

BONE COLLECTORS

Drama

Neja Repe

Dramatis personae

NATAN, 30

LOVRENC, 55

IVANA, ∞

TONI, 31

SAŠA, 28

HERMAN, 50

VILLAGERS

Karol, Alica, Jakob, etc.

BONES

Rozalija, Franc, Jože, Mihela, etc.

1. SCENE

Evening. VILLAGERS wrapped in grey, unrecognizable rags as shadows, covered with different greenery, constantly humming indefinable tune in the background - the majority is rummaging through the earth with their hands and shovels, large pictures of saints are planted into the mounds, ritual atmosphere. Slow activity.

FIRST: Saint Ivana, support us, give us the strength to complete the task for your glory and honour.
(everyone murmurs)

SECOND: Saint Crispin, stand by us during this holy task!
(everyone murmurs)

THIRD: Saint Ivana, strengthen our arms, make our sight clearer, to complete the sacrifice in your name!

The sound of shovelling is heard, murmuring of the ritualized tune, until a woman's victorious scream rings out, sounding more like an animal than a person. The villagers' shadows pull their baskets closer and start to throw the bones they found into the baskets frantically, without stopping, in harmony with the fast rhythm of the ritualized tune.

LOVRENC: Be careful not to mix anything! Slowly, slowly... Karol! Don't touch that, I'll do that...

FIRST: Of course, Lovrenc. Anything you want.
(they continue silently and ritualistically)

SECOND: *(nervously)*: And for the rest... Is the rest taken care of? Is he being taken care of?

LOVRENC: Psssst! You're at a holy place!

SECOND: I have a bad feeling.

LOVRENC: I told you to be quiet! You're worse than some old hag.

FIRS: Jakob, you really mustn't... We're together, don't think about it anymore. Everything's going to be all right, everything has always been all right.

LOVRENC *(angrily)*: Stop gossiping, will you! Don't you have any manners? *(silence, they continue)* Do we have everything? Go, go, faster, the women are waiting for us. *(the villagers hurry off, Lovrenc is the last, he carries his basket slowly, solemnly, lovingly)*

2. SCENE

Burial grounds. A long wooden table, covered with a table cloth, and chairs. Villagers are gathering around it, SAŠA is among them. The bones and the skulls are piled on the table - not in disarray, but assembled, as if they wanted to depict each dead person separately. Weak lamps. LOVRENC is standing at the head of the table.

LOVRENC: Be seated. *(the villagers take their places, expect for Saša)*

(To Saša, who is still standing) Sit down, you're standing there like a fool. *(Saša doesn't move, Lovrenc stands up in a threatening manner)* Sit down! I told you to sit down! *(Saša approaches the table with slow steps and sits down)*

There, that makes all of us. Alica, move Rozalija closer to me. *(The YOUNG VILLAGER is scared, but she slowly moves the nearest bones in front of Lovrenc)* And now - we drink. *(the villagers raise their glasses)*

Oh, there is nothing more beautiful than a family united. Rozalija, my beloved Rozalija *(he caresses the skull in front of him)*, my dear beloved Saša *(Saša stares emptily)*, Saša, won't you kiss your mother? *(Saša raises her eyes - a challenge is in her eyes)* Don't be such an ungrateful child. Come here! - I said, come here, you will not behave so badly! *(he stands up, rushes towards Saša and drags her to his chair)* Kiss her! Now! *(when Saša resists, he pushes her head above the skull, Saša jumps away)* There! I don't know how you can be such a cold-hearted witch, your mother was a warm, kind woman... Alica! Pour! *(he approaches her)* Why aren't you sitting with your folks? Your father and your mother... Always so kind, always willing to help, Jože and Liza... Alica, sit with your family...

YOUNG VILLAGER: Let go of me!

LOVRENC: There, young lady, don't be so wild, what's the matter with you? This is a dinner among friends...

YOUNG VILLAGER: Let me go, I know everything! If it weren't for you, my parents would still be here, they'd be a...

LOVRENC *(slaps her)*: Brat!

VILLAGERS *(hesitating, alternating, like a mantra)*: She's right... She's right... She's right...

LOVRENC *(sits down, calm)*: Alica, sit with your parents. *(the young villager hesitates, then sits)*

down between two piles of bones). And now, we drink. As friends. (*pours the wine on Rozalija's skull*) Rozalija, my beloved! I'm happy that I got to spend so much time with you. I'm glad you made me happy through the years, took care of our home, raised our daughter carefully and guided me on the right path. Rozalia, there isn't a woman like you in the whole country. Rozalia, my dear Rozalia. (*stares into a different pile of bones*) Oh, my dear friends. Franc and Mihela. How proud you must be of your son. Rozalia raised our daughter well, but your son left, he's gone far and is successful now - all thanks to you, a good son of good parents. To Franc and Mihela! (*pulls both skulls to him, places them next to Rozalija's, pours wine on all three of them, the villagers only murmur*)

3. SCENE

TONI and HERMAN are walking along a dark path through the woods towards the village. They are clearly tired and have been walking for a while. Herman is wearing a military uniform, TONI uncomfortable city clothes. The path is practically destroyed, still moist from the rain and muddy. They stop, panting.

TONI: Damn mud. I'll be all dirty.

HERMAN: Filthy you mean.

TONI: Don't be a wiseass.

HERMAN: Why the pretty rags if you knew we'd be walking? And you even wanted to force me into wearing civilian clothes. Me in civilian clothes? That will never happen, amen. I'd be dipping my trousers in the mud like you, hahahaha!

TONI: Can you keep quiet?

HERMAN: My God, you are nervous.

TONI: Nervous, nervous! He's acting like we've gone camping!

HERMAN: You've been on tenterhooks the whole way. Relax, man. We'll come, take a look around and we'll be back by tomorrow.

TONI: It's that simple, isn't it?

HERMAN: What else?

TONI: Military brains.

HERMAN: You politicians are always so nervous. What can they do to you?

TONI: I can't talk to you. So, you're not an official. It's not quite so simple for us.

HERMAN: I don't remember when was the last time you made such a fuss. Don't take the jeep, take

the train. Don't wear the uniform, wear plain clothes. Not with a nice little platoon, alone. Don't get off at the right stop, walk for miles and miles like two monkeys. And at the end, we will come to some kind of a nest of dumb peasants, who'll shit themselves, when I bellow my hello.

TONI: Stop thinking, I prefer the other version of you.

HERMAN: What other version?

TONI: And keep your voice down, will you? We're close to the village now. I don't want to wake everyone up. And you're going to help me with this and don't you worry about the "why", if you know what I mean.

HERMAN: Of course, Toni. You do the talking, I'll do the work. We're on duty nevertheless.

TONI: Good. Now, let's go find this stationmaster. And stop stamping with you boots immediately, for Christ's sake, or we're going to barge into the village like a pack of wolves.

HERMAN: Should I take them off?

TONI: Come with me and at least try to be quiet, bloody hell.

HERMAN: Alright, alright.

