

## A Pragma-Stylistic Analysis of Serafín and Joaquín Alvarez Quintero s' "Sunny morning"

Asst. Lect. Khawla Shukor Mahmood Mohammed  
General Directorate of Education in Diayla  
[khawlashukor@yahoo.com](mailto:khawlashukor@yahoo.com)

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### Abstract:

Pragma-stylistic analysis of literary texts contributes to the readers' understanding of those texts as it would be a tool for them to interpret and analyze literary discourse. This paper explores the types of speech acts in the Quintero brothers' "Sunny morning" from a pragma-stylistic point of view. It seeks to show the hierarchy of speech acts to know which type is more dominant than the other. Data analysis shows that representatives score the highest percentage which is (60.93%). Next, directives occupy the second level with (24.37%). Then, expressives are found as they score (7.81%). In the fourth level, commissives are located with (6.56%). Finally, only one instance of declaratives has been identified in the play under study. Thus, they score (0.31%).

**Keywords:** Pragmatic stylistics, direct speech act, indirect speech act.

## تحليل تداولي اسلوبي لمسرحية سيرافين وخواكين الفيريس

### كوانتيرو "صباح شمس"

م.م. خولة شكر محمود محمد

وزارة التربية / المديرية العامة لتربية ديالى

### المخلص:

إن التحليل التداولي الاسلوبي للنصوص الادبية يسهم في فهم القراء لهذه النصوص حيث يكون اداة لتفسير وتحليل الخطاب الادبي. ان هذه الدراسة تستكشف انواع الافعال الكلامية في مسرحية الاخوة كوانتيرو "صباح شمس" ذات الفصل الواحد من وجهة نظر تداولية اسلوبية. فهي تهدف الى بيان التسلسل الهرمي للافعال الكلامية ومعرفة اي منهم اكثر ظهورا من غيره. اظهر تحليل البيانات ان الافعال التمثيلية قد سجلت اعلى نسبة حيث بلغت (60.93%). ثم الافعال الامرية التي احتلت المركز الثاني بنسبة (24.37%). بعد ذلك نجد الافعال التعبيرية التي سجلت (7.81%). في المرتبة الرابعة قد استقرت الافعال الالزامية بنسبة (6.56%). اخيرا قد سجلت حالة واحدة فقط من الافعال الاعلانية في المسرحية قيد الدراسة. وهكذا قد سجلت نسبة (0.31%).

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** التداولية الاسلوبية، الافعال الكلامية المباشرة، الافعال الكلامية غير المباشرة.

### **1. Introduction**

In order to work out the meaning of literary texts, readers are required to study and understand the language of these texts. Stylistic approach to literary texts does not only involve linguistic textual analysis but also encourages readers to interact with textual structure to understand meaning. It is necessary to study linguistic aspects of literary discourse. Although any literary text lends itself to different interpretations, pragma-stylistic analysis is certainly the tool that help readers and researchers describe literary works. In other words, one can deeply penetrate into the world created by the writers of these works ( Timucin,2010:129).

### **2. Pragmatics**

Pragmatics is branch of linguistics that is concerned with studying language in use and in social context. It originates in the semiotic theories of Charles Morris (1938) who proposed that pragmatics is one of the three divisions of semiotics (along with syntax and semantics). However, it was philosophers like J. L. Austin, Paul Grice and John Searle in the 1950s and 1960s who laid the basic tenets of pragmatic analysis. They propose that people do not use language to say words only but to do things or perform acts. Literary pragmatics and pragmatic stylistics share these same interests concerning literary texts. While various theories and researchers pay different levels of attention to the formal qualities of literary texts, pragmatics is interested in understanding language, including literary language, as it is an important form of social action (Warner,2014:362).

### **3. Pragmatic Stylistics**

Pragmatic Literary Stylistics studies "the ways in which current theories of language in use and communicative processes are applied to the analysis, interpretation and definition of literary texts "(Chapman and Clark,2014:1).

Mey (1999:12) proposes that literary pragmatics studies "the kinds of effects that authors, as text producers, set out to obtain, using the resources of language in their efforts to establish a 'working cooperation' with their audiences, the consumers of the texts". Stylistics is pragmatic in away or another because it is concerned with understanding the relationship between the characteristics of a text and its effects on readers. However, pragmatic theories can make stylisticians create a relationship between the readers' points of views, impressions and evaluations of style on one hand and the conventions, norms and values of the societies in which texts are produced and received on the other. Pragmatic theories can also help readers examine the ways in which style influences them socially, that's whether a literary text is socially or culturally appropriate or not (Warner,2014:373).

#### 4. Speech Act Theory

The basic principles of speech act theory were put by the Oxford philosopher Austin. Speech act theory states that people do not use language to say things but to do things. The term speech act does not refer to the act of speaking only, but to the whole interactive situation, involving the context of the utterance (that is, the situation in which the speech takes place, the interlocutors and any preceding verbal or physical interaction) and paralinguistic characteristics that play significant role in the meaning of communication. Thus, pragmatics is concerned with contextualised speech (Leech 1983: x) and ( Yule 1996: 3–8). Pragmatics is not concerned with whether or not an utterance is grammatically correct, but whether it is an appropriate or not, whether the speaker accomplishes his communicative goal or not. For example, when the speaker says 'Cold, isn't it outside in a winter's day' may be no more than a phatic expression to start conversation; if the speaker is talking to his host indoors, it may be intended as a request to turn on the central heating; if the interlocutors are looking at a house with an intention to buy, it may be perceived metaphorically as a refusal to buy it (Black, 2006: 17).

