

*(The Marquise's hands are tied behind her back, and her mouth is bound with a cloth.)*

SANCHO

*(to the Marquise)* Madame, please pardon my boldness. As a queen captures a pawn so have you captured my heart. I have loved thee from the opening moves of our correspondence.

MARQUISE

*(responds muffled through gag)* Mmm, mmmm mmmmmmmmmmm mm mmmmmmm mmmm  
mmmmmmmm mmmmmmm—

SANCHO

What was that? I cannot understand you through this mouth muffler. *(to Antonio)* Dear sir, can you find it in your brigand code of honor to remove it? I must know the beautiful lady's response.

ANTONIO

*(sniffles and wipes away a tear)* After so touching a revelation, it pains me not to comply. *(goes to remove gag)* But no funny business. *(removes the Marquise's gag)*

MARQUISE

Sir, your confession is indeed bold beyond measure. However, in this instance, your indiscretion can be forgiven. I return your amatory feelings. Long have I dreamt of this moment.

SANCHO

Ah! You love me? *(to Antonio)* She loves me, Sr Bandito Generoso! *(to Marquise)* I am the happiest royal tutor in all of Portugal! What relief! Had I known you loved me in return, I would have beaten you at chess years ago.

MARQUISE

I beg your pardon?

SANCHO

Oh yes, I have another tiny confession, my sweet. I intentionally avoided winning our first game because I vowed to declare my love for you once it ended, and my nerves got the better of me... for eighteen years.

MARQUISE

Ah! That explains the inscrutable logic behind your moves. On many an occasion, I was sorely tempted to defeat you out of sheer confusion.

SANCHO

If you knew how to win, why didn't *you* do so?

MARQUISE

I would never! It is the absolute height of impropriety to beat someone at a game they invite you to play.