

THE ANDALUSIAN ZORRO SONG

a play with songs
by Theo Hakola

ACT ONE

scene i

The overture builds slowly as the various instruments join and lock into it's repetitive structure capped by a simple violin melody...

The music drops off, leaving nothing but slivers of violin harmonics as late afternoon sunlight begins pouring through a window to reveal a couple, on a bed, at the top of a flight of stairs stage right. In a tangled mess of damp sheets, the couple – MIGUEL ANGEL and ESPERANZA – are coupling...

As the opening music picks up once again, MIGUEL ANGEL reaches for the half empty bottle of cognac on the floor and begins his monologue in song:

MIGUEL ANGEL

I am not happy, but mama I am driven
I am driven to seek pleasure; that is all I feel safe in
I am driven inside; I am driven to hide
in the sweetest bath of the kindest haven

And if it's not a woman then whiskey elation
might throw a shield up against the world's penetration
The lava drips down my throat to save me from abrasion
Oh cognac! Carry me! Until the revelation!
I sponge up the poison like dry sand sucks water
I buy time biding mine, waiting for damnation...

Here it comes...

An instrumental refrain. MIGUEL ANGEL extracts himself from ESPERANZA'S arms, wraps himself in a sheet, hops drunkenly down the stairs and picks up the song again:

MIGUEL ANGEL

The fumes of rot are rising inside of me and out
You can smell the Spanish abscess wafting out my mouth
You can see the swollen Spanish earth aching to explode
You can taste the tempest in the air as the fire takes hold

My blood is blue lead and my skin is dead
My spine is melting and my bones are chalk
The sun is my garrote and the moon wants my head
I hear my Cain in the rain and my negation when I talk

Here it comes...

He drags himself back up the steps and collapses in the arms of ESPERANZA. His monologue, spoken now, continues as the music fades.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I believe in nothing except, perhaps, that I believe in nothing. Wait, that's not precisely true. I should rather say that I believe in nothing customarily believed in by people with beliefs. I believe in penetration, for example. It has to be admitted. There is nothing more believable than penetration. Nothing more secure. I lose myself inside a woman where protection is absolute. Where I am sheltered. Where there is peace.

The centerpiece difficulty of my life is being outside a woman...

I'm all right now because I'm inside and safe. Inside my Esperanza. Inside smoldering, wet beauty. Inside my sister. Ha! Such a dolorous task – looking into her – but I can do it. I do it. I persist and the pain turns to pleasure. I see myself in her black eyes and I like to think that she sees herself in my blue ones and that, maybe, we love each other as a reflection of each other's beauty.

Our ravenous unions just might be the ultimate expression of narcissism.

ESPERANZA is making love to her brother – slowly, steadily, silently, apparently oblivious to his verbal rambling.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Sadly, it is not always easy to arrange our miraculous little sessions for we live in the same house. We are careful, but I'm afraid that our fecundities have somehow laced the air here. There are times when I can taste our smell; it burns my nose. My mother may have already sensed something, but she could never understand the heavenly thing that that something is... My mother.

Esperanza pauses for a moment to unwrap the sheets that they've become twisted up in, and then recovers her rhythm.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I can't... I can't... stand... myself or anyone else when I'm outside of a woman. Anything else I do for peace is nothing but a holding action. It is the thin screen of tired opium; the whiskey I pour down my throat and the nasty things I say to good, respectable people. They look at each other and pity my father who pities himself.

Holding actions! Not the real peace that I could die for when the world snaps it from me.

I know this now because I am where I am. Inside. Safe. I understand it now. I understand many things here. And yet, later, I won't be inside and safe... and I'll wonder how I could have let that happen. Why I always let that happen. And I'll want to kill myself once again for having once again let it happen...

I never should have left London when my father asked me to. Never.

ESPERANZA is climaxing apparently, quietly.

MIGUEL ANGEL

London! I was getting drunk. I hadn't been to a lecture in weeks. It was over for me. Still, I figured that as long as I stayed enrolled in school my father would...

ESPERANZA collapses with a long sigh on MIGUEL ANGEL. He brushes her black curls out of his face as if they were getting in the way of his recitation.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I was getting myself drunk, displacing my dissatisfaction with that lovely liquid that warms my heart and... walls my eyes. Drop by drop, gram by gram, sip by swallow. Scotch! Drinking blinders thank heavens!

But there I was... when James walked into my room as if it were his, as usual.

JAMES enters from stage left, all the urgent messenger with a telegram held conspicuously before him as he comes to soldierly attention before the audience:

JAMES

It's a telegram from Spain. From your family I think.

MIGUEL ANGEL

He may have sensed that this telegram and he were not unrelated. My family never communicated with me on anything but financial matters and the horrible, little leech had spent almost as much of my money as I had in the last couple months.

JAMES

(in upper-class English accented Spanish)

Miguel Angel. Tienes que volver. Hay problemas. Ya lo sabes.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Is that it? Nothing more?

JAMES

Yes... No. Nothing more.

MIGUEL ANGEL

The pig didn't even wire me extra money for the train.

JAMES

Well? What is it? Do you have to go home? What kind of problemas?

MIGUEL ANGEL

(after a pause)

Yes. I have to go home.

JAMES

But why?

MIGUEL ANGEL

I guess that he has finally hit bottom.

JAMES

What!?

MIGUEL ANGEL

He's broke.

JAMES

Of course Michael. Broke.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Yes, yes, yes. How unfortunate that you've gotten to know me so late, just as my old papa's golden stream seems to be drying up. A pity.

JAMES

I won't believe that. With all the money they... all they have...

MIGUEL ANGEL

They have. They have, yes, much but... no money. They have no liquid assets. James is going to have to find somebody else to piss in his thirsty little mouth, Papa and I can't do it anymore.

JAMES

Oh really Michael! This is all too ridiculous! I...

MIGUEL ANGEL

(sitting up)

My father needs my help. He is losing.

JAMES

Losing what? To whom?

MIGUEL ANGEL

To the government. To the peasants. To the... But the bottom line is...

(he's amazed too)

My father isn't sending any more money... The peasants are stealing his land and the The Republic is letting them. Or the peasants are refusing to work the few fields that he still cultivates and The Republic is letting them. They want to shoot him and The Republic will let them.

JAMES

(smiling)

Of course. And you? Beheaded. I wonder who will have the honors. The Jacobins? The Bolsheviks? Who's scheduled to do the dirty there? Michael... does your father have delusions?

MIGUEL ANGEL

Not at all. He is probably right. Sooner or later Papa will be shot.

JAMES

Michael!

MIGUEL ANGEL

This is simply nature.

The opening music comes back up, delicately. The lights go out on JAMES.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I should never have come back here... Never.

He stares at the audience for a moment. He falls back on ESPERANZA who seems to be sleeping, and the stage goes dark. The music fades out.

scene ii

The lights come up on the Escobar family salon where we find Señor ESCOBAR, his brother LUIS, the GENERAL, and Captain MORENO (of the Guardia Civil), in cigar-smoked, cognac-soaked, pre-dawn conversation. The music for "REMEMBER WHEN YOU COULD BE PROUD" comes up with the lights and they take it away in song:

SEÑORES

Remember when you could be proud? Proud to be a man?
When you didn't have to fight for your birthright
your honor and your land

Remember when you could be proud? Proud to be a man?
When there was no shame in an upper-crust name
And the upper-crust never ran

ESCOBAR

When you told a peasant to jump, he asked "how high?"

LUIS

They'd never dare be insolent or look you in the eye

ESCOBAR

When you told a maid to raise her skirts...

MORENO

She'd want to know "how high?"

ESCOBAR and LUIS

And you could have your way with her as easy as pie

Each man is sitting in his "place," rising to deliver his line and sitting down immediately after. MIGUEL ANGEL, lugging a bulging old suitcase, appears stage left. He's dusty and disheveled after three days of trains and stations. He slowly takes a seat on the ground, listening. The song continues:

SEÑORES

Remember when you could be proud? Proud to be a man?
When you didn't have to fight for your birthright
Your honor and your land

Remember when you could be proud? Proud to be a Spaniard?
When the nation was one with its face to the sun
God's legions marching onward

ESCOBAR

Remember when you could be proud to be rich?
And we ran this country without a hitch

LUIS

Remember when you were rich?

MORENO

And no Red was too big for a garrote to fix

GENERAL

Enough señores! Before I go for my blade!
I might be old but I'm still bold
and fit for a crusade

Righteous anger knows, knows no golden age
You're never too grey to seize the day
You don't need youth to be infected with rage

And I can still pull the old chain every night
And when I let my river flow,
my woman still takes fright

Great Spain will rise now as it must
You have to have faith; you have to have guts
You have to fight for...

Suddenly, jumping from quiet contemplation to his feet, MIGUEL ANGEL hops into the middle of the room where he dumps his suitcase with a jarring, lamp-rattling thud that stops the song and freezes the SEÑORES. His manner is absurdly gay.

MIGUEL ANGEL
(with a ludicrous bow)
Youth... has arrived señores.

Crossing over to his surprised father, he bends over dutifully to kiss the seated man and make his stagey announcement.

MIGUEL ANGEL
Well Papa, I've finally come back to you.

ESCOBAR
(standing up, flustered)
And it's good to have you back here again, my son.

MIGUEL ANGEL
(turning to the other men)
So then: Are we overthrowing the Republic tomorrow gentlemen? What's the hour? Or, haven't you decided yet? You haven't gone yellow on the reds now, have you?

SEÑOR ESCOBAR sits down again heavily. MIGUEL ANGEL has a word for everyone:

MIGUEL ANGEL

Well General! Staying out of prison these days?...

(aghast, pointing at the man's "eye")

Good heavens, couldn't you wear a patch over that mess?... My dear Uncle Luis! You still have a spot of hair left!... And who is this youngish looking man father?

ESCOBAR

This is Captain Moreno, Miguel Angel, of the Civil Guard here in Bracera.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Oh. I see. Thank God you finally managed to rid us of that nasty Captain Gonzales! I understand, señores, that the maggot was actually a Republican – loyal, ha ha, to the elected government, a picture of that bloated toad Azaña up on the wall in his office. *Quel scandale! Quel* remarkable swine! What did you do, have the dog shot?

Chuckles. Exchanged glances. Eyes on ESCOBAR.

ESCOBAR

(coughs)

My son must be tired after such a trip. Your room should be ready for you my boy.

MIGUEL ANGEL begins backing towards the door, hardly able to mask his fatigue.

LUIS

Listen Miguel Angel. I'm sure that your cousin Antonio would be pleased to see you. He's very busy now with the... activities. He's head of the Falange here, you know.

MIGUEL ANGEL

How exciting that is, Uncle! Just smashing.

LUIS

You see, he's the head of the Falange here. They have important work to do...

MIGUEL ANGEL

I'm sure they do...

LUIS

Yes. And, well... What with the communists...

MIGUEL ANGEL

(warding off an imaginary blow to his face)

Oh dear heavens! Are there even communists here now?

GENERAL

(impatient)

It is a case of communist anarchists.

MIGUEL ANGEL

(yawns)

And they all take orders from Moscow anyway. It's all very serious indeed I'm sure but, if you gentlemen will kindly excuse me now... I haven't had a proper bowel movement in days, and, as you all know at least as well as I do, there is no shit like a home shit. I'll see you all soon again, I'm sure. Until tomorrow, Papa.

He bends to kiss his father again – this time on the lips. The troubled man seems to ignore the impropriety of the gesture, but there is an audible gasp of revulsion from the others.

The lights go out on the salon as MIGUEL ANGEL begins climbing the stairs stage right. At the same time, ESPERANZA begins descending the staircase, in her night clothes. MIGUEL ANGEL only sees her when they meet face to face in the middle. He chuckles.

ESPERANZA

(reaching for his suitcase)

I'll help you.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Yes. Help me.

The stage fades to black.

scene iii

The dining room at noon. MIGUEL ANGEL is seated at the table, holding his head in his hands and staring at the bowl of coffee before him. SEÑORA ESCOBAR is in and out of the room. When she's out, we hear the clattering cups and saucers sounds of a kitchen. When she's in, she seems to be doing other house work though after a while it becomes evident that she's just locked into a repeating cycle – repositioning the same candles, dusting the same table corner, etc. each time around. It's a kind of dance, accompanied by her disjointed, non-musical song. A da da/Disney cartoon character happily at work.

SEÑORA

Oh when I'm cleaning a chicken, la la la
I look at the hairs on its skin, da da de la
Then I look, la la look at the back of my hand
And I look at the hairs on my skin, I... la la la
I, I truly like a good flan

Oh I have to take my tweezers, teasers, la la sneezers
and dust all around the carpet, de de de la
and shine the shoes and shine the sun... windows...
fresh air and flowers, Carmen, la la la
Why don't you just, come in once again
Tweezers la la for the hair on the skin
And dusting la la away, all the la de la la day

Without a pause, she begins questioning her son:

SEÑORA

How was your trip? Is London nice? I hear that it rains a lot there. Are your studies going well?

MIGUEL ANGEL

(speaking to his bowl)

Yes that is true. Indeed mother. Yes it does. I'm fine. They are going well. London is nice... How is your family?

SEÑORA

I suppose they are fine. It has been quite some time since my last trip to Madrid. Years. Years I believe.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I see?

SEÑORA

I don't know... I suppose that there isn't any money here to pay for the... Yes, that would be the reason. Did you visit Madrid on the way here?

MIGUEL ANGEL

No. Not really. I just passed through. The station.

