

THE COURTYARD AND CLOISTER OF A CONVENT.

A group of LITTLE BOYS, walking two by two in line, are led across the courtyard by some NUNS. Other nuns are coming and going in the courtyard or along the cloister, where a priest is also passing.

In a corner of the courtyard a group of nuns are chatting. One of them is VIRIDIANA. The MOTHER SUPERIOR comes toward her. The film opens to the strains of Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus," which accompany the credits. Then the music fades as the first picture comes on.

MOTHER SUPERIOR
Sister Viridiana.

The young nun breaks away from the group and comes toward the MOTHER SUPERIOR. She bows.

VIRIDIANA
Mother?

MOTHER SUPERIOR
I've just had a letter from your uncle. He won't be able to come when you take your vows.

VIRIDIANA
(indifferent)
All right, Mother.

The MOTHER SUPERIOR is astonished at her lack of concern.

MOTHER SUPERIOR
You don't seem to mind very much.

Both have begun to walk along the cloister.

VIRIDIANA
I hardly know him. I saw him only once, some years ago. I can't even remember him.

MOTHER SUPERIOR
In any case he's asking you to come and stay with him.

VIRIDIANA

I don't want to leave the convent, Mother.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

I'm afraid that his health is not good. He's your only relative and you ought to say farewell to him before taking your vows. You will certainly never see him again.

They stop and face each other.

VIRIDIANA

But why does he want to see me? He has never bothered about me.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

He has paid for your studies and your maintenance, and he has just sent your dowry. Does that mean so little to you, Viridiana?

VIRIDIANA, taken aback, seems to reflect. They start walking again.

VIRIDIANA

I have no desire to see the world again, but if you order me to...

MOTHER SUPERIOR

The retreat will start soon. You can leave tomorrow morning.

They stop and face each other again; VIRIDIANA looks dejectedly at the MOTHER SUPERIOR.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Everything you need for the journey has been put in your cell. Go get yourself ready, and try to show him some affection.

She smiles at her again and leaves. VIRIDIANA, looking worried, watches her go.

PRIVATE PARK.

Close-up of the dirty, skinny legs of little RITA, who is jumping rope. They come forward and go back, opening and shutting like compasses. RITA jumps from one bare foot to the other. Nearby, behind her, the legs of a man are seen passing. As they recede, the chest, then the face, of DON JAIME appear. He watches the little girl's legs.

The head of the breathless little girl is tousled, her eyes shining and her lips moist. She bites her lower lip. DON JAIME comes toward her.

The noise of a horse and carriage stopping is heard nearby. RITA stops skipping and looks toward the carriage.

DON JAIME

That's enough for today, Rita. Do you like that rope I gave you?

RITA

It's easier to jump with: it's got handles.

DON JAIME

Go away now. Go and play.

RITA hands the rope to DON JAIME, who hangs it on a nail fixed to the trunk of a big tree which overshadows them. DON JAIME then turns his attention to the carriage and begins to walk toward it. RITA also goes toward the carriage. VIRIDIANA is getting out. The COACHMAN hands down her small bag.

RITA

Hello.

VIRIDIANA

Hello.

RAMONA

Welcome, miss. I'm Ramona, Don Jaime's servant.

VIRIDIANA

Ah! Pleased to meet you.

DON JAIME arrives now.

DON JAIME
Viridiana!

The young girl leaves the maid and moves to face her uncle. They look at each other with curiosity. The novice's expression is what one would expect in such circumstances, but DON JAIME shows a more lively interest.

VIRIDIANA
Yes, Uncle. How are you?

DON JAIME
I'm well ... The bus was late, wasn't it? ...
What was the journey like?

VIRIDIANA
Excellent. What a charming, peaceful place,
Uncle.

DON JAIME
You'll think you're still at the convent.

In spite of a total lack of cordiality and warmth on both sides, DON JAIME's face now registers the great interest his niece has aroused in him.

The camera frames the legs of VIRIDIANA and DON JAIME, who are moving forward side by side. They stop occasionally, as people do when they are walking and talking together. At first we only hear their voices. Then the camera shows them both completely. The tone of the conversation is normal, except that DON JAIME voice shows evident interest. Hers has less expression.

DON JAIME
How long are you staying?

VIRIDIANA
A very short while, Uncle. I've been given
permission to stay only a few days.

DON JAIME
Was that difficult to get?

VIRIDIANA

No. Mother Superior told me to come.

DON JAIME stops.

DON JAIME

(crestfallen)

Did you have so little interest in seeing me?

VIRIDIANA

(smiling, sincere)

To tell you the truth, not very much. I cannot lie. I respect you and I am grateful to you because I owe you everything materially, but otherwise ...

DON JAIME

(sadly)

You have no feelings toward ...

VIRIDIANA

No.

They start walking again. He begins to show pleasure, as well as surprise, at the frankness of the young girl.

DON JAIME

You are right. Being alone has made me self-centered. Now I am sorry we have not seen more of each other. It's too late, isn't it?

She makes a gesture of resignation and indifference.

VIRIDIANA

Yes. It's too late.

Now they are passing under a big tree, the branches and trunk of which overshadow the two stories of the house. In the distance are the fields of the estate, lying waste and fallow.

VIRIDIANA

You've been neglecting the farm, Uncle.

DON JAIME

In twenty years the grass has invaded everything. There are spiders all over the

house except on the first floor. I hardly ever go out.

RITA'S VOICE

(from the thickest part of the tree)

It's true. When he goes out he makes me jump rope.

Astonished, VIRIDIANA looks up into the branches. The head of the little girl appears among the leaves.

DON JAIME

Come down here, you scamp.

VIRIDIANA

Who is she?

DON JAIME

My maid Ramona's daughter. She's a little animal.

VIRIDIANA

Come down.

The little girl disappears again among the leaves. VIRIDIANA walks on, drawing ahead of her uncle.

DON JAIME

How like your aunt you are, even in your walk.

VIRIDIANA

I know, Uncle, you've told me that already.

DON JAIME

You see, even the voice.

They walk on under the trees of the estate.

DON JAIME'S SITTING ROOM AT NIGHT.

Close-up of DON JAIME's feet slowly working the pedals of a harmonium; his hands playing on the keyboard. He is playing a piece of classical music.

DOÑA ELVIRA'S BEDROOM.

VIRIDIANA is undressing. She takes off her dress and then sits on the edge of the bed to take off her black stockings. Her legs, white and perfectly shaped, appear in full light.

THE SITTING ROOM.

DON JAIME, with an ecstatic faraway look on his face, continues to play the harmonium.

THE HALL.

RAMONA moves a few paces and stops. She hesitates for a moment, and then comes back toward Viridiana's room. She looks through the keyhole. The sound of the harmonium comes from the sitting room.

THE SITTING ROOM.

DON JAIME is still in his musical ecstasy. RAMONA comes in and goes quietly to her master. She stops near him and, for a moment, watches his hands on the keys.

RAMONA

She has made her bed on the floor, sir!

The old man continues to play without answering.

RAMONA

She has something in her suitcase that looks

like thorns. Her nightgown is made of some rough cloth. It really must tear her skin!

(pause)

Such beautiful skin, sir.

DON JAIME, his attention suddenly caught, continues to play.

DON JAIME

Leave me now. You can go to bed.

RAMONA

Yes, sir. Good night.

DON JAIME goes on playing.

DO A ELVIRA'S BEDROOM.

Close-up of a crucifix of rough wood, surrounded by replicas of the instruments of the crucifixion: the crown of thorns, the hammer, the nails,

the sponge. These are all placed on a cushion on the ground.

VIRIDIANA, clad

in a nightgown, is crouched in front of these things praying.

INTERIOR OF A STABLE, DAYTIME.

Close-up of the udder of a cow and the hand of the man who is milking it. It

is the SERVANT whom we have already seen as the coachman. Little RITA is

perched on the wooden partition to which the cow is tied.

VIRIDIANA, carrying

a basket, joins the group.

VIRIDIANA

Good morning.

The servant answers politely.

VIRIDIANA

Good morning, Rita. How are we today?

RITA

Today, a good girl.

VIRIDIANA
(to the servant)
Could I trouble you for my glass of milk?

SERVANT
Certainly, miss.

She takes a glass out of her basket and hands it to the SERVANT.
The man
fills the glass straight from the udder. VIRIDIANA watches him with
curiosity.

VIRIDIANA
Is that difficult?

He looks at her for a moment as if he does not understand how
anybody could
ask him such a silly question.

SERVANT
Here, try it yourself.

The suggestion amuses VIRIDIANA, but she declines.

VIRIDIANA
But I wouldn't know how.

He insists.

SERVANT
I'll show you. Hold here.

He grasps a teat and motions VIRIDIANA to take it. Hesitating, she
finally
does so timidly. She sits on the stool that the SERVANT pushes
toward her.
She blushes. She begins pulling the teat. RITA watches her
clumsiness with
contempt.

VIRIDIANA obviously finds the sensation of the teat in her hand
unpleasant.
When no milk comes the SERVANT insists, guiding her hand.

SERVANT
Pull hard like that and squeeze.

But VIRIDIANA gives up the struggle with a gesture of disgust.

VIRIDIANA
I can't. It makes me ...

The servant looks at her without understanding.

VIRIDIANA
It makes me feel ...

She trails off and goes to RITA. At the end of the stable the other servant,
old MONCHO, is carrying straw.

RITA
I saw you in your nightgown!

VIRIDIANA looks at her angrily.

VIRIDIANA
What?

RITA
Yes, yes, I saw you!

MONCHO
Don't take her seriously, she's a liar.

The little girl turns to the old man furiously.

RITA
I saw her! I saw her ... When she was dressing,
her pins fell out and she picked them up.

VIRIDIANA knows this is true. She takes RITA by the arm and speaks
to her
seriously.

VIRIDIANA
How did you see me?

RITA
From the terrace.

VIRIDIANA
It's very wicked to spy. Why did you do it?

MONCHO shocked, bows his head resignedly. Viridiana smiles and
addresses the

little girl.

VIRIDIANA

I'm going to the hen house. Are you coming with me?

RITA

No, I don't want to.

RITA sulkily comes down from her perch and goes away. VIRIDIANA thanks the SERVANT, who hands her the glass of milk which she drinks.

INTERIOR OF THE HENHOUSE.

VIRIDIANA takes the eggs that she finds in the nests and puts them in her basket.

DON JAIME'S VOICE

Hello!

There is a pause; VIRIDIANA stops collecting the eggs.

VIRIDIANA

Good morning, Uncle. You're very early this morning.

DON JAIME (off)

So that I can see a little bit more of you.

The camera moves around the scene. The house is filled with egg crates and pigeons' nests. The pigeons fly in and out beneath the stone arcades.

VIRIDIANA

I'm going to make you a nun's cake. It will make your mouth water.

DON JAIME

You are spoiling me too much. I won't know what to do with myself when you've gone.

VIRIDIANA

(deliberately)

Only because you want it.

DON JAIME walks up and down.

DON JAIME
What do you mean?

VIRIDIANA
Nothing. I didn't say anything.

A silence.

DON JAIME
You don't trust me, do you? What do you want to know?

She hesitates for a moment.

VIRIDIANA
Very well! I'm talking to you like this because I can't keep things to myself.

She goes up to him and looks him straight in the eye.

VIRIDIANA
Is it true that you have a son?

DON JAIME is left momentarily speechless. He blushes.

DON JAIME
How did you know about that?

VIRIDIANA
Oh, some years ago I heard my mother talking about it. But is it true?

DON JAIME
Yes, it is.

VIRIDIANA
Don't you ever see him?

DON JAIME
Never.

VIRIDIANA
How could anybody behave like that?

DON JAIME
Sometimes these things happen because of

inexperience. Sometimes it's because of...

VIRIDIANA
(interrupting)

Evil.

DON JAIME

And what do you know about life? When all is said and done you couldn't possibly understand.

He walks forward a few steps looking worried.

VIRIDIANA

I understand perfectly. But even if you were not entirely blameworthy, you should have brought up the child.

VIRIDIANA's expression becomes harder. DON JAIME begins to pace again nervously. He passes in front of his niece, speaking with a certain embarrassment.

Nearby is a basin of water. While they are speaking, DON JAIME looks down into the basin, on the edge of which a bee has settled.

DON JAIME

His mother wanted to keep him. She came from a poor family. I was in love with your aunt. I would like to have acknowledged him but I was afraid of losing her. That's why I didn't say anything.

VIRIDIANA

And this innocent child.

DON JAIME

Don't worry. He won't be forgotten.

There is silence. VIRIDIANA picks up her basket again. DON JAIME stares obstinately at the basin. The bee is still there.

DON JAIME

You must think I am a monster.

VIRIDIANA

No, but what a pity life is like that.

The bee falls into the water. It flounders there, beating its legs and wings.

DON JAIME puts a bit of bamboo into the water and lets the bee climb onto it.

DON JAIME

The poor little beast. It was going to drown.

INTERIOR OF THE SITTING ROOM.

It is two o'clock in the morning. The chimes dominate the music of the phonograph which plays a muted Ninth Symphony (fourth movement). The clock then strikes two.

The sitting room is lit only by the cheerful light of the wood burning in the hearth. Don Jaime's bedroom, opening off the end of the sitting room and lit by an oil lamp, appears to be empty. The camera pulls us into this room.

INTERIOR OF DON JAIME'S ROOM.

DON JAIME is sitting in front of a large carved wooden chest which he has just opened. He seems to be concentrating but his expression is impassive. He is looking at the wedding attire he has kept, and judging from the cut of the clothes, they are the ones his dead wife Doña Elvira wore on her wedding day. DON JAIME gradually takes out the different parts of the outfit. He gazes at some of them for a moment; others he hardly looks at at all. There is the veil, the bodice, the skirt, the crown of artificial orange blossoms, the satin slippers.

He looks at some of these voluptuously. He throws the crown of orange

blossoms onto his bed. He takes off his shoes and tries to put his bare foot into one of the delicate feminine slippers. Now he takes a satin corset with ribbons out of the chest. The chorus of the Ninth Symphony is still heard.

With difficulty, DON JAIME gets up and, with the corset in his hands, goes toward his mirror. He draws on the corset and gazes at his face.

DON JAIME's head and shoulders are reflected in the glass. His expression is blank. The music continues.

The log fire in the fireplace makes leaping shadows on the walls.

As DON JAIME is standing in front of the mirror a sudden noise makes him start. He rapidly hides the corset which he had wrapped around him and goes to the door.

DON JAIME
(in a broken voice)
Who's there?

He hears the sound of furniture being knocked against. He sees VIRIDIANA pass two steps in front of him. She is barefoot. She has thrown over her nightgown a large woolen shawl which covers her shoulders. The girl does not seem to notice her uncle watching her and she continues to move toward the door of the sitting room. Crossing his room simultaneously, DON JAIME goes into the sitting room by the door which joins the two rooms.

THE SITTING ROOM.

VIRIDIANA is carrying a wicker workbasket. Her eyes are open but the expression on her face is cold, distant, statuesque. She goes directly to one of the armchairs near the fireplace and sits down.

DON JAIME comes into the sitting room. He follows the girl's movements with a dismayed look. He goes and stands in front of her. He sees that VIRIDIANA is sleepwalking. He makes every effort to avoid making a noise but never takes his eyes off of her.

As VIRIDIANA sits down, her nightgown is disarranged and her leg and the beginning of her thigh are uncovered. DON JAIME stares at the white, finely grained flesh, unable to look away. He is visibly agitated.

VIRIDIANA takes the things that are in the workbasket -- needles, balls of wool, skeins, and so on -- and throws them into the fire. But her eyes do not see what her hands are doing. The precision of her movements is admirable; but as she makes another movement to draw nearer the fire, more of her thigh is exposed.

DON JAIME sadly closes his eyes. What a torment, to have so near his grasp the young woman he wishes to possess and yet dares not take in his arms! He opens his eyes again. Apparently what he sees gives him an idea. But for the moment he is worried about what the young novice is doing.

VIRIDIANA, kneeling now in front of the fire, takes handfuls of ashes and sprinkles them into her basket. Then she gets up and walks slowly toward Don Jaime's room and goes in. After a moment of astonished hesitation, he follows her. As VIRIDIANA reaches the bed, she empties the ashes from her basket, with a slow movement, onto the bedspread beside the orange blossoms DON JAIME threw there.

