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Death and the Maiden

By Rafael Yglesias

All the monkeys
were back in their cages...
in time for the matinee.
The circus will be in town
two more weeks.
Thanks to early morning
rush hour fog...
twenty-three cars, four trucks,
and one bike...
were in a massive fender bender.
Luckily, no serious injuries.
Highway patrol reports traffic
moving briskly.
It's seven o'clock. Here's
a recap of today's top stories.
On his second day in office...
President Romero fulfilled
a campaign promise today.
He announced the formation...
of a commission
on human rights violations.
The commission will investigate
acts of torture and murder...
that took place
between 1975 and 1980...
under the military junta.
Rumors swept the capital
about who will be named...
to chair the controversial
and powerful committee.
Attorney Gerardo Escobar,
civil rights activist...
and on the short list
for Minister of Justice...
met with the president
for an hour this afternoon.
...president's office
has refused to comment.
Informed sources said...
Mr. Escobar has accepted
the committee chairmanship.
In other news, as expected,
President Romero appoint...
Quite sure you won't come in?

No, thanks.
Home and a hot bath.
Me, too. Sorry for the trouble.
- No problem.
- Then why not drop in someday?
Thanks again and good-bye.
You know it's crazy...
I never introduced myself.
Gerardo Escobar.
Dr. Roberto Miranda.
Nice to meet you.
If you're ever passing...
- Escobar the lawyer?
- That's right.
It's OK. It's me!
- Power's out. Again.
- Shit.
Did you have an accident?
A flat in this.
Can you believe it?
What a nightmare.
You want a towel?
Oh, God.
Who was that?
It was the guy
who stopped to help me.
I practically threw myself
in front of his car.
He didn't have a lot of choice.
You made a lovely dinner.
I'm sorry.
I was going to be here on time.
I'm sorry. I'm sorry.
Not your fault.
Stop apologizing.
It's only chicken.
Why are you wet?
I was looking for you...
patiently awaiting my captain's
return from the sea.
It blew out about a mile
past the lighthouse.
Right in the middle of nowhere.
Be a good girl.

How'd the meeting go?
I always forget how deserted
that shore road is.
Seriously,
if that guy hadn't come along...
I'd still be stuck.
- He has a house here?
- Yeah, on Salt Pond.
Really was very good of him.
He went way out of his way
to take me home.
This suit is completely ruined.
What a nightmare.
The phones are out, too.
Shit.
I have to call a tow truck.
We have no car.
He drove me to a gas station,
but it was closed.
I don't want to leave it
out there.
Anything could happen.
Thanks.
You're not having any?
I ate.
I was hungry. I'm sorry.
Now you're apologizing...
but you're apologizing
for the wrong reasons.
When you get a flat tire...
most people...
actually all people...
go to their trunk and get what?
An interrogation...
my favorite thing in life.
A spare tire.
Uh-huh. A spare tire.
In the pouring rain,
wearing their best suit...
they jack up the car,
remove the flat...
getting dirtier until,
after a grueling struggle...
they finally put the spare on.

This is a brilliant narrative,
full of surprises.
I didn't know that
all people who change tires...
wear their best suits.
Just the classy jerks, like me.
A complete physical wreck,
I finally get the spare on...
only to watch it sag.
You had two blowouts?
No. You're not listening to me.
The spare was flat.
You never fixed it.
You didn't notice it was flat
until you'd put it on?
Well, that was dumb.
So, your conclusion is
I was dumb?
Oh, no, my love,
I believe we all agree...
including the president...
that you are
a highly intelligent man...
but it was dumb to put
a flat spare on the car.
Don't feel bad.
Even geniuses do dumb things.
So, did he ask you to head
the commission?
God, it's very hot in here,
isn't it?
Congratulations.
It's the peak of your career.
Not the peak, I hope.
I meant the first peak.
You'll go from peak to peak,
I'm sure.
I'm very serious
about the spare.
You were supposed
to take care of it.
And how did he react
when you turned him down?
It's a very complicated

situation.

It's much, much more complicated
than we thought.

Shit. What am I going to do
about the car?

- Fuck the car.

- Great.

Are you going to tell me
what you said to the president?

Did you change his mind
about the rules?

Why don't I tell you
all about it later, OK?

I really don't want
to discuss it now.

Fine.

Oh, come on!

- OK. Let's talk.

- Too late.

Nothing's been decided yet.

I told the president

I had to discuss it with you.

You told our brand-new president
you had to ask my permission?

Of course.

So you told him about me?

Of course not.

Listen, nobody knows about you.

No, somebody knows about me.

But I'm not talking about them.

Don't lie! I hate that.

What's the point?

I know you're lying.

What am I supposed to be
lying about?

Of course you said yes.

- OK. I'm sorry.

- God damn it!

Don't apologize.

You think you can pay
for anything with those words.

If you were really sorry...

you would've said no
to this whitewash.

You would've said,
"No, Mr. President...
"I won't dignify this betrayal!"
- It's not a betrayal.
- Bullshit.
We have to move very slowly.
I can get the commission
to accomplish a great deal.
What will happen to the men you
prove were on the death squads?
The evidence will be turned over
to the courts.
To the courts.
Yeah. Maybe to that judge
who told Maria Bautista...
her husband
wasn't tortured to death.
He just ran off
with a younger woman.
If this happens every night,
I can't do this job.
- Good.
- It's a job that's worth doing.
I don't exist.
Once the truth
starts to come out...
I can get the president
to change the rules.
But you didn't change his mind.
It's still only cases
that ended in death.
You have to give me time.
Make love to me. Let's be happy.
Happy?
That's real bullshit.
We can.
Just give me time.
Give us time.
I promise you
I'll get them for you.
I'll bring you justice
instead of a flat tire.
Let's dream of happiness,
my sweet girl.

My bride.

- My savior.

- I want to.

I want to help you be
brilliant and important.

I want us to live
like suburban idiots.

I want to adopt a baby
and spoil it.

My beautiful boy.

My beautiful, beautiful boy.

