

Zero-Eleven

By Ivana Komarcevic

Marko - Tanja
Scene I
on the stage, nice stage

The high school courtyard. Year 1989, Belgrade. A group of students is hanging out in the courtyard. The school can be seen in the back with some of its windows broken and graffiti on the walls. Across the stage, facing the audience, there are metal bars that the courtyard is surrounded with. In the courtyard, stage left, there is a basketball goal without the net, and Cula is sitting on the top of it. The rest of the kids are in the courtyard so that there are metal bars between them and the audience. Goran is leaning on the wall and kissing with Tanja. Neske is looking through the bars with the walkman on his head. Jelena and Marko are sitting on the ground and reading a magazine. They are all wearing baggy clothes, blue Lewis 501's and All-star converse shoes.. Cula and Goran have their hair shaved on the sides, and Neske has long hair, died black. Jelena has short, reddish hair and is wearing a flannel shirt. Tanja has long hair tied in the back and the same gray sweatshirt with the hood as Goran. Neske is dressed in black. Cula is wearing the leather jacket. Their bags are piled up on the ground. When the lights come up, Cula and Neske are smoking. Yugoslavia rock song is playing until they start talking.

CULA

Hey, Marko, where did you get this Marlboro? It's horror man...

MARKO

My father brought it from his business trip to Austria. I stole two packs. As usual, he did not notice ~~into~~ anything.

TANJA

Give me one, will you? I haven't smoked real cigarettes in three days.

GORAN

You shouldn't be smoking anyway. I don't want to lick an ashtray every time I kiss you.

They laugh.

CULA

I wouldn't mind kissing you Tanja even if you smoked three packs a day.

GORAN

That will happen only in your dream. Fire ^{it} man!

NESA

Just listen to ^{these} ~~this~~ lyrics..... I wish I could write like this.

I wish I could say what I feel but in a way that it would shoot the arrow from my heart to the heart of every person in this world.

JELENA

Neske, maybe it would be a good idea if you stop going to Azra's concerts. What, it's been the fourth night in the row?

NESA

You guys don't understand. There are only three more concerts and who knows when I am going to see them again.

MARKO

Next year, when they make a new album.

They laugh.

CULA

Maybe you could wait for the band after the concert and give them your phone number. I am sure they would call you.

NESA

Azra is Croatian band!

CULA

So? They have telephones in Croatia, Neske, ~~don't worry. Don't worry,~~
~~smile..~~

NESA

You guys are so blind.

JELENA

~~Wait, wait, you don't have to feel offended,~~ we were just joking with you Neske.

NESA

Turns away from the bars to speak to the rest of them.

I know Jelena, that's just the sad part about it. That you still think of jokes, Marlboros, parties, soccer games...Don't you see what's going on with our country? All these democratic elections and nationalistic parties winning. Slovenia and Croatia already want to break-away...

JELENA

Why should we worry about this? Look, that's why we have politicians. You don't expect us to be concerned about politics. We are in high school, we should have fun.

CULA

Besides, what is so bad if Croatia and Slovenia have democratic election. We should have them here too. Every western county is democratic.

TANJA

Yeah, don't get excited about politics Neske. There is nothing you can do to change things. What's going to happen is going to happen. That's up to the guys who are pulling the strings. All we have to do is to accept their will and nothing will ever happen to us.

NESA

If all of you can pretend that nothing is going on, I can't. Don't you see there will be a spurt of nationalism all over the place- a civil war, a religious war. Cards have been dealt already. We have little players like Milosevic and Tudjman, and main players, Germany, Austria, America... Haven't you heard of the term 'the new world order'? Dzoni Stulic said at the concert last night that democracy and freedom and all those bullshit ideals do not exist even in America. Everything is just interest, power-seeking, money-seeking...

CULA

Sings in the full voice, everybody follows him.

Amerika i Engleska bice zemlja proleterska!

(America and Great Britain will be the lands of the proletariat)

They repeat the line couple of times, each time faster and faster, banging on the metal bars and basketball goal. When they finish they laugh like crazy.

Marko goes around and gives everybody a cigarette.

JELENA

Sometimes I wonder why can't I just stop the time and never let it go! I wish

we could always stay happy and careless like we are now. Being young is the biggest possession that a person can have.

TANJA

Still, there are a lot of things a person can do when he grows up.

JELENA

Yet to me, they seem very boring. I would be content with my life if I could just be with you guys, the way we are now, free... Do you think that's possible Cula?

CULA

No. I don't know. You philosophize too much.

GORAN

No, she doesn't. She is just emotional.

CULA

Call it what you like. It's the same shit for me, just different packaging.

They all resume doing what they did at the beginning of the scene.

GORAN

I think Nesa is right in a way. It seems that big shit is coming with all those elections and nationalistic leaders. Who knows, maybe our country is really going to be chopped off in many pieces!

