

VOLUME IX, ISSUE 1
JANUARY-JUNE 2025
ISSN: 2284-3310
SPECIAL EDITION



TWO ECOSYSTEMS OF PLAY

Claudio Boschi | João Pecegueiro

Edited by Armando Rotondi
With Critical Contributions by Armando Rotondi and Valentina Temussi

iaa Institute of the Arts
Barcelona

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the European Union



Mise en Abyme
International Journal of Comparative Literature and Arts

Volume IX, Issue 1
January-June 2025
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Publisher
Mise en Abyme/IDEA
in partnership with the Institute of the Arts Barcelona

The issue is part of the final outcomes of
the Artistic Residency
"Ecosystems of Theatre and Performance"
(28 October-1 December 2024)
funded by

**CULTURE
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This work was made possible with the financial assistance of the European Union. The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the European Union.

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"Mise en Abyme" is officially recognised as an academic journal by ANVUR and is indexed on the following indexing sources: Scholar — WorldCat — Bielefeld Academic Search Engine (BASE) — JURN Directory — IngentaConnect — Directory of Research Journals Indexing (DRJI) — Internet Archive — Academic Naver. All work is licensed under a Creative Commons 4.0 Non-Commercial International License.

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Ecosystems of Theatre and Performance: Two Ecosystems of Play. An introduction

Armando Rotondi
Coordinator
Ecosystem of Theatre and Performance Residency

This volume, *Two Ecosystems of Play*, brings together two experimental scripts by resident artists Claudio Boschi and João Pecegueiro, developed as part of the *Ecosystem of Theatre and Performance* residency at the Institute of the Arts Barcelona (IAB). The residency was hosted in collaboration with *Mise en Abyme* and supported by the *Culture Moves Europe* programme, funded by the European Union and the Goethe-Institut, running from 28 October to 1 December 2024.

The works featured in this publication—*Checkmate* by Claudio Boschi and *Freya's Story to an Unborn Audience and an Audience* by João Pecegueiro—are a testament to the residency's commitment to fostering artistic research, collaboration, and experimental performance-making. Developed in partnership with experts, consultants, and peer artists such as Oscar Valsecchi, Martin Lewton, and others, these plays reflect an intricate interplay between narrative structures, audience engagement, and the broader ecosystem of contemporary theatre.

The *Ecosystem of Theatre and Performance* initiative aligns with the wider discourse on artistic ecosystems, as explored by scholars like Baz Kershaw. This approach considers theatre as an interconnected and evolving network of creative practices and social interactions. Key themes explored in these plays are related to a social awareness.

Situated in Sitges, a town with a rich history in theatre and performing arts, this residency has provided a unique space for artists to engage in critical discourse and experiment with new performance methodologies. Audiences have played an active role through workshops, discussions, and interactive performances, contributing to a dynamic dialogue on contemporary theatre-making.

This publication serves as both a documentation and a continuation of that dialogue, offering insights into two of the creative outcomes of Boschi and Pecegueiro while inviting further exploration into the evolving landscape of performance. By sharing these works, we hope to inspire new artistic conversations and contribute to the ongoing transformation of the theatre and performance ecosystem.

Claudio Boschi's *Checkmate*: A Psychological Duel of Power and Control

Armando Rotondi*
Institute of the Arts Barcelona

Claudio Boschi's play *Checkmate* is an intense psychological drama that explores themes of trauma, power, manipulation, and the fragility of the human mind. Set in a psychiatric hospital, the play revolves around the complex dynamic between a psychiatrist and his patient, Marisa, who has been rendered mute by severe trauma. As the narrative unfolds, what initially appears to be a clinical interaction gradually transforms into a cerebral battle of wits, ultimately blurring the lines between doctor and patient, captor and captive, winner and loser.

