

## THE ENGINEER'S TALE

There was a taxi driver named Miguel  
Whose wife, named Mary Lou, put him through hell.  
He drove for many hours every day  
So she could throw his hard-earned cash away  
On clothes and pocketbooks and shoes and jewels.

Ah, the world is too full of such fools!  
Better a wife who's plain and full of love  
For you than one who's always thinking of  
Ways to spend what you work hard to earn.  
But those who wed for lust will never learn!  
Never even thinking what a life  
One might have to live with such a wife.

And so it was with poor Miguel, who drove  
All day long on crowded, dangerous roads  
To feed his wife's desire for brand-name stuff,  
Of which, of course, she never had enough,  
Too tired, mostly, to enjoy the charms  
He had so long envisioned in his arms,  
And, besides, too angry at her greed

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To feel the slightest stirring of his need.

Still, it felt good when Miguel could see  
Men stare at her and wish that they were he.

One day Mary Lou, as usual,  
Was shopping at a nearby high-end mall  
When she saw a lovely Prada bag  
That made her cold heart ping and spirits sag,  
For at a thousand it was quite a steal,  
And yet no calculation could reveal  
A way she might get cash enough to pay  
For it. And so she found another way.

With dreams of that bag dancing in her head,  
A little dark-brown clutch with hints of red,  
She called a close friend of her husband, who  
Her husband called a cousin. But she knew  
That he would love to get her into bed,  
Though he was never crude in what he said.

She asked him to take her out to lunch, which he  
Was pleased to do, listening while she  
Complained about her husband bitterly,  
And how he treated her so stingily.

He was a loser, not worthy of her glance,  
And here she was, trapped by circumstance.  
All she wanted was a little clutch,  
A tiny bag, it wasn't asking much,  
But she knew he was sure to tell her no.  
Oh how! Oh how could he reward her so!  
All she did was love him, give him pleasure!  
Other men would treat her as a treasure!

"I would," his friend Ramon at last broke in,  
As she had expected, "were I him.  
How much does that bag cost?" "Not much," she  
said.

"A thousand. It's a steal." He clutched his head.  
"A thousand! I don't have that much! I would,  
Believe me, give it gladly if I could.  
For I have loved you from the moment I  
First saw you in the glint in Miguel's eye  
When he told me about you. And since then  
I've wanted you without a word. But when  
You just revealed your feelings, I felt free  
At last to tell you what you mean to me."

"Oh, Ramon, my darling, never fear!"  
She said. "I have a plan, as you shall hear.  
We shall get my stingy husband to  
Cough up the money for my bag, while you  
Get everything you want -- and more -- today!  
If you do precisely as I say."

That afternoon Ramon called up his friend  
And asked him for a short-term loan, to tend  
To an investment for which cash was due.  
"How much?" Miguel asked. "A grand. Too much for  
you?"

"When can I have it back?" "Just till tomorrow."

And so Miguel allowed his friend to borrow  
A thousand dollars from his cash reserve,  
As true friends ever one another serve.

Straight from Miguel, Ramon went to deliver

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The cash to Mary Lou, who gave the giver  
All he could desire, and more than he  
Had dreamed of in his wildest fantasy.  
Then off she went back to the Prada store  
To buy the bag that she was lusting for.

The next day Miguel inquired of his friend  
About the loan. When did he intend  
To pay it back? "I gave it to your wife,"  
He said. "This morning. I swear upon my life!"  
"I believe you," Miguel replied. "But she  
Said nothing of this interchange to me."

Ramon shrugged, so Miguel said nothing more,  
But waited till they went to bed before  
He asked his lovely wife whether she  
Had gotten from Ramon the money he  
Had lent him just the day before. "Oh, yes!"  
She said. "And guess what I got -- you'll never guess!"

She hopped right out of bed, turned on the light,  
As if assuming mutual delight,  
And took out the Prada bag, a treasure  
So beautiful it must give equal pleasure  
To both of them. "It was a steal!" she said.  
"I knew you wouldn't mind!" Then back to bed  
She leapt. "Oh, thank you, thank you, thank you!"  
she

Cried out, smothering him with kisses, while he  
Just lay there, hapless, helpless, hopeless, numb  
To love and lust alike, thinking how dumb  
He was, and how many miles he'd have to drive  
To pay for this, and how he must deprive  
Himself of little things he might enjoy,

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While she, laboring to his member buoy,  
Plied his body with exquisite art,  
Engaging every morsel but the heart.