DON JAIME is startled; the expression on his face, seen in close-up, shows horror at the girl's apparently absurd conduct.

VIRIDIANA walks back across the room. As she passes DON JAIME, the basket in her hand brushes against him. Her eyes, still open, have a dead look in them, and since she is barefoot and walks slowly she seems to glide rather than walk. She leaves the room. DON JAIME goes to the bed and looks, in a distracted and incredulous way, at the ashes she has left there.

THE HALL.

VIRIDIANA walks toward her room. DON JAIME stands in the doorway of his bedroom watching his niece until she disappears into Doña Elvira's room.

The door of Doña Elvira's room closes very slowly. A faint click is heard as it is locked from the inside.

INTERIOR OF DON JAIME'S ROOM.

Through the window which opens onto the balcony, the trees of the drive are seen standing out against the bright daytime sky.

RAMONA is busy brushing a suit.

DON JAIME'S VOICE

Is she up yet?

RAMONA

She's been up for some time.

She looks toward the bed where doubtless her master is and speaks, watching to see what his reaction will be.

RAMONA

She asked me to get her things ready.

DON JAIME is shown sitting on his bed eating breakfast. What the servant has just said makes him start.

DON JAIME

Her last day in this house! I'll never see her again if she leaves.

At the other end of the room, RAMONA is now dusting a shelf.

RAMONA

Why don't you ask her to stay on for a few days?

DON JAIME

(put out)

I have asked her but she's ungrateful. Sometimes I feel like hitting her. When I talk to her about the convent, she turns to stone.

He is frowning and seems to be thinking of something important.

DON JAIME

(almost pleading)

Ramona!

She stops dusting and looks intently at her master. He taps the edge of the bed.

DON JAIME

Come here, Ramona.

The servant lays down her duster and shyly goes over to the bed.

DON JAIME

Sit down, I'm going to need your help.

RAMONA

What's the matter?

She hesitates; he takes her hand, forcing her to sit down on the edge of the bed.

DON JAIME

Sit down, woman, sit down.

(looks into her eyes gently)

You like me, don't you?

RAMONA

I'd be really ungrateful, if I didn't like you, sir; you took me and my little girl in when I didn't know where to turn.

DON JAIME

Yes, yes, but there's no need to bring that up. How far are you prepared to help me?

RAMONA

Just say the word, sir, and I'll do anything.

Without a doubt there is something at the back of his mind but he wants to feel his way first.

DON JAIME

Why don't you speak to her, Ramona? Women are good at that sort of thing. Think of something that will make her stay a few more days.

(again takes her hand
and caresses it)

You are kind, Ramona! Speak to her. I know I don't need to offer you anything, but, if you're successful in this, I'll not forget you or your little girl.

RAMONA

But sir, what can I say to her? And why should she pay any attention to what a servant tells her?

DON JAIME twists his hands anxiously.

DON JAIME

You're right, but we must do something.

He continues to think thoughts that he dare not express.

RAMONA

You must think what the best thing to do is, and I'll help you to my utmost.

DON JAIME looks at his servant enigmatically, then speaks, without seeming to attach much importance to what he says.

DON JAIME

Look in the cupboard. On the upper shelf,
there's a little blue bottle. There's no label
on it. You'll find some white pills inside.

While DON JAIME is speaking the cupboard is shown in close-up,
half-open.
Among other articles there are some bottles on one of the shelves.
RAMONA
fully opens the cupboard door and takes one of the bottles. She
turns to
DON JAIME.

RAMONA
This one, sir?

DON JAIME nods in affirmation.

DON JAIME
Yes, leave it there. Go on with what you were
doing. I'll tell you what to do later.

RAMONA goes out of the room. DON JAIME puts down his tray on the
small
breakfast table and gets out of bed. He is in pajamas. He puts on
his
slippers and goes to the window. He looks out at the drive.

THE PARK.

Below DON JAIME'S window, RITA is jumping rope. VIRIDIANA is
standing nearby.
She stops the little girl. They talk for a moment, then the girl
takes the
rope and they begin to jump together very skillfully.

DON JAIME is watching the scene with the same enigmatic look on his
face that
he had a moment before and his eyes are full of tenderness.

THE DRAWING ROOM, DAYTIME.

Close-up of a woman's hands peeling fruit. The peel unrolls in a
long spiral.

It is VIRIDIANA who is executing this work of art. She puts the fruit on a saucer and carries it to DON JAIME, who is sitting beside the fireplace where a good fire is blazing. On the little round table there are the remains of a meal which is just ending.

DON JAIME, his back turned three-quarters to the fireplace, is cleaning his pipes. He abandons them to thank his niece for her kindness. He admires the spiral.

DON JAIME

I have never been able to do that. I'm too nervous.

VIRIDIANA, her back to the camera and to her uncle, gazes at the fire, lost for a moment in thought. She then turns and goes to DON JAIME and raises her arms in a gesture of incomprehension.

VIRIDIANA

Why didn't you wake me?

DON JAIME is eating the fruit.

DON JAIME

They say it's dangerous.

VIRIDIANA seems to be ashamed of her bout of sleepwalking. She reacts energetically. She is trying to dismiss the matter as unimportant.

VIRIDIANA

I don't believe it. A few years ago -- the last time I walked in my sleep -- they woke me up by slapping my face. And you can see I'm still alive.

(her face darkens)

What worries me is that I put ashes on your bed.

DON JAIME is busy munching a piece of fruit.

DON JAIME

Why? It's no more odd than anything else.

People who walk in their sleep don't know what they're doing.

VIRIDIANA, worried, shakes her head in disagreement.

VIRIDIANA

No, Uncle; ashes mean penance and death.

DON JAIME

(laughing)

Then it's penance for you who are going to be a nun; and for me, who am old, it's death ...

VIRIDIANA sits down. RAMONA, who has come into the room a second before, serves a cup of coffee to DON JAIME.

DON JAIME

If you like, I will come with you tomorrow to the village when you leave.

VIRIDIANA

Thank you, Uncle.

DON JAIME examines the pipe which he is filling.

DON JAIME

This evening we must do something special by way of a farewell.

VIRIDIANA

Whatever you like.

DON JAIME offers a piece of fruit to his niece. She takes it.

DON JAIME

(trying to appear detached about it)

I should like you to do something for me. It's an innocent sort of thing but I'm very set on it.

VIRIDIANA

Today I can refuse you nothing.

DON JAIME, surprised and happy, gets up and comes over to her.

DON JAIME

You'll do what I ask, then?

VIRIDIANA, not at all alarmed, bites the fruit which her uncle has given her.

VIRIDIANA

Whatever you wish. I'm at your command.

He looks at her with gratitude. At the same time he is sincerely modest and shy.

DON JAIME

No, wait ...

(he smiles awkwardly)

What a silly thing! It's quite difficult for me to tell you what it is.

He takes a mouthful of coffee and relights his pipe. He shakes his head as if he is sorry for himself.

THE PARK AT NIGHT.

The facade of the house is lit by the moon. The windows of the only two rooms which show light stand out in the darkness. Slowly, the light fades in the window of Doña Elvira's room as if someone is carrying the light away. A dog is heard barking.

THE HALL.

VIRIDIANA, who appears clothed in the wedding dress previously seen in Don

Jaime's hands leaves Doña Elvira's room. She is holding a lit candelabra in her hand. She advances as if walking to the altar. Although the situation is not to her liking, she is a little amused by it. RAMONA helps by carrying her train. They move toward the sitting room.

THE SITTING ROOM.

DON JAIME looks toward the door as the radiantly beautiful VIRIDIANA enters the room. His hand shakes; he is motionless for a second. Then he goes toward her, takes the candelabra from her, and gazes at her in admiration. RAMONA lets go of the train and goes off the frame.

DON JAIME

(very tenderly)

How strange you are! When I asked you to do this favor for me you refused. You seemed almost offended. And now, here you are, making me so very happy all of a sudden. Thank you, my child!

VIRIDIANA

(a bit oppressed)

I don't like masquerading, but as you see I decided to give in to your whim.

DON JAIME frees the girl's hand; he looks bitter.

DON JAIME

It's not a masquerade, nor is it a whim.

(silence for a moment)

I'm going to tell you something that few people know.

He takes a few steps with his fists clenched, stops, and turns to her.

DON JAIME

Your aunt died of a heart attack, in my arms, on our wedding night, wearing that dress, and you look so like her ...

As he speaks he goes to the table, on which he places the candelabra. His words have moved the girl. DON JAIME follows her with his eyes.

DON JAIME

You must think I'm mad.

VIRIDIANA

No, Uncle, and now I'm pleased to have been able to do this favor, because, although I didn't think so at first, you are really a good man.

VIRIDIANA adjusts her veil. DON JAIME has gone to another table near which

RAMONA is hovering. He lights the spirit lamp under a samovar.

DON JAIME

If you only knew ... When I was young I was full of idealism. I wanted to do something on a big scale for others, something to show my great love for humanity. But as soon as I tried to do something about it, I became afraid that I would be laughed at and I felt like a fool ... and so I went back into my shell.

VIRIDIANA

Wasn't that cowardice?

DON JAIME

No, it isn't that, I can assure you. I wouldn't be afraid in the face of real danger. I've proved that to myself. On the other hand, if a stranger visited me simply to say hello, I'd be alarmed.

There is silence for a moment. DON JAIME looks at VIRIDIANA almost lovingly.

DON JAIME

I can't take my eyes off you. Come, let's sit down.

They sit side by side.

VIRIDIANA

Uncle, you mustn't think that I won't be sad to leave you.

DON JAIME

(eagerly)

It's up to you entirely. Don't leave, then ...

VIRIDIANA shakes her head.

VIRIDIANA

Unfortunately ...

DON JAIME

(discouraged)

It's my fault. If I'd come to see you more often, if I'd invited you here for holidays, maybe everything would be different.

VIRIDIANA

(smiling)

Maybe ...

DON JAIME gazes at his niece. His tension is at a peak. His whole future depends on what he is about to say; he is convinced of that.

DON JAIME

There's one way you could stay. If I asked ...

He stops in front of her; he lowers his eyes.

DON JAIME

I mean .. . if I said to you ...

He cannot go on. His mouth is dry and he is flushed, his muscles contracting.

DON JAIME

No, I can't ... I can't ...

VIRIDIANA looks at him in amazement.

RAMONA comes up to them. The servant has followed the conversation with interest and anxiety. She comes to her master's assistance. She quickly intervenes to address the girl in a firm tone.

RAMONA

What he wants, miss, is to marry you.

This remark leaves the girl stunned.

RAMONA

Excuse me, sir, but I only said what you didn't dare say yourself.

DON JAIME is ashamed and looks at the servant reproachfully.

RAMONA

He loves you very much and he deserves to be loved in return, because he is a very good man.

VIRIDIANA has not yet got over her surprise. Perhaps she is even more upset than he is. But, gradually, she frowns and shows her irritation.

VIRIDIANA
You're really serious?

DON JAIME answers in a determined voice but with his eyes lowered.

DON JAIME
Yes, I don't want you ever to leave this house.

VIRIDIANA
(getting up)
You must be out of your mind. I've been so happy these last few days -- now you've spoiled it all.

A silence. VIRIDIANA pulls off her veil angrily.

VIRIDIANA
I think it would be better if I went to my room.

She moves toward the door. DON JAIME rushes forward to restrain her.

DON JAIME
Wait! Forgive me! Honestly, I really beg your pardon. Stay a few more minutes! If you go now, I'm afraid you'll always resent me. I promise not to say anything that might annoy you. I'll put some music on and we'll have a cup of coffee.

DON JAIME makes a sign to RAMONA, who has gone over to the sideboard where the coffeepot is. VIRIDIANA is motionless, her head hangs, she refuses to say a word. RAMONA looks at DON JAIME, who signals to her almost imperceptibly. He goes to the phonograph and puts on a classical record, as usual. VIRIDIANA, head still down, has just sat down in the armchair. RAMONA fills the coffee cups. The phonograph begins to play.

RAMONA

Take this, miss, it'll do you good.

RAMONA offers a cup of coffee to the girl. Gazing in front of her, she drinks almost the whole cup in a quick gulp.

THE SERVANTS' QUARTERS, NIGHTTIME.

A very simple room on the ground floor of the house. An old sideboard and a rough kitchen table. MONCHO is sitting near the table mending a strap. Beside him is a piece of paper with lumps of sugar on it. He eats them with enthusiasm, munching noisily. The door opens and little RITA comes in, sobbing and frightened. She is barefoot, dressed in a skirt and an old ragged blanket which covers the upper part of her body. The old servant looks at her disapprovingly.

MONCHO

Why are you crying?

RITA

I'm afraid.

MONCHO

Don't invent stories; go to bed.

RITA

A black bull came.

MONCHO

(laughing mockingly)

A black bull!

RITA approaches him. Her fear is disappearing.

RITA

It's a very big one.

MONCHO

Very, very?

RITA
(with an air of defiance)
Yes -- very, very big!

MONCHO
He couldn't get through the door, then?

RITA shakes her head vigorously. MONCHO laughs with an air of "Now you've been caught in a barefaced lie."

MONCHO
Then how did it get in, silly?

The little girl thinks for a moment.

RITA
(energetically)
He came in through the cupboard.

MONCHO
You little liar! Get out of here!

RITA starts crying again.

RITA
I'm afraid.

MONCHO holds out a piece of sugar to her.

MONCHO
Here! And call your mother if you're having nightmares. Now go away and don't annoy me.

RITA accepts the gifts and lingers for a moment. The servant carries on with his work and finally the girl leaves, munching her lump of sugar.

THE SITTING ROOM.

RAMONA puts down her cup. Then DON JAIME gives her his. They look at each other in silence. The music has stopped. DON JAIME goes to the phonograph and

switches it on again. VIRIDIANA is still sitting, with her back to the camera, holding the empty cup in her hand. DON JAIME comes up behind her.

Close-up of VIRIDIANA's right hand holding the cup and saucer. Her fingers slacken and she lets go of them. DON JAIME holds his breath. He is just behind her. He stops to watch her reactions. He looks at RAMONA. Then he speaks.

DON JAIME
(in a shaky voice)
You look very tired. Perhaps you'd better go to bed.

There is no reply. VIRIDIANA'S head falls on her shoulders. DON JAIME comes toward her slowly until he is standing in front of her. He shakes her gently.

DON JAIME
Viridiana! Viridiana! ...

There is no reply.

THE HALL.

The only light comes from the sitting room. At the end of the hall, the small silhouette of RITA appears as she comes upstairs. She carefully enters the hall, going in the direction of the sitting room, from which muffled voices are heard.

DON JAIME'S VOICE
Help me ...Take her by the legs.

RAMONA'S VOICE
Lift her a little more, sir...

A pause. There is the sound of a chair being overturned.

DON JAIME'S VOICE

Don't think too badly of me, Ramona; I only want to have her close to me.

The camera reaches RITA. There is the sound of footsteps approaching the door and the child runs and hides herself behind the staircase, from where, timorously, she watches the scene. DON JAIME and his servant appear from the sitting room, carrying VIRIDIANA who appears to be dead. They go toward Doña Elvira's room and enter it. RITA comes out of her hiding place. Her curiosity aroused, she would like to see more but she is afraid of being discovered. She withdraws gradually and starts to go downstairs again.

INSIDE DOÑA ELVIRA'S ROOM.

DON JAIME and RAMONA have laid VIRIDIANA motionless on the bed. RAMONA lights the candles.

DON JAIME'S VOICE

That will be all, Ramona.

She obeys in silence.

VIRIDIANA remains lying on her back motionless. Her hair is slightly untidy, as it was a few minutes before in the sitting room. DON JAIME, feverishly, with an artist's meticulousness, begins to perfect his masterpiece. He crosses the girl's arms over her breast, puts her feet together, arranges the pleats of her dress. Lying thus, VIRIDIANA has the look of a lovely figure on a tomb.

The scene switches to the big tree which dominates the grounds. We see RITA going toward it, looking up from time to time at the feebly lit window of

Donna Elvira's room. After a moment's hesitation, the little girl begins to climb the tree. As she ascends, the sound of a dog barking is heard in the night.

