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# Desierto adentro

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## THE DESERT WITHIN

### **FIRS:**

### **FAUL:**

On July 31 st, 1926...  
...San Isidro held  
its last mass.  
The evil government  
had the churches closed...  
...and forced God to leave  
his own house.  
Priests were ordered  
to go to the city.  
The sky cries on our heads.  
Against such an offense...  
...we promise never  
to renounce you, Lord.  
I'm sorry. I have to go.  
We'll find a way  
of baptizing it...  
...when the time comes.  
This won't last forever.  
Watch over yourselves.  
in charge of a church...  
...who sounds the bells,  
will be fined MX\$50."  
their children to pray...  
...will have the same fine. "  
religious icons, same fine. "  
religious icons, same fine. "  
What's all that crap, Mother?  
I volunteered to hide them...  
...but it's only for  
a few days.  
Do that when you're a man  
and in your own house.  
You're a good Christian, son.  
Let God defend God's stuff.  
I must care for my family.  
Where are you taking them?  
Don't make me lose face.  
They're not yours! Elias!  
All the men are fighting

in the mountains now.  
What are you waiting for?  
It's not moving.  
Looks like it's  
not moving anymore.  
And if it's asleep?  
If it dies,  
without a blessing...  
...its soul will never  
find peace.  
Don't bring on  
a bigger disgrace.  
Can't you see  
there's a war?  
I'll make her feel better.  
Pray for her.  
Give me your blessing.  
I hope you're not wrong.  
Father!  
Go, Elias, you'll get me  
in trouble.  
Dolores fell.  
She and the unborn child  
are sick.  
- What can I do?  
- Come with me.  
Are you crazy?  
They're killing priests.  
I'm not asking, Father.  
Get in.  
Even the walls have ears.  
Go ahead with the priest.  
Take him away before  
things get worse.  
If anyone finds out,  
we're screwed.  
Thank you.  
You should've brought  
a doctor.  
Bless it, Father...  
...so she can be in peace.  
I bless you in the name  
of the Father, the Son...  
...and the Holy Spirit.

- Amen.  
Hail Mary, full of grace.  
You ask but give nothing.  
Give me back the guns, Elias.  
Please.  
I did my part.  
I want to leave now.  
The horses are tired.  
Sleep.  
I'll come get you  
tomorrow morning.  
Thank you.  
What's going on back there?!  
Wait, wait, hold on!  
Come on! Move it!  
Damn rain.  
We'll be in San Isidro shortly.  
Nobody backs down.  
That priest is rising  
the people.  
You scared me.  
My mom sent this.  
Aureliano, don't go.  
I want a horse.  
Come with me to town.  
Father!  
Father!  
Father Trinidad!  
Mother, we have to go.  
The army is coming.  
Go get your brothers.  
Get up, woman,  
we're leaving.  
Get dressed.  
Come on.  
What?  
They're here.  
They've come to get  
Father Trinidad.  
Carefully.  
Hold on.  
You brought the priest,  
they followed you.  
Your son took him

into town.  
Hold on, son!  
I'll get you down!  
Let him go!  
Bring water  
and a blanket.  
- Father.  
- Go, Elias.  
Listen to me.  
I meant no harm.  
It was a mistake.  
We just wanted to bless  
the child's soul.  
God will punish  
the petty man...  
...who for saving his son  
brought on the death...  
...of God's other children.  
Don't say that, Father.  
Did you see them out there?  
You killed them.  
"Eye for an eye,  
tooth for a tooth. "  
With the death  
of your son, Aureliano...  
...you've begun to pay.  
If I'm guilty,  
please, absolve me.  
Have mercy.  
I'm going to die, too.  
May God forgive you  
because I can't.  
Father...  
Our Father,  
who art in heaven...  
...hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come...  
...thy will be done...  
Ready!  
Aim!  
Fire!  
Get up, bastards.  
Come on!  
Come on!

Move. Move it.  
Mother!  
And the others?  
Aureliano?  
There's your son.  
She was good,  
so I helped her...  
...but there's no  
forgiving you.  
God is wise.  
That's why he took her  
from you.  
God bless you.  
Go, Elias. You have  
no one in San Isidro.  
You're not my son...  
...nor anyone's family  
in this town.  
The guns are in the field.  
What for? There isn't  
anyone left to fight.  
Go.  
If you stay, they'll kill you.  
Wait here.  
Forgive me, God.  
What do you want  
from me?  
Why did you leave me here?  
What's going on?  
I want to do the right thing.  
Please, God.  
Help me.  
Having escaped death,  
Elias called God...  
...who enlightened him  
with a sign and said:  
"You are alive  
to pay your faults.  
Your children will pay  
the punishment. "  
Lord, give us a chance  
to compensate our wrongs...  
...and obtain  
your forgiveness.

