

Blind Hunger by Margarita Reiz

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Scene I

Two children of nine and ten years of age cross the empty stage with their bicycles, laughing. They are seen at intervals of light.

Their laughter can be heard above a cocktail of sounds.

Sounds that belong to a huge city, collapsed, absurd, mad:

manifestations, discourses, news, conversations, sirens, horns,

harangues of poor people...The sound grows in tone for a few

moments. At their zenith they stop completely. The laughter of

children is no longer heard, as they are lost in the darkness.

Scene II

Explosion of bombs. Bursts of a submachine gun.

Scene III

Afternoon of a day of war. It is winter. The sun sets, darkening the

sky with blood. Wind can be heard. Shots and explosions. A

pathway. Desolate landscape. In the background a city in ruins. In

a trench a gambling den built with plastic and canvas is camouflaged. A sixteen year old girl, EVA, comes and goes. Dressed in an ill-fitting school uniform and white stockings, wearing no shoes. She carries a book bag on her back and two ripped flags: one gray, the other green. EVA walks, and sings a sad lullaby. She is

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afraid, hungry, and cold. From time to time she becomes frightened and a smile breaks across her face from one side to the other. She adopts an innocent posture, trembling, and arranges the disheveled locks of her hair. She lifts up one flag then another. She hesitates. Afterwards, after checking that nothing is wrong, the tension diminishes and she remains like a broken doll, with the smile frozen on her lips. She throws the flags on the ground and tramples on them with anger.

EVA: I'll have to find another place to live if I don't want to die from hunger.

She gathers some roots. From her book bag she takes out a greenish crust of bread. She breaks it into two parts and keeps one of them in the pocket of her uniform. With incredible delicacy she eats it as if it were from the tastiest morsel. She dries a tear with the dignity of a queen.

At the end of the road appears a boy with a military uniform in tatters. He is seventeen years old. He limps. He drags a broken-down bicycle. A large military bag hangs from his shoulder, along with his sleeping bag. He has an army knife, pistol, ladle, and water bottle on his waist. A blanket and some pieces of junk make his pitiful entrance almost comical.

Upon seeing him, EVA changes her majestic attitude, smiles, poses innocently and selects the flag whose color coincides with the soldier's uniform. She hides.

The SOLDIER tries to fit some things on his bicycle. He marches clumsily towards where EVA is. She comes out very stealthily, showing

her flag. He, surprised, shocked, loses his balance and tumbles onto the ground with all of his things. He quickly takes out his pistol.

SOLDIER: Don't move or I'll kill you!

Eva remains paralyzed with the flag ready.

EVA: No, please!

The boy drags himself on the ground toward her, without ceasing to aim the weapon at her head. He collects around him his things that are scattered on the ground.

SOLDIER: Don't move! Don't you dare even move a muscle!

EVA: Please don't hurt me.

SOLDADO: The slightest movement and I'll blow your head off.

Right now one more dead body won't turn my stomach.

A slight tremble in the SOLDIER's voice betrays him. EVA's knees wobble while she waves her little flag and modestly stretches out her small uniform.

EVA: I'm harmless.

SOLDADO: I'm not going to hurt you.

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The young man drops his arm with the weapon alongside his body.

The girl grabs her book bag carefully and tries to leave. The

SOLDIER again aims at her head with the pistol.

SOLDADO: I told you not to move! Drop that book bag right now!

EVA screams and drops the bag. He clears his throat and tries to speak with authority.

SOLDADO: I am a soldier and we're at war, anyone can be the enemy, even you, despite how you look. Don't think you're going to fool me so easily. Don't move and nothing will happen to you.

EVA: Don't be nervous. Sorry, I only grabbed my bag to show you the stupid things I have inside: photos, mementos. But if you don't like that we can leave it behind, it's alright.

SOLDADO: Don't be a smartass with me. You were trying to leave, and, who knows. . .how do I know that you're not carrying a weapon in that bag? Don't try to fool me, I'm sick of lies, I can't stand them.

EVA waves her flag very carefully and laughs stupidly.

EVA: But don't you see we're on the same team. You look so tired, perhaps you want to rest a bit here, maybe even spend the night.

SOLDADO: You think I'm going to trust you, with that look on your face? You'd probably wait until I was asleep to rob me, or report me. You could even kill me.

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EVA: Okay, well if you don't trust me don't put away your pistol. But you can leave your other items there and rest. That old bicycle, for example, doesn't even ride, and I don't think you'll need it for anything.