4. SCENE

The come to a small village station outside the village, where trains stop very seldom. TONI heads towards the door of the apartment where the stationmaster lives, the light is on, HERMAN follows. He knocks.

TONI: Mister Natan? Mister Natan?

NATAN (*on the other side of the door, angrily but scared at the same time*): Who are you?

TONI: You talked to me.

NATAN: Mister Toni?

TONI: That's right. Commander Herman is with me. Will you let us in?

NATAN: In? I would've let you in already if those villains left me with the key. They locked me in, bastards!

TONI: Locked you in? When?

NATAN: Today! Just now!

TONI: Herman, get him out. Or get us in.

HERMAN: This won't be difficult at all, the door is quite old. Heave ho! (*he slams into them only a few times, the door breaks down*)

NATAN: I thought you weren't coming.

TONI: Oh, no, Mr. Natan, with the kind of announcement as yours... We have to check everything.

NATAN: Go up the hill. To their sacred cave. You'll catch them in flagrante. Right now. They're violating the bones... This has to stop. It's perverted.

TONI: Mr. Natan ...

NATAN: Go! I'm not crazy, I'm not making this up. You saw they locked me in.

HERMAN: Don't you have a spare key?

NATAN: Of course not. The apartment isn't mine. I'm only using it.

HERMAN: Maybe there's one lying around nonetheless.

NATAN: Go up the hill. See for yourselves; don't look at me that way. You'll just catch them, they're just...

TONI: Mr. Natan, slow down. We're alone, while the villagers are, as you can see, somewhat violent. Slow down, slow down.

HERMAN (*determined*): Calm down, young man.

NATAN: The telephone is right over there if you want to use it. I don't have a record. Of any kind.

HERMAN: We have our own phone. Don't worry.

TONI: We'll spend the night. It's too late to do anything before morning. But we should get up rather early.

NATAN: Very well. Very well. As long as something shall be done. I can't stand it anymore. I can't stand it. I don't care what happened. They must leave the bones alone.

TONI: Calm down. You've done your bit.

NATAN: Yes, I have. Really, I have.

TONI: Now, go to sleep, it might not be a good idea if the villagers saw the light on for too long. They'd get mad and - as you know - we have a slight problem with locking the door.

5. SCENE

Burial grounds. All is calm - not even the leaves on the trees are stirring.

Drunken singing is heard from the distance and clumsy steps. LOVRENC is approaching the burial grounds.

LOVRENC (*singing*): Ooooly one more drop... Ooonly one more drop.... In thaaaaan, my brothers, never again... (*stops*) Hkhmkhm, fuck it... (*continues*) Fuck, where am I now... Fuck, this are Nabrežine... Oh... I'm going have to sit down... Fuck, mole hill... Fucking bloody mole, what are

you doing here... Stupid animal, shit... (*sits down*) He said... He said... Lovrenc, I won't leave you alone even after I die... Moron, hahaha... And now... Now, I'm calmly sitting at Nabrežine and all that's poking me in the ass is the bloody mole... Franc, are you the mole? Are you the bloody mole? If you are... They've screwed you over quite nicely up there, didn't they? Filthy maggot! I said... I'll get you or you'll get me... (*starts to shout*) I got you, Franc, I got you and now you're compost... And I'm alive... And I'm drinking... Hehehe... Franc, I got Mihela too, you know... Right after you... She didn't have anyone... No one to defend her... And I fucked her, Franc, I fucked her and I hope you saw it from the great beyond, you fifthly little bastard... Did you hear me, Franc, you old cock-sucker? Fucking hell, I've never had more fun in my life than the time I buried your assess...

(*stands still*)

Franc! Hey, Franc! I didn't mean it that way, Franc! Fuck, it was that kind of time... You should've been smarter, Franc. Listen here, Franc, we were animals at the time... We were all animals... You too... You'd got me if I wasn't faster.... You were the same... You were even worse, goddamn it... You wouldn't spare anyone... Franc... Damned be this place... D-a-m-n-e-d i-t s-h-o-u-l-d b-e! (*bursts into tears*) You know I liked you Franc! Franc, why the hell weren't you smarter? Franc! Stop haunting me, Franc, you were the same! You were an even greater bastard! You'd kill everyone... Everyone... Everyone... Fuck, Franc! Fuck, Franc! Damned be your bones! (*stands up painfully*)

IVANA (*walks towards him, gently*): Lovrenc. Lovrenc.

LOVRENC (*recognizes her, drops back on his knees*): Holly Lady!

IVANA: You're not a bad person. Lovrenc. You're not.

LOVRENC: I'm not. I'm not. God knows, you know, Milady. You know everything.

IVANA: There was no other way, Lovrenc. You have no sin.

LOVRENC: I don't. I don't. Even an animal would defend itself. Sometimes you have to be ruthless. Only, Rozalija, Milady, Rozalia...

IVANA: They want to separate you from her.

LOVRENC: I know, Milady. That darn young snooper. I'll break him in. Too bad that old Silvan had to die; everything's gone wrong ever since we have that juvenile vagabond at the station.

IVANA: They want to separate you from her. He wants to separate you from her. He doesn't know what he's doing. He doesn't know you, like I know you.

LOVRENC: I'll break him in. A stranger shall not meddle in our business. Never and at no time.

IVANA: Lovrenc, don't be too harsh on him. He's young.

LOVRENC: Young and stupid and sneaky! But whatever you say, Milady, so be it. I didn't harm him. I didn't even hit him, I swear I didn't.

IVANA: That's appreciated, Lovrenc. If the boy could only appreciate it. He doesn't respect you. He told the strangers.

LOVRENC: What? How?

IVANA: He told strangers. They will come.

LOVRENC: Milady.

IVANA: Sometimes you have to be ruthless, Lovrenc. It's not a sin.

LOVRENC: It's not a sin.

IVANA: Lovrenc, you carry a great burden. You can't think only of yourself.

LOVRENC: No. No. Damned boy... I'll show him! (*picks up a stick from the ground*)

IVANA: Lovrenc, no violence. No violence. There's been enough violence. Don't you remember?

LOVRENC: Forgive me, Milady. I'm weak, I've always been. Forgive me.

IVANA: Go home to your daughter.

LOVRENC: I don't have a daughter anymore. She has shamed me. She has shamed her father. She ripped out my heart and spat on it. Ungrateful brat!

IVANA: You have to forgive her, Lovrenc. Forgive and forget. Show her that you love her, that she's yours. Just like before.

LOVRENC: I don't know if I can do that, Milady. I would like to obey. You've never abandoned me.

IVANA: Forgive her... Care for her, show her... You know she misses you as well, she missed your love... It's only love, it's nothing else - and that's all you have, Lovrenc... Don't hesitate.

LOVRENC: Yes. Yes. Your wisdom, Milady.

IVANA: Go. (*Lovrenc leaves, Ivana keeps her eyes on him; in his drunken weariness he sits, nods off*)

6. SCENE

Morning. At the train station, NATAN is alone, Toni and Herman are nowhere to be seen. IVANA approaches.

NATAN (*aggressively*): Why are you still appearing?