Speech acts can be analyzed into three levels: locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary. A locutionary act refers to the actual utterance or the performance of speech. The illocutionary act refers to the intention of the speaker that he wants to the addressee to do. The perlocutionary act is the effect of the speaker's utterance on the hearer. If the speaker asks the hearer to close the door and the hearer does so, then the speaker is said to have fulfilled his communicative aim. It is not an easy task to reveal or discover the intentions of authors, i.e., the perlocutionary aim of most literary works is fruitless. Doubtfully, most literary works have no perlocutionary aim in any obvious sense (though one might claim that Dickens, for instance, always criticizes the social, political and economic corruption in his contemporary era and seeks to make a social reform through his writings). In literary works, characters surely have perlocutionary aims (Black, 2006: 18).

In order for a speech act to be well formed, certain circumstances must be available otherwise the speech act is said to be infelicitous or inappropriate. These are known as felicity conditions (ibid.). Felicity conditions are certain circumstances that are necessary to the success of the speech act. Without felicity conditions the speech act is said to be infelicitous or inappropriate. For example the sentence: "I sentence you to six months in prison" is infelicitous or inappropriate if the speaker is not a specific person in a special context (in this case, a judge in a court room) (Yule, 1996: 50). Cruse (2000: 343) defines felicity conditions or happiness

conditions as" contextual conditions which must be fulfilled before a speech act can be said to have been properly performed".

### **5. Direct Speech Acts**

A speech act is said to be direct when there is a direct correspondence between the grammatical form of an utterance and the function it performs for example, (Shut the door) where the form is the imperative which is directly mapped with the communicative function which is a command or a request. Thus, it is a direct speech act (Black,2006:19). In addition to that, the use of the explicit performatives, that have the declarative form, are also considered direct speech acts, because they their illocutionary force is overtly stated by the performative verb in the main part of the sentence. On the other hand, if there is no match between a sentence type and its illocutionary force, indirect speech act is identified. Thus, when an explicit performative is used to make a request, as in (I request you to pass the salt), it serves as a direct speech act; the same is true in the sentence (pass the salt) where the imperative is employed. By comparison, when an interrogative is used to make a request, as in ( Can you pass the salt?), we have an indirect speech act (Mey,2009:1005).

### **6. Indirect speech acts**

When there is no direct correlation between the grammatical form and function, indirect speech acts are identified as the speaker uses an expression and leaves the hearer to understand the intention of the speaker(Black,2006:19).

Interlocutors often use indirect speech acts for the sake of politeness. People normally avoid using imperatives because they sound impolite. In English, for instance, imperatives are used only in certain situations like when the interlocutors are on great intimacy or in the military orders or when talking to kids or in forthcoming danger. So, Can you turn the radio down? Said to a teenager is a polite request. Without that context, it is not obvious whether the speaker is asking about a physical ability to turn the radio down or he is merely conducting a polite way of addressing the hearer. When a Glaswegian says Was you looking at me Jimmy?, he is not asking a question, but making an invitation to fight. In a nutshell, there are many functions of questions depending on the context. As a result the hearer is left to his pragmatic knowledge to decode their meanings appropriately. As members of one speech community, people are able to interpret messages that are not uttered directly. Thus, indirect speech acts do not pose a problem to language users(ibid.). Levinson (1983: 274) proposes that any utterance can be understood well in the context of the situation. Grundy proposes that language consists of smaller meaningless units, morphemes and phonemes. These units yield meaning only when

they are combined into words or sentences. ( thus, tap can be a noun or a verb, according to the context in which it occurs) (Grundy 1995: 101–5). These are possible solutions to the problem posed by indirect speech acts; they simplify analysis and are thoroughly pragmatic in their attention to context rather than syntactic form (Black, 2006:19).

### 7. Classification of Speech Acts

Searle (1979:8) classifies speech acts into the following categories:

1. **Declarations** are those types of speech acts that change the world via their utterance. In addition to that, the speaker must be in a specific position in order to perform a declarative speech act properly, otherwise, the speech act would be condemned to be unsuccessful or infelicitous. For example:

(a) Priest: I pronounce you husband and wife.

(b) Referee: You are out!

In performing a declaration, the speaker changes the world via words (Yule:1996:53).

Declarations are rare type of speech act depending on the status of the speaker. They include marrying, sentencing someone to be sent to prison , christianing and sacking a worker (Bousfield, 2014:122 ).

2. **Representatives** or **assertives** are those kinds of speech act that the speaker uses to show what he thinks. For example statements of facts, conclusions, and descriptions.

(a) The earth is flat.

(b) It was a warm sunny day.

In using a representative, the speaker makes the words fit the world(of belief).

Like every day discourse, literary discourse consists largely of representative speech acts; in particular, much of the narrator's activity consists of representative speech acts (Black,2006:20).

3.**Commissives** are those types of speech acts that a speaker employs to commit himself to some future action. They express what the speaker intends. They are like promises, threats, refusals, pledges.

(a) I 'll be back.

(b) I 'm going to get it right next time (Yule:1996: 54).

Commissives are common in the discourse of characters in fiction, but unique in the narrator's voice, yet some novelists initiate their novels by expressions that function as a commissive such as "The story I shall tell begins like this" and "once upon time" (Black,2006:22).

4.**Directives** are those speech acts a speaker uses to get someone else to do or not to do something. They show what the speaker wants. For example, commands, orders, requests, suggestions.

(a) Could you lend me a pen, please?

(b) Don't touch that.

Directives are more likely to occur within character to character discourse. Directives addressed to the reader are seldom found in the narrator's voice because readers are found outside the communicative situation of the literary work (Black, 2006:21).

**5. Expressives** are those speech acts that show the speaker's attitudes or feelings about something. They are used to express the psychological state of the speaker such as pain, happiness, pleasure, likes, dislikes or sadness. They are like apologizing, congratulating, praising, thanking and pardoning.