It's a car.

- There's a car here.

- What?

Wake up.

What is it? What?

- OK. I'll go.

- Don't.

It's OK. It's OK.

Who is it?

It's Dr. Miranda.

I've got your tire.

- Oh, Christ.

- What?

It's OK. It's nothing.

I'm coming!

It's the guy who stopped
to help me with the car.

It's OK. It's OK.

Christ. Just a minute.

I forgot to take it out.

Of course. I'm so stupid.

I drove home and got into
the shower before it hit me.

- Oh, I woke you.

- No. I was just, uh...

Is your power out, too?

Yeah. The whole peninsula
for a change.

- This is very kind.

- It's no problem.

I could've picked it up.

How? On your bike?

You have no car.

I couldn't call,
and you needed the tire.
I'm really sorry for
what I've done to your weekend.
Stop that.
You're being nice...
but it isn't necessary
to keep apologizing.
I'm all alone.
My wife took the kids
to her mother's.
The house is so empty...
I probably wouldn't
be able to sleep.
Want to know the truth...
the real, real truth?
Truth is, I'm a fan of yours.
I was so stunned
when you introduced yourself...
I couldn't say anything.
On the way home,
I heard the news on the radio.
I'm thrilled to meet you.
On the radio?
What did you hear?
About you and the commission.
You're doing
the most important work.
I couldn't resist the temptation
to come tell you.
What exactly did you hear?
You're going to chair
the commission.
That's not supposed
to be announced.
Oh, well...
I wouldn't worry.
They said it was rumors.
Leaks, I guess.
This was on the news?
I followed your career
ever since you petitioned...
on behalf
of the missing prisoners in...

Anyway, I just want to tell you
what a thrill.

A real thrill... a mud bath
and a sleepless night.

No, no. I'm serious.

With you on the commission...
there's a real chance
for our country.

Well, I hope
we can do some good.

I'm sure you will.

So you see,

I'm glad to be of use.

I had an ulterior motive.

Sir.

Listen...

this time,

you have to have a drink.

I can't send you into the dark
and stormy night...

without some reward.

- I shouldn't. It's late.

- Just one drink.

I'm afraid

my wife's already in bed so...

Oh, shit. I woke her, too.

No, she's still awake.

I have to turn my lights off.

To tell you the truth...

she gets a little nervous

because of the bad old days.

We both used to get

pretty freaked...

by that knock on the door

in the night.

Oh, God. I should've left

the tire and gone quietly.

No. You just taught me

a very valuable lesson.

Please, sit down.

In a democracy, the midnight

knock can be friendly.

- Want a whiskey?

- A teeny-weeny drop.

More than just a drop.
I'm just going to go check
on Paulina.
Excuse me.
Are you asleep?
- I'm very tired.
- What?
I'm almost asleep.
Come out and say
a quick hello. He's harmless.
Are you too tired?
Must be
from listening to the news.
What?
Never mind.
I'm afraid
my wife's almost asleep...
but she sends her thanks
and apologies.
- I know I must seem ridiculous.
- Why ridiculous?
I am ridiculous,
especially when my wife's away.
She would've told me
to go to bed.
"Bring it in the morning.
"You'll wake those poor people,
scare them half to death.
"You think Escobar's
a great man.
"Don't give him a heart attack."
I suspect we're all lost
without our wives.
You must be excited
about the committee.
Now I know who's running it,
I'm very optimistic.
Yeah, I am pretty optimistic
despite my being on it.
You're modest, too.
That doesn't surprise me.
Don't you think this could be
a real turning point?
It's a step

in the right direction.
Even though we can't put
those bastards on trial...
because they gave themselves
amnesty...
we can make their names public.
A ground rule is the names
aren't going to be made public.
Really? It doesn't matter.
The names will leak out.
Their kids will know.
They'll ask...
"Is it true you did
those horrible things?"
Those fucks will have to face
their own flesh and blood.
Maybe.
That's a kind of justice.
It's possible, well, likely,
people will get so pissed off...
when they hear
the details of these crimes...
they'll revoke
this bullshit amnesty.
Any move in that direction
is dangerous.
The army has only stepped aside.
They haven't disbanded.
My wife
must be letting in some air.
It's stuffy.
The storm
didn't really cool things off.
I think we're being
too merciful.
I'm for killing
the whole bunch of them.
Really? With all due respect,
I can't agree with you.
Isn't that what
the death squads proved?
Killing doesn't end it
for either side.
Still out.

The president says the army
is very, very unhappy...
making a lot of veiled
and not so veiled threats.
How depressing.
Maybe you're right.
Maybe my idea about the children
learning the truth...
is just a fantasy.
You've taken my point too far.
If you really want to know...
the president told me...
this is between us...
Oh, I won't tell.
Not even my wife.
Especially not your wife.
The president told me...
in actuality, there are hundreds
and hundreds of people...
ready to make statements.
Now, once this begins,
with luck, it could snowball...
and we could know everything.
Jesus. You may be in danger.
- Danger of what?
- Well, you said so yourself.
They're out there.
They have a lot to hide...
and they have the guns.
Stop! That's my car!
God damn it! That's my car!
Shit!
I'm such an asshole.
I'm yelling, "Stop,
that's my car" to a thief.
He's glad it's my car.
That's the whole point.
I'm sorry.
It's probably some kids
out for a joyride.
This time, I really do have
something to apologize for.
My wife took your car.
She went for a tire?

I don't understand.
Where did she go?
She's pissed at me.
Jesus. 'Cause you had a flat?
I thought
my wife was unreasonable.
No, she took money.
Had some in the house.
She took it all.
Well, that's weird.
Well, then, she's a woman.
Why am I surprised?
Is she coming back soon?
Is this a twenty-four-hour deal
or a week or what?
How will I explain this
to my wife?
This has never happened before.
We fight. We have fights,
but she's never...
Oh, shit.
I really thought
that she understood.
She's left me.
Fuck women.
She'll be back.
Well, that's the bad news.
Oh, come on. You love her.
I didn't think
I'd feel this shitty.
- I thought I'd feel relieved.
- Relieved?
Be careful.
Let me tell you something.
She has not been easy.
She's got a lot of reasons,
but she's crazy.
They all have reasons,
and they're all crazy.
You know what Nietzsche said?
I think it was Nietzsche.
I always say it was Nietzsche.
It's probably Freud.
I mean, he said everything.

