a Judge. He and his investigators will do anything to find out who killed the Commander. We must all agree on what we're going to tell them.
 Frondoso What can we say?
 Esteban If they ask you who killed him And they put you to the torture Die saying "Fuente Ovejuna". Nobody budge from that.
 Frondoso And it's the truth – Fuente Ovejuna did kill the Commander.
 Esteban What will you say?
 All [Raggedly] Fuente Ovejuna.
 Esteban I'd better show you what I mean. Let's rehearse it. I'll be the torturer. Now who can be the one who's being questioned? Ah yes . . . Mengo!

Mengo Couldn't you find someone feebler than me?
 Esteban Impossible. Come on, man. We'll only pretend to torture you.
 Mengo All right. Do your worst. Pretending.
 Esteban Mengo, who killed the Commander?
 Mengo Fuente Ovejuna did it.
 Esteban What if I torture you? Will you change your story?
 Mengo Not even if you kill me dead. It was Fuente Ovejuna.
 Esteban Confess, you scum.
 Mengo All right, I'll confess.
 Esteban Who did it then?
 Mengo Fuente Ovejuna.
 Esteban Tear out his nails.
 Mengo That's nothing. Fuente Ovejuna!
 [Enter ALONSO, agitated]
 Alonso The Judge has arrived. With a troop of soldiers.
 Esteban Everyone, go to your homes.
 Alonso They're rounding up everyone.
 Esteban Don't be afraid. You all know what you have to say?
 All Yes!
 Alonso What's that?
 Esteban When we're asked who killed the Commander We say – Mengo, who killed the Commander?
 Mengo Fuente Ovejuna!
 [Enter MANRIQUE with SOLDIERS]
 Manrique Ladies and gentlemen, Judgement has come to Fuente Ovejuna. I represent the King and Queen today And I am here to investigate the death of Commander Gomez de Guzman. I will conduct my interviews in the Town Hall And I want to talk with every one of you.
 [Exeunt]

Scene 5

[The MASTER of Calatrava's tent. The MASTER seated, a SOLDIER standing]

- Master** That was a terrible way to die.
You, I shall have you killed
For bringing me such news.
- Soldier** I'm only the messenger, sir,
I meant no harm.
- Master** A town of savages!
They dared do such a thing?
Well, I shall take five hundred men
And Fuente Ovejuna shall be burned.
That town will be a black patch on the ground.
I'll burn their bones and their children's bones.
- Soldier** Control your anger, sir.
The people of Fuente Ovejuna have declared their loyalty
To Ferdinand and Isabella.
You're on the wrong side of the King already.
- Master** How can they declare for the King and Queen
When the Order of Calatrava owns their town?
- Soldier** You'll have to settle that with King Ferdinand.
I suppose you could bring a law-suit against him.
- Master** Idiot! How could I ever win?
No, I'll bank down my anger
And seek an audience with the King and Queen.
I have been a rebel, but I may be pardoned
By such a gracious Queen and King.
Youth's an excuse for anything.

[Exeunt]

Scene 6

[The Town Square. FRONDOSO and LAURENCIA stand and listen to the interrogations taking place off stage]

- Laurencia** My love, I'm terrified they'll kill you.
For God's sake, get out of this town.
- Fronadoso** I'm not going to abandon my friends
Just to save my own skin.

[Screams from the ball!]

- Laurencia** Listen. What's happening.
- Manrique** [Off]
Come on, grandad, I want the truth.
- Fronadoso** They're torturing an old man.
- Laurencia** Bastards.
- Esteban** [Off]
Give me a minute's peace!
- Manrique** [Off]
Slacken off a bit.
Tell me, who killed Commander Gomez?
- Esteban** [Off]
Fuente Ovejuna did it.
- Laurencia** God bless you, father.
- Fronadoso** He's a brave man.
- Manrique** [Off]
Take that bey.
That's right.
I know you know who did it, you little pig.
You won't talk?
Tighten it!
Who killed him?
- Boy** [Off]
Fuente Ovejuna, sir.
- Manrique** [Off]
Peasants!
I'll hang the lot of you with my own two hands.
Who killed the Commander?
- Fronadoso** He's only a boy.
- Boy** [Off]
Fuente Ovejuna!
- Laurencia** It's a brave town.
- Fronadoso** Brave and strong.
- Manrique** [Off]
Now that woman.
Hold her down.
Begin!