IVANA: What a question.

NATAN: There are plenty of those who want to see you in the cave. They're praying and lighting

candles.

IVANA: I can't be too obvious. That's boring.

NATAN: A saint can't be boring?

IVANA: Boring, maybe. Obvious, no - Did you have visitors?

NATAN: It doesn't concern you. - Bad for business?

IVANA: Extremely.

NATAN: There's no business with me. You're wasting your time.

IVANA: You're just as crazy as they are.

NATAN: I'm not.

IVANA: You are. You can see me.

NATAN: It's your decision, not mine.

IVANA: No one's going to believe you. You can't lie. You know they're not lying. Could you live with untruth?

NATAN: I don't talk to anyone about you. You don't exist.

IVANA: Why not? They would know what you're talking about. They would be on your side.

NATAN: No one's on my side. I don't want anyone on my side. My side isn't the kind you could be on. There's no room.

IVANA: They will if I order them.

NATAN: Your words don't matter. You don't exist.

IVANA: You don't believe your own eyes?

NATAN: My eyes are me.

IVANA: Why do you deny me, then?

NATAN: I'm not denying you. I'm talking to you, aren't I?

IVANA: But I don't exist.

NATAN: No.

IVANA (*long laugh*): You're a funny boy.

NATAN: You don't make decisions about anything.

IVANA (*long laugh*): Are you blind? One word from me and you're dead.

NATAN: Then say it.

IVANA: Are you taunting me?

NATAN: Demonstrate your power. It's what you like to do.

IVANA: I don't have to prove anything.

NATAN: Alright. Than stand aside. (*gets up*)

IVANA: For a moment, young lad, for a moment (*leaves*)

7. SCENE

TONI and HERMAN appear on the scene.

TONI (*hurries towards Natan*): Mr. Natan! All necessary measures were taken, reinforcements are here.

NATAN: I didn't know you'll be bringing an army.

TONI (*laughs*): Oh, no, no Mr. Natan. That's just a precaution. You told us that we'd be dealing with dead bodies and, therefore, we need only trained personnel, in order to prevent any kind of poisoning or infections. The commander and his troops will only assist with exhumation of the bodies and transfer them to a proper cemetery.

NATAN: Exhumation?

TONI: Of course. They can't stay here, the conditions are utterly inappropriate. The villagers probably buried their deceased in good faith and as they saw fit, which has to be understood, of course, it's normal, but it cannot stay that way. Diseases can spread, underground water can become poisonous, you know how it is...

NATAN: That's not the problem. These bodies have been here since-

TONI (*interrupts*): Yes, yes, for a long time. But it's going to be different from now on, because the authorities will take care of the prosperity of the countryside. Herman! Call the troops! (*Herman leaves*)

NATAN: That's not why I call-

TONI (*interrupts him again and gives him a friendly pat on the shoulder*): You did the right thing, Mr. Natan. I am extremely grateful. You can go home now. You can't help here any longer. I'll write a recommendation to your superiors for you. (*Herman comes back, Natan wants to object*) Herman! Escort the gentleman inside, so we can show him our deepest gratitude and take care of his safety! (*Herman holds Natan by his upper arm, when he tries to resist, he tightens his grip and almost drags him along*)

TONI: Damned it. We're going to have problems with this one. If my uncle were still alive...

8. SCENE

SASA is sitting in front of Lovrenc's house, she's holding a skull in her hand, but she is not looking

at it. TONI walks along the tracks. He sees Saša.

TONI: Saša? Saša? Is that really you?

SAŠA (*looks at him, silence*)

TONI (*comes closer*): Saša. Let go of it. It could be dangerous. You can get infected. (*Saša lets out a sharp laugh*) Don't cause problems, please. You're not like the elders. Be reasonable.

SAŠA (*holds out the skull to him, directly in front of his eyes*): Then take it! Take it, I tell you!

TONI (*is feverishly looking for gloves in his pocket, refuses to look at it*): Let me just find...

Gloves... Bag... Put it on the ground.

SAŠA: On the ground? You cowardly cry-baby.

TONI (*hurt*): Saša ...

SAŠA (*coldly*): Saša, what? What, after all this time, Saša? Take it in your hands and go away. I won't give it to you if you don't want it. Take it by force. Or better yet, let others take it by force. You know how to do that, right?

TONI: We haven't seen each other for so many years and you want to fight?

SAŠA: You want to hold my little hand? Like you used to? Give me your hand. But be careful, I've held the skull with both hands.

TONI: You speak like I'm the enemy. I'm not the enemy. I'm saving your shit.

SAŠA: Saving? You hated this mud. You disappeared. And now you've come to save us? You? With your house in the nice big city?

TONI: You're just like them. (*gets up*) The same.

SAŠA: You're leaving again, already? You know how to do that too. Very nice.

TONI: What the hell do you want? We were children! A child would say anything. I don't even know who you are now! What do you want, go to the city with me?

SAŠA: No.

TONI: What do you want then? Do you want anything at all? Or do you just want everyone to be miserable because you're miserable? You're not a child anymore, either. You use to care for me.

SAŠA: And you're just the same child you once were. Lie. Run. Love thyself.

TONI: You want to ruin everything. All the memories, the whole past, everything. You want me to hate you because it would be easier for you to hate me. Maybe you left me. Maybe you betrayed me. Only, I don't whine as much as you do!

SAŠA (*gets up, holds out the skull to him*): You want it?

TONI: To hell with everything! (*grabs the skull, tries to shove it in his pocket, it doesn't go so he throws it far away and storms off, Saša keeps her eyes on him*)

9. SCENE

NATAN in his house, behind a table, nervous TONI besides it.

TONI: Natan, I don't understand what is upsetting you.

NATAN: Those bones... Now you're tossing them around.

TONI: Tossing them around? Natan, you're judging us all wrong. We came here to show respect for the dead. We're going to transfer them to real graves, not caves like Nabrežina.

NATAN (*furiously*): You should not disturb the dead.

TONI: Natan, you know we're doing the right thing. The villagers, as misled as they are, would stir everything up. - In your opinion, is burying the dead really a greater insult than to hang them on chairs and decorate them with flowers?

NATAN: I don't know.

TONI: See, burial is the only option to preserve the respect for the dead.

NATAN: These dead don't need respect. They need peace. And you're violating it. The villagers too. That's not why I called you!

TONI: What did you want?

NATAN: To prevent the perverseness. To protect the graves.

TONI: We should guard the graves? Are you serious?

NATAN: Why do you have Herman?

TONI (*laughs*): Herman is a soldier. He's the operative, he and his soldiers. Fast and efficient.

NATAN: And your guard.

TONI: I don't need any guards. The villagers know me.

NATAN: And love you. As I see.

TONI: It's a village. It takes time before people get it. Certain things.

NATAN: What about you and your saints?

TONI (*laughs*): Saints?

NATAN: Saints? That's fairly popular with the villagers.

TONI: You surely don't believe in this fairytale.

NATAN: You never saw anyone?

TONI: Never, and I grew up here. It's a psychosis, collective psychosis. Surely, you've figured it out by yourself?