A Battle of Wills: Language as a Weapon

At its core, *Checkmate* is an exploration of power. The Doctor, a man who prides himself on his ability to heal and control the human psyche, is presented as an individual deeply immersed in his profession. He measures his worth through his successes, his victories over mental illness, and the validation he derives from his work. However, his engagement with Marisa exposes the

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vulnerabilities lurking beneath his professional facade. Over the course of the play, his authority erodes, revealing a man whose sense of self is inseparable from his need to dominate and "win" against his patients. Marisa, on the other hand, though seemingly silent and powerless, emerges as a formidable opponent, subverting his authority and ultimately dismantling his perception of control.

Silence plays a crucial role in the play, serving both as a weapon and as a reflection of trauma. Marisa's muteness is not just a symptom of her psychological state but also an act of resistance. In a setting where the Doctor holds all the conventional power—medical, institutional, and social—Marisa disrupts the expected dynamic by refusing to engage on his terms. Her silence renders the Doctor powerless, transforming what should be a therapeutic relationship into a confrontation of wills. This subversion is at the heart of *Checkmate*, illustrating how traditional structures of authority can be overturned by those who refuse to participate in them.

Madness Unveiled: The Reversal of Roles

The title *Checkmate* itself is a fitting metaphor for the play's narrative structure. A chess game is a battle of intellect, patience, and strategy, where players must anticipate their opponent's moves and counter them effectively. The Doctor initially believes he is in control, treating Marisa as just another case study, another mind to dissect and "cure." However, as the play progresses, it becomes clear that Marisa is not merely a passive patient but an active participant in the game. She maneuvers skillfully, allowing the Doctor to believe he is making progress, only to dismantle his confidence at the crucial moment. The turning point occurs when she finally speaks—just two words, "It's black"—delivering the decisive move that signifies his ultimate defeat. This

moment, more than any physical altercation, is the final stroke in Marisa's strategic dismantling of the Doctor's authority.

Boschi's writing crafts a sense of suspense and escalating tension. The Doctor's monologues are particularly revealing, exposing his deep-seated insecurities and his increasing desperation to reclaim control. His slow unraveling, from professional detachment to personal obsession, makes for a gripping psychological descent. The play's climax—his attempt to physically overpower Marisa—is a moment of raw, visceral intensity, but it is ultimately his psychological defeat that delivers the true checkmate.

A Psychological Chess Game

The final scene of *Checkmate* is perhaps its most haunting. The roles of patient and doctor dissolve into something more ambiguous, almost cyclical. The fact that they resume their positions as if preparing for another round suggests that their psychological battle is not a one-time event but an ongoing, inescapable loop. This repetition reinforces the idea that trauma and control are not neatly resolved but continue to shape interactions and identities in many unpredictable ways.

Checkmate is a compelling and unsettling examination of power, identity, and psychological warfare. Boschi's play challenges the audience to consider the nature of control—who truly holds it, how it can be subverted, and what happens when those in positions of authority are forced to confront their own vulnerabilities. Through its gripping dialogue and intricate power dynamics, *Checkmate* leaves a lasting impact, ensuring that the battle between Marisa and the Doctor lingers long after the final words are spoken.

Checkmate

*Claudio Boschi**

Characters

Doctor: 40 years old, a respected psychiatrist.

Marisa: Same age. She has suffered a severe trauma and has apparently lost the ability to speak.

A psychiatric hospital. A doctor meets with Marisa, a patient at the facility, for her regular session. Marisa does not speak. They are seated, and the scene presents an informal conversation. Marisa stares fixedly at the doctor with each question he asks. The intensity of her gaze conveys a sense of defiance toward him.

