

Santa Beatriz de Roma / Saint Beatriz of Rome: Edition and translation from the Leyenda de los santos (Burgos: Juan de Burgos, 1499)

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"St. Beatriz de Roma / St. Beatriz of Rome:
Edition and English Translation"

by [Elizabeth Rhodes](#)

This is an edition and English translation of the life of St. Beatriz of Rome as it appears in the extremely rare *La leyenda de los santos* (*Legends of the Saints*), a volume extant in one copy at the British Library ([IB 53312](#)).¹ O'Neill Library at Boston College has a microfilm of the complete text ([BT430 P377 1493a](#)). The *Leyenda de los santos* is the second of two books bound together, the first being a *Pasión de Cristo* (*Christ's Passion*) that Aldaz believes was published separately and earlier, perhaps in 1493.² Among of the first books published in Spain, the *Leyenda* is believed to have been printed in Burgos in 1499 by Juan de Burgos, and its content follows Jacobus de

¹ The word 'legenda' in this context is the future passive participle of the Latin verb 'legere,' and means 'things needing to be read.'

² José Aragüés Aldaz. "Trayectoria editorial de la *Leyenda de los santos*. Primeros apuntes." *À tout seigneur tout honneur. Mélanges offerts à Claude Chauchadis*. Ed. Mónica Güell and Marie-Françoise Déodat-Kessedjian. Toulouse: CNRS-Univ. de Toulouse-Le Mirail, 2009. 1-18.

Vorgaine's [*Golden Legend*](#). This edition complements my analysis of María de Zayas's adaptation of the St. Beatriz vita in the ninth tale of her 1647 *Desengaños amorosos*.³

I have used standard editorial procedures, resolving abbreviations, bracketing corrected letters, modernizing and normalizing spelling, as well as adding modern punctuation and paragraphs. Enclitic pronouns are unmodified and no alterations in meaning have been made. Content notes are with the English text; Latin words and those no longer in use are noted in the Spanish text with their meanings. The translation privileges the late medieval syntax of the original over fluidity of style.

Santa Beatriz de Roma



[244v] Había en Roma un emperador, el cual tenía una mujer de santa vida que había nombre Beatriz. Este emperador hizo voto de romería a Jerusalén, y vino a consultar su partida con la emperatriz su mujer. Y ordenaron que, en tanto que él fuese a su romería, que todo el imperio obedeciese a ella y a un su hermano de él. Esto así acordado, habló el emperador con su hermano sobre ello y mandóle que hiciese el mandado de la emperatriz. Y habló con los de la ciudad para que obedeciesen en todas las cosas a la emperatriz y a su hermano en tanto que él iba a una romería. Y partido él y otro suyo de quien mucho se fiaba en hábito de peregrinos, y salieron de la ciudad a pie.

³ "María de Zayas and St. Beatriz of Rome." *Representing Women's Authority in the Early Modern World: Struggles, Strategies, and Morality*. Ed. Eavan O'Brien (London: Aracne Press 2013) 93-119.

Y luego su hermano pensó traición en su corazón y demandó amor a la emperatriz, diciéndole que le haría él mejores obras que su marido el emperador y que se alzasen con todo el imperio. Y la emperatriz, como mujer de muy santa vida y de gran entendimiento, pensó en su corazón y no le dio respuesta ninguna, mala ni buena, pensando que lo hacía por la probar y saber qué tenía el emperador su marido en ella. Y como era de gran discreción, pensó en su voluntad que, si de verdad lo decía, que otra vez se lo tornaría a decir. Y luego a pocos días tornó con la misma razón a ella. Y la dueña, por no consentir en el pecado, calladamente habló con algunos buenos de la ciudad y díjoles que fuesen a su palacio y cuando viesen entrar a su cuñado que luego fuese preso, lo cual así hicieron.

Y cuantos había en la ciudad de Roma lo hubieron a maravilla, y pensaban por qué razón la emperatriz prendiera a su cuñado, mayormente por cuanto había quedado en lugar de su hermano en el imperio. Y murmuraba el pueblo mucho por ello, y siendo ella de gran entendimiento, cómo se atreviera a ello, y no podían entender la razón de este hecho. Y él, en cuanto duró en la prisión siempre pensaba mucha traición y mentira contra ella.