If it's quotable,
it's probably Freud.
You're very funny
when you're grief-stricken.
That's the only way to suffer.
What did Nietzsche say,
or whoever else?
Whoever said...
"We can never entirely possess
the female soul."
I don't know
what the fuck that means.
Sure, you do.
You go insane wanting them.
It doesn't matter
what it costs you.
You pay the price...
but you still don't get
what you expect.
What do we expect?
- Approval.
- What do we get?
No. Don't tell me.
I know, I know.
Guilt.
- Guilt?
- Right.
Boy, that's interesting.
We each get
something different.
Each man gets the very thing to
keep him coming back for more.
Guilt.
And you?
Me, I get my balls cut off.
Your balls? That's what
keeps you coming back?
Sure. I want them back.
- Did you hear the phone?
- No. It's not working.
Sure?
Should be fixed by now.
I hate this.
All these fucking things

don't work!
Hey, come on, man, take it easy.
I hate this house.
It's like her.
We're both too fucked up...
to know what to think
about anything anymore.
Let's get some sleep.
What a disaster I've made
of your life.
Not my life. Just one night.
I know I shouldn't really
say this...
'cause you're feeling
so terrible...
but I'm enjoying myself.
She'll be back in the morning.
You'll see.
Then you'll have a headache.
And it won't just be the booze.
Well, at least
we became friends tonight.
We sure did.
Oh, God, I'm drunk.
Let me show you the spare room.
No, no, no. I'll be all right.
- You sure?
- Sure.
Why?
Shut up, bitch.
Dr. Roberto Miranda.
So that's your name.
I've waited so long to be...
properly introduced.
Keep still, motherfucker!
You know,
I thought you'd be bigger.
I had a friend at school
named Miranda.
Anita Miranda.
They were from St. Esteban.
Maybe you're related.
They were
a very respectable family.

Many of them were doctors.
Do you know Anita?
That's right.
That was my tactic, too.
Admit nothing.
Well, Anita and I,
we were going to be doctors...
just like you.
You don't recognize me.
Well, why should you?
It's been forever.
My hair was different then.
Very light brunette.
Almost red.
Very long.
I'm not surprised.
What time didn't change, I have.
I didn't want you
to recognize me.
I didn't want to recognize me.
Still don't know?
I'm hurt.
But I was touched...
when I found this in your car.
Let's listen to it.
For old time's sake.
Out here, my love.
I didn't get my diploma
when I was released.
I didn't go back to school.
You can guess why.
Shouldn't require
much imagination on your part.
Look at me!
Luckily, Gerardo was waiting.
Well, I shouldn't say
waiting, exactly.
But let's just say
he still loved me...
so I didn't have to go back.
You know how long it's been...
since I listened
to this quartet?
If it's on the radio,

I turn it off.
Once, I ran out of
a dinner party just to get away.
It made me sick...
physically sick, to hear it.
But it's time for me
to reclaim my Schubert...
my favorite composer.
And to think I threw out
my entire collection.
Don't touch him!
- What is this?
- It's a miracle.
He's delivered himself like
a surprise Christmas present.
- What's going on?
- It's him.
- Who?
- The doctor.
The doctor who played
"Death and the Maiden."
- The doctor who...
- Yes. It's him.
You were blindfolded.
- The voice.
- His voice? That's it?
- That's it.
- That's it?
That's enough for me.
Paulie, you're ill.
- I'm not ill.
- You're ill.
All right, but I can be ill
and recognize a voice.
Jesus fucking Christ!
Are you trying to kill me?
It's him.
I'm telling you, it's him.
Your memory of a voice
doesn't prove anything.
His voice, his laugh...
his favorite phrases.
I would recognize him anywhere
from his pet phrases.

It may be a teeny-weeny thing,
but that's the real, real truth.
- Paulie, this isn't funny.
- No, it isn't funny... not a bit.
He's bleeding.
Want me to clean you up, Doctor?
My angel of mercy?
"She can take more.
"Give the bitch
another five volts.
"Her sweet cunt is still wet."
Paulie, this is about me.
You're angry with me.
About you?
I knew you were vain, Gerardo.
You're angry because
I ignored your feelings...
because I said yes
to the commission.
I know his smell.
Remember that? Remember?
You like my love bites.
You told me so.
You hungry, bitch?
You want some meat?
I'll give you some meat.
I'll give you
a big, fat sausage.
Christ, Paulina.
That's how
your new buddy talked to me.
This has got to stop.
Even if he is guilty, you can't
torture him like this.
Torture? Head
of the president's commission...
you call this torture?
You know so little
about your subject.
Give me the gun.
As you would say... I'm sorry.
While you're holding the gun,
we have nothing to discuss.
The minute I give up the gun,

all discussion will end.
Paulina, please.
Stop saying my name
as if I'm a child.
You're behaving like a child,
as if there are no consequences.
What you're doing
will destroy any hope...
of exposing the real criminals.
He is the real criminal.
Listen to me.
I'm in no hurry. I'm listening.
What revolted me most
about the old regime...
You can call them fascists.
I won't tell the press.
Let me finish!
What revolted me was that
they ignored the evidence...
and never allowed the accused
to defend themselves.
No matter how sure you are...
no matter how terrible
the accusations...
he has the right
to defend himself.
But I have no intention of
denying him that right, Gerardo.
I'll give him a chance
to defend himself.
What are you talking about?
He's tied to a chair.
Look who I've gotten
to be his attorney...
one of the most talented
in the nation...
a future Minister of Justice,
no less.
If only I had been
that well-represented.
Don't you agree,
Gerardo Escobar, Esquire?
He has a better chance
to defend himself than I did.