DONNA ELVIRA'S ROOM.

DON JAIME, sitting on the edge of the bed, stands up. For a moment he walks up and down in front of the motionless body, without taking his eyes off it. He stops for a second, then goes over and sits on the bed again. He caresses VIRIDIANA'S hair and forehead. He is terribly affected. Then he puts his arms around the girl's shoulders and lifts her gently into a sitting position. He draws his face close to hers and joins his lips to hers in a sweet, prolonged kiss.

The window, through which little RITA, who has reached the terrace, looks curiously in at the scene.

With trembling hands, DON JAIME unfastens the neck of VIRIDIANA'S dress. Her throat and the top of her breasts are exposed. The body he has been yearning for, now defenseless, is at his mercy. He is completely beside himself. He lays his cheek against VIRIDIANA'S breast. He feels the softness of the skin and its warmth. He kisses it once, twice. Suddenly, he reacts. He gets up with a start and looks, almost with terror, at the body. He sees the calm, serene expression on the girl's face. DON JAIME now passes from the realm of blind instinct to the realm of conscience. He realizes the meanness of his actions. Basically, he is a good and kindly man. Nevertheless his hands reach out to her again. Then suddenly, decisively, as if moved by fear of himself;

he runs to the door, opens it, and goes out into the hall, taking the lit candelabra with him on the way. The music has not stopped throughout.

RITA climbs down from the branches of the tree and jumps to the ground. She sees her mother waiting for her and runs to join her.

RAMONA
What are you doing?

RITA
Don Jaime was kissing the lady.

RAMONA, with a somber look, stares at her child. Then she sees how RITA has come to know this. She frowns, annoyed.

RAMONA
He only kisses her because she's his niece.
Don't I kiss you? You should be in bed.

RITA
A black bull came into my room.

RAMONA
Be quiet. I'm going to put you to bed.

She takes her by the hand and leads her to the servants' door. Again the barking of a dog is heard.

DON JAIME passes down the hall on his way to his room, walking quickly and nervously. He opens the door, enters, and closes it with a bang. Absolute silence then reigns in the house.

INTERIOR OF DOÑA ELVIRA'S ROOM, THE NEXT DAY.

RAMONA, standing in front of the window, closes it. We hear the moaning voice of VIRIDIANA.

VIRIDIANA (off)

I'm thirsty.

RAMONA gives her a glass of water from a bottle that is on the console.

VIRIDIANA drinks it greedily.

RAMONA

How do you feel?

VIRIDIANA

I have a headache.

RAMONA

That will soon pass. It's nothing.

VIRIDIANA notices her exposed body and covers herself modestly -- ill at ease.

VIRIDIANA

What happened to me?

RAMONA

You fainted last night after supper. The master and I carried you here.

VIRIDIANA

Have I slept long?

RAMONA

Oh, you slept well; don't worry.

The sound of footsteps is heard approaching the bedroom. VIRIDIANA covers herself under the bedclothes. The door opens and DON JAIME appears. His face and the untidiness of his clothes show clearly that he must have spent a sleepless night. Seeing him, VIRIDIANA wants to protest but does not dare.
DON JAIME comes in.

DON JAIME

Leave us alone, Ramona.

VIRIDIANA

(vehemently)

Don't go!

DON JAIME makes a sign with his head and the servant obeys. She leaves the room, closing the door behind her. The uncle and niece remain, facing one another.

VIRIDIANA

Leave me alone, uncle, please. I want to get up.

She receives no reply. The old man walks up and down the room, deep in thought, obviously not knowing how to begin. She insists, in an irritated manner.

VIRIDIANA

I have to go!

DON JAIME sits down on the edge of the bed. He answers very decisively.

DON JAIME

No. You can never go away now.

There is a sudden look of impatience, almost of real fear, in the girl's eyes.

VIRIDIANA

Last night you promised never to speak of that again. I beg you, leave me alone.

The old man does not budge.

DON JAIME

What could be more unlike than an old man who lives alone and a young woman like you, consecrated to God. However ...

The girl, exasperated, almost sits up in bed.

VIRIDIANA

(violently)

Be quiet! I don't want to listen to you! Don't you understand that I want to get dressed?

He, lost in thought, does not seem to hear her.

DON JAIME

I forgot everything because of you, even the
passion that has kept me going all these years
... everything.

He gets up and walks around the room. VIRIDIANA would like to get
up and
force him to leave the room, but her state of semi-nudity prevents
her.

DON JAIME

I must have been mad. I thought that you would
agree to marry me, but naturally you refused.
And now it's the day that you must leave.

She looks at him, wondering how the discussion is going to end. DON
JAIME
comes to the bed and leans over her. He stares at her.

DON JAIME

(coldly)

I had to force you.

(pause)

That was the only way I could find to have you
in my arms.

VIRIDIANA evidences growing dismay and anxiety.

VIRIDIANA

(shouting)

You're lying.

DON JAIME

No, it's true.

(speaking each word distinctly)

Last night when you were sleeping, I had you
all to myself.

She opens her eyes wide in horror. She can't believe what he's
saying. She
feels a cold sweat breaking out on her forehead. DON JAIME starts
pacing back
and forth again in front of her, sometimes staring at her and
sometimes
obstinately lowering his eyes.

DON JAIME

Now you won't be able to go back to your
convent. You're not the same woman who left it
a few days ago. Now, you'll have to stay with

me here forever.

He stops comes back to the bed, and sits down. There is a pleading note in his voice.

DON JAIME

Everything I have will be yours, and if you don't want to marry me, if you prefer to live as we have up to now, provided you're close to me, I'll content myself with ...

She visibly takes time to understand her uncle's words. The blow is so hard that she hardly even reacts. Her plight moves DON JAIME to sympathy.

DON JAIME

Think about it. Don't hurry. Think it over.

VIRIDIANA

(with a start, almost shouting)

Go away! Leave me alone.

She looks at him with hate and disgust. DON JAIME is affected. He hesitates. He starts to speak to her again but does not do so. He finally gets up and goes to the door. He feels VIRIDIANA's eyes, blazing with anger, upon him. He leaves the room, head hanging, shattered. Immediately, VIRIDIANA leaps out of bed, grabs her bag, and wildly begins to throw her clothes into it.

AT THE DOOR OF DON JAIME'S ROOM.

RAMONA is waiting for DON JAIME, whom we see coming from the hall. He passes the servant without noticing her. He goes into the room. RAMONA goes up to him slowly.

RAMONA

What did you say to her, sir?

He looks at her.

DON JAIME

The way she looked at me, Ramona! She hates me now. I think I've made a great mistake. She's going away, she's going away and nothing will stop her.

RAMONA

(without conviction)

Speak to her again. Explain everything to her seriously.

DON JAIME

What for? She'll only look at me that way again ... I couldn't. You go. Perhaps she'll listen to you. Try to convince her.

RAMONA

But what can I say to her, sir?

DON JAIME

Tell her I lied, that I didn't take advantage of her.

Ramona looks at him, stunned, incredulous. He continues with sincerity.

DON JAIME

I did mean to do it, Ramona. But I realized in time what I was doing. I spent the whole night turning my thoughts over in my mind ... and I lied to her so she wouldn't go back to the convent.

(taking RAMONA by the arm)

Go on, explain to her.

He almost pushes her to the door. She goes against her will, hesitating. He watches her from the doorway.

IN DOOR ELVIRA'S ROOM.

VIRIDIANA has dressed and is closing her bag. RAMONA comes in stealthily

through the half-open door. VIRIDIANA's eyes are full of tears. In the background, RAMONA hesitates for a moment, then half turns and goes back quickly to DON JAIME's room.

IN DON JAIME'S ROOM.

DON JAIME is leaning against the bed. RAMONA appears in the doorway.

RAMONA
Sir, come right away.

DON JAIME straightens himself with a start. He stares at the servant for a second. Then he walks quickly to the door and goes out.

DO♦A ELVIRA'S ROOM.

VIRIDIANA grabs her bag and is just about to go as her uncle enters. He blocks her way and locks the door, taking the key from the lock. The girl still has signs of tears on her face.

VIRIDIANA
Let me pass!

DON JAIME
You must listen to me before you go.

VIRIDIANA
(angrily)
I've listened to you long enough. Let me out.

VIRIDIANA goes back a couple of steps and puts down her bag. She is no longer afraid. She can hardly feel any emotion except anger mingled with disgust. DON JAIME remains standing beside her.

DON JAIME

All that I said just now was a lie. I said it so you wouldn't leave. I only molested you in my thoughts ... I can't bear to have you leave me, hating me like this.

(pleadingly)

Tell me you believe what I'm saying and I'll let you go.

VIRIDIANA

You disgust me... even if what you say is true.

DON JAIME

(in a quieter voice)

Then you won't forgive me?

The young woman's look shatters DON JAIME. With difficulty, VIRIDIANA, who has turned her back to her uncle, holds back the sobs which are choking her. After a moment's anguished silence, DON JAIME, resigned to his fate, holds the key out to the girl. She snatches it from him, takes up her suitcase, and makes for the door; she goes out without a glance in his direction.

As VIRIDIANA comes out of Doña Elvira's room into the hall, RAMONA is seen walking toward her away from the camera. DON JAIME's silhouette hovers on the threshold which the girl has just crossed. VIRIDIANA passes in front of the camera and her rushing footsteps are heard descending the staircase.

DOÑA ELVIRA'S ROOM.

DON JAIME is looking out from the balcony. RAMONA enters, shaken by all that has happened. Hearing her footsteps, DON JAIME turns around. His expression is not what one would expect. He seems calm, without the slightest trace of disappointment. He seems even to be smiling. Now that what he has feared

so much has occurred, he is recovering his former courage. The servant stops a few feet away, her eyes lowered, not daring to look at him. DON JAIME goes to her.

DON JAIME
You believe me, don't you?

RAMONA
Yes, sir.

Her voice is low, utterly without conviction. DON JAIME notices this. He smiles.

DON JAIME
Don't lie. You don't believe me either.

RAMONA
(trying to find an excuse)
It's only that ... It's all very odd, sir.

DON JAIME nods his head sympathetically.

DON JAIME
It's all right, my girl, it's all right.

He makes for the hall. RAMONA goes to the unmade bed and examines the sheets, as if trying to discover the truth. Seeing nothing, she sits on the edge of the bed with a thoughtful air.

THE PARK.

THE COACHMAN finishes preparing the carriage. Some yards away VIRIDIANA is waiting, seated on a stone bench with her back to the camera. Her bag is at her side. Nearby, RITA is playing diabolo. The toys DON JAIME gives her indicate how old-fashioned he is.

RITA
See how high I can throw it!

VIRIDIANA does not even look around. In order to attract her attention, RITA collects the spool which has fallen back onto the string. She turns it and puts it into place with the aid of one of the sticks.

RITA

Look! You can't do that!

As VIRIDIANA remains sunk deep in thought, RITA loses heart and tries to interest MONCHO, who has just picked up VIRIDIANA's bag and is taking it to the carriage.

RITA

Look! Moncho! Look how high it is!

As usual, he answers her in a surly manner.

MONCHO

Let me have a little peace, won't you?

RITA goes on playing without paying any attention to his bad temper. MONCHO approaches VIRIDIANA.

MONCHO

When you're ready, miss.

The girl stands up and goes to the carriage.

THE BALCONY OUTSIDE DON JAIME'S ROOM.

DON JAIME watches his niece's departure. As VIRIDIANA goes to the carriage, RITA says something to her, but she merely caresses her head with her hand as a sign of farewell. She gets in and the coachman gives the horse the whip. The little girl waves goodbye, then begins to run after the carriage.

DON JAIME sadly watches the carriage disappear. But he recovers quickly and

his face takes on a calm, almost indifferent look. He goes to the desk which is in the corner of the room and sits down at it. He rubs his forehead. The writing materials on the table are lying in disorder. Several months must certainly have passed since he has been near his desk. Carefully, he begins to make order out of the chaos. He rubs his fingers along the table to see if there is any dust on it. Seeing that it is clean, he smiles at the thought of Ramona's conscientiousness. Finally, he takes a pen and a sheet of notepaper and begins to write. He smiles quietly, rubbing his beard dreamily. He appears to have thought of something that pleases him very much.

THE VILLAGE SQUARE.

Under the arcade which borders the square, VIRIDIANA is waiting for her bus to arrive; its approach is heralded by the sound of its engine. She goes to the bus stop, where others are waiting. As the bus stops, passengers get off and those who were waiting get on. The driver comes up to VIRIDIANA.

DRIVER

I'll take your bag, please, miss.

At this moment, an important-looking middle-class gentleman -- the MAYOR -- comes along the arcade, followed by two uniformed POLICEMEN and a PEASANT. The group comes up to VIRIDIANA, to whom the man holds out his hand.

MAYOR

How do you do, Miss Viridiana!

VIRIDIANA

Is anything the matter, Mr. Mayor?

MAYOR

You cannot leave ...

VIRIDIANA
(surprised)
Why not?

MAYOR
There's been an accident.

VIRIDIANA
Where?

MAYOR
Come with me.

He takes her by the arm. VIRIDIANA neither protests nor asks any further questions.

DON JAIME'S ESTATE.

A car stops in the drive. The MAYOR gets out, followed by the group which was with him in the village. All come toward the camera, eyes trained on the branches of the big tree beside which Rita likes to play. MONCHO rushes up to meet them.

Near the tree, RAMONA and her daughter, clinging to one another watch the people arrive.

The big tree, through whose foliage hang the feet of a man. Close-up of VIRIDIANA, who has just got out of the car and sees the body. Overcome, she leans her forehead against the car door and remains like that for a moment, motionless and silent.

Close-up of the branch from which DON JAIME is hanging. The only part of him that is visible is the back of his head. The body itself is outside the

frame. The rope which is tied to the branch has a wooden handle. It is Rita's jump rope.

THE TURRETS OF THE HOUSE AND THE TREES OF THE PARK.

The same picture of little RITA's legs skipping under the big tree as at the beginning of the film.

MONCHO, who is leading a horse, stops upon seeing RITA. He lets go of the animal's halter and goes up to the little girl. Brutally, he takes hold of the jump rope and tries to snatch it from her. RITA struggles with him fiercely.

RITA

Give it to me. It's mine!

The old man elbows her aside.

MONCHO

I'll box your ears if you don't show some respect for the dead! You mustn't play under this tree.

RITA

Don Jaime loved to watch me skip.

The servant finally seizes the rope and throws it away.

MONCHO

If something terrible happens now it will be your fault.

He leaves. As soon as his back is turned, RITA picks up the rope and with the same liveliness begins to skip. The picture of her legs again.

VIRIDIANA'S ROOM.

Close-up of her black wooden cross and the crown of thorns hooked across the end of the bed. The room has a red brick floor and white-washed walls.

VIRIDIANA, who undoubtedly did not want to keep the room she was in before, is now in a less elaborate room on the ground floor. The furniture consists of an iron bed, two chairs, and a white wooden table. In the corner there is a very simple dressing-table without a mirror. VIRIDIANA, with bucket and broom, is washing the floor. The young woman's face is more drawn and she is no longer smiling. Something seems to have happened to her: she appears youthful, and with a certain balance that she lacked before.

RAMONA comes into the room and puts a tray on the table. She lifts off the napkin, revealing the meal of a plate of vegetables, a glass of milk, and a piece of bread.

RAMONA

You aren't eating enough. I've given you a glass of milk, and this evening I'll bring you some meat.

VIRIDIANA stops working and goes to wash her hands in a basin on the dressing table.

RAMONA

You don't look at all well!
(Viridiana does not answer)
The mayor told me that he's dealing with the problems you were talking about. You can go to the village when you want to. It'll do you good to see the world.

In the distance a car is heard: it stops. RAMONA looks out the open window ... Two nuns pass outside and into the building. One of them is the MOTHER SUPERIOR of VIRIDIANA's convent.

VIRIDIANA goes to the door. Unruffled, she watches the MOTHER SUPERIOR enter.
RAMONA moves back to let the visitor pass and then leaves the room.

MOTHER SUPERIOR
Good morning. You weren't expecting me, were you?

VIRIDIANA
Mother.

The MOTHER SUPERIOR looks at VIRIDIANA with compassion. She shakes her head with pity.

MOTHER SUPERIOR
You must have suffered, my child!

