

# Don Juan

or The Stone Guest



**Stella Chester**

Adapted from the play by Molière

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**BIG DOG PUBLISHING  
P.O. Box 1401  
Rapid City, SD 57709**

Don Juan or the Stone Guest

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Don Juan or the Stone Guest was first produced at the Palais Royal, Paris, on February 15, 1665 with Molière playing the part of Sganarelle.

## Don Juan Or the Stone Guest

**CLASSIC FARCE.** Adapted from the play by Molière. Notorious scoundrel and ladies' man, Don Juan, marries Elvira and then abandons her. Enraged, Elvira's brothers are determined to hunt Don Juan down and exact their revenge. While on the run from Elvira's brothers, Don Juan encounters two pretty peasant girls and proposes marriage to them at the same time. When Don Juan's servant warns him of heaven's wrath, Don Juan just laughs it off. But, in the end, it may be heaven itself that has the last laugh! Don Juan remains one of the most memorable, comical rogues in literature and is sure to leave your audiences rolling in the aisles with laughter.

**Performance Time:** Approximately 75-90 minutes.



Portrait of Molière by Pierre Mignard. The first volume of a 1739 English translation of Molière's plays.

## About the Story

Molière is the stage name of Jean-Baptiste Poquelin (1622-1673), who was born in Paris to a wealthy family. One of the greatest comedic playwrights of all time, Molière worked as an actor and used this experience to hone his comedic talent. The first written version of the Don Juan legend is attributed to Spanish playwright Tirso de Molina who published his play *The Trickster of Seville and the Stone Guest* in 1630. Molière's 1665 play *Don Juan and the Stone Guest* remains one of the best-known depictions of Don Juan. Other famous versions include Mozart's comic opera, *Don Giovanni*, and Lord Byron's 1821 epic poem, *Don Juan*. Though the storylines differ, the legendary Don Juan is usually portrayed as a wealthy gentleman who takes great pride in seducing women of all ages and classes, thus destroying their family's honor. Don Juan is part of Molière's hypocrisy trilogy that includes *The School For Wives* and *Tartuffe*.

## Characters

(9 M, 6 F, 5 flexible, opt. extras)  
(With doubling: 4 M, 3 F, 4 flexible)

**DON JUAN TENORIO:** Ladies' man and scoundrel who takes great pride in seducing women of all ages and classes, thus destroying their family's honor; owes money to creditors; male.

**SGANARELLE (sgah-nah-REHL):** Don Juan's servant who hates his master's sinful acts but remains loyal to him out of fear; has common sense and a respect for women; male.

**DONNA ELVIRA:** Don Juan's wife, who he abducted from a convent; wears a veil; female.

**DON CARLOS:** Elvira's brother, who seeks revenge on Don Juan for betraying Donna Elvira; male.

**DON ALONSE (ah-LONS):** Elvira's brother, who seeks revenge on Don Juan for betraying Donna Elvira; male.

**GUSMAN:** Elvira's servant; flexible.

**CHARLOTTE:** A peasant girl deceived into thinking she is Don Juan's only love; female.

**PIERROT (pyeh-ROH):** A country lad who is engaged to Charlotte; male.

**MATHURINE (mah-tew-REEN):** A peasant girl deceived into thinking she is Don Juan's only love; female.

**STATUE:** Statue of the Commander who Don Juan killed; statue costume should look like it is part of the Commander's tomb; male.

**DON LOUIS (lwee) TENORIO:** Don Juan's father, who wishes Don Juan would act like a gentleman and stop disgracing the family; male.

**LA VIOLETTE:** Don Juan's servant; female.

**RAGOTIN:** Don Juan's servant; female.

**MONSIEUR DIMANCHE (dee-MAHNSH):** Don Juan's creditor, a merchant to whom Don Juan and Sganarelle owe money; male.

**LA RAMÉE:** Swordsman; male.

**GHOST:** Ghost that appears as a veiled woman; when veil is removed she appears as the figure of Time and carries a scythe; female.

**BEGGAR:** Don Juan offers him a gold coin if he curses; flexible.

**SERVANTS 1-3:** Servants to Don Carlos and Don Alonse; non-speaking; flexible.

**EXTRAS (Opt.):** As Entourage for Don Juan, Don Carlos, and Don Alonse.

**Note:** For flexible roles, change the script accordingly.

## Options for Doubling

Statue/Servant 1 (male)

La Ramée/Servant 2 (male)

Beggar/Dimanche (male)

Don Carlos/Pierrot (male)

Don Alonse/Don Louis (male)

Ghost/La Violette (female)

Donna Elvira/Mathurine (female)

Ragotin/Charlotte (female)

Gusman/Servant 3 (flexible)

## Setting

Sicily, 1600s.