Y estuvo el emperador en la casa santa dos años y medio. Y al cabo, siendo la emperatriz avisada de su venida, como mujer de santa vida y de buena consciencia, pensó en su corazón diciendo que todo hombre, por soez que sea, cuando viene de fuera de su tierra para su casa siempre quería hallar todo placer y alegría.

Y con esta razón fuese para la cárcel do[nde] estaba preso su cuñado y díj[o]le, "Sabe por cierto que tu hermano el emperador será aquí muy aína y yo no querría que él tomase pesar consigo, estando tú así. Mas encubre tú la maldad que tú dijiste a mí por tu

boca, y yo así mismo callaré mi injuria, en manera que él haya placer y nos. Ca en toda la ciudad no hay quién sepa porqué te tengo preso, ni lo pudieron entender ni saber."

De lo cual él le dio infinitas gracias, diciendo que lo que él había de suplicar a su alteza, ella lo rogaba a él.

Y aunque él así lo decía por la boca, otra cosa tenía en el corazón. Y la emperatriz mandóle luego sacar de la prisión y mandóle dar muy nobles paños para vestirse a sí y a toda su compañía con que saliese a recibir a su hermano. Y él, con la traición grande que tenía pensada, no se quiso vestir ni consintió vestir su gente.

Y a cabo del tercer día salieron todos los de la ciudad a recibir a su señor con gran honra y muchos placeres. Y el emperador paró mientes por su hermano, por ver cómo lo salía a recibir, y no lo vio. Y turbado por ello, pensando otra cosa, demandó por él afincadamente.⁴ Y las compañías no sabían darle razón alguna de él. Y allegándose el emperador cerca de la ciudad, salió el hermano a recibirlo e iba mal vestido y peor calzado y mal encabalgado.

Y el emperador, cuando lo vio así tan mal aderezado, díjole, "¿Qué es esto, hermano? ¿Cómo venís así?"

Y él dijo, "Tres cosas son porque te debo decir verdad. Lo primero porque eres mi hermano. Lo segundo porque eres mi señor. Lo tercero porque eres hombre a quien tengo de decir verdad. Ca sabe, señor hermano, que después que tú partiste de aquí hasta este día de hoy nunca salí de la cárcel en la cual la emperatriz mi señora me hizo echar."

Y el emperador demandóle la razón porqué.

⁴ 'Diligently.'

Dijo él, "Señor, yo te lo diré. Sabe, señor, que muchas veces me cometió y dijo que hiciese adulterio con ella y que nos alzácemos ambos con el imperio porque cuando tú vinieses a la ciudad de Roma que no te recibiésemos en ella por señor. Y yo, hermano, porque no quise hacer tal traición, mandóme echar en la cárcel."

Y el emperador, cuando esto oyó, hubo a caer de la mula en tierra. Y llegando cerca de la ciudad, veníalo a recibir la emperatriz con muchas doncellas, y fue a su marido por le besar la mano, no sabiendo de la maldad. Y el emperador dióle una bofetada en el rostro, que toda la cara le hinchó de sangre. Y mandóla tomar a dos monteros que la fuesen a degollar.

Y los monteros tomaronla por los cabellos y lleváronla a un monte. Y uno de ellos quiso dormir con ella antes que la matase.

Y dio ella grandes voces y dijo, "¡Oh [245v] traidor!, ¿cómo queréis hacer tan gran traición contra tu señor? Toma el cuchillo y haz lo que te es mandado, y no quieras pecar contra Dios y contra tu señor ni contra mí en esta manera."

Y ellos estando en esto, pasaba cerca de ellos un conde con un azor en la mano, bien como que venía de cazar. Y oyendo las voces, fue allá por ver qué cosa era. Y cuando vio que querían hacer tan mala cosa contra ella, echó el azor de la mano y tomando su espada, mató al que quería deshorrar a la emperatriz. Y él no la conociendo, sacóselas de las manos. Y el conde iba también a recibir al emperador marido de aquella emperatriz que era su señor, y él llevóla para su casa a las ancas de su mula e iban am[b]os departiendo por el camino, empero ella nunca se quiso descubrir al conde. Y él, viendo que era mujer muy hermosa y bien enseñada, llevóla para su palacio a su mujer la condesa.

