

Sorry, not delicately put,
I'm afraid, but there it is.
The lovesick; a common ailment
in which the senses rise up,
leading to fits of wildest fury.
But we'll have her back on her feet
before you can say 'catatonia'.

SANCHO: Her fits have become worse of late.

VERINO: Ah, that was always in the runes.

Posidonios of Athens
discovered that the membranes swell,
constricting the supply of blood
to the equitable humours.
There are a thousand and one cures;
as many as we've had hot dinners,
you and I, but there's one danger:
remove the madman from her sight
and your niece will surely die.

SANCHO: How can I keep them together?

VERINO: Ah, I see you follow my drift.
You must go to her and pander.

SANCHO: Pander?

VERINO: Yes, to her obsession.

Tell her she will indeed marry
the object of her delusion.
We turn to nature for our cure,
to the natural principle
that woman forms herself in man
as matter itself seeks out form.

SANCHO: Marrying Orlando would cure her?

VERINO: As surely as day follows night.

She would return to her first sense,
shattered by her late obsession.

I quote from the Master Galen:
 'Lock ye not the madman away
 for melancholy grows apace
 with darkness and with solitude.'
 His meaning is, I think, crystal clear.

SANCHO: Indeed. You mean...

VERINO: What day is it?

SANCHO: Tuesday... Shrove Tuesday!... Carnival!

VERINO: When all Valencia celebrates.
 Let them join the celebrations
 to disperse those grey dense vapours
 and then we'll feed her heart's desire.
 We'll marry them this afternoon.
 By night she'll be as right as rain.

SANCHO: There's no question of a wedding night.

VERINO: The subject is, of course, delicate.
 Have no fear. Feed her obsession
 and her sanity is assured.

SANCHO: Talk of the devil... and here's his monkey.

VERINO: Monkey?

SANCHO: Orlando's coming down.

Scene 2

Enter FLORIANO, muttering.

FLORIANO: They can do what they will to me,
 kill me, hang, draw and quarter me,
 but they're not going to make me go.

SANCHO: What's worrying you, Orlando?

FLORIANO: Pisano wants me to go out
 to beg for alms this afternoon.