

XI. How Lazaro Left for His Homeland and What Happened to Him on the Way

In this chapter of **The Life of Lazarillo of Tormes**, Lazaro encounters his former master, the squire who had stolen his clothes, by chance in Madrid. Seizing the opportunity for revenge, Lazaro incites a local family, wronged by the squire, to attack him. As the squire is beaten and taken to jail, believing Lazaro's family is seeking restitution, Lazaro escapes the city, cursing his profession.

Lazaro then recounts his time in Madrid, where he survived on alms due to his weakened state from beatings. He overhears a beggar discussing the fate of the squire, learning of his trial and subsequent banishment from Madrid for vagrancy. Fearing retribution from those tricked by the trunk scheme and the squire's pursuit, Lazaro disguises himself and quickly departs Madrid, heading towards his homeland, Tejares, but not before reflecting on the majesty of the unfinished Escorial and its healthful climate.

En route, Lazaro encounters a band of gypsies outside Escorial. Initially mistaken for one of their own due to his appearance, Lazaro is invited to share their meal and subsequently recounts his life story to the gypsies. His tale, especially the incident involving the barrel at the inn in Madrid, amuses the gypsies, particularly a man and woman among them who reveal themselves to be the priest and maiden involved in the same incident Lazaro had described. The maiden takes over the narration, detailing her scandalous escape from prison with the priest, now disguised as a gypsy, and their integration into the gypsy community.

Through a blend of fortune and misadventure, Lazaro, the priest, and the maiden find themselves interlinked by the consequences of their actions and choices, humorously illustrating the unpredictable nature of life and human connections. Their stories, marked by cunning and adaptation, continue to unfold amidst the backdrop of 16th-century Spain, revealing the social complexities and personal struggles of the time.