MARKO

There is no chance, man. We've lived together for fifty years in brotherhood and unity, Tito's legacy. If he saw the country breaking apart, he would turn three times over in his grave.

Yes.

CULA

Jebo te Tito! (Tito fuck you!) Oh God, you really don't know what's going on?!

TANJA

How can he, he's dad is a big guy in the Communist Party...

JELENA

I bet they all sing "All for Tito, Tito for all" before they start a dinner ...

NESA

A Communist prayer.

They laugh. They sing:

We are Tito's pioneers, we are the real army,
everyday day we grow more, like grass in the valley.

MARKO

embarrassed

What? What is it? What is ^{it} that I don't know?

GORAN

Everybody in Croatia and Slovenia hates Tito now, you idiot, because he made them live in Yugoslavia and they wanted to have their own countries.

CULA

Such bullshit! The guy is Croatian at the first place!

GORAN

And where is he buried? IN BEOGRAD!

TANJA

And not just anywhere in Belgrade! His memorial house is the biggest memorial house in the whole world!

JELENA

It has a zoo! And fountains! Marble floors and columns!

NESA

Talking to the audience through the metal bars.

It must cost millions to keep his resting place as the most beautiful palace I've ever seen. His picture is hanging in the every classroom, every institution, and every office in Serbia. Wherever you go, you will see Tito smiling at you...

CULA

I bet he is not even there. In that grave! I bet he is buried in ^{the} Vatican, with all the Popes. Or even if he is in that grave, we should dig him out and carry his skeleton to Croatia. He fucked up Serbia really bad. Carving up our territories and preaching brotherhood and unity. He did such a favor to Catholicism!

JELENA

Don't talk like that. Now you sound like those nationalistic leaders. I believe that all people are equally good, it does not depend on the religion or the race. Besides, how do you know who is Catholic and who is not?

CULA

I know. Why do I have to tell you?

JELENA

As I remember, two summers ago you had ^{so} ~~such a~~ great fun in Dubrovnik with those guys from Zagreb.

MARKO

And girls, man, and girls....

(They laugh. Some of them say: Opa Culo!)
CULA

So what? That was two years ago. OK, they are good Catholics. But Tito is definitely a bad one.

JELENA

To tell you the truth, I've never liked him. When he died, they did not show cartoons on TV for a whole week.

They burst out laughing. Some of them say: You are crazy!

JELENA

What do you want? I was seven years old! And then in the elementary school, when they played sirens on the day of his death and we had to stand up for five minutes and give our respects, I could never be sad. My teacher always liked more those girls who cried then and pretended they miss Tito even though they never saw him. I tried to cry one year, but it didn't work. I stared at one point without blinking and still nothing: not a single tear!

They laugh even more.

CULA

Everything is over now, Jelena. We'll protect you.

MARKO

Yeah, especially you Cula! We know how you are going to protect her!

Laughter.

CULA

Now lets get serious gentlemen. We don't like Tito, do we?

EVERYBODY

NO!

CULA

That's what I wanted to hear! In that case, I have a great idea.

He jumps to the ground from the goal and lights a cigarette. He waits until everybody has surrounded him.

How about if we take down all his pictures from all the classrooms?

TANJA

Fire man! Are you normal? You know what the principal is going to do to us? We'll get expelled from the school.

CULA

Oh, come on, maybe *we'll* get expelled Tanja, but not you. You have the best grades in our class and the principal adores you.

NESA

I agree with Cula's plan. We should do it. It's time we start doing something serious. Somebody has to start the revolution.

JELENA

But why ^{vs} we? We are just ordinary high school students, and the revolution...

NESA

Don't you ever read books? The biggest revolutions in the history have been started by ordinary people.

MARKO

Walks away from the crowd.

Don't count on me in this one. If my Dad finds out, I am dead. He'll lose his position in the Communist Party, and then our whole family is dead. No way, I'm out of this one.

NESA

Come on, don't be such a chicken!

GORAN

Leave him alone.

NESA

What? Are you afraid too? I can feel it, you are shiting in your boxers now...

GORAN

Shut up!

CULA

Hey, guys, lets stop quarreling. Your most admired friend Cula has a hidden card in his sleeve.

TANJA

What is it?

CULA

As they all listen attentively.

Our principal is above all a mathematician.

JELENA

So?

CULA

And this is a Mathematical High School.

GORAN

How come you don't know how to differentiate in your senior year Cula?
Laugh.

CULA

Ha, ha, very funny. We are talking about a serious thing here so shut up all and listen. If we take down Tito's pictures and put up pictures of famous mathematicians like... like...

TANJA

Pythagoras, Thales, Newton, Leibnitz...

CULA

Yes, yes, yes, and other scientist, we won't get into a trouble with the principal.

JELENA

Why not?

CULA

Because we would show by this gesture that we are serious students who are interested in gaining knowledge. We would show that we believe that science goes above politics in every society.

