

## **Michael Du Val and Count Gondomar: an Approximation towards the Authorship of *The Spanish-English Rose Or The English-Spanish Pomgranet* (c.1623)**

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### ABSTRACT

In this paper I endeavour to establish a link between “Michael Du Val”, the author of *The Spanish-English Rose Or The English-Spanish Pomgranet* (c.1623), of whom nothing else is known, and Don Diego Sarmiento de Acuña, Count of Gondomar, most renowned for his excellent diplomatic role as Spanish ambassador during James I’s reign. The hypothesis presented centres around the suspicion that Gondomar was not merely the addressee of the dedication of this pro-Spanish propagandistic work which sings the praises of the proposed marriage between the Infanta María and Prince Charles, but also an active contributor to the elaboration of its contents.

There is still a big gap in our knowledge about Don Diego Sarmiento de Acuña, Count of Gondomar, especially during his second embassy to England from 1620 to 1622 and after. What is most surprising is that Carmen Manso Porto (1996:91-96) mentions that there have been three known instances of literary works that have been dedicated to this Spanish diplomat. What does not seem to be known is that there is a *fourth* work which contains an extremely flattering dedication written to Don Diego Sarmiento de Acuña. This work is *The Spanish-English Rose Or The English-Spanish Pomgranet* (c.1623).<sup>1</sup> It is here that one’s curiosity begins to run riot.

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<sup>1</sup> The dating of this work can be ascertained by looking at the dedication it includes at the beginning to Don Diego Sarmiento de Acuña, Count Gondomar. Within this dedication is included a list of the titles he possessed. One of these titles, Member of the Spanish Council of State, had been conferred on the diplomat in April 1623, during the Prince’s visit to Madrid, in recognition of the fact that he had apparently been behind the planning of the Prince’s journey to Spain (See Redworth, 2003:51-60, 82 and 159, n. 47). Francisco de Jesús (1968:45) comments that Du

The English and the Latin versions of *The Spanish-English Rose* which I have consulted differ slightly in the following aspects: The Latin version contains the main text and the dedication at the beginning to Don Diego Sarmiento de Acuña, Count of Gondomar. It is signed with the none too Latin sounding name “Michael Du Val”. The English version contains the same, but before the dedication to Gondomar there is also a dedication to the King of England, James I, and some Spanish and Latin verses with their English translation. The dedication to James I is signed with the none too English sounding name “Lvcius Lauinius”. Could this imply that the Latin author was different to the English author? Could the Spanish verses found in the English version mean that a Spaniard was behind the writing of this work? Who was “Michael Du Val”? Unlike Gondomar, there is absolutely no historical information about this man save the fact that his name appears as the author of *The Spanish-English Rose*. The anonymous author of an anti-Spanish pamphlet published in 1624 entitled *Boanerges* implies a connection between Du Val and Gondomar, as he places his criticism of Du Val’s work immediately after his diatribe on Gondomar. This author states that Du Val’s work had a “fantasticall title” and that its author was “as fantasticall a man” (1624:29). This pamphleteer obviously thought that Du Val was a pseudonym, but for who?

Perhaps the key is to be found in Du Val’s dedication to Gondomar. Du Val obviously knew him and admired him. Furthermore, if we study information offered by Carmen Manso Porto (1996) about the works that

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Val’s work was published in London at the end of 1622. From the detail above showing that it had to have been published in 1623 at the earliest, one can only take this date as a mistake and conclude that *A Spanish-English Rose* must have appeared towards the end of 1623. Yet, another instance where this pamphlet is mentioned, in the anonymous *Boanerges* (1624:29-30), the author implies that the publication of *The Spanish-English Rose* preceded the trip to Spain. He sets out to criticise its contents and describe the controversy that aroused as a result, and then says: “Then followed the Princes iorney into Spain” (30). Nichols (1828, IV:917-918) also stated his belief that this work was published before Prince Charles’ Spanish escapade. He quotes a letter written on June 8th 1622 by a certain Mr Meade to Sir Martin Stuteville where he describes Du Val’s work and comments about public opinion on the topic: “They say it is prohibited to be sold openly, and that the King was offended at it. It was translated into English, but they say the printing was stayed” (Nichols, IV:918 and Harleian Manuscript 389). The end of 1622 could be taken, therefore, as a plausible date of the Latin publication, if it were not for the fact that Gondomar was made a member of the Council of State in April 1623. I have consulted both the Latin and the English versions of this pamphlet and, in both, Gondomar’s newest title appears. The only possible explanation could be that there was a 1622 edition to this pamphlet which did not contain this detail, although I have not been able to locate it. For this reason, I choose to believe that the publication date, at least of the copies to which I have had access, was 1623.