SEÑORA

Oh that must have been nice. Madrid is a nice city. I am from Madrid you know.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Yes.

SEÑORA

Most of my family is still there. They were naturally troubled about me marrying Señor and living down here with the provincials and the uncovered dirt but I... I...

MIGUEL ANGEL

(making faces at his coffee)

Yes... yes. I know. The country is a fine place to be.

ESPERANZA enters, in slippers and dressing gown, dutifully breezing over to her mother and giving the woman an affectionate kiss. They look at each other with broad smiles and sing their greetings:

ESPERANZA

Good morning dear mother and how are you today?

SEÑORA

I'm just fine my dear daughter, I'm happy to say.

ESPERANZA

Oh this lovely sunshine; it makes one feel so gay.

SEÑORA

And it lightens up your curls, the envy of all the girls
Good morning good daughter and how are you today?

ESPERANZA

I slept like a baby, I slept like a queen
I slept like a lamb in the first days of spring
I dreamt of heaven and a church bell's sweet ring
And I woke up dear mother, I woke up to sing

MIGUEL ANGEL eyes his sister with amazement.

SEÑORA

Oh that's nice Esperanza; I'm so happy to hear... I...
(she turns to her son, losing the song)
I... Have you seen that... Who is near, uh here? Have you...
(she gives up singing, speaks:)
You see who... Look who has come home Esperanza!

ESPERANZA

Oh my goodness! It's Miguel Angel!

She flies to his side to give him a kiss on the cheek while he makes faces at his bowl again.

ESPERANZA

Oh how is our Miguelito?

MIGUEL ANGEL

(pouring cognac into his bowl)

He is as perfect as could ever possibly be imagined. Wonderfully fine indeed.
He slept! He dreamed of women with erections and...

ESPERANZA

(cutting him off with her stage voice)

I'm glad to hear that. Did you enjoy London?

MIGUEL ANGEL

Oh yes I did indeed. Isn't that the sacred truth mother?

SEÑORA

Oh yes he did Esperanza, though it rains all the time there.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Oh yes; isn't that the holy sorrow of life in London?

(swallows the lump in his throat, whispers to Esperanza)

My savior!

ESPERANZA

(taking his hand)

Miguel Angel looks a bit pale... must have missed our Andalusian sun.

The SEÑORA, back to her clean up routine, misses her cue.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Pale? Oh that's simply because the books are so white there and the sky sometimes and the English themselves seem to be leaning most undeniably in the whiteward direction as far as I've been able to see and that is not very damn far when you consider that I've always done my best to maintain my poor oft-pummelled self in the most exalted state of inebriation because if that were not the case...

ESPERANZA stops him with a wrenching squeeze of his hand. He snaps it away, wounded, and takes his head back into his hands over his bowl.

MIGUEL ANGEL

That hurts... We are going for a ride.

SEÑORA

Oh... yes. That's nice.

Blackout.

scene iv

The lights come up on MIGUEL ANGEL and ESPERANZA lying on the ground. She is on her back staring at the sky, head pointed at the audience. He, parallel to and almost touching the stage apron, is a few yards stage right of, and perpendicular to, her. He's on his back too, with a bottle of red wine standing on his stomach.

ESPERANZA

I don't do anything.

MIGUEL ANGEL

What do you think about?

ESPERANZA

Nothing exactly... Things. People.

MIGUEL ANGEL

(after a long swig from his bottle)

What do people think about you?

ESPERANZA

I don't know... Little. I am 23 and I'm not married so they think little of me.

MIGUEL ANGEL

And the boys? The señoritos?

ESPERANZA

(after a pause)

They were interested. Cousin Antonio brought them. They showed themselves to me. Then they stopped. I don't think that they believed that I was seeing them. Señoritos need to be seen.

MIGUEL ANGEL

So... I'm to assume that everything is fine with you.

ESPERANZA

... Yes.

MIGUEL ANGEL

(incredulous, towards audience)

And time just sort of slides by? Is she so fortunate? Has God has exempted her? Time grates on me. Every single minute scratches across me like a horde of barbarian... cats... and I feel every claw. Time leaves scars, never slips by unfelt. Are you happy?

ESPERANZA is uninterested in answering.

MIGUEL ANGEL

This girl! An honest to goodness clown! Do you ever cry? Do you ever break down in despair and sobs... exploding in your chest? Ever?

(no reply)

Ever? Do you feel safe?

ESPERANZA

I don't cry, no.

MIGUEL ANGEL sits up and eyes his sister as she continues to follow the clouds rolling over them. Then he lays down again and, like an inch worm, works his way towards her.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I am going to have to be the arrow for her bow. The cross for her "t". The branch on her trunk. There is no choice. It's God's will.

Arriving, he delicately places his head on her stomach. She doesn't react.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I adore God's will... And the comfort of a woman's stomach!

Carefully, he pulls her white blouse out of her riding trousers.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Now my pillow's only case is her skin.

He turns and begins kissing her where his head had been. He moves carefully up to her breasts, down to her thighs, back up to her breasts, etc. The carnal embrace, shared. Pushing. Building. MIGUEL ANGEL freezes.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Oh no.

He shivers. Wraps ESPERANZA and holds her tight for a moment. Finally:

MIGUEL ANGEL

Oh God. This is something.

He burrows his face back into her lower abdomen. Silence.

ESPERANZA

What happened?

Silence. MIGUEL ANGEL springs tight again as another shiver sweeps over his body.

ESPERANZA

What is it?

MIGUEL ANGEL

(quietly)

I came.

ESPERANZA

Oh... What do you mean?

MIGUEL ANGEL

I e-jac-u-lat-ed.

ESPERANZA

Oh... Where?

MIGUEL ANGEL

(pointing contemptuously)

Down there. Where the hell else?

ESPERANZA

Oh... Are you all right?

MIGUEL ANGEL
(a hiss)

Yes.

MIGUEL ANGEL, his head once again posed on ESPERANZA'S stomach, closes his eyes. She sits up, cradling his head in her lap, bored and uncomfortable.

ESPERANZA
What are you doing?

MIGUEL ANGEL
(eyes still closed)
I think I was sleeping.

ESPERANZA
Yes.

MIGUEL ANGEL
Have you ever made love?

ESPERANZA is silent. She runs a hand tenderly over his head and then pushes it firmly into the place where her thighs meet. She begins countering its pressure with her own, rocking against it. Harder and harder. MIGUEL ANGEL, fully awake now, is caught in a vice, suffocating in her grasp. She seems to be achieving orgasm. Cries out. Heaves two or three big sobs. MIGUEL ANGEL breaks the lock and falls back away from her.

MIGUEL ANGEL
For the glory of God! Slow down! Wait!
(he collapses on his back, laughing hysterically)
It's like breaking a horse!

ESPERANZA is out of breath, looking away, wiping her tears. He finishes the bottle in one long swig, struggles with the rise of vomit for a moment and falls back down.

MIGUEL ANGEL
Oh good Jesus. My ears! My ears are burning! Are they still there?... Hello hungry organ. Famished filly. Hello bounteous dark curls of my kindest dreams – my own beloved lake to save me from my fever. MY LUXURY!... Hello?

ESPERANZA

Yes.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I want to cry like that. Burst like that. I'm jealous.

(opening the second bottle)

Maybe you'll explain it to me some day. Maybe you'll love me enough to make me understand it. And feel it too. What you feel. Yes. Gift of God. You could. You are most probably the closest thing to God since Jesus Christ his holy... Since Jesus... Yes. And I've been sent here to be saved by you. Nourished when I'm hungry. Kissed, when I am thirsty. Sheathed, when I am frightened. When the horrid air is more than I can stand, my beloved savior, you'll take my hand...

ESPERANZA

It's... not the same for you.

MIGUEL ANGEL

What?

ESPERANZA

... Then. What we did.

MIGUEL ANGEL

No, my most beloved. Not quite.

He drinks. He's drunk.

MIGUEL ANGEL

What does your father think of you?

ESPERANZA

Nothing. It is the same as with Mother.

MIGUEL ANGEL

He never talks to you? To her?

ESPERANZA

Only in front of people outside the family. It has always been that way.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I wasn't home very often.

(Seeing her turn away from him)

Be nice. Make allowances for a vision defect.

ESPERANZA

What are you going to do here?

MIGUEL ANGEL

I suppose... I suppose I'll wait.

ESPERANZA

Wait for what? The end?

MIGUEL ANGEL

What do you know about the "end"? The "end" of what?

ESPERANZA

The end of our way of life.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Oh I see. How does someone who never goes anywhere know such things?

He drinks, spilling wine down his neck.

ESPERANZA

You don't have to go anywhere. It's in the air. You smell it, like just before a thunderstorm. A heaviness.... Are you going to see Ignacio?

MIGUEL ANGEL

(sleepily)

Is he still here?

ESPERANZA

Of course he's still here.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I... don't know.

His eyes are closed. He wraps his arms around her waste to curl up and sleep with his head in her lap. He yawns.

MIGUEL ANGEL

You'll take care of me. Do you promise?

ESPERANZA

Please, don't get wine on me.

MIGUEL ANGEL

(slurring)

You worry me, black eyes. Yes. Wasting away here in hell and imagining that you know piss from shit when you're only... biding time before you embark on a trip to that never never land that your mother inhabits. Oh no my love, you wouldn't, would you? Not in the middle of the night, with no one around even capable of noticing that my... my darling-soft saint is leaving... us... no, me... Alone! That can't happen. That gives me a lump in my throat. See? Feel it? Hear it? Kiss it and make it go. Give me your mouth!

Out of breath and out of strength, he falls asleep holding her. She sighs, bored and uncomfortable, still sitting. The "IN THE NIGHTMARE" music comes up and she sings:

ESPERANZA

You let yourself go and you lay down your head
You close your eyes and you're half way there
Your nerves are alive but your body is dead
and you're on the road to the nightmare

You can't light the candles in the shadow of the nun
You're walking on glass and your feet are bare
The lead in your legs won't let you run
and you can't find your clothes anywhere

MIGUEL ANGEL squirms, moans. She eases out of his arms, lets his head drop to the floor and stands up. Her voice gets louder. It's an anti-lullaby:

ESPERANZA

You're falling forever, waiting to land
You're a step from home but can't get there

The birds fly so low you're afraid to stand
crawling down the road to the nightmare

You see a thin blue fish with a black horse eye
when you tear back your scalp and look for your brains
Though you're breathing sand and your throat is stone dry
you can't open your mouth when it finally rains

It works. MIGUEL ANGEL awakens, anxious, shaking his head and holding himself. He sits up, grabs his bottle and drinks, faces the audience and sings. The bridge:

MIGUEL ANGEL

It's a sin to sleep when you could be smelling the flowers
It's a sin to sleep when you could be milking the hours
It's a sin to sleep when you could be drinking in the skies
It's a sin to sleep when you could be inside her thighs

ESPERANZA picks the song up again.

ESPERANZA

You'll shout about the pain and how the game isn't fair
but people won't hear you; they'll just smile and stare
You closed your eyes; you put yourself there
when you crawled down the road to the nightmare

You could have flown from the sun to my side for a kiss
but you fell into the arms of Morpheus

MIGUEL ANGEL, who had fallen half asleep again after singing, finally stands up and puts his hand over her mouth. As they begin disrobing to make love, the music ends and the stage fades to black.

scene v

In The Bar. The "SEÑORITOS' THEME" music comes up. ANTONIO, Miguel Angel's cousin, and two other señoritos are smiling, drinking, smoking chains of black tobacco cigarettes and talking. Cutting smooth silhouettes and shining with the sleek, arrogant virility of the young, Andalusian inheritors that they are. It's hard to tell one from the other. Their conversation is rhythmic, machine gun, but not sung:

SEÑORITOS

I've always understood that... But you continue to act as if you didn't... I do not... Wait. A birthright is something that must be defended, something sacred but one needn't make a church doctrine of one's belief in it. That much is obvious... But I wasn't making a doctrine... I am talking about the necessary commitment to class. Society... Birthright has ... Has everything to do with... It is up to us to take an impossible situation and... Those before us have been feeble in this regard...

There is something of them in MIGUEL ANGEL. He enters, buttoning up his fly and heads towards the chair next to the prostitute – PILAR – that he had previously vacated to relieve himself. ANTONIO sees him returning, brings the conversation to an instant halt with a dramatic, conductor's gesture, and raises his glass to his cousin:

ANTONIO

To my cousin! To Miguel Angel!

SEÑORITOS

Here, here! To his return!

ANTONIO

And just in time. Just in time to do his part, to take his place when things get hot.

MIGUEL ANGEL

(backing slowly towards PILAR)

Yes, uh, thank you. Very nice. Hot. Yes. Well... You know me, I was never much of one for the heat. I've always liked it where it's cool and calm.

He plops himself down on the chair next to PILAR and raises the empty glass before him to his lips, waiting for the last drop of whiskey, while ANTONIO continues:

ANTONIO

And the Pope's a Jew I suppose? Such lies! I remember my little cousin. He wasn't allergic to a bit of excitement, a bit of heat. He was a lunatic, getting everyone else in trouble with him. He started his own house on fire once!

MIGUEL ANGEL

(to himself)

Of course. Long Live the Red Maja Brotherhood.

SEÑORITO 1

London rain and those English manners may have broken our friend down a touch.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Precisely! You've got it! Those manners could make a mouse out of any man. So very tweed. Intuitive fellow. Very good.

SEÑORITO 2

(suggestively miming the act of playing billiards)

And those umbrellas could make a faggot out of any Gentle Man.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Ha ha! I get it! Gentle Man... umbrella... faggots and billiards cues. Ha ha ha!