Y díjole, "Condesa, traígote aquí una dueña de las más hermosas y enseñadas que hoy en el mundo pueden ser. Y tráigotela que te sirva y sea tu dama."

Y la condesa respondió que le placía con ella. En aquella sazón la condesa era preñada, y venido al tiempo de su parto, parió un hijo, el cual dieron a criar y enseñar a aquella dueña.

Y aquel conde tenía un hermano y vivía con el mismo conde, y era muy enamorado de esta señora. Y un día, demandóle su amor. Y la emperatriz extrañóselo mucho y díjole que si más se lo dijese que se querrellaría de ello a su señor el conde. Y viendo él que no la podía haber, vino a pensar en su corazón muy gran traición y maldad.

Y una noche, yaciendo la emperatriz durmiendo con el infante su criado en los brazos y no estando otro ninguno en la cámara sino ella sola con su criado, entró el hermano del conde y viola como estaba durmiendo sola y salió luego fuera y miró a todas partes. Y viendo que no parecía ninguno, tomó un cuchillo y degolló el niño su sobrino y metió a la emperatriz el cuchillo en la mano. Y cuando ella despertó y halló el niño muerto dio grandes voces. Y el conde y la condesa, viendo esto, comenzaron a hacer grandes llantos y amargarse mucho.

Estando en esto, entró el hermano del conde y comenzó a herir malamente a la emperatriz y dijo a su hermano el conde, "¡Oh traidor!, matote a tu hijo y ¿no la puedes mandar matar? ¿No ves el cuchillo que tiene en la mano sangrienta con que lo mató?"

Y luego el conde mandó quemar a la emperatriz. Y llevándola al fuego, salió la condesa muy afincadamente al conde su marido, rogándole que no le mandase dar tan mala muerte como aquella y que le diese otra muerte que él quisiese, ca⁵ bien sabía

⁵ 'Ca' is an old conjunction that means 'because.'

dó[nde] la hallara y cómo, y ella temíase que se lo diese todo el mundo en rostro. El conde, a ruego de la condesa, mandó que la echasen en una isla del mar y que allí la dejasen hasta que se muriese de hambre. Y pusiéronla los marineros muy a lejos de allí y viniéronse.

Y esta emperatriz, cuando estaba en la ciudad de Roma con su marido el emperador, todos los días por la mañana iba a hacer su oración y mandaba decir una misa de la Virgen María a una santa vocación⁶ dentro de la ciudad que llaman Santa María la Redonda. Así que la emperatriz había por abogada a Santa María.

Y ella, estando en aquella isla, había tres días que esta[ba] llorando, y a cabo del tercer día, vino a ella Santa María a consolarla, y díjole, "No hayas miedo ninguno, que yo soy la madre de Jesu Cristo en quien tú has muy gran fe. Mas cras⁷ saldrás de aquí e irás a portar a terreno y vendrán por aquí unos marineros, y dándoles tú voces vendrán luego, y llevarte han de aquí. Y mándote que cojas muchas de estas hierbas que tú ahora tienes a tu cabe[246r]cera⁸ y llévalas contigo y tú irás a portar a una tierra en que hay muchos gaños de la lepra de San Lázaro y dirás que se confiesen los que se quisieren sanar de sus dolencias y dáles esta hierba a beber y luego serán sanos."

Y otro día por la mañana vio venir los marineros que andaban pescando y llamólos a grandes veces y rogóles que la sacasen de allí. Y díjoles que ella viniendo en

⁶ "Vocación" in the sense of "protected place" (*Diccionario de la Real Academia Española*, <<http://buscon.rae.es/draeI>> [accessed 15 April 2011]).

⁷ "Cras" is Latin for "tomorrow."

⁸ "Cabecera," literally "headboard," here probably means the area where she laid her head at night.

una nave que pereciera la nave, y ella que aportara por su ventura en aquella isla y allí la mantuviera Dios y la Virgen María, a quien ella sirviera algún tiempo. Y ellos lleváronla luego consigo y aportaron a una tierra do[nde] había muchos gafos. Y ella, tomando hábito de romera, mandó dar pregón por toda la tierra que todos los que eran enfermos del mal de San Lázaro que viniesen a ella y con la misericordia de Dios que los sanaría. Y vinieron a ella muchos que eran enfermos de aquella enfermedad. Y ella mandábales que se confesasen y tomasen penitencia de sus pecados y dábales aquella hierba a beber, y por la gracia de Dios eran sanos. Y así duró en aquella tierra diecisiete años.