SOLDADO: Why do you care what I carry with me, I have my reasons.

EVA: Is it yours?

SOLDADO: Yep.

EVA: I didn't know that soldiers on the front used them.

SOLDADO: Are you trying to make fun of me? Do you maybe think that I'm a moron? I just found it in the rubble of the ruins of a building.

EVA: I was just curious. You're the strangest soldier I've seen up 'til now. Besides, I also like that useless bicycle with its multi-colored horn. Even though I still can't figure out how it goes with you, or your uniform.

SOLDADO: I already told you it's none of your business. And if I seem strange to you it's only because you haven't looked at yourself. Is there a reason why you're disguised as a school-girl?

EVA: I took it from a girl who didn't need it anymore. The dead don't get cold, but I do, and I didn't have anything to put on. It's a little tight and somewhat short, isn't it? Sometimes it helps me get food. Too bad the shoes didn't fit me at all.

SOLDADO: So you're a whore.

EVA: I am not a whore! I have no idea why you have to be so unpleasant. I'm only hungry. Maybe you have food and we can share it...

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SOLDADO: You're funny. I'm just as hungry as you, that's how I feel, although perhaps you want to trick me and you've got something inside there...

Upon saying that the soldier tries to grab her book bag. EVA fiercely throws herself on top of it to defend it, pushing him. Before he can react she hits him with the flagpole and the pistol rolls onto the ground. They aggressively fight with their hands, nails, and teeth. EVA is able to grab a rock and hit him on the head. Next she tries to flee. She becomes caught up in the book bag, his military bag, the blanket. . . The boy, rather dizzy, looks for the pistol on all fours. When he finds it he screams.

SOLDADO: Stoppppppppp!

EVA: *(Stopping sharply)* I'm so sorry I hit you, I'm sorry but...

SOLDADO: Shut up you idiot! Do you want to die?

EVA: (*Silence*)

SOLDADO: You're gonna force me to kill you. Is that what you want?

EVA: I don't have anything. I didn't do anything to you.

SOLDADO: Oh, really? You almost split my head open. Now I want to see what you have in that bag right now.

EVA approaches him and hands over the bag, the rest of the things are left lying on the ground.. The broken-down bicycle is at her side. She absent-mindedly honks the horn. The SOLDIER begins to search through the bag.

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EVA: I don't have anything in there, just mementos, I already told you.

SOLDADO: I want food. Then I'll leave.

EVA: Well then you can leave now, because I don't have any food.

SOLDADO: We'll see. You should never trust anyone.

EVA: You're obsessed.

SOLDADO: Trust in the devil and run like hell!

EVA: What?

SOLDADO: If you put your trust in the big red devil he'll burn your ass like white hot metal!

EVA: Repeat that please! Say it again!

SOLDADO: It's just something stupid I used to say. I don't even know why I just told you now, I had forgotten it.

EVA: Please...

SOLDADO: You're the one who's obsessed, leave me alone!

EVA honks the bicycle horn again, keeping her back to him, and sitting on the floor. She continues her nervous tic of smoothing out the locks of her hair.

EVA: Why are you here? What are you looking for?

SOLDADO: I was looking for my house, for my family...

EVA: Did you used to live in this city?

SOLDADO: Used to.

EVA: Me too.

SOLDADO: That's nice, but I really don't care.

EVA: I had to leave seven years because they transferred my dad. He was a diplomat. The war, for weird reasons, brought me back here about a year ago.

EVA continues touching the bicycle and honks the horn again. The boy keeps rummaging around in her book bag, which is full of strange and useless objects.

SOLDADO: Enough already, it's about time to give up your secret!

EVA: If you're a soldier, why aren't you on the front?

SOLDADO: You being such a chatterbox doesn't mean I have to answer all of your questions.

EVA: Are you a deserter?

SOLDADO: You going through an interrogation is going to end up pissing me off again.

EVA: Why don't you leave the pistol? You won't need it with me.

SOLDADO: And what about these scissors?

EVA: You're the one who has them, not me.

SOLDADO: Yeah, but they were in your bag.

EVA: I would have never used them on you, even less now. I use them as a tool, to dig up roots to eat.

SOLDADO: Well you put that rock to pretty good use.

EVA: I don't like that you're poking around in my things, they're mine! They're the only things I was able to hold onto.