JELENA and NESAS

Wow! That's horror plan!

GORAN

That's a good plan. Bravo majstore!

CULA

Hey, I just know our principal well because I had many little talks with him in the past four years. Unfortunately.

TANJA

I like the idea of having all these scientist on our walls. It will inspire us to study even more.

CULA

That's not quite what I had in mind, but if you wish, think of it that way.

GORAN

Marko, are you in?

MARKO

Sure I'm in. Always with the gang.

They all form a circle, pile up their right hands and say loudly: Mi smo sampioni!

NESA

I have some posters of Einstein and Tesla at home.

TANJA

Me too.

CULA

Lets do it tomorrow then!

MARKO

Yeah, lets do it tomorrow before classes!

JELENA

Meet here at 1:30.

CULA

yells

Get ready Belgrade! Get ready Yugoslavia! Young revolutionaries are coming!
The school bell rings.

GORAN

Shit! Did anybody do the physics lab report?

TANJA

You can copy mine. Just change the numbers a little bit.

They pick up their bags from he ground, quickly extinguish cigarettes, and leave.

Scene II

Four months later. Goran's room. There is nothing in the room but a mattress and a big, old closet. The floor is dirty and there are clothes all over the place. Tanja and Goran are on the bed, half dressed, having sex. The lights don't come up at the beginning of the scene.

TANJA

Jos malo, just little bit longer...

GORAN

I can't hold it any longer.

TANJA

Ne, ne, jos samo malo...wait ...SADA....

GORAN

Uh...Horror...

The lights come up. Goran is laying on top of Tanja, his head on her chest.

GORAN

Till what number did you count this time?

TANJA

Three.

Pause.

You didn't come inside...

GORAN

No. You should know by now that I don't make that mistake. We have to get dressed ~~Tanja~~. My dad is coming soon from work.

TANJA

Always the same. Why can't we just lay here little longer?

Goran is getting up, putting on his shorts, walking around the room. He goes downstage and starts doing sit-ups.

GORAN

Don't be such a woman!

TANJA

You don't love me anymore.

GORAN

The same story again. You know that is not true.

He is involved with his moves.

TANJA

Just look. You are not even looking at me and five minutes ago we had sex.

GORAN

Get dressed, will you? You know he is going to be here any minute.

TANJA

I don't care. If you can do whatever you like, I am going to do whatever I like.

She reaches down for her backpack and takes a cigarette. She lights it and sits back in bed.

GORAN

goes over to her

Look, Tanja, I don't know what more ~~do~~ you want. *you're* *Jamir,* We are seventeen, *we* we have fun with each other, but it doesn't mean that we are tied with a cord. ~~I really don't understand, what do you expect?~~

TANJA

That's not what you used to say. As I remember, just yesterday you were telling me how much you love me...

GORAN

Sranje. (shit) There is no point in having a serious discussion with you when you get so sentimental.

He starts to leave.

TANJA

But I don't understand. I love you and I know you love me, but sometimes you hate that it is that way. Are you listening? ... YOU CAN'T JUST IGNORE ME!

GORAN

Tanja, I love you, I am crazy about you, but life is something different. Who knows what will happen to us in life. I can die in the car accident tomorrow, and you are going to love me till the day you die?

TANJA

~~It's stupid what you are saying.~~ If you think that way, you can go and jump

from that window right now.

GORAN

I am justing saying that nothing has yet happened to us. How strong is our love? We didn't test it, so how can you know you love me that much. Image this situation: I go away. What would you do?

TANJA

But why would you go away?

GORAN

Lets say I am sent away. What would you do?

TANJA

I would go away with you.

GORAN

What if you can't?

TANJA

What if what if...

GORAN

/What if you can't go with me, Tanja?

TANJA

I would wait for you.

GORAN

Yes. Far away from eyes, far away from the heart.

TANJA

She gets angry, gets up, dresses up and starts packing her stuff as she talks.

If this is just one of your torturings because you are in a bad mood, I am leaving. I don't understand you, you always have to ruin everything. You just can't be happy. Always, always, always...there is something that you...

GORAN

pause

Jebem ti zivot (I fuck life). I am not in a bad mood.

Tanja stops packing and looks at him.

I am scared.

He turns to her.

They came here this morning. Guys from the Register. I am going to Army in September.

Scene III

The transition from the second scene is immediate. As light go up, Goran is picking up a green, army shirt and a hat from the ground and putting them on. Tanja and Goran walk over to the table with two chairs on the other side of the stage and sit down. Six months later, a bar in Zagreb, the capital of Croatia. Offstage, there is a back room and more soldiers in it. They are playing cards and getting drunk while folk music is playing. The tablecloth on Tanja and Goran's table is red and stained.