NATAN: They say they can see them.

TONI: Figments of imagination.

NATAN: They say that st. Ivana speaks to them.

TONI: Silliness.

NATAN: They say she gives them orders.

TONI: Nonsense.

NATAN: They say she ordered them to celebrate the bond in the community with the bones.

TONI: Why do you listen to them?

NATAN: I live here, Mr. Toni. For two months.

TONI: There's nothing to this. You don't see saints, do you?

NATAN: No. But I was wondering if you have.

TONI: The answer is obvious. No, I did not, it's a psychosis. Don't test my common sense. Luckily, I've been away from these places for long enough that I don't feel obligated to hold on to such foolishness.

NATAN: Obligated?

TONI: You see what the village is like. A few people, a lot of rumours. If you live here, you say thing other people say. You see what other people see. You worship what other people worship.

NATAN: And those, who are here as strangers?

TONI: You can see by yourself.

NATAN: I'm not a stranger. I'm a man, like them.

TONI: I'm sorry, no one is just a man in a village. You don't understand that. (*silence*) Why did you come here at all?

NATAN: I could ask you the same question.

10. SCENE

HERMAN enters.

TONI: Oh, Herman. Sit down. (*Herman sits on the sofa.*)

HERMAN: Just a little bit more and it's going to be settled.

NATAN: What?

HERMAN: I've set up a perimeter of my soldiers around the burial place, so none of the villagers can come near it. The others are handling the exhumations...

NATAN: They're not crazy.

HERMAN: I'm sorry?

NATAN: The villagers. They're not crazy.

HERMAN (*exchanges glances with Toni*): All right. They're not crazy. I've expressed myself wrongly. I'm sorry. - The army speech is more direct. More familiar. I don't know how to speak as well as Toni.

TONI: Herman, you flatter me. Well, I'm happy things will be taken care of soon.

NATAN: I don't want you digging around.

HERMAN: Dear man, how else are we going to move the bones? The bones are not just available, they're underground.

NATAN: Stop it.

HERMAN: It doesn't concern you anymore! (*starts to get up*)

TONI: Herman! (*gives him a stern look, Herman sits down again*) Natan, look. We're grateful that you prevented a great misfortune.

NATAN (*gets up*): Shut up.

TONI: Natan, calm down. (*Herman stands as well*) Herman, sit. Natan, it's for the best.

NATAN: It's not. It's not. Not for them. Leave the dead where they are. It's a sin.

TONI (*still sitting*): You believe in sin?

NATAN: Yes.

TONI: In saints?

NATAN: What is this nonsense?! (*Herman grabs him by the arm*)

TONI: Herman, no! (*Herman reluctantly lets go, but stands close in a threatening manner*)

NATAN: Why can you give him orders? What are you to him? You're not a soldier!

TONI: Calm down. Natan. Please. You don't want to cause problems.

NATAN: Problems, ha? Problems? Leave me alone. Leave them alone. Get out of my house. Out! (*Herman grabs him again*)

TONI: Herman! No! We're leaving! (*gets up, signals Herman, who lets go of Natan and leaves the house without a goodbye. Toni follows but turns around*) We won't bother you much longer. It's going to be over in a week. (*leaves*)

NATAN (*collapses on a chair*): Fucking hell!

11. SCENE

Lovrenc's house, Saša is washing the dishes, Lovrenc is sitting at the table with a small glass of schnapps.

LOVRENC: Was anyone here this morning?

SAŠA: No one.

LOVRENC: No one. (*drinks*) You didn't have a visitor?

SAŠA: No. No one comes to see me. Unless it's to ask where you are.

LOVRENC: So someone asked where I was?

SAŠA: Who?

LOVRENC (*gets up*): That damned brat of yours from the station, who else! Are you really such a fool that you don't know who has seen him on his way here or are you just trying to make a fool out of me again?

SAŠA: Natan wasn't here. Ever! Leave him alone!

LOVRENC: Then it was Toni! (*slams his hand on the table*) What's going on with that brat again?

SAŠA: Nothing. Why are you getting all upset? I haven't seen him in seventeen years, remember?

The last time I saw him was when we walked him to the station together, when he left Silvan to go to the city. I completely forgot about him because he stopped writing... Soon.

LOVRENC: He's become conceited, yes, conceited. He adjusted to the city quickly, the worm. -

That's why he has no business coming here! No business, did you hear me? He is not to cross the threshold of this house! Mr. Fancy pants, who is ashamed of us, has no business under my roof.

Even Silvano, may God give him eternal rest, was ashamed that the boy forgot about him like that.

He could've got on a train, brought him something from the city, sent him some money. The poor bugger was so old and sick to his last day, but the boy though only about his ass all those years and his uncle should just kicked the bucket for all he cared! There! And you let someone like that into my house!

SAŠA: Don't get upset, please.

LOVRENC: Bloody brats from the station. You barely get your senses back over one, you're throwing yourself at the other one.

SAŠA: Father!

LOVRENC: Is anything wrong, am I not taking good enough care of you? Where else could you have such comfortable life than here, with your father? Who do you think is going to love you like your father? Those brats? They'll use you and toss you aside like a pile of garbage!

SAŠA: Father!

LOVRENC: You don't know what life is, girl!

SAŠA: Is this, what I have here, life? I'm sick of it!

LOVRENC: Saša!

SAŠA: I have no freedom, no money, no mother, I have nothing, there, nothing!

LOVRENC: What are you saying? You have a mother.

SAŠA: A mother? A pile of bones? That's not my mother!

LOVRENC (*hits her*): You will not speak of Rozalija like that!

Saša slowly moves away as in a trance, sits at the table and stares at the tablecloth. Lovrenc slowly and uncertainly approaches her from behind.

LOVRENC: Saša ... I'm sorry. (*he goes through her hair with his hand, caresses her*) I didn't want than, but you... You should know not to speak that way. But we mustn't argue. You're all I've got and I'm all you've got. No one else. (*Saša removes his hand but not violently*) And you want to desert me.

SAŠA: No, father.

Lovrenc lifts Saša, starts to kiss her, Saša fights back.

SAŠA: No. no. I can't do this anymore. I can't do this anymore. I love you, I always will, but...

LOVRENC (*continues with what he's doing*): You're confused, Saša. Those brats confused you, those selfish bastards who want to use you - but no one will come between us, between our family, this is stronger than all sugar-coated words! (*takes off her clothes, pushes her on the table, sexual intercourse, he holds her hands on the table*) I love you, Saša... Saša... You have beautiful eyes... Hair... You have a nice laugh... Rozalka... Rozalka... I love you... Rozalka...

12. SCENE

Next to the burial site TONI and HERMAN.

HERMAN: We can begin. The lads measured and calculated everything, there are no more obstacles.

TONI: The villagers?

HERMAN: Under control.

TONI: Natan?

HERMAN: We're watching him.

TONI: There aren't going to be any problems, right?

HERMAN: Are you afraid of problems? Why did you go back to him?

TONI: I just want to get it over with.

