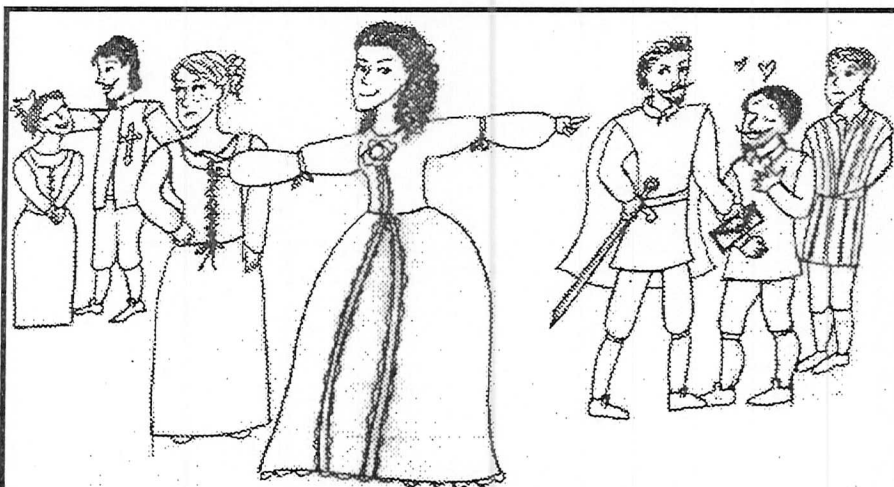


COMIC BOOK OF *EL RETRATO VIVO*

DRAWINGS BY SARAH BUTLER, CAPTIONS BY JARED WHITE



Bernarda, annoyed that Cosme is constantly jealous of her friends, decides to play a small trick on her husband. She invites the Painter over to "paint" a picture of Cosme. In order to set her plan in motion, she and the painter drug Cosme, making him fall asleep.

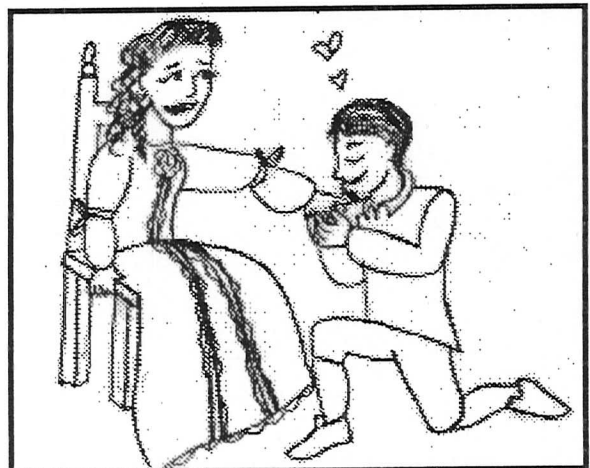


After Cosme falls asleep, Bernarda and her friends execute their plans. First, she gives the sword-wielding *Valiente* a letter for him to write when he needs to disguise himself as the mailman (or *Correo*). Second, she invites her old flame, the *Cortesano*, to flirt with her, trying Cosme's patience. After arranging everything, Bernarda claps her hands and giggles with glee.



Although most of her friends are in on the joke that Bernarda is playing on Cosme, her servant, or *Criada*, does not know what is going on. Bernarda explains the joke to her and invites her to bring out her new "painting."

Upon waking up, Cosme realizes that he is stuck in a painting! Terrified of the Painter, Cosme tries to his best to avoid his paintbrush. Bernarda has her servants dust off Cosme, as if he really were a painting.

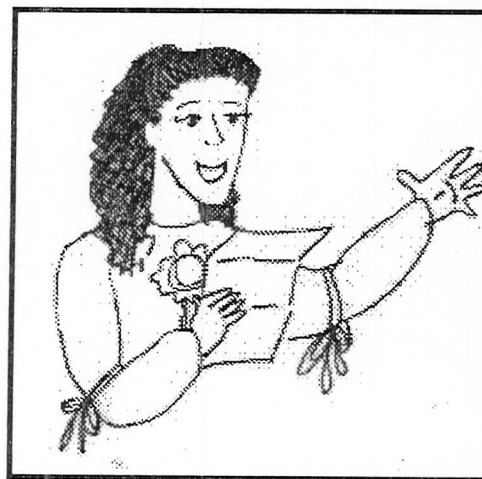
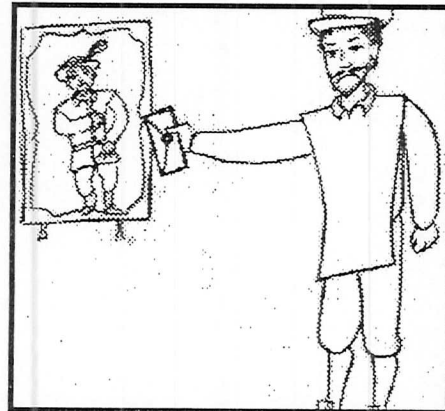


The *Cortesano* finally makes his long-awaited appearance and attempts to seduce Bernarda, causing her to forget about her husband and run away with him. Cosme is infuriated after the *Cortesano* gives Bernarda some lovely ribbons.

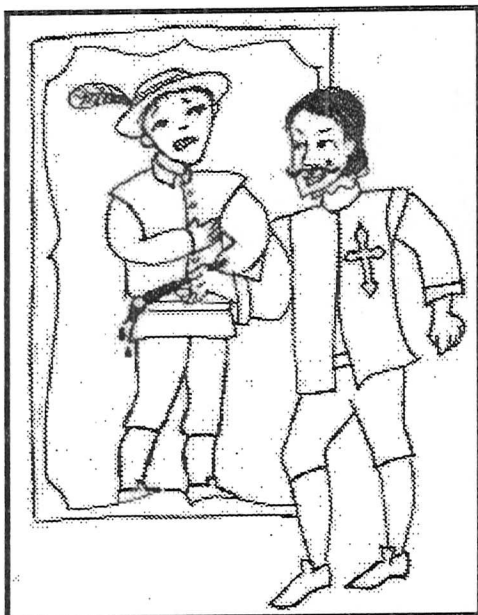


Immediately following the *Cortesano*, the *Valiente* comes storming onto the stage, waving his sword and stabbing at the "painting." Cosme, fearing for his life, tries to dodge the quick thrusts. Eventually, Bernarda is able to calm the *Valiente* down and remind him of his responsibility to dress-up as the *Correo*.

Disguised now as the *Correo*, the *Valiente* gives the letter that "Cosme" wrote to Bernarda from his hunting party in la Zarzuela. Along with the letter, the *Correo* gives Bernarda two partridges with painted red feet.



While Bernarda reads the letter, Cosme becomes more and more convinced that he actually wrote it. In fact, he even goes so far as to elaborate on his experiences in la Zarzuela! After realizing that the *Correo* brought food, Cosme complains that he is hungry and would like to eat. Bernarda warns Cosme that eating will cause the Painter to return.



As if he were listening all along, the Painter comes running onto the stage and begins touching-up his "painting," much to Cosme's dismay. When asked what type of paint he uses, the Painter confesses to using cheap wine.

The Painter invites everyone to make their own corrections to the "painting."



After feigning to be dead, Cosme scares Bernarda. They argue for a few moments but finally reconcile their differences and ask each other for forgiveness. The play ends as all the characters dance off stage.



Bernarda and her friends dance around Cosme, singing the *ronda*. At the end of their dance, they all take turns fixing the "painting." After the Painter offers a final correction, Cosme falls out of the picture frame onto the floor.