We're leaving.  
Hop on, quickly.  
Help your brothers.  
What do we do?  
It's a boy?  
He'll be Aureliano,  
like his brother.  
When I was born,  
my mother...  
...Maria Dolores Hernandez  
died in childbirth.  
I'm the last  
of eight children.  
I was named after  
my brother, who died.  
Thank you, God,  
for letting me live.  
Preserve my health,  
which isn't well.  
January, 1934.

**SECOND:**

**PENANCE:**

See the desert, Aureliano?  
No, I can't see.  
We had two carts pulled  
by mules and horses.  
Listen to the steps.  
The carts' noise.  
Can you hear?  
See the animals?  
Yes, I see.  
Where were you, Father?  
In front,  
on the first cart.  
We carried the bell there.  
Did you pray?  
A lot. The mules barely  
held their weight.  
Where was I?  
I already told you that.  
You were in the back  
of the second cart...

...in a glass crib  
so you wouldn't eat dirt.  
Micaela was sitting  
beside you.  
Where was mom?  
Dad?  
Dad?  
I saw it all, Dad.  
I saw Marcos.  
I saw the bell.  
There were horses.  
Go on. Start painting  
before you forget.  
You'll show me later.  
This one is done.  
You'll break the glass,  
idiot!  
Micaela!  
Where did they go?  
To get wood.  
There's a place  
close to the stream...  
...with a lot of trees,  
like outside.  
- Around here?  
- No, here. Up.  
Up.  
There. Close to  
the snake mountain.  
When will you take me  
with you?  
You know I can't.  
Let's eat.  
Thank you, Lord,  
for this holy meal...  
...that you've given us.  
I hear you, God.  
I achieve what you see.  
I abide your mandate.  
I follow all your laws.  
Amen.  
Give her to me!  
Reach her!  
Micaela!



What?

I want new leaves.

Leave them there.

If I ask for something,  
will God grant it?

Only if you have  
a lot of faith.

How does God know?

How does He know what?

That I have faith.

Come here.

See that outside?

Do you see the church?

The church is a gift  
for God.

Everyday we build  
another piece...

...and everyday we show  
a bit more of our faith.

When it's done,  
we'll call God with the bell.

He'll show us the light  
and say we're forgiven.

Is God very mad?

To bed. Come on.

Micaela, let me brush  
your hair!

Micaela!

Micaela!

What do you want?

A favor.

If I do this favor,  
can I touch you?

No.

Okay! You can!

- What is it?

- A gift.

Place it in the church.

Not your hand.

I touched it.

I want your face.

If I touch Aureliano  
he doesn't die, you know?

I'll talk to you later!

Give me health,  
Holy Father...  
...to go outside and play  
in the tree with my brothers.  
Come, son.  
Get inside the trunk.  
I'm sleepy.  
Come on. Don't you want  
to climb the tree?  
We're getting out  
of your room.  
We're in the hall.  
The kitchen still smells  
of tortillas.  
We're outside.  
The sun is high.  
Can you feel the heat?  
We're heading  
towards the tree.  
I can see Bartolome  
and Micaela from here.  
They've climbed it.  
What's wrong?  
I want to go out for real.  
First you have  
to get better.  
Dirt is bad for you.  
I want to help  
in the church!  
You're helping us  
by painting.  
Let me go with you.  
You stay in charge.  
Give me that.  
I'm not playing.  
It's enough with one  
taking the risk.  
There's a war out there.  
Get off your horse.  
Just once, Father.  
I want to see people.  
I want a woman.  
Get off.  
You'll have your pick

when we finish the church...  
...and people come  
to pray here.  
What are you doing?!  
Put him down!  
You'll hurt him!  
Who took him out?  
You know how it is.  
I know he can't go out.  
It was the four of us.  
You are the eldest.  
We were just playing.  
You're not a child anymore.  
- Can I see him?  
- No.  
Not right now.  
He's too sick.  
You'd better go.  
God, the fault is mine.  
Have mercy, God.  
He has his life ahead.  
The boy has been good.  
The sin is mine.  
The fault is mine.  
Have mercy, dear God.  
The boy has been good.  
The boy...  
The sin is mine.  
The fault is mine.  
Have mercy, holy God.  
Pull, pull.  
More. More.  
Slowly, slowly.  
More, more, more.  
More, a bit more.  
Stop! Stop, stop!  
Don't be mad at Genaro.  
It's true,  
I asked him to do it.  
I'm not mad.  
But you can't go out.  
You get sick if you do.  
I brought you a big glass  
for the window.