Y a cabo de este tiempo el hermano del conde fue muy gafo, y la fama de la romera sonaba por toda la tierra. Y oyólo el conde como sanaba a muchos de aquella enfermedad y de otras muchas. Y él envió un mensajero a aquella romera, rogándole que quisiese venir a su tierra do[nde] él moraba, y si le sanase aquel su hermano de aquella lepra que le daría cuanto ella demandase. Y ella fue pa[ra] allá, y luego que la vio el conde díjole, "Romera, oí decir que tú sanas los gafos."

Y ella dijo que sí sanaba.

Y dijo el conde, "Pues ruégote que sanes un mi hermano que tengo muy doliente y gafo, y darte he cuánto tú demandares. Y respondió ella que de buena voluntad lo haría. Y viniendo allí el hermano del conde, díjole ella, "Amigo, ¿vos queréis ser sano y limpio de vuestra enfermedad?"

Y dijo él que sí.

Y díjole ella, "Pues ¿vos haréis lo que yo [os] mandare? Y sed cierto que si lo hiciéredes que luego habréis salud. Amigo, tomad otra carrera y dejad la que tenéis y confesad luego todos vuestros pecados, con muy gran contrición ante un clérigo y ante el

señor conde vuestro hermano y ante su mujer y ante mí y por ante doce hombres buenos, y darvos he a beber una hierba muy buena que traigo conmigo de mucha salud, y luego seréis sano sin duda ninguna."

Y dijo él, "¡Oh mezquino! ¿Cómo confesaré yo tan gran traición y maldad y falsedad como yo cometí e hice contra el conde mi hermano y mi señor y contra las cosas que él más quería?" Y hubo de ir al hermano con gran vergüenza y díjole, "Hermano, ruégote por la pasión de mi Señor Jesu Cristo que me quieras perdonar, ca yo hice contra ti la mayor traición y falsedad y enemiga que nunca hizo hombre del mundo a otro. Y sabe, hermano, por verdad que yo te maté a tu hijo que te criaba la dueña que tú hiciste matar, echándola en la isla del mar, ca cuando ella estaba en tu casa yo quería la muy bien y demandéle su amor. Y por cuanto ella no quiso hacer cosa por mí, hube muy gran despecho de ella, y estando ella con la criatura durmiendo en los brazos fui yo y degollé a tu hijo mi sobrino y puse el cuchillo en la mano de la dueña como viste, e hice morir a aquella dueña por mi maldad y al tu hijo."

Y el conde y la condesa, cuando lo oyeron, fueron muy maravillados de tal confesión y hubieron muy gran pesar y lloraron muy mucho por ello. Y decía la condesa en su llanto que mayor pesar tenía de la dueña que hiciera matar que de su hijo. Y el conde y la condesa dijeron que le perdonaban por amor de Jesu Cristo de buen corazón y de buena voluntad, por[246v]que Dios perdonase a ellos. Y en todo esto, la buena dueña nunca se descubrió. Y sacó la hierba que traía y diósel a beber. Y luego en punto fue limpio de la enfermedad.

Y desde que lo vio sano, dijo la buena dueña, "Yo soy aquella a quien tú levantaste el testimonio falso, mas ruega ahora al conde y a su mujer que te quieran perdonar otra

vez y que nunca te lo den en el rostro en plaza ni en otro lugar, y perdónote yo de aquí para ante la cara de Dios porque Dios quiera perdonar a mí."

Y el conde y su mujer, cuando lo supieron, fueron maravillados y hubieron por ello mucho placer y dijeron, "Señora, queremos vos dar la mitad de todo nuestro condado por toda vuestra vida." Y ella dijo que no lo quería y pensó en su corazón que harto la traía Dios a mal estado, de emperatriz que solía ser.