HERMAN: No one will stand in our way. Anyone who tries will regret it.

TONI: Herman – gently.

HERMAN: I know all about it.

TONI: Don't rush, that could hurt all of us. I don't want any stories. Nothing can come out of this. Even I barely knew what went on here all this time.

HERMAN: Trust me; I've been doing this for long enough.

TONI: I've known you long enough. But when you're on home soil, you're always nervous.

HERMAN: What ties you to this shit hole? An uncle that's no longer here? The stupid belief in saints? (*laughs*)

TONI: Stop it... Don't laugh.

HERMAN: It's funny. A bunch of idiots, who claim to be under the command of some made up beings... Hahaha... A good excuse...

TONI: Don't laugh... Don't laugh.

HERMAN: We're alone here.

TONI: It doesn't matter.

HERMAN: Relax already. Only my soldiers can stalk you here. And I don't have any orders for you, yet.

TONI: Very funny.

HERMAN: Come on, relax already! You politicians are always so nervous.

TONI: And you soldiers are always so indifferent.

HERMAN: No one wrapped us up in wool. Only your machine gun stands between you and death.

TONI: Come on, shut up already.

HERMAN: Relax. A while longer and you'll be back in you cabinet.

TONI: Time is a bitch.

HERMAN: Why did you take this job is you hate it so much?

TONI: Why. Why. Because this is my home. And because they're under my jurisdiction, that's why. Do you even know what living in this nest includes?

HERMAN: So?

TONI: So, your machine gun doesn't solve every problem. Sometimes something more is needed.

HERMAN: Not all, but most of them. I would never trade with you.

TONI: Thank God. You have the brains of a tank on tracks.

HERMAN: All tanks have tracks.

TONI: Come on, shut up already, will you.

HERMAN: Aha, a chap is coming already. An old alcoholic, I can smell him from thirty feet away. I'm going, you deal with him, I haven't got any patience for the likes of him. If you want it with gloves. (*leaves, LOVRENC comes*)

13. SCENE

LOVRENC (*sees Herman leaving*): Good day, gentlemen.

TONI: Good day, Mr. Lovrenc. What do you want?

LOVRENC: I hear you're exhuming.

TONI: Yes, sir.

LOVRENC: How will you sort the bones?

TONI: Excuse me?

LOVRENC: The bones, how will you sort them?

TONI: Well, first we'll identify which part goes with which person. The skull, jaw, collar bone, shoulder blade, back bone and so forth to the big toes. Then everything is put together and buried as close together as possible.

LOVRENC: Where will you burry them?

TONI: In the mass graves in the city. They have sewers there.

LOVRENC: But... You'll separate them?

TONI: Of course. Each femur to its skull.

LOVRENC: Not like that. Separate them - according to their value.

TONI: Their value, Mr. Lovrenc?

LOVRENC: The victim cannot rest next to its executioner.

TONI: What victims? There are only the village dead here.

LOVRENC: Don't play a fool with me. You know very well what happened here.

TONI: This is a village commentary.

LOVRENC: Which drank endless litres of blood. You mother's too.

TONI: My mother is buried in the city.

LOVRENC: Fairly tale. She's in there, you know very well, you father did it.

TONI: Not true! My mother died in the city, my father died ages ago as well, due to pneumonia.

LOVRENC: Oh, look at him. That's why you're doing it? So you the innocent and the guilty will be equal? Worthless asshole, the child of worthless assholes!

TONI: The alcohol destroyed your brain.

LOVRENC: Alcohol? Alcohol? Nothing can erase the memory, my lad! The truth is the truth!

TONI: The truth from a wino won't interest anyone.

LOVRENC: What are you going to do with the bones? What?

TONI: They'll go to a public cemetery. Anonymously. Equally. And this will end the stories spread by you and the likes of you - about saints for Christ sake; tell them to an idiot. You're behind all of

this, you're instigating the villagers!

LOVRENC: Oh, no, that's not true. You won't destroy the memory! (*grabs him by the shirt, Herman returns and intervenes immediately*)

HERMAN: What is this?!

TONI (*straitens his collar*): He attacked me.

HERMAN: Attacked? (*To Lovrenc, while still holding him*): March, you old geezer, go! (*drags him off, then returns*)

TONI: You took care of it?

HERMAN: Yes. He won't be making any more problems; the chaps will make sure of that.

TONI: Will you patrol the village?

HERMAN: If I find anyone who is hiding bones at home...

TONI: Yes. Yes. (*they leave*)

14. SCENE

Natan's apartment. NATAN is lying on the bed on his back, jerking off. IVANA enters. She comes closer and starts to take off her clothes, slowly and sensually.

IVANA: It's so boring out there. (*Natan stares into the air and continues*) You've finally learned that you can't get rid of me or run away from me. Praise worthy. But it's so terribly boring! A whole herd of people, praying, entrusting themselves to you, their small unimportant matters... I know each one of them to the depth of their being. It's not hard to talk to them. But they're so simple... So innocent. They know worry, anger, jealousy, fear, guilt. A beautiful symphony of feelings, but... (*comes near and slides her hands along Natan's legs*) I know you're listening. You're disappointed. Jealous. And angry, too. At her. At me. Because you know I'm here. And I'll stay here and there's nothing you can do about it. Even though you think you don't want me, you do want me. Even though you angry at yourself because of it.

NATAN: Go away!

IVANA: Yes. Such a pleasant melody.

NATAN: Can't you see I need some privacy? (*continues and turns away*)

IVANA: Oh, I didn't come to disturb you. I only came (*grabs his hips*) to enjoy. (*grabs Natan's hands, puts them over his head and mounts him*) I'm going to take you. And you're going to enjoy every second of it. You don't have any choice either way.

NATAN (*ironically*): Yes, mistress.

IVANA (*fucks him*): It's extremely boring being a saint. You have everything - glory, honour, eternity, you know the limits to which you can go in order to sacrifice yourself for good. There's only one problem. (*Natan moans*) You don't have any humanity. You were just a small boy when you came to that backyard for the first time. You don't even know how lucky you are.

NATAN: Shut up... Shut up about luck...

IVANA: And to go from man to saint, simple. You just mustn't quit. You think that torturing yourself is same as learning. Oh, I know all about it and more, something you never will. The villagers seem fun enough, from time to time. It's simple with them. You come, say it, it's done. You're more stubborn, but you still let me fuck you. You like it, don't you. You feel at home? Like that boy from the backyard, who cried, when his ga-...

NATAN: Shut up... Be quiet already...

IVANA (*fucks him wildly*): You be quiet. You, who are so alive, with all options opened to you . Goodness does not make a man. Nor does pity. Or innocence. I don't know anything, anything! You're a fool. You think you're going to discover something new if you let people spit all over you for long enough? What new thing? What haven't you discovered yet? Don't you have enough of everything? Don't you know what it feels like to be humiliated? When you're getting beat up but you're not returning the punches? When you're deceived, cheated, rejected? Are you a different man, proud of yourself? Or are you just a helpless little freak that wants to be different from everyone else? Keep going, keep going. You'll regret it. You'll regret it when it's too late and when you'll discover that you're still not you, that you've spent your life asleep, that you fell for the oldest trick in the book that knowing thyself beyond good is only possible inside evil... (*Natan is coming*) and you missed the chance, the last chance!