were dedicated to Gondomar, some interesting facts begin to emerge. Firstly, we know for example, that Don Diego was sent the copy of a manuscript in 1601 by the Dominican friar Diego de Zamora. Zamora's intention was for Sarmiento de Acuña to revise and correct the text. He did so but took away the epistle dedication to himself saying that it was unnecessary and useless (Manso Porto 1996:91-92). Secondly, there is a letter that proves that Don Diego revised the prologue of another book dedicated to him in 1600 by the Augustine friar and author Luis de Azevedo entitled *Marial. Discursos morales en las fiestas de la Reina del Cielo Nuestra Señora* (Valladolid, 1600). Thirdly, in 1619, Toby Mathew, an English courtier and friend of Gondomar, sent the Spanish ambassador the manuscript of a translation written by Mathew of a book by Sir Francis Bacon.<sup>2</sup> In this translated version of what he calls "El Librillo del señor Chanciller" (94),<sup>3</sup> Mathew adds a dedication to Gondomar. He tells Gondomar in a letter to add or take away anything he pleases but begs him not to ask the author to dedicate it to anyone else (94). According to Loomie (1968:10), this book never saw the light<sup>4</sup> and nothing is known of its contents or of the dedication included.<sup>5</sup> Does Du Val's dedication to Gondomar constitute a fourth dedication or is it the same one that Mathew wrote? This is impossible to prove in this paper. We merely have to study what particular links existed between Gondomar and other writers and Du Val in particular. Manso Porto (1996:96) summarises what the evidence shows, that Gondomar's relationship with writers was based on his erudition and the fact that he revised, corrected and brushed up original works.

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<sup>2</sup> Mathew had already translated Bacon's *Essays* and *De Sapientia Veterum* into Italian.

<sup>3</sup> This letter is reproduced in Manso Porto (1996:266).

<sup>4</sup> Or perhaps it did see the light but not under Bacon's or Mathew's real names but pseudonyms. The fact that Mathew's letter to Gondomar was written in 1619 somewhat detracts from the idea that this "librillo" could be the Du Val book. Then there is also the point that the dedication that Mathew had written for the translation of the "librillo" was for the translation, not the original work and in *The Spanish-English Rose* it appears in the Latin and the English version. Furthermore, although Mathew was extremely pro-Spanish, an admirer of Spain and her people and a convert to the Roman Catholic Church himself, Bacon, as far as I know, although friendly with Gondomar, was not quite of the same disposition as Mathew. We must add that Manso Porto (1996:94) and Loomie (1968:10) assume that the translation that Mathew had written was in Spanish, although the actual letter does not reveal that this was so.

<sup>5</sup> There is also nothing known about a dedication that Gondomar's confessor of his youth, friar Lorenzo de Vera, was to address to Gondomar in five books of his in 1618. All that is known is that Vera wished to dedicate these five works to Gondomar to perpetuate the latter's name and lineage (Manso Porto 1996:94).

We also know that Gondomar did this not only for those writers that dedicated their works to him but also for renowned historians and genealogists who regarded him as an expert in their fields. Fray Hernando Ojea, for example, tells Gondomar that he will not be satisfied with the manuscript of his book *Historia de Galicia*, until Don Diego “con su mucha erudición, los apure y añade” (67). It is also known that Gondomar helped the chronicler Gil González Dávila to write a chapter in Dávila’s *Teatro de las grandezas de la Villa de Madrid* (1623).<sup>6</sup> Fray Prudencio de Sandoval, royal chronicler and bishop of Tuy and Pamplona, also sent Don Diego works in manuscript for him to revise and correct, especially when it came to fragments about genealogy (67). It was not only Prudencio de Sandoval who asked Gondomar to revise questions of genealogy. Other famous genealogists of the time, Salazar de Mendoza and Alonso López de Haro, also sent their manuscripts to Gondomar to revise and correct.