(a) I 'm really sorry!

(b) Congratulations!

In using an expressive, the speaker makes words fit the world (of feeling) (Yule, 1996:54) and (Reiter, 2000:32). Thus, expressives are expected to occur in the discourse of characters within fiction more than in the narratorial voice (Black, 2006:20).

### **8. Utterances and speech acts**

Weigand (2004:16) states that an utterance lends itself to different interpretations depending on the context. For example, an expression may serve as a declarative in one situation and a representative in another. This depends on the amount of emotion found in an utterance.

In representatives, speakers can state the emotion they feel but in expressives, interlocutors need to put a tremendous emotion more than the amount required in the former. In declaratives, speakers can maintain or make a social relationship by announcing emotion.

(1) I love you. (declarative)

(2) I regret it (at court). (declarative)

The declaration of an emotion, must be recognized from a statement or representative:

(3) I love him. (representative)

(4) I regret it (in everyday talk). (representative)

(5) I am surprised. – I can believe it. (representative)(ibid.)

When the speaker declares his/her love, he/she changes the social relationship or changes the world via his/her utterance. By declaring regret at court the circumstances of the situation are changed. Thus, these utterances are representatives not expressives. Expressives, the original speech acts of emotion, aim at getting some sort of sympathy or responsiveness from the addressee such as in (6) What a surprise!. One may ask about the characteristics that signify a specific speech act. In general, it is the grammatical structure of the utterance including intonation and not the lexical means which determines the type of speech act. Thus, we have the pattern of the explicit performative utterance for the declarative speech act I love you which contrasts with the representative

speech act I love him. We have the specific sentence type of an exclamatory sentence with a specific intonation contour What a surprise! Which contrasts with the representative speech act I am surprised. These grammatical means however are integrated means, i.e., they are dependent on other means and variables of the action game. Besides these types of speech acts for declaring, stating, and emphasizing an emotion, there is another type in which the emotion is only an accompanying feature of the action. We might make a statement which does not refer to any emotion at all but nevertheless the statement is accompanied by a feeling. The feeling might be positive in the sense of joy or pleasure, or it might be negative in the sense of anger. Thus the statement, for instance (10) You are playing the piano again. may be interpreted as a confirming and encouraging speech act or as a reproach or accusation. Intonation is an important means for expressing this difference. (Weigand,2004:17).

### **9. A Summary of the one act- play "Sunny morning"**

"Sunny morning" is a comic one-act play written by the bothers Serafin and Joaquin Alvarez Quintero. It is about two seventy years old protagonists, Don Gonzalo and Dona Laura, who are passionate lovers in their youth but torn apart by the cruelty of fate. On a sunny morning, in quite corner of a park they meet accidently. Dona Laura is feeding pigeons after she has been left alone by her servant, Petra. Don Gonzalo enters with his servant, Juantio, looking for a bench to sit on. The conversation between the two starts sarcastically, with each accusing the other of intruding on their private space. Don Gonzalo complains the priests have taken his bench, and says Dona Laura is a, "Senile old lady! She ought to be in at home knitting and counting her beads." She accuses him of being impolite and "an ill-natured old man!" After that, Don Gonzalo is obliged to sit by the lady on the same bench because he has no other choice. The conversation between the two seventy year olds begin sarcastically, with each accusing the other of imposing on their private space.

A pinch of snuff is sufficient to settle the dispute between them and made peace between them.

At the beginning, they do not recognize each other after a long time. When they begin to talk ,they know each other yet they are unwilling to reveal their real identities to each other. At the end of the play, they agree to meet at the park again, still not acknowledging what they both know to be true.

### **10.The Model of The Analysis**

The current study adopts (Black's 2006) as the model for the data analysis.

## 11. Results and Discussion

The play under study has 320 sentences. They are counted and classified according to the five categories of speech acts. The percentage of each speech act has been found by using statistical equation. This equation has been applied by multiplying the number of each type of speech act by 100 divided by 320. Data analysis show that representative speech acts are placed at the top of the scale as they score the highest frequency among the other types of speech acts. The percentage of the occurrence of representative speech acts is 60.93% in the play under investigation. This conforms with Black's ( 2006 ) assumption that representatives are more frequent in literary discourse than any other type of speech acts.

- Example (1) **Dona Laura** "He is a philosopher."(**representative**)
- Example (2) **Don Gonzalo** " The benches here are public property."(**representative**)
- Example (3) **Dona Laura** "You are very polite."(**representative**)

The above mentioned utterances are typical examples of representatives speech acts. In the first exmple, Dona Laura is describing one of the pigeons she is feeding. He is witty in the sense that he can get more crumbs than his peers. In the second one, Don Gonzalo expresses what he thinks toward the benches saying that they are public property. He is criticizing Dona Laura 's desire to possess the bench herself and prevent him from sharing her the same bench. In the third example, Dona Laura describes Don Gonzalo as being polite. Actually, it is irony because she is condemning his insistence on sitting beside her and addressing her in away that she considers to be impolite.

In the second place, we find directives as their percentage is 24.37 % of the total data . As it has previously mentioned that directives are rarely found in the narrator's voice and normally occur in a character to character discourse. Thus, this type of speech acts is often found when Dona Laura and Don Gonzalo address their servants as in the following examples:

- Example (4) **Dona Laura** " Pass me the book, then. " (**directive**)
- Example (5) **Don Gonzalo** " Have they gone?" (**directive**)
- Example (6) **Don Gonzalo** " Ask the hares and the partridges"(**directive**)

In examples 4, 5 and 6, there is direct correlation between the grammatical form of these sentences and their illocutionary force. Thus, they are typical examples of direct speech acts in which the speaker ask the addressee to do things for him. In example 4, Don Laura uses the imperative to request her servant Petra to give her the book before she leaves. In example 5, Don Gonzalo gets bored looking for a bench to sit on . He is asking Juantio whether the priests who occupied "his" bench leave or not. In example 6, Don Gonzalo claims that he is good hunter and if she wants



to make sure that he is brave, she can ask the hares and the partidges which are good witnesses on his deeds.