Y ella estando en aquel lugar, el otro hermano de su marido el emperador estaba muy gafo y muy leproso más que todos los otros y con gran hedor. Y el emperador, sabiendo la fama de esta buena dueña como sanaba a muchos, envió por ella para sanar aquel su hermano. Y ella no se detardó y fue para allá. Y el emperador preguntóle si podría darle sano aquel su hermano y ella respondió que sí, si él hiciese lo que ella le mandase. Y dijo el emperador, "Si vos lo hiciéredes, yo os daré todo cuanto vos demandareis por la boca." Dijo ella que lo haría muy de buena voluntad por hacer servicio a Dios y por hacer a él placer y a su hermano. Y ella mandó que lo trajesen delante. Y tanto era el hedor que de él salía que no había hombre en el mundo que delante de él se pusiese, tan grande era la ponzoña.

Y díjole ella, "Amigo, vos queréis ser sano de esa dolencia?"

Y él respondió que sí.

Y dijo ella, "Pues vos haced lo que yo os mandare, y decidlo sin vergüenza y con gran contrición de corazón y confesión verdadera y luego veréis vuestra salud a ojo con una hierba que yo os daré a beber. Confesad a alta voz todos vuestros pecados que hiciste por ante doce caballeros, los mayores de esta ciudad, y por ante nuestro Señor el Papa y

por ante vuestro hermano el emperador y por ante mí, y daros he luego la mi hierba a beber. Y luego seréis sano de toda vuestra enfermedad y aun de[1] ánima."

Y él comenzó a decir su confesión mal y falsamente y no decía los mayores pecados con miedo y con vergüenza del emperador y del papa y de los otros presentes. Y la buena dueña vio que no iba camino. Dijo al emperador que si aquel su hermano mejor no decía verdad y claramente que nunca sanaría. Y el emperador dijo, "Hermano, di la verdad en tu confesión y serás sano. Si no, nunca sanarás hasta la muerte del cuerpo y del ánima."

Y él dijo, "¡Oh mezquino!, ¿Y cómo confesaré tan gran falsedad y traición y mentira como yo cometí e hice contra vos?" Y dijo, llorando mucho de sus ojos, "Hermano señor, ruégote por amor de Dios que me quieras perdonar tan gran traición y falsedad y mentira como yo hice contra ti y contra mi señora la emperatriz, porque la hice matar por cuanto dije que ella me dijera que hiciésemos maldad sobre ti y nos alzásemos con el reino del tu imperio, y cuando tú vinieses que no te recibiésemos en él por señor. Y dígotte, señor hermano, que por cuanto yo la afincaba mucho por eso me hizo prender y echar en la cárcel. Mas sepas por cierto que yo le demandé su amor y le dije que nos alzásemos con el imperio y cuando tú vinieses que no te recibiésemos en la ciudad. Y ruégote hermano que me quieras perdonar tan gran traición y falsedad como yo te he hecho porque Dios perdona a ti."

Y el emperador per[247r]donólo luego por amor de Jesu Cristo. Y ella diole a beber la hierba y luego fue sano.

Y dijo ella al emperador, "Señor, sepas que yo soy aquella tu mujer la Emperatriz."

Y él fue maravillado y alegróse mucho con ella, y queriéndola llevar para el palacio, ella dijo que no quería ir allá, mas que rogaba al Papa y a cuantas compañías allí estaban que le quisiesen dar un hábito, que se quería meter en una orden por servir al mayor Señor. Y el Papa mandóselo dar, la cual es ahora santa en la corte de los cielos con los santos escogidos de Dios.

St. Beatriz of Rome



There was an emperor in Rome, who had a wife who led a holy life whose name was Beatriz. This emperor took a vow to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and went to consult with his wife the empress about his departure. They decreed that as long as he was on his pilgrimage all the empire would obey her and a brother of his. Having decided this, the emperor spoke about it with his brother and ordered him to do what the empress ordered. And he spoke with those of the city so they would obey the empress and his brother in all things as long as he was on pilgrimage. And he and another man he greatly trusted left, attired in pilgrims' garb, and departed from the city on foot.