SOLDADO: But there's not even anything useful in here. It's only junk.

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EVA: That stuff is important to me, so stop rumpling it up and give it back to me already.

At that moment the SOLDIER takes out a ripped and quartered envelope in the interior of the bag. He opens it and takes out some old photos that he begins to look at.

SOLDADO: My God, you still have the pictures from when you were a baby! How silly! Life has changed a lot since then, honey, haven't you noticed?

EVA: You're an idiot, you've always been! What are you making fun of? You travel around with mementos on your back just like

me. Or are you gonna tell me that this shitty bicycle is really useful?

EVA honks the horn again.

SOLDADO: Stop it right now! And don't get smart with me because you'll regret it.

EVA: I told you you don't need that pistol, so why don't we stop pretending to be heroes?

SOLDADO: I'll leave it, as long as I can see your hands at all times.

EVA: I don't have any weapons. That's why I'm still alive.

The SOLDIER makes a gesture of indifference and continues looking at the photos that he had taken out of the envelop before.

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SOLDADO: My God, the Oval Tower! It can't be! And this horrible little kid sticking her tongue out, is that you?

EVA: How funny!

SOLDADO: It's great! It seems unbelievable to see what I'm seeing. It's fantastic!

EVA: You're still crazy.

SOLDADO: Just because we lived in the same city doesn't give you the right to talk about with such confidence, as if you knew me or something.

EVA: Of course. You know what? I used to have a bicycle just like yours. I put the exact same horn on it. Well, mine was much prettier! I spent my savings of two weeks on it, but it had to be the prettiest one. A friend of mine installed it for me.

SOLDADO: With that bicycle the only thing I've missed is sleep. There's none better.

EVA: Nonsense!

SOLDADO: Nonsense?

EVA: That's what you're saying. A minute ago you were making fun of me for that. . .

SOLDADO: Dammit! That's the only thing I've found of my house and of my family!

Pause.

EVA: On Toro Street?

SOLDADO: What?

EVA: You used to live on Toro Street, number one, downstairs?

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Pause.

SOLDADO: I used to live there, yes. I don't know how you found out, but don't think I'm going to let you sweet-talk me with that absurd story.

EVA: Why would I bother to trick you if you're not important?

Stop going back to deception, you seem like a broken record!

You're obsessed with that topic!

SOLDADO: No, I'm not important. Nevertheless a moment ago you wanted to rob me, oh, you think you're so smart!

EVA: And you must think yourself very dumb.

SOLDADO: You're going too far and I have little patience left!

EVA: You used to travel on your bike every day around "El Capricho," that's the most beautiful park in the world.

SOLDADO: "El Capricho" is now a huge cementery.

Pause.

SOLDADO: Where do you know me from? And, for however much I look at you, I still don't know who you are.

EVA, amused, imitates children and their voices.

EVA: "-At four in the Plaza Mayor?"

-Yes, Pablo, see you later.

-See you later, Iván."

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Pause. The boy clears his throat in order to speak better.

SOLDADO: Iván was my best friend when I was a kid, but he had to go away because his dad sent him abroad. We wrote to each other for awhile. Then the war came.

She approaches him and looks through the photos in his hands, finding one in particular. She shows it to him and returns to where she was standing. The SOLDIER does not stop looking at her and the photo. He becomes emotional looking at the photo.

EVA: I am Eva, but I was your friend Iván for one marvelous summer. It's been so long that it hurts to remember it. Together, we

rode around "El Capricho" many afternoons, sweating on our bicycles.

SOLDADO: But, you were a boy! There's no way.

EVA: I used to be many things that I no longer am.

SOLDADO: You can't be the same person.

EVA: I am Eva. And you are Pablo. You've changed a lot. But your eyes, although sadder now, are the same as always. And the stupid things you say and do, the same.

PABLO: You're the one who's changed...

EVA: More than what it seems.

Pause. PABLO can't stop looking at EVA, from top to bottom. She smiles, looking pleased and a little flirtatious. He picks up his sleeping bag from the ground and offers it to her.

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PABLO: Take it, you don't have anything to cover yourself up with at night.

EVA takes it and searches in the pocket of her uniform, taking out the piece of moldy bread that she guarded at the beginning, and throwing it to him.

EVA: If you chew really slow with this piece of moldy bread you can trick your belly a little. Tomorrow we'll look for something more, okay?

PABLO: Sure, tomorrow.