SOLDIER 1(offstage)

Jebem ti majku! (Fuck your mother)

SOLDIER 2 (offstage)

Ma nosi se bolan...

GORAN

You shouldn't have come here.

TANJA

I thought you would be happy to see me.

GORAN

How did your parents let you go?

TANJA

laughingly

They don't know I am here. I told them I was going to a hiking trip with Jelena. I caught fog in school today, took a train, and here I am, sitting in front you, happier than ever now that I see you squirrel.

GORAN

Still sentimental, aren't you Tanja? I will be surprised if you ever grow up.

TANJA

Why are you so sarcastic...

SOLDIER 1 (offstage)

Mamicu ti jebem! Sad cu da te ubijem (I fuck your mummy... Now I'm going to kill you)

SOLDIER 3 (offstage)

Ma gde ces bre... Pusti ga... Popio je malo... (Let him go. He had a few beers)

SOLDIER 1

Give me the queen!

GORAN

It's different here, ha. No more Belgrade and walking in the streets hand in hand... Everything has changed. Everything. ~~Sve se promenilo. (everything has changed).~~

TANJA

Oh, I know that. Stupid politics. Now ~~one has to~~ ^{we} watch ^{the} news every evening and ~~drink~~ ^{take} five sleeping pills before going to bed because one can ~~not~~ sleep ~~with clear consciousness~~ ^{me} after those images of horror and destruction. But I am not going to give up. They can not kill me. They can kill my body, but not my thirst for life. You can't let them take you away. Is it true, that this is just the beginning of war?

GORAN

pause

How are things in Beograd? What is the gang doing?

TANJA

Same old thing. Jelena and Marko finally started going out. It was last week, at Marko's party when they both got so drunk. It was in the middle of the party. around three when they dissappeared. We were looking for them, and guess where they were: locked in the bathroom. We were all so happy for them: finally after four months they did something- true, they were drunk, but still, isn't that cute? But you know what happened then? Nesa drank the whole Vodka by himself and had to hug the toilet, so he broke the bathroom door and puked. When the rest of us came in, Jelena and Marko were sleeping in the bath tub, naked, and Nesa was sleeping on the floor, still hugging the toilet.

~~GORAN~~ ^{GORAN}

I guess some people can still see the blue circle ~~in~~ ^{of} the sky and a big, yellow star in it. What is Cula doing? Is he all over you these days?

TANJA

That's another story. He is into anti-communist demonstrations. He is even the leader of the Youth Democratic Party. Last week during the demonstrations he climbed to the top of the water tank as the tank was spraying people with water, and took off the hose. Then he stood up and cheered and yelled: Vive la Serbie! Vive la democratie!

GORAN

Stay away from those demonstrations. They are dangerous.

TANJA

But I really want to go. It's just that every time there are demonstrations, my parents lock up all my shoes in the closet and I can't go. I am so pissed at them.

A fat waitress comes in. Her white shirt is stained, she has a pencil behind her ear and paper in her hand.

WAITRESS

Sta ocete? (What do you want?)

GORAN

Two beers please.

TANJA

But please, bring us BIP beer.

WAITRESS

We don't have it.

TANJA

How about Valjevacko?

WAITRESS

Look, sweetie, we don't have Serbian beer here.

looking at Goran

This little one is not one of the locals? Is she your girlfriend from home?

GORAN

Just bring us whatever you have.

WAITRESS

Oh, how sweet...You guys should not waste your time here. There are a lot of hidden places for pigeons like you, building enterances and parks, at this time of the night

SOLDIER 1(offstage)

Kelnerice! Oj, kelnerice! (waitress!)

SOLDIER 2 (offstage)

Three hands you are not going to get her tonight.
Waitress walks out.

TANJA

This is awful.

GORAN

This is the only place where they don't mind soldiers. Every other bar in Zagreb has a sign on the door: Dogs and soldiers not allowed! Sometimes I stare at the sign and think, am I a dog or a soldier. Govno sam, eto sta sam (I am shit, that's what I am)

TANJA

she puts her hand on his and kisses it.

Don't think like that. You will go crazy if you think. In five months you will be out and we will be together again. You have to believe in that.

GORAN

I just can not see it any more. That big, blue circle with a yellow star. It is all like a big dream now, the dream I dreamt long time ago.

TANJA

You will dream again. You just have to make it through this.

SOLDIER 2 (offstage)

You can smoke my dick! I got this one.

GORAN

Would you look at me if I killed a man?

SOLDIER 2 (offstage)

Lazove! You are cheating! I'll break your neck!

GORAN

I could not look at myself if I killed a man.

SOLDIER 3 (offstage)

Pusti ga! Let him! He is an idiot anyway!

GORAN

Tanja, every day I feel like I am five years older than the day before. I never asked for that. You know me, I never asked for that.

Blackout.