Get some rest.  
Dad!  
Dad! Dad!  
The bell for God.  
So he'd hear.  
We wanted to call God.  
You cheat.  
You forgive one  
but you take the other.  
Are you sure?  
It's all right.  
You got scared.  
That's normal.  
If you don't want  
to see him anymore...  
...paint him by memory.  
I do.  
The drawing you make...  
...will be the memory  
we'll keep.  
I'll be here with you.  
Were you scared?  
Me, too.  
The angel has died,  
oh God, what joy.  
The angels received him,  
sing for Mary.  
Angel, you're going  
to heaven...  
...with a lily at hand.  
Ask holy Mary forgiveness...  
...for your brothers.  
All the eternal riches...  
...will be at your disposal.  
And from the Virgin...  
It was an accident.  
What don't you understand?  
You're all damned  
because of me.  
You and your brothers.  
You'll all die before I do.  
If you prove your faith,  
God will forgive you.  
You slept in there?

I just washed them.  
What's wrong?  
Worthless.  
Worthless.  
Worthless.  
You'll break them.  
You lied to me.  
Outside or inside the room,  
it doesn't matter.  
I'm going to die  
because of you.  
On February 2nd, 1934...  
...I decided to leave  
my room.  
Give me strength, Lord,  
to help finish the church...  
...until your kindness  
pardons all our lives.  
In 1939, the plague arrived.  
Bartolome and Saul died  
in that order.  
They were only 20  
and 19 years old.  
Dear God, have mercy.  
Listen to our prayers.  
Commending ourselves  
to God...  
...we finally finished  
the church for his glory.  
For such a great miracle,  
we thank you, God.  
We hope to receive a sign  
of your forgiveness.  
March, 1942.

**THIRD:**

**THE SIG N:**

Where were you?  
Here, tie this.  
You stink, Micaela.  
Go wash.  
And get dressed.  
It's late.

When I'm inside,  
ring the bell.  
Let God know  
that I'm waiting.  
Nothing happened.  
- There was no sign.  
- Shut up. It'll come.  
Dad knows what he's doing.  
Dad said many things  
that aren't true.  
You look like a pig.  
Didn't he say Aureliano  
would die first...  
...because he was  
the weakest?  
Eat something, Father.  
I did all this  
to prove my faith.  
He has to forgive us.  
That sign was for us,  
Father.  
It was for us.  
What? What did you see?  
The lights. In the water.  
I didn't see anything.  
Father.  
They were lights  
like God said.  
What else could they be?  
- I swear I saw them.  
- I didn't.  
I saw them.  
I'm not making it up.  
If there had been a sign,  
I would've seen it.  
You're tired. Go sleep.  
CAN YOU SEE US?  
Celia?  
Celia?  
Throw more water on her.  
What was the sign like?  
Was it a light?  
What was a light?  
Celia saw the sign last night.

No, I didn't.  
Dad said nothing was there.  
See? It's hollow here.  
It's not hollow,  
it's just like the others.  
A church has to last.  
What did Celia see?  
She woke up sick.  
She's burning in fever.  
What if it was the sign  
and you didn't see it?  
The sign?  
I went back to the pond.  
There's nothing there.  
We have to wait.  
We haven't been forgiven.  
I'm dying.  
Don't say that.  
You just have to rest.  
Go on. Sleep.  
I believe you.  
Aureliano, too.  
Though the sign isn't  
in the pond anymore...  
...we're going to find it.  
If God loves us,  
it'll turn up again.  
Micaela?  
Micaela, we're leaving.  
Do me a favor.  
Put this in the church.  
If I do you a favor,  
can I touch you?  
I'll be waiting for you.  
Lord, if it's your will  
to forgive us...  
...guide our path  
towards you.  
Do you want to confess?  
Whatever you have to say,  
God already knows it.  
Dad is wrong.  
It's all in your head.  
You're not sick.