PABLO devours the crust of bread, and, fascinated, does not stop looking at the movements of EVA. She smiles at him and collects roots, digging them out with her scissors, in order to give them to him.

EVA: I think you used to like me. Even though what I really wanted to do was to keep playing with you, as a boy, always.

PABLO: That's why, shortly after you left, you didn't want to send me photos...And later, when my parents finally allowed me to spend a few days with you, you said you were sick.... A few days later the air raids began and everything ended...

EVA: I didn't want you to see me, at fourteen it wasn't possible to hide anymore. And as a girl I felt uncomfortable, horrible!

PABLO: You're beautiful!

EVA: Don't say stupid things.

Pause.

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EVA: Why did you become a soldier?

PABLO: The truth is that I don't know. I suppose I thought that everything would have already ended. I enlisted as a volunteer two years after the war started. I was going crazy waiting and seeing so many people die around me.

EVA: What are we going to do now?

PABLO: We can't do anything. Except wait.

EVA: Together?

PABLO: If you want to...

EVA: Yes, I want to.

The night has slowly arrived, filling everything with darkness.

Escena IV

An immense moon floods the scene. Unsettling howls can be heard in the night. EVA and PABLO sleep, holding each other. Her respiration is irregular, she moans and moves about restlessly. In the background a figure wearing a white tunic emerges, running toward them as in slow motion. Upon reaching its maximum height it raises its arms to the sky and collapses, struck down by lightning. It drags itself on the floor until it disappears through the other side. Some girls, dressed in school uniforms and white stockings, arrive, laughing, and, singing a few songs, playing in a circle.

FIRST GIRL: Beneath the blue-blue
 atop the cold earth,
 a green moon.

SECOND GIRL: In her breast of tulle
 the she-wolf suckles pups

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in a sweet cradle.

THIRD GIRL: Light of lost fish
bronze of a dry drum,
fallen children.

FOURTH GIRL: Bread of sleeping eyes,
echo's voice cries out
rigid fields.

FIFTH GIRL: Beneath the blue-blue
atop the cold earth
a green moon.

SIXTH GIRL: In her breast of tulle
the she-wolf suckles pups
in a sweet cradle.

SEVENTH GIRL: Runaway horses
like a flaming sword,
vivid blood.

EIGHT GIRL: Crippled hearts
flame of a blind sun,
furtive flower.

NINTH GIRL: Beneath the blue-blue
atop the cold earth
a green moon.

A thunderclap interrupts the song, the girls flee in opposite directions, covering their ears with their hands. They cry out, forming a dissonant chorus.

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EVA wakes up, startled. She sits up, looking all around. Upon seeing PABLO at her side, she becomes calm. She caresses his forehead. She kisses him on the lips. She strips off his shirt, exposing his chest, and then removes her own shirt; she stretches out at his side, embracing him. He moans in satisfaction. She gets under the blanket. PABLO moans with pleasure. The moon is hidden behind a cloud.

Escena V

The moon again inundates the scene and the unsettling howls are heard. EVA sleeps with her head on PABLO's chest. He, as with a

convulsion, represses his uneasiness as he snoozes. In the background, some men dressed in uniforms drag a body toward the bonfire. They sing together a gloomy string of words as they do so, as if it were a melody.

HOMBRES: Watchdog, war, weapon, worm, warrior, wreath.

Dental, disguise, deity, devil, dragon.

Crow, cutter, cross, cypress.

Rod, ray, rolling.

Slaughter, sarcophagus, sacrifice.

Slaughter, sarcophagus, sacrifice.

Slaughter, sarcophagus, sacrifice.

They leave the man on a rock next to the bonfire. They dance around him and crack their whips on the ground. The man claps and moves as if he were a marionette. A storm ensues that puts out

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the bonfire. Bursts of a submachine gun. A bomb explodes. They disappear. PABLO jumps up in his bed. Seated and sweating, he

looks at EVA, who is sleeping at his side. He is feverish and his wounded leg hurts. He caresses the breasts of the young girl and tries to uncover them. She rejects him without waking up, turns over and continues sleeping. He kisses her hair and lies down, embracing her. Another cloud covers the moon.

Escena VI

Dawn breaks. In the distance along the pathway a man approaches seated on a motorcycle that is dragging a small iron cart filled with newspapers and pamphlets. When he arrives where EVA and PABLO are sleeping he throws them a newspaper and various pamphlets, that fly through the air until they land on the ground.

