a number, though ever so resolute, both take the field and garrison the forts against such a multitude as that of the enemy?) (Cervantes 2008, 349)

There is no better contrastive opposition. The tale tells of seven thousand men slaughtered as they sought the security of place, of the inside, as they were faced with a dreaded danger outside. Although the captive is liberated, the Spanish soldiers are slaughtered. The story is then created with a double focus, with an elliptical shape, and, as we recall from the discussion in the introductory chapter, this geometrical figure, symbol of the baroque, has two centres, one that stands out and one that is shaded. The brief defeat of the Spanish is followed by the lengthy and delightful tale of the captive’s liberation. It is as if the second, lengthier part, with its many windows, seeks to dispel the claustrophobia of the slaughter inside. Two poems follow the fall of La Goleta. Stephen Rupp explains: “The terms ‘wall’ and ‘sword’ (in Spanish ‘hierro’ iron) describe by metonymy the circumstances of the assault, standing respectively for the defensive works at the fort of La Goleta and the weapons of the Ottoman invaders. These lines evoke the difficult situation of soldiers trapped between their own fortification and the enemy’s weapons, but they achieve this effect through a technique of displacement, attributing violence to instruments of assault and defense rather than to human agency” (2014, 131).

Through metonymy the work once again attempts to diffuse the horrors of claustrophobia, of an enclosed place. But neither windows nor rhetorical devices can fully erase the shadowing of the story and of Spanish imperial history. If anything illumines the space of dread, it is the vision of the human body as an architecture that is in itself a prison. The first quartet of the first sonnet reads: “Almas dichosas que del mortal velo / libres y esentes por el bien que obrastes, / desta la baja tierra os levantastes / a lo más alto y lo mejor del cielo.” (Oh happy souls, by death at length set free / From the dark prison of mortality, / By glorious deeds, whose memory never dies / From earth’s dim spot exalted to the skies!; Cervantes 1978, 1.40.483; 2008, 351) To the pessimism of a moment in history, of prisons and claustrophobic fortresses, Cervantes adds two elements of hope: the life beyond the body’s impermanent architecture, and the windows as a way to look at other cultures.

**Facing Windows**

We will leave out a rather singular architecture that is described in the “Captive’s Tale,” and we will stay closer to home, turning to a tale that also takes us on an epic journey to a faraway land where the
gods demand a sacrifice. At the inn, listening to the sweet songs of a muleteer, Dorotea, who is lying awake next to Clara, wakes her up. Clara confesses that the songs are addressed to her and then goes on to tell the story, which we might call the tale of facing windows. Clara, before departing with her father, Juan Pérez de Viedma, a judge who was to take an important post in America, lived with him at the court in Madrid. Of the house we know very little except for the detailed description of some windows: “y aunque mi padre tenía las ventanas de su casa los lienzos en el invierno y celosías en el verano, yo no sé lo que fue ni lo que no, que este caballero, que andaba al estudio, me vio ni sé si en la iglesia o en otra parte” (And though my father kept his windows with canvas in the winter, and lattices in summer, I know not how it happened, that this young gentleman, who then went to school, saw me; nor can I tell whether it was at church or elsewhere; Cervantes 1978, 1.43.524; 2008, 389). The reader is left to wonder where the young man saw her. Although Clara denies that he could have seen her at home due to her father’s care in keeping the windows closed all year, it is possible that she is an unreliable narrator and is not telling the full truth. The home may represent safety, but it is also confinement. That she may have opened one of them is certainly a possibility, particularly because he lived across the street. Clara goes on to explain: “finalmente, él se enamoró de mí y me dio a entender desde las ventanas de su casa con tantas señas y con tantas lágrimas, que yo hube de creer, y aun querer” (but, in short, he fell in love with me, and gave me to understand his passion from the windows of his house, by so many signs, and so many tears, that I was forced to believe, and even to love him; 1978, 1.43.524; 2008, 389). No other details are narrated regarding the young man’s home. Through the windows in her home she fell in love with him: “cuando estaba mi padre fuera de casa y el suyo también, alzar un poco el lienzo o la celosía y dejarme ver toda” (when his father and mine were both abroad, to liftup the canvas, or lattice window, and gave him a full view of me; 1978, 1.43.524; 2008, 389). If we follow Vitruvius, windows characterize the setting of comic plays, not tragic ones (1960, 150), thus we would expect a happy resolution. Given that through these windows the two see each other, these architectural elements also point to the eyes through which bodies perceive. This doubling of perception, albeit indicating a comic action, will later take on an ominous turn and cast this tale of airy and hopeful young love into something approaching a tale of tragedy.

The separation of the lovers intensifies when Clara’s father takes her on his journey to the New World. But Luis will not stay behind as they
travel from the court to the coast. He follows, disguised as a muleteer. Appearing at the inn, he sings to her of Palinurus:

— Marinero soy de amor  
y en su piélago profundo  
navego sin esperanza  
de llegar a puerto alguno.  
Siguiendo voy a una estrella  
que desde lejos descubro,  
más bella y resplandeciente  
que cuantas vio Palinuro. (Cervantes 1978, 1.43.521).

(‘A Mariner I am of love,  
And in his seas profound,  
Toss’d betwixt doubts and fears, I rove,  
And see no port around.  
‘At distance I behold a star,  
Whose beams my senses draw,  
Brighter and more resplendent far  
Than Palinure e’er saw.’) (Cervantes 2008, 386–7)

The crazed knight transforms inns into castles, Lotario transforms a woman within the house into a fortress, and here Luis describes his pursuit of Clara as that of Aeneas’ helmsman who follows the stars and constellations to stay on course. And yet, Palinurus was cursed by Neptune and was not able continue his journey, falling asleep, falling from the vessel, and being killed in a foreign land. It seems as if Luis succeeded in reversing one of the elements: in spite of falling asleep in the tale, the Spanish Palinurus actually wakes up his beloved. But the poem is sufficiently hermetic as to hide its prophetic intent, and the inn is a liminal place as travellers go to and fro. Inns bring together space and place, danger and safety. His love, it seems, is not to be. Four servants sent by his father catch up with him there. Although he would die rather than return home, a solution is reached, while Clara travels on. The place promised by the double windows of desire and perception has come to naught. What Luis sees as an epic journey ends with his demise in the sense that he may never see Clara again. Treacherous fortune mocks him in the image of Don Quixote. The knight is tricked by Maritornes (pretending to be his princess) into giving her his hand through a hole or window at the inn. To do so, the knight has to stand on top of Rocinante. Binding his hand, Maritornes leaves him to spend the night in this impossible position. Clara must also leave, and Luis is left with an image of windows as dangerous and deceiving spaces.