NATAN (*out of breath*): Is this your chance?

IVANA: You're delusional.

NATAN: You're abusing them. Those fools, who will pay dearly for their sin... Where is God?

IVANA (*rises*): Don't call God. Here, in this forsaken place, there's no one; it's our fault. Only me.

NATAN: Your words are venomous. I'm not like that!

IVANA: Why are you afraid of me?

NATAN: I'm not afraid of you. I despise you.

IVANA (*laughter*): You can never escape from yourself. You're a coward. You humiliate yourself and you think you'll see the light someday. No, surprise, my friend! There's no light! It's not hard being the victim-being the executioner is the hard part. And only the executioners are rewarded. By themselves, without God.

NATAN: Your sermons. Spare me. You say what suits you best. You cannot punish me. I have

done nothing wrong.

IVANA: You don't know how boring it is.

NATAN: Then stop. Leave them. Guilty consciousness will devour them even without you.

IVANA: How blind you are. Attractively blind.

NATAN: This is not a party!

IVANA: It is a party. It's all just is a big carrousel. And only you don't know how to enjoy it, because you don't dare to. Because you're afraid of that part of yourself, which could hit a deceiving woman people are laughing at you about.

NATAN: Be quiet! (*rises in a threatening manner*)

IVANA: Hit me. Hit me. At least once. Draw blood. It will save you.

NATAN: Be quiet!

IVANA: Do it. Do it. Don't you remember the laughter? (*laughs with a high pitched and neighing voice*)

NATAN: No! No! (*runs to the other side of the room*) Go away! Go away!

IVANA (*follows him, the laughter become demonic*): Hit me! Hit me! Come on, give into it... Give into it... Live... (*Natan pushes her off, finally he turns and hits her - Ivana's laughter is becoming more normal, loud, until it slowly disappears. Natan collapses and buriers his hands in his arms, appalled, he stands up determined.*)

15. SCENE

Burial site. LOVRENC, NATAN approaching.

LOVRENC: Stop!

NATAN: You think you can order me?

LOVRENC: I won't let you pass, I'd rather break your pussy. The villagers are here - turn around.

NATAN: And the soldiers?

LOVRENC (*laughs drunkenly*): The soldiers have nothing to guard here. They're gone. They're too busy with tossing our houses.

NATAN: What did you do with them? The bones?

LOVRENC: What did we do with them you little cunt? They're gone! They've swiped them! This is all your doing... You... (*rushes towards Natan, they start to fight, Natan ends up on the ground*)
Piss off, you rat. Piss off!

NATAN (*starts to get up*): What about your daughter, you fuck? I know... I know everything... You

filthy cunt! Leave me alone!

LOVRENC: My daughter is mine! If she wants to screw around with you, she will; you think you're her first twerp? She came home to me every time, you're not men enough for her. You know it's true, right, you know?

NATAN (*starts to leave*): Bloody sod!

LOVRENC: What did you say?

NATAN (*moving away*): Bloody sod! I've had enough of you lot! I hope those bones get stuck in your throats, perverts! You won't get me! Let the soldiers slaughter you, idiots!

LOVRENC: Neighbours, let's go! We won't allow them to transport them out of the village! Go!

16. SCENE

At the station in front of Natan's apartment. NATAN is throwing suitcases and boxes in front of the door, SAŠA sitting by the door.

SAŠA: You're leaving?

NATAN: Yes. I'd take you with me but I guess you father's enough for you, so I won't ask.

SAŠA: Where are you going?

NATAN: I don't know. Anywhere. They'll transfer me gladly anyway. Into a new village full of psychopaths, who drink wine from their wife's skull and fuck their daughters.

SAŠA: And where you won't be able to stand it. Is this the first shit you're leaving behind?

NATAN: Shut up.

SAŠA: Is it the last?

NATAN: Talk, just talk. The train is due in half an hour.

SAŠA: You despise us. But at least we're able to look our victims in the face. And out torturers. Not you. You think you're good, better than us. But you're just running away, you're like Toni. Better to be sick than a coward.

NATAN (*stops*): I'm not a coward.

SAŠA: You're a coward.

NATAN: Don't say that. Don't say that!

SAŠA: You are.

NATAN: What do you think it's like to move around for all these year and be a stranger each time and stand behind your convictions all the time, without being run over, because you're alone? That you don't start to sell yourself for a smile, for a warm word , for a bloody cup of coffee? You think it's easy for us, cowards? If I was a coward I'd be drinking wine from your mother's skull because

I'd be afraid of you, perverts!

SAŠA: Only my father does that.

NATAN (*sarcastic*): Of course.

SAŠA: It's easy to be brave if you want to be a messiah, isn't it?

NATAN: I'm not. You speak rubbish. You don't understand. You don't understand anything. Leave me alone. I've had enough of you, all of you!

SAŠA: It's too late now. You came, you started it and now you finish it. But you can't because you don't have the guts. Just leave. To the next village.

NATAN: It's not my fault what Toni and Herman are doing. Don't pin that on me.

SAŠA: It's not your fault. It's not your concern. Nothing is. Everything was your concern yesterday.

NATAN: What the hell do you want?

SAŠA (*cynically*): Go all the way. At least once. You'll at least know what it feels like. (*grabs his upper arm from behind*)

NATAN: Don't touch me.

SAŠA: Am I infectious, again, will I transfer my disease to you, will filth stick to you? You gave me a few days of illusions, then you dropped me like a pile of stinking shit. Now you're calmly packing and speculating and you think you can play word games with me? Go to hell! (*kicks the nearest suitcase*) Go to hell!

NATAN: I should go to hell? What about you golden daddy? You know, the old fart you shagged when you came to me? How was that supposed to make me feel, how? The whole village laughed at me, the idiot!

SAŠA (*sets out towards him*): Shut up! Shut up!

NATAN: Everyone knew, except me! Great, let's laugh at him, the strange moron, who just got here and he's already stumbled upon Lovrenc's mine, as big as he is!

SAŠA: Oh, they laughed at the poor sod! You, you, you! What about me?

NATAN: I don't like being mocked! It's your fault! Why did you do that to me?

SAŠA: Me? What do you know about me? Did you ever ask me? Or were you in a too big of a hurry to get me between the sheets?

NATAN: If they were only sheets!

(*they fall silent, Saša slowly sits on a suitcase*)

NATAN: Come with me.

SAŠA: No.

NATAN: You can't live here.

SAŠA: I can only live here.

NATAN: Let's go to the city. We'll be free there. No one will know anything.

SAŠA: I'll never be free - You go. You were ready to go just a second before.

NATAN: That was yesterday.

SAŠA: Just a second ago.

NATAN: You don't want to help yourself.