MESSENGER: Come on! Wake up! The war is over! Come on!

There's a lot to do now. The homeland needs us all. Return to the city, the war is over!

EVA: *(Getting up)* What are you saying...? The war is over? Wait!

MESSENGER: That's what I said.

EVA: Do you have food you can give us? Wait, please!

MESSENGER: I don't know anything more other than what I said.

The orders are to return to the city.

EVA: Why?

MESSENGER: I don't know. I just follow orders. It might be dangerous to stay in isolated places in times of confusion like this. Information is distributed as quickly as possible, but not everybody is

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aware of the events, there's still a lot of misinformed people.

Fighting. There's even people who do so for personal reasons. It's dangerous to stay here! You must return to the city...

EVA: Dangerous? Everything's been dangerous for awhile! Wait, please, we want to understand...

The MESSENGER-CORRESPONDENT goes without answering her.. EVA reads one of the leaflets scattered about on the ground. She grabs one of the newspapers and leafs through it. She looks at PABLO and happily tries to wake him up. She grabs some pamphlets and reads. She is surprised. She begins to hear her own

voice in a whisper, as if trying to understand, or to convince herself, of what it says. PABLO sits up, pale and feverish, but then falls back, dizzy.

EVA: "Friends": Friends? Okay, however they want to say it.

"Friends: the war is over. You may return to your homes and resume your lives without fear."

EVA smiles mockingly.

EVA: Without fear...? Our lives...? *(She laughs)* Return to what homes? *(She keeps laughing)*. We will rebuild this shattered country. This country of ours, this country of us all!" *(She roars with laughter, with a hysterical and uncontrollable laugh).*

Finally she calms down. She pauses for a long while and clears her throat, surprised, in order to keep on reading...

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EVA: "Together we should now allow life to once again run through our streets and lands. No effort will be too great. No healthy arm should remain still. We ask for assistance and for joy

in your hearts for this new and final sacrifice. All will be for the greater good. Courage!"

EVA remains pensive and repeats at random some of the words she read, then goes back to laughing hysterically. As if playing around, she grabs another pamphlet, looks at it, and throws it up in the air, amusing herself in watching where it lands, all the while clapping and jumping around like a silly girl...She does so again. She stops at one and keeps reading.

EVA: "Citizens: the city awaits your labor. Our government has signed an advantageous peace treaty for all. There will be no more air raids. We now ask for your collaboration. After these years of war, we may again breathe easily and we may think about the reconstruction of our cities and villages. We await you!"

Suddenly, EVA becomes very serious and pensive for awhile, without taking her eyes off the pamphlet, as if re-reading it, paying close attention.

EVA: Shit! What does this mean? I don't understand anything. I've dreamt about this moment even while I was awake. I've

desperately wanted this to happen. I've imagined how it would be in meticulous detail. I put up with everything thanks to that morning that I hoped that one day would arrive. And now..., I don't know what they're talking about! I don't know that they're saying, nor what they ask of me. It's not at all clear what they want. What is happening to me...? What's gonna happen now...?

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EVA angrily rips up the pamphlet in tiny little pieces. Then she rips up another meticulously, and then rips up piles of them, each time more upset.

EVA: Who started this and why? Who are my citizens? Who are my friends? I haven't even figured out who the good ones or the bad ones are for me! Why do they call on me now? What do they want? What more do they need from me? I'm nobody! My life isn't worth anything!

EVA attacks the newspapers, as she continues paging through them and tears out and rips up each one with an uncontrollable anger.

EVA: An advantageous peace treaty? What's that supposed to mean? Why aren't they talking about food? It's been 100 years! I am a hundred years older and I'm still hungry! Still hungry!

EVA stamps on the pieces of paper, tramples over the pamphlets amidst screams and guttural sounds. She picks up handfuls of pamphlets and newspapers off the ground and throws them crazily while she tries to speak, with a voice more and more unrecognizable.

EVA: Why do I have to leave here now? This is my only home! How is there going to be danger if peace has returned? Everything began a long time ago, and, suddenly, our lives were shattered like a time bomb, those idiots! I didn't understand either, but it distorted my face.

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EVA suddenly calms down. She picks up her book bag and sits down with it on her lap. She takes out the scissors from inside. She cuts a lock of her hair very short while she continues talking.