Then his brother had traitorous thoughts in his heart and demanded love of the empress, telling her that he would do greater things for her than her husband the emperor and they should rise up, taking all the empire. And the empress, like a woman who led a very holy life and had great understanding, thought heartfully and gave him no answer whatsoever, affirmative or negative, thinking that he was doing it to test her and to know what kind of wife the emperor her husband had in her. And since she was most discreet,

she thought about it⁹ and about how if he were saying it in truth, he would do so once again. And then a few days later he proposed the same scheme to her. And the lady, so as not to consent to the sin, quietly spoke with some good men of the city and told them to go to her palace and, when they saw her brother-in-law come in, to apprehend him immediately, and they did so.

And everyone in the city of Rome marveled at this and wondered for what reason the empress would apprehend her brother-in-law, mostly because of how he was standing in for his brother in the empire. And the people gossiped a lot about it, and since she was of great understanding, wondered how she dared do that, and they could not understand the reason for this action. And he, for as long he was in prison, was always designing endless treason and lies against her.

And the emperor was in the holy residence for two and a half years. And in the end, when the empress was notified of his return, like a woman who led a holy life with a clean conscience, she thought in her heart that any man, no matter how common, when he returns home from abroad always wants to find everything pleasant and happy.

And reasoning thus, she went to the prison where her brother-in-law was jailed and said to him, "Know for certain that your brother the emperor will be here very soon and I would not want him to be distressed by finding you like this. So cover up the evil you spoke to me with your mouth, and I will do the same with regard to the insult to me, so that he and we be pleased. For in the entire city there is no one who knows why I have you imprisoned, nor could anyone ascertain or know the reason."

⁹ The text says literally, "she thought in her will." In Augustinian theology, the will is one the soul's three faculties, the others being memory and understanding.

For which he gave her infinite thanks, saying that he had been planning to request of her what she was requesting of him.

And although he spoke thus with his mouth, he had something else in his heart. And the empress ordered him removed from the prison immediately and ordered he be given very noble clothes to dress himself and his entire retinue, in which they would go out to receive his brother. And he, with the great betrayal he had designed, refused to dress himself or his people.

And three days later, everyone from the city went out to receive their lord with great honor and many delights. And the emperor looked for his brother, to see how he came out to receive him, and did not see him. And thus disturbed, suspecting something else, he asked for him with diligence. And those in his attendance had no idea what to tell him. And when the emperor arrived close to the city, his brother came out to greet him poorly dressed and shod worse, on a bad mount.

And when the emperor saw him in such a bad state, he said to him, "What is this, brother? How is it that you arrive like this?"

And he said, "There are three reasons why I should tell you the truth. The first, because you are my brother. The second, because you are my lord. The third, because you are a man to whom I must speak truly, for know, lord brother, that since you left here until this day I never left the jail into which the empress my lady ordered me thrown."

And the emperor asked him the reason why.

He said, "Lord, I shall tell you. Know, lord, that many times she came upon me and said I should commit adultery with her and that we should rise up together with the empire so that when you returned to the city of Rome we would not receive you there as

lord. And because I, brother, refused to commit such treason, she ordered me thrown into jail."

And the emperor, when he heard this, fell off his mule to the ground. And when he got close to the city, the empress came to greet him with many maidens and went to her husband to kiss his hand, not knowing about the evil. And the emperor gave her such a blow to her face that it all swelled up with blood. And he ordered two mounted guards to take her to be strangled.

And the mounted guards grabbed her by the hair and took her to a mountain. And one of them decided to sleep with her before he killed her.

And she screamed loudly and said, "Oh traitor, how can you so betray your lord? Take the knife and do what you are ordered, and do not wish to sin against God and against your lord nor against me in this way!"

And while this was happening, a count with a falcon in his hand passed close by them, returning home from hunting. And hearing the voices, he went there to see what was happening. And when he saw that they wanted to commit such an evil against her, he released the hawk from his hand and, taking up his sword, killed the man who wanted to dishonor the empress. And not recognizing who she was, he removed her from their hands. And the count was also on his way to receive the emperor, husband of the empress, and he took her to his home on the back of his mule, and they talked along the way, but she never revealed who she was to the count. And he, seeing she was a very lovely woman and well brought-up, took her to his palace to his wife the countess.

And said to her, "countess, I bring here one of the most lovely and refined ladies the world has ever seen. And I bring her to you that she may serve you and be your lady in waiting."

And the countess replied that he pleased her thereby. At that time the countess was pregnant, and when her time came, she delivered a son, which they gave to that lady to be raised and instructed.

