

Ink in the Eye

Milko Valent

CHARACTERS:

ADRIANA, wife
 CARLO, husband
 SUZY, student
 FANY, landlady
 SEA (the role of the sea is interpreted as a three-part by Adriana, Carlo and Suzy)

**SCENE ONE
 TOILET PAPER**

Lights come up. A few seconds of absolute quiet, then the introduction from ALSO SPRACH ZARATHUSTRA by Richard Strauss. The end of the introduction melts into the sound of the sea. Splashing the shore the Great Water tells...

SEA (*Adriana, Carlo, Suzy — speaking calmly, distinctly and harmonically*): It is me again, the sea. A storm seems to be hanging in the air. The waves of the Adriatic sea, that is me, are breaking on the rocks. Heat. Crickets are chirruping. Seagulls shrieking. Dalmatian islands are basking in the sun. The end of the 20th c. is coming nearer. Young, middle aged, even old people are more and more nervous. O shit. This summer, as well, precedes many divorces. Even the quiet sounds like hearts buzzing and the calmness of the sea are as dangerous as a beautiful tiger hidden before its leap. Troublesome and merry pauses are imbued with indifferent yet lively incidents of an incredibly charming nature. Jealousy grows out of the inability to capture another creature completely....
 (*The murmur of the sea goes on. Crick-*



ets & seagulls...)

CARLO: You see, there is Spalato... oh, and there is Makarska...

ADRIANA (*angrily*): Don't change the subject. You're still looking south, towards that damn town where she ...

CARLO: Adry, honey, Adriana, calm down. Haven't we solved this already?

ADRIANA: No and no. I can see the love veil in your eyes, I can feel it physically...especially since we have been here on the scene of the crime, you hedonistic pig! How stupid of me to agree to come here...

CARLO: Adry, honey...

ADRIANA: Don't you honey me... I know you are constantly thinking about Suzy...*(on the verge of crying)* All year round I have been coming across damn evidence, for instance that piece of paper on your desk....

CARLO: What bloody paper?

ADRIANA: You know very well what I'm talking about. The pink one, you idiot!

CARLO: Really, I...

ADRIANA: That pink piece of soft toilet paper... toilet paper!... on which she, to seduce you more quickly, wrote (*pretending caustically*) Qu'il soit important ton regard, pas la chose regardée. Which means: let your look be important and not the thing being looked at. *(short pause)* And when we returned to Zagreb, dear Carlo, you said you would throw it away and you didn't. You didn't!

CARLO (*unconvincingly*): Yes, now I remember... Suzy wrote it on the terrace of the Galeb hotel, there were many of us at the table... in Zagreb I lost it... You don't really expect me to worry about a piece of paper with worthless student quotations beside all the work I have?!

ADRIANA: Stop pretending Casanova, because there is a lot of evidence against you...

SEA: I am the warm sea... sea, bluish sea. I am blue and beautiful, I am a world policeman who sees to the peaceful dreams of all living beings on this planet. O shit. I know how to tell tales, when you hear me I am speaking to all those who have learnt how to listen. Have you heard the story about the two little balls? Well...

CARLO: Cool it a bit, it is getting hot...

ADRIANA: And the latest evidence is you saying her name in your sleep last night, and a few days ago you decisively declared you would answer her postcard in ink, with a fountain-pen... yes, yes.... your beloved Pelican.

CARLO: What has that got to do with

it? In case you didn't know nowadays it is polite to write to your friends in fountain-pen. And if it's Pelican with nice blue cartridges, ha, so much the better.

ADRIANA: Oh, please. I didn't think anyone still wrote in fountain-pen. No one except snobs, parvenus and romantic married fools who fall in love outside their marriage instead of nicely loving their wives forever and...

CARLO: And forever standing their sadism masochistically. Stop it you snake! We agreed not to bring up the past, even the recent one. I never mention that idiot to you, that sledge coach or whatever... I never mention that neanderthal, that bus driver... bus driver, hey... Suzy is at least a student... (*resignedly*) Look what you have brought me to. Are you really going to ruin this summer with groundless jealousy?

ADRIANA: Groundless! Oh yeah, and what about her name in your sleep?

CARLO: And what about you? The year before last you cried "Eugene, Eugene, hold me tight!"

ADRIANA: You know perfectly well that Eugene is my cousin.

CARLO: Even worse. You don't even have the right to be jealous.