Go ahead.
Take off his gag.
Consult your client...
and prepare his defense.
It's OK. I'll handle it.
- Move away.
- Let me untie his hands.
Move away, or I'll kill him.
Water.
Get him some water, Gerardo.
There's a mike built into this.
At least that's what the man
in the store told me.
I want everything on the record,
scrupulously recorded.
Little did I know
how handy this would be.
Nothing like cold water,
huh, Doctor?
- Beats drinking your piss.
- You have to stop her.
Move away from him.
This is unforgivable.
Hold it. Everyone be quiet.
It's working.
We already have a statement
from the good doctor.
He tells us tying a person up...
and preventing him from speaking
is unforgivable.
You know what, Doctor?
I agree.
It is unforgivable.
Please.
Proceed with your statement.
I don't know you.
I've never seen you before.
I don't know what it is
you think I've done.
Obviously, she's insane.
She's not responsible
for what she does...
but you're a lawyer.
If you don't stop this,

you're an accomplice...
and you'll pay the price.
- You threatening?
- I'm not.
Yes, you were.
Let me make this clear.
The time for people like you
making threats is over.
Out there maybe you bastards
are still running things...
but in here... in here...
I'm in charge!
Understand? Me.
Is that clear?
I'm sorry.
I didn't mean it as a threat.
It's OK. He's not resisting.
Hear him out.
Quick! Get it!
Get the gun!
You didn't do anything.
You just stood there.
Of course he just stood there.
He's the law.
My God.
This is some kind of game.
You're part of it.
Paulina, I beg of you.
Tie his legs.
He's OK like that.
Tie his legs and do a good job.
Use the green rope.
I don't know who she is.
I don't even know
what she thinks I've done.
You want to hear the charges?
I accuse Dr. Roberto Miranda...
of overseeing and approving
systematic beatings...
and the use of electric shock
on Paulina Lorca.
What?
I wasn't married then...
although Gerardo recruited me

into the student resistance.
He was my fearless leader,
but you never knew that.
If I'd given you his name...
he wouldn't be heading
an investigating committee.
Some other lawyer would be
investigating his death.
And in addition,
I accuse Dr. Miranda...
of raping Paulina Lorca on
fourteen separate occasions...
each time playing Schubert's
"Death and the Maiden"...
on a wobbly turntable
over cheap speakers.
Raped?
You never told me
you were raped.
I was. Of course I was.
This is crazy.
I've nothing to do
with any beatings or tortures.
Paulie, we have to talk.
- When was this?
- In 1977.
I wasn't even in the country.
I was in residency
in Barcelona for three years.
- Sure. I'll write a letter.
- Make a call!
Why don't we just drive
to the police station...
ask them to call for us?
Oh. We can't drive, either.
We have no car.
Our car had a flat...
and your car
has also had an accident.
Went right through the guard
rail and down the cliff.
I don't think you could've
survived such a crash, do you?
You're an expert on how much

punishment the body can take...
before death is the result.
That's what they called you
in for, wasn't it, Doctor?
This is insane. Is this a trial?
You're willing to be
an accomplice...
to kidnapping and murder, too?
I have to talk to you.
For God's sake, go ahead, talk.
Privately.
In your chambers?
All right, on the deck.
What a sad and beautiful man
Schubert must have been.
Only thirty-one when he died.
Did you know he was homosexual?
Of course you do.
You told me.
"He was a faggot."
"You don't like faggots."
You like a real man's cock."
I'm a gentleman. I'd never say
anything like that to a lady.
Enjoy it.
We won't be long.
Why didn't you tell me?
Why didn't you ask?
You knew.
You're an expert.
You've listened to hours
of testimony.
They did it to us all.
You told me everything else
the doctor did...
how he supervised the torture...
- I told you nothing.
- Nothing?
Actually, very little.
Almost nothing.
All these years because you
took it for granted that I knew?
There's a difference
between knowing the facts...

and hearing the details.
If I'd told you,
he'd always be between us.
We'd never be alone.
I understand.
Remember how young we were?
I miss us, Gerardo.
So we're here, Paulie.
We're still here.
I understand what you feel,
but even if he is guilty...
Even if?
Do you realize what you've done?
Yes, darling. Absolutely.
This is kidnapping, assault.
We'll go to jail
for twenty years.
Think what that'll do
to the movement.
It's the kind of excuse
the authorities look for.
We've given enough
to the movement.
I've given enough.
If you thought you
recognized him...
why didn't you tell me?
You wouldn't have believed me.
It doesn't matter.
It matters to me.
More than anything.
You have no proof.
- What will you do with him?
- Put him on trial.
This isn't a trial.
It's terrorism.
Do you love me, Gerardo?
We're supposed to be different.
We can't use their methods.
I'm giving him all
the guarantees he never gave me.
He has a lawyer.
I'll listen to his defense.
That's bullshit.

You've already convicted him.
The evidence
is your own testimony.
- Lf you want the real truth...
- The real, real truth.
You're not a reliable witness.
Because I'm crazy.
Any court
would tear you to pieces.
Five years ago
in the Taveli Cafe...
you heard a voice
you recognized...
I never said it was him.
You panicked on a bus when a man
touched your shoulder.
Stop it.
You can be cold, Gerardo.
I'm being truthful.
Isn't that what you want?
It's too serious
to spare your feelings.
You're not killing him.
Kill him?
You really think I'll kill him?
Why did you crash his car?
I didn't crash his car.
It's parked on the road.
I made that up to make him
think I mean business.
I'm not the secret police.
I have to create
the illusion of threat...
or he won't take the trial
seriously.
What are you trying to do to me?
Oh, my baby.
My poor, gentle baby.
I'd never do anything
to hurt you...
or the commission.
I don't want to stop you...
from finding the bodies
of the missing...