The SEÑORITOS look at each other, at ANTONIO and at MIGUEL ANGEL who can't stop laughing as he holds on to PILAR's thighs under the table. She kindly pushes him away. He takes his head into his hands and stares at the bottom of his glass. "THE SEÑORITOS' THEME" comes up again and they turn away from MIGUEL ANGEL:

SEÑORITOS

(one after another, in rapid fire, again)

They are counting on us. Those before us. We owe them something after all... Not much, but something nevertheless... Families made Spain great and families will bring Spain back to life... I believe you exaggerate Mariano... I invent nothing Antonio... The new order will insure the sovereignty of the family and prosperity and survival of the new ... Too cramped with this

religiosity of doctrine, side-stepping the issue... Clearly, our commitment to the Falange implies, above all, a commitment to action... Yes... No. Action befitting our station in life above all... Jose-Antonio Primo de... For the pure-hearted, the noble... the land, the people...

Fade out on the SEÑORITOS and their music, but the imprecise hum of their conversation continues. Lights focus on MIGUEL ANGEL and PILAR. He's leaning over, propping himself up with his forearms on her thighs and speaking to her throat.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Give me your mouth. Give me your kiss. Save me from this. Cover me with bliss.

PILAR

Stop it.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Please, my darling, my hope, my sin. Take me out. Take me in.

PILAR

Don't pull on me. I let you warm your hands in my thighs. That's enough for now.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Oh Pilar, that is kind of you. But, I need to warm all of me between your thighs.

PILAR

You know you have no money. Why do you go on...

MIGUEL ANGEL

I love you! My God, can't you feel it? Doesn't that mean anything?

PILAR

It means you're a cretin, or drunk, or...

(pulling his head up by the hair to examine his face)

Both... And it means your broke.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Oh Lord above. Don't let me feel this way!

PILAR

You should go home my little rabbit.

MIGUEL ANGEL

IT HURTS!

ANTONIO

(from the darkness, a real life voice entering a dream)

Is something the matter, Miguel Angel?

The lights and music come back up. The SEÑORITOS eye MIGUEL ANGEL.

MIGUEL ANGEL

(loath to raise his eyes and meet theirs)

No, no. I'm comfortable. I'm listening.

ANTONIO

Would you like to join us for the little adventure we have planned for tonight?

SEÑORITO 1

I think you'd find the trip most rewarding.

ANTONIO

We are going to hit a... C.N.T. office in Cordoba. They're organizing the strikes over there, and it's a safe bet that they're behind the trouble here. On your father's land. Negotiation with these devils is a dream. The only card worth playing is that of their fear – fear of our authority. Our power. Us.

MIGUEL ANGEL

(the eager child, he jumps to his feet)

All right. But only if I get to throw the bomb. Oh please: Let me throw the bomb!

The SEÑORITOS exchange glances. The SEÑORITO'S THEME music gets louder.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Let us make for Cordoba forthwith.

He stumbles and falls. The music drops off and the stage fades to black.

ACT TWO

scene i

The stage is dark. The music – “WAITING FOR RAIN” – begins. The lights come up on MIGUEL ANGEL, in bed once again with ESPERANZA, as if it were still Act I, scene i.

MIGUEL ANGEL
(still drunk)

And so I got stuck here. Bloody sudden rooted in a place where nothing is nourished, where no life blood flows. I came back to a thirst like a plague. Full circle, from birth to the blade. Ashes to ashes... dust to ashes to... Shit! Ashes to ashes; dust to diamonds to..., rust. To mire. That's it. Yes, I came. I am the fool who came. Home. I was paralyzed in London and now I am paralyzed here. Mired. Could I have avoided this? Could I have exerted my flimsy will? Could I be told?

The music comes to a halt for ESPERANZA'S response:

ESPERANZA
I will leave.

MIGUEL ANGEL
(gasping)
No. Oh no!

ESPERANZA
I have to now. Don't.

MIGUEL ANGEL
Oh my God... Well... yes, I... I am no longer exactly afraid of my fear because I know it like the back of my hand... and Esperanza's eyes. And Esperanza's gem marble thighs. Her roundness, her softness, her love-induced sighs. Aghhh!
I am an erotic victim.

ESPERANZA
I've been here too long.

MIGUEL ANGEL
Familiarity breeds... ashes and... Familiarity breeds... lack of fear? I can't wait for it to breed contempt. Majestic contempt of fear. Yes, I'll sleep better then, won't I?

No reply. ESPERANZA climbs out of bed and begins making herself presentable. MIGUEL ANGEL picks up the pace, running his words together in a building panic:

MIGUEL ANGEL

Ashes to ashes to dust... thy dust o'... and rot. Before the ashes, the rot. That I can taste. Now. As everything around me rots in this rotten place and this rotten time. Oh God it smells so much worse than I remembered.

ESPERANZA begins heading down the stairs.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Please! It is the odoral manifestation of the Spanish illness. Please! You can smell it rising from the festering mass of sin as it battles its way up and... Please! You don't want to let your beloved get too far! You don't want to let her get away!

He turns and throws himself back onto the bed, scooping up a pillow which he hugs with a moan of pain. He looks around the room hopelessly, sighs, and begins getting dressed.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I need a drink.

The scene's opening music comes up again. MIGUEL ANGEL begins singing:

MIGUEL ANGEL

All that's left is arid Oklahoma
Where there once was a heart there's an old dust bowl
Chalk white bones where there once was a Sequoia
And Death Valley moans where there once was a soul

There's a place inside me where nothing will grow
There's an arid plot lying fallow
I'm waiting for life; I'm waiting for rain
But it looks like a desert and it feels like pain

Instrumental interlude as he finishes dressing. He begins walking down the stairs, slowly:

MIGUEL ANGEL

There's guns in my lungs that won't let me walk
There's death in my breath and a dirge when I talk
Where there used to be a vision, there's a wall of alcohol
And the only sound I'm sure of is the sound of my fall

There's a hole inside me where nothing will grow
There's a sand-choked Mojave arroyo
I'm waiting for life, God I'm praying for rain
Because that desert inside me is all thirst and pain

Instrumental. He enters the bar – at the bottom of the stairs, stage left – apparently unnoticed by the three SEÑORITOS there, once again deep in conversation. PILAR is seated at the same place; it could be the continuation of Act I scene v. She picks up the song:

PILAR

You don't know that face; you don't know those eyes
You can't feel the flesh as it takes the knife
You don't know if it's you or the devil in disguise
You've lost the line between sleep and life

There's a place inside you where nothing will grow
Black rocks lie smoking where a river used to flow
You're waiting for life, Lord you're waiting for rain
But that desert inside you is all thirst and pain

Instrumental. MIGUEL ANGEL pulls PILAR from her seat to "waltz" her through the rest of the song as he takes back the lead vocal and she hums harmony.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I'm waiting for life; I'm waiting for rain
But it looks like a desert and it feels like pain
I'm waiting for life, God I'm praying for rain
Because that desert inside me is all thirst and pain

PILAR sings the words with him now:

MIGUEL ANGEL/PILAR

I'm waiting for life, Lord, I'm dying for rain
But that desert inside me is all thirst and pain
I'm waiting for life, I'm waiting for rain
But that desert inside me is all that remains

They sit down together. The SEÑORITOS finally begin to observe the couple.

SEÑORITO 1

I thought that he would be happy to be back with his own people.

SEÑORITO 2

What a shameful fall! His father must be very disappointed.

SEÑORITO 1

His mother too; I'm certain. And his sister.

SEÑORITO 2

Who knows? Have you ever tried to talk to her? She's soft in the brain, you know.

ANTONIO

Go to hell.

SEÑORITO 2

Why, you don't think that...

ANTONIO

Go to hell.

The focus switches back to MIGUEL ANGEL and PILAR. The din of the SEÑORITO conversation continues in the background.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I think one of them is my cousin.

PILAR

One of them is.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I can't tell them apart anymore.

PILAR

There is no need to.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I'll just smile if they speak to me but I won't hold my head up. My hands are too cold. I'll have to warm them in my hair, laced in with the roots, because you won't let me warm them between your legs... That silken interior – smoother and warmer than the bristly outside. Of course Esperanza's skin is less slack...

PILAR

(bopping him on the head)

Oh that's good to know.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Please be nice. My hands are cold. But my heart is warm. I can feel it. Otherwise, I wouldn't care as much as I do. You know, sometimes I care so much it hurts.

PILAR

Yes my little rabbit. You do care.

MIGUEL ANGEL

And sometimes I don't know if I've said something or just thought it. Inside my head or out... Did we just talk about caring and rabbits?

As he awkwardly tries to get PILAR to take him in her arms, the focus opens up to expose the SEÑORITOS again.

SEÑORITO 1

You had better watch out Antonio, or your cousin is going to have that puta right there on the table.

ANTONIO

Go to hell.

SEÑORITO 1

All right. I was just trying to help.

ANTONIO

Go to hell anyway.

SEÑORITO 2

Come, come now. What about tonight?

ANTONIO

What about tonight? We have a job to do.

SEÑORITO 1

I hate this. I hate doing chores for your... We aren't the police.

ANTONIO

Do you want to make a difference or not?. We need to be there at hiring time, not just to help the owners but to, well, show ourselves. They're getting out of hand.

SEÑORITO 1

At three pesetas a day I'd get out of hand too.

ANTONIO

That's not our problem. Just try to have a little vision. Our time will come.

SEÑORITO 2

Vision. At five o'clock in the morning all I can see is my bed.

MIGUEL ANGEL and PILAR are listening.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Speaking of beds. In fact, I was just wondering if it might be time, oh...

PILAR

Time for my little rabbit to go home to his bed. To sleep.

MIGUEL ANGEL

To sleep.

PILAR

To sleep.

MIGUEL ANGEL

(with his eyes closed, whispering)

Yes. To sleep... I can't sleep.

The music of "WAITING FOR RAIN" comes up again and carries into the next scene as the stage blacks out.

scene ii

It's still night. The "WAITING FOR RAIN" music fades slowly as a half light comes up on MIGUEL ANGEL, standing, unsteadily, centerstage and listening to the sounds of animated conversation building offstage:

MALE VOICES

So do we get to nail their fat asses to the walls today?

Why? Is something on?

Just the fact that they have been nailing ours to it for long enough. Haven't they?

Well, yes.

Well, yes.

We're waiting for the necessary hammer and nails...

Not to mention the wall.

Oh, I know the wall, a perfect one. Don't worry about that.

The men behind the voices, IGNACIO and two CAMPESINOS, enter from stage right. MIGUEL ANGEL watches from the shadows as they meander along in the moonlight before him.

CAMPESINO 1

I'm shitting in their mothers' milk.

IGNACIO

Well, it's only a personal opinion, but I believe that nailing their asses to the wall would be more effective.

CAMPESINO 1

No, no. Goat-fucking, turd-eating fascist cuckolds: I shit in their mothers' milk.

IGNACIO

A worthy ambition. Before or after we shoot them?

CAMPESINO 1

During. While they're shitting themselves silly. Yes. Manure men. The stuff of which great yields in great fields are made. Shit, shit and more shit!

All three of the CAMPESINOS burst into laughter. MIGUEL ANGEL joins in from the dark. His laughter becomes hysterical and, as soon as theirs begins to die down and they hear his, theirs stops completely, along with their slow walk towards stage left.

IGNACIO

Who's there?

MIGUEL ANGEL'S laughing continues. The CAMPESINOS begin to back away.

IGNACIO

Show yourself!

MIGUEL ANGEL'S laugh breaks down into a horrendous cough as he steps out of the shadows.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Yes sir... Here I am... Myself shown.

(the coughing fades, the voice is choked dry)

Good evening, Ignacio... I... You and your friends are having a good time. Going to work, I suppose. Yes, well, good luck. I was on my way home, I was...

IGNACIO

You. What are you doing here?

MIGUEL ANGEL

I told you, I was on my way...

IGNACIO

In Bracera.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Well I... Don't I live here?

IGNACIO

Come to help bail out your old man. I wouldn't bother if I were you, Miguel Angel.

CAMPESINO 1

It's an Escobar?

MIGUEL ANGEL doffs a non-existent hat in acknowledgement.

CAMPESINO 1

No, I wouldn't bother if I were you.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Bother helping my old man the goatophile scativore? I shouldn't? All right...
Good heavens Ignacio, aren't you going to give me a hug? After so long?

IGNACIO

This really isn't a good time for you to be here.

MIGUEL ANGEL

No. Yes. I guess that's right or uh, wrong.

MIGUEL ANGEL and IGNACIO eye each other. MIGUEL ANGEL, despite his slouch, stands clearly taller than IGNACIO, who paces a semi-circle while he's talking.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Ignacio, old friend. Please: You're making me dizzy.

IGNACIO

You've made yourself dizzy. You'd better go home.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I'll try to do that.

IGNACIO

Still the same old ironic smile. You should try to think of something else.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I'll try to do that too Ignacito. I'll really try; I assure you. I'll think of something else and... Hey, don't forget our pact. And our horse.

IGNACIO

Idiot. They sold the horse – your horse. Your Red Maja. She's glue by now. You were always an Escobar and I was always the son of someone who worked for the Escobars and never had a horse and didn't believe in these kinds of pacts.

MIGUEL ANGEL

What? Not even the Fraternity of the Red Maja?

IGNACIO

And you didn't either. Not at all. So don't be ridiculous.