Subsequently, it appears safe to assume that Gondomar knew of the existence of *The Spanish-English Rose* and might even have revised and added parts himself. After all, if he did this for all his other writer friends, why not for Du Val? Indeed, I have found several instances and examples of the contents of Du Val’s work that strongly remind one of the Spanish diplomat. I will now put forward all the reasons that I believe reflect opinions and in some cases, actual words from Gondomar’s own mouth or pen.

*The Spanish-English Rose* is essentially a pro-Spanish propagandistic work which, although originally published in Latin, was mainly directed towards the English public. It presents all different aspects of the Spanish Match negotiations involving the proposed marriage between Prince Charles, later to become Charles I of England, and the Infanta María, Philip IV’s sister.

The very title of the work brings to mind the Spanish ambassador. Du Val in his dedication to Gondomar calls the latter “an ENGLISH-SPANIARD” and “a SPANISH-ENGLISHMAN”. This epithet to Sarmiento de Acuña became well-known. Even Gondomar himself referred to himself as a Spaniard who “was an Englishman at heart” (Redworth 2003:83) and the anti-Spanish pamphleteer John Reynolds indirectly implies the Count when he accuses James I of being blinded in his judgement by “*Spanish Englishmen, and English Spanyards*” (Reynolds, *Votivae Angliae*, 1624:C.ii). It is true, however, that this form of naming Gondomar may

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<sup>6</sup> The evidence is to be found in a letter that the chronicler wrote to Gondomar in 1620 and which is reproduced in Manso Porto (1996:248-249).

have arisen after Du Val's work was published and merely indicates how widely-spread it was and how familiar people were with its contents.

The next element to strike me as sounding extremely like Gondomar himself is an expression quoted by Du Val after listing the advantages of the two countries uniting. He states that it is from England that the following Spanish proverb is derived:

Pax cum Anglia, & reliquo Mars Belliger Orbe:  
Peace with England vs betide,  
And Warre with all the World beside  
(c.1623:34).

Anyone who knows anything about Gondomar recognises this as one of the Spanish ambassador's favourite axioms, and which in Spanish was "guerra con toda la tierra y paz con Inglaterra". In 1613 Gondomar had written this maxim in a letter to his servant Pedro García Dovalle (Tobío 1974:246), and in 1619 he wrote it once more in a letter to the Secretary of the Spanish Council of State, Juan de Ciriça (Loomie 1978:xvii and xviii). Tobío (1974:300) assures us that Gondomar repeated this saying several times in his correspondence.

The actual subject of Du Val's work, the Spanish marriage, is also an element to link the author and Gondomar. Gondomar's principal mission in England had been to inform King James I of the advantages that the Match would bring England and in so doing, try to get the English King to grant liberty of conscience for the Roman Catholics in England. Philip III had instructed Gondomar to do this "con blandura y maña" (Rodríguez-Moñino Soriano 1976:59). Was Du Val helping Gondomar, or vice versa? What is true is that, for both men, the foreseeable advantages of the marriage were the same and Du Val lists them as royal blood; power; prestige; money; safety and trade (c.1623:21-29). These were all arguments that Gondomar had used himself with the Stuart king.

However, Du Val's attitude towards the aspect of religion in the Match is also similar to that held by Gondomar. True it was that the latter did his utmost in England to improve the situation of the Catholics and reduce the enforcement of the recusant laws, but he was not blind. Gondomar knew that only so much could be achieved. When he began his first embassy in London he wrote back to Spain saying that he thought the conversion of the Prince of Wales to the Roman Catholic religion would be possible. But he displayed much open-mindedness as far as this was concerned and more or

less implied that theory was one thing but reality another when he wrote that

en esta materia [*i.e.*, the Prince's conversion] no puede votar bien el teólogo que lee en su celda y en las escuelas en medio de España la doctrina de los santos sin ver ni considerar lo que pasa en el mundo. (Tobío 1987:38)