or getting the crimes on record.
I love you.
You're my life.
But you're only
investigating...
the cases of those
who are dead, who can't speak.
I can talk now.
I'm free for the first time...
since I was buried alone
with this terror...
until...
I've got him, Gerardo...
and he's the one I wanted,
the worst of them.
The others were thugs.
I expected them.
But he was a doctor...
supposedly there to make
sure they didn't kill me.
He talked about science
and philosophy.
- He liked to quote Nietzsche.
- Nietzsche?
"I think it was Nietzsche."
He was so friendly,
so thoughtful.
After a horrible session,
he gave me a shot.
To soothe me, he said...
to ease my suffering,
he said he would play music.
I want to tell you.
Do you really want me to?
Because I can.
You really think
you can stand it?
Well, I told you I was...
blindfolded.
They had me tied
to a table... face up...
except when they decided
to put me face down...
in a bucket of my own shit,

but this day...
the first day the doctor came...
they were being kind.
They had all these wires,
electrodes all over me...
and a metal rod,
like a penis, inside me.
When they shock you...
first it burns, and then...
and then your body jumps...
and it hurts where you're tied.
I was trying to scream
more where it hurt less...
a little trick,
but it didn't work.
The doctor came in.
He told them I'd had enough.
He sent them away.
He gave me a shot.
I felt warm.
That pain was gone.
I didn't think it could go,
but it was like magic.
He cleaned me up.
He put something on my wounds.
He told me I was safe...
and that he would play
"Death and the Maiden."
Did I like Schubert?
"Oh, yes," I said.
"I love his music."
I thanked him.
I thanked him and thanked him...
and we listened together...
like a couple of people
who care about each other...
and for the first few minutes,
he didn't do anything.
Then I heard him moving around.
It sounded like his belt
dragging on the floor.
I heard the change
in his pockets jangling.
I heard the whisper

of his clothes coming off...
and, suddenly,
he was on top of me...
slobbering sick ideas.
He pushed himself in.
And, God, it hurt...
like fire.
I screamed.
I screamed as hard
as when they shocked me...
but he wouldn't stop.
He wouldn't stop.
I love you.
Let me hold you, Paulie.
I don't trust you.
Understand? I can't.
I'm sorry. I know you hate me
saying it, but I am sorry.
And after he'd finished...
he turned the music off
and said good-bye...
with one of his pet phrases...
"No bones broken, right, baby?"
I know it's him.
I'm positive.
What do you want?
My first thought
was that I wanted to rape him.
That's what I thought...
that he should know
what it's like...
but a woman can't rape...
so I thought it would be
something you would have to do.
Paulie, please.
It would be difficult for you.
After all, you need
a certain amount of enthusiasm.
Stop it.
Then I wondered maybe
I should use a broomstick.
That's enough.
I know it's ridiculous.
It's ridiculous because

no revenge can satisfy me.
That's what they're about...
crude power and control.
I don't want to fuck him.
I don't want him dead. L...
I want him...
to talk to me.
I want him to confess.
To confess?
I want to get him
on videotape...
confessing to everything he did,
not just to me, to all of us.
After he's confessed,
you'll let him go?
I don't believe you.
You have to.
You have no choice.
If he repents,
I will let him go.
You and your commission
will be safe.
With a taped confession...
he won't send thugs
or go to the police...
or the video
would be all over the TV...
and I'll let him live.
As you say about
our sad country, Gerardo...
I will let the past
become the past.
We'll get on with our lives?
Yes. We'll have to.
We'll have to live with him.
What if he refuses?
Tell him if he refuses,
then he's dead.
Is that a real threat?
What happened to you
can't be condoned in any way.
You have to do this.
You have to convince him.
There's no other way.

What if by some
incredible miracle...
this is just some
crazy coincidence?
What if he's innocent?
If he's innocent,
then he's really fucked.
Will you please turn that off?
Know that I'm not allowed
to come near you.
She's got the gun on us both.
Don't kid yourself.
You're an accomplice.
You can end it.
This is a charade.
You're playing good cop/bad cop.
I'm a victim, too.
Not from where I sit.
Dr. Miranda, are you...
What happened to Roberto?
We're not friends anymore?
Are you aware the secret
police used doctors...
as torture session consultants?
Everybody knows.
The Medical Association
denounced it.
I signed their petition.
You weren't asked
to participate?
I told you.
I wasn't even in the country.
Oh, this is hopeless.
If you don't want to die,
you'll confess.
What?
She's promised if you confess
and show remorse...
she'll let you go.
My God.
You're no different from them...
threatening to kill me
if I don't confess.
You're supposed to be

a democrat, a lawyer...
a man who believes in justice.
What's she got on you?
What's her power over you?
It's not power.
What is it?
Gratitude and love.
She saved my life, OK?
What's this all about?
Why was she tortured?
What did that...
You know why.
I don't.
I don't understand anything!
What's that in my eyes, blood?
Is that blood?
Wait a minute.
Listen, he's bleeding.
I'm going to wipe it off.
Is that OK?
Go ahead.
What's going on? Tell me.
What's this about?
Remember one of the underground
newspapers, "Liberation"?
Sure. Thanks.
Really? You said you were
in Barcelona in 1977.
Everybody knew
about those papers. Come on.
I don't know whether one
was called "Liberation."
I just remember
people talking...
about protest papers
later when I...
It's OK. It doesn't
prove anything anyway.
It doesn't matter.
There were seven
illegal broadsides.
I was the editor of
the student paper "Liberation."
We protected ourselves.