ADRIANA: Oho! Speaking about relatives I could add one or two. Your little niece Tea, on her last birthday you stroked her hair way too long. And the way you looked at her. With a paedophile concentration. And how disgustingly you laughed when your friend, that sociologist Joseph, said that all little girls were a paedophile symphony and that boys were the same but more... and

CARLO (*interrupting her*): Laughed disgustingly. You're exaggerating. You're overburdened with your literature studies, *Death in Venice* and so...

ADRIANA (*not listening*): And in the New Year postcard you added a PS for the kid, with your famous fountain-pen, something like... if I remember correctly, and I do.... "Dear Tea, study hard and in spring you will practice forehand with your uncle." My God, forehand!

CARLO: Adry, but tennis is only an innocent white sport in which you

use... in which you use forehand as well. The kid could really do with some practice, and so could you.

ADRIANA (*not listening*): And what drives me crazy most of all is the fountain-pen (*caustically*) with its nice blue cartridges. As if the damn ink wants to spite me... (*a little pause, calmly*) And why do you have to send her a postcard anyway?!

CARLO (*patiently*): Because she is our friend. After our last year's adventure you forgave us and decisively declared she may be my friend, even yours, but not my lover.

ADRIANA: I know, it's true, but I didn't know she would cling like ivy. Letter here, postcard there... what she would like most of all is to possess that Pelican of yours forever and to....

CARLO: Adriana, Adry... relax. Let's enjoy the sea. The sun will set soon, sink towards Spalato, or Split if you like it. There's no point in your jealousy ruining that sight.

ADRIANA: My jealousy?!

CARLO: Then whose!

ADRIANA: OK, I admit it. But you admit you still love her.

CARLO: Yes in a way. But I love you most of all, you snake. And the proof is that we're still together even though you are impossible. With your ways you diminish the quality of our life, disturb the radiance of the stars... and that is why I beg of you, at least today, on our anniversary, to slow down. Enjoy the sea, watch the sun, look at those pretty and violent elements that have shaped you so wrongly and eat this juicy peach I picked with so much love for you. And look at the sun... (*the murmur of the sea goes on, as well as the crickets*)

SEA: I am the sea, your native water, your homeland. My salt gives taste to your living. It is a spice for all your gestures, where too much use results in nervousness, jealousy, depression and a delicate range of cannibalism, arrogance and cynicism. O shit. Be moderate for a while and listen to the story about two little balls! (*a short pause with drums*) Once upon a time in a confused July, LI TAI PO, Maker of the Sun, Sea and all the rest, made in his scented garden two little balls. They

were exactly the same in size. The same in their sound and taste, had the same purpose, the only difference was one being lighter and the other darker. (*drums from the distance*) Then the Maker LI TAI PO connected them with a string of rejection and attraction, the strongest principle of the cosmic seesaw, including both fear and love. Watching over his juicy fields wisely, he threw the two inseparable balls into the world. O shit. Into wandering, into the constant insecurity of change, into implacability. But LI TAI PO was really wise, the wisest: he built into the two little balls the capability of finding peace, calmness and painless blooming of their round souls. For now the two little balls are still wandering around attracting and rejecting each other. Peace is but their future. On that journey of good and evil, fear and unease, the calm smile of LI TAI PO relieves their days and nightmares. The smile of the creator knows the two little balls will finally reach in Time of the Love chapel, in Time of the never-ending July. (*The drums stop, the murmur of the sea continues, just as the crickets do.*)

CARLO: Oh, God! I said: "Eat the peach!", and not: "Play with it!"

ADRIANA: Stop pestering me. You see it's big.

CARLO: Well, eat it with pauses and look at the sun setting, and with your free arms you can give me a hug but not a possessive one. Make our anniversary pleasant, come out of the dark and look at the sun.

ADRIANA (*to herself*): ... sun, sun... damn the sun... I'm not into the sunset... I'm a threatened woman, they all want to take my husband away from me... all those pretty faces, those pretty slim bodies without a gram of cellulite... I have to watch every bite...and I could also mention that bitch with two kids to him... Mary or whatever her name is ... (*imitating Mary*) ... "My Laura, my Laury, what a pretty girl... and my precious Ann, like a plum." Bloody plum. You would be happiest to give your plum to my unstable Casanova. And the way you devoured him with your eyes the other day in the disco... in a white see-

through dress...miniature underwear standing out... oh, how primitive!