The young girl goes up to her, but instead of throwing herself into her arms weeping, as her Superior seems to expect, she bows deeply and calmly kisses the crucifix on the Mother Superior's rosary. This calm somewhat disconcerts her visitor.

MOTHER SUPERIOR
Ever since yesterday, when we heard by chance about the tragedy, we have been very anxious for you. Why didn't you write? I would have come immediately.

VIRIDIANA
I had so many things to think about!

MOTHER SUPERIOR
A suicide is horrible. I know. But you should have told me.

She looks around her and seems to approve of the simplicity of the room.

MOTHER SUPERIOR
I talked for a few minutes to the parish priest in the village and he told me how it happened. Everybody is asking why this horrible offense was committed against Our Lord. Do you know the reason?

VIRIDIANA remains standing.

VIRIDIANA

I only know that my uncle was a grave sinner
and I feel guilty for his death.

The MOTHER SUPERIOR'S face darkens. She moves toward VIRIDIANA.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

How can you say that! You, responsible for the
suicide of a man? I want a complete confession
from you.

VIRIDIANA lowers her eyes.

VIRIDIANA

(firmly)

I'm not going back to the convent; therefore
I'm no longer under obedience to anyone.

She says this calmly, almost humbly, but there is an element of
revolt in her
voice which angers her SUPERIOR, who struggles to control herself.
The
SUPERIOR swallows hard and speaks without raising her voice.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Is there some grave impediment which prevents
you from taking your vows? There must be
something.

VIRIDIANA

I have nothing to reproach myself for. All I
know is that I've changed. With all my
strength, which is not much, I will follow the
road that the Lord has shown me. One can also
serve outside a convent.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Are you aware of the pride there is in what
you're saying?

VIRIDIANA does not answer. She continues to look down. The nun
changes her
tone. She tries irony.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

What great plans are you thinking of dedicating
yourself to now?

VIRIDIANA looks her in the eye.

VIRIDIANA

I know my own weakness, and whatever I do will be humble. But, however little it is, I want to do it alone.

There is a moment of silence while the MOTHER SUPERIOR tries to follow

VIRIDIANA's train of thought. Her amazement prevails over her indignation.

She does not know what to think. Finally she speaks, very dryly.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Very well. As you won't let me help you, I must leave you. I'm very sorry I came and disturbed you. Goodbye.

She half turns and goes to the door.

VIRIDIANA

Mother!

The MOTHER SUPERIOR stops.

VIRIDIANA

Forgive me if I have offended you.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

You are forgiven. Goodbye.

She goes out, closing the door behind her.

THE CHURCH SQUARE OF THE VILLAGE.

It is flooded with sunlight. A little old man dressed in rags half-walks,

half-runs, up to a group of beggars as shabbily dressed as himself who are

standing in the doorway of the church. The beggars are DON AMALIO, blind,

about 45; EL PELON (BALDY), a rather alarming character of about 40; ENEDINA,

who is carrying a two-year-old girl in her arms; REFUGIO, a woman of

uncertain age, showing obvious signs of pregnancy; and finally, the little old man who has just arrived and who answers to the nickname "El POCA".

DON AMALIO, who has the hard, sharp features of a countryman, is sitting with his back against the stone steps of the church, his face absorbing the sun. Near him lies a long white stick which acts as a guide when he walks. In his arms, he holds ENEDINA's second little girl, who is about a year old. As people pass him on their way into the church, he calls out sonorously for alms.

PELON

Why isn't she coming?

POCA

She has already crossed herself.

REFUGIO

She's a very firm believer.

There is a silence. Some of them look toward the church door.

ENEDINA

I've heard she's even going to pay us to go and live with her.

Two women pass.

DON AMALIO

Kind people! Don't forget a poor blind man.

In the background, VIRIDIANA comes out of the church. The beggars are in confusion. POCA grasps the blind man by the arm and pulls him to his feet.

POCA

There she is. Hurry up, come on. You've had it if you totter around like that and fool with the kids.

VIRIDIANA joins them. She takes the child from AMALIO.

VIRIDIANA

Give the little girl to me. Come here,
sweetheart. Are you ready?

PELON

When you are, miss.

VIRIDIANA

Good, then let's go!

POCA, who is leading the old man, comes up to VIRIDIANA. He looks at her and speaks to DON AMALIO.

POCA

She has the face of an angel. What a pity you can't see her.

VIRIDIANA

Right, let's go.

(to Poca)

And keep the compliments to yourself. I don't like them.

The beggars get their belongings together, then join up.

IN ANOTHER LITTLE SQUARE OF THE VILLAGE.

Two more beggars are waiting: one is DON ZEQUIEL, an old man of about sixty whose full white beard gives him the look of a patriarch; the other is a man of about forty, with a black beard. He moves with the help of a stick and is known by the name of HOBBL Y. He is drinking from the fountain of the small square when the group led by VIRIDIANA comes toward them.

DON ZEQUIEL

Here they come.

HOBBL Y turns away from the fountain to look at them.

VIRIDIANA

Are you the other two?

DON ZEQUIEL
Yes, miss, that's us, yes.

VIRIDIANA
Good, come with me.

INTERIOR OF DON JAIME'S SITTING ROOM.

Close-up of an oil portrait of Don Jaime.

JORGE'S VOICE (off)
What a strange man! I wish I knew what he was like.

LUCIA'S VOICE (off)
As far as you're concerned, worthless. You can see how much he cared about you.

The people who are speaking come into view. JORGE, Don Jaime's son, no more than thirty, is a well-built energetic type. Not overimaginative or a dreamer, he is a practical man of action. His custom-made clothes look recently cleaned and pressed. LUCIA is younger. She is pretty and pleasant but there is nothing to distinguish her from many other women. She too seems dressed in her Sunday best.

JORGE
I'm not at all bitter about it. Anyone can love and forget. But ... Why did he acknowledge me at the last moment? What was going through his mind?

RAMONA, who is coming out of Don Jaime's room, is listening. She looks at the portrait tenderly.

RAMONA
He was very good. Better than some people would think.

JORGE
Why did he kill himself?

RAMONA tries not to show anything of what she knows, or her sorrow.

RAMONA
I don't know, sir.

JORGE
(nodding)
One shouldn't be alone the whole time.
(looks at Lucia; laughing)
I'm not like him, am I?

He goes to the harmonium. LUCIA follows him.

LUCIA
Not in that way; you're always looking for
company.

JORGE
Why do you say that? Perhaps the young girl is
a bit jealous.

LUCIA (off)
I know what I mean.

JORGE pedals the harmonium and runs his hands across the keyboard,
causing a
series of discords. RAMONA cannot bear this profanation and
interrupts.

RAMONA
Don't play, sir.

He takes his hands from the keyboard and looks at the servant in
astonishment.

RAMONA
(respectfully)
I beg your pardon, sir. The master used to play
here by the hour. It was a real delight to
listen to him.

She closes the harmonium slowly. JORGE leans against the instrument
and
stares at her, looking half the seducer and half ironic. The
servant,
disturbed, slips away.

RAMONA

If you don't mind, I'll go get the other suitcase.

LUCIA, looking sulky, goes past them onto the balcony. JORGE follows her.

The balcony looks out on a wasteland: scorched terrain, with some scrub and weeds; some trees and among them some dilapidated outhouses of the old farm.

There are mountains in the background.

JORGE

Look at these beautiful fields! And behind those pines the fields, dried up and abandoned. There's so much to do here and it's all mine. We won't have time to get bored.

LUCIA smiles. JORGE takes the young girl by the shoulders and draws her to him. He wants to embrace her, but she pulls away.

JORGE

Aren't you happy?

She seems rather sad, in fact.

LUCIA

Yes. But I don't know ... I wish I hadn't come.

Obviously, her lover is everything to her, but she fears that this unexpected prosperity might separate them. Something happening in the drive attracts Lucia's attention and she points.

LUCIA

Look at that.

JORGE leans over the balcony and looks at what is happening below.

THE PARK.

VIRIDIANA is coming into the park followed by her troupe of beggars. The

beggars, in little groups, are looking around with curiosity. POCA and the blind man DON AMALIO are among them. POCA is telling the blind man what he sees.

POCA
(full of admiration for the house)
It's very big ...

The blind man hits the ground with his stick.

DON AMALIO
So much the better. We'll all fit. How many floors are there?

POCA
Two.

DON AMALIO
Are there many windows?

POCA
Lots. It's got balconies and two big towers.

DON AMALIO
(sententiously)
Then it's a respectable house.

The old servant MONCHO comes out of the house and approaches the arrivals.

VIRIDIANA
Have you repaired the windows of the dormitories?

MONCHO
They shut all right now. And the blankets are ready.

ENEDINA and REFUGIO bring up the end of the line.

REFUGIO
That miss is as good as gold.

ENEDINA
She's very good, but a bit of a simpleton.

The group stops near the house.

VIRIDIANA

The men will sleep on one side, the women on the other, but we will eat together. We'll try to get you some decent clothes tomorrow. Moncho, show them where they'll be. I'll take the women.

JORGE and LUCIA have come out of the house and are looking with curiosity and astonishment at this tattered group. They go up to VIRIDIANA.

JORGE

Viridiana.

VIRIDIANA turns and notices the couple without showing any surprise. JORGE bows.

JORGE

Miss Viridiana ...

VIRIDIANA

Are you Jorge?

She shakes the hand he is stretching out.

JORGE

Jorge, Don Jaime's son, at your service.

VIRIDIANA

I've been expecting you; I got a letter from the lawyer.

She looks at LUCIA.

JORGE

(smiling)

This is Lucia; she's a good girl. You'll get to know each other very quickly.

They shake hands.

Little RITA has come out of the house and rushes toward the beggars, brushing past LUCIA. The beggars are waiting near the house. MONCHO goes through them to get in front. Old DON ZEQUIEL paternally puts his hand on RITA's head.

DON ZEQUIEL

What's your name?

RITA

(lively)

Don't touch me! You're going to sleep in the farmyard with the chickens!

MONCHO gestures to the men to follow him.

MONCHO

Get moving! Anyone who pokes around where he shouldn't be will pay for it.

They begin walking, but the blind man is offended by these words.

DON AMALIO

Listen, although we may be poor, every man has his dignity, brother.

MONCHO

Don't "brother" me: there aren't any scum in my family.

PELON, who doesn't inspire sympathy, understands the allusion.

PELON

Well now, even the servants put on airs here, don't they?

MONCHO stops and turns around.

MONCHO

(angrily)

Do you want me to smash your face?

VIRIDIANA, who is following with the women, hears the exchange and goes up to the beggars.

VIRIDIANA

What's going on, Moncho?

MONCHO

This louse is looking for trouble.

PELON hardly lets him finish.

PELON

You runt.

MONCHO is about to attack but VIRIDIANA stops him.

VIRIDIANA

(to Pelon)

Don't talk like that!

PELON

I'll talk the way I want to. I've had enough of this.

The blind man, guided by the voices, is angered by PELON's lack of respect and hits him with his stick.

DON AMALIO

That'll teach you some manners.

PELON

Blind, shit! You can see now.

He attacks DON AMALIO. All of them intervene to separate the two.

VIRIDIANA

fearlessly stands between them.

VIRIDIANA

(shouting with authority)

In you go! Moncho, lead the way!

(to Pelon)

You stay here.

MONCHO

But, miss ...

JORGE and LUCIA are anxiously watching the absurd proceedings.

JORGE is about

to intervene but LUCIA stops him.

LUCIA

Leave her.

The beggars, both men and women, are calmer. The blind man is muttering.

PELON looks at VIRIDIANA venomously.

VIRIDIANA

Keep calm, Moncho. And you...

(to the blind man)

...don't be quarrelsome!

MONCHO, unwillingly resigning himself to the situation, goes forward followed by the beggars. VIRIDIANA calmly goes up to PELON.

VIRIDIANA

Would you mind telling me what I did wrong to you to deserve your insults?

PELON

I've had a gutful of this.

VIRIDIANA

If you want to stay you'll have to exercise a little self-control, and be a bit more humble to everybody.

The beggar shrugs his shoulders contemptuously.

PELON

If that's the way, it's better to leave.

He half turns and walks away a few steps, but then he hesitates a moment and turns around again, facing the young woman.

PELON

Give me something to go on with.

Viridiana reaches in her pocket and gives PELON some money.

PELON

Because we are poor, without it ...

He leaves. In the background, JORGE and LUCIA go back into the house.

The beggars split up into two groups. On the left the men are led by MONCHO and on the right are the women; VIRIDIANA joins them.

THE SITTING ROOM AT NIGHT.

Close-up of a basin of hot water which is still steaming. In the water are

the feet of JORGE, who has rolled up his trousers. He is dressed for the country. He is sitting on Don Jaime's special armchair and smoking one of his pipes. LUCIA, sitting on a small low chair in front of him, has just finished polishing his boots. They are silent. She looks at him now and then.

LUCIA (off)
Are you tired?

JORGE
I nearly walked my legs off today.
(rubs his legs, points to the basin)
That has done me good.

There is a silence. RAMONA comes in with a towel in her hand. She hands it to JORGE and then looks at LUCIA, who goes on wiping the boots which have been waxed.

RAMONA
Why don't you let me do that, miss?

LUCIA
(dryly)
Because I've got him into bad habits.

JORGE begins to dry his feet. The maid bends down to pick up the basin, gets up, and turns. She goes to the door but stops before going out.

RAMONA
Whenever you're ready I can serve supper.

LUCIA
Right, we'll have it now.

The maid leaves the room after glancing at the little table which is already laid. JORGE, suddenly in a bad mood, flings his towel to the floor. LUCIA looks at him in surprise.

LUCIA
(harshly)
What's the matter with you?

JORGE

Nothing.

LUCIA

Why the bad temper?

JORGE

It's Viridiana. She's getting on my nerves.

LUCIA has finished his shoes and puts them in a corner.

LUCIA

(shrugging)

She's mad.

JORGE

No, not mad at all: she's rotten with religion.

LUCIA

Let her do what she wants. She doesn't bother us in any way. She minds her business and we

...

They fall silent. LUCIA goes up to JORGE and looks at him meaningfully.

LUCIA

Do you know what I think? What's annoying you is that she pays so little attention to you.

He looks at her furiously, which seems to indicate that she has touched a sore spot ... She moves away to the other side of the room and, at that moment, RAMONA comes in carrying a tureen of soup. LUCIA leaves the room.

JORGE goes over to the table, sits down, and opens his napkin with irritation. RAMONA has put the soup tureen on the edge of a sideboard.

JORGE turns his back to her so that she has only to turn her head to see him.

She gives him a look that is both tender and submissive. She is obviously disturbed by the presence of Don Jaime's son. Without taking her eyes of him,

she goes to pick up the tureen again and prepares to bring it over to the table, but at that moment LUCIA's voice is heard.

LUCIA

Ramona!

She starts as if she has been caught doing something wrong. For a moment, she tries to catch the tureen, which is about to fall, but only succeeds in making matters worse. The soup tureen smashes onto the floor, its contents spreading out.

LUCIA

That's the last straw! What were you looking at, woman? Look what you've done!

JORGE has got up to look at the disaster. He looks at the maid, nodding his head in commiseration.

JORGE

So, Ramona!

LUCIA

Run and get something to mop it up with, quickly.

RAMONA obeys, fleeing. LUCIA begins to pick up the pieces.

LUCIA

That woman's getting more and more stupid every day.

JORGE sits down again, looking resigned.

JORGE

What of it?

THE BEGGARS' REFECTORY: NIGHTTIME.

The beggars are eating at a rough table made of planks. Surprisingly, they

are respectfully dressed. Their clothes are worn out but clean. Their appearance is relatively washed and tidy. DON AMALIO, POCA, DON ZEQUIEL, HOBBLY, ENEDINA, and REFUGIO are there; also three other wretches, a man and two women. One of the women is a DWARF, the other, whom we will call the GARDENER, is a nondescript, middle-aged woman. The last character, who is named PACO, is a man of about fifty with a shaggy beard but no scar or physical deformity. They are all eating heartily.

DON AMALIO

When I wasn't so miserable I used to sell pigs. Begging your pardon, I was more honest than my holy Mother.

POCA

(swallowing)

So you didn't come from the poorhouse!