No one knew each other.
Paulina went to
the blind drops each week...
and brought me our anonymous
contributors' articles.
She was the only one
who knew my identity...
which is what they wanted.
If she'd given them my name...
But you know all this.
You're playing games.
I am not.
I admire you both!
I'm on your side!
I respect
what she's been through.
Please, check on me.
Isn't there a way?
She wants a confession.
Confession? How?
How can I confess
to something I haven't done?
Then make it up.
That's the only way
she'll pardon you.
She's got nothing
to pardon me for.
Don't you understand? Christ!
It's not her, it's you.
You're too fucking civilized
to admit it's you.
You think I'm guilty.
You want revenge.
Yeah, I think you're guilty.
She recognizes your voice,
your smell...
all those peculiar
little phrases of yours.
She remembered that you
liked to quote Nietzsche.
And there's this.
For God's sakes, I've got
dozens of tapes in my car.
I'm not alone quoting Nietzsche

or my smell.
It's ridiculous.
She's making it up.
She's paranoid.
She's delusional.
You said so yourself.
She's crazy.
But so's the whole country.
I have to take a pee.
What?
I have to go to the bathroom.
Listen, I'm not sure
about anything right now...
but I'll tell you something.
I do know that she's serious.
All I said was I have
to go to the bathroom.
No tricks, you understand?
You want me to pee in my pants?
He wants to go to the bathroom.
Can I untie his hands?
Number one or number two,
Doctor?
Christ.
Well? Do you have
to go wee-wee...
or is there something
more substantial in you?
Forget it.
A trick. That's what I thought.
It's not a trick.
God damn it,
I have to pee, you cunt.
That's the Dr. Miranda
I know so well.
All right, I believe you
do have to pee.
Untie his legs.
Do it. Untie them
and step away from him.
Don't move a muscle
till I tell you to.
Don't make this any more
grotesque than it already is.

Gerardo, shut up.
Take this.
Walk ahead of us
to show the way.
Guest bathroom,
I think, for our guest.
Get up slowly and move slowly.
If you make
any sudden movements...
the gun might go off,
even if I don't mean it to.
I can't, not like this.
Yes, it's very difficult,
isn't it...
to live without privacy
or pride?
- You'll get used to it.
- Paulina.
Quiet, Gerardo.
I guess we have
to try again later.
It isn't hard to humiliate
or be humiliated, is it, Doctor?
Not that difficult
to lord power over people.
It's no great achievement.
All done?
I guess I'd better
wash my hands.
Oh, God!
Don't shoot. Don't shoot!
Don't move!
Don't fucking move!
Get the phone.
Hello, Mr. Escobar?
Pablo Milar, the president's
executive secretary.
We've been trying
to reach you for hours.
We've had a storm.
All electricity
and phones were out.
Could you hold
for the president, please?

The president?
Yes, of course I will.
I said don't move.
Sorry. I couldn't help it.
Don't make a sound.
I won't. I swear.
Be careful, please.
Shut up!
Yes, sir.
Sorry to wake you.
That's quite all right.
There's been a leak
about your appointment.
It was on the news.
As usual... don't think this
is out of the ordinary...
there have been death threats.
Death threats to you?
I'm afraid death threats
against me...
are a daily,
even boring occurrence.
I mean death threats
against you.
As a precaution, we're sending
some men to your beach house.
There's been a storm?
Yeah. Everything's still out.
The lights are still out.
Probably the road's impassable.
So maybe...
They'll get through,
but not until about... What time?
About six o'clock
in the morning.
It's unnecessary.
I'm safe here.
Why not send your men
to my city apartment?
I'll be there Sunday night.
Couldn't stop them
if I wanted to, and I don't.
Who was it?
I have to talk to you.

Don't move.
The president is sending cops
here to protect me.
What? Why?
It's a precaution.
It doesn't matter why.
They'll be here by six.
We've only got...
Shit. You better hurry.
That's less than four hours.
They may even get here sooner.
We don't have time
to get this confession.
Fine.
We'll kill him right away.
You're going to kill him?
Everything's taken care of.
We push him off the cliff
onto the wrecked car.
- It'll look like an accident.
- You're serious?
It'll look like he lost control.
Push him off the cliff.
Maybe he'll hit rocks.
We'll do it
where I wrecked the car.
You said you didn't do anything
to his car.
I had to say that.
It's easy.
You lied to me?
There's no time for this.
It's simple. We push him.
With his hands tied?
We'll climb down, untie them...
put him in the water,
or the car.
Which is better?
In the water, he'll bang around.
Are you crazy?
Well, you know me.
Climb down? Move his corpse?
The tide will take his body.
They'll still know

it was murder.
What am I saying?
I'm not doing this.
You promised not to kill him.
You only wanted a confession.
You don't want to push him
off the cliff?
No. It's premeditated murder.
I won't do it.
Well, if you won't...
you'd better get
the confession quick.
Why don't you use the phone?
It's working now, right?
In the middle of the night?
Barcelona, it's daytime there.
And say what?
Ask for
the administration office...
for Elena Galvan,
the Deputy Secretary.
- You're wasting time.
- She knows me.
She'll tell you
I was in residency in '77.
It won't matter.
I was there
when your wife was under arrest.
Arrest. That's a good euphemism.
I couldn't have had anything
to do with it.
Please, just make the call.
It's not going to convince her.
She's mad. She needs therapy.
You are her therapy.
You're telling me
that if I confess...
she'll forgive me
and let me go?
Forgive you, no.
Let you go, yes...
if your confession
convinces her...
and she truly believes

you're remorseful.
My hands aren't getting
any circulation.
Can you loosen them, please?
That's it. Fuck it!
I'm going to count to five,
then I'm telling her...
there's nothing more
I can do to save you. One...
- You're scared your career...
- Two...
...will be destroyed
if I get out alive.
If you confess,
we have no worries. Three...
Stop counting. I can count.
Four is next. It's stupid!
Four.
All right. All right!
What do I have to confess to?
Don't start.
I don't know what to say.
Just imagine it.
But I don't know
what she expects.
If I make it up and it's wrong,
she may kill me anyway.
I know a few things.
Maybe I can help you.
Why don't you ask her?
Ask her what?
What she wants
in the confession.
I'll write down exactly
what she wants, OK?
No. She wants it to be genuine.
How can it be genuine?
I am innocent.
I don't see why you need
to hear everything from me...
to get him to confess.
I'm your lawyer.
I need facts.
I don't want you

to be my lawyer.
I want you to be my husband.
I'm trying to be,
but you're never satisfied.
Poor Gerardo.
There's never any pity for me.
I'm always wrong.
I'm sick of it.
I want to get through this
and get on with our lives.
Is that so wrong?
I wanted to tell you
the day I was released.
Even though I was a mess
and in pain, I ran to see you.
Let's start with the day
of your arrest.
Did you love her?
Christ, we don't have time
for this. They're coming.
I have to interrogate him.
He'll have to write
the confession, we tape it.
Did you love her?
You forgave me.
How many more times
can we go over this?
I never asked if you loved her,
just if you fucked her.
That was stupid.
You were in bed together.
What did I think you were doing?
We'll die from so much past.
There's too much pain.
We must deal with him.
He's the monster.
How many times did you fuck her?
Give me the gun.
I'll kill him. I'll blow
his fucking brains out.
Will that make up for it?
No. I just want
the truth for once...
no evasion, no tact.