Scene IV

Tanja's room. Tanja is sitting on the bed, and Cula is sitting in the chair, with his feet on the working desk. There is an old record player with a big collection of records next to it. Tanja's sketches of nature and some nudes are on the walls, not framed and not yet finished. As lights go up, Tanja is opening a little porcelain box and Cula is whistling.

CULA

This is boring. Lets have some music.

TANJA

I have only thirty marks.

CULA

She is asking for fifty.

TANJA

So what do I do? I can never find that much money in two days.

CULA

Nema problema. ~~(no problem)~~. Twenty marks is nothing.

TANJA

What do you mean?

CULA

You'll have them tomorrow. I know where to get them.

TANJA

You are going to lift them somewhere, aren't you?

CULA

Maybe.

TANJA

~~Govoriti~~ (tell me, hey..)

CULA

Boze (God), you woman are really crazy! When I tell you I'll give them to you

tomorrow, then I will. The rest is my business, OK?

pause

Do you have Stranglers?

Stands up, goes over to the record collection, looks through the records. He

sings: Hello, I love you, won't you tell me...

TANJA

Maybe I shouldn't do this. How did you find this women anyway?

CULA

~~He galaka~~ (she's illegal) My ex girlfriend got into same trouble... Hey, it's not a big deal... So many girls go through this...

TANJA

I don't know. What if something happens to me? Suppose something goes wrong.

CULA

singing

I love you, love you, jump in your...

TANJA

Then my parents will find out about it, and I will be extinguished. They won't even let me go to school in America. And Goran, he will kill himself and then kill me.

CULA

laughing

Ha, ha, you are banging!

TANJA

Whatever, you know what I meant. Maybe I should tell him before I do this.

CULA

What? Are you normal? ~~Ma ti si luda sto posto...~~ (you are crazy 100 percent). Goran is one of those types who can't provide for their families. Just look at him! He won't achieve anything in life. He doesn't have a drive, no ambition-no action. I am really surprised he manages to make a baby... But then, one has to consider that he is in Army and that he didn't do push-ups until you went to visit him...

TANJA

You are such a peasant!

CULA

I'm sorry, it's just that I don't understand how ^{he} could have such a smart and

pretty girl like you fallen for him. It doesn't go into my head! Tanja, you are really something, you deserve a man, a real man. Somebody who will lead you and protect you, give you what you need, not somebody who is running behind you. Not a wimp who is fighting in the stupid war instead of being here with you.

TANJA

Oh, I forgot! Not all of us have relatives in the Army Cula. Not all of us can avoid being drafted./

~~Me~~ CULA

That's life, mala (little). And it's not I was scared that I didn't go to the Army, I just didn't want to fight for nothing. Here I know what I am fighting for. I care about democracy in Serbia more than I care about Croats in Croatia. That's over, you know. We should all forget about Yugoslavia and start from zero. Instead, people are still lingering on the old dreams, can not let it go...

TANJA

But you can not just wake up one morning and say: I am a different person. You can not be that ruthless to forget your dreams and your previous life. You can not look at the news and say: That's over. That's not happening.

CULA

Come on, you know books better than me. We are talking about survival here, and Darwin's theory of evolution implies that only the fittest will survive. Why not accept that fact? Why pretend that we care and that we are good? ~~To je sve stranje~~ (it's all shit).

TANJA

I will rather kill myself than think like you.

CULA

HA! So here we are. You do think like me, it's just that you don't see it. Otherwise, you wouldn't be packing your bags and going to America! You would stay here and wait for Goran because you love him that much. Isn't that so?

Tanja does not respond.

You can feel it in you stomach that I am right. ~~Istina boli~~ (truth hurts). It will sound disgusting to you now, but you and I are much more alike than you ever thought./We have that drive to achieve something, more than

ordinary people are satisfied with... A drive to sit on the top and smile to everybody beneath. Don't we Tanja?

TANJA

Da. (yes). I guess. But I don't want to be pushed into that. I don't want to compete. I do not want too much from life.

CULA

You do. That's what makes you you, not Jelena or Goran. Life is something different than what our ~~old~~^{parents} told us. Just think Tanja what you can have if you just let go: you can have everything you imagine: money, fame, holidays in Jamaica, Hawaii...

TANJA

I can, can't I?

CULA

Sure you can.

Nesa walks in.

Hey man, what's up?

NESA

Hey guys.

CULA

Did you finish the posters for the demonstrations tomorrow?

NESA

No. It's no use anyway.

TANJA

What's wrong Neske?

NESA

I stopped by to say good-bye. I am going to London tomorrow.

TANJA

No way! Just like that?

CULA

All of a sudden?

NESA

No, my parents have been planning this for a long time. I kept convincing them that war is going to be over soon and that everything will change for better, but I can't convince them any more. They say there is no future for me in this country. They are afraid I'll get drafted. My mother doesn't answer the

door nor the phone any more. She thinks that any of those bells can be from the Army. For me. You have a cigarette?

