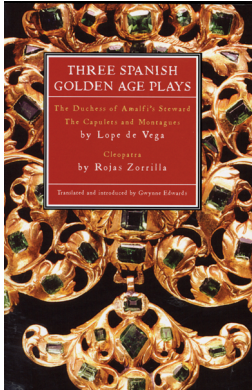


Duchess of Amalfi's Steward by Lope de Vega



Having echoes with Webster's later play of a similar title (*The Duchess of Malfi*), Lope de Vega's piece focuses on Antonio, the Duchess's steward and husband, with whom she is in a secret marriage and has two children. The play tells of their escape from Amalfi to Ancona, the Duchess's revelation there of her marriage to Antonio, their attempted escape, and the ensuing arrest and murder of the Duchess, Antonio and their children. Despite the prominence of mystery and murder in the play, the overwhelming theme is love and its all-consuming power.

'And then came the monster of nature, the great Lope de Vega, who took over the comic monarchy....' *Harvard Magazine*

Genre:	Historical romantic drama	Fee:	£40 plus VAT, per performance
Cast:	m16 f2 (plus peasants)	Scripts:	ISBN 9780413774750 £16.99
Set:	various settings	Length:	3 acts
Contact:	amateur-rights@bloomsbury.com		

EXTRACT

Antonio

I think there is a way to keep
Our secret and avoid the scandal that
You fear. We'll go to my estate.
We can disguise ourselves and live
Among the ordinary people,
The peasants who work the fields,
The shepherds who guard the flocks.
When we are known to them and to
The local priest, he'll marry us.
My happiness will be complete!
I cannot wait a moment longer!

Duchess

The plan is excellent. We'll leave
Tonight, dressed in peasant clothes. When
we are married there, we shall be happily

And blamelessly united in
The honest bond of marriage.

Antonio

So how will you explain your absence?

Duchess

Livia shall inform the household I
Am sick, confined to bed.

Antonio

Ah, yes,
A most effective remedy!
And when the night is at its darkest and
The world's asleep, we'll take two horses.

Duchess

Go, get them ready now!

Antonio

And clothes!
I'll see to it.

Duchess

The water's wide
But love demands we reach the safety of
The shore. God be with you, Antonio!

If you enjoyed this, you might like:

- *Cleopatra* by Rojas Zorrilla (m6 f4 plus soldiers)
- *The Moods of Marianne* by Alfred de Musset (m4 f4)
- *Careless Vows* by Marivaux (m5 f3)