EVA: I'm going to get ready to go back. In this papers it says that I have to give the joy in my heart over for this final sacrifice. Well, nothing's happening, so I'll do it. I'll give them all the happiness that I don't have. The happiness that they uprooted from my face and heart, and I'll go back without my soul...I don't know why I've changed so much, after all, the war is over, everything's going to be fixed and will go back to how it always was...Pablo, wake up, we have things to do!

EVA, as if driven mad, keeps cutting lock after lock of her hair, throwing them in the air and smiling as she watches them fall.

EVA: I'm truly happy, of course I am, I have all the reasons in the world to be happy. Even though I always thought that it would be different, that a million marvelous sensations would run through my insides, that I would think about the future, about love, about not being cold anymore, that anxiety would fade away, and that hunger would no longer devour me from the inside, that...It doesn't matter, it will come! Maybe it's just that I'm too surprised, tired,

fed up, terrified...Pablo, I'm getting ready to leave! What are you thinking of doing?

PABLO sits up, shocked. The sudden movement of rising reminds him of the profound pain that his wounded leg causes him. He is lacking in strength and it is

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evident that he is very feverish. EVA keeps cutting locks of her hair. Upon realizing what she is doing, PABLO, clumsily, tries to stop her.

PABLO: Have you gone crazy? What are you doing with your hair?

EVA: I always wore my hair short when I was little. You know that well.

PABLO: Come on, give me those scissors!

EVA: No.

PABLO: Are you delirious? It must be hunger that's making you talk nonsense. Eva, please, let's stop hurting each other, let go of the scissors. You'll have beautiful hair when it's clean!

EVA: I've always had short hair. I never wanted to have it long. Do you get it?

PABLO: I don't get it. Besides, I'm in bad shape, stop it, already, please. I like you more now. Where did you come up with this cutting your hair right now?

EVA: I don't know. It's been awhile now that I don't know what I'm doing, nor why I'm doing it. That's why it doesn't matter now, because everything's over.

PABLO: What are you talking about?

EVA laughs again and plays around with the scissors, trying to provoke PABLO.

EVA: So you like me more now, huh? How lucky you are! It's much better for you because there's no solution.

PABLO: If I had realized how crazy you are I wouldn't have stayed with you. Give me those scissors!

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EVA: Take them from me...

PABLO: I can't, can't you see that I'm sick and I have a fever. . .?

But I'll try to if you want.

EVA: Excuses, nothing but excuses!

PABLO: Sure, but I feel like my leg is going to burst.

Despite everything PABLO has dragged himself toward EVA, joining in the game, in order to try to snatch the scissors from her. He hurts himself at once and shrinks back, grabbing his painful leg and becoming completely dejected and exhausted. EVA turns to him affectionately to help him. She wipes his sweaty forehead with her hand and kisses him.

EVA: You're burning up! Let me see that wound. It looks bad.

What happened to you?

PABLO: I have a bullet inside. It's war! But it doesn't matter. It will heal up on its own and I'll be left with gunpowder on my hands as a reminder.

EVA: Well I think you need to take it more seriously. I suppose you know that it can gangrene.

PABLO: The only thing I'm worried about right now is getting rid of this uniform. Putting on warm clothes and finding food for both of us. As soon as I eat something, my leg will become as happy as I am and will heal itself up just like that.

EVA: Worry about your wound, that's more important. The uniform doesn't matter, the war ended. Nonetheless that wound...

PABLO: What?

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EVA: I said that your wound doesn't look good!

PABLO: No, before that, what did you say before that?

EVA: That we're not at war anymore.

PABLO: What do you mean?

EVA: *(She points to the ground and the pamphlets)* It seems that the war has ended. Even though they don't say anything about food or clothing.

He looks around and seems not to understand. EVA grabs a newspaper from the ground and hands it to him. PABLO takes it and reads, surprised at first, then anxious later. He turns the pages

and continues reading. He kisses the newspaper. He hugs EVA and, for a few moments, appears to have improved.

PABLO: Finally! My God, finally! You're amazing. I love you, I love you, I love you!

EVA: I'm not the one who...

PABLO's strength gives way and they both roll onto the ground. He keeps laughing, curled up in a ball, grabbing his wounded leg. She breaks away from the hug and goes about picking up some of the pamphlets that aren't torn up, without ceasing to look at the young man.

EVA: They tell us to return home. They say we shouldn't be afraid anymore. They say we have to fight to rebuild the country. But they don't say how to do it, nor what homes we should return to, nor how we can remove the fear from our bodies, nor anything else! Everything ends just like it began, and I don't like it...