MIGUEL ANGEL

What despondency. What confusion. My ears are hurting me!

IGNACIO

(exiting stage left with the other two)

You've had too much to drink.

MIGUEL ANGEL

That's it. That's all. Very well, à bientôt mes amis. Cheerio.

MIGUEL ANGEL waves – a forlorn, half-accomplished gesture – and exits stage right. A instrumental glimmer of "THE ANDALUSIAN ZORRO SONG" comes up in the background as the lights go out.

scene iii

"THE ANDALUSIAN ZORRO SONG" builds very slowly. MIGUEL ANGEL is sitting in the light of a full moon, in front of his house, gazing thoughtfully at the salon windows. The sounds of the SEÑORES, in late night conversation as in Act I scene ii drift in and out. We might see their moving silhouettes, breaking up the light behind drawn curtains.

MIGUEL ANGEL

The earth is too hard. The voices are too loud. The light is too bright. My mouth is too dry. The passing of time is a monstrous grindstone sharpening my exposure. My mouth is getting dryer. The voices are getting louder. The light is getting brighter. The earth is getting harder. I'm getting cut.

The song takes form and he sings it:

MIGUEL ANGEL

I'm not happy but mama I'm driven
I'm driven to seek pleasure that is all I feel safe in
I'm driven inside, I'm driven to hide
in the sweetest bath of the kindest haven

And if it's not a woman, then whiskey elation
might throw a shield up against the world's penetration
The lava drips down my throat to save my soul from abrasion
Oh cognac! Carry me until the revelation!
I sponge up the poison like dry sand sucks water

I buy time, bidding mine, waiting for damnation...

Here it comes...

The instrumental refrain. MIGUEL ANGEL exits stage left. ZORRO appears stage left – only a silhouette, hesitant. ZORRO exits. MIGUEL ANGEL returns, faces the audience:

MIGUEL ANGEL

The fumes of rot are rising inside of me and out
You can smell the Spanish abscess wafting out my mouth
You can see the swollen Spanish earth aching to explode
and taste the tempest in the air as the fire takes hold
My blood is blue lead and my skin is dead
My spine is melting and my bones are chalk
The sun is my garrote and the moon wants my head
I hear my Cain in the rain and my Zorro when I talk

Here it comes. Here it comes.
Here it comes. Here it comes.

MIGUEL ANGEL exits stage right. ZORRO enters stage right. ZORRO sings.

ZORRO

Idle rich, hypocrites and sacerdotal scum
Listen to the aria coming from my gun
And if you try slinking back into your sacrarium
I'll dog the trail of slime that you worms have left behind
and blow you oppressors all to kingdom come
It's 1936
Let history's will be done

They switch again. ZORRO out. MIGUEL ANGEL in.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I'm the useless issue of caciquismo
I'm a badly weaned leach, like any señorito
I'm a sick son of a bitch, and my old papa's a cabron
expecting me to don the mantle of an Andalusian patron

But I've got this prayer coming out of me
I've got the means to expiation
I've got a way to pay for all my blood's sins
with my masked man's sword revelation

Here it comes. Here it comes.
Here it comes. Here it comes.

The last switch. ZORRO comes on dancing this time. Stiff with exaggerated pride, he moves in time with the song all the same.

ZORRO

I will march with the righteous down the glorious path
I will mete out peoples' justice finely dressed in black
I'm the instrument of history and the martyrs' wrath
Away from me you cursed lest I break your back

Hypocrites clergy and ruling class scum
Hearken to the song coming from my gun
You can crawl where you will to find asylum
But I'll track you by the line of slime you leave behind
and send all you sinners to kingdom come

He continues his series of simple dance steps, glaring at the audience, through the outro. The music dies and the stage fades to black.

scene iv

The family is at the dinner table. Father, mother and daughter are eating; MIGUEL ANGEL is holding his head in his hands and staring at his plate. After a moment in which the only sound is that of ESCOBAR eating, the usual mother-daughter banter begins:

SEÑORA

Did you have a nice day today Esperanza?

ESPERANZA

Oh yes. I went for a ride. I had a nice time.

MIGUEL ANGEL

(to his plate)

And her first good taste of anal penetration.

SEÑORA

That's nice... How is Moquino?

ESPERANZA

He's fine. He can gallop for hours.

SEÑORA

Yes. Yes... And what did you do today Miguel Angel?

MIGUEL ANGEL

Yes. Yes I am. For hours.

There's a silence. SEÑORA is trying to use her fingernails to pluck hairs from the skin of her chicken wing. She raises her head, thinking that someone is due a reply.

SEÑORA

That's nice.

ESCOBAR

Miguel Angel! Your mother asked you a question didn't she?

MIGUEL ANGEL

Oh yes... I'm fine. Excuse me. I thought I'd already... I was thinking...

(he closes his eyes)

...about sodomy.

ESCOBAR

About what?

MIGUEL ANGEL

(finally raising his head, to the audience)

The miracle of anal coition.

ESCOBAR

Miguel Angel! What were you thinking about? Speak!

MIGUEL ANGEL

All right... Zorro.

ESCOBAR

What were you thinking about Zorro?

MIGUEL ANGEL

I don't know. He frightens the freezing shit out of me, that's all. Quelle horreur!

SEÑORA

(to herself)

Frightens the freezing...

MIGUEL ANGEL

And I just hope to God that we don't find the man waltzing into our living room one of these days soon. He scares the old testicles right back up my...

ESCOBAR

(forcing insufficiently chewed food down)

Miguel Angel! What...

(coughing to open a passage)

... What makes you think he'd come around here?

MIGUEL ANGEL

Well he would, wouldn't he? I mean, that is his job Papa.

ESPERANZA

Who is Zorro?

SEÑORA

Who is who?

Nobody answers them.

ESPERANZA

Is he the one who threw the bomb yesterday? The bomb that caused Papa's guards to fire on Papa's workers?

MIGUEL ANGEL

Yes my love. My honey skinned treasure. And he's the one who, this morning, shot Papa's guard who shot Papa's worker. He's the one who'll tear Papa's head off and use his neck as a chamber pot.

ESPERANZA

Papa?

MIGUEL ANGEL

(laughing)

He spoke of "dispensing true justice" or some such in a letter that he nailed to a wall at the Guardia post... What do you say to that, sweet face?

ESCOBAR

Oh mother of Mary...

The SEÑORA looks up from her food, surprised by the tone in her husband's voice.

SEÑORA

Is someone going to visit us?

ESCOBAR gets up from the table. There are tears in his voice.

ESCOBAR

Good God this is... This is hopeless. This is shame...ful... discredit. I can't...

MIGUEL ANGEL starts eating again. The SEÑORA looks at her husband with renewed curiosity as he exits.

SEÑORA

What is it?... What is it Esperanza?

ESPERANZA

It's nothing Mother. Papa's business.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Papa can't see his kee kee when he goes pee pee. The poor man is depressed.

SEÑORA

(back to her food)

Ohhhh. Hmmm. I see.

MIGUEL ANGEL

She sees. Life is grand. I love life.

(to ESPERANZA)

So kiss me my wild dark thing. My vaginate goddess.

ESPERANZA continues to ignore him, calmly slicing off a piece of bread. The SEÑORA looks up from her plate and smiles.

Blackout.

scene v

MIGUEL ANGEL and ESPERANZA are up in their bed again. It's nighttime now.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Do you love me?

ESPERANZA

I think so.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Oh you don't even know what love is. Do you feel anything? Does your heart turn out of orbit occasionally? Do I cut your breath short?

ESPERANZA

... Yes.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Truly?

ESPERANZA

At certain moments.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Then why, for the love of Christ on the cross, don't you ever tell me so?

ESPERANZA

What?

MIGUEL ANGEL

LOVE!

ESPERANZA

Yes. Well... I love you.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Try to think of it yourself sometimes. I need those words. Badly. Haven't you understood that I will die without them?

ESPERANZA

I thought you would die without... penetration.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I would at that.

ESPERANZA

And alcohol.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Yes, very good Esperanza. You know me now that we've known each other for two months? Now you'll leave me. You won't share my fear with me. Nothing hurts like not being able to share your fear with the one you love.

ESPERANZA

Your fear is like that of an animal's. Blind. Dumb. You're afraid of the air, afraid of Zorro...

MIGUEL ANGEL

Zorro, yes... What a silly idea, linking me – Miguel Angel Escobar de la Sierra – of all people, to the exploiter class that Zorro has pledged to eliminate? Ha ha ha!...

ESPERANZA

If it is to happen, then it had to happen.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I see. Thank you. I feel better.

ESPERANZA is more interested in physical than verbal communication. She begins trying to make love to him, but MIGUEL ANGEL is hardly conscious.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I'm so tired.

ESPERANZA

You're so drunk. I'm going to my room.

MIGUEL ANGEL

You see? I said that you would... It's the devil that won't let us sleep the night together. Devil's woman, don't go. I can't sleep without you.

ESPERANZA

You're already asleep.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I AM NOT.

ESPERANZA breathes a sigh of resignation. The music for "THERE'S A DREAM WAITING FOR YOU" comes up and she sings while cradling her brother.

ESPERANZA

On the other side of closed eyes
In the place where you have lain
There's a dream waiting for you my darling
There's a refuge from the pain

There's the end of loneliness and lies
There's a cool green mountain lake
There's a dream waiting for you my darling
There's escape from the world you hate

There's a red horse called Maja waiting there
A queen among queens with a lion's heart
She'll fly you to battle to repel the invaders
and strike fear in the bowels of Bonaparte

You'll fly with ease; you'll fly for hours
You'll fly over trees and under flowers
You'll land on a mountain of butter soft gold
and fly off to heaven with all you can hold

You'll swim up a rolling river of rye
and drink it down with no nasty consequences
In that dream waiting for you now darling
That caress for all your senses

Carefully laying MIGUEL ANGEL'S head on the pillow, she climbs from the bed.

ESPERANZA

Can you hear your lover calling you now,
like an angel from above?
She's a dream waiting for you my darling
with her siren's song of love

The music continues as she exits, ghost-like, into the black and then it stops. On the next beat, in time, MIGUEL ANGEL lurches up to a sitting position.

MIGUEL ANGEL

No! I let her go. Why oh why? I should have been on my knees with whispered pleas. She might have at least seen me off to real sleep. I have to pay more attention. I never realize how painful it really is until she's out the door. I am bested again.

(he sits at the edge of his bed, looks around glumly)

There is nothing to kiss here... Nothing to drink here.

Strains of the SEÑORES nocturnal salon come wafting up to his room. Gravel-bass vocal notes. An exclamation. A bit of a song.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Aghhh. Yes. They're at it again. The only bar in town. Yes... No! I would have to see them. I would have to... Aghhh... They are only humans. They are flesh and flowing blood like I am. Some are even my own flesh and blood so... I could be polite. There are those two lovely carafes of healing, golden liquids.

(standing up, shivering)

Why should I be proud?

The music rises. The center stage lights come up on the ESCOBAR salon and the SEÑORES in the middle of "REMEMBER WHEN YOU COULD BE PROUD?"

SEÑORES

Remember when you could be proud? Proud to be a man?
When you didn't have to fight for your birthright
Your honor and your land

Remember when you could be proud? Proud of your tradition?
Before this five year night of democratic blight
and Freemason perdition

GENERAL

Is there anybody here who believes that the day is near?
When we'll hail the triumph of tradition
with the holy fire of a new inquisition

Do any of you understand that a new dawn is at hand?
It's time to get ready; it's time to get fit
For Spain is rising from...

MIGUEL ANGEL, shoeless, with a night shirt tucked into his trousers, makes his entry/interruption as in 1-ii. The song comes to a crashing halt.

MIGUEL ANGEL

(flashing his best smile)

Good evening Señores.

The GENERAL makes no effort to hide his displeasure over being cut him off.

ESCOBAR

Miguel Angel.

MIGUEL ANGEL goes straight to the whiskey and pours himself a glassful.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Sip of a... night cap here, uh...

(feigns a toast, drinks greedily, smacks his lips)

I hope I'm not disturbing you.

Silence. MIGUEL ANGEL offers a little bow to his Uncle LUIS which is acknowledged with a nod. MIGUEL ANGEL takes another draught and focuses on THE GENERAL.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Erriget, eriget, rigget... The good soldier Cyc – lops.

GENERAL

It's rather late for you, isn't it?

Offering no reply, MIGUEL ANGEL just stands there nursing his drink while staring blankly through the source of the last words to be spoken.

MORENO

Good God. He's like a baby with a tit!

MIGUEL ANGEL finishes his glass and serves himself another..

MIGUEL ANGEL

S'il vous plait, messieurs. As you were. I appreciate your... kindly carry on!

LUIS

So General; you were saying?

MIGUEL ANGEL

(to the audience)

They always called Jose-Maria Vidal Garrido General. He never had much land...

GENERAL

But mine is one of Spain's most powerful aristocratic families...

MIGUEL ANGEL

Was. Until a long line of female offspring broke it down, spreading their blue blood all over the peninsula. Humping it away, diluting it...

GENERAL

My father, a Cordoba lawyer, was an advisor to Queen Isabella II...

MIGUEL ANGEL

Advisor and lover. But after Isabella was run out of the country, this loyal subject became a partisan of the short-lived first Spanish Republic. He eventually died in an insane asylum in southern France in 1880. Oh fate...

GENERAL

In Morocco I accumulated more wounds than any officer in the history of the...