Was that the first night
she'd spent with you?
So how many times
did you fuck her?
I didn't know
you were alive, Paulie.
That's an excuse.
I want the truth.
You'd been gone for two months.
You're going to shoot me now?
That's your new way
of having a conversation?
We'd been lovers for a month.
I don't know how many times
we had sex.
Were you in love with her?
You want the real, real truth?
Yes. Tonight, I want the truth.
I can't remember.
I can't remember.
I can't remember anything about
how I felt since that night.
You came back beat up and crazy.
You were half-dead...
taken punishment
a thousand times worse...
than anything
I could have taken...
and you did it to save my life.
How do you think I feel?
I would have given them
your name to save my skin.
They would have broken me
on the first day.
So you see, I don't
really remember anything...
about how I felt since
that night you came back.
But I love you.
I love you.
It's been the logic of my life.
I have a feeling
it's going to destroy me.
It was about two

in the afternoon.
I'd made the pickup...
on the corner of Huerfanos
near the bookstore.
I heard them get out
of a car behind me.
There were two of them...
and one came up
and took my arm...
and said, "Hey, girlie,
you're having a busy day."
The other put a gun
in my ribs...
and said, "Let's go away
for the weekend."
I smelled garlic on his breath.
It's weird.
I'd wondered what he'd eaten.
I didn't resist.
Sometimes I wake up
in the middle of the night.
I get so angry
I want to hit myself.
The street was crowded,
crowded with students.
Maybe they would
have fought for me.
I didn't cry out.
You were supposed to.
You told me, "If they come
for you, yell your name."
"I am Paulina Lorca,
and they're kidnapping me."
"This is an illegal arrest."
I was a fool.
They would have shot you.
They probably would have.
That was the problem.
You see, I wanted to live.
I wanted to see the future.
I wanted to be there
to enjoy my happy ending.
I wanted to live
for that glorious day...

when I would once again
rejoin the man I love...
and live in a free country.
You don't have
to describe the room.
She never saw it.
She was tied to a table,
a wooden table.
Was it long enough
for her whole body?
Oh, for Christ's sake.
Whatever I don't know,
just leave out.
She was tied with ropes.
Ropes?
That's right.
They beat her with iron rods
on her back and thighs.
They burned her breasts
with cigars.
Oh, Jesus Christ.
They put a rod...
a metal rod in...
Go on.
I took part
in ninety-four interrogations.
They told me
the prisoners were dying.
They needed someone they could
trust to care for them.
Why did they
want to keep us alive?
He's supposed
to be making a statement.
I want the truth.
That's all I want.
Wait.
"I believed they had a right
to medical attention...
"and at first,
that's all I did.
"I tended to their wounds.
"I checked on their health...
"but after a week,

they said they needed my help...
"in supervising interrogations."
Who needed your help?
This is not going to work.
I thought we agreed he was only
going to talk about what he did.
I didn't agree.
We haven't got time.
All right, go on.
Wait.
"I tried to protect
the prisoners...
"from the worst tortures
to prevent permanent damage...
"and to lessen
the chance of death...
"from shock
and sudden heart failure.
"I made sure that a sufficient
amount of food and water...
"was given so there would be
no deaths from starvation."
This isn't a confession.
It's a fucking testimonial.
Sounds exactly like
the confession of a torturer.
You expect them
to face the truth?
Tell them about me.
About me.
Wait.
"After three weeks, the daily
sixteen-hour sessions...
"began to rub off on me.
"I tended to be
impressionable...
"to be influenced
by my surroundings...
"and the people around me.
"I lost my sense
of my own identity...
"and my own moral code."
You liked it!
Tell the truth.

Jesus. Give him a chance.
All right, go on.
Get to it.
"When I..."
Wait.
"When I first saw Paulina Lorca,
she was in very poor condition.
"She had had no food or water
for three days.
"She was tied by ropes
to a wooden table.
"She had been severely beaten
on her back and thighs.
"She had burns on her breasts.
"She'd also been subjected
to electric shocks...
"on her torso and genitals.
"I convinced them
she would die...
"if the torture
and starvation continued.
"I asked them
to leave me alone with her...
"so I could gain her trust.
"I had tried this
successfully...
"with a number
of other prisoners.
"I tended
to their physical pain...
"I tended
to their physical pain.
"I played music
to soothe their minds.
"Paulina Lorca
was a very beautiful woman."
That's why you raped me?
Because I was beautiful?
It's my fault, right?
You left the ugly ones alone.
Would you stop interrupting?
You don't understand.
I obeyed women,
honored women all my life.

That's bullshit!
You're going to die, Doctor.
I let your lawyer convince me
to spare you...
if you made
an honest confession...
but you're playing games.
You're deliberately making
mistakes to look innocent.
He gave me all the details.
They came from you.
I never told him
I was tied with ropes.
You're lying.
This is worthless.
You're right.
They tied you with wires.
- Are you sure?
- I'm sure.
Wires... it was wires.
What did you tell him, Gerardo?
I didn't tell him anything.
I know you prepared him.
I knew you were going to,
so I lied to you.
What did you tell him?
Ropes.
Understand?
You didn't tell him...
so how did he know
it was really wires?
Because it was wires.
You see? I'm not crazy!
Get the gun!
Don't move!
I don't want to shoot.
Back off!
Get that light out of my eyes.
I don't want to hurt anyone.
I'm not a killer.
I don't want trouble.
Up! Up!
I just want out.
Back off!