Laurencia He's going mad.

Manrique [Off]
I'll skin you all alive.
I'm warning you.
Come on, who killed the Commander?

Pascuala [Off]
Fuente Ovejuna.

Manrique [Off]
Now! Show her what pain is!

Fronoso Pascuala! She'll never hold out.

Laurencia Pascuala won't break.

Manrique [Off]
I think they're enjoying it.
Don't play games with me, girl.
Let her have it.

Pascuala [Off]
Jesus Christ!

Manrique [Off]
I said let her have it!
Are you deaf?

Pascuala [Off]
Fuente Ovejuna did it.

Manrique [Off]
I'll take the fat one next.

Laurencia Poor old Mengo! That must be him.

Fronoso Mengo! He's bound to crack.

Mengo [Off]
Oh! Oh!

Manrique [Off]
Turn it again.

Mengo [Off]
Oh!

Manrique [Off]
Tighter. Do I have to help you?

Mengo [Off]
Oh! Oh!

Manrique [Off]
Who killed the Commander?

Mengo [Off]
Stop! I'll tell you, sir.

Manrique [Off]
Slacken it off a little.

Fronoso He's going to talk.

Manrique [Off]
Ready to start again?

Mengo [Off]
I know who killed him!

Manrique [Off]
Who?

Mengo [Off]
Fuente Ovejuna.

Manrique [Off]
A townful of idiots!
They're laughing at the pain.
I was sure I'd break that fat one down.
Oh, let them go for the moment.

[Enter MENGO, ESTEBAN, PASCUALA and BOY, with other TOWNSPEOPLE]

Fronoso Mengo! You're a hero.

Esteban That's what I say too.

Mengo Oh God!

Esteban [Producing a flask] Have a drink, Mengo.

Mengo [Drinking and spluttering]
What is that stuff?

Esteban Home-brewed brandy. Don't you like it?

Mengo Oh God. Give me another go at it.

Fronoso Must be good.

Esteban Have another.

Mengo Yes please.

Fronoso You deserve it.

Laurencia Put a blanket round him, he's shivering.

Esteban Want some more?

Mengo Well, just a few more.

Pascuala Pass it round, we all need a drink.
[Drinks] Oh good Lord above.

Laurencia What's the matter?

Pascuala It's a bit rough. [Takes another swig]

Fronoso [Producing another flask] Here, try mine.
Mengo, who killed the Commander?

Mengo Fuente Ovejuna did it.
[Exit all but LAURENCIA and FRONOSO]

Fronoso Tell me, my love, now we're all alone . . .
Who did kill the Commander?

Laurencia Fuente Ovejuna, my darling.

Fronoso Who killed him?

Laurencia Fronoso, I'm scared.
Well, it was Fuente Ovejuna.

Fronoso And me, what do I kill you with?

Laurencia What with? With loving you so much.
[Exit LAURENCIA and FRONOSO]

Scene 7

[The Palace of KING Ferdinand and QUEEN Isabella. Enter KING and QUEEN, meeting]

Queen How lucky I am, my lord,
To welcome you home again
To your palace and my arms.

King My eyes are stinging with the dust
Which rises from the yellow roads –
I look at you – my eyes feel young again.
But tell me, what is happening in Castile?

Queen Castile is peaceful once again,
Orderly, in control.

King Hardly surprising, under your rule, my lady.
[Enter CIMBRANOS]

Cimbranos The Master of Calatrava
Implores you to grant him an audience.

Queen I've heard so much talk about the boy
That I'm fascinated to see what he's like.

King He's a very young man –
They're all much the same.