MIGUEL ANGEL

In an effort to regain lost family honor, the General distinguished himself by losing various parts of his body. The glazed-over eye, uncovered, is worn like a medal. No gloves either, the better to exhibit the two grisly stubs left on his right hand... Eugh! That hand...

(falling back into a chair)

Yes, yes. Je vous en prie... mon generale... Continuez.

GENERAL

(sputtering with anger)

Very well. All right... It's in the hands of the military. We will have to wait for them now, gentlemen, but I can assure you that it is going to happen very soon.

LUIS

You've said that before, in April, I believe. You said that ...

GENERAL

Certain obstacles were not yet overcome! Then. Now they are. Franco is with us, at last. Mola is explicitly implying that the uprising will take place in July at the latest.

MIGUEL ANGEL'S eyes are closed now, but he continues to balance his almost empty glass on his thigh.

ESCOBAR

Excuse me but... What do they expect of us. What are we supposed to do?

All the men jump, despite themselves, as MIGUEL ANGEL'S sleep loosened grip relaxes and the glass finally tumbles over between his legs and onto the seat of the armchair where it stays, dripping what whiskey hasn't splattered his trousers onto the leather upholstery.

GENERAL

(at wits' end)

You are supposed to be patient. That's what they expect.

ESCOBAR

But then...

GENERAL

It's obvious! Seizing public buildings, securing lines of communication, preparing a declaration. Quick and violent. Administration of exemplary punishments.

ESCOBAR

What about Zorro? Captain?

MORENO

Well yes, of course. Uh, it's obvious that he is working for the anarchists.

LUIS

But the C.N.T. rejects him, in big headlines. They call him an agent provocateur. The bastards condemn his every act asking why he kills the hired instead of the hirers?

MIGUEL ANGEL stirs. The movement is enough to send the glass the rest of the way to the edge of his seat and on to the hardwood floor where the sound of its breaking reverberates painfully and seems to wake MIGUEL ANGEL up.

MIGUEL ANGEL

(mumbling)

Uh hmm. Yes the hirers... Give him time... Give him time.

Blackout.

scene vi

The lights come up on a young PRIEST – Father Pelado y Redondo – pattering around the sacristy. He lines up the gold plated books so the spines are all flush. He rolls the wax from the candelabrum into snakes and balls. He looks up suddenly; he's heard a noise. Slowly, he turns around. ZORRO's presence three feet away from him gives the PRIEST a terrible start. The masked man in black is pointing a pistol at the gasping PRIEST's face. The violin melody of the "ANDALUSIAN ZORRO SONG" comes up in the background.

ZORRO
(hoarse, impatient)

Open the safe.

PRIEST
May I ask who...

ZORRO
Shut up priest. Do as I say or die.

PRIEST
(smiling despite himself)
Die? I thought that that happened when I came to this town. Isn't this heaven?

ZORRO cocks the revolver.

PRIEST
O.K. All right. Go easy there with your... thing Señor. But seriously, how can...

ZORRO raises the gun to strike the man with it.

PRIEST
All right! Just... Just a moment... I...

With a motion like a fencer's lunge, ZORRO drives his gun barrel full force into the other man's ribs.

PRIEST
(howling, falling to his knees)
Aghhh! Oh God.

ZORRO
Move priest. Open it now or I will strike you again, before killing you.

PRIEST

It was already open! You didn't let me...

ZORRO

Shut up! Fill the sack.

The PRIEST complies. Candelabras, chalices, coins, etc.

ZORRO

I am Zorro. You, Pelado y Redondo, are scum. If you don't watch yourself. If you don't change your ways: If you go to the authorities about this before noon tomorrow, you can rest assured that I will be back here to hammer your kneecaps off. Both of them. I am out of patience and so is history.

The "ANDALUSIAN ZORRO SONG" comes up full force and ZORRO sings his refrain.

ZORRO

I will march with the righteous down the glorious path
I will mete out peoples' justice finely dressed in black
I'm the instrument of history and the martyrs' wrath
AWAY FROM ME YE CURSED! Lest I break your back

Hypocrites, clergy and ruling class scum
Hearken to the sound coming from my gun
You can crawl where you will to find asylum
But I'll track you by the line of slime you leave behind
and send all you sinners to kingdom come

Kingdom come

Outro, as his deliberately slow exit is combined with a couple of dance steps. Blackout.

ACT THREE

scene i

There's second bed, at the top of a second flight of stairs, stage left. The lights come up to reveal IGNACIO twisted up in it's yellowed sheets. His once carefully combed hair hangs in greasy strings and he's soaking in his perspiration. He addresses the audience:

IGNACIO

What a mess! You need to understand that. A wicked mess. And yet, it could have been so right, so good, if we had just been left alone to straighten things out at home, to tend our own garden... If only! Ha ha ha. "Tend your own garden"? Stupid peasant dream, stupid... Wait!

(he sits up straight)

You need to understand the situation in that spring of 1936, correctly. Spain was dead set on... de te de dumm: Breaking out into civil war. And everybody was going in for their respective lick. How to describe it without waxing poetic? Ha ha! Impossible... So imagine a volcano, long past its dormant stage, burning steadily inside, building incessantly for that final, inevitable... release. The makings of a bloody orgasm.

Stop. Just stop. The sexual metaphor is frankly frivolous. Try harder.

How about a wooden house whose basement is smoldering, feeding on the refuse for which it has served as a depository for ages. Bits of smoke seep through to the upstairs, but most of the people there are too busy arguing to stop it. Some are delighted though, and encourage the beast producing the smoke by augmenting their garbage output and breaking a cellar window in order to get oxygen in to nourish the foetal flames... Foetal flames?

Yes. In the last three years I have learned a lot of words. A lot of things. I speak well... Foetal flames. In the basement... Outside. People on the outside may have noticed the smoke, but most of them have no idea how to get into the house and effectively indicate the danger to its inhabitants. Most of them have their own troubles anyway. Few understand the house's inhabitants and those who think they do, well, they look on; they drool and dream, occasionally feeding combustibles to the smoking mess that's just aching to get out and up to a good hold on those curtains, those carpets, and walls... No! Not good enough! There's no sense of the elements involved, responsibility. I'm too tired...

Try this: A pair of drugged cocks spitting at each other as their building frenzy weakens the tethers keeping them from each other as long as... But who provided them with the drugs? Who tied them up? Above all: WHERE IS THE SENSE OF RIGHT AND WRONG? GOOD VERSUS EVIL! Without that, the metaphor can't possibly ring true. We were the sons of the people. We lived in a world of

grief in which they made slaves of us and we fought that oppression. We were what is noble in man. GOOD AGAINST BAD!

I'm sorry. I can't. Let me quote Antonio Machado, who couldn't either:

*Little Spaniard coming into the world
Beware of God
One of the two Spains
Will chill your heart*

I tried... In Bracera we tried. We took over some of the unfarmed lands and we stopped working those that the owners wanted us to work. They would arrest us. They would try to connect us with various plots and Zorro murders but they couldn't make any charges stick. Zorro still hadn't killed a señor or a señorito, but he was painting their death sentences on walls all over town:

*REVOLUTIONARY VIOLENCE NOW
DEATH IS THE ACT – THE ACT IS PROPAGANDA
DEATH TO THE OPPRESSOR*

He brained a Civil Guard with his rifle butt and shot another in the stomach while trying to rescue several of our comrades from jail. The comrades refused to move, thinking it a fascist trap. He got in the way. He wrote me a letter.

IGNACIO lays back down, exhausted. The lights reveal ZORRO standing stage right:

ZORRO

Ignacio, Comrade:

I am with you. Your struggle is mine. Do not make unfounded declarations about me. Your enemy is mine. I will fight them to the death. I can provide you with funds. I can provide you with information. I must have your assistance in order to assist you. When you are in prison, so am I. When you are hungry, I am starving. I am history's instrument. I am your instrument. Do not reject me.

IGNACIO

We didn't quite know what to do with the man. We weren't much practiced in elimination... at the time

Blackout.

scene ii

The lights come back up on MIGUEL ANGEL and ESPERANZA in their bed, thrashing around in the sheets. They stop.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Yes! That's a pretty one. On such an excruciatingly beautiful back. Voila! A red snake trail. What a creation! But art can't last forever. This one's only good for a week. C'est la vie. Do you like it?

ESPERANZA

I can't see it.

MIGUEL ANGEL

But do you like how it feels? That cold sting.

ESPERANZA

You know that I do.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Yes. Yes darling. It's your favorite caress. And one of mine too. But it's failing me now. I am sans erection! I am still outside!

(grabbing at her more violently)

Please get on with it. SEDUCE ME!

ESPERANZA

I can't. You can't... stop. That's not good. Stop!... I feel as sexual as dirt when you are like this... Drink something.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Good God above, it's an historic moment! You want me to have another drink!

He takes a long swig of whiskey and throws part of it back up over the side of the bed.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Take me in your mouth!

She slaps him hard in the face. MIGUEL ANGEL collapses in the bed with a miserable sigh. The music for "THERE'S A DREAM WAITING FOR YOU", the lullaby, comes up, more sketchy this time. ESPERANZA sings:

ESPERANZA

On the other side of closed eyes
In the place where you have lain
There's a dream waiting for you my darling
There's a refuge from the pain

There's the end of loneliness and lies
There's a cool green mountain lake
There's a dream waiting for you my darling
There's escape from the world of hate

So go to your lover; she's calling you now
with her siren's song of love
She's waiting for you in a dream my darling
with her angel's song from above

The Red Maja is saddled and prancing
She's waiting to take you there
Waiting for you in a dream my darling
She will take you anywhere

He dozes off, but then he begins talking in his sleep, interrupting the song. His speech is slow and deliberate, slightly gruff, in marked contrast to his usual flighty tone:

MIGUEL ANGEL

TO HELL! To hell with drink. To hell with that. To hell with this.

The music stops. His sits up and opens his eyes.

MIGUEL ANGEL

To hell with Zorro.

ESPERANZA

Yes... Miguel Angel, you were sleeping. You can sleep... I have to go.

MIGUEL ANGEL

(his normal voice back)

No please I, I wasn't sleeping. It just felt good to close my eyes...
You are a vicious snake. You leave me out and then you leave.

The music comes up for "WAITING FOR RAIN". MIGUEL ANGEL gets out of bed and dresses. ESPERANZA sings as she walks away:

ESPERANZA

I don't know that face; I don't know those eyes
I don't know if it's him or the devil in disguise
In the place of vision there's a wall of alcohol

MIGUEL ANGEL

And the only sound I'm sure of is the sound of my fall

ESPERANZA exits.

MIGUEL ANGEL

There's a hole inside me where nothing will grow
There's an arid plot lying fallow
I'm waiting for life; I'm waiting for rain
But it looks like a desert and it feels like pain

Dressed, he heads down the stairs to the usual bar where PILAR picks up the song.

PILAR

He's dry as a bone so he comes here to moan
and with death in his breath, he begs for a loan
The silver spoon in his mouth could sure water his snout
but it's caught in his throat and he can't rip it out

MIGUEL ANGEL

There's a hell inside me where nothing will grow
Black rocks lie smoking where a river used to flow
I'm waiting for life, Lord I'm dying for rain
but that desert inside me is all thirst and pain

MIGUEL ANGEL/PILAR

I'm waiting for life; I'm waiting for rain
But it looks like a desert and it feels like pain
I'm waiting for life; God I'm praying for rain
Because that desert inside me is all thirst and pain
I'm waiting for life; I'm waiting for rain
but that desert inside me is all that remains

He sits down next to her. The two SEÑORITOS there hardly acknowledge his arrival. He raises his open hand to them in the straight-armed, fascist salute with a big smile.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I'll have a scotch on the rocks... Thank you Mario.

There's no reply. It's as if he hasn't spoken.

PILAR

I'll take care of it Mario.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I used to be able to force thoughts and words to take the place of food. And alcohol. In London I could drink and think and forget that I had an empty stomach. And when I say drink, I mean alcohol now. Not beer. Not that English maker of ugliness – spare useless flesh, bloated faces, complacent throats. I mean alcohol with a blade to it – a drop on your tongue and you know it's there. Eighty proof. Proof that there is a God, a real one, damn it, not this one: Not ours. Not the prissy, pathetic, pink prancer that has done all this. Not the cur that has forsaken me.

The waiter brings the whiskey. MIGUEL ANGEL downs it in a gulp and bangs the glass on the table.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Another.

The WAITER looks at PILAR. She shakes her head. MIGUEL ANGEL digs angrily in his pockets, comes up with a few coins and slaps them down on the table. The WAITER sizes them up and walks away without a word. MIGUEL ANGEL thoughtfully holds his glass to his lips:

MIGUEL ANGEL

Oh God...

(then smashing the glass down again)

Now I can't drink enough. I can hardly erect! Pilar. Pilar!

PILAR

What is it?

MIGUEL ANGEL

Take me to your room.

PILAR

Get yourself a wife.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Please.

PILAR

I won't be a scab. I won't do it for free.

MIGUEL ANGEL

You did once.

PILAR

Twice...

MIGUEL ANGEL

(dreamily raising the glass again)

My God in heaven: I'm going to die.

PILAR

Hush! Maybe tonight, darling. Maybe tonight.

MIGUEL ANGEL

No! I can't wait until tonight. No. Not tonight... My exposure will be too high.

ANTONIO, in his Falangist blue shirt, walks in.

ANTONIO

(unsmiling)

Hello... cousin...

MIGUEL ANGEL

(with his head in his hands, looking down)

Who is it?

SEÑORITO 1

One of these days we're going to have to clean up this bar.