To the window!
The window!
I'll go to the door,
and then I'll leave.
- You won't get hurt.
- No. You wouldn't hurt a fly.
Listen!
I just want to get out of here.
You can keep
your idiotic confession...
and your ridiculous tape.
You can watch it every night.
It'll make great therapy.
If I see you on the beach...
you'll forgive me
if I don't smile.
I don't care what games you play
in this fucking madhouse...
I just want out.
You fuck! Fuck! Fuck!
Gerardo, get up.
Hurry.
What'll we do?
Take him to his car.
The confession game is over.
I believe I was the winner.
- What are you doing?
- Quiet.
That's it. We're taking him.
You got your confession.
You got what you wanted.
Let's forget tonight
ever happened.
That's not what I want.
It's phony.
It's phony
because he's innocent.
He didn't even want the tape.
He didn't want it
because it's absurd.
It looked staged.
A man with a bandage
talking like a robot.
Get up.

Get me that dish towel.
Paulie, wait. Wait, wait.
I have to think.
You think. I'm going.
What are you doing?
Let me make this call.
Let me call Barcelona.
We've got time.
It'll only take
a couple of minutes.
You won't give up
being a lawyer.
Paulie, please.
Is that what you need to do it?
What time is it?
Ten after five.
Five minutes.
That's all the mercy
we can spare.
- Our Lady of Sorrows.
- Personnel office, please.
Not personnel.
- I'm sorry. What did you say?
- There's no personnel office.
You want administration.
I'll transfer you.
Who do I want?
Deputy Administrator's office.
Ask if Elena Galvan is there.
Hello, is that administration?
Not again.
No. This is the cafeteria.
Shit. They just cut me off.
This is bullshit!
- We have to do it now.
- Let me try again, OK?
He isn't finished.
Just let me try again.
Wait. I beg you!
You should know
how useless begging is.
Wait. Wait.
Let me check.
I'm almost through.

You've got to stop her.
- You have my confession.
- You told me you made it up.
Yes, but you have the tape.
I'll keep quiet.
He can't decide which lie
to stick to.
Either you were there
in April '77 or not.
What can I say?
If I'm guilty, you'll kill me.
If I'm innocent, you'll kill me.
If I'm innocent, you're screwed.
If I'm guilty,
you'll kill me for revenge.
Justice, not revenge.
It's not justice!
You're not dead!
No. I wasn't that lucky.
Our Lady of Sorrows.
You just tried to transfer me
to the administration office...
and connected me
to the cafeteria.
You want the cafeteria?
No. I want
the administration office.
What extension do you want?
I don't know the extension.
Who do you want
in administration?
I want to speak to... Wait...
I want to speak to Elena Galvan.
No. The person I want is
the Deputy Administrator.
- Hold on, please.
- Thank you.
Administration.
I have an application
for employment...
from a doctor who said
he did his residency with you...
from 1975 to 1978.
Could you confirm that?

The records office
will confirm it.
I don't want your records.
I just want
a routine confirmation...
he did his residency
at your hospital.
You can fax the records office.
Their number is...
Is there somebody there
called Elena Galvan?
Elena Galvan?
Yes. I'm Elena Galvan.
Do you remember
a doctor named Miranda?
You do?
Yes. Dr. Roberto Miranda.
Was he there in April 1977?
Yes. In '77.
Thank you.
It's true, Paulie.
I just spoke with Elena Galvan.
He was there, just like he said.
She remembers him.
Thank God.
You had it ready, didn't you?
You had it all set up.
Gerardo, is it the truth?
Is it the truth, Gerardo?
You told me yourself the army's
been preparing alibis.
You said some of them
have fake visas.
So this one has a crony
at the hospital...
who conveniently remembers...
fifteen years later...
where he was the very month
he was raping me.
This is it.
We're going to end it here.
Look at me.
Isn't it bright enough
to see me?

Don't you know me?
Didn't you tell me
your ugly thoughts?
Didn't you tell me your secrets?
Didn't you rape me?
Didn't you put your cock in me?
How many times?
Many times.
I raped you many times.
Fourteen times.
You played music.
Yes, I played music.
I wanted to soothe you.
I was good at first.
It took weeks.
I was strong.
I fought it so hard.
No one fought as hard as I did.
I was the last one,
the last one to have a taste.
No one died, I swear.
I saved many,
and I made it easier on them.
That's how it started.
That's how I got into it.
They needed doctors.
My brother was
in the secret police.
He told me they needed someone
to make sure nobody died.
I washed you.
You soiled yourself.
You told me, "I'm dirty,"
and I washed you clean.
The others egged me on.
"Come on, Doctor, you're not
going to refuse free meat."
I couldn't think straight.
And inside, I could feel
I was starting to like it.
They lay the people out...
flesh on the table
in the fluorescent light.
You didn't know.

It was bright in those rooms.
People lying totally helpless,
and I didn't have to be nice!
I didn't have to seduce them!
I realized I didn't even
have to take care of them.
I had all the power.
I could break anyone.
I could make them do or say
whatever I wanted.
I was lost.
I got curious.
Morbid curiosity.
How much can this woman take?
What's going to happen
to her vagina?
Does it dry up
when you shock her?
Can she have an orgasm
afterwards?
I liked being naked.
I would undress slowly.
I would let my pants fall...
so you could hear
what I was doing.
I liked you knowing
what I was going to do.
I was naked in the bright light,
and you couldn't see me.
You couldn't tell me what to do.
I owned you.
I owned all of them.
I fell in love with it.
I could hurt you,
or I could fuck you...
and you couldn't tell me not to.
You had to thank me.
I...
I loved it.
I was sorry it ended.
I was very sorry it ended.
I can't do it, Paulie.
I just can't.
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