CARLO (*to himself*): ... look, that one separated... he thinks he is Jonathan Livingston... he is flying as if he would sink with the sun... ha, ha... a seagull on his way to Spalato, maybe even Trogir... there lives the girl who nourishes the polysemantic elegance of solitude and of the colour purple... she goes to church regularly to repent the night desecration of the church portal... and look at these... a band of gulls seeking fresh fish...and now... a little more and the fireball will softly sink into the sea oil... and not like a stone in the desert... it's beautiful... my god, even van Gogh's paintbrush would experience stress here... and if it were not for this damn jealousy the earth would be earthly paradise... ah, as if men are to blame that women love them... and that is why I say: one should whistle happier tunes...(*whistling*)

ADRIANA (*reproachfully*): You're whistling. You don't care about our anniversary. I'm sure you wish Suzy was here, like last year, so the three of us could make up verses and then write them down on those stupid pieces of paper... as if it were a merry game which helps develop imagination and companionship, while it really had to do with glances, accidental touches and friendly nudging through laughter and joking...refreshment in the sea, splashing, swimming, diving, a wet touch of her wet tits, vibrating asses... Good job you didn't take both of us to the room, I bet she would agree by the time you said sex...

CARLO: Adry...

ADRIANA: And those provocative expressions of hers, like powdered sperm, there's a capsule in me, wet slices of moonlight... viciously wet.

CARLO: Well you let yourself go too... those jumbos-bumbos of yours and plum dumplings... you think of it and you'll recall you also set a fire that just had to burn.

ADRIANA: Maybe. But I never thought you were so weak.

CARLO: Men are weak, just like cocks.

ADRIANA: You and your anthropological, zoological and cock-a-doodle-

doo theories. It was really all my fault, but how?

CARLO: Remember baby! Remember your voluptuous laughter while you pronounced your erotic conclusions... But let's get back to the sunset, just a few more minutes...

**SCENE TWO
I LOVE THIS GAME**

Flashback. Change into a sequence from last year's summer. Add to the same background (sea, crickets) the murmur of the town beach around noon.

SEA: I am the sea, your only sea. I am a merry area with a sense of humour and calm observation. I like to watch crowded beaches in the time of neverending July. What makes me happy is children's voices, parents shouting, the seagulls cawing and shrieking, relaxed old people beside the purring of the Summer Vivaldi...and more than all of that the cries of hormonal harmonies and disharmonies of young and old animals. Most of all, I like those born under Cancer who often go wild in July reaping their passion. O shit. Enriched by lunar paleness they look deadly enthusiastic but precise grouses. Yes, I'm your sea, your Great Water that patiently mourns over your confused ephemerality... Oh yes, just remember last summer...

CARLO (*quieting down the laughter of the young women*): OK, girls, this is a serious game. Let's go into the shade not to get sun-burnt, here next to this wall. There. Adriana don't... stop tickling me... and you Suzy, stop throwing those pine needles! As I said, the sayings, verses or phrases must not be too long. Come on, who is going to start? My pen is ready.

SUZY: Oh you start.

ADRIANA: I agree. So we get the hang of it.

CARLO: OK, let's see... (*coughs, thinks a few seconds and starts ceremonially*) Baskets are full of bodies.

SUZY(*impatently to Adriana*): Will you?

ADRIANA: Whatever, you start.

SUZY(*voluptuously*): The capsule is in me.

ADRIANA (*cuddly*): Jumbos-bumbos have nice trunks.

CARLO (*seriously*): The rhythm of the line. Imagine!

SUZY (*tenderly*): Dear, take these wet slices of moonlight.

ADRIANA (*contently*): For lunch we have tomato sauce and pasta. Yummy.

CARLO (*macho*): I'll put a plum-dumpling in properly.

SUZY (*enthusiastically*): The skin is orange from the inside.

ADRIANA (*voluptuously, laughing*): And what about taking the dumpling out.

CARLO (*seriously*): It's all a big depression.

SUZY (*laughing*): Tarzan.

ADRIANA (*sadly*): The Little Prince.

CARLO (*seriously*): Sugaring the sea.

SUZY (*voluptuously*): Powdered sperm.

ADRIANA (*cuddly*): Chestnut purée.

CARLO (*happily*): Milk on the way to its goal. That's me.

SUZY (*devilishly*): Graciously to the floor and at the bottom hiking boots.

ADRIANA (*cuddly*): Little is nice. And nice is white.

CARLO (*seriously*): I am afraid. Really afraid.

SUZY (*happily*): Rice heaps, rice heaps.

ADRIANA (*calmly*): Covered with black Lolita-algae.