The blind man puts his plate on the table and grasps his stick.

DON AMALIO

I'll hit whoever said that.

DON AMALIO seems to mean what he says.

ENEDINA

Don't pay any attention to him, Don Amalio, he's a rogue.

Other voices are raised.

VOICES

Good evening, miss.

VIRIDIANA has just appeared on the threshold with two new guests, the woman SINGER and the LEPER.

DON ZEQUIEL

(standing up with respect)

Benedictus!

VIRIDIANA smiles at this incongruity. The SINGER looks distrustfully at the

others; she didn't expect such a great number. The LEPER holds back as if uncertain of the reception he will receive. All keep silent for the moment and the noise of eating is heard. VIRIDIANA makes the new guests sit down and gives them each a spoon and a plate.

VIRIDIANA

Make room for your new companions. You sit there, you there. I guess they're hungry, aren't they?

SINGER

God will reward you.

VIRIDIANA

Have you eaten well? Did you like it?

DON ZEQUIEL

I don't want to criticize the saintly miss who is so good to us, but I would take the liberty of saying that the beans were acid.

REFUGIO

What does that mean?

POCA

Sour, idiot.

REFUGIO

Don't pay any attention to them, they're peasants.

VIRIDIANA silences them.

VIRIDIANA

If Don Zequiel says the beans were bad it must be true. We'll do something about it tomorrow.

They all look at the LEPER with disgust. VIRIDIANA helps him to something and the man begins to eat hungrily. VIRIDIANA places the bread basket near him.

VIRIDIANA

(smiling)

Now I've got some good news for you. From tomorrow on, everyone will have some work to do.

This is a disagreeable surprise. They look at each other. POCA is flabbergasted and terrified.

VIRIDIANA

Don't worry, you won't be asked to do anything impossible or anything you won't want to do. I only want you to have a bit of a change and to take some exercise.

ENEDINA

I'm a cook, miss, I'm good at roasts and vanilla puddings. Last year I made pastry for the Companza people. They can still remember it.

VIRIDIANA

Good.

She goes up to each of them in turn.

VIRIDIANA

(to the Dwarf)

You can help me with the accounts.

DWARF

Yes, miss.

HOBBLY

I can paint religious pictures ... Before, I used to be able to write, but now with this leg I've forgotten ...

PACO

I can weave hemp, but with the rheumatism in my fingers ...

VIRIDIANA

What about you, Manuel?

POCA

I'm only good at making people laugh.

VIRIDIANA

That's all right; we all laugh here, but not at you; I'll see to that.

The LEPER is eating beside the woman GARDENER who sees him stretch out his

arm for a piece of bread.

GARDENER

I've got green fingers. The priest will tell you ...

VIRIDIANA

So you won't get bored here, there'll be more than enough for you to do!

The GARDENER suddenly points to the LEPER's arm.

GARDENER

Look! It's disgusting.

He immediately conceals his arm. Everybody looks at him.

HOBBLY

Let's see it.

POCA, standing up to see better, tries to get a look at the sores.

GARDENER

That's leprosy.

REFUGIO

Throw him out, miss! We're all clean here.

VIRIDIANA goes up to the LEPER, who has stood up, and calmly takes his arm.

He resists a bit, but she succeeds in examining a sore. At her gesture, they all fall silent and watch with revulsion.

LEPER

They're varicose veins, miss, but some days I can't take care of them.

VIRIDIANA

Are you sure it isn't contagious?

LEPER

They told me it isn't at the hospital.

VOICE

Don't listen to him, miss. I've known him for a long time.

The LEPER looks at his companions.

LEPER

(angrily)

They're varicose veins. It isn't leprosy.

VIRIDIANA

(to all)

I'll take him to the doctor tomorrow. Come on now, sit down and go on eating. And you, look after him as if he were a sick brother. Be understanding. Now finish eating and then go to bed. Everyone in bed by eight o'clock!

VIRIDIANA shows the newcomers where to sleep. With varied inflections the beggars bid her good night. HOBBLY goes to the door, opens it for VIRIDIANA and wishes her good night. The LEPER sits down again in his place. VIRIDIANA goes out.

HOBBLY turns back and approaches the LEPER. He pushes him with his stick and motions him to get up.

HOBBLY

If you don't disappear, I'll make holes in your belly.

LEPER

(frightened)

You're not the one to make me move.

HOBBLY pulls out a knife.

LEPER

The miss, she understands, she told me I could stay.

There is a scuffle.

ENEDINA

Hit him if he doesn't get out!

The blind man beats the table with his stick.

DON AMALIO

Calm down, people, calm down. Somebody will get hurt. If anything happens, we'll all be thrown

out.

SINGER

Out, the turd!

The LEPER relents and begins to leave.

LEPER

Okay, that's it, I give in, but I'm staying on the grounds. All together you'd be able ...

He begins to walk away, goes a few paces, but then turns around. He indicates the table, ashamed.

LEPER

Give me something for tomorrow morning.

The GARDENER, more compassionate than the others, takes a piece of bread and hands it to him at arm's length. The LEPER puts it in his pocket and goes to the door.

The blind man, who has not left his place, has ENEDINA at his side. He is pawing her thighs. They whisper.

DON AMALIO

I'll come to you tonight.

ENEDINA

No, the children sleep with me.

DON AMALIO

Give them to Refugio.

ENEDINA

No, I don't want to because they yell. And I've got news for you too.

DON AMALIO

Then I'll get you in the fields tomorrow ...

VOICE (off)

Pass me the salt.

They all get up. HOBBLY sees RITA's jump rope on the table and takes it to

tie up his trousers.

VIRIDIANA'S ROOM.

The room is lit by a candle. The young girl is kneeling on the floor like a countrywoman, telling her beads. There is a knock at the door.

VIRIDIANA

Who's there?

Without answering, JORGE comes into the room with a cigar between his lips.

Looking annoyed, VIRIDIANA gets up quickly.

VIRIDIANA

Jorge. You frightened me. What's happening to you?

JORGE

It's about time we spoke to each other, isn't it?

VIRIDIANA

Well... is it so urgent?

JORGE

If I wait until tomorrow, it'll be the same as yesterday and the day before and all the other days. When you're not with your poor people, you're praying or you disappear, I never see you.

Both furious and ill at ease at being surprised, VIRIDIANA rushes to the chest of drawers on top of which is her wooden cross, the crown of thorns, and the hammer. She quickly hides them in a drawer.

VIRIDIANA

What's the matter?

JORGE (off)

I want to put in some electricity, change the habits ... well, to make some improvements.

Viridiana listens as if this were foreign to her.

JORGE (off)

Then there's the land. It really hurts me to think of its not producing anything.

VIRIDIANA

I don't know anything about these things, Jorge ...

JORGE

But you have a right to let us know what you think.

VIRIDIANA

I'm not interested. Do what you think's best.

She steps forward as if to show that the conversation has come to an end.

VIRIDIANA

Is that everything?

JORGE has no intention of ending the conversation so abruptly. He goes on, irritably.

JORGE

No, it isn't; there's much more. It seems absurd for us to be staying here so near each other in this situation without knowing each other.

He plants himself near her and leans on the bed.

JORGE

What do you know about me?

VIRIDIANA

I know that you used to work with an architect.

JORGE

And do you know that my mother and I had to suffer? If my father had bothered himself a little more about us, I'd be an architect now.

She does not reply and so does not encourage him to talk further. JORGE looks

around with curiosity. He sits on the bed and is suddenly aware of its
hardness. He punches the blanket. There is a board underneath
instead of a
mattress. JORGE underlines his discovery with irony.

JORGE

I don't understand how you can like being
alone so much.

VIRIDIANA

I'm not like you, you have your wife.

This gives JORGE an opportunity to hurt her. He gets up and goes up
behind
her.

JORGE

We're not married. I don't need anybody's
blessing to live with a woman.

VIRIDIANA does not blink. If she is embarrassed she does not show
it.

JORGE

I see that you ... I ought to go. Good night.

He goes to the door.

VIRIDIANA

(dryly)

The next time you come, knock first and wait
until I tell you to come in.

This remark, made perfectly naturally, produces an unexpected
reaction in
JORGE and restores all his aplomb. Before leaving he runs his eyes
over the
young woman's body. With a mocking smile he blows a puff of smoke
toward her
and leaves.

VIRIDIANA locks the door with the key and brushes the smoke away
with her
hand. She goes to the window and opens it wide, to let in some air.
Then she
moves to the center of the room again, while the camera frames the
open
window.

THE PARK.

The SINGER is heard, off, humming a couplet. Close-up of a sheet of tin plate on which is painted in a very primitive style the scene of a miracle: a sick woman lying on a bed, with the Virgin and two angels on one side. The painter is adding the last touches to the face of the sick woman. We see the artist's arm, then his face: it is HOBBLY. A few feet away, sitting on an old wheelbarrow, is the SINGER, who is posing for him. Behind her ENEDINA is hanging out laundry on a line.

HOBBLY

I'll put some yellow in her face to show she is ill.

SINGER

Hurry up, I'm cramped all over.

HOBBLY

It's nearly finished, sweetheart.

In the background, from near the house, DON AMALIO approaches, led by REFUGIO.

SINGER

I don't like having to stay still for so long.

HOBBLY

It seems to me that you ought to know damn well how to swing your...

VIRIDIANA appears a few yards behind the painter with POCA, both come forward to inspect the painting. POCA looks at the masterpiece and begins to laugh.

POCA

(referring to the sick woman)
She looks like a sick marrow!

VIRIDIANA

Don't pay any attention to him. It's very good.

SINGER

I don't like having to be the Virgin.

HOBBLY

You ought to be the one in bed. I'd like to ask you, miss, to pose...

HOBBLY stands up in his turn.

VIRIDIANA

(amused)

Me?

HOBBLY

Come on, miss. Just so the Virgin can be really pretty.

VIRIDIANA doesn't seem convinced. HOBBLY insists.

HOBBLY

It won't take but a minute. It's a votive offering for a lady who was cured just when she was dying of fever. Our Lady of the Helpless granted her a favor.

VIRIDIANA

Do you have great devotion for the Virgin?

HOBBLY sits down again.

HOBBLY

I'm not a bigot, miss, but everybody has his own beliefs ... and then ...with this terrible thing ...

(points to his legs)

... if I didn't have faith ...

VIRIDIANA is sitting on a wheelbarrow. Nearby REFUGIO is adjusting DON AMALIO's clothes.

VIRIDIANA

(to Refugio)

I must know when you expect to give birth.

REFUGIO

Why?

VIRIDIANA

Heavens! So the doctor can be warned.

REFUGIO

In that case in about four months, but I can't tell you exactly.

POCA

(chiming in insolently)

She doesn't even know who the father was. She said that it was night and she couldn't even see his head.

REFUGIO

(vexed)

I didn't expect you to scream it from the house tops.

DON AMALIO

(with authority)

Shut up. You shouldn't speak like that in front of our holy protector who is a well-bred person.

VIRIDIANA gets up and arranges REFUGIO's clothes. She is astonished. She had never imagined that such people existed. She finds this contact with decadence both seductive and horrifying.

VIRIDIANA

(to Refugio)

I'm very sorry for you. Have you any other children!

REFUGIO

No, miss, it will be the first. Do you mind...?

VIRIDIANA sits down again. At that moment DON ZEQUIEL, the bearded patriarch, and the DWARF arrive. HOBBLY continues working. VIRIDIANA is posing. The others are silent.

DWARF

We're going to the village, miss ...

DON ZEQUIEL

With God's and your own permission.

ENEDINA

(to Viridiana)

They must bring me some potatoes, bacon, and rice.

VIRIDIANA gives DON ZEQUIEL some money.

VIRIDIANA

Take it and be careful not to be as late as you were yesterday.

DON AMALIO

(with a sickly smile)

Could they bring me some tobacco?

POCA

No, miss. Smoking makes him spit and feel ill.

DON AMALIO

(furiously)

Smoking makes me feel ill? It's these filthy fag ends. I won't mention in this company what's upsetting you.

VIRIDIANA

(conciliatory)

That'll do. Bring the tobacco and I'll distribute it.

DON AMALIO

Thank you, miss.

The DWARF and DON ZEQUIEL leave.

HOBBLY (off)

Come over here and see the picture.

He has finished his work. VIRIDIANA gets up and goes over to see the result.

All of them gather around to look at the artist's work.

VIRIDIANA

It's very good.

HOBBLY

Thank you; but it's missing something.

VIRIDIANA

That doesn't matter; I like it.

A ROAD BORDERING ON DON JAIME'S PROPERTY.

JORGE and his FOREMAN are standing near an electric pole. They are measuring the ground with a tape.

JORGE

How much is that?

FOREMAN

Fifteen yards.

JORGE

That's fifteen by seven?

FOREMAN

That's it.

JORGE

Good.

JORGE jots the figures down in his little notebook and rolls up the tape. They are both walking toward the road. A little covered wagon pulled by a mule is coming along the road in their direction. The wagon passes. Inside it, under the canvas, are TWO POLICEMEN in uniform and another MAN. Behind them the driver's back is visible. A dog is attached to the axle of the wagon by about three feet of string.

The dog runs along panting, its tongue hanging out. It seems to be exhausted and can hardly keep up with the mule. If it stopped, it would be pulled along and strangled by the rope.

The dog recedes from the camera, framed between the two threatening wheels of the wagon. It reaches JORGE and passes him and his companion. The wagon stops

at a fork in the road about a hundred yards farther on. JORGE goes toward it, intrigued. As he approaches, the TWO POLICEMEN jump down and speak to the PEASANT who owns the wagon.

ONE POLICEMAN

Thanks, pal, see you later.

PEASANT

Goodbye: if you ever need anything ...

The TWO POLICEMEN go off. The PEASANT goes in back of the wagon to inspect the brakes. JORGE, sickened by the cruelty of the scene, comes up to the wagon. He is frowning and speaks harshly to the peasant.

JORGE

That animal can't take any more. Now that the wagon's empty, why don't you let him ride?

The PEASANT straightens up and stares at JORGE.

PEASANT

It's for people!

JORGE

Then let him go and he'll follow you.

PEASANT

And let him get run over by somebody else?

The apparent contrast between the PEASANT'S cruelty and his care for the dog bewilders JORGE. He bends down and strokes the animal.

JORGE

I'll buy him.

The PEASANT looks at him for a moment. He is perplexed but reacts immediately.

PEASANT

He's good at rabbiting and he knows it. When we're in the country, if he doesn't hunt he doesn't get fed.

JORGE

How much do you want for him?

PEASANT

(hesitating)

I wasn't thinking of selling him, but if you want ... I'll leave it to you.

JORGE pulls some notes out of his pockets and gives two to the PEASANT.

JORGE

All right, untie him.

The PEASANT does so and hands the string, which is used as a lead, to JORGE.

PEASANT

Thank you, and God keep you and bless you.

(taps the wagon and addresses the driver)

Get moving.

He gets onto the wagon and sits down where the policemen had been. The wagon moves off.

PEASANT

(to Jorge)

And remember, the less he eats, the better he runs.

JORGE

(as the cart is going away)

What's he called?

PEASANT

(shouting)

Canelo!

On hearing his name, the dog tries to jump toward his master, but JORGE pulls him back with the string.

JORGE

Be quiet! Where are you going? Come here, Canelo! Canelo! Come on!

JORGE and his companion leave the road and cross the field toward their

workers. The wagon continues on its way. Another carriage comes from the opposite direction toward the camera. Neither JORGE nor the FOREMAN pays any attention to it.

The second carriage, with another miserable dog attached to its axle, passes in front of the camera. The two men do not notice the unhappy dog as the cart goes by.

In the field, two or three WORKMEN are loading a truck with stones. Beyond them, about twenty FARM WORKERS are clearing the land for plowing. It is full of stones and brushwood. They are wielding hoes and mattocks and tearing out bushes and weeds. JORGE and the FOREMAN stop to watch the men work.

FOREMAN

Have you thought of what you want planted yet?

JORGE

The fields have been left so long; with a good manuring anything will grow.

FOREMAN

It's for wheat. We've always grown maize in the strip above the vegetables.

JORGE

And in the vegetable plot?

FOREMAN

That's good land.