DOCTOR Good morning, Marisa. How are you? Aurelio told me that this week has been better. You finally interacted with other people. I also saw yesterday's volleyball match, where you really let loose. I didn't know you were that good. When did you start? Have you ever competed in any major sports events? Have you practiced any other sports? I was a regional fencing champion, you know? That's how I met one of my girlfriends. Do you know what fencing is? What would you say if we organized some new sports classes here in the hospital? Tell me a sport you like, and I'll see if I can set something up. Would you like to try a new sport... another discipline? You could start by telling me something about yourself, after a year of sessions... Or rather... after a year of

* Claudio Boschi is an Italian director, actor, voice artist and playwright based in Rome. He graduated from the University of Naples "Federico II", then obtained a diploma in dubbing, and underwent training with artists such as Orlando Cinque, Argentinian director Agostina Luz Lopez – in the international programme of Betsud Beyond The South –, and others. Active as a director as well as an actor, in 2018 he signed his first foreign direction with *Children are Children*, an international project on "Filumena Marturano" based on the English translations by Eric Bentley and Carlo Ardito. The project was sponsored by the International Network of Italian Theatres. Among his credits, he has been featured several times at prestigious festivals such as the Napoli Teatro Festival Italia, with shows including *Stasera c'è spettacolo? To play* and as the protagonist of *Celeste* by Fabio Pisano and *Esploratori dell'Infinito* by Boschi-D'Agostino-Rotondi. He collaborates regularly with the award-winning playwright Fabio Pisano, winner of the Hystrio Award and finalist for the Riccione Prize. He is working at the moment on a authored monologue play dedicated to Ernest Hemingway.

sessions, you could at least say *something*, right? Would you like to go outside? What's the first thing you'd want to do once you're out? Do you have friends you'd like to see again? You know, many people tell me they have a place they'd like to go. Do you? Where do you want to go, Marisa, once you leave here? Just tell me that.

Let's do this: I won't ask you anything else... just tell me what color that wall is, and I swear I'll leave you alone for today. What color is it? Come on... It's a good deal, right? Just tell me the color, nothing else... and I'll stop bothering you.

You know, I've been thinking that things are going quite well, and I could start the paperwork to get you out of here. It would just mean that once or twice a week, you'd come here, and we'd talk a bit... just for half an hour, not much when you think about it... So? What color is that wall?

I love what I do. Did you like what you did before you came here? Sometimes I go home and check the time. It's always so late. But I don't realize how late it gets... I only see it when I walk into my house. I can't leave this office until I've gone through all your records, until I know exactly what you've eaten, what you've done during the day... your progress, your fears. The ones you've overcome and the new ones...

Do you know why I don't have a family? Because I work late. Last night, I stayed up until two. I spent the whole time reviewing your file. I do all of this for you, and you don't speak. You never have, not in a whole year. Your trauma resulted in your inability to speak. It all makes sense. It's a textbook case.

A car speeds along a mountain road—not recklessly fast, but fast enough to lose control on a patch of gravel. Maybe left behind by a truck that passed before. The car crashes through the guardrail and flips down a ravine. Losing your entire family in a single moment is something no one should ever experience. Watching your child flung forward, still strapped in the car seat that detached from the back seat, seeing him struggle for his last breaths, so much blood. In the accident, along with the child, your husband also dies instantly—a massive head injury. BAM! From the impact.

You were driving, Marisa... It's the guilt that took away your voice... I turned forty last week. No one wished me a happy birthday. Simple: no one knew. Yes, a few old friends remembered, but just a few... Of course, my parents called. My mom even asked, "Why don't you come home to celebrate?" Guess what? I had work to do. Today, though, marks twelve years in my career. Twelve years in which I've achieved incredible results with my methods, with every single one of my patients, no exceptions. Imagine where I'll be by sixty. But I'd be deeply disappointed if I got there without succeeding with you.

How did you feel, Marisa, when you realized it was all your fault? Only your fault? Did you realize immediately that, in a single moment, you lost everything? It's not pleasant to be the architect of the destruction of the deepest bonds a person can have—their own family. Right? Tell me, Marisa, how much does it hurt? I wouldn't know. No one waits for me at home. And look at fate: now, no one waits for you either. Here it is! That look. That look you get when you compete. You had the same look during the volleyball match. Now, the question is: why are you competing with me? You don't want me to win... What is it that you don't want me to win? Is this our match? I want you to speak, but you fight to make sure that doesn't happen.