TANJA

Here. What about school? Are you going to study engineering over there?

NESA

No. I'll find a job somewhere.

CULA

What's up with this? Everybody is leaving- Tanja to America, you to London.

Mañ, we'll never win the elections if the average age of a person living in Serbia is fifty!

NESA

Look, I don't want to leave. I have to. My parents have nobody but me.

CULA

~~What do you know!~~ Maybe it's for the better. Don't forget us, ^WWho knows what will happen to us. Send a postcard sometimes, dial zero eleven, don't forget... we'll be here.

NESA

I should be going now.

Goes over and hugs Tanja. They hug for a long time.

Say bye to Goran for me.

TANJA

Good luck to you.

He goes over and shakes hands with Cula. Cula ^{5/100} ~~looks~~ him on a shoulder.

CULA

Tell me if it's true that British chicks don't shave legs.

NESA

I'll do that.

He leaves.

CULA

yells after him

Hey, you are coming back when we win the elections. This will be the best country you know! ~~Oh, well, I hope he heard me.~~

TANJA

It's sad that we are falling apart.

CULA

It's better for him. He has to grow up. He is too emotional and dependent. Now he will have to be alone and fight for himself. What's wrong with you? Don't tell me you are sad now that you are going to America? After all we've talked about? Tanja, ~~that's~~^{it's} your chance to rise yourself from this mediocre society. You would be stupid not to take it.

TANJA

You might be right. I guess you are. I shouldn't ~~turn behind~~ that often.

CULA

Now we are speaking the same language. Sentimentality is to see nothing but black in the future, dark gray in the present, and lots of pink in the past. Leave that for your enemies. You know better than that.

TANJA

I am on the right track. As soon as this thing is over, my life can begin again. In three months I'll send you guys a postcard from California. Who could have expected that?

CULA

I did.

TANJA

Let us be happy! Life is rock'n roll.

CULA

Don't ~~still~~^{eat} my philosophy.

He picks a record from the collection and starts playing it. It is Sex Pistols record. Then he walks slowly to Tanja, takes her hand and lifts her from the bed. They start dancing as he is leading her. They look at each other and smile for a minute. Then he comes closer to her and starts touching her breasts. They slowly start exploring each other.

At this moment, Goran runs from one side of the stage to the other. This is happening downstage, (it can also happen that he is running through the audience). He is in his Army uniform, running away from the enemy.

Machine gun in his hand. Tanja and Cula can not see him. They are in two separate worlds, only time is the same.

Tanja and Cula get more physical, but they are not kissing. Breathing can be heard. Machine gun fire is heard offstage. Goran crawls on the floor.

Cula makes a move to kiss Tanja, but she rejects him. He tries again.

~~Sta ti je?~~ (What's wrong?)

TANJA

I heard something.

CULA

~~Sra~~ (What?)

GORAN

Sranje! (shit) I can't see a thing!

TANJA

Oh, nothing. It's OK.

GORAN

I am out of munitions. SRANJE! Mama, ^{*if only you could*} ~~where are you to see me now?~~
Mama...

CULA

Look, will you tell me what's wrong or what?

TANJA

~~No znam.~~ (I don't know). ~~Nesto jeste.~~ (something is). I don't know, I swear.

GORAN

What do I believe in? I have to find something I believe in quickly so I could pray.

yelling

Necu da umrem! Jel me cujes? Govno jedno najvece! NECU DA UMREM!

(I don't want to die. You hear me, you biggest shit in the universe. I don't want to die!)

TANJA! I didn't even start! I don't want to die!

Scene V

A luxurious living room in Jelena's apartment around three o'clock in the morning, after the party. Empty beer bottles and full ashtrays are on a small table in the center of the room. Cula and Marko are laying on the sofa, Goran is sitting on the leather chair, and Jelena is on the floor, picking up cigarette butts and putting them in the ashtrays.

JELENA

It was boring. I should have invited more people.

CULA

No, it was horror. Do we have some booz left?

JELENA

Votka. Balticka. (Vodtka Baltic). It's on the table.

Cula takes it and drinks from it.

JELENA

I don't get it. We had everything. Cigarettes, beer, pot...But it wasn't as good as it used to be.

MARKO

~~Jelena, I don't want to say that~~ it's your fault that party wasn't horror, but there just weren't enough people, you know.

JELENA

So it's my fault? Why didn't you invite more people?

MARKO

Hey, I'm sorry, I just wanted to give an overview of the party that just resumed so that the next time...

GORAN

You are wasting your time. There is nobody to invite next time because by the next time we make a party even more people would have left Belgrade. It's like there is a plaque in the city so everybody is running away, saving their own asses.

CULA

Right! If I had a chance to go, I would go. Find a rich, fat, old plastic bag in America, do push-ups on her three times, and then when she has a heart attack, take her money and uuuuuuuuuu. There is nothing that connects me to this country any more but the force of gravity.