Expressives occur in the third position as they score 7.81% of the total. Expressives are recognized when the speaker communicates (or attempts to communicate) his emotions and attitudes such as:

- Example (10) **Dona Laura** "I am so glad to be here." (**expressive**)
- Example (11) **DON GONZALO**. Good-bye until tomorrow. (**expressive**)
- Example (12) **DOÑA LAURA** (aside). What an atrocious lie! (**expressive**)
- Example (13) **DOÑA LAURA**. Thank you very much. (**expressive**)

In example (10), Dona Laura expresses her happiness to be in the park and that her bench is not occupied by someone else. In example (11), Don Gonzalo 's expression of leave-taking is an expressive speech act. In example (12), Dona Laura expresses her exclamation at Don Gonzalo's lie as he is boasting his past deeds and adventures. Exclamatory expressions are considered expressive speech acts. In Example (13) Dona Laura thanks Don Gonzalo after the quarrel comes to an end.

Commissives are located at the fourth level of the scale as their percentage is 6.56%. Commissives are identified when the speaker commits himself to a future action such as in:

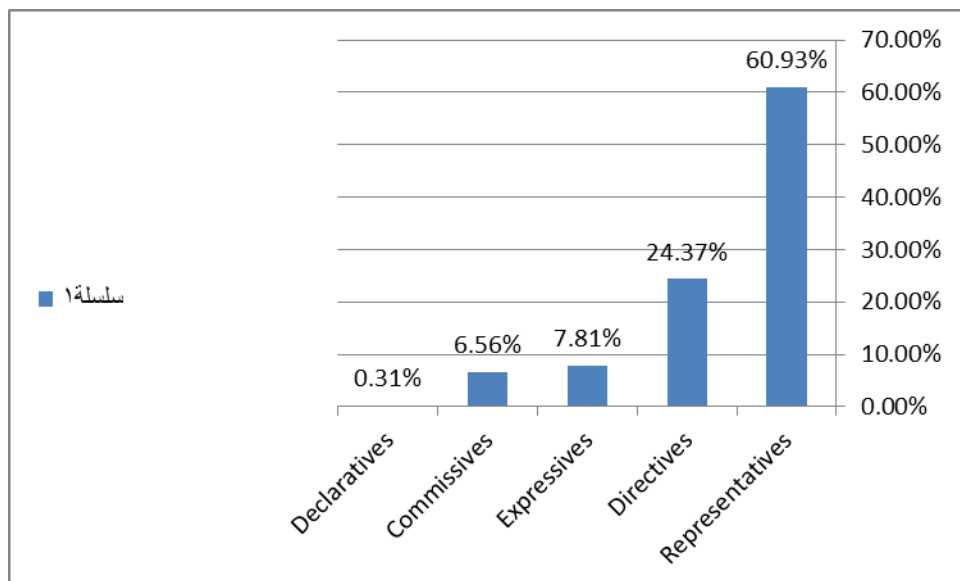
- Example (7) **Dona Laura** "I'll bring more tomorrow". (**Commissive**)
- Example (8) **Dona Laura** " I 'm going to leave just to please you."
- Example (9) **Don Gonzalo** "No, no, I will not reveal myself". (commissive)

In example (7) Dona Laura promises the pigeons to bring more crumbs tomorrow. In example (8), Dona Laura expresses her refusal to leave. Thus, she performs a future act. In example (9), Don Gonzalo wouldn't like to expose his real identity to Dona Laura. Thus, they are performing commissive speech acts.

Finally, only one instance of declarative speech acts has been identified in the play under study. Declaratives score (0.31% ) and thus, they are placed at the bottom of the scale. Declaratives change the world via their utterance. In the example(14) and namely after the reconciliation between the two seventy years old protagonists , Dona Laura declares that the bench is Don Gonzalo's henceforth. This means that it wasn't his before the utterance of this statement. Thus, she is performing a declarative speech act.

Example (14) **DOÑA LAURA**. This bench is at your disposal (**declarative**).

Below an illustrative figure is provided to show the frequency of the speech acts in in the play under study.



**Figure (1) Frequency of Types of Speech Acts**

The play consists of 320 sentences distributed mainly between Dona Laura and Don Gonzalo as they are the main characters in the play who exchange turns. Dona Laura's share is 160 statements, 95 representatives, 40 directives, 18 expressives, 6 commissives and one rare declarative. As far as Don Gonzalo is concerned, he performs 88 representatives, 33 directives, 7 expressives and 15 commissives.

As a feminine character, Dona Laura is more likely to express what she feels. Thus, she is more talkative than Don Gonzalo. On the other hand, Don Gonzalo is typified by using commissives more than her.

Having a look at the table below makes it clear that Dona Laura is a dominant character i.e., She controls most of the speech. Although she is a main character, she has performed more speech acts than Don Gonzalo except in the case of commissive speech acts where Don Gonzalo exceeds her. As far as the other two secondary characters, Jauntio and Petra, are concerned, no tangible difference is found between them. Jauntio performs 10 speech acts whereas Petra does 7.

To sum up, most of the dialogue in the play is devoted to Dona Laura. She exceeds Don Gonzalo in performing speech acts. Thus, she is an effective character in the sense that she prevails most of the dialogue of the play.