Gondomar was above all a realist and, according to Tobío (1974:290-291), he knew how to judge each moment and circumstance for what they were. Hence, on reading Du Val's work, when we come across the idea that the Infanta would be more likely to convert to the Prince's religion rather than vice versa (Du Val c.1623:73-74), one could suppose that Du Val was of the same mind. In his *El hecho de los Tratados* (1968:45-46) Francisco de Jesús affirms that this line written by Du Val caused quite a stir in Spain at the time. Yet, one must remember, that more than for the Spanish public, Du Val's work was aimed at an English audience. Du Val, very cunningly, or very realistically, wrote the most important thing that the English Protestants would like to hear: that their Prince's religion, and consequently their own, would not be at stake if he were to marry the Infanta. Gondomar may or may not have agreed to including this point in Du Val's work, but satisfaction was also afforded the Spaniards in that Du Val reminds the English public that if Spain and England had been enemies before, the Spanish Armada had only been sent to attack England because the Spaniards had previously been "prouoked by Grievous and Intolerable Iniuries" (54) such as robberies, piracies and their helping of the Dutch rebels to Spain's detriment. Gondomar and all his fellow countrymen must have welcomed this commentary. Not so the English.

Gondomar was one of the few Spaniards in favour of the Spanish Match and, as such, did his utmost to promote it. In a letter to Philip III in April 1614 Gondomar stated that the circumstances in England were such at that moment that things now seemed favourable for the Spanish Match negotiations to go ahead (Rodríguez-Moñino Soriano 1976:47). He describes this as a heaven sent miracle. The word "miracle" was one that few people have used to describe anything to do with this marriage alliance. Indeed, I have only found two instances where it is used. The first is the one I have just mentioned. The second is to be found in *The Spanish-English Rose*, where Du Val states that considering all the advantages the marriage could bring England, the loveliness of the Infanta María, the fact that she came from a wonderful family and a wonderful country full of wonderful

Spaniards, it would be “A Miracle” (c.1623:35) if the marriage did not go ahead. An interesting coincidence.

If one pays attention to the books quoted by Du Val and also the actual historical details he gives to back up his conviction that the Spanish Match was the best thing that could ever happen to England, it is possible to see a striking similarity to the books that formed part of Gondomar’s library and those used by Du Val. Furthermore, these two figures appear to share the same interests: politics, history and genealogy. Practically all the books or authors quoted by Du Val are to be found in the inventory made of Gondomar’s library in Valladolid in 1623.

There are other writers that are mentioned too that I have not been able to locate in Gondomar’s inventory of his library in Valladolid.<sup>7</sup> However, we must remember that the inventory of his books is incomplete and it contains a page where it states explicitly that to the ones included must be added those that he had in Madrid and in the town of Gondomar (Manso Porto 1996:419). *The Spanish-English Rose*, for example, is not to be found in this inventory, but I do not doubt for a minute that Count Gondomar possessed a copy. We could also concede that Du Val had his own library at his disposal, or that Gondomar lent him his books as was the custom among noblemen who had extensive libraries. However, Manso Porto tells us that from the beginning of his first embassy in England in 1613 Gondomar did not lend his books to hardly anyone and disallowed anyone access to his library (109 and 112). It is also feasible to think, however, that if Du Val was a member of the English court, he too could have owned his own extensive library.

Yet, there is another book that Gondomar possessed (562) which was written by Carlos García: *La oposición y conjunción de los dos grandes luminares de la Tierra* (Paris, 1617). Du Val does not name it but the style and content of *The Spanish-English Rose* suggest that he knew of its existence and was most probably influenced by García as he wrote this book. García’s work was first published in 1617 and it appears that it was written to commemorate the double marriage between France and Spain. García talks of Spain and France being the sun and the moon and he reasons to the reader how these two nations compliment each other. Towards the end of *The Spanish-English Rose* Du Val calls Prince Charles and the Infanta María “GLORIOUS PRINCES, SACRED TWINS of *Heauen, Orient SVNNES*

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<sup>7</sup> The poems that appear before Du Val’s dedication to Gondomar are signed with initials that I have not been able to decipher: D.D.F.I., I.B.D. Nobilis Flor, CL.D.D.T. and M.D.V.N.G.

