

## **BERNARDO SARTOLO (1654–1700)**

### ***ADMIRABLE LIFE . . . OF NICOLÁS DE AYLLON (1684)***

#### **I. Of His Birth and Early Education**

Chiclayo is . . . a small pueblo . . . its inhabitants are subject to various calamities and suffer under the tyranny of their caciques. But this place is extremely fortunate to have been the patria [homeland] of the venerable man Nicolás de Dios . . . His parents were Indians; they were not plebeians but were eminent nobles who were chosen to collect the royal tributes . . .

#### **II. Of the Virtue and Example With Which Nicolás Served a Religious [Friar]**

Nicolás was eight years old when he left the house of his parents to be taught and guided by Father Fray Juan de Ayllón, from whom he received his surname, like other Indians who retain the name of the Spaniards whom they serve, in memory of their loyalty and gratitude. . . . Nicolás began to serve his master with the same respect and humility that Saint Paul wanted servants to obey their masters . . . he joyfully performed the lowliest tasks, and he did so with great precision that it was evident that he saw in his temporal master the King of Heaven and God in the face of his priest. [He did so] without ever demonstrating the slightest sign of that vice, so common in servants, and much more among Indians, of repaying their masters by disappearing, sealing their ultimate infidelity by stealing and fleeing unexpectedly . . . [Nicolás also] began to give examples of his passionate charity for his neighbours, because the ration that corresponded to him, as with other servants, was divided into three parts: the first he destined for the Fathers because he recognized that he was obliged to give to them first; the second he distributed to the poor because of their necessity; and the last he reserved for his own sustenance, attending first to the needs of others and assigning himself to the final place. It was truly an admirable sight to see a child, raised among Indians, and in the rudeness of a small village . . . hand out alms in the arcade of the convent . . .

#### **VII. The Divine Inspiration of His Choice to Enter into Holy Marriage**

[Nicolás prayed to the Virgin to help him find the right wife, and he encountered a noble couple who assisted him in this pursuit]. [T]he two pious nobles went to the Convent of the Incarnation to ask the abbess for Doña Jacinta de Montoya, which was the name of the maiden who was to be the wife of Nicolás . . . But when Jacinta found out that the motive for taking her out of the monastery was to marry her off to an Indian tailor, she became extremely upset, crying bitterly at her misfortune. . . [After significant depression she thought it over and came to a conclusion]. That an Indian is he who is to be my husband does not take away from the fact that he is well born, and much less from the fact that he is affable, polite, self-controlled, and virtuous. I am not marrying a people but one man, and it matters little that this people is not the same as him if he is of strict morals. In him I will have one who will politely attend to me, and perhaps in a Spaniard I would find a tyrant who would not appreciate me. His trade will provide abundantly for the two of us, and it is crazy to aspire to something more superfluous . . . With these placid and prudent thoughts her melancholy subsided . . . [and she accepted Nicolás as her husband].

Translated by Jason Dyck. Taken from Bernardo Sartolo, *Vida admirable y muerte prodigiosa de Nicolás de Ayllón, y con renombre más glorioso Nicolás de Dios, natural de Chiclayo en las Indias del Perú* (Madrid: Juan García Infanzón, 1684), 1–2, 9–10, 13–14, 62–65.