SAŠA: It's too late for me. All I have are illusions, they're not for life nor for death. You go. There's a lot of villages with psychopaths who fuck their daughters and drink from skulls. You were right. You can't change anything. There's no minister here, no God. Just evil.

NATAN: The bones are gone.

SAŠA: The bones are not important. We're all dirty. So are you. But you can forget. Leave. Be silent.

NATAN: It's all my fault. I don't like what I'm becoming here.

SAŠA: It's not. It's not.

NATAN: It's not too late. No. It's not. I will not be deceived. Not true.

SAŠA: It's not your fault. Go. You were quite ready to leave just a while back.

NATAN: It's my fault. *(leaves)*

(Saša waits, Natan returns to the apartment, indistinct talking is heard; Saša gets up, starts to arrange the suitcases in a straight line calmly and conscientiously, then leaves)

17. SCENE

Outside, close to the station, HERMAN with a few soldiers runs into TONI.

HERMAN *(furious)*: For fuck's sake, where are you hiding, when I need you? Did you see what the little sod did to us? Did you see? When I get my hands on him!

TONI: What? What is it? What are you talking about?

HERMAN: This! The headquarters nagged for half an hour about what we're up to, whether we're completely incapable, that the matter leaked and that the whole hill could be crawling by tomorrow, that it can be full of reporters and snitches! Reporters! That's all we're missing! We have a bunch of bones here and crazy yokels and some hocus pocus - God knows who that nut called! I'll kill him!
Kill!

TONI: Calm down. Calm down. Let's sit down. Think this through. I'll say...

HERMAN: You and your talk. I shouldn't have listened to you. You're incompetent, you know, a totally incompetent loud mouth!

TONI: Watch your tone with me! I'm in charge here, whether you like it or not.

HERMAN: You're in charge? You're shitting me! You're up to your neck in shit and now you're trying to drag me in as well. Up yours, mate! You and your gloves and other blabbing - look what you've done! You can't even handle a kid your own age. The headquarters are pissing on me, how many times do you think that's happened, hey? Never, I tell you, never and now because of you! Now I should save your skin? And you were all for keeping everything quiet that you bugged me senseless. Ha! Now back off!

TONI: I'll report you.

HERMAN: Report me? You won't leave this place if we don't do this right.

TONI: Is that a threat? You're threatening me? Are you out of your mind?

HERMAN: Be quiet and learn. Once you're back in your office, nice and safe, you'll buy a round sometime.

TONI: What are you going to do? What do you intend to do? I'm in charge.

HERMAN: Stop with the drama, this is not a show.

TONI: Tell me what you are going to do.

HERMAN: Go up to your chaps. If anyone comes around, your babbling will come in handy.

TONI: What about you? What will you do?

HERMAN: I'll find out who we can expect tomorrow. Intercept them. Fuck.

TONI: How?

HERMAN: Why are you asking all these questions, gosh, you are annoying! Go, already. Chaps, with me!

(Herman leaves with his soldiers, Toni hesitates for a while, then leaves towards the burial site.)

18. SCENE

The burial ground. The villagers are knelling and standing in a circle, naked bones in the middle, but together, representing each deceased. Candles and torches burning. Piles of different clothes in front of the villagers. The atmosphere is of rapture, almost transcendent.

LOVRENC: You, Milady, we call thee in the time of need! Have mercy on us!

EVERYONE: Have mercy on us!

LOVRENC: You, who have always guided us safely, help us!

EVERYONE: Help us!

LOVRENC: Come, Milady, help us, save us!

EVERYONE: Help us!

LOVRENC: We are unworthy of your help and protection, but take pity on us, who have been your loyal subjects for so long!

EVERYONE: Take pity on us!

LOVRENC: Show yourself, the good lady, we need your advice!

EVERYONE: Take pity on us! (*they wait, murmuring to themselves in a sacral atmosphere, the tension mounts*)

FIRST: (*quietly*): She's not coming.

LOVRENC: Milady, show yourself, we don't know what to do!

EVERYONE: Take pity on us! (*they wait again*)

SECOND: She's not coming.

FIRST: Not coming.

LOVRENC: Quiet! - The good lady, I beg you! They want to take everything from us!

THIRD: Maybe...

LOVRENC: What, maybe? What?

THIRD: Nothing, nothing. Let's wait.

LOVRENC: The lady will come. She always comes. She has never failed us - not like you, people! Therefore, wait and be quiet! (*they wait*) Milady! Milady!

FIRST: What is that? That sound?

SECOND: What?

FIRST: The soldiers will come. We shouldn't be here. I told you it's forbidden.

LOVRENC: And who are you, smartass? Who cares what you think, who cares if you're shitting in your pants? Go, run down to that fucking soldier and lick his boots! We all know you don't have any balls, you never had them! Crying and moaning, that's how you always save your ass! Look in front of you! Go on, look! You should all look!

FIRST: Ivana knows that it isn't true. I've always loved them. I did not betray them.

LOVRENC: Don't drag the Lady into this! It's a sin!

FIRST: The Lady is my witness!

LOVRENC: To you? To you? You jackass!

SECOND: Lovrenc, we all know...

LOVRENC: What the hell is with you today? Have you gone crazy?

THIRD: We mustn't argue here. We have to stick together.

LOVRENC: That's right. Quiet! Milady, Milady! Don't let them separate us! It's not right, they belong to us, help us! (*no response*) Help us! Help us! Help, please, help!

SECOND: Let's go, we should go. This is Ivana's will, we have to respect it. She knows what's best for us. Her will shall be done.

LOVRENC: What are you babbling about, idiot? Have you lost your mind? The best for us! She's always protected us, she'll protect us now. Tell that to your mother's face, here, where she's always worshipped our Lady! And you, ungrateful fool, you have the honour to gaze into Ivana's eyes - an honour that was never bestowed upon your mother! She would die of happiness if she saw Ivana only once - and you? Scum! You don't care if you ever see the Lady again, you don't care if you ever see your own mother again! Yuck!

SECOND: She doesn't want to protect us. She doesn't want to talk to us. She doesn't want to talk to you, Lovrenc.

LOVRENC: What did you say?

SECOND: No one will protect us! She's gone and we don't have anyone else!

LOVRENC: You-

IVANA (*her figure and her voice in the shadows*): They shall protect you.

LOVRENC (*falls backwards to his knees and everyone with his*): Milady!

IVANA: Your mothers, fathers, your sons and daughters, your neighbours, your friends! Love unites you, their love will protect you!

LOVRENC: Milady! To have not thought of that, I am ashamed! Forgive me! (*crawls to Rozalia's bones, caresses her skull with his hand*) Little Rozalia, little Rozalia, forgive me! For you not to take care of your child, it's just not possible! Rozalika, strangers are here, they want to take your child away! But I won't let it happen, Rozalika, never, no! And neither will you, Rozalika, right? (*turns towards the villagers*) We won't allow that! If they want them, they can try, but only over our dead bodies!

VILLAGERS: We shall fight!