CARLO (*sadly*): It is difficult to live without care.

SUZY (*calmly*): First I had my period, then it rained.

ADRIANA (*wisely*): The sting is always in the end, first comes the buzzing.

**SCENE THREE
SHE IS HUNGRY**

ADRIANA: But I'm really jealous. So modern, yet so jealous...

CARLO: And so nervous.

ADRIANA: How shouldn't I be? I'm not jealous only of Suzy, your Ikebana from transcendental meditations who accidentally spends her summer holidays where we do, but I'm jealous of the fountain-pen too... that damn ink that looks like the deep seas...like your career, like your plans... Carlo, I'm afraid of losing you.

CARLO: Crazy... shhh...

ADRIANA (*timidly*): I'm really afraid.
CARLO: Adry, but we said till death do us part... and your jealousy.

ADRIANA: Yes, and your infidelity too. Hackneyed expressions don't help here, only worsen the bitter taste of being cheated on... Here, look Casanova, your beloved sun has set in the west. With many fat signs its shine still glitters in your eyes. (*again caustically, euphorically, it is difficult to suppress*) But my dear, all is quiet on the western front... you just keep hoping to sell your lifeless works...

CARLO: Now we have started insulting each other, aha ... your jealousy really meanders interestingly. And speaking of my lifeless works my dear student, they are already being performed in Germany, Austria and the Czech Republic.

ADRIANA: Only because you're a clever merchant with Europe's unhappiness and you're good at manipulating people... apart from that, boring.

CARLO: You're really impossible.

ADRIANA: It's only that I know your string, lover. Narcissistic, greedy for fame and neurotic like that, that bard... But let's allow the dead to rest in peace. Maybe you will forge or mystify your biography too and you will, for instance, name me Queen because Adriana doesn't sound noble enough.

CARLO: You have definitely gone mad. A witch, that's what you are. You're sorry you haven't graduated.

ADRIANA: What do I care about graduating. I can still do it anyway. You know. It's easier to graduate than to write a masterpiece. (*short pause*) Yes, yes... But, what are we talking about? What's got into me today?

CARLO: That's what I'd like to know.

ADRIANA: How did we even start this stupid conversation? Maybe because of Suzy, the postcard and the ink in your eyes... and the fountain-pen in your pocket. (*short pause*) I'm hungry.

CARLO (*relieved*): Ah! Finally a sensible word. Let's nicely go home now, have a shower, rub in some *Nivea body milk* and go out to dinner...

SCENE FOUR

I'M SO KINKY TODAY, I'M MEXICO

The murmur of the sea, church bells, boat engines. Another hard night for the fishermen.

SEA: I am the sea, a sensitive creature. On the surface strange things happen, enriched by my depth. And through Shakespeare, my child, I speak: "Fair is foul, and foul is fair." And through Mother Theresa, my child, I do good deeds. I glitter, I punish, I organize, I give the necessary smell to my mammals. O shit. Sweat and laughter and tears. God and I work well together on composing this world. That is why the greatest drama is pervaded by poetry, a lyrical sound of me and blood. That is why I feel so powerful.

ADRIANA (*to herself*): Room, room... today you will not slip away so easily lover... though I'm hungry I'll taste you before dinner... so we can see whose genitals are better... hers or mine. Listen to me! Genitals... even in my thoughts those literary terms show... good etiquette, as my distinguished father would say... I'll free myself from that, so help me God... oh, and before dinner as an aperitif I'll order prosecco... and for dinner that red wine *Dingo* ... little nice dingo... later to the disco and then the tavern... that Dalmatian band will be there... and in the end, in the silent night, I'll take you again, ha, ha... on the waterfront... uh, I'm so kinky today... what a fiery girl I am... grab my lock, God...

CARLO (*interrupts her monologue*): ... and that beautiful whiteness of Mediterranean towns. Look Adry, look at these first colours of dusk, the purple gauzes that cover the metal-coloured Biokovo mountain... that is a purplish-red metallic. The Dalmatians are right: "Who can pay for this?"

ADRIANA: What?!

CARLO: I said... oh nothing. I can hardly wait to have a shower, I'm all salty.

ADRIANA: Carlo, Carly, I'll wipe it off...

CARLO (*to himself, joking bitterly*): Who did I marry... love is blind but beautiful... so help me Goethe, now I

see some strange spots on her shoulders... and that spot on her behind. OK, it's not as big... and the arrogant character, difficult nature... oh poor boy, and for things to be worse she doesn't understand my work, she doesn't appreciate it... and her breasts are a bit... and she's only ... hm... and that jealousy, all year round... but on the other hand she's a great cook. Her biscuits are the best in Croatia... and the pussy ... puss, puss...