And that count had a brother who lived with the count himself, and he was much enamored of this lady. And one day, he demanded love of her. And the empress was much taken aback and said that if he ever spoke that way to her again, she would tell her lord the count. And when he saw he could not have her, he devised a great betrayal and evil in his heart.

And one night, when the empress was sleeping with the prince her charge in her arms, when no one else was in the room except her and her charge, the count's brother came in and saw that she was sleeping alone and went out immediately and looked all around. And seeing that no one was in sight, he took a knife and cut his nephew's head off and put the knife in the empress's hand. And when she awoke and found the child dead, she screamed loudly. And the count and countess, seeing this, began to weep and despair greatly. When things were thus, the count's brother came in and began to strike the empress harshly and said to his brother the count, "Oh traitor! She killed your son and you cannot order that she be killed? Do you not see the knife in her bloody hand with which she killed him?"

And then the count ordered that the empress be burnt. And when she was taken to the fire, the countess came out and begged most sincerely of the count her husband that

he not give her such an evil death as that, rather a different one than he might select, for he knew well where he had come upon her and under what conditions, and she feared that the entire world would hold it against him. The count, at the countess's plea, ordered that she be thrown onto an island in the sea and left there until she died of hunger. And the sailors left her very far from there and returned.

And when this empress used to be in the city of Rome with her husband the emperor, she would go every morning to pray and have a mass said to the Virgin Mary at a holy place called Santa Maria della Retonda inside the city.¹⁰ So it was that the empress had an intercessor in Saint Mary.

And when she had spent three days on that island weeping, Saint Mary came to console her and said, "Have no fear, for I am the mother of Jesus Christ, in whom you have great faith. But tomorrow you will leave here and be off to the mainland, and sailors will pass by here, and when you shout out, they will come immediately and carry you away. And I order you to collect many of these herbs you now rest your head on at night and take them with you, and you will set off to a land where there are many with the leprosy of St. Lazarus,¹¹ and you will tell those who wish to be healed of their illness that they confess and give them this herb to drink and they will be healed immediately."

¹⁰ The Pantheon in Rome has been informally called Santa Maria della Rotonda since the seventh century.

¹¹ Leprosy has long been called the disease of St. Lazarus, after the leprous beggar Lazarus whom Jesus contrasts with the rich man in Luke: 19-31, who is not a saint. The illness became mistakenly attributed to St. Lazarus, brother of Mary and Martha whom Jesus raised from the dead, who did not have the disease.

And the next morning she saw sailors who were out fishing arrive and she called out loudly to them and begged them to take her away from there. And she told them she had been travelling by boat, that the boat had perished, and her fortune having delivered her to that island, and there God and the Virgin Mary, whom she served for some time, had sustained her. And they immediately took her away with them and delivered her to a land where there were many lepers. And she, donning pilgrim 's garb, ordered that a crier pass through all the land and that all those suffering the illness of Saint Lazarus should come to her, and with God 's mercy she would cure them. And many came to her who suffered from that sickness. And she ordered them to confess and do penance for their sins and gave them that herb to drink, and by God 's mercy they were cured. And thus she spent seventeen years in that land.

And at the end of this time the count 's brother had bad leprosy and the fame of the pilgrim who healed resounded through the land. And the count heard how she healed many of that illness and many others. And he sent a messenger to that pilgrim, begging her to consent to come to his land where he dwelled, and, should she heal his brother of that leprosy, said he would give her whatever she asked for. And she went there and as soon as the count saw her, he said to her, "Lady pilgrim, I heard it said that you heal lepers."

And she said yes she did heal.

And the count said, "Then I beg you to heal my brother who is suffering greatly and is a leper, and I shall give you whatever you ask for. And she replied that she would do so with good will. And when the count 's brother arrived, she said to him, "Friend, do you want to be healthy and clean of your illness?"

And he said he did.

And she said to him, "Then will you do whatever I tell you? And rest assured that should you do so, you will be healed immediately. Friend, take another path and abandon the one you are on and confess all your sins immediately with most great contrition to a priest and to your brother the lord count and to his wife and to me and to twelve good men, and I shall give you a very fine health-giving herb to drink, and you will be healed immediately, without a doubt."