## Set

The sets can be as simple or elaborate as your budget allows.

**The gardens of the King of Naples' palace.** A backdrop can be used or a bare stage will suffice.

**Countryside.** A backdrop can be used or a bare stage will suffice.

**Forest site of the Commander's tomb.** The Commander's tomb is situated between two trees. A forest backdrop may be used.

**Don Juan's home.** There is a stool, an armchair, and a table with chairs/stools.

## Synopsis of Scenes

**ACT I:** The gardens of the King of Naples' palace in Sicily.

**ACT II:** In the countryside.

**ACT III:** Forest site of the Commander's tomb.

**ACT IV:** Don Juan's home.

**ACT V:** In the countryside.



## Props

Snuffbox  
Country clothes, for Don Juan  
Doctor's clothes, for Sganarelle  
Gold coin  
Sword, for Don Juan  
Veil, for Donna Elvira  
Tray of food  
Beverage tray  
Dinner plate  
Candle  
Scythe, for Ghost  
Veil, for Ghost

## Special Effects

Sound of a scuffle  
Knock at the door  
Thunder  
Lightning bolts (lighting effect)  
Smoke effect  
Great flames burning (lighting effect)

“My heart belongs  
to all the beauties...”

—Don Juan

## ACT I

(AT RISE: *The King of Naples' palace, Sicily, Italy. Sganarelle and Gusman enter, in the middle of a conversation. Sganarelle is holding a snuffbox.*)

SGANARELLE: But enough of this. Let's pick up where we left off. You say that Donna Elvira, surprised by our departure, set out across the countryside after us. And that her heart—which my master Don Juan has affected so deeply—could not live, you say, without seeking him here. But between the two of us, may I tell you what I think? I fear she will be badly paid for her love, and that her journey to this city will produce little fruit, and that the two of you would have gained just as much by staying put.

GUSMAN: But why? Tell me, I beg you, Sganarelle, what prompts such a gloomy forecast?

SGANARELLE: I have a general idea how things go with him...and though he has said nothing, I'll bet how this affair will end. Of course, it's possible I could be mistaken.

GUSMAN: What? Could it be that this unforeseen departure is due to an infidelity on the part of Don Juan? Could he be capable of such an injury to Donna Elvira?

SGANARELLE: No, but he is still young and does not have the heart—

GUSMAN: Could a man of his quality commit an action so vile?

SGANARELLE: (*Sarcastic.*) Oh, yes, his quality!

GUSMAN: But he is bound by the holy ties of matrimony.

SGANARELLE: Ah! My poor Gusman, my friend, you do not yet know, believe me, what kind of man this Don Juan is.

GUSMAN: I don't know, truly, what kind of man he could be. I do not understand at all, how, after such effusions of love and impatience, after so many urgent tributes, vows, sighs, and tears, after so many passionate letters, ardent

declarations and oaths, and, finally, in his passion even abducting her from a convent— (*Slight pause.*) I don't understand, I say, how, after all this, he could have the heart to abandon her.

SGANARELLE: For myself, it's not so hard to understand, and if you knew this man as I do, you would see that it's easy for him. I'm not saying that his feelings for Donna Elvira have changed. I have no certainty on that score. You will find in Don Juan, my master, the greatest renegade that the earth has ever endured—a wild man, a dog, a devil, a heretic who does not believe in heaven or hell, a thoroughly brute beast, a pig who closes his ears to all Christian grievances, and treats all that we believe as empty words. You tell me that he has married Donna Elvira. A marriage costs him nothing to contract...lady, maiden, peasant. I would tell you the names of all those he has married in various places but that would take until nightfall. (*Gusman is taken aback.*) You are surprised and change color at these words, yet this is only a sketch of his character, and to finish the portrait, I would need a lot of paint. It's enough that the wrath of heaven will overtake him someday and that it would have been better for me to be the devil's servant than his...he has forced me to witness such horrors! When a great lord becomes an evil man, it is a terrible thing, but I must serve him faithfully in spite of my misgivings. With me, fear causes me to bite my tongue. (*Looks off and sees Don Juan approaching.*) But see, there he is, coming to take a walk in the palace. Let's part. Listen, I have made this confidence in all honesty, and it has poured rather quickly from my mouth, but if any of it should come to his ears, know that I will say that you lie.