**Table (1) The frequency of speech acts by characters**

Type of speech act	Dona Laura	Don Gonzalo	Juantio	Petra	total
representatives	95	88	7	5	195
directives	40	33	3	2	78
Expressives	18	7	0	0	25
commissives	6	15	0	0	21
declaratives	1	0	0	0	1
Total	160	143	10	7	320

## 12. Conclusion

Data analysis shows that representative speech acts are the most frequent in the story under study as they score 60.93% of the total. Thus, representatives occupy the first level. Unlike, representatives, declaratives score the lowest percentage with 0.31% therefore; they are located at the bottom of the scale. The other types of speech acts lay in between. The percentage of directives is 24.37%. Next, we find expressives with 7.81%. Then, commissives come with 6.56%.

In a nutshell, representatives occur more in literary texts than the other types whereas declaratives are rare. Expressives, commissives and directives occur in literary discourse less than representatives.

As far as the dominant character is concerned, Dona Laura has performed more speech acts than the other characters in the play under study.

### Data Analysis

Each character in the story under investigation is mentioned first followed by the statement and the type of the speech act.

**DOÑA LAURA.** I am so glad to be here. (**expressive**) I feared my seat would be occupied. (**expressive**) What a beautiful morning! (**expressive**)

**PETRA.** The sun is hot. (**representative**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Yes, you are only twenty. (**representative**) (She sits down on the bench.) Oh, I feel more tired today than usual. (**expressive**) (Noticing PETRA, who seems impatient.) Go, if you wish to chat with your guard. (**directive**)

**PETRA.** He is not mine, señora; he belongs to the park. (**representative**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** He belongs more to you than he does to the park. (**representative**) Go find him, but remain within calling distance. (**directive**)

**PETRA.** I see him over there waiting for me. (**representative**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Do not remain more than ten minutes. (**directive**)

**PETRA.** Very well, señora.(**representative**) ( (Walks toward the right.)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Wait a moment.(**directive**)

**PETRA.** What does the señora wish?(**directive**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Give me the bread crumbs.(**directive**)

**PETRA.** I don't know what is the matter with me.(**representative**)

**DOÑA LAURA** (smiling). I do. (**representative**)Your head is where your heart is with the guard.(**representative**)

**PETRA.** Here, señora. (**directive**)

[She hands DOÑA LAURA a small bag.

Exit PETRA by the right.]

**DOÑA LAURA.** Adiós. (**directive**)(Glances toward the trees at the right.)

Here they come!(**representative**)

They know just when to expect me.(**representative**) (She rises, walks toward the right, and throws three handfuls of bread crumbs.) These are for the spryest, these for the gluttons, and these for the little ones which are the most persistent. (Laughs. She returns to her seat and watches, with a pleased expression, the pigeons feeding.)

There, that big one is always first!(**representative**) I know him by his big head.(**representative**) Now one, now another, now two, now three—that little fellow is the least timid. (**representative**) I believe he would eat from my hand.(**representative**) That one takes his piece and flies up to that branch alone.(**representative**) He is a philosopher.(**representative**) But where do they all come from?(**directive**) It seems as if the news had spread.(**representative**) Ha, ha! Don't quarrel. (**directive**)There is enough for all.(**representative**) I'll bring more tomorrow.(**commissive**)

[Enter DON GONZALO and JUANITO from the left center.

DON GONZALO is an old gentleman of seventy, gouty and impatient. He leans upon JUANITO's arm and drags his feet somewhat as he walks.]

**DON GONZALO.** Idling their time away!(**expressive**) They should be saying Mass.(**representative**)

**JUANITO.** You can sit here, señor.(**directive**) There is only a lady.(**representative**) (DOÑA LAURA turns her head and listens.)

**DON GONZALO.** I won't, Juanito. (**commissive**) I want a bench to myself.( **representative**)

**JUANITO.** But there is none.(**representative**)

**DON GONZALO.** That one over there is mine.(**representative**)

**JUANITO.** There are three priests sitting there.(**representative**)

**DON GONZALO.** Rout them out. (**directive**) Have they gone?(**directive**)

**JUANITO.** No indeed.(**representative**) They are talking.(**representative**)

**DON GONZALO.** Just as if they were glued to the seat.(**representative**) No hope of their leaving.(**representative**)

Come this way, Juanito.(**directive**) (They walk toward the birds, right.)

**DOÑA LAURA** (indignantly). Look out!(**directive**)

**DON GONZALO**. Are you speaking to me, señora?(**directive**)

**DOÑA LAURA**. Yes, to you.(**representative**)

**DON GONZALO**. What do you wish?(**directive**)

**DOÑA LAURA**. You have scared away the birds who were feeding on my crumbs.(**representative**)

**DON GONZALO**. What do I care about the birds?(**directive**)

**DOÑA LAURA**. But I do.(**representative**)

**DON GONZALO**. This is a public park.(**representative**)

**DOÑA LAURA**. Then why do you complain that the priests have taken your bench?(**directive**)

**DON GONZALO**. Señora, we have not met.(**representative**) I cannot imagine why you take the liberty of addressing me.(**representative**) Come, Juanito.(**directive**) (Both go out by the right.)

**DOÑA LAURA**. What an ill-natured old man!(**representative**) Why must people get so fussy and cross when they reach a certain age?(**directive**) (Looking toward the right.) I am glad. (**expressive**)He lost that bench, too. (**representative**)Serves him right for scaring the birds.(**representative**) He is furious. (**representative**)Yes, yes, find a seat if you can.(**directive**) Poor man!(**representative**) He is wiping the perspiration from his face.(**representative**) Here he comes.(**representative**) A carriage would not raise more dust than his feet.(**representative**)

[Enter DON GONZALO and JUANITO by the right, and walk toward the left.]