ADRIANA (*loudly interrupts his monologue*): Carlo, hey, Carlo, what's wrong with you?

CARLO (*confused*): Oh, sorry... I... (*to himself*) ... where was I... aha... it's delicacy, didn't say... but compared to Suzy's which is afforested like some parts of... eh, it's a jungle... oh Goethe, dark Brazilian women, black haired Mexican... I can already hear some good music, Mexican tunes... there's a film in which Richard Gere says: We're going to Mexico... and then laughing devilishly to the girl in his car adds (*with a Spanish accent <mehiko>*) Mexico, Mexico, Mexico... how nice for him... and what if he saw our Dalmatian girls, fair-complexioned, dark-haired... and Suzy is from... (*the song Mama Juanita*)

SCENE FIVE

IN THE KITCHEN WITH SIGNORA FANY

ADRIANA (*panting*): Uh, those steps are the steepest in the world.

CARLO (*panting*): You don't say steps but *scale*.

ADRIANA: Clever boy. You don't say either but stairs... up which you took Suzy, that Ikebana... who thickens your precious ink, I almost said sperm. The one that shakes your fountain-pen. I almost said...

CARLO (*interrupts her*): You started again, snake. Be good because... our landlady is coming. Now that's a woman! (*Fany is coming*) FANY (*always happy*): Hello my dear tourists. Did you bathe?

ADRIANA: Yes we did signora Fany. Carlo choked on the water.

CARLO: She's lying, bitch. I choked on her stupidity.

FANY: Good heavens Mr. Carlo, don't use such harsh words, so help you God. (*laughing*) But come with me for a moment and have a glass of that medicine of mine, and then go have a shower and then to the hotel for dinner. Mrs. Adriana and you are such a great couple, everyone will envy you. Maybe I go out a little today, to stretch my legs and see the world... and dance in the disco... they play that Aki and that David... what's his name... Bowie... (*moving chairs, pouring drinks, toasting*)

FANY: Cheers!

ADRIANA: Cheers, signora Fany! Cheers lover!

CARLO: Cheers, signora Fany! And you shut up, you little bitch! (*drinking booze*)

FANY: Let's have another glass... (*pouring*) for washing the teeth... my grandfather Mateo, rest in peace, would drink five or six before dinner, eh... and he lived to be ninety-one... and died nicely, under an olive, eh!

CARLO: Uh, signora Fany, this is strong stuff, congratulations. Thanks... and now Mrs. and I are going to get ready to go out. I'm as hungry as a wolf... Well OK, one more, what's three...

ADRIANA (*to herself*): ... last year Fany makes pancakes, everyone is happy, Carlo is watching me hotly... when here comes Suzy, the black Ikebana with some flowers... peeps through the window, swallows him with her eyes, calls him giving him a flower... a flower, imagine... and talks, talks, talks ... (*imitating Suzy*)... "You know Carlo, I went for an excursion to the famous holiday resort Bol ... to see the famous Golden Cape and so... your work is so poetical... that John from *Metamorphosis* ...that must be something autobiographical, isn't it... no, no signora Fany, thank you, I mustn't ... I have to keep my figure, stay slim and find a husband... Adriana can eat as much as she likes now, but pancakes are fatty and I..." ... the bitch, seduces my husband and teases me while doing it... French school... she learnt that in Paris as an au-pair living with a promiscuous couple, *menage a trois* ... maybe that is what she would

like to repeat with us, the little bitch... and she lost her virginity leaning against a wall in her primary school... primary... as an underage lusty girl... and even brags about it... I hope she doesn't come this summer, she said she might be going to Greece after Dubrovnik... imagine, against a primary school wall... (*Pink Floyd with The wall*)

CARLO (*to himself*): ... God, this Dalmatian brandy goes to the head, concentrated sun... now to the room, shower... today I shall wear those white trousers and the black shirt... where is Suzy, my black miracle, now... last year... moonlight, the terrace, sandalwood and jasmine sticks... (*blue feeling*)... and then God opened the night and she let her white dress fall... swaying, tender Japanese rice... rice heaps... a planetary film on the terrace... cherry juice, a mattress, mosquitos and fierce identifications... and her small India with great possibilities... and a red spot on her pink clitoris... and then a river of tears, crying and weeping endlessly into the short July night... at home Little Adriana hurt... like a fury, almost a divorce... neurosis leading to psychosis... what happened to the nineties... before we had "make love, not war" ... and everyone was relatively happy... hm... and we could do it as a threesome... we could even invite Adriana's mother, I'm sure she wouldn't mind ... since her divorce she has been looking at me nicely... a youthful, beautiful, mature fifty-year-old woman... oh God, the bigger the group the closer the heaven we were obviously expelled from...by that, my Adriana on the Adriatic, I mean...nothing political, he, he... where is the towel...