OF THE *World*, LIGHTS of the *Earth*” (89). Surely these words echo those of Carlos García? Du Val calls the Infanta María “the North” and Prince Charles is described as “The SVNNE at his Meridians Fullest line” (c2v) and implies that their union in marriage will be a “GLORIOVS Dawning” (c2v). Du Val later calls the couple “Orient SVNNES of the World” (89). Interestingly, Du Val says that this “GLORIOVS Dawning” could “Dim both SVNNE and MOONE with GREATER Light” (c2v). Considering that Carlos García had described Spain and France as the Sun and the Moon, could Du Val be making a disguised reference to the French and Spanish marriages of 1615? Is he implying that the Spanish Match will be more splendid than these? What we *do* know is that Gondomar was in possession of García’s work and Du Val seemed to be familiar with it too.

There are indications of Du Val’s extremely Spanish favouritism or inclination. He refers to a triple alliance being produced through the marriage of the Infanta María and Prince Charles and implies that thus England, Spain and France will be united and “from this Inuincible and Sacred TRINITY will arise Most Blessed vnity in Earth” (14). This triple union that Du Val mentions is an image created no doubt for the pleasure of a Spaniard who could delight in the idea that his monarchy was so well placed. The future queen of England, the Infanta María, Philip IV of Spain and Queen Ana of France were all of the same Spanish royal House of Austria. This inclination towards Spain is continued in more ideas. No Spaniard could have hidden his delight at the words expressed by Du Val that there was no other princess equal in beauty and in virtues to the Prince of Wales who could belong to his church. She had to be a Roman Catholic and Spanish.

And Du Val’s favouritism towards the Spaniards continues as he adds the thought that the invasion of the Spanish Armada had been provoked by the English due to their acts of piracy against Spain and due to their helping the Dutch rebels. This must have brought on an immense smile on any Spaniard’s face. The fact that the Palatinate problem is not mentioned by Du Val is also a sign of his inclination to favour Spain. Maybe this is not surprising, as, like Gondomar, Du Val must have known that the Spanish Match and the Palatinate problem were two separate issues and that the marriage was not going to make the Spaniards support the Protestant cause in Germany.

The exaltation of the figure of the Infanta María, the House of Austria, Spanish queens, Spain, Spaniards in general and of Gondomar himself were also meant for the Spaniards to feel proud. Indeed, literature written about the Match in England at the time was slanderous towards the Match, the



Spaniards and Gondomar in particular. The general trend at the time was to propagate what has come to be called the Black Legend of Spain; therefore, Du Val's work is quite unique. His is the only work in English I know that counterattacks the so called Black Legend of Spain.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, he says absolutely nothing bad about the Spaniards. Could Du Val have lived in Spain? Was he a Spaniard, an English Roman Catholic, or merely a royalist who wished to promote the King of England's policy for the Spanish marriage alliance? Did he know the Spanish royal family personally? Or did he rely on Gondomar's knowledge to help him write a description of the Infanta herself? This may have been the case. In the pamphlet *Boanerges* (1624), mentioned previously, its anonymous author tells the reader that Gondomar had "pencelled out the excellencies of the Infanta Maria" (1623:29). Does this pamphleteer wish the reader take these words literally or metaphorically? After all, they could be interpreted as meaning that the Spanish ambassador had done his job by putting across to the English court all the advantages that the Spanish Match would bring. But then again, this anti-Spanish writer could also be voicing a suspicion that Gondomar had really written something about the Infanta. Once more, we have to remember that the author of *Boanerges* places his diatribe of Gondomar just before another about Du Val (29-30). Could he be implying that Gondomar was behind the writing of Du Val's praise towards the Infanta María? The mind boggles.