**JUANITO**. No indeed, señor.(**representative**) They are still there.(**representative**)

**DON GONZALO**. The authorities should place more benches here for these sunny mornings.(**commissive**) Well, I suppose I must resign myself and sit on the bench with the old lady.(**commissive**) (Muttering to himself, he sits at the extreme end of DOÑA LAURA's bench and looks at her indignantly. He touches his hat as he greets her.) Good morning.(**expressive**)

**DOÑA LAURA**. What, you here again?(**directive**)

**DON GONZALO**. I repeat that we have not met.(**representative**)

**DOÑA LAURA**. I was responding to your salute.(**representative**)

**DON GONZALO**. “Good morning” should be answered by “Good morning,” and that is all you should have said.(**directive**)

**DOÑA LAURA**. You should have asked permission to sit on this bench, which is mine.(**directive**)

**DON GONZALO**. The benches here are public property.(**representative**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Why, you said the one the priests have was yours.(representative)

**DON GONZALO.** Very well, very well.(expressive) I have nothing more to say.(expressive) (Between his teeth.) Senile old lady! (representative) She ought to be at home knitting and counting her beads.(representative)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Don't grumble any more. (directive) I'm not going to leave just to please you.(commissive)

**DON GONZALO** (brushing the dust from his shoes with his handkerchief). If the ground were sprinkled a little it would be an improvement.(representative)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Do you use your handkerchief as a shoebrush?(directive)

**DON GONZALO.** Why not?(directive)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Do you use a shoebrush as a handkerchief?(directive)

**DON GONZALO.** What right have you to criticize my actions?(directive)

**DOÑA LAURA.** A neighbor's right.(representative)

**DON GONZALO.** Juanito, my book.(directive) I do not care to listen to nonsense.(representative)

**DOÑA LAURA.** You are very polite.(representative)

**DON GONZALO.** Pardon me, señora, (directive) but never interfere with what does not concern you.(directive)

**DOÑA LAURA.** I generally say what I think.(representative)

**DON GONZALO.** And more to the same effect.(representative) Give me the book, Juanito.(directive)

**JUANITO.** Here, señor.(directive)

[JUANITO takes a book from his pocket, hands it to DON GONZALO, then exits by the right.

DON GONZALO, casting indignant glances at DOÑA LAURA, puts on an enormous pair of glasses, takes from his pocket a reading glass, adjusts both to suit him, and opens his book.]

**DOÑA LAURA.** I thought you were taking out a telescope.(representative)

**DON GONZALO.** Was that you?(directive)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Your sight must be keen. (representative)

**DON GONZALO.** Keener than yours is.(representative)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Yes, evidently.(representative)

**DON GONZALO.** Ask the hares and partridges.(directive)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Ah! Do you hunt?(directive)

**DON GONZALO.** I did, and even now—(representative)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Oh yes, of course!(representative)

**DON GONZALO.** Yes, señora.(representative) Every Sunday I take my gun and dog, you understand, and go to one of my estates near Aravaca and kill time.(representative)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Yes, kill time.(representative) That is all you kill.(representative)

**DON GONZALO.** Do you think so?(directive) I could show you a wild boar's head in my study—(commissive)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Yes, and I could show you a tiger's skin in my boudoir. (commissive)What does that prove?(directive)

**DON GONZALO.** Very well, señora, please allow me to read.(directive) Enough conversation.(directive)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Well, you subside, then.( directive)

**DON GONZALO.** But first I shall take a pinch of snuff. (commissive)(Takes out a snuffbox.) Will you have some? (directive)(Offers the box to DOÑA LAURA.)

**DOÑA LAURA.** If it is good.(commissive)

**DON GONZALO.** It is of the finest. (representative)You will like it.(commissive)

**DOÑA LAURA** (taking a pinch of snuff). It clears my head.(representative)

**DON GONZALO.** And mine.(representative)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Do you sneeze?(directive)

**DON GONZALO.** Yes, señora, three times.(representative)

**DOÑA LAURA.** And so do I. (representative)What a coincidence!(expressive)

[After taking the snuff, they await the sneezes, both anxiously, and sneeze alternately three times each.]

**DON GONZALO.** There, I feel better.(representative)

**DOÑA LAURA.** So do I.(representative) (Aside.) The snuff has made peace between us.(representative)

**DON GONZALO.** You will excuse me if I read aloud?(directive)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Read as loud as you please;(directive) you will not disturb me.(commissive)

**DON GONZALO** (reading).

“All love is sad, but sad as it is, It is the best thing that we know.”(representative) That is from Campoamor. (representative)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Ah!(expressive)

**DON GONZALO** (reading).

“The daughters of the mothers I once loved Kiss me now as they would a graven image.” (representative) Those lines, I take it, are in a humorous vein.(representative)

**DOÑA LAURA** (laughing). I take them so, too.(representative)

**DON GONZALO.** There are some beautiful poems in this book. Here.(representative)

“Twenty years pass. He returns.”(representative)

**DOÑA LAURA.** You cannot imagine how it affects me to see you reading with all those glasses.(**expressive**)

**DON GONZALO.** Can you read without any?(**directive**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Certainly.(**representative**)

**DON GONZALO.** At your age?(**directive**) You're jesting.(**representative**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Pass me the book, then.(**directive**) (Takes the book, read aloud.)

“Twenty years pass. (**representative**) He returns.(**representative**) And each, beholding the other, exclaims— Can it be that this is he?(**directive**) Heavens, is it she?”(**directive**)

[DOÑA LAURA returns the book to DON GONZALO.]