Cimbranos He has fought bravely in two battles
And he has aged considerably.
[Exit CIMBRANOS. Enter the MASTER of Calatrava. He kneels]

Master The Master of Calatrava
Most humbly begs your royal forgiveness.
I was wrong, I was deceived.
I struggled against you and I stole from you –
And all because I am so young.
The bad advice of Commander Gomez
And my own vanity and self-interest
Sent me galloping headlong down a wicked road –
So I beg for your forgiveness.
And if you can forget my sins
I will engage from this day on
To serve you most wholeheartedly,
For I would ride along with you
To that great battleground to which you go
And there, in bright Granada, there I'll prove my courage.
My sword, the moment it's unsheathed
Will spread terror amongst your foes
And you shall see red crosses spring
From all Granada's battlements.
And furthermore, I'll bring with me
Five hundred soldiers and a vow
That I will serve you all my life.

King Rise, Master, from your knees.
You came to us bravely of your own accord,
So you are very welcome.

Master You are the healer of the sick.

Queen Your prowess in battle, I am told,
Even excels your skill with words.

Master You are as beautiful as Esther was
And you, sir, merciful as Xerxes.

[Enter CIMBRANOS]

Cimbranos Your majesties, your Judge
Is back from Fuente Ovejuna.

King [To QUEEN] You shall pass judgement on these rioters.

Master It is, of course, your Majesty, your concern,
But were it mine, I would teach them a lesson
For killing their Commander.

King It is no longer your concern.

[Enter MANRIQUE]

Manrique Your majesties, I travelled to Fuente Ovejuna
And, as you requested,
Conducted my inquiry
With care and diligence.
However, in all the evidence I found
We do not have one single page,
No, not a single sentence written down
Which names the perpetrator of this crime.

The people of the town were stubborn.
Whenever I asked the name of the murderer
All they would say was: "Fuente Ovejuna".

I interrogated three hundred of them.
All the approved tortures, rigorously applied.
Old men, women, ten year old boys,
But I could get nothing out of them
Except the cry of "Fuente Ovejuna".

Queen But if it's impossible
To find out who it was
We'll either have to pardon them
Or execute them all.

Manrique They are all here.

King Let them be brought before us.

[Enter the TOWNSPEOPLE of Fuente Ovejuna, guarded]

Laurencia Is that the King and Queen?

Fronoso The rulers of Castile and Aragon.

Laurencia Oh, they are so beautiful.
St Anthony's blessings fall upon them!

Queen Are these the barbarians, the murderers?

Esteban Your majesties,
The town of Fuente Ovejuna stands before you.
A town which is loyal and longs to serve you.
The cruelty of the late Commander
Was the root of all our troubles.
He stole our farms. He raped our women.
He had no pity for anyone.

Fronoso That's right.
This is the young woman
God sent me for a bride.
I was the luckiest man alive –

Laurencia – But on our wedding night
The Commander and his men carried me off –

Fronoso And she resisted and they hurt her –

Mengo Permission, sir, to say a few words?
Permission, madam? Prepare yourselves
To be dumbfounded by my account
Of the behaviour of Fernando Gomez.

Because I tried to protect a young woman
From being abducted by his bullies,
That little Nero had me flogged
Till my back looked like a side of smoked salmon.
Three burly soldiers beat my drum
With such rhythmic energy
That I've had to spend my life savings on
Linament and myrtle powder.
I can prove all this, your majesties.
Would you care to inspect my scars?

King Later, perhaps.

Esteban Sir, we wish to live under your rule.
You are our rightful overlord.
My lady, we ask for your leniency

Hoping you'll understand
The innocence and courage of our town.

Queen

No written evidence exists
Naming the person who
Committed this most vicious crime –
So we must pardon you.

[*Cheers*]

King

Fuente Ovejuna, you turned to us for help,
Therefore your town shall be
Ruled by ourselves from this day on –
And we'll watch you carefully,
Till we can find a new Commander
Who's fit to govern such a town
As Fuente Ovejuna.

Laurencia

Your gracious majesties, we must
Thank you for being both kind and just
And it's on this happy note, good friends,
That the story of Fuente Ovejuna ends.

[*The End*]

Lost in a Mirror

(It Serves Them Right)