SEÑORITO 2

We're going to have to give it back to Spain. There's no place in Spain for drunken faggots and their little whores.

MIGUEL ANGEL

(quietly)

To hell with faggots.

ANTONIO

Shut up Mario. Shut up Miguel Angel.

MIGUEL ANGEL

(more intense)

To hell with all of you.

SEÑORITO 1

What's this? The faggot's showing his balls? It's a miracle. He must be thirsty.

PILAR

(taking MIGUEL ANGEL'S hand)

That's enough. Hush.

MIGUEL ANGEL

(louder still, raspy)

To hell with drink. To hell with whores.

(rips his hand from hers stands and screams)

TO HELL WITH ALL OF THIS! This moral wreckage! This inequity! THIS SHAM!

With his eyes wide open and unfocused, he scrambles towards the door stage left, tipping over a table in the process. As he exits the bar into the dusty street the sudden white glare of the midday sun delivers a terrible blow to his abrupt surge of strength: His muscles go liquid and he collapses in a heap. It's as if an invisible beam has caught him in the head and knocked it back over the rest of his body.

As PILAR goes to her ersatz sweetheart, the stage fades to black.

scene iii

"THE ANDALUSIAN ZORRO SONG" music comes up. ZORRO is alone, in the middle of the stage. He sings his refrain:

ZORRO

Idle rich, hypocrites and sacerdotal scum
Now you see what I mean and you've seen what I've done
Your soul's in a noose and you're on the run
for there's a lot more rope where that came from

The simple song of vengeance coming from my gun
is the last song you'll ever hear so pay attention
By the light of the moon or the rising sun
Have faith ye cursed, your bullet will come

By the light of the moon or the rising sun
you'll regret your filthy life had ever begun
And if you try slinking back into your sacrarium
I'll dog the trail of slime that you worms leave behind
and blow you oppressors all to kingdom come
It's 1936... Let history's will be done

The verse part in instrumental. The lights come up on delirious IGNACIO in his sick bed above stage left. He'll join ZORRO for a singing exchange:

ZORRO

I march with the righteous down the glorious path
I mete out peoples' justice finely dressed in black

IGNACIO

Peoples' justice like his was an unfunny laugh
But we loved the silly costume, the mask and the hat

ZORRO

I am the instrument of history and the martyrs' wrath
Away from me ye cursed! Lest I break your back!

IGNACIO

He thought he'd play Moses to the golden calf
as he tried to wreak carnage on our behalf
Drained from a brain that was deeply cracked
his words were the drivel of a psychopath

ZORRO

Hypocrites, clergy and ruling class scum
Hearken to the aria coming from my gun
You can crawl where you will to find asylum
 But I'll track you by the line of slime you leave behind
 and send all you sinners to kingdom come

The instrumental outro continues while shedding various instruments and simplifying.
The lights fade on IGNACIO. ESPERANZA enters. ZORRO watches as she sings to a
tune that springs from the violin melody: "MAN'S BLOOD MOVES A WOMAN'S
ASIDE."

ESPERANZA

We are surrounded by men
It's sad when boys become them
Mind and body degeneration
When the woman gets driven out of them

Swelling flesh collects under the chin
Thick hair sprouts from virgin skin
Voices fatten feeding on smoke and gin
When the father moves the mother out of him

As the hair thins so does the love
It's easier when he hates
That is the rise in him of
his father and a father's traits

As the belly bloats so does the pride
When a man's blood pushes a woman's aside
It might take both to help a man thrive
But a man's blood moves a woman's aside

ZORRO begins shadowing her as she moves. She doesn't notice him.

ESPERANZA

As the fear grows so does the pride
When a man's blood pushes a woman's aside
He might need both to stay alive
But a man's blood moves a woman's aside

The music comes to an end. ZORRO jumps in front of her and stays rooted to the spot.

ZORRO

(a hoarse whisper)

I am Zorro. I would like you to arrange a meeting between myself and...

ESPERANZA

Could you speak up please.

ZORRO

...between myself and Ignacio Delgado. A meeting.

ESPERANZA

Yes.

ESPERANZA walks to the apron stage left, stops, and turns to face the audience. Lights out on ZORRO. It becomes night. The lights return to IGNACIO in his sick bed.

IGNACIO

She came to me, on a horse. "Nice horse," I said. "But you loved Maja, Ignacio," she replied. How did she remember that? How could she even know?

ESPERANZA

I remember. I loved Maja too. I knew all about your pact, the "Brotherhood."

IGNACIO

I was amazed. I was impressed. I was...Oh Esperanza...

(no longer ill sounding)

Did your brother tell you about that?

ESPERANZA

No. He doesn't know that I know it.

IGNACIO

It was a joke. It didn't mean anything. Why are you doing this?

ESPERANZA

He asked me to.

The "ANALUSIAN ZORRO SONG" instrumental comes up as ESPERANZA exits. IGNACIO climbs out of bed, dresses, combs his hair and makes himself presentable, as in June of 1936. He quickly descends the stairs to the stage where a light comes up to reveal ZORRO, still planted in the middle of it. IGNACIO begins tracing the semi-circle path that he'll pace throughout their conversation. The man in black's only movement is the flick of his wrist that sends a leather satchel to the ground before IGNACIO – that and the rotating head whose eyes stay glued on his interlocutor.

ZORRO

That is from the church. There is more.

IGNACIO remains silent.

ZORRO

Listen to me. You can trust me. I am at your service, at the service of revolutionary justice. I am here to punish the evil-doers and stem the tide of injustice...

IGNACIO says nothing.

ZORRO

The fascists are going to try to take power.

IGNACIO

Oh really? I wasn't aware of that.

ZORRO

In July. It is therefore necessary to eliminate all potential leaders in the enemy camp. Now! While it is still possible to do so. Here and all over Spain.

IGNACIO

Like that. Shoot 'em all.

ZORRO

Yes, if you can. If it can be done. I am here to help you. That is why I exist. I...

IGNACIO

All right. I hear you. Your God's gift to the laboring masses.

ZORRO

That's what you say.

IGNACIO

(stops again, for a second, whispers)

Oh Mother of God breathing on... It's Jesus Christ himself!

ZORRO

(forever oblivious)

Please. Listen now. I know who the key contact is and I must advise his immediate execution.

IGNACIO

We'll take care of Antonio Escobar...

ZORRO

No. It's General...

IGNACIO

Vidal Garrido? That fossil?

ZORRO

It is he. The link to the army. He'll decide when and where you are to be shot. It is not a revolution, it is a military take-over that will be followed by a purification program. The young only make noise. The General... I will take care of him.

IGNACIO

NO! Stop! Don't lift a finger. You've done enough damage already.

(picking up the sack)

The deed is done. Don't do it again. We are not thieves. We are workers. This money; these jewels have meaning only to the owners, the true thieves. These things belong to a language that we don't speak. We will not be poisoned by them. It's better to burn a church than to rob it...

Now crawl back into your hole and stay there. We'll let you know if we need you.

Blackout.

scene iv

The lights come up on MIGUEL ANGEL and ESPERANZA in their bed again.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Do you love me?

ESPERANZA

He asks for the eighty-ninth time.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Do you love me?

ESPERANZA

Ninety... No. I don't believe I do.

MIGUEL ANGEL

(to the audience)

At last. I had been waiting to hear that for weeks. The diamond drill entry into the heart. The searing agony that I knew was coming but... The hell of anticipation has finally come to an end. Release. Aghhh God! You've done it to me again!

(he rolls off the bed, lands on the floor and lies still)

Why?

ESPERANZA

You know why, Miguel Angel. Love stems from; no, love is sex and courage – is at least that. You have no courage, and I am incapable of taking you inside me now.

She exits. He crawls to the edge of the bed's platform and speaks to the audience:

MIGUEL ANGEL

Every once in a while, unfortunately, I see her like I first saw her the night I arrived. I stand before her sun-browned face and the shining black hair that she was holding back with one hand, thin fingers like golden chains. The woman's body pushing out from within the night dress; the black eyes in a one quarter smile; what I knew was the exterior manifestation of an incandescent heart. Esperanza. From that moment I... When I first saw her I hoped for heaven, but I never dreamed that the next day I would find my sexual parts warmly embedded in hers. That was miraculous and that is why the pain is choking me now. I have tried, but I haven't managed to put my heart and my soul to sleep. I hate myself. I hate Esperanza. I hate this life. It was already so cruelly thin with her; how could it have any worthy substance without her? How could I?

A light comes up on ZORRO, standing stage right, below MIGUEL ANGEL.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I am going to have to kill myself a little faster.

ZORRO

Or have yourself killed.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Yes, of course. But what will you do when I'm dead.

ZORRO

Nothing, obviously, except live on in the hearts and minds of the people... and in the worst fears of the exploiter classes. That is enough.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Do you love my sister?

ZORRO

That wouldn't be part of my purpose.

MIGUEL ANGEL

She used to be part of mine, of me. Now she is breaking my heart.

ZORRO

She helped you to hide. That is all.

MIGUEL ANGEL

She gave me a place to hide. That is love. Then she took it away. That is death.

ZORRO

That is weakness, nothing else. Not important. Hunger, injustice and war are important. Your tears are for yourself, as is your love for her. You are useless.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I gave you life.

ZORRO

You had no choice... Now you serve no purpose on this earth.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Did you tell her that? Did you tell her that?

ZORRO exits. The lights come up on the Escobar dining table around which SEÑORA ESCOBAR is once pattering while singing her work song.

SEÑORA

La la la ladies cleaning la la ladies
Da da da don't forget the mold in the sink
Ya ya ya your house is your home is your ha ha hades
and you... da da da don't want it to stink
You, ya ya ma ma...
Miguel Angel!... Your... ba ba ba breakfast is ready.
Oh, oh oh no, you don't, no no no noooo
Your family needs somewhere to go go go gooo
And you.... And ya ya ya you who who who da da do do

MIGUEL ANGEL stumbles down the stairs and takes his place before a steaming bowl of coffee. He adds a good dose of cognac to it. He takes his head in his hands and stares at it.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Still no milk. It's been weeks since I've seen milk.

SEÑORA

(cheerfully)

Yes, yes. Isn't that something! I can hardly remember what color it is. Milk!

MIGUEL ANGEL

I've been betrayed.

SEÑORA

Yes dear. We'll have ma ma ma milk again soon.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I've been betrayed by myself and by everyone else.

SEÑORA

I don't believe that I have betrayed you my son. No, I don't think I have.

MIGUEL ANGEL

That's true... You haven't betrayed me Mama... But she has. She has. She gave me life. She gave me Esperanza... I'm sorry mother. Nobody's clean here.

ESPERANZA breezes in, dressed for her ride.

MIGUEL ANGEL

(smiling)

Oh those boots! She's come to walk on my face... You know you are wrong to do this to me. You are lacking in compassion.

His voice is different – slurless, dryer. ESPERANZA holds a finger to her lips to silence him. He just shakes the sign off and raises his voice:

MIGUEL ANGEL

He could care less about a lovely freckle on so sweet a clitoris. He doesn't...

ESPERANZA slaps her hand over his lips. Their mother, back in her own hemisphere by then, can't help but hear the popping sound of her daughter's hand on her son's mouth.

SEÑORA

Children! Don't fight at the table.

Having done her job, she goes back to the lettuce leaves she's been fiddling with.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Thank you. That was nice
(after a pause)

You hurt me.

ESPERANZA

You hurt yourself.

MIGUEL ANGEL

(a child's taunt)

He won't be there today!
Doesn't want her anyway!
She'll go unfucked another day!

She raises her hand again. The threat is enough to silence him.

ESPERANZA

(smiling, quietly)

Who?

MIGUEL ANGEL

Zorro.

ESPERANZA

Poor Miguel Angel. It must be torture to know as much as you know.

MIGUEL ANGEL

It is, yes. Very painful.

ESPERANZA

But Zorro was yesterday. Today is Ignacio. And tomorrow, who knows?

MIGUEL ANGEL

Ignacio? No. You are wrong. You think you are going to see Zorro today. But you won't... I... won't let you.

She studies his face. There is no alcohol in his voice.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Why did you mention Ignacio? Were you letting something slip. Is he the one giving you sex while Zorro gives you courage or visa versa?

ESPERANZA

(sighing)

Oh Miguel Angel...

MIGUEL ANGEL

Now I can see how you managed to close the door with such ease. Assassin. He's giving you a... hand. But I'll wager that his tongue doesn't soothe the delicate corners that mine does. Did.

ESPERANZA

(kindly)

Please. Don't do this.

MIGUEL ANGEL

(head in hands, to bowl)

Oh, why did my love have to be so hard?

The music for "IF THERE'S A GOD" rises as ESPERANZA gets up from the table. MIGUEL ANGEL sings:

MIGUEL ANGEL

If you don't love me what are you doing alive?
Why aren't you even doing time?
You can fall for any line but you never will find
a heart that's bigger and better than mine

It's gut-gnawing, soul-mauling, ungodly unfair
It's a negation of all that is good
If some God were really looking down from up there
He'd strike you down like a good God should

If there's a God, why haven't you haven't been hit by lightning?
How can you still be alive and well?
If there's a God, why hasn't he done the right thing?
Why aren't you sweating blood in hell?

ESPERANZA exits. The music's tempo accelerates:

You couldn't ride the storm in a love like an ocean
so big and boundless it made you sick
You couldn't ride the waves and the foaming emotion
so like a rat you abandoned ship

This truth is wide as the sky and right as you're wrong
This truth is rich as any Rockefeller
Oh hear the voice of reason screaming from this song
You and me were meant to be together

If there's a God, why haven't you been hit by lightning?
How can you still be alive and well?
If there's a devil why aren't you spending day and night with him?
Why aren't you sweating blood in hell?