SCENE SIX

ADRY, YOU SHAMELESS WOMAN

CARLO: Where is that towel?... As the Dalmatians say: The hell with God.

ADRIANA: Leave the towel... let's have a five minute rest, it's not even nine. The brandy on an empty stomach made me dizzy... lie down here beside me, Carlo, Carlkins...

CARLO: Listen, I really think that...

ADRIANA (*pouting, cuddly like a*

child): Oh come on... massage my feet a little. They hurt me from all that walking on the rocks and those horrible stairs... there...

CARLO: OK, you bitch... you've persuaded me. (*he is doing very well. Je t'aime by Jane Birkin. The song plays till the end of the Scene Six.*)

ADRIANA: Oh, that... a bit higher, now here up my hips, yes there... that's medicine... now here, a bit higher... more, yes here...

CARLO: No more. The only thing I can do now is climb the hill of my life, my Golgotha, my delicate cross...

ADRIANA: Well climb it my dear...

CARLO: Adry, you shameless woman...

ADRIANA: Oh, my dear Carlo... darling... what harm can there be in a husband massaging his wife's feet...

CARLO: Nothing, of course...

ADRIANA: Then... do it to your little wife...

CARLO: Adry, Adriana... (*continues in a biological rhythm, then a little rest.*)

CARLO: You've seduced me, you witch... so that you know.

ADRIANA: You were so good... you know. As usual, wait... wait for me to lick the salt off... here...

CARLO: Stop.. it tickles.. what kind of tricks are those? You are from some old film, baby.

ADRIANA: Here... here around the fountain-pen with white ink...

CARLO (*tired*): I can't any more Adry... and I'm as hungry as a wolf, you nymphet. Uh, I'm all in pain... and we have to celebrate our anniversary in another way. With a bottle of *Dom Pérignon*, for instance. Uh, and why do my knees hurt, everything hurts...

ADRIANA (*cuddly*): Are you sorry? CARLO: Don't be silly...

ADRIANA (*changing her mood again*): You must have remembered that black Ikebana... admit it, you were thinking of her! Admit it!

CARLO: For heavens sake I was not! Don't start again. Please!

ADRIANA: I just wonder what she has that I don't?

CARLO: Adriana, Adry... You have everything one real woman needs. Honest to God. (*seriously*) And now basta and to the shower!

**SCENE SEVEN
SHOWER, WATER, CLEANNES**

CARLO (*to himself*): Ha, ha, ha ... yes, yes, yes... I was thinking of your mother, mummikins... seductive bathing suit, bikini... you can see it all. Thou God who are... a strong plump woman with little cellulite... an experienced hot girl... and when she looks at me in that way while Adriana is not watching... big breasts for love rests... ah, where are the times when the whole family enjoyed themselves... and not only the holy family... and in only seven thousand years man completely alienated himself from his...yes, yes... from his true nature... hell ...

ADRIANA: Soap my back a little.

CARLO: Of course, honey... and your bottom a bit too, aha...

ADRIANA (*to herself*): ... I must seduce you even more, my dear so that you don't go small under the stars... I must refresh our marriage... I must intoxicate you, make you crazy, make you dizzy... you won't, so help me God, think about your sage and Ikebana with the lioness smile any more... and before dawn I will kiss your salt and sweat... I will kiss you madly, like schizophrenics and young girls with tuberculosis... I am overburdened with literature... he, he, he ... yes, before dawn I will say rude and obscene words to you again ... hm, hm, hm... sentences ... I'm your cow... here's my udder and so on... all the stuff men like... and we women too... how pleasant the warm gush of the shower is between my legs... with it I have often... yes, yes... I'll be the best to my husband... I'll better than Emily Jane, Molly Bloom and Nora Barnacle together.... la, la, la, la, la....(*They ended the shower. Adriana sings, Carlo joins in.*)

TOGETHER (*again la, la, la, la, la....*)

CARLO (*shouts like an advertiser*): Yes, yes, yes! Nivea body milk! The best milk for your tender aristocratic skin! Oh yes!