IVANA: Dress your beloved ones! In their favourite clothes! That those ruthless strangers will know who Rozalia is, who still knows what love and loyalty are... Who is Franc... Who is Mihael... Who is Jože... Who is Liza... Who are everyone else who love you and are loyal to you! (*the villagers in a trance, ceremonially dress the bones of their deceased in shirts, trousers, skirts, hats, socks, etc*) The soldiers are coming! Get ready! (*sounds of approaching troops can be heard from the distance*)

LOVRENC (*Rozalia made from bones in one hand*): Take your weapons! Quickly, quickly! (*the villagers hasten, each with a skeleton or two or three in their arms, they're picking farming tools across the burial site - axes, pickaxes, hoes, sticks*) Get in line!

IVANA: Don't let them lure you with sweet words! The city folk can do that.

LOVRENC: I'll show them! No one will make a fool out of me and my Rozalika! (*murmurs of approval from the villagers*)

The troops approach and are stunned when they see the villagers in formation.

LOVRENC: Get them! (*the villagers run towards the soldiers, brandishing their tools*)

FIRST RANK: Stop! We don't want to harm you!

LOVRENC: Get them! Get them! The bastards who sold their souls, leave our village!

FIRST RANK: Stop, or we'll shoot! (*some villagers start to stop*)

IVANA: They can't hurt you! You're protected! Forward, forward, don't be frightened!

LOVRENC: You heard the Lady! Forward!

FIRST RANK: For the last time: STOP, or we will shoot! (*the villagers approach in a threatening manner, first shots are heard, some villagers fall*) Get back! GET BACK, I SAID!

IVANA: He wants to confuse you! He wants to shatter your faith, condemn your souls! But I tell you, no one is dead! It's a con, a trick! Don't listen to their lying tongues!

LOVRENC: Forward! Everyone forward or I'll smash your skulls! Leave the lying lie! You will not insult our Lady! FORWARD!

FIRST: Forward!

THIRD: Forward!

The villagers once again attack in unison, the soldiers fire. No one reaches their line, they all fall to the ground with their skeletons - except for Lovrenc, who is only heavily wounded.

FIRST RANK: Shit! Damn shit, damn fools! (*silence*)

19. SCENE

HERMAN and soldiers break into Natan's apartment, blinded by rage.

NATAN (*stands*): What do you want?

HERMAN: What did you do? Who did you call? Speak! Right now or I'll show you hell!

NATAN (*laughs*): You'll find out in time.

HERMAN (*rushes towards Natan and slams him against the wall*): Don't be a smartass, damn it! I've told you once: Leave these things alone! You just can't get enough, ha? You think I'm fucking with you? Is that what you think? (*throws him on the floor, Natan gets on his knees, tries to get up*) Don't move, you cunt! (*draws a revolver from the holster*) Now, listen. Listen well, you fuck! So you'll remember who you tried to fuck with! Strip! Now! (*Natan moves and tries to get up*) Stay on the ground! And no silly business, my lads can't wait. Come on! (*Natan slowly undresses*) Come on,

don't fuck with me! Hold him down! (*Herman pulls a rubber whip from his belt*) Start talking if you want to save yourself. Who did you call? Who knows? (*silence*) Speak! (*hits Natan's back with all his strength, Natan jerks and gasps for air but doesn't move*) That's right, be a hero. I'll show you, you bloody punk! (*keeps hitting, everywhere, Ivana appears, strokes Natan's head, Herman stops, surprised, then keeps hitting harder and more out of control. Natan restrains himself for a while, then his screams of pain are heard until he ends up lying, uncurious in a pool of blood*)

20. SCENE

Enters TONI, pale and shaken.

TONI: God damn it! What did you do?

HERMAN: Do you mean to cause problems as well? Say it, say it right now! Something very odd is going on here. Damn it, it is. I don't know, what you're playing at, but something odd is going on here.

TONI: No, no, stop it. It's fine, it doesn't matter anymore. No one will notice anything anymore. Tell your men to take him up with the others.

HERMAN: The others? What are you babbling about?

TONI (*sits*): That old fool... Lovrenc. I was too late. He threatened that he won't allow the bones to be taken, that he has a bomb and that he'd rather kill everyone and us along with them... I couldn't stop your soldiers, Herman, I'm not their commanding officer...

HERMAN: They shot them?

TONI: Yes.

HERMAN: All of them?

TONI: Yes. It was horrible. I'll never forget it.

HERMAN: Damned idiots! Any curious rat can dig that up now! Couldn't you slaughter them?

Toni, I knew I really couldn't rely on you!

TONI: Why are you bugging me now? I'm not a soldier. I didn't even want this at all. Your soldiers are animals. We have to get out of here, fast. Declare it an accident or something.

HERMAN: Slow down. Everything you fucked up, has to be put right. We should burry them in a pile with the old bones. It won't show.

TONI: Yes, yes, it was Lovrenc. Psychologically unstable. That's right. It couldn't be any different. My God, this damned place!

HERMAN: Don't even think about babbling about this. I don't do this only to babbling brats, you

know. (*hints towards Natan*) We've known each other for a long time, but don't think about it. Don't even think.

TONI: Be quiet. I've got a lot more to lose than you.

HERMAN: So, you'll change your last name.

TONI: And wife and children?

HERMAN: I'm going to clean up. Get on the first train, settle the matter. Talk, give them whatever you want.

TONI: Yes. (*Herman leaves, Toni absently picks up his revolver, which stayed in the shadow - Ivana behind his back*)

21. SCENE

IVANA: She's still alive. But she will betray you.

TONI (*with his back*): She won't.

IVANA: Amalija will leave you.

TONI: She won't.

IVANA: Why didn't you ever talk to her about this?

TONI: I won't burden her. These are ugly stories.

IVANA: Amalija is from a good, middle-class family. Her mother would never care for a child of a murderer.

TONI: She cannot know. It doesn't matter.

IVANA: Your office will not want a child of killers. It doesn't look pretty, it doesn't attract votes and smiles.

TONI: I can work. The office isn't everything.

IVANA: If you don't have an office, you don't have Amalija's mother. Nothing. Who will take care of your children? Your children will starve.

TONI: They won't. Amalija's mother would never allow it... Even if... Even if...

IVANA: You'll lose your children.

TONI: No. No. I love them. They love me.

IVANA: How many times did you hear arguments between Amalija and her mother because of you? How many times did you lie about your childhood? You want to come back here, alone and without anything? To me? To her? She doesn't care for you. And you'll never be alone...

TONI: No ... No ... (*Saša walks through the door, more as a shadow*)

IVANA: She'll knock. (*Saša knock on the opened door*) She'll scream. (*Saša screams upon the sight*)

of Natan and collapse) She'll turn to you for help.

SAŠA: Toni! What happened?

TONI (*reserved*): An accident.

IVANA: And she'll ask:

SAŠA: An accident? This is a beating! You don't accidentally beat someone up! (*hugs Natan, Toni watches*)

IVANA: She knows, Toni. You're responsible. She'll tell...

SAŠA: Toni ...

(Ton raises the revolver with a shaky hand, but suddenly perfectly seriously and calmly aims as her and fires. Saša falls)

CURTAIN