MIGUEL ANGEL takes his head in his hands again. The stage slowly fades to black.

scene v

The lights come up stage left. ZORRO, with a shotgun, walks deliberately up to a door, knocks and backs up. An elderly maid answers, sees him and screams. This naturally rouses THE GENERAL from his siesta.

GENERAL
(from the inside)

What is it?

(limps to the door, sees the maid on her knees)

What is the matter ? Crazy lady, stand up! For the love of...

(sees ZORRO)

Oh. It's you. In the middle of the day? You repugnant imbecile! I...

ZORRO

Shut up.

GENERAL
(moving towards ZORRO)

Pardon me? What did you just say?

ZORRO empties both barrels into the old man's chest. The maid is whining hysterically.

ZORRO

(to the maid)

Comrade. Silence. I do this for the people. I do this for you. You have sent me to this destiny. It is your finger on this trigger. Now get up and breathe the cleansed air! The servant is greater than the lord. Be proud to have witnessed history.

(turning to the audience)

Be proud to witness the progress of humanity. You, the living, are fortunate. Some of you will see the new day dawn. Some of you will even labor to assure that day's arrival. Others, those that have hated me, have hated the revolution: They shall not partake of its fruit. They shall be judged accordingly. They shall be spat out! In a little while, you shall see me no more. The end of my time on this earth is nigh but my soul will breath forever in the winds of freedom sweeping across this land..

The final struggle is at hand.

Blackout.

ACT FOUR

scene i

July 18, 1936. A phone is ringing. The lights come up on a government OFFICIAL, facing the audience behind a large desk, stage right. He's dialed a number and is waiting for an answer. Suddenly there's noise from stage left – shouts, shots, church bells. A door slams. The lights come up on the office phone that's been ringing – stage left – and an out-of-breath SEÑORITO answers it.

SEÑORITO

Hello! What is it?

OFFICIAL

Jerez? Hello Jerez?

SEÑORITO

Yes! What is it?

OFFICIAL

It... This is Madrid. The Ministry of the Interior. How is it with you?

SEÑORITO

Come see for yourself, you bastards.
(making the straight-armed salute)
¡Arriba Espana!

The SEÑORITO exits. The OFFICIAL dials another number. The phone rings again. The background noise continues. An army OFFICER enters to answer:

OFFICER

Lieutenant Alonso speaking.

OFFICIAL

Yes. Hello. Interior here, in Madrid...

OFFICER

Not for long red dogs!

He hangs up, laughing. The OFFICIAL shakes his head and dials another number while making notes. The phone rings again. This time a CAMPESINO runs in to answer it:

CAMPESINO
(yelling over the din)

¡Salud! Hello.

OFFICIAL
Hello Bracera? Hello. Is that the train station? Hello?

CAMPESINO
Hello?

OFFICIAL
(shouting)
Hello! This is Madrid: The Ministry of the Interior. Who's in charge there?

CAMPESINO
Madrid? Hello?

OFFICIAL
Hello Bracera! Has the army been about down there?

CAMPESINO
Well, no. I don't... We've had trouble, but we haven't seen any soldiers. In any event, the railroad station is definitely with the people!

OFFICIAL
Very well. I, uh...

CAMPESINO
(hanging up, raising a clenched fist)
LONG LIVE ANARCHY! ¡Salud!

OFFICIAL
Yes thank you. Uh, Long Live the... Republic.

The OFFICIAL hangs up as well, slowly. Black out. Then lights come up on IGNACIO, in his hospital-bed above stage left.

IGNACIO
Of course. We took Bracera. How could it have been otherwise? Lacking even a minimum of mass support or serious leadership, our fascists had to fail. And they had no advance warning; the General's "high level" contacts apparently gone to the grave with him. We were ready. We greeted their golpe with our revolution. Expropriation. Occupation. It was beautiful and true... A rash of Zorro-authored wall slogans appeared the night before it began. The Escobar family was at the top of his hit list with special attention paid to the village idiot – Miguel Angel.

The lights come up on ESPERANZA and MIGUEL ANGEL, completely dressed, sitting on the other bed facing the audience.

ESPERANZA

Our home was occupied on the second day...

The lights come up on ESCOBAR and his wife below in the middle of the stage.

ESCOBAR

These peasants can get to me anytime they want. I'll be damned if I have to speak to them in my underclothes. Damned!

ESPERANZA

My father's worsening odor testified both to the nervous sweat he bathed in, and the fact that he didn't dare take off his clothes, not even to sleep or wash.

SEÑORA

(still cheerful)

I sleep all the time. Oh, I still get up every morning at 7:00; you can be sure of that. But then there is nothing to do. So it's ba ba ba back to be be be bed at eight.

ESPERANZA

I wasn't allowed out of the house alone. But Ignacio let me visit Moquino as long as he accompanied me there.

Lights out on all but IGNACIO.

IGNACIO

(more feverish)

In the beginning... I would never have imagined such a thing. How could I have? She was beyond my reach. She was their daughter and his sister... She came to me. I expected nothing. I asked for nothing. But I received everything! You can't imagine what Esperanza taking my sex in her hands meant. And so tenderly, with such honor and respect! What unearthly power has love!

That kind of intimate kiss was more liberation than God or revolution could ever give a man. I was made to live by that act! And now it accelerates my death process. My blood moves more quickly and quickens the spread of this infection.

Lights out on IGNACIO. Lights up on ESPERANZA and MIGUEL ANGEL.

ESPERANZA

Miguel Angel just sat quietly in his room. Transformed. Calm. The shell was the same, but after July 18th, I didn't recognize what was inside it.

MIGUEL ANGEL

(his voice tired and sober)

It is all for the best. At last I can rest. This is the way it had to be. I am going the way of history.

ESPERANZA

(moving closer to him)

Is it "God's will?"

MIGUEL ANGEL

If you like... What are you doing?

ESPERANZA

I suppose I was looking for your smell. I miss it.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I see. What is my smell like?

ESPERANZA

Like you. Like your skin. Bitter. I remember it from your sheets, especially. It's not nice or pretty; it's just intoxicating. I miss it.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I see. The primitive person poisoned by the invader. Your Indian teeth rotted by my sugar, your body by my pox, your brain by my alcohol and your soul by my capitalism. I've created in you new needs. Now you miss my smell. I see.

ESPERANZA

Yes... and your affection.

MIGUEL ANGEL

My affection. A few months ago you didn't know or need this affection. I see.

ESPERANZA

They've outlawed alcohol now... and coffee and prostitution. They're doing a lot.

MIGUEL ANGEL

There is a lot to be done.

ESPERANZA

They're in a hurry. Cordoba was taken by the insurgents. The army advances daily.

MIGUEL ANGEL

The fascists in Cordoba. I see. We will be disposed of soon.

ESPERANZA

Unless... There's still Ignacio.

MIGUEL ANGEL

What about Ignacio? He has his duty.

ESPERANZA

I don't know. You haven't done anything. You haven't done any harm.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I am harm. Don't you see that?

ESPERANZA

Enough of that nonsense... What about you, don't you miss my affection?

She forces a long hard kiss on him, pushes him back onto the bed and straddles him. He lays still, unresistant and uninvolved.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I contaminated you.

ESPERANZA

Who are you?

MIGUEL ANGEL

I am Miguel Angel Escobar de la Sierra y Boiron, señorito. That is why I am a prisoner in my house and I haven't long to live. Are you going to rape me?

ESPERANZA

I can't. I would, if I could but it can't be done. It's not fair... And I can't even find your smell.

MIGUEL ANGEL

What do you think Zorro smelled like?... He smelled like me. If you had ever made it to his neck, I'm sure you would have noticed this. And now Zorro is dead. His smell is that of decay. Have you noticed? He and I were one, once.

ESPERANZA

I see. You should tell Ignacio about it. It might help us.

MIGUEL ANGEL

He has his role to play. Mine is to let him play it.

ESPERANZA

(angrily rising to leave)

I can't stand this.

MIGUEL ANGEL

There. You've smelled it, haven't you? It's revolting, isn't it? It burns the nostrils. That's Zorro's decay... He and I were one, once.

ESPERANZA exits. The lights go out on MIGUEL ANGEL in his bed as they come back up on IGNACIO in his.

IGNACIO

(in delirious rage)

She loved me! She did the sweet thing that she did because she cared for me. She was... She was my first and only love and that was a love that went beyond, beyond death. My organs work together. You can't separate my sex from my heart. You can't do that to Esperanza either. One body inside another, that's sacred. That's the truth and nothing can change it. Esperanza loved me...

(calmer)

I did what I had to do. With the army only two days from Bracera, we had to act. Anything but retreat would have been suicide. So we became soldiers... First fighting for the Revolution, then for the Republic, then for our lives. I'm fighting for mine now...

(he spits)

But we couldn't just leave our prisoners to reinforce the fascist rebellion. And yes, as Zorro would have said, there was justice to pay. Zorro. Yes. All right, I understood. I understood that morning when I walked out my door and saw his latest black paint exhortation on the wall before me:

¡VIVA LA HERMANDAD DE LA MAJA ROJA!

Long live the Brotherhood of the Red Maja. I understood. Yes. I thought about it. God, of course I did! I waited for a solution, something... but nothing came. I had responsibilities! I had to do what I had to do!

Blackout.

scene ii

It's dawn on a rise outside Bracera overlooking the yellow Andalusian plain. Several CAMPESINOS, including IGNACIO, are organizing the execution of the ESCOBAR brothers, MIGUEL ANGEL, Captain MORENO – who is badly wounded – and a couple SEÑORITOS. ESPERANZA and her mother are there, forced to watch.

CAMPESINO 1

A last lesson for the rich...

CAMPESINO 2

A taste of nature's glory for those who have never known or respected it. These parasites who have never had to see a sunrise in their sorry lives.

CAMPESINO 1

Something to take to hell with you.

MORENO

You don't even believe in hell.

IGNACIO

We don't, but you do. So take this sun rising over our land there with you.

The prisoners are set up in a line. MIGUEL ANGEL walks with grace and dignity, a smile on his face. His father has to be pushed forward as he's gasping for air.

SEÑORA

But they're not going to fire on them. No. No. They are not going to do that. No...

ESPERANZA has to restrain her mother as the woman takes a step towards the prisoners.

SEÑORA

(with supplication now)

Why?

MIGUEL ANGEL eyes the two women calmly. IGNACIO walks up to ESPERANZA.

IGNACIO

I'm sorry.

SEÑORA

(screaming)

I'm sorry!

ESPERANZA

(staring at Miguel Angel)

Ignacio, if you are truly sorry then you are truly wrong.

MIGUEL ANGEL

(happily raising a clenched fist)

LONG LIVE THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE RED MAJA!

A round of machine gun fire. The lights go out except for a light on MIGUEL ANGEL. The music for the "ANDALUSIAN ZORRO SONG" comes up. He's happy. He sings:

MIGUEL ANGEL

Oh the girl that I marry will tire of holding my hand
She'll have the saddest black eyes in the land

Oh the girl that I marry will want to sleep alone in her room
But she'll always think of me when she looks at the moon

ZORRO appears from stage right. He shuffles in behind MIGUEL ANGEL, copying his moves like a shadow.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Oh I can see her shining with her bitter-sugar smile
I can hear her cracking her hair like whips

I can feel the venom in her heart and the honey in her bile
I can taste the long love that she'll lay on my lips

Here it comes. Here it comes.
Here it comes. Here it comes.

ZORRO jumps in front of MIGUEL ANGEL to sing his refrain:

ZORRO

(tired)

Profligate parasites and sick religions
Your legs will snap like weak convictions
Dig yourself a hole to cross the Styx in
For redemption will never come

You rats with wings, you pigeons
You deserve more than the simple death affliction
Go to Hell since you hold that it's no fiction
And there will be no redemption when you roast in your invention
My will will be done when you burn like dung
It's 1936 time to cross the River Styx
Redemption will never come

MIGUEL ANGEL, works his way back to the front, never breaking contact with ZORRO. Their ballet continues. They fuse.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Oh the girl that I marry will sing like the rain
She'll have long thin fingers like a silver chain

She'll be a hundred years old and look like twenty-nine
She'll take over my longing, she'll move in on my mind

Cream skin velvet will surround, her honest and angry heart
Wrapping me there in my refuge, in a soul like a work of art

I'll love her like the end of the world. she'll make me laugh and cry
A holocaust of humanity, she'll make me unafraid to die

Here she comes. When it comes.
Here she comes. When it comes.
(with ZORRO in harmony)
Here it comes. Here it comes.
Here it comes. Here it comes.

The two sing the refrain together: ZORRO, drained. MIGUEL ANGEL, insouciant:

MIGUEL ANGEL/ZORRO

Our father who art in heaven, or hell
To hell with thy name
On earth, from birth all the way to expiation

Our father who art in heaven, or hell
To hell with thy game
On earth, from birth all the way to expiration

Here it comes. Here it comes.
Here it comes. Here it comes.

The music fades.

MIGUEL ANGEL

It is finished.

ZORRO

Are you not thirsty?

Another, longer round of machine gun fire. MIGUEL ANGEL and ZORRO drop dead at the same time.

Blackout.

scene iii

The lights come up on the prone body of MIGUEL ANGEL, alone, where he fell center stage. Then on IGNACIO, delirious, up in his hospital bed.

