

Call Back Side for LEANDRO and CRISPÍN

Leandro: A great city this must be, Crispín; everything speaks of its grandeur and wealth.

Crispín: Two cities, you mean. Heaven grant we've landed in the better one.

Leandro: Two cities, Crispín? Ah, I see: old and new, one on each side of the river.

Crispín: What do the river or old age or newness matter to me? I mean two cities like in any city in the world: one for those that arrive with money, and another for those that arrive like us.

Leandro: It's enough to have arrived without running into the police! And I'd like to stay here a while, because I'm tired of roaming the earth.

Crispín: I'm not, it's the condition of natives, like me, of the kingdom of knaves not to settle in any one place, unless by force and in prison. But since we've stumbled upon this city and it's fortified from what we've seen, let's work out our battle plan like prudent captains, so we profit from the conquest.

Leandro: We're a poorly equipped army!

Crispín: We're men, and it's men we'll meet.

Leandro: Our only assets are our bodies. You didn't want us to get rid of these clothes, which, if we'd sold on the cheap, would've made us some money.

Crispín: I'd sooner get rid of my skin before good clothes! Nothing matters more than appearance, in this world of ours, and clothes are the first to appear.

Leandro: What can we do, Crispín? Hunger and tiredness have worn me down, and I can't think straight.

Crispín: All we can do is use ingenuity and impudence, because if we're not impudent ingenuity is worth nothing. What I'm thinking is that you must speak briefly and be rude, to give yourself upper-class airs. From time to time I'll allow you to plant blows on my ribs; when you're spoken to, answer mysteriously; and when you speak on your own account, let it be with gravity, as if passing judgement. You're young, good looking; up 'til now you've wasted your qualities; now let's make the most of them. Put yourself in my hands, for nothing becomes a man better than having someone at his side singing his praises. We men are like merchandise, worth more or less depending on the skill of the merchant that displays us. I assure you, if you were glass, I could pass you off as a diamond. So, now let's stop at this hotel, so we set up camp in sight of the fort.

Leandro: At the hotel? How will we pay?

Crispín: If you scare so easily, let's find a home for the needy, or, let's collect for charity if we want to appear virtuous; and if you're feeling brave, let's go back on the road and assault the first traveller we meet; if we stick to the truth of our resources, we have no other choices.

Leandro: I have letters of introduction to people of good standing in this city.

Crispín: Rip up those letters right now and don't think like a low-life. Presenting ourselves as if we're poor! That's no introduction! Today they'll receive you with great courtesy, they'll tell you their home is your home, then the second time you knock the Butler will say Sir isn't at home, nor is he expected, and on the next visit, they won't even open the door. This is a world of take and give, an employment exchange, a market place, and before asking you have to offer.

Leandro: But what can I offer, if I've got nothing?

Crispín: What, is a man, just as he is, of no worth? A man can be a soldier and with his bravery be decisive in victory; he can be a lover, and with sweet medicine cure a debutante who feels she's dying of melancholy; he can be the servant of a powerful gentleman who elevates him to the highest office, he can be many other things I needn't enumerate. To climb the social ladder, any step does the job.

Leandro: And what if that step fails me?

Crispín: I offer my shoulders to raise you up.

Leandro: And if we both fall to the ground?

Crispín: May it be a soft landing.