ADRIANA: Bravo maestro! Look how fast it soaks into my skin...

CARLO: Aha...

ADRIANA (*cuddly*): Here... touch it... and here... with your dark hands. Touch it here, aha... so you can see what skin is.

CARLO: Not again! Listen, do you think they will wait for us till midnight with dinner?! We're not in Zagreb or Dubrovnik where they cook all night specially for us. Adriana. Pull yourself together.

ADRIANA: You're really a bit... you know. Dear Carlo, it's not even ten. And it's summertime... OK, I'll hurry up, quick, quick like the rabbit in the wonderland. I'll wear that black mini dress and let everyone enjoy the gifts of nature...

SCENE EIGHT

A MEDITERRANEAN SUMMER NIGHT

A murmur of the restaurant, clanging of cutlery, prelude on the piano.

CARLO: And the best in the world are Istrian shrimps. That's been proven even scientifically. Really... but these are not bad either. A pinch of salt, a drop of lemon and a bit of olive oil and yum, yum. This last one is the sweetest. (*chewing*) Remember, a bit of olive oil...

ADRIANA: And you get dirty. (*laughing*) But never mind. Here's a sound greasy kiss. (*kiss*)

CARLO: Oho! And what can I thank for such an intimate act in a public place?

ADRIANA: Everything. And most of all to the patience with which you cure my impossible neurosis. Cheers! (*clinking of glasses*)

CARLO: And dinner, ha?

ADRIANA: Super! Not to mention the table arrangement, the hotel's best wishes... a real anniversary... I know you know the head waiter but... a nice surprise.

CARLO: I let him know a few days ago, he nicely wrote it down and here. That is normal, we have been coming here for three seasons running. A heavenly place for tired intellectuals.

(*laughter*)

ADRIANA: Everything is perfect... really perfect! Only if it wasn't for that table there, that damn table at which she seduced you last year, she, she...

CARLO: Please Adry, we had a deal... Don't you feel we are all that matters today?

ADRIANA: Papa don't preach, I won't any more... this is getting to me a bit. Does this *Dingo* go with shrimps at all?

CARLO: I have no idea, actually... but I like it. (*a short break*) Hey, and the disco?! As if this dinner got the best of us... Poetry is made of various delicatessen.

ADRIANA: Really, come on, let's go before I fall under the table. Ho, ho, ho... I could cry I'm so happy. Because I love you. (*a sound kiss, they get up from the table*) And I feel like laughing, and I'm angry I'm not able to make this night last forever, the night in which bloody *dingos* fell... and the night when confused stars will fall...

CARLO: Look, you really chose the wrong profession. After you graduate you must enroll in the Drama Academy...

ADRIANA: ... in which confused comets will fall. They will fall into my lap like planned orgasms, cucumbers and elegant eels... full of absolute beginners... wine and guitars... Carlo, I must seduce you tonight.

CARLO: But you have, ages ago, you bitch.

ADRIANA: You don't understand. I must seduce you even harder... I'll be like a sea fairy. I'll be like controversial Mary Jane. Hooray! Hooray! Carlo, I'll seduce you till you blast... so I don't lose you somewhere on the way to death.

CARLO: Women...

ADRIANA: Men... (*both laughing paradoxically*)

SCENE NINE

A WALK DOWN THE SHORE

They're leaving the restaurant. A quiet summer night. Moonlight. The Great Water tells short stories of universal meaning. Metronomes are ticking into infinity.

SEA: I am the sea, the unavoidable

scenery in the fateful moments of your everlasting life drama. And all moments are fateful, fatal flowers on the crests of necessary waves. In the moonlight, like the one today, I look nice... a bit mysterious like your souls which are me. The streetlights of inhabited places give me a dangerous charm, logical and desirable. I same truth. O shit. Through one of our mammals shines the ocean theory of sexuality which is proof of the fullness of our depth without any strongholds. Our life is an endless movement in sea currents of endlessly beautiful colours. Its nature is absolutely, definitely and relatively promiscuous. And so I say: love each other in an organized and unorganized fashion...for we are all waves, surging love cramps. And so, covered in moonlight, I say: it's impossible to claim another soul. Only few await the dawn...