GORAN

I don't doubt it.

CULA

What did you say? Come on, spill it out.

JELENA

Why don't you two cool off? Tanja and Nesa would not like to see us all like this...

CULA

Why the fuck do you always have to play an angel? Why don't you take off that gold ring above your head and grow up?

MARKO

You crossed the edge, Cula. She is just trying to make things like they used to be. It's you who is trying to destroy everything because you are drunk and miserable.

CULA

Ooooo! Little Marko is finally raising his voice! When did this change happen? I did not know that a son of a communist can be so tough. Well, let me tell you something Marko, no everybody: I have every fucking right to be pissed. I am not going to pretend that everything is just like it used to be because you know why, it's not. I can not buy cigarettes, I can't drink milk and eat meat, I didn't use deodorant for two months, not to mention going out- what is that concept, can somebody remind me...

JELENA

Do you think it would be better if you go to London to wash dishes in the restaurant like Neske?

CULA

Fala Bogu! (Of course)

JELENA

You don't know what you are talking about. You have no idea how much he misses Beograd, us.

CULA

I wouldn't mind missing you if I could go to McDonalds and drink Coke every day.

GORAN

He'll get over it any way. They all do. They whine first couple of years, then they come back to family funerals to show off how much money they have, and they leave. Never to come back again. Leave their roots, just like that.

CULA

Hey, hey, what did this country give us? Fuck the country with no future! Fuck the country in which you think you can do anything you dream of doing only when you are young and crazy!

takes a bottle of Vodka and pulls it to his mouth

GORAN

stands up from the chair and walks over to Cula. Pulls him out of the sofa by his shirt.

Who are you horse's shit to say anything about this country, ha? You escaped when it needed you the most! Govno jedno (you are shit). Where were you to see people die and kill in the name of our country? You never believed in it. You can not even say its name! Say it!

pulls him closer, yells

Say it! Kazi Srbija, kazi, ajde... (say Serbia, say it, come on...)

JELENA

Let him Gorane, what's gotten into you? (let him go). He is completely drunk, can't you see? What's gotten into you? Just sit, here, have a cigarette.

Goran is not looking at her, he is still looking at Cula who is now laying on the sofa, his back turned. Goran sits down, lights a cigarette.

How about if I bring the old album and we look at our photos?

MARKO

I want to see them.

GORAN

Takes a piece of paper out of his pocket, unfolds it nervously. It's Tanja's letter. Jelena stood up to go to the kitchen, but as she sees Goran, she sits back again. You have to be crazy to think they are ever coming back. They are not coming back, They are lying. They can pretend as much as they like, but they won't fool me. Hey, ten thousand miles away nothing is real! Does it matter to me if there is a flying elephant in Africa! No, I don't care because I can't see it. And even if there was, I don't care- it's great for Africans if they

to make sure they are listening to him.

At the same moment lights on the room dim, and they go on front stage left where Tanja is sitting on the floor. She is wearing a simple, blue dress, her hair is tied in the back. She is looking into the audience.

TANJA

My little squirrel, Sorry I did not write to you in a long time. School is different here and I actually have to do a lot of work. Nothing is like home here, but how can it be when you are not here?

GORAN

So why don't you come back?

TANJA

I am lonely. There is no love in this place. I forgot how it feels to be at home. Why aren't you writing to me?

GORAN

You packed your bags and left while I was in the Army.

TANJA

If you love somebody else, tell me, and I will stop bothering you.

GORAN

I can't fall in love with anybody, Tanja. What do you think love is?

TANJA

It's weird how you dream about something for your whole life, and finally get that thing, and it doesn't feel great at all. I was blind. I am scared that I can't get myself out of the hole I dug up. At least I have all the time in the world to think here. I can buy you LEE overalls; they have them in orange here. Just tell me what you need, I know it's hard nowadays...

GORAN

You really don't know anything about love, do you?

TANJA

I miss you. You are still everything I dream about. All my dreams are in Belgrade. In them, I am walking with you on the ruins of Kalemegdan.

Tanja pulls out a pair of scissors from her pocket and cuts off her hair. Lights go off on her, and they are back on the room again. Goran burns the letter with his lighter.

JELENA

She still loves you.

CULA

That I will never understand!

GORAN

He is really pissing me off.

Jelena goes out to get her photos.

MARKO

It's dawn already.

GORAN

It's noon in the States. God, how much I hate her! She is not worth it, Marko, she is not worth a single bean, leaving me like that... I told you how it all happened.

MARKO

Yes, you did.

GORAN

I come back from the Army and run over to her place. Her dad opens the door: Sorry, but Tanja is not here. So can I come in and wait for her? Ha,ha,ha... Four years is kind of long time, says he. She went to America two weeks ago, to study at the University there. Thank you, say I. Then I broke the glass door on the elevator with my fist.