(*Gusman exits in a hurry. Don Juan enters.*)

DON JUAN: Who were you just speaking to? He looked a little like the good Gusman of Donna Elvira.

SGANARELLE: More than a little, I'd say.

DON JUAN: (*Surprised.*) What? It was he?

SGANARELLE: Himself.

DON JUAN: How long has he been in this city?

SGANARELLE: Since last night.

DON JUAN: And what business brings him here?

SGANARELLE: I believe you can easily imagine what's bothering him.

DON JUAN: Our departure, no doubt?

SGANARELLE: The good man is totally mortified by it and wishes to know the cause.

DON JUAN: And what did you tell him?

SGANARELLE: That you had said nothing to me about it.

DON JUAN: But tell me...what are your thoughts on the subject? What do you make of this affair?

SGANARELLE: For myself, I believe—without prejudice to yourself, sir—that you are pursuing some new love.

DON JUAN: You believe so?

SGANARELLE: Yes.

DON JUAN: And you're not wrong, no! And I avow to you that another object has chased Elvira from my thoughts!

SGANARELLE: By God! I know my Don Juan like the back of my hand! You have the heart of a predator, pouncing from meal to meal, never lingering for long.

DON JUAN: And don't you find that I am right to use my heart in this way?

SGANARELLE: Sir!

DON JUAN: What? Speak.

SGANARELLE: (*Regaining composure.*) Of course, you are right...because you wish it. One must not contradict you. But if you did not wish it, that would be another thing altogether.

DON JUAN: Ah, I see! Well, then, I give you the liberty to speak and to tell me your feelings.

SGANARELLE: In that case, sir, I would say honestly that I do not approve at all of your habits, and that I find it deplorable to love the ladies as you do.

DON JUAN: (*Horried.*) What? You'd prefer that we'd bind ourselves forever to the first beauty who takes us, renounce the world for her, and never again have eyes for anyone else? What vanity to want to preen oneself on the false honor of being faithful, to entomb ourselves forever in one passion, and to be dead to all the other beauties that might strike our eyes! No, no. Constancy is only suitable for buffoons. All beautiful women have the right to charm us, and the advantage of being seen first should not steal from the others the just claims they have on our hearts. I let beauty ravish me wherever I find it and yield easily to its sweet violence and to the places it leads us. I would be bound in vain...and the love I have for one beautiful woman does not oblige my soul to commit an injustice against the rest. I reserve the right of my eyes to see the merit of all and to render to each the tributes obliged by nature. Be that as it may, I cannot refuse my heart to any love-worthy object I see, and if I had ten thousand in my coffer, and a beautiful new face asked me for it, I would give it all. After all, the first stirrings of love are charged with inexplicable charms, and all the pleasure of love subsists in change. We taste an extreme sweetness in reducing, by a hundred tributes, the heart of a young beauty...to see from day to day the little progress that one makes there...to combat with tears and sighs, the innocent shame of a soul to the point of rendering up its arms...to force, at close quarters, all the small resistances she puts up...to vanquish the scruples of which she makes an honor and to lead her softly to the place where we wish. Nothing more is left to say or to wish. The beautiful part of passion is done, and we would sink into the tranquility of such a love if some new object did not come to awaken our desires and present to our heart the alluring charms of another conquest. There is nothing so sweet as to

triumph over the resistance of a beautiful woman. And in this matter, I have the ambition of conquerors, who march perpetually from victory to victory and know no limits to their wishes. There is nothing that can halt the impetuosity of my desires. I have a heart to love all the world, and like Alexander, I wish that there were other worlds so I could march in and make my amorous conquests there as well.

SGANARELLE: You seem to have it memorized and speak just like a book.

DON JUAN: And what do you have to reply to all this?

SGANARELLE: I'd say...I don't know what I'd say...because the way you put things makes you seem to be right...and yet it's true that you're wrong. A moment ago, I had the clearest ideas in the world, but your speech just muddled them all up. Let it be. Another time I will put my thoughts in writing so I can argue with you.

DON JUAN: That would be well done.

SGANARELLE: But, sir, does the liberty you've given me also let me tell you that I am not a little scandalized by the life that you lead?

DON JUAN: Oh? And what life exactly is it that I lead?

SGANARELLE: Well, for example, to see you marrying every month as you do —

DON JUAN: Could anything be more pleasant?

**[END OF FREEVIEW]**