IGNACIO

He betrayed me first. He was born to. Sure, we were only children, but our pact was based on principles that I still hold dear, that brought me to the place where I fell next to the Ebro. We once cut our arms open and exchanged blood to seal our commitment to those principles. Perhaps it was their return to the surface that finally split him in two and killed Miguel Angel, the poor boy. Perhaps my thick peasant blood finally caught up with him. Finally did him in.

ESPERANZA'S voice comes from nowhere, in the dark.

ESPERANZA

You did him in.

IGNACIO

I did not. He did it to himself. He could have saved himself if he had wanted to.

ESPERANZA

That's possible, but you could have saved him if you had wanted to.

IGNACIO

NO! Not alone. We weren't a party dictatorship. I needed their assent and the comrades wouldn't have let me have it.

ESPERANZA

You could have explained.

IGNACIO

No! Even being Zorro wouldn't have been a basis for clemency! He was insane, a loose canon. And they knew about you and me and they doubted my judgement and after a time so did I because you... You were my only love.

(softening)

You are what I see when I close my eyes. What I saw when I was hit at Mora la Nueva and the white light exploded. You were with me through three years of horror and now you're here to help me survive this beast sucking the life out of me.

ESPERANZA

You let Miguel Angel die because I told you that he was my lover.

IGNACIO

(covering his ears, screaming)

No! That's not possible. It never happened!

ESPERANZA

It did. We were. You know that I never lied. I couldn't. I can't.

IGNACIO

He died because he had to. He could have been Zorro, sure, but they were two different people. Not even Miguel Angel knew who he was, that he was... Zorro was just something that happened to his body. An illness. A reaction.

ESPERANZA

And I was just something else that happened to Miguel Angel's body. Another illness of his that you could choose to simply disregard.

IGNACIO

(warding off a blow with his arms)

STOP! Is that really you talking to me? Are you there? In the flesh?

ESPERANZA

Why? What are you thinking? That I might be dead too? Perhaps you're hearing yourself. The truth of a gnawing memory.

IGNACIO

No! Stop this. Your love and goodness must come to me, not this. You must help me survive the fascist victory.

ESPERANZA

Perhaps I already have. They've been to see you, haven't they Ignacio?

IGNACIO

(in agony)

No. Please! I wouldn't have told them anything, not about that jewel among jewels that was my lover. They did come; that is what I'm told. But I wasn't myself... Is that why I am still alive?

He reaches under his pillow and pulls out a butcher knife.

ESPERANZA

You are alive and Miguel Angel is dead.

IGNACIO

He was a vegetable by that point! I pitied him. There was no hate left in me for so pathetic a... I... We did him a favor! He was begging for it. I had no choice. We put him out of his misery! You can see that Esperanza... Esperanza?

Silence.

IGNACIO

ESPERANZA! They hurt me. They hung me from a wall. They crushed my toes with pliers. They forced castor oil down my throat. I passed out in the ice bath. I don't know. I don't know what I said. I DON'T KNOW! God, oh God.

He plunges the knife into his stomach, working the blade back and forth. He falls from his bed, crawls down the stairs and collapses next to MIGUEL ANGEL.

IGNACIO

Esperanza. You are good. You come to save me. Save me Esperanza.

Blackout.

scene iv

The music for "THE COMPASS SONG" comes up. ESPERANZA'S voice rises from the darkness, singing:

ESPERANZA

When you've been driven for days in a thirsty haze
by an arid Andalusian wind
When you've been buffeted for weeks and pirated of sleep
by the thundering tempest din

The lights come up to reveal her in her bed above stage right – the place from which she had been speaking unseen to IGNACIO in the previous scene – along with the bodies of MIGUEL ANGEL and IGNACIO center stage.

ESPERANZA

When you're lost in a flight o'er the endless night
in a war nobody will win
I'll be standing on the shore or waiting at my door
to take your beaten body in

And I'll love you when you come to me
And when I love you and you love me you will be free

She sighs, as if from sexual arousal. Once. Twice. MIGUEL ANGEL begins to move, slowly. He raises his head and gazes in the direction of the voice. He turns to IGNACIO and eyes him curiously, looks back towards the voice, then shakes IGNACIO violently.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Listen! Listen to this! It's wonderful.

(looks around, becomes somber)

All this blood... And I can't even smell it.

Another sigh lifts his spirits instantly. He slaps IGNACIO and shouts:

MIGUEL ANGEL

Hear this! You must hear this!

IGNACIO reacts at last, shaking his head and mumbling incoherently.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Hurry before... Oh Virgin Mother it's Esperanza! I know it!

That gets IGNACIO. He holds still a moment. Listening.

ESPERANZA

When any face looks like any other
mirrors of the utter blank within
When our sacrament-steeped ancestors meet and share
the secret of our proud sin

When they drink thy blood my brother
and devour thy lion's flesh
Then you'll feel the wet flame of my tongue on your mane
in a sixteen language caress

And I'll love you when you come to me
And when I love you and you love me you will be free

IGNACIO

I... can't...

MIGUEL ANGEL

It's too beautiful... A woman's womb singing. She's calling someone.

IGNACIO

You.

MIGUEL ANGEL

What?

IGNACIO

She's calling you. It's... obvious.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Why not you?

IGNACIO

Because I am not worthy of her.

MIGUEL ANGEL

But you've been through hell. Look at you. You fought.

IGNACIO

I fought and I failed. Mistakes were made. You go.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Are you trying to say that I was a success? Ignacio!

IGNACIO

Esperanza is calling you. I am sure of it. Go to her.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Wait. How do you know she isn't calling you?

IGNACIO

(voice trembling)

Because I can't hear her. Do you understand what that means?

MIGUEL ANGEL is impressed. He stands up slowly, his head cocked, listening intently to the song.

ESPERANZA

You are the heart that will be reanimated
Revived by my holy desire
Rearmed by a dip in my dark well
Restored by the sound of my midnight choir

Yes I'll love you when you come to me
And when I love you and you love me you will be free
This song is a kiss with a warm promise of permanent company
For I'll love you. Forever. Come to me

He starts walking in one direction, stops, listens, heads off in another, etc. until he finds himself at the bottom of the steps leading to the bed above stage right. He climbs up the stairs to see ESPERANZA as she completes the last verse. The music comes and goes throughout the rest of the scene.

MIGUEL ANGEL

It's her. It's really her. There could be a God!

IGNACIO, who has been watching MIGUEL ANGEL, collapses again.

IGNACIO

Aghh non! Enough! I'm sick. Just let me die!

The lights fade, returning him to darkness.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Esperanza. It is I, Miguel Angel. I'm not smelling blood that I see but I am hearing your song.

He kneels at the foot of the bed and eases himself into her welcoming embrace.

MIGUEL ANGEL

(amazed)

Jesus oh Jesus, an erection. Turgescence in my rudder. I am back at the helm! I was cold. Now I'm warm. It's better. I don't want to be cold again.

ESPERANZA

When you are cold, I am cold. When you are hungry, I am famished. When you are dying, I ... I am here my lover.

MIGUEL ANGEL slips his clothes off and climbs into the bed. He speaks to the audience as in scene i.

MIGUEL ANGEL

I am happy. I am no longer driven. I have no reason to be. Well, that's not precisely true; I am driven to seek penetration, to maintain the miracle and keep my place inside my beloved Esperanza – this gift of God: I am driven to feel alive. Driven: That is too strong a word. The infinitesimal amount of will that I have to bring to bear in order to assure the previously mentioned pleasures has hardly been something that you would call drive. It's little more than breathing. I just followed her voice. And she took me where I am now. In heaven.

There is nothing more heavenly than penetration.

I'm only sorry that Ignacio can't feel the way I feel now. Full, I am. No cavities where misery can find a niche. Covered, I am. No exposed edges to be caught in the cold wind. Saved, I am, by the sweet bath of the insides of a woman. Esperanza. Into her to the hilt. Forever. There will be no little death for me. I will never, ever peak.

ESPERANZA

You might have to. If I do, you might not be able to resist.

Silence. The night comes to an end. The sun rises.

MIGUEL ANGEL

You waited for me.

ESPERANZA

If that makes you happy.

MIGUEL ANGEL

It does my angel. It does. Is your story a long one?

ESPERANZA

Yes, rather long.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Will it make me sad?

ESPERANZA

Yes, it might, but you can't make it into anything. You can't change what has happened or what will happen.

MIGUEL ANGEL

There's heaven between your shoulders. Let me kiss it.

ESPERANZA

(ignoring his request)

Mother stopped eating after her men were shot. By the time our jailers had fled, mother no longer knew what had happened. After a week, she didn't know who I was either. It was easy to put food in her mouth, difficult to get her to chew it and impossible to make her swallow and keep it inside her. It just came right back up.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Allergic.

ESPERANZA

When the army appeared, so did cousin Antonio. Away at the time of the uprising, unlike his foolish friends, he had survived. We were allowed to stay on in the house. Mother died, of course, when there was nothing left of her to live. It was decided that I would be placed in what was left of the burned out Carmelite convent near Huelva. I was told to enter the orders.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Is that where my poor baby spent the rest of her life?

ESPERANZA

Yes it is Miguel Angel. All three years of it.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Three years? That's all?

ESPERANZA

Three years. Your friend Ignacio saw to that, but he could have meant to. He couldn't have hung on to life until they got to him just to stop me from giving mine to the church... He couldn't have known.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Perhaps God spoke to him.

ESPERANZA

He may have just wanted me dead. He felt betrayed because I gave him something and then took it back. And when I told him about you and me, I felt his heart wither. He was pure and he hated me.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Because he loved you.

ESPERANZA

In any event something would not let Ignacio die. But his condition was so hopeless that he wasn't even evacuated when the Francoists reached Tarragona. They swept through the hospital collecting what bits and pieces of enemy survivors could be used to help weed out others responsible for Spain's fall from grace. Ignacio was an easy subject. He was delirious. With or without torture, he probably didn't know what he was saying.

MIGUEL ANGEL steps up the caresses. She pauses, waiting for him to relax.

MIGUEL ANGEL

You may continue my darling.

ESPERANZA

I will indeed. When informed of Ignacio's capture, the authorities in Bracera were particularly interested in his knowledge of Zorro, thrilled to see the masked man unmasked. You see many people believed that Zorro was still alive. There were rumors, sightings. And someone had to be made to pay for his crimes.

MIGUEL ANGEL

My sweet child.

ESPERANZA

Since you'd been taken care of, they had to appease their blood lust with the shedding of mine. My mother superior received an order to hold me until they came to bring me back to Bracera. The woman put me in chains.

MIGUEL ANGEL

How was my darling miracle worker feeling then?

ESPERANZA

She was waiting for the end. I could have survived another 60 years at that convent pace, but those would have been grey years. I accepted the coming of death but I was frightened by the rifles. I imagined the bullets hitting my face.

Vengeance for Zorro so excited them that even Antonio couldn't stop the execution; and it was but one of so many. August 20th, 1939: I felt the bullets hit, Miguel Angel, but none of them entered my head. They were all volunteers and they all aimed at my legs. I fell to the ground, alive and bleeding. The men recocked their rifles, but the squad commander, instead of giving the order to fire again, walked up to me with his pistol. "I'm doing this for the Escobar that you once were," he whispered. Then shouting: "Die, whore," he took aim at my shaved head and fired. I must have died quickly then.

MIGUEL ANGEL

My sweet beloved. My dark one. My angel.

The sun sets and the music increases in volume. MIGUEL ANGEL is snoring. ESPERANZA is laying on top of him. Suddenly she sits up.

ESPERANZA

It is time!

Straddling him, she begins "making love" to him. Her sighs become screams.

MIGUEL ANGEL

Esperanza! No! Please wait. Please... Stop the noise.

ESPERANZA

Enough. We are going to finish this.

MIGUEL ANGEL

No let me wait. Please. It's too soon!

ESPERANZA

No, it's time.

She covers his face with kisses. She bites his shoulder. He screams. He slaps her. She holds his hands down. Her moans and her motion accelerate.

MIGUEL ANGEL

No. Oh God the ungodly throat... It's too much. Wait my love! No!

ESPERANZA

Yes!... The end is as inevitable as your next breath.

MIGUEL ANGEL

No. I want it to last. Let it last my darling! I WANT LIFE!

ESPERANZA

We all have to. You have to. Now!

MIGUEL ANGEL

Please, oh please. No! NO! NO!

His cries sound for a moment like those of ESPERANZA when suddenly his voice dies and he collapses. The music rises in volume and intensity as ESPERANZA climbs from the bed to complete "THE COMPASS SONG":

ESPERANZA

When we're eating trees for breakfast, lunch and dinner
When we've drunk half the lakes and spat in every river
When we've put the empty earth to sleep 'neath a tombstone of concrete
And the stars in the skies are obscured from our eyes by shades of haze and heat

Then I'll love you and you'll love me when you hear me
And when you hear me, I'll save you from the sea

When the ocean's a boil bent upon your mortal coil
and she's stripped you of your sense of time
When she's bled your whale pale and trapped your wolf
forever in her brine

When you lose the North as her rage billows forth
and you're navigating blind
Then my song will guide your hand and drive your ship to land
and make your brittle body mine

I am the quill that will trace your course
I am the compass that will keep you on line
I am the tongue that will sing your battered soul to sleep
When you sail to me and make yourself mine

I'll love you and you'll love me when you hear me
And when you hear me, I'll save you from the sea
This song is a kiss with a warm promise of permanent company
For I'll love you. Forever. Sail to me.

curtain

