

LA TARANTELLA
THE WORLD FAMOUS SPIDER DANCE

(a villanelle)

Courtesan to kings, to the New World came
a smoky “Spanish” beauty. She arrived
as “Lola Montez,” dancer, all aflame.

On the San Francisco stage, her audience thrived
on whirling waltz-mazurkas... on this mad
smoky “Spanish” beauty. She arrived

on Sacramento’s stage (a simple gad-
about). She stomped in a colorful, radiant rig,
to whirling waltz-mazurkas... in this mad

flinging off of spiders-stamping-jig...
But rotten apples, eggs and cabbages flew
about. She stomped in her colorful, radiant rig,

and cursed them – “Silly puppies!” – amid the spew.
They laughed... *how dare they laugh!* As spiders swarmed,
rotten apples, eggs and cabbages flew.

“Take my skirts, for you’re not men!” she stormed.
They laughed... *how dare they laugh!*, as spiders swarmed,
Courtesan to kings, to the New World came
Lola Montez, dancer, all aflame.

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