

El Capitan – boastful coward and mad dreamer, tinged with the bitterness of a soldier returning from war

El Capitan complains to his companion Arlequin about his plight since returning from war.

EL CAPITAN: Tell me, what about us? Because we were beaten in the latest wars, not so much by the powerful enemy as by those shameless traffickers who govern us and who sent us to defend their interests without sufficient manpower or enthusiasm (for no one fights faithfully for that which he doesn't esteem)—those same men who failed to hand over one of their own kind to serve in the army and didn't unhand a penny except at high interest and for even higher profit, those who no sooner feared to see the war lost than they threatened to ally themselves with the enemy—*they* now blame *us* and treat us badly and belittle us and would like to save even the wretched pay with which they think they're remunerating us; and they'd be very glad to discharge us, except they're afraid that some day all those oppressed by their crimes and tyranny may rise up against them. Woe to them if, on that day, we remember on what side reason and justice stand!