**DON GONZALO.** Indeed I envy you your wonderful eyesight.(**expressive**)

**DOÑA LAURA** (aside). I know every word by heart.(**representative**)

**DON GONZALO.** I am very fond of good verses, very fond, I even composed some in my youth.(**representative**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Good ones?(**directive**)

**DON GONZALO.** Of all kinds. (**representative**)I was a great friend of Espronceda, Zorrilla, Bécquer, and others. I first met Zorrilla in America.(**representative**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Why, have you been in America?(**directive**)

**DON GONZALO.** Several times.(**representative**) The first time I went I was only six years old.(**representative**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** You must have gone with Columbus in one of his caravels!(**representative**)

**DON GONZALO** (laughing). Not quite as bad as that.(**representative**) I am old, I admit, but I did not know Ferdinand and Isabella.(**representative**) (They both laugh.) I was also a great friend of Campoamor.(**representative**) I met him in Valencia.(**representative**) I am a native of that city.(**representative**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** You are?(**directive**)

**DON GONZALO.** I was brought up there and there I spent my early youth.(**representative**) Have you ever visited that city?(**directive**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Yes, señor.(**representative**) Not far from Valencia there was a villa that, if still there, should retain memories of me.(**representative**) I spent several seasons there.(**representative**) It was many, many years ago.(**representative**) It was near the sea, hidden away among lemon and orange trees.(**representative**) They called it—let me see, what did they call it? (**directive**)Maricela.(**representative**)

**DON GONZALO** (startled). Maricela?(**directive**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Maricela. Is the name familiar to you?(**directive**)



**DON GONZALO.** Yes, very familiar.(**representative**) If my memory serves me right, for we forget as we grow old, there lived in that villa the most beautiful woman I have ever seen, and I assure you I have seen many. (**representative**) Let me see—what was her name?(**directive**) Laura— Laura—Laura Llorente.(**representative**)

**DOÑA LAURA** (startled). Laura Llorente?(**directive**)

**DON GONZALO.** Yes.(**representative**) (They look at each other intently.)

**DOÑA LAURA** (recovering herself). Nothing.(**representative**) You reminded me of my best friend.(**representative**)

**DON GONZALO.** How strange!(**expressive**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** It is strange.(**representative**) She was called “The Silver Maiden.”(**representative**)

**DON GONZALO.** Precisely, “The Silver Maiden.” (**representative**) By that name she was known in that locality.(**representative**) I seem to see her as if she were before me now, at that window with the red roses.(**representative**) Do you remember that window?(**directive**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Yes, I remember. (**representative**)It was the window of her room.(**representative**)

**DON GONZALO.** She spent many hours there. (**representative**) I mean in my day.(**representative**)

**DOÑA LAURA** (sighing). And in mine, too.(**representative**)

**DON GONZALO.** She was ideal. (**representative**) Fair as a lily, jet-black hair and black eyes, with an uncommonly sweet expression. (**representative**) She seemed to cast a radiance wherever she was.(**representative**) Her figure was beautiful, perfect.(**representative**) “What forms of sovereign beauty God models in human clay!”(**expressive**) She was a dream. (**representative**)

**DOÑA LAURA** (aside). If you but knew that dream was now by your side, you would realize what dreams come to. (**commissive**) (Aloud.) She was very unfortunate and had a sad love affair. (**representative**)

**DON GONZALO.** Very sad.(**representative**) (They look at each other.)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Did you hear of it?(**directive**)

**DON GONZALO.** Yes.(**representative**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** The ways of Providence are strange.(**representative**) (Aside.) Gonzalo!(**representative**)

**DON GONZALO.** The gallant lover, in the same affair(

**DOÑA LAURA.** Ah, the duel?(**directive**)

**DON GONZALO.** Precisely, the duel. (**directive**)The gallant lover was my cousin, of whom I was very fond.(**representative**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Oh yes, a cousin? My friend told me in one of her letters the story of that affair, which was truly romantic.(**representative**) He, your

cousin, passed by on horseback every morning down the rose path under her window, and tossed up to her balcony a bouquet of flowers which she caught.(representative)

**DON GONZALO.** And later in the afternoon the gallant horseman would return by the same path, and catch the bouquet of flowers she would toss him. (representative) Am I right?(directive)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Yes. They wanted to marry her to a merchant whom she would not have.(representative)

**DON GONZALO.** And one night, when my cousin waited under her window to hear her sing, this other person presented himself unexpectedly.(representative)

**DOÑA LAURA.** And insulted your cousin.(representative)

**DON GONZALO.** There was a quarrel.(representative)

**DOÑA LAURA.** And later a duel.(representative)

**DON GONZALO.** Yes, at sunrise, on the beach, and the merchant was badly wounded.(representative) My cousin had to conceal himself for a few days and later to fly.(representative)

**DOÑA LAURA.** You seem to know the story well.(representative)

**DON GONZALO.** And so do you.(representative)

**DOÑA LAURA.** I have explained that a friend repeated it to me.(representative)

**DON GONZALO.** As my cousin did to me.(representative) (Aside.) This is Laura!(representative)

**DOÑA LAURA** (aside). Why tell him?(directive) He does not suspect.(representative)

**DON GONZALO** (aside). She is entirely innocent.(representative)

**DOÑA LAURA.** And was it you, by any chance, who advised your cousin to forget Laura?(directive)

**DON GONZALO.** Why, my cousin never forgot her!(representative)

**DOÑA LAURA.** How do you account, then, for his conduct?(directive)

**DON GONZALO.** I will tell you.(commissive) The young man took refuge in my house, fearful of the consequences of a duel with a person highly regarded in that locality.(representative) From my home he went to Seville, then came to Madrid.(representative) He wrote Laura many letters, some of them in verse.(representative) But undoubtedly they were intercepted by her parents, for she never answered at all. (representative) Gonzalo then, in despair, believing his love lost to him forever, joined the army, went to Africa, and there, in a trench, met a glorious death, grasping the flag of Spain and whispering the name of his beloved Laura(representative)