CARLO (*to himself*): I love Adriana, but I love you too... gracious, black Ikebana... why are you in Dubrovnik now... tomorrow I'll write you a letter in ink... my Pelican is ready for you... blue like the sea, dappled with bluish and greenish veins... when I look towards the South, where you are, my vision is filled with blue ink... endless but I'm as sober as the central memory of the best computer... I remember your white dress from last year... shining in the moonlight... playing around your hips like a white cotton petal... a Goddess in white... even Nietzsche wouldn't watching southward, dear Ikebana... the sea is in my eyes, ink is in my eyes...

ADRIANA (*to herself*): ha, ha, ha... I'm a bit ... a bit tipsy... Carlo says... the bus driver, the bus driver, so what... a nice guy from a Croatian province... we just had some coffee and a little... it's strange... I'm not so jealous when I'm sated... and when I'm drunk then not at all... I could even cuddle Suzy ... she's really pretty and somehow nice... but then again... Carlo doesn't understand that ... I must keep him, I must... I'm not so young any more... twenty-six and so... and on St. Valentine's Day... maybe that's why I'm so passionate... I love him, I love him, I

love him and I won't give him up... now I'll show him what summer dancing and summer glue is...

**SCENE TEN
THE SMELL OF A HAPPY SPOT**

Summer disco in the open.

CARLO: Rum and Coke refreshes the heart and the brain. But three ice-cubes are too much.

ADRIANA: Not for me. After the prosecco and wine a little water can't do me harm. Let's have another dance... let's dance to only half the song.

CARLO: With glasses?

ADRIANA: So what! We can drink too... hold me tight, aha... I'm a bit dizzy. We'll dance slowly, what do we care...

CARLO: Firstly, don't step all over my feet, secondly, listen to this song, I mean the words and thirdly, we are passing through here but the main hit is the pub

ADRIANA: Aha, I get it, romance... Dasen's wine is waiting...

CARLO: No dear... champagne is waiting, as well as Dalmatian songs and the glittering of the sea only a meter away. Ha, what do you say?

ADRIANA: I admit, an irresistible combination for any anniversary. (*scanning*) It's best at Dasen's... it's best at Dasen's ... and when Dasen closes at four, we'll sit in front of the pub, watch and listen to the sea, and wait for dawn, little dawn... an Aurora without the sea is like an old woman without wrinkles.

CARLO: And when the sun rises above Biokovo and makes the scenery bloody, we will go and pick some sage for Zagreb. That's what I call a good time... await for dawn by the sea and start the day with the odour of sage among your fingers...

ADRIANA: And the smell of a small sad kitten...

CARLO: And the smell of a happy spot...

ADRIANA: And the native goes to the field on his donkey...

CARLO: And as tired as dogs we die of beauty...

**SCENE ELEVEN
WHY ARE YOU SO STIFF**

At Dasen's bar. Adriana and Carlo are a bit tipsy.

CARLO: Dear, how about taking another bottle?... It's not *Dom Pérignon* but it makes one happy... and it's not water.

ADRIANA: And it's not oil... it's unid... unid... unidentif... tified champagne from Champagne... shhh... a white mushroom...

CARLO: A white alcohol fang... yes, yes... like the foam of the waves and tales... Adry, Adriana, don't be cross, but... (*startled*) Wait? What is this?...

ADRIANA: What? Why are you so stiff, like a cooked shrimp?...

CARLO: Adry... give me your hand and be happy for I'll not use my fountain-pen... the Pelican will rest for the pub is full of miracles... look, the ink has just run out of my eye... look who is here!... She's coming...

ADRIANA (*startled, devastated, angry*): Suzy!

CARLO (*relaxed, calm, sobe, tender*): Suzy. Yes... Suzy. *After an eternal moment of loud silence Mozart's REQUIEM. Agnus Dei plays till the end of the SEA text which is performed in a loud whisper. A light sound of the sea.*

SEA: I am the sea, an instructive water. And when love is born and when love dies, the moonlight shines equally on me. Like the native milk, like the extreme unction, like the fateful beauty which gives and takes surprised creatures in this world. When I love or hate, I present myself in the same way: I foam. Yes, that is me, the sea: a single mother. A father and mother. O shit. Yes, that's me, Aphrodite full of mercy and beauty, Aphrodite full of meat who brushes her foam. Yes, that is me, Venus full of love and sympathy, Venus full of meat combing her foamy hill. Yes, that is me, the sea, the Great Water full of passion and understanding. Yes, that is me, the God of Gods...

The music stops. The sound of the sea is splashing harder. And lasting

Translated by Vera Jovanović