Suddenly, the young man sees VIRIDIANA passing nearby on the road. VIRIDIANA comes up, followed by POCA. She is holding a white box which she had near her when she was posing for HOBBLY's picture a short time before. JORGE goes forward to meet her.

JORGE

What a miracle, you let yourself be seen. Have you come to look at the work?

POCA passes discreetly, giving JORGE a wide berth to avoid meeting him.

VIRIDIANA

I've told you before I'm not interested in this.

JORGE looks around with the satisfied expression of a landlord.

JORGE

The best thing my father left me was the land. You can see the result of the work on it, and if you helped me it wouldn't take long to change it even more.

VIRIDIANA does not reply and tries to move on.

JORGE

(to Poca)

What are you doing here? Get out.

VIRIDIANA

Leave him alone.

JORGE

You won't get much done with those people. Those times are over! You ought to let me kick them out.

VIRIDIANA

Do they worry you that much, then?

JORGE

They worry me a great deal, and especially because of you.

VIRIDIANA keeps walking. JORGE walks beside her. He still has the dog with him.

JORGE

There's no point in helping some of them when there are so many others.

VIRIDIANA

I know perfectly well how little I can do. What I want to do is give passing beggars a roof, some food, and a bit of human warmth.

JORGE

Is that all you're going to devote your life to?

VIRIDIANA

I'm not sure yet. I've had a shock recently,
and I'm only beginning to get over it. Perhaps
I'll go back to the convent one day.

At this point there is a strange intermittent noise as if a bit of
tin plate
were being knocked against stones. There is also shouting.

WORKMEN'S VOICES

(shouting)

Put your things somewhere else! Get out of here!

VIRIDIANA looks toward the commotion. The LEPER comes up. He is
afraid to
come too close to her because of the people who are there. He is
pulling
along an empty can which is attached to his belt by a piece of
string: it is
the can hitting against the stones which is making the noise. On
hearing the
shouts of the workmen, the beggar reacts with gestures of contempt.

LEPER

Swine.

VIRIDIANA (off)

Why are they shouting at him? Haven't they any
pity?

JORGE, who has witnessed this scene, shrugs his shoulders.

JORGE

I don't know what's going on; ask him.

VIRIDIANA goes to the LEPER. The cruel mocking of the workmen can
still be
heard. The FOREMAN goes up to JORGE, smiling.

FOREMAN

These rascals are demons. They've tied a can to
him. Because they find the poor guy revolting,
they make him walk with this can so they know
when he's coming.

VIRIDIANA, with POCA just behind her, goes up to the LEPER and
unties the can

while she is talking.

VIRIDIANA

Why did you come here, Jos? I told you where to go until you're cured.

Jos the LEPER kicks the can away angrily.

LEPER

The weather is wonderful, the sun is warm, so I keep on walking and walking ... then you see ...

VIRIDIANA doesn't reproach him, on the contrary she replies gently.

VIRIDIANA

How are you today?

LEPER

Things seem to be getting better.

VIRIDIANA

Hold your arm out. You can't hope to be cured quickly. You heard what the doctor said. If it had been seen to in time ...This'll take time. But with the help of God, we'll pull through.

They go up to a clump of trees. POCA keeps his distance and then hides behind a bush. JORGE, very unhappy, watches them go. But he recovers immediately and goes up to the workmen. VIRIDIANA sits down on a big stone and makes the LEPER sit beside her.

VIRIDIANA

Stretch out your arm.

While he is obeying, she takes a tube of ointment and some gauze from the box she is carrying. She begins to treat the arm. During this process the LEPER talks.

LEPER

It all started one unlucky day. A punishment from God because one windy day I was with a woman and after that I started to be punished. You're the first good woman I've seen; if all women were as bad as the priests say, you

wouldn't take care of me. You, bad? He shakes his head and laughs stupidly.

VIRIDIANA does not seem to hear and goes on with her task calmly.

VIRIDIANA
Are your parents alive?

LEPER
Parents? Nobody cares a damn, what's the use of them!

VIRIDIANA
Don't say that.

LEPER
Right, I won't say that, but I still think they're no use.

POCA, who has been listening to the conversation, comes out of hiding and intervenes angrily. He waves his arms around like a windmill.

POCA
Don't pay any attention, miss; this man's no good. He wants you to catch it too. At church, he puts his arm into the Holy Water and seems to say would to God all those damn women got it. The priest won't let him in.

The LEPER gets up mad with rage. The young woman can hardly hold him back.

LEPER
You'll soon find out, you liar!

VIRIDIANA
Stop this!

LEPER
He's lying through his ass!

POCA
Ask the priest, miss.

VIRIDIANA
That's enough.
(to Poca)
Go join the others, and don't come back here.

(to the leper)
And you'll have to control your temper.

Peace reigns. POCA leaves, annoyed. VIRIDIANA finishes bandaging the LEPER'S arm. He bows his head, not daring to protest, in spite of his urge to do so.

DON JAIME'S ROOM AT NIGHT.

An oil lamp is burning. JORGE is sitting at a table holding an old gold watch. He is winding it carefully. His face expresses curiosity and pleasure.

JORGE
(looking at the watch)
This must have been my grandfather's.

LUCIA is getting ready for bed. She is sitting on the edge of the bed in her nightgown. There is an atmosphere of cold conjugal routine.

JORGE
If you wake first, wake me up.

LUCIA
What are you going to do?

She gets up and comes over to him.

JORGE
What I do every day, but I want to do it earlier.

LUCIA
(slightly reproachful)
You're happy, aren't you!

JORGE inserts a little gold key into the watch.

JORGE
Shouldn't I be? You, on the other hand ...

LUCIA
I'm bored. I'm alone all day and I don't know

what to do.

JORGE

You should have enough to do in this house ...
Come here and listen to this.

She comes to him and he puts the watch to her ear, winding a little spring. A tiny chime is heard. He is pleased with his discovery. She listens, frowning.
The tiny musical sound stops.

JORGE

What are you thinking about?

LUCIA

(harshly)

That your cousin is more to your taste.

JORGE is startled. He hesitates, then tries to change the subject.

JORGE

She isn't my cousin.

LUCIA

It doesn't make any difference what she is: you
like her.

JORGE puts the watch in a box.

LUCIA

I had a feeling I shouldn't have come here. I'd
better get out, fast ...

She goes back to the bed. JORGE, who does not like the way this conversation is going, wants to divert it.

JORGE

We ought to talk about that some other time.

She gets into bed. JORGE, paying no attention, continues to play with the watch.

JORGE

How in hell does it wind up?

LUCIA

I think I'd better go tomorrow.

JORGE

Don't be a fool! Why rush away from something which couldn't happen?

He hums. LUCIA slips between the sheets.

LUCIA

You see how much you like her?

JORGE

That's life. Some people are brought together, others are separated. What can we do, if that's the way it happens?

LUCIA, under the blankets, sobs.

JORGE

Lucia! Don't cry! Come on, darling, don't cry like that!

He is still very busy with his father's trinkets. He suddenly comes across a small jeweled crucifix. With his left hand, he gets hold of the little blade which is set into one side of it: the crucifix is in fact the handle of a dagger.

JORGE

What a thing! Where did Father find that?

LUCIA is still sobbing. JORGE tries to open a watch case with the point of the dagger.

A SMALL WOOD A HUNDRED YARDS BEHIND THE HOUSE.

There are several buildings, mostly in ruins, all scattered. One of them serves as the living quarters and dormitory of the beggars. Another building, in equally bad repair, is some sort of storehouse where a group of about

fifteen MASONS and LABORERS are working. A truck is standing in the yard with a load of materials; the FOREMAN is supervising the unloading. JORGE comes out of the house with Canelo, still on the end of the string.

JORGE

(pointing to the truck)

Hold on, Ramon! Is there time to make another trip?

FOREMAN

No, sir, it's nearly six o'clock.

(to the workmen unloading the truck)

Okay, let's get a move on!

(to Jorge)

When are you leaving?

JORGE

Tonight, but I'll be back tomorrow afternoon.

The village clock chimes six.

ROWS OF ALMOND TREES.

Most of VIRIDIANA's beggars are sitting there on the ground or standing around. DON AMALIO comes from the path, led by the DWARF. From afar, the six strokes of the village clock finish chiming. VIRIDIANA arrives. She claps her hands.

VIRIDIANA

The Angelus.

Hurrying, the beggars kneel, with the exception of HOBBLY who remains standing, leaning on his stick. VIRIDIANA also remains standing. The LEPER, seeing what is happening, moves quickly past the group and goes away. In a quick montage, there follow alternated shots of the beggars praying quietly under the blossoms of the almond trees and the work in full swing: close-up

of cement slapped onto a dilapidated wall, a tub full of water in which some lime falls, sand being sifted, logs piling up on the ground, a wheelbarrow full of stones being tipped out, planks being sawed. The sounds underline the contrast: the otherworldly muttering of VIRIDIANA and the beggars; the very actual and rhythmic sound of the activity in the work yard.

VIRIDIANA

(praying)

The Angel of the Lord declared to Mary.

There is a subdued murmur in which the voices of women, who are more familiar with the words, are prominent.

BEGGARS

And she conceived by the Holy Ghost.

ALL

Hail Mary full of grace the Lord is with thee
blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is
the fruit of thy womb Jesus. Holy Mary Mother
of God pray for us sinners now and at the hour
of our death. Amen.

The camera moves to dump truck noisily emptying its load onto the ground. Two MASONS are stacking bricks. The beggars are heard in the distance reciting the Hail Mary. JORGE walks in front of a heap of cement and sand, where there are two MEN shoveling.

VIRIDIANA'S VOICE

Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

BEGGARS' VOICES

Be it done unto me according to thy word. Hail
Mary full of grace ...

VIRIDIANA'S VOICE

And the word was made flesh.

BEGGARS' VOICES

And dwelt among us. Hail Mary full of grace ...

The camera shifts back to VIRIDIANA in prayer. She prays without ostentation, very simply. A few feet away from her, HOBBLY leans on his stick, contemplatively.

VIRIDIANA

Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.

BEGGARS

That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

The BEGGARS cross themselves, stand up, and go away. VIRIDIANA walks in the direction of the work yard.

JORGE sees the young woman coming toward him smiling. He feels sorry for her.

To a man of action like himself, his feet well on the ground, VIRIDIANA seems to be behaving absurdly: but he is strongly attracted by her gentleness and beauty.

As the two young people approach each other, the WORKERS and the FOREMAN, who have finished work and changed their clothes, come out of the building and pass in front of them. They wave to JORGE and leave.

VIRIDIANA

(indicating the building
and the beggars' house)

Are they going to work here too?

JORGE

Don't worry. Nobody's going to disturb you.

His eyes run quickly over her body. He can't hide the ironic reaction he experiences upon completing this examination.

JORGE

Don't forget the meeting with the lawyer. The car will pick you up tomorrow morning.

VIRIDIANA

I'll be ready.

JORGE
(nodding toward the dormitories)
Do you intend to stay here for some time?

The BEGGARS pass to and fro.

VIRIDIANA
Yes. Why?

JORGE
You can come and live again in the big house if
you want. Now that I'm alone, I can settle
down anywhere.

VIRIDIANA lowers her eyes shyly.

VIRIDIANA
And ...your friend?

JORGE
She's left.

VIRIDIANA
Is she coming back?

JORGE
No.

VIRIDIANA
Why?

JORGE stares at her with a certain amount of insolence.

JORGE
Why does any man leave a woman?

She shrugs and purses her lips, indicating her lack of experience.

JORGE
If you don't understand, I don't want to
explain it to you. You're too cold and
religious; you'd be shocked.

VIRIDIANA blushes. He bursts out laughing and walks off toward the
work yard.

VOICE (off)
Miss!

Old MONCHO and the COACHMAN, looking awkward, are waiting nearby.
VIRIDIANA
goes up to them. We can see RAMONA'S back behind them. She is
fidgeting with
a bunch of keys. She seems to be waiting for something.

VIRIDIANA
You have decided to leave, Moncho.

MONCHO
Yes!

VIRIDIANA
I can't do anything to make you stay? These
people annoy you, isn't that it?

The two men don't answer but look down.

VIRIDIANA
Well, what are you going to do?

JORGE passes near the group and goes to RAMONA.

COACHMAN
He's coming to live with me, miss.

VIRIDIANA
If that's what you want ... But I'm very sorry
you're leaving. Thank you for everything,
Moncho. God bless you.

She shakes hands with them. They go off toward the village. RAMONA
hands
JORGE the bunch of keys when he comes up to her. Without saying
anything,
they go off toward the house.

THE ATTIC AT THE TOP OF THE HOUSE.

There is a bizarre collection of junk: an ancient worm-eaten piano,
some old
suitcases, some broken chairs, various boxes, unsteady-looking
piles of
crates, a burst mattress, a once elegant couch, now torn and dirty.
The
voices of JORGE and RAMONA are heard coming from another room.

JORGE'S VOICE

Obviously! Here's the missing furniture! What a state it's in! Father must have been a peculiar type.

RAMONA'S VOICE

I don't think the master ever came here.

They both appear. JORGE is carrying the keys RAMONA gave him earlier, in the field. He looks at the couch cover.

JORGE

And this chest?

RAMONA

There are some curtains and drapes, but they're all very old.

A cat makes its way through the piled-up crates.

JORGE

There must be some rat's nest in there! I'd like to ask you something. You worked for my father for seven years, didn't you? Did he ever mention me?

RAMONA's eyes follow him tenderly.

RAMONA

I don't know; I can't remember. But I'm sure he loved you.

JORGE

Why?

RAMONA

You wouldn't be here otherwise.

JORGE

(hitting a chair)

These chairs are in good condition. With a little varnish and some new covers this one will be quite presentable.

JORGE continues to poke around. Again, RAMONA looks at him with the willing

submission evident before. JORGE goes to another corner of the attic where, on one side, sacks are heaped against the wall. The camera frames a door and a few beams. JORGE goes up to a heap of sacks.

JORGE

What are these sacks doing here?

He half lifts them.

RAMONA

I don't know -- they've always been there.

JORGE

That's stupid! Plaster! It can still be used.

He goes up to another pile of sacks. Ramona follows him, fascinated.

JORGE

And those! That's sand. As I won't be here tomorrow, tell the foreman to take them.

He shows the sacks to RAMONA. Turning suddenly, his eyes meet hers. He understands everything. Frightened by the discovery, she avoids his glance.

JORGE begins to laugh.

JORGE

What's wrong with you, woman? Why are you looking at me like that?

RAMONA tries to escape, but the young man catches her by the arm. He pulls her around to face him and looks at her for a moment, in silence, smiling.

Then he holds her chin.

JORGE

Do you know something, Ramona? If you took some trouble, you'd be quite pretty ... Small teeth, a good mouth -- what more do you want?

Without further ado, he kisses her on the lips, not even bothering to hold her. Feeling his lips on hers, she shuts her eyes. Her eyelids quiver. She

gives herself up to the long awaited pleasure. JORGE looks around.

JORGE
(pulling her with him)
Let's sit down a moment.

They go over to a pile of sacks.

Close-up of the piled-up furniture. The camera frames a big rat
busy by an
old sack. With a bound, the cat is on it.

IN FRONT OF THE HOUSE.

A car stops near VIRIDIANA, who is waiting. The driver gets out.

VIRIDIANA
Are we leaving?

DRIVER
Don Jorge said he'd be waiting for you at the
lawyer's at four o'clock.

VIRIDIANA
Good.

She goes up to DON ZEQUIEL and the SINGER, who are waiting nearby.

VIRIDIANA
(to Don Zequiél)
You're the most responsible here. I'm handing
them over to you. Make sure they all behave
themselves.

DON ZEQUIEL (off)
Don't worry, miss, I'll look after things.

VIRIDIANA (off)
Do you want anything else?

DON ZEQUIEL (off)
Bring me a flute if you see one. I'd like to
learn music.

RAMONA, together with RITA who has her face bandaged as if she has
a

toothache, comes out of the house and shuts the door.

RITA
(weeping)
They're going to hurt me.

RAMONA
Well if they hurt you, put up with it! Let's
go!

RAMONA and RITA get into the car, followed by VIRIDIANA.

BEGGARS' VOICES
Good luck, miss!

THE KITCHEN.

ENEDINA is cradling her yelling baby in her arms.

