

LA PERICHOLE

Music by Jacques Offenbach

Libretto by Henri Meilhac & Ludovic Halévy

First Performance: Théâtre des Variétés, Paris, October 6, 1868

Paquillo and La Perichole, two street singers, arrive in Lima on the Viceroy's birthday, which is being celebrated by his own order. Paquillo's jealousy will not permit La Perichole to accept pay from other men, so the two are perilously near starvation. A dinner from the smitten Viceroy tempts La Perichole, as does his invitation to the palace. By law, no unmarried woman may enter the royal household, so a husband must be found for the new favorite. Conveniently, Paquillo, made drunk by the Viceroy's henchmen, is pressed into service; neither he nor the tipsy bride recognizes the other. He is furious when he discovers the deception and is imprisoned by the Viceroy. La Perichole tricks the Viceroy; the pair escapes with the aid of a long-incarcerated political prisoner. When the Viceroy realizes the lovers' true devotion, he forgives them.