CULA

Turns around on the sofa and mumbles.

Better for her. Imagine she stayed here and kept the baby...

GORAN

What baby?

MARKO

Sranje (shit!)

Jelena comes into a room with a big pile of photos and papers.

GORAN

stands up

Now, wait a minute, wait a minute. What is going on here? What baby?

MARKO

I don't know. I don't know. Nonsense!

CULA

What's up with you man? Tanja's baby, why are you making so much noise about it, Tanja's baby that went into the Danube before she left.... You know it.

GORAN

pulls his hair and walks around

Jelena, what's going on? Tell me! Stop playing with me! I'll break something, speak! Tell me! Jelena, tell me!

JELENA

CULA

Turns around on the sofa and mumbles.

Ma bolje za nju. Better for her. Imagine she stayed here and kept the baby...

GORAN

What baby?

MARKO

Sranje (shit!)

Jelena comes into a room with a big pile of photos and papers.

GORAN

stands up

Now, wait a minute, wait a minute. What is going on here? What baby?

MARKO

I don't know. I don't know. Nonsense!

CULA

What's up with you man? Tanja's baby, why are you making so much noise about it, Tanja's baby that went into Danube before she left... You know it.

GORAN

pulls his hair and walks around

Jelena, govori, brze govori inace nesto ce se desiti! Don't play with me!

Polomicu nesto, govori! (I'll break something, speak) Tell me! Jelena, tell me!

JELENA

puts the stuff on the table and sits down, not looking at Goran.

Tanja got pregnant in Zagreb. When she went to visit you. She had an abortion ten days before she went to the States. We promised her that we would never tell you this.

Goran is still standing there, biting his lower lip and looking at everybody in the room.

He goes over to the table, picks up cream from the cake with his fingers and stuffs it into his mouth.

GORAN

So why don't you just tell me everything? I can take it now. I am OK. I am fine. It's not a big deal. You can tell me. I won't go crazy. Goran can take anything now...

Ajde picke, ajde, recite mi...Come on, pussies, tell me everything...

CULA

You are a pussy! You owe me twenty marks. I gave Tanja twenty marks and now I need money.

GORAN

Twenty marks?

CULA

Dvadeset. (twenty). So when am I going to see them?

pause

A, kada? When? Vрати mi te pare pa da (give me back that money and then)

GORAN

Ubicu ga! Ubicu govno jedno! Jelena, hold me, I'm going to kill him! Pa ti si joj pomogao to kill my child! You gave her money to kill... Znao si! You knew it!

He attacks Cula with all his force. Cula is trying to get up from the sofa but he can't. Goran is beating him up. Jelena starts screaming and Marko tries to separate Cula and Goran, but without any success.

GORAN

You knew it was mine! You knew it! Ubicu te! I'll kill you!

He takes a pillow and places it on Cula's head. He presses hard.

Jesi li spavao sa njom (did you sleep with her) Did you, ha? Did you?

Polomicu ti sve kosti! (I'll break your bones). Jesi li je tucao (did you fuck her?). Did you?

You knew it was mine! Mine! Mrtav si! (you're dead!)

Goran takes the pillow off and starts strangling Cula. Cula is already red in a face.

Govori bre! Just tell me the answer and I'll let you go! Did you! You shit!

JELENA

Stop it! You are really going to kill him!

GORAN

You shit! DID YOU FUCK HER?

CULA

faintly

Ne. (No). I didn't.

Goran hears his answer, stops yelling, but is still strangling Cula. Then his

movements slow down, until he is just holding Cula's head in his hands, looking at him. Cula is looking at him. They look at each other for a moment, Jelena and Marko looking at them.

Goran lets Cula go, slowly. Cula sits on the sofa, Goran walks back to the chair. Cula lights a cigarette. Silence.

MARKO

You guys really scared me.

JELENA

Lets go to bed. It's been a long day.

Cula and Goran don't move.

If you want, I can first make some breakfast.

Cula and Goran don't respond. Goran starts looking through the album. He finds a big picture, looks at it for a long time.

GORAN

Tito. He is smiling.

JELENA

I saved that one. It was the first one we took down. It's always nice to keep memories.

CULA

Let me see it.

Goran passes him the picture.

Yeah, he is really smiling.

MARKO

gets a picture from Cula

That's how it all started! He is guilty for everything. If we didn't take down those pictures everything would have stayed...

GORAN

No, it wouldn't have. Things change.

JELENA

Lets look at other photos.

GORAN

No. It's over. It's time to move on.

CULA

Yeah, this is over. I am going home.

Both of them stand up and leave through opposite exits.

JELENA

What are we going to do now?

MARKO

I still think he is guilty. He is smiling at us. Can I burn it Jelena?

JELENA

Burn it. I don't care.

He burns Tito's picture as the lights fade.

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