DON AMALIO
Keep quiet. These miserable brats only get in
the way.

ENEDINA
You'd like me to kill them?

POCA
With the life that's ahead of them they'd be
better off being sent to Paradise.

ENEDINA goes up to PACO and hands him the child.

ENEDINA
Put her in the sun with her sister.

PACO takes the little girl, who is still crying, and leaves.

HOBBLY, who has been standing at the door watching the car go,
comes back
into the kitchen rubbing his hands.

HOBBLY
Now to knock off a couple of lambs. We'll have
them roasted.

This idea obviously amazes ENEDINA. She looks at the blind man and POCA, who are enjoying themselves.

HOBBLY

What do you think of that?

DON AMALIO

I'll go along with it ... if it's being respectful enough.

ENEDINA

What will the lady say?

POCA

She won't even know.

ENEDINA

If everybody agrees, but to make a roast takes four hours.

HOBBLY

Well, what's all the hurry?

The blind man turns to ENEDINA.

DON AMALIO

Didn't you say you know how to make vanilla pudding?

ENEDINA

Yes, yes.

HOBBLY

You hear that, Poca? Get the eggs and milk. I'll see to the lambs.

POCA takes a pail and PACO hands him a basket. The blind man sits down on a bench and breaks out into merry idiotic laughter.

THE PARK.

REFUGIO, the pregnant woman, is busy collecting dead wood. The SINGER is

sitting near her on a bench. She sings a few bars of a song in a grating voice, accompanying herself on a guitar. DON ZEQUIEL is not far away. Unlike her normal self, REFUGIO is very active. She moves with great ease. The SINGER interrupts her song and addresses her companion.

SINGER

Don't kill yourself, Refugio! Can't you see we're alone?

REFUGIO

What's that got to do with it?

SINGER

What's the good of working?

DON ZEQUIEL, scandalized, goes up to them.

DON ZEQUIEL

You keep quiet. The miss left me in charge here and nobody is going to upset things. You, stick to your singing!

SINGER

Look at us now! What made you think that I was up to something?

There are shouts from the house. They look around. The DWARF and the GARDENER are gesturing from the doorway.

GARDENER

Don Zequiel! Refugio! Come here!

DON ZEQUIEL

Damn women! How did you get in there?

DWARF

Through a back window.

REFUGIO and the GARDENER rush toward the house. DON ZEQUIEL follows them uncertainly.

DON ZEQUIEL

Where are you going?

The SINGER has reached the door.

SINGER

Come here, Don Zequiel. I was here with the lady. There're wonderful things inside!

DON ZEQUIEL seems unconvinced.

DON ZEQUIEL

If it's only to have a look ...

He moves toward the house.

DON ZEQUIEL

But don't touch anything. Leave everything where it is!

The three beggars, one behind another, itching to have what has been forbidden them, join the others in the house.

THE FIELD.

Close-up of a dove working its way awkwardly over the grass. The LEPER, who is following it, throws himself forward and traps it in his hands.

LEPER

Little dove from the south, you're hurt. What are you called?

(stroking it)

My little dove! My dear dove! My darling, sweet dove!

Suddenly, he is struck on the shoulder by a stone. He gets to his feet.

Without realizing it, he has come to the place where the men are working. The laborers have seen him and are warning him in this crude way.

FIRST WORKER

Get out!

SECOND WORKER

Come any nearer and I'll bust your head in!

THIRD WORKER

Get lost.

One of them picks up a stone and hurls it at him. The LEPER, furious, makes obscene gestures at them and pours out insults while he rubs the place where the stone hit him.

LEPER

You bastards! I hope you get what I've got!

But while he is shouting, he is making off. Foaming with rage, he disappears into the trees, jabbering incoherently.

INTERIOR OF THE SITTING ROOM.

Close-up of the portrait of Doña Elvira. While the camera pulls back to include the portrait of Don Jaime, the comments of the beggars, who have just come into the house, are heard off.

SINGER

That woman, the one who looks like our Miss Viridiana, she's the wife of the man who hanged himself.

Among the first group of beggars, DON ZEQUIEL is in the act of filling one of Don Jaime's pipes.

DON ZEQUIEL

Think of hanging yourself, with all that money!

SINGER

He must have had asthma. All those loaded old men have asthma.

They stop examining the picture and begin exploring the drawing room. The women go up to the cupboard which holds tablecloths and silver. The SINGER opens it. They stand, gaping.

DWARF

What stuff!

GARDENER

Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

The SINGER takes out a heavily embroidered tablecloth which she has seen among others at the bottom of the cupboard. DON ZEQUIEL, smoking the pipe, comes up to look.

SINGER

Look at that. How's that for a tablecloth!

GARDENER

Come on, let's put it out.

Excited, she puts it on the table and begins to spread it. The others help her.

REFUGIO

That must have cost a fortune. At least a thousand.

SINGER

A thousand! More like ten thousand! Can't you see it's French lace?

DON ZEQUIEL

Go on, fold it up, you're going to spoil it.

SINGER

Keep on smoking and shut up. We're not doing any harm. It's not as bad as smoking his tobacco.

REFUGIO

Don Zequiel's right. If those people come back and we don't hear them, God help you.

GARDENER

They won't get back before tomorrow. I heard them tell the driver.

REFUGIO

If you haven't eaten on lace like that, you haven't lived.

THE DINING ROOM THAT NIGHT.

Close-up of a shaking hand trying to pick up a full glass of wine from the laid table. The sumptuous tablecloth is stained with wine and grease. The hand knocks the glass over. Scraps of talk are heard.

VOICE (off)

Watch it, Don Zequiel!

REFUGIO

Don't worry! We'll all clean it up; it'll be as right as rain.

The camera reveals an extraordinary scene. The BEGGARS are sitting at the table; the LEPER is by himself at a small adjacent table. They have got through two roast lambs, the remains of which are scattered over the table. There is an extraordinary confusion of glasses, plates, and bottles; the "guests" are unhampered by any formality, and some of them -- like the patriarchal DON ZEQUIEL, who has just knocked over the glass -- are really drunk, others only "lit-up."

PACO

Pass me that bottle.

SINGER

Go on, Don Amalio!

DON AMALIO

They've got a real hen house here! You can't hear yourself speak.

POCA

Tell me the answer to this! What bird lays eggs in a barn?

VOICE

Shut up, let's hear Don Amalio!

DON AMALIO

Quiet! Now we're gathered together to beg under the porches. But only in the churches of the rich! The girls passing by smelled so sweet that you felt them on you.

POCA is chewing a hunk of mutton. His hands and chin are shiny with fat.

POCA

That's great! You can smell them but you can't lay your hands on them! Is that it?

The LEPER is sitting some feet away from the others, but as the drinking goes on he gradually works his way in until finally he joins the group; the others are beyond noticing his sores. The LEPER claps his hands to show his appreciation of the blind man's story.

LEPER

Why did you split up?

DON AMALIO grimaces at the sound of the LEPER's voice. He half turns toward him.

DON AMALIO

You, shut your face! I won't have questions from any one!

Most of them are not listening; they are talking to each other, eating noisily, pouring out wine for themselves and each other.

VOICE (off)

Go on with the story!

DON AMALIO

(heavily)

Okay, it broke up when this deaf fellow started on the collection boxes in the churches with a knife.

ENEDINA has finished eating and is picking her teeth with her fingers, unconcernedly.

SINGER

How did you know?

DON AMALIO

The noise of the money in his pocket gave him away. We hardly got a sou that day.

He strikes the table to get silence and attention.

DON AMALIO

You know what I did? I told the police about him!

HOBBLY

You sang because he didn't cut you in, you rat!

The blind man reacts, seizing his stick. Then he decides to talk his way out.

DON AMALIO

The judges thanked me very much, and one of them, who was a gentleman, said I was ...

The old man, DON ZEQUIEL, who is half slumped over the table, comes around sufficiently to pick up the blind man's story.

DON ZEQUIEL

(muttering)

Shitty bastard, that's what I'd call you!

DON AMALIO goes on as if he has not heard. The SINGER, his neighbor, leaves the table.

DON AMALIO

He said "Honest citizen," if you want to know.

The SINGER takes up her guitar and begins to sing a popular song. Most of them join in. DON ZEQUIEL is slumped over the table, trying to sleep. POCA is drinking heavily with one of the women. One of ENEDINA's daughters, who is sleeping on a couch, wakes up frightened and begins to bawl. REFUGIO, who is tight, cannot bear the din and lurches toward the little girl.

REFUGIO

(shouting)

You filthy little brat. Shut up or watch out!

She picks up the whining child and shakes her brutally.

REFUGIO

What's up with you? Why are you screaming? I'll belt you one!

ENEDINA rushes up furiously and takes the child out of her arms.

ENEDINA

Don't you touch my little girl.

REFUGIO

Keep the brat quiet so we can hear what's going on.

ENEDINA

I'll bust your face.

REFUGIO

Keep your hands off me, you filthy whore!

ENEDINA hits her powerfully. REFUGIO jumps on her like a tigress and grabs her hair. The crying of the children gets louder. The others go on singing, apparently unperturbed by the fight. The two women hit each other in a blind fury. POCA and PACO try in vain to separate them, under the glassy stare of DON ZEQUIEL. But it takes DON AMALIO to calm them. He takes ENEDINA and protects her with his body.

DON AMALIO

Stop this, stop this.

ENEDINA

Let me go, Don Amalio, I'll tear her apart.

During the brawl, the LEPER goes up to the table to get a bottle. HOBBLY, without leaving his place, pokes him viciously with his stick.

DON AMALIO does not let ENEDINA go.

DON AMALIO

Keep quiet, Enedina, she's not worth paying attention to. Let's behave ourselves nicely.

(to Refugio)

Stick to your place.

There is calm once again. They all go back to their places and adjust their clothes.

POCA goes up to the sideboard where he finds the plate of vanilla pudding. He sticks in his finger and licks it greedily.

ENEDINA (off)

My pudding! Leave it, you thief!

She pushes POCA's hand into the plate. He pulls it out covered with cream.

VOICES (off)

Bring in the pudding, enough of the brawling.

ENEDINA, still puffing and blowing, takes the plate of pudding, walks to the table, and puts the pudding down. There are claps and murmurs of satisfaction. There is no more singing. The children are quiet. They all help themselves to pudding and there is quiet while they all taste the dessert. The LEPER prowls around the table with a plate in his hand, not daring to take any. Once again HOBBLY drives him away. The GARDENER realizes what is going on, fills a plate and brings it to him. Then she sits down again and helps herself. POCA catches ENEDINA's eye.

POCA

Enedina?

ENEDINA (off)

What do you want?

POCA

Is it all right?

ENEDINA

Yes.

POCA
(addressing all of them)
Enedina's going to take a picture. So we'll
have a souvenir.

DON AMALIO
Where's the camera?

ENEDINA
(laughing cagily)
It's a present from my parents.

They go to one side of the table. The LEPER places himself near the
blind
man, who sits in the middle. The blind man sits very straight, with
his arms
stretched out and his two hands on the table. The others arrange
themselves
on either side of him, striking different poses. In honor of the
occasion,
DON ZEQUIEL has come out of his stupor. When everyone is ready,
ENEDINA
stands in front of them. She turns her back to the camera. In a
flash the
still scene suddenly conjures up the scene of another Supper.

ENEDINA sweeps her very ample skirt up to her face. The photograph
is taken.
She chokes with laughter behind her skirt. They all relax their
poses and
break out into disordered babbling. The group comes to life again
and the
hubbub reigns supreme.

The LEPER now appears lecherous and gay. He goes up to the
phonograph, takes
a record, puts it down dissatisfied, and then picks up another at
random. He
puts it on the record player. It is the "Hallelujah Chorus" from
Handel's
Messiah. He plays it very loud and this seems to give him pleasure
and even
more strength. He glides toward Don Jaime's room. Before going in,
he looks
at them defiantly but they don't seem to notice.

ENEDINA helps shake DON ZEQUIEL, who has fallen asleep again.

REFUGIO

The lousy man. Tables aren't meant to lie on.

SINGER

Eat your pudding. It's a dream.

Handel's music fills the room with sound. DON ZEQUIEL opens an eye and looks bleary. He sees the plate which is being handed to him. The SINGER, laughing, spoon-feeds him like a child.

DON ZEQUIEL

(half unconscious)

You're a dainty piece. How spry you are, Enedina.

They all burst out laughing.

SINGER

This isn't Enedina.

In the middle of the hubbub, the LEPER appears at the door of Don Jaime's room in Doña Elvira's veil and corset. He begins to dance to the music of the "Hallelujah Chorus." It is a wild, grotesque dance, with movements of the fandango and an expression of inane merriment. His incongruous toothless mouth makes it slightly sinister. He pulls tufts of feathers out from his jacket and throws them around the room onto the guests. His entry causes some surprise. The women scream and the men jeer. Soon the SINGER gets up and goes to dance with the LEPER. She takes of his veil and puts it around herself. It begins to look like a witches' sabbath.

LEPER

(throwing the feathers)

Little dove of the south. Little dove.

The blind man, still sitting, pulls ENEDINA onto his knee.

DON AMALIO

Enedina, come here. Sit down. Come on, drink up!

ENEDINA drinks.

POCA joins the others. He pulls his beret over his eyes and goes into a series of contortions, moving his arms and legs with a frenzied agility remarkable for a man of his age, gyrating in a mad jig. He dances with the GARDENER. REFUGIO joins in to dance with the LEPER, keeping her distance, however.

While the couples are dancing, HOBBLY, DON ZEQUIEL, and DON AMALIO still sit around the table. One of ENEDINA's little girls has begun to cry again. DON ZEQUIEL, who has finished his dessert, contemplates the show without understanding clearly what is going on.

ENEDINA goes to the couch, carrying the weeping little girl in her arms.

ENEDINA

There, there, don't cry.

She puts the child on the couch; the crying stops. PACO appears behind the couch, gesturing to ENEDINA, and points to where he is.

PACO

Look at this, Enedina.

ENEDINA goes around the couch to PACO, curious to see what it is.

ENEDINA

What is it?

PACO

Get down, you won't see it otherwise.

The woman does so. PACO grabs her and makes her fall behind the couch; they roll over each other. Their legs stick out behind one end of the couch. Sometimes hers are on top, sometimes his. They roll around on the floor, PACO laughing, ENEDINA protesting. The GARDENER sees what is happening behind the

couch and waves DON ZEQUIEL over.

GARDENER

Just look at this, Don Zequiel! Isn't it awful!

He looks and sees. The legs of the couple struggle behind the couch. Close-up of the scared face of the little child stretched out on the couch.

ENEDINA'S VOICE

Get off, let me go! Let me go! Let me go!

DON ZEQUIEL vigorously thumps the table.

DON ZEQUIEL

Leave them alone! It'll make them sorrier later!

HOBBLY hurls a plate of pudding into the "patriarch's" face. DON ZEQUIEL wipes his face with his hands, trying to get the stuff off his beard. Meanwhile, POCA, who has just seen what is happening behind the couch, passes near DON ZEQUIEL and laughs at the state he is in.

GARDENER (off)

That's just the thing for you, Don Zequiel!
Ecce Homo, that's what I'd say!

DON ZEQUIEL tries to get to his feet to defend himself; but he wobbles and falls back heavily onto his chair. POCA, who is looking cautiously over his shoulder, comes up to DON AMALIO who is still in his place and touches him on the shoulder.

POCA

Don Amalio!

DON AMALIO

What's that?

POCA

Enedina and Paco ...

DON AMALIO

What about them?

POCA

They're playing games behind the couch ...

The blind man starts. His jaw trembles and anger takes hold of him.
He seizes
his stick and gets up.

DON AMALIO

Which couch?

POCA

(vaguely)

That one.

DON AMALIO puts his hand on POCA's shoulder.

DON AMALIO

Take me there.

POCA

Really, Don AMALIO, there's not much point in
making a fuss.

POCA, who does not seem to be too happy about this turn of events,
walks
toward the couch, followed by the blind man who is gripping him.
POCA does
not seem keen on getting involved in the events he stirred up and
slithers
out of the way, leaving his jacket in the hands of AMALIO, whose
fury is
mounting.

DON AMALIO

Where are you, you swine? I'll crack your skull
in. Take me to them and I'll kill him.

