

The Shakespeare Theatre Company  
AUDITION SIDES – THE DOG IN THE MANGER

**RICARDO**

Side 1 of 3

RICARDO.                   Lovely Diana,  
There's no impediment love will not brook,  
no labour that for my love would be lost,  
no hindrance that would make my foot falter,  
speeding here to press my suit, declare my love.  
I know I have rivals more arrogant,  
who would think my ambition perhaps high,  
but the vessel of their love is empty  
whilst my cup overflows with love for you.  
Today you are so simply radiant,  
that my heart dances as my eyes look,  
and seeing you so lovely, so alive,  
I make no inquiry as to your health.  
This is the deep knowledge of the lover,  
entranced at the beauty of his beloved,  
and in that beauty he sees her health shine.  
Those who ask you if you're well do not see.  
They are fools, you should drum them from your door.  
I see you are well and so in return  
I ask you to ask me how I am.

DIANA.                                   Good sir,  
your wit leaves me almost without breath.  
To see me as being so alive  
and to deduce from that I'm well,  
is a notion both poetic and wise.  
As to your health, I daren't speculate.

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RICARDO. A man's health, my dear, is in his honour,  
and my intentions are honourable.  
You may therefore speculate quite freely,  
and indeed you'd have your family's blessing,  
if such speculation became stronger.  
Since your father's death you have been alone,  
and they, like me, are waiting for but one word.  
With my own pater's very recent demise,,  
I've inherited great titles and estates,  
but if I were to rule from north to south,  
from the frozen wastes to the burning sands,  
and from Aurora's rising in the east,  
to where she takes her rest in the bloodshot west,  
and had I all the gold that men worship,  
treasure chests full of diamonds and pearls,  
that rain of tears from the sea's depths,  
- by which I mean pearls, lovely image, isn't it? –  
then I would take them all and give them to you,  
and I would fight single-handed with the sea  
to serve you, Diana, and you alone,  
and I would walk the earth with feet of fire,  
from here to antipodean shores,  
to assert your beauty and sovereignty there.

DIANA. How could I fail to be impressed  
by your gifts of... phraseology?  
I shall turn your words in my mind,  
though we must seek not to offend  
the feelings of Count Federico.

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RICARDO. Indeed, he wears his feelings on his sleeve,  
a sleeve like the suit to which it is attached,  
known to all for its sham plumes and false colours.  
Feelings and suit superior to mine  
in every way, except in quality.  
And so I trust the justice of my suit  
- I'm sure you noticed my little pun there –  
will leave such shabbiness exposed.

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CELIO. She came on foot. With her household.

RICARDO. Her sweet footfall honours the street.

CELIO. Like the sun rising in the morning,  
and picking out in its golden beams  
the twin horns of heavenly Taurus,  
so the day is adorned with two stars,  
the two eyes of Countess Diana.

RICARDO. My love has lent you eloquence.

You do well to see her as the sun,  
for each suitor of Diana,  
the heavenly Diana,  
is a simple constellation,  
that together form her zodiac.

CELIO. So who will be her Taurus?

RICARDO. We'll let him be her Taurus.

For it'll be him she speaks to first,  
just as the sun lights Taurus first,  
before entering the house of Leo.  
I think I'm a perfect Lion,  
And he who's lit last is lit longest.  
And we'll geld the bull...in the dark.



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after Fabio discovered your message.  
So much rejection weighs down the spirit,  
and when these gladdest of tidings reached me,  
that I, your devoted slave, am your chosen one,  
then wild beasts in a cordon round your door  
would not have stopped me from coming here now  
to kneel before you and kiss your tiny feet.

*[He kneels]*

My joy is such that mere madness is not enough.  
I am constrained to take madness to new heights,  
for when did I think in my wildest thoughts  
that my fond hopes, my dreaming desires  
would ever be anything more than that?

DIANA. I am at a loss to answer.

I sent for you? Is this some jest?

RICARDO. What's going on, Fabio?

FABIO. Good sir,

I brought you here with good reason.

It was Teodoro who told me.

DIANA. Teodoro's too quick off the mark.

He must have heard me yesterday,

comparing you to Federico,

who, 'in spite of being my cousin,

pales in his dazzling reflection',

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I said. He's leapt to conclusions.

I beg you sir, forgive these fools.

RICARDO. Your holy image gives this man sanctuary

I kiss your feet in gratitude and withdraw,

hoping my constancy one day will prevail.