**DOÑA LAURA** (aside). What an atrocious lie!(expressive)

**DON GONZALO** (aside). I could not have killed myself more gloriously.(**representative**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** You must have been prostrated by the calamity.(**representative**)

**DON GONZALO.** Yes, indeed, señora.(**representative**) As if he were my brother.(**representative**) I presume, though, on the contrary, that Laura in a short time was chasing butterflies in her garden, indifferent to regret.(**representative**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** No, señor, no!(**representative**)

**DON GONZALO.** It is woman's way.(**representative**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Even if it were woman's way, "The Silver Maiden" was not of that disposition.(**representative**) My friend awaited news for days, months, a year, and no letter came. (**representative**) One afternoon, just at sunset, as the first stars were appearing, she was seen to leave the house, and with quickening steps wend her way toward the beach, the beach where her beloved had risked his life.(**representative**) She wrote his name on the sand, then sat down upon a rock, her gaze fixed upon the horizon.(**representative**) The waves murmured their eternal threnody and slowly crept up to the rock where the maiden sat. (**representative**)The tide rose with a boom and swept her out to sea.(**representative**)

**DON GONZALO.** Good heavens!(**expressive**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** The fishermen of that shore, who often tell the story, affirm that it was a long time before the waves washed away that name written on the sand. (**representative**)(Aside.) You will not get ahead of me in decorating my own funeral. (**representative**)

**DON GONZALO** (aside). She lies worse than I do.(**representative**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Poor Laura!(**expressive**)

**DON GONZALO.** Poor Gonzalo!(**expressive**)

**DOÑA LAURA** (aside). I will not tell him that I married two years later.(**commissive**)

**DON GONZALO** (aside). In three months I ran off to Paris with a ballet dancer.(**representative**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Fate is curious.(**representative**) Here are you and I, complete strangers, met by chance, discussing the romance of old friends of long ago! (**representative**)We have been conversing as if we were old friends.(**representative**)

**DON GONZALO.** Yes, it is curious, considering the ill-natured prelude to our conversation.(**representative**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** You scared away the birds.(**representative**)

**DON GONZALO.** I was unreasonable, perhaps.(**representative**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Yes, that was evident.(**representative**) (Sweetly.) Are you coming again tomorrow?(**directive**)

**DON GONZALO.** Most certainly, if it is a sunny morning.(**commissive**)  
And not only will I not scare away the birds, but I will bring a few crumbs.(**commissive**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Thank you very much.(**expressive**) Birds are grateful and repay attention.(**representative**) I wonder where my maid is?(**directive**)  
Petra! (directive)(Signals for her maid.)

**DON GONZALO** (aside, looking at LAURA, whose back is turned). No, no, I will not reveal myself.(**commissive**) I am grotesque now. (**representative**) Better that she recall the gallant horseman who passed daily beneath her window tossing flowers.(**representative**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Here she comes.(**representative**)

**DON GONZALO.** That Juanito!(**representative**) He plays havoc with the nursemaids.(representative) (Looks to the right and signals with his hand.)

**DOÑA LAURA** (aside, looking at GONZALO, whose back is turned). No, I am too sadly changed. (**representative**)It is better he should remember me as the black-eyed girl tossing flowers as he passed among the roses in the garden.(**representative**)

[JUANITO enters by the right, PETRA by the left.

She has a bunch of violets in her hand.]

**DOÑA LAURA.** Well, Petra!(**representative**) At last!(**representative**)

**DON GONZALO.** Juanito, you are late.(**representative**)

**PETRA** (to DOÑA LAURA). The guard gave me these violets for you, señora.(**representative**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** How very nice! (**expressive**)Thank him for me. (**directive**)They are fragrant.(**representative**)

[As she takes the violets from her maid a few loose ones fall to the ground.]

**DON GONZALO.** My dear lady, this has been a great honor and a great pleasure.(**expressive**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** It has also been a pleasure to me.(**expressive**)

**DON GONZALO.** Good-bye until tomorrow.(**expressive**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Until tomorrow.(**representative**)

**DON GONZALO.** If it is sunny.(**commissive**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** A sunny morning.(**representative**) Will you go to your bench?(**directive**)

**DON GONZALO.** No, I will come to this if you do not object?(**commissive**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** This bench is at your disposal (**declarative**).

**DON GONZALO.** And I will surely bring the crumbs.(**commissive**)

**DOÑA LAURA.** Tomorrow, then?(**directive**)

**DON GONZALO.** Tomorrow!(**commissive**)

[LAURA walks away toward the right, supported by her maid. GONZALO, before leaving with JUANITO,

trembling and with a great effort, stoops to pick up the violets LAURA dropped. Just then LAURA turns her head and surprises him picking up the flowers.]

**JUANITO.** What are you doing, señor?(**directive**)

**DON GONZALO.** Juanito, wait (**directive**)

**DOÑA LAURA** (aside). Yes, it is he!(**representative**)

**DON GONZALO** (aside). It is she, and no mistake.(**representative**)

[DOÑA LAURA and DON GONZALO wave farewell.]

**DOÑA LAURA.** “Can it be that this is he?”(**directive**)

**DON GONZALO.** “Heavens, is it she?” (**directive**)

[They smile once more, as if she were again at the window and he below in the rose garden, and then disappear upon the arms of their servants.]

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