This mystery could be taken a step further if we look at what is said about Gondomar in the first pamphlet that was written about Prince Charles's journey into Spain in 1623 to woo the Infanta María, *A Trve Relation And Iovrnall* [...] (1623). The author, John Digby, who was granted the title of Lord Bristol in 1622 and who was the English ambassador in Madrid at the time, states that the arrival of the Prince of Wales at the Spanish court induced the King of Spain, Philip IV, to make Gondomar a member of his Council of State.<sup>9</sup> He adds that Gondomar had done the Spanish king good service

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<sup>8</sup> A Latin work, by the equally mysterious Scipio Mirandvla, entitled *Cynthia Coronata Sev Serenissima Maria Avstriaca Inclitissimo Principe Carolo Sole Svo Avricomo Cincta: Avgustissimo Gemino Vtrivsqve Genio Sacra. Qvam Nmmini Maiestatique Ipsorvm Devotissimvs Ex Voto, Debito, Et Obseqvio Hvmillime Meritissimoqve, Dat Dicat Consecrat* (n.d), is another example of a distinctly pro-Spanish Match propagandistic work. Edmund Garrard's *The Covntrie Gentleman Moderator* (1624) blatantly plagiarises Du Val's work in its opening pages.

<sup>9</sup> Although published anonymously, I have come to the conclusion that John Digby, Lord Bristol, must have been the author of this work after checking an excerpt from his diary which is published in Martin Hume's *The Court of Philip IV* (1907:97-99) and finding that it coincides with the sequel to this pamphlet *A Continuation Of a former Relation* [...] (1623:14-118). Both these

*in printing* [my italics] such a Character of his [Philip IV's] sincere affection, in the heart of the King of Great Brittain, and of his Highnesse; as that they should thinke fit to put such a precious treasure into his hands, as his Highnesse was. (1623:11)

Was Bristol being metaphorical about printing a character description on the King of Great Britain's heart, or did he know something that we do not? Who knows? What is equally as interesting is that this pamphlet and its sequel *A Continuation Of a former Relation* [...] (1623) were both published by the printer John Havilland in London. This is not at all interesting really until we discover that despite the fact that *The Spanish-English Rose* does not have any place of publication printed on it, as far as I have been able to ascertain, Palau's *Manual del librero hispano-americano* (1990, III:97) and *The Short Title Catalogue* (1950:164) state that Du Val's work was published by the same publisher in London. If we look at all three texts we perceive that the style of printing is similar.<sup>10</sup> The first two pamphlets mentioned have the words "published by authority" on some copies of the title page. Could this mean that the publication of Bristol's works was aided by the English crown? Could this mean that Du Val's work was also supported by the English monarch?<sup>11</sup> Could *The Spanish-English Rose* be a joint effort between the English and Spanish embassies of England and Spain? We must also note here that Du Val's work also praises Bristol (c.1623:50-51), Gondomar's friend and diplomatic counterpart. The mystery deepens.

Could Du Val's name be "fantasticall" as the anonymous author of the pamphlet *Boanerges* stated? If it is a pseudonym, could its form have been influenced by the name of Gondomar's birthplace? Don Diego Sarmiento de Acuña was born in the south of Galicia in the Valle Miñor, which in Galician is "Val Miñor". Could there be some connection? His servant, Pedro Dovalle, another Galician, had a similar name too. Is this another clue as to Du Val's identity or mere coincidence?

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works are written with a similar style, wording and structure. Hume states that the manuscript of Bristol's diary is to be found in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh.

<sup>10</sup> I would like to express my gratitude to Dr Keith Whitlock for discussing with me the probable publisher of Du Val's work.

<sup>11</sup> The reasoning Francisco de Jesús gives about this pamphlet makes one believe that it was at least a semi-official English piece of propaganda. Gardiner (1968:187) translates his words thus: "It was altogether unreasonable for anyone to suppose that, even if this book could have been published without the knowledge of the King of Great Britain, it could have been spread abroad so publicly as it was, both at home and abroad, without his being aware of it. He adds that considering "the particular attention which he [James I] always paid to things of this kind, [...] it would be an insult to suppose that he would do anything without a special object" (187).

The questions which this paper contains are numerous and the answers scarce. Thomas Cogswell (1989) has been the only other person I know who has recently studied *The Spanish-English Rose*. Yet, he has studied it from the perspective of the message that Du Val wished to convey. The identity of Du Val still remains a mystery. But I insist that the key to his identity lies in his relationship with the Count of Gondomar, which as I have endeavoured to prove, must have been close. We will see if future biographies on Don Diego Sarmiento de Acuña can shed any light on Du Val's secret.

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