While speaking EVA has been leaving pamphlets next to PABLO, organized neatly. Afterwards she moves away stiffly, without ceasing to speak, among sighs and silences.

EVA: I still don't understand what they mean with all of these written words. You're a soldier, you must understand better than I do what's happening, how things are, what's best for us to do...Perhaps I distrust everything too much.

PABLO: Calm down, why are you so nervous?

EVA: I don't know why, but I'm more terrified than before, I had begun to feel almost safe here and now I don't know...What I am going to do? I don't understand why they say it's dangerous to stay...The two of us could stay together like we thought yesterday. Of course we have hardly any food and this is not a house and supposedly it's better that we return to the city...Do you think we should go together?

PABLO: I still can't go back.

EVA: That's silly! At least until everything is clearer the messenger said...

PABLO: (*Cutting her off*) I can't return wearing this uniform!

EVA: I don't know why you're yelling at my now. Are you nervous too? We'll find something so you can change. I have clothes and things over there.

PABLO: I can't return to our city, don't you understand that?

EVA: No, I don't understand.

PABLO: They're looking for me.

EVA: Who?

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PABLO: The government, the military...I don't know.

EVA: You're not that important. There'll be other things to do now that the war has ended, that's why I say. Besides, you enlisted as a volunteer, so you're not part of the army.

PABLO: It's not that simple. I committed a crime, I would have to face a military trial. I have to make them think I'm dead and assume another identity.

EVA: All that mess just for deserting...?

PABLO: I can't allow them to identify me.

EVA: I see that the news has affected you much more than me; therefore, now that I've regained my composure I'll make the decisions for both of us. I suppose that the best thing is really to return...In the city surely they'll be organizing the provisions and passing out food, I think I'll be eating for hours and hours without stopping! And we'll sleep in beds! I don't remember what it feels like sleeping between sheets...And blankets! Lots of blankets!

PABLO: I can't go back like this.

EVA: Don't be afraid, it's the best thing we can do.

PABLO: They'll sentence me to death.

EVA: You exaggerate! Everything will sort itself out, you'll see, besides, that leg of yours doesn't look too good, a doctor has to see you...They also must be organizing a service to attend to the wounded! Everything will work out, you'll see!

PABLO: I have no way out.

EVA: I'm going, with or without you!

PABLO: I killed my captain!

EVA: You killed your captain? Why?

PABLO: It's a long story.

EVA: Didn't you have enough to do killing enemies?

PABLO: Things on the front aren't so simple.

EVA: They've never been anywhere. I know it perfectly well.

PABLO: You have to help me, Eva, they're coming for me!

EVA: What can I do?

PABLO: They'll make me pay for my impudence.

EVA: I don't want other people's messes, I have enough of my own! I'm not sure either how it is that you think I should help you?

You deal with the army yourself, I don't want to know anything else about uniforms for the rest of my life!

PABLO: Just a minute ago you wanted to be a child again. I'm your friend Pablo! Do you remember?

EVA: And what does that matter to me?

EVA angrily grabs her book bag. She walks around from one side to the other in long strides. She runs into the flags and separates

them by kicking them. With a smack she destroys the pamphlets that she had collected before.

PABLO: I now see what they've done to you.

EVA: *(Throwing the book bag onto the ground)* Don't annoy me any more! Why did you do it?

PABLO: What does that matter now?

EVA: It matters to me. It's important for me to understand something in this whole shitty mess. I want to know who you are now. These last few years I've lived

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surrounded by dead bodies, but that's not why I've never grown accustomed to it. I need to know that you're not a murderer. Why did you kill your captain?

PABLO: I had to do it. He raped a young girl, while, I, obligated to do what he said, held her down. He told me that I had to do it next, he was panting and his tongue was heavy as he spoke from being drunk. Pulling up his pants he said to me: "Kid, she's all yours. Miserable bitch that she is. Fuck her, she wants it, can't you see

that? I'll keep her arms still, and her teeth if necessary, if I need to I'll knock them out of her mouth..."

While he said this he dislocated the girl's jaw when he put the pistol between her lips and she hardly groaned. I didn't want to do it...I couldn't do it...He hit me, insulting me. I puked and went for him...In the skirmish the pistol went off twice: The first bullet hit my leg, the second exploded his heart. He was dead and I was responsible. I fled from there as fast as my wounded leg would allow me to. Don't ask me what happened to the girl, nor how I got here, because I don't know...