And he said, "Oh miserable me! How will I confess such a great betrayal and falsity as I committed and did against the count my brother and only lord and the things he loved most?" And he had to go to his brother with great shame and said to him, "Brother, I beg you for the sake of the Passion of my lord Jesus Christ that you be willing to forgive me, for I committed the greatest betrayal and falsity and enmity against you that ever a man in the world committed against another. And know, brother, in truth that I killed your son that the lady was raising for you whom you had killed by throwing her onto an island in the sea, because when she was in your house I cared greatly for her and demanded her love. And because she refused to do a thing for me, I felt great spite against her, and when she was sleeping with the child in her arms I beheaded your son my nephew and put the knife in the lady 's hand as you saw, and for my evil made that lady and your son die."

And the count and countess, when they heard this, were much astounded at such a confession and greatly grieved and wept much over it. And in her lament the countess said that what grieved her most, more than her son, was that the lady had been killed. And the count and countess said they willingly forgave him for the love of Jesus Christ,

that God might forgive them. And through all this, the good lady never revealed herself. And she took out the herb she was carrying and gave him to drink of it. And on the spot he was cleansed of the illness. And as soon as she saw him cured, the good lady said, "I am that woman against whom you bore false witness. But now beg that the count and his wife forgive you once more and that they never bring up this business in public or anywhere else, and I forgive you here as if you were standing before God so that God might choose to forgive me."

And the count and his wife, when they found this out, were astonished and greatly pleased and said, "Lady, we wish to give you half our county for as long as you live." And she said she did not want it, and thought in her heart how God had drawn her, who used to be an empress, to a low estate indeed.

And while she was in that place, the other brother, of her husband the emperor, was very deformed and very leprous, more than all others, and gave off a great stench. And the emperor, knowing that this good lady's reputation was to cure many, sent for her to heal that brother of his. And she did not delay and went there. And the emperor asked her if she could heal that brother of his and she responded yes, provided he did what she ordered him to do.

And the emperor said, "If you do that, I will give you everything you should ask for by mouth." She said she would do it willingly in the service of God and to please him and his brother. And she ordered he be brought before her. And the stench coming from him was so great that no man in the world would stand before him, so great was the poison.

And she said to him, "Friend, do you want to be cured of that illness?"

And he replied he did.

And she said, "Then do whatever I order you to, and say it without shame and with great contrition of heart and true confession and you will immediately have your health within sight with an herb I will give you to drink. Confess out loud all the sins you committed before twelve of the most important knights of this city and before our Lord the Pope and before your brother the emperor and before me, and I will immediately give you my herb to drink. And right away you will be healed of all of your infirmity and even that of your soul."

And he started to make his confession badly and falsely and did not say his greatest sins out of fear and shame before the emperor and the Pope and the others present. And the good Lady saw he was taking the wrong path. She told the emperor that if that brother of his failed to say the truth clearly he would never heal. And the emperor said, "Brother, tell the truth in your confession and you will be healed. If not, you will never be healed, unto the death of your body and soul."

And he said, "Oh miserable me! And how will I confess such great betrayal and falsity as I committed and did against you?" And he said, tears streaming from his eyes, "Brother my lord, I beg you in the name of God that you be willing to forgive such great betrayal and falsity and lying as I committed against you and against my lady the empress, because I had her killed because of what I said she said to me, that we commit evil against you and revolt with your kingdom. And that when you returned, that we would not receive you therein as lord. And I tell you, lord my brother, that it was because I insisted greatly that she had me arrested and thrown in jail. But know for certain that I demanded love of her and told her we should take over the kingdom of your empire and

when you arrived, that we not receive you into the city. And I beg forgiveness of you, brother, for such great betrayal and falsity as I have committed against you, that God might forgive you."

And the emperor forgave him immediately for the love of Jesus Christ. And she gave him the herb to drink and he was immediately cured.

And she said to the emperor, "Lord, know that I am that wife of yours, the empress."

And he was astonished and delighted with her, and when he wanted to take her to the palace she said she did not want to go there, but rather begged the Pope and all the company there that they be pleased to give her the habit, for she wanted to join a religious order to serve the greater Lord. And the Pope ordered it be given her, who is now a saint in the court of the heavens with God 's holy elect.