You just have to will it.  
Genaro.  
Genaro, wake up.  
The lights.  
Long live Christ.  
Where are you going?  
San Isidro to pray  
to the saint.  
And the army?  
What about the war?  
It's over.  
Everything's changed.  
Do you have another candle?  
I also have a sick girl  
at home.  
What's wrong?  
Tell Him we did it.

**HERE WE ARE:**

DOES GOD SEE US?  
Father!  
Look, Father.  
The sign.  
We're forgiven.  
Father!  
They're leaving.  
They're leaving.  
Dad!  
Look!  
Genaro, let's go.  
Not yet.  
Where are you going?  
We have to go back.  
The war is over.  
We have to tell dad.  
Are you stupid, Aureliano?  
Elias knew and he lied to us.  
Grandma!  
Grandma Elvira, open up!  
It's me. Genaro.  
Elias' son.  
Elias.  
My son.  
You came back.



No, Grandma.  
I'm your grandson.  
Why do you say that?  
I know you're my son.  
Don't cry, Elvira.  
No.  
It's me.  
Your son, Elias.  
I came back.  
What if Dad doesn't really know  
the war is over?  
I'll wait for you here.  
Bring them all.  
Convince Elias.  
The sign was real.  
Tell Celia.  
Where were you?  
Where's your brother?  
Father, the war is over.  
There are many churches.  
We can go back.  
Grandma Elvira also  
wants you to go back.  
We saw the sign.  
We're forgiven.  
You saw nothing.  
Celia is dead.  
Help me. We have  
to clean your sister.  
I'm sorry, Celia.  
Looking for you at the pond  
and not finding you...  
...Celia died drowned.  
She was only 27.  
December, 1942.  
What do you want  
from us, Father?  
Don't be an idiot.  
I killed them.  
It's my fault.  
It's my fault.  
You know that.  
It's my fault.  
You know that.

I killed them!  
It's my fault.  
You know that.  
It's my fault.  
You know that.  
I killed them.  
It's my fault.  
He's been like that  
since Celia died.  
I'm afraid of being  
alone with him.  
Open, Father.  
Don't leave us alone.  
Talk to me!  
It's me, Aureliano.  
What's wrong?  
I was mistaken.  
We made it wrong.  
We must build it again.  
This wall? What else?  
What else?!  
This will never end.  
Father, please.  
He won't stop  
until he buries us all.  
- Get out.  
- Leave me.  
You're not escaping  
like that.  
You want to leave?  
Let's go.  
Leave me!  
Get up.  
- My dad?  
- He's chosen.  
You wanted a sign  
to feel at ease?  
There's your sign.  
God doesn't punish.  
God forgives.  
Thank you, Lord,  
for showing your mercy.  
Micaela and Aureliano.

**LAS:**

**FORGIVENESS:**

THAT DOESN'T COME

No, no!

Let go of me!

You're hurting me!

"Damn him who disregards  
his mother and father...

...and the whole town  
will say Amen.

Damn him who sleeps  
with his sister.

Daughter of his mother  
or his father. "

- Where's Micaela?

- "The whole town says Amen. "

"Damn him who doesn't  
follow this law...

...or practices it.

The whole town says Amen.

Damn him who disregards  
his mother and father...

...and the whole town  
will say Amen.

Damn him who sleeps  
with his sister. "

Don't lock me up again.

"And the whole town  
will say Amen.

Damn him who doesn't  
follow this law... "

It's best if you don't eat.

Hopefully that'll  
calm you down.

You won't achieve  
anything that way.

I won't say sorry.

I only have

to answer to God.

The Lord doesn't come...

...because you and Micaela  
live in sin.

How do you expect God

to forgive us?  
Repent.  
I'm sorry.  
We have to rebuild  
the church wall.  
Help me, Aureliano.  
Everything will be better.  
Micaela?  
It's me.  
What is it?  
Are you all right?  
Is he letting us out?  
Yes, if you repent.  
You just have  
to say you're sorry.  
What?  
I already repented.  
What we did was wrong.  
It was a sin.  
Help her.  
I can't anymore.  
What's wrong?  
Did you cut yourself?  
Get me out of here.  
Cover me.  
You come to see my son?  
No.  
I just want water.  
Here. For the road.  
Go with God.  
Dear God, forgive  
your follower...  
...who lived and died  
in a mistake.  
His sons, Genaro and  
Aureliano, survived.  
Rest in peace, Elias,  
wherever you are.  
Commending ourselves  
to God...  
...we finally finished  
the church.