Long pause. EVA approaches PABLO and caresses his hair timidly.

EVA: Forgive me for making you remember that. You did what you had to do.

PABLO: I couldn't avoid it.

EVA: Hush.

EVA kisses him on the lips sweetly.

EVA: He deserved it. People like that don't even have the right to be born. The only shame is that he didn't suffer.

PABLO: He did suffer...He was looking for death, he needed it. He always drank non-stop. From morning to night he was drunk. In the few moments of clarity he had he was an educated, refined, rather kind man, although terribly sad. When he was shitfaced he became a kind of monster, aggressive and cruel.

EVA takes him in her arms, sitting down on the floor next to him; rocking him and rocking herself.

PABLO: Do you understand me, Eva? It wasn't premeditated, he was my captain and my friend, but it wasn't her fault even though she was part of the enemy's faction.

EVA: Sssshhh, calm down, don't think about it anymore, that's how things happened...My father disappeared before everything began. After two weeks of searching and uncertainty two men appeared in our house, they dragged my mother to a room and closed the door. Surprised, my two little brothers and I crept to the door to listen, to look through the keyhole, through the crack on

the floor...We saw how they aimed at my mother's head with a pistol and we began to kick and hit the door with our fists, screaming desperately, but when that fucking door opened we couldn't see anything else. After that they pushed us out of our home and separated us. I haven't found out anything else about anyone in my family. The commanding General took charge of me, to turn me over to his wife as war booty, but then he changed his mind and decided first that

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he would enjoy his gift as he pleased for awhile...Before he ended my life I had to end his. I soon found out that I had to kill him in order to keep living, even though it took more than five months to do so. You can be sure that it was no accident, and that I attempted to give back to him all the pain that he caused us, even though I knew that that would be impossible.

Now the two are hugging each other even stronger, and they seem smaller. A gust of wind blows around them, scattering the sheets of paper. Each presses more tightly into the other, as if wanting to

occupy the least space possible. Military marches sound. An army approaches, its speech can be heard. Little by little they break their hug. EVA helps PABLO to stand up.

EVA: Pablo, we have to go. Do you hear the same thing I do?

They're coming, they're arriving sounding their triumphant trumpets and launching into the wind their proclamations...This trail is going to become an obligatory path for people of all types, and it's clear that we won't have a choice but to dash off. We'll think of something to swindle them and survive, don't worry. I have plenty of resources.

PABLO: I can see that you've had to become pretty strong.

EVA: We can pass ourselves off as a married couple and nobody will recognize you.

PABLO: We're too young.

EVA: You think?

PABLO: Although we can try to seem older...

EVA: Of course you can, with that smashed up leg you look like an old man.

PABLO: Well! And you, what do you look like?, with that miserable uniform.

EVA: I have other disguises around here that I'll put in my bag, we'll go along the path changing our clothes, we just have to get moving and start walking.

PABLO: Of course!

EVA: The most important thing now is to lower your fever and cure that wound.

PABLO: Nothing worries me as long as you're with me.

EVA: Right now there's nothing I desire less than losing sight of you, even though you only say stupid things.

PABLO: You're the one who hasn't stopped saying stupid things.

They go about collecting their things, putting clothing and equipment in their book bags. Once they've packed up everything they begin to walk toward the background, where a city in ruins can be made out. PABLO does so with much difficulty. Some of the bags he carries fall, EVA picks them up and carries them. They

slowly advance. For PABLO the journey is very painful, dragging his leg and the bicycle. On the way they are seen getting rid of some of the less useful items. At one moment, PABLO loses his balance slightly. She helps him, supporting him under the shoulder. They leave behind in their path a trail of things they can't carry. EVA tries to convince PABLO to let go of the bicycle, but he stubbornly refuses. Suddenly he falls to the ground and she picks him up, carrying him completely, forcing her to let go of almost all of the bags in order to hold onto the bicycle that he refuses to abandon. They continue advancing while looking back many times. Finally the bicycle rolls down, falling all the way to the

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orchestra seats. Finally they are seen disappearing on the horizon. The bicycle has been destroyed upon falling.

Escena VII

The deafening sound of the discourses and long-winded speeches of a triumphant approaching army invade the scene, accompanied by a chorus of trumpets, drums, and salutes. Meanwhile, the curtain falls.

THE END