Without his guide, he loses all sense of direction. He moves from
one side to
the other. In vain, HOBBLBY tries to stop him. Overcome with rage,
the blind
man clutches his cane and, facing the banquet table, lays about him
with all
his strength. His flaying creates havoc with the contents of the
table:
plates, glasses, bottles. Wines, sauces, and puddings are spilled.
Very soon

the beautiful embroidered tablecloth becomes a battlefield of destruction.

PACO and ENEDINA, terrified, get up from behind the couch.

REFUGIO and the GARDENER begin to be troubled by the turn of events. Disorderliness has turned into an orgy without anyone's really being aware of what is happening. A glimmer of sense in their befuddled minds makes the two women aware of the possible consequences.

In the middle of the room, ENEDINA tidies herself up. The LEPER tries to extricate himself from the corset that he has wrapped himself in.

REFUGIO
(whispering to the Gardener)
Things are going to be worse than the Cuban War ...

GARDENER
You're right. We'll be better off if we're seen in the village tonight.

They slip into the hall.

The blind man is finally in command. DON ZEQUIEL falls face down and gets entangled in Doña Elvira's wedding veil as he tries in vain to stand up again.

LEPER
Now he has spoiled the party.

SINGER (off)
Holy Virgin, how can we fix up this brothel?

All of them have stopped dancing although the phonograph is still playing.

ENEDINA tries to justify herself.

ENEDINA
(apropos the blind man)
If he were my man, he'd have his rights; but as it is, why?

SINGER

You're quite right, old dear. The way he treats
you ...

REFUGIO and the GARDENER rush down the stairs into the lower hall.
When they
reach the big front door, they open it and go out into the park.

They have hardly left the building when they hear the noise of a
car, and
almost at once the headlights appear, making them hesitate for a
moment and
try to hide in the shadow. The music of Handel's Messiah is still
playing.

THE CAR ROUNDS THE TURN IN THE ROAD.

It comes to a halt in front of the house. JORGE, RAMONA, then
VIRIDIANA and
RITA get out one at a time. VIRIDIANA, noting the two beggars
running away,
takes a few steps in their direction. JORGE realizes immediately
that
something abnormal has been going on. He sees a woman running away
and hears
the solemn chorus of Handel's Messiah. Without pausing a moment to
reflect,
he goes into the house.

The camera switches to the beggars grouped in the sitting room.

POCA

Now it's every man for himself. Let's go.

The camera shifts back to JORGE, entering the house. One by one the
beggars
pass him in the hall, looking crestfallen and as innocent as the
situation
allows. The first one he meets is POCA, who with great difficulty
is
supporting the almost completely unconscious DON ZEQUIEL.

PACO

Good night ... He doesn't feel too well.

Appalled, JORGE stands in the hall and watches the strange herd pass by. The SINGER, carrying one of the little girls who is bawling, goes by with the DWARF.

SINGER

Good night, Don Jorge. We're leaving now...

Then it is POCA's and ENEDINA's turn. The latter has another infant in her arms.

ENEDINA

(pathetically)

They told us you'd be back tomorrow ...

POCA

I didn't want to do it, Don Jorge. They made me ...

JORGE, quite beside himself, takes POCA by the arm.

JORGE

Get out of here! Out!

The blind man, led on as if by instinct and by the noise of the departing fugitives, goes toward the exit with the aid of his stick. He marches along, head high, his stick in front of him. It is difficult to know whether he is aware of JORGE's presence or not. On passing in front of him, he intones in a sonorous voice.

DON AMALIO

Blessed are the generous, master, who take into their respectable house a poor defenseless blind man. God will reward them.

He advances while he speaks. His feet get entangled in the wedding veil which was left on the floor. Finally he gets rid of it with his stick and goes out as quickly as his blindness allows.

The room is now empty. JORGE, frowning, takes in the carnage caused by the

senseless orgy. He advances toward the record player, where the "Hallelujah Chorus" is still playing, and turns it off. He starts suddenly on hearing the noise of furniture being knocked against in Don Jaime's room.

JORGE enters Don Jaime room and gropes around in the half light. The room is faintly lit by one chandelier with the six candles which are still intact. JORGE looks around. At first he does not see anybody. But then a curtain moves and he goes toward it.

JORGE
(shouting)
Didn't you hear me? Beat it.

HOBBLY appears from behind the curtain.

JORGE
Okay, get out, you.

HOBBLY smiles in a sinister way.

HOBBLY
Your Lordship must not get annoyed: I have not done anything wrong . . .

Without saying a word, JORGE advances on him, ready to seize his arm and put him out. HOBBLY, now alert, suddenly pulls out a dagger. JORGE is undecided for a moment, but soon reacts by finding a chair in the passage and brandishing it, ready to attack his opponent. In a flash, a raised arm behind him swings a bottle. Before he is aware of the danger, JORGE is hit by the bottle, staggers, and falls heavily to the floor. The LEPER, looking happy and proud of himself, leans over his victim.

LEPER
I got him, comrade. I got him!

At this point, VIRIDIANA appears at the door and is frightened by what she sees.

VIRIDIANA

My God, what have you done to him!

HOBBLY

He was asking for it.

VIRIDIANA

But why? Why?

She rushes to him and leans over him, calling him in anguish.

VIRIDIANA

Jorge! Jorge!

HOBBLY stops her and takes her by the arm.

HOBBLY

You shouldn't cry over that. If you're without one man you can always find another to console you.

He embraces her, crushing her cheek with his lips. She screams and looks around for a means of escape. She sees the LEPER and there is a glimmer of hope in her eyes.

VIRIDIANA

Jos❖, Jos❖! For the love of God, don't let him...

The LEPER empties a bottle and begins to jeer again without moving an inch.

LEPER

Nothing will happen to you, miss. We're all good folk here. Aren't we, Hobbly?

It is apparent from VIRIDIANA's expression that she feels lost. She tries to escape but HOBBLY takes hold of her again. She looks at him in terror.

IN THE PARK.

The beggars have disappeared except for the old man DON ZEQUIEL, who is staggering along the wall, helped by PACO. RAMONA and her daughter are standing in front of the car and have seen them coming out of the house. So has the DRIVER. RAMONA makes up her mind and quickly gets back into the car with RITA.

RAMONA
(to the driver)
To the village! We've got to warn ...

DRIVER
They'll get them in no time. If they've stolen anything, it won't do them any good.

The car starts up and moves quickly away from the estate.

DON JAIME'S ROOM.

JORGE is stretched out unconscious. The LEPER, kneeling, is tying up his legs with a curtain cord. He ties one end to the wardrobe.

HOBBLY (off)
Why all the fuss? It had to happen sooner or later!

VIRIDIANA
Ramona! Help!

They can be heard struggling. A chair crashes to the ground. The LEPER finishes tying up JORGE. His livid face looks ghostly in the half light. He laughs, jerking his head back as if he is having a fit of St. Vitus' dance. His work finished, he gets up and with the look of an impartial spectator watches the struggle between his benefactress and the beggar.

VIRIDIANA is defending herself with more energy than she ever looked capable

of. HOBBLY is strong, but despair provides the young woman with equal strength. HOBBLY pushes her onto the bed and then jumps on her, but VIRIDIANA reacts quickly and flees toward the door. But the LEPER is waiting for her there and blocks her passage with folded arms. HOBBLY catches his prey again and, holding her tightly in his arms, takes her once again to the bed.

VIRIDIANA

(screaming)

Ramona! Ramona!

HOBBLY

(between his teeth, with rage)

Quiet, my dove. Quiet, or I'll ...

JORGE opens his eyes and, only half conscious, becomes aware of the struggle.

He desperately tries to free himself from his bonds but they do not give way.

With muffled voice, he calls to the LEPER.

JORGE

Come here!

The LEPER jeers foolishly.

JORGE

Come here, you rogue! Come here!

The LEPER goes up to him and speaks in confidence, with a greedy laugh, indicating the struggling couple.

LEPER

Maybe afterwards he'll let me ...

JORGE

If you free me, you'll be a rich man ...

The LEPER shrugs his shoulders, laughing.

LEPER

Me, rich? Come on!

JORGE

There's plenty of money in this house. Piles of it.

The LEPER becomes serious and leans a little lower in order to hear better.

LEPER

Where?

Meanwhile, in the fight, VIRIDIANA ends up by falling on the bed under HOBBLY. Her arms flail furiously in resistance. Her clenched hand grips the cord that the beggar is using as a belt. It is Rita's jump rope, the same one Don Jaime hanged himself with. As her hand touches the handle of the rope, her gesture freezes. Then she lets go, dropping her arms as if giving up the struggle. HOBBLY brutally turns her face to his and avidly kisses her.

But Jorge's words seem to have had an effect on the LEPER.

JORGE

I don't want you to untie me. Kill him and then I'll give you the money.

LEPER

Where's the dough?

JORGE

Kill him and I'll tell you. If I don't keep my word, you can kill me too. There are thousands of pesetas. Kill him, idiot!

The LEPER trembles with cupidity. He gets up, seizing an iron fire shovel. He goes toward the bed, where VIRIDIANA seems to have fainted. HOBBLY is embracing her. At this point the LEPER hits HOBBLY's head with all his strength. There is the sound of heavy blows then nothing more ...

JORGE

(through clenched teeth)

Kill him.

LEPER

(with a ferocious laugh)
That will teach you not to bother me any more,
you son of a bitch.

The LEPER, having satisfied his vengeance in order to gratify his avarice,
turns to JORGE. Pointing the shovel at him, he reminds him savagely of his
situation.

LEPER
Where's the cash?

JORGE realizes that the LEPER is quite likely to finish him off too. He is
even more afraid that, now that the LEPER is master of the house, he might
try to do something to VIRIDIANA.

JORGE
There in the cupboard. It's open.

The LEPER quickly opens the cupboard and begins looking.

JORGE
On the top shelf under the linen.

The LEPER looks there. He seizes piles of linen and throws them on the floor.
Finally he finds a bundle of notes and counts them avidly.

Outside the house, the car is back and stops in front of the door. RAMONA and
RITA get out, with the MAYOR and two POLICEMEN. They rush into the house. The
DRIVER is the last.

RAMONA
Up there.

MAYOR
Let's go!

THE PARK, THE NEXT DAY.

Two cows are being led toward the fields by the COACHMAN, who has returned.

RITA is walking behind, playing with a stick and jumping happily in the grass. Old MONCHO, who has also returned, is pushing the wheelbarrow beside them.

INSIDE THE HOUSE.

JORGE stands near a door to one of the rooms with a MAN who is taking measurements and writing them down in a notebook.

JORGE

I want a switch here; and put a plug over there.

The MAN indicates the fitting on the other wall with chalk marks. He crosses the room. JORGE then turns to VIRIDIANA, whose presence in the room is apparent only now. She is seated a few steps away, sewing, dressed in a print blouse, which gives her an unexpectedly youthful air. She seems finally to have become just like any other young woman.

JORGE

(amiably but insistently)

Have you got over the scare you had yesterday?

VIRIDIANA, her eyes lowered, does not reply. JORGE turns around again and joins the MAN who was accompanying him. Their conversation continues, off.

JORGE

You can put the other plug there at the bottom for the two floor lamps that I've bought.

With her eyes, VIRIDIANA follows the young man who no longer pays any attention to her. It is a look we have never seen in her. It is undefinable, but seems full of gratitude, apology, and tenderness -- a woman's look.

VIRIDIANA'S ROOM, NIGHTTIME.

VIRIDIANA pulls out a small broken mirror from a drawer. By the light of a single candle, she smooths her loose hair. She has cried and there are traces of tears on her cheeks. Without a doubt she is undergoing some internal struggle. She stands up, picks up a garment, and leaves.

ON THE DRIVE, NEAR VIRIDIANA'S CELL-LIKE ROOM.

A brushwood fire has been lit. MONCHO puts some leaves on it. It is cool and the old servant warms his hands over the flames and then goes off to find some more dry leaves.

Some jazz, in contrast with Handel's Messiah, begins to play. This continues until the end of the film.

Little RITA, her shoulders covered by the old blanket already seen on her, is sitting on a big stone near the fire. She is holding the crown of thorns dear to Viridiana, looking at it curiously. While she is handling it, she pricks her finger and a drop of blood appears. She sucks it. And, after looking sorrowfully at the crown of thorns, she throws it onto the fire with an air of detachment. The crown of thorns very soon becomes a crown of fire. Jazz music.

DON JAIME'S ROOM.

JORGE with his sleeves rolled up is washing his hands and arms.
RAMONA is
sitting on the edge of the turned-back bed, sewing a button on
JORGE's
jacket. It is a peaceful family scene.

JORGE
(off)
The towel.

RAMONA puts the jacket on the bed and goes to look for the towel.
She hands
it to him. JORGE looks at her, smiling, while he is drying himself.
He
strokes her cheek. RAMONA happily lets his hand run across her face
to her
mouth. She covers his hand with little kisses and nibbles it
gently.

The jazz music gets louder; it is coming from the phonograph. The
camera
switches briefly to the crown of thorns in flames. With a stick, a
hand takes
it out of the flames and puts it on the ground, where it goes on
burning and
crackling.

IN DON JAIME'S ROOM.

JORGE and RAMONA are startled by the noise of light rapid knocks on
the door.

JORGE
Who's there?

RAMONA starts to leave the room but JORGE stops her.

JORGE
Where are you going? Wait!

Nobody appears or replies and he goes to the door himself.
VIRIDIANA is
there. Her expression is strange. She is apparently very calm but
she betrays
a great inner agitation. Her hair hangs loosely on her shoulders.
She has

never looked so feminine. Her appearance takes him by surprise.

JORGE

Come in, Viridiana. Has something happened?

She does not reply. She tries to look him in the eye but, overcome, soon lowers her gaze. She stands still and silent on the threshold.

JORGE

Did you want to speak to me? Is there anything I can do?

JORGE tries to penetrate her thoughts but does not succeed. VIRIDIANA finally looks at him imploringly as if asking to be understood and pardoned. JORGE's concentrated gaze relaxes. As if by instinct, he suddenly realizes that the long desired moment has arrived. The girl is at his mercy.

His smile is ironic but friendly as he moves back to let her in. Seeing RAMONA there, she is taken aback. Her face hardens and her body stiffens as she stares at the servant and then JORGE. RAMONA herself seems petrified, while JORGE, apparently at ease, tries to relax the atmosphere.

JORGE

I must say, I was not expecting you. We are playing cards ...

While he is talking he moves toward the table.

JORGE

I hope you are not surprised by this pastime, but the evenings are long and they must be got through, somehow. But ... do sit down ...

VIRIDIANA, who is a little reassured, but not completely at home, taut, with a fixed look and without a word, follows him. RAMONA, who feels she is not wanted, is about to leave.

JORGE

Don't leave, Ramona. Come here! Mademoiselle is not proud and she doesn't mind your staying

here. Isn't that so?

RAMONA goes timorously to the table. VIRIDIANA's expression is blank. JORGE takes up the cards and shuffles them rigorously. He does not seem to find the situation at all unnatural.

JORGE

You know how to play cards, cousin? No? Then sit down. I'm sure you'll like it.

VIRIDIANA, still detached, decides to sit down. RAMONA remains standing, partly out of distress and partly out of respect.

JORGE

You too, sit down. Come on, sit down. All cats are gray at night...

RAMONA sits down and JORGE finishes shuffling the cards.

JORGE

Do you like this music, Viridiana? It's popular now.

He puts the cards on the table in front of VIRIDIANA. She is still taut and silent.

JORGE

Cut. Like that ...

Close-up of JORGE's hand, which quietly takes VIRIDIANA's limp hand and puts it on the cards, helping her with a light pressure to divide the pack. JORGE then puts the cards together and begins dealing to each according to the rules of the game ...

JORGE

You won't believe me, but the first time I met you I said to myself: "My cousin Viridiana will end up playing cards with me."

He finishes dealing. RAMONA is slightly animated. VIRIDIANA, who seems to be

paying no attention to what she is doing, with the tips of her fingers starts playing her cards.

The camera now recedes at top speed, showing the room in immense perspective. At the end of it, the three players are soon almost indistinct in the center of the image. The shooting angle widens more and more and in the center of the image, while the music continues its euphoric and frenzied rhythm, there appear the words:

THE END.