And what would happen if I won? This is no longer about you and your problems, your trauma. No. Not anymore... This is now about *you and me*. The dynamic has changed: it's no longer a doctor-patient relationship. And maybe it never was. It's no longer a process following the rules of medicine. The rules have changed. They're becoming personal, for you. You've changed the tools. We're fighting with two different weapons. I keep trying to talk to you. Using words, therapy, science, experience... but you've changed the rules, you've changed the playing field, you've changed the objective. It's like you've picked up a gun and are walking away, putting distance between us, yet still maintaining full control.

We're playing an uneven game now. I don't know why, but I've become your problem. That's a fact... If you challenge me like this, and if you're as lucid as I

know you are, then we've reached a point where I can't do anything about it. I have to let it be. I have to give in to your silence.

Marisa, do you think that can happen? Do you think I can stop here? Do you think I can allow my career, my work, everything I've built over the years, my only reason for living, the sole meaning of my existence, my only guiding compass to be tainted by failure? By *this* failure?

That's what you want. You clever, damned woman... While I was trying to understand you, I didn't realize I was opening the door to your intelligence and your instincts. The very same you used to lure me into your psychological trap, making me the weak one in this battle. Bravo. Congratulations. I feel like *shit*. Is that what you wanted? Now that I'm in front of you? The one who lost. By putting me in this position, I can't do anything anymore. You've fucked me.

MARISA (*laughs*)

DOCTOR You've fucked me.

(He realizes he has lost confidence in himself because of this failure. It's unacceptable to be made a fool of by a patient you're trying to heal. Better to kill her and erase the proof of failure.)

DOCTOR I never thought this could happen to me. I've never cared about personal failures. Affection has never meant anything to me. Everything fades, everything loses meaning over time. If ten years after your father's death you no longer cry, then that means it wasn't what truly mattered. That's why my work is so important. A patient's recovery is a great joy, yes, but for them and their family—not for me. For me, the only thing that matters is winning, winning against the human mind. Our brain is a formidable opponent. It's like playing chess against the best in the world, and I'm used to winning, Marisa. You're the opponent who defeated me. But do you know what's worse? That while you were winning, I didn't even realize it. Have you ever played chess, Marisa? Do you know what it feels like when your opponent says, *Checkmate*? There's a fraction of a second where you feel absolute emptiness inside...

followed by the thought, *It's not possible. They must have made a mistake. There has to be a way out.* And then—nothing. You realize you've lost...

(He pulls out a vial, slowly empties it, drawing the liquid into a syringe.)

I cannot lose. Not in this...

(A struggle begins. He describes it aloud in real-time, as if narrating his plan—his eventual alibi—leading up to injecting her with an overdose of sedative.)

And that's why, right now, you're having a violent reaction, Marisa. You're thrashing around, losing control. Your uncontrollable rage has become dangerous, and I have no choice but to sedate you. Maybe it's too much, but I didn't have time to measure the right dosage while you were attacking me without reason—do you understand, Marisa? Do you understand?

(Marisa realizes she has little chance of winning the struggle and screams.)

MARISA Help!

(The Doctor freezes. She trembles... The syringe falls to the ground. The chess game is truly over now.)

DOCTOR What color is that wall?

MARISA *(exhausted)* It's black...

(Slowly, they begin moving as if slipping back into a different life. Their daily game is over, and it's time to return to their madness. He retrieves the straitjacket he had hidden behind the desk and hands it to her. She helps him put it back on. The light fades slowly on the image of them leaning against the desk—his gaze empty, completely lifeless; hers filled with amusement, already eager to play the same game again tomorrow, just like every day.)

Motherhood, Memory, and Agency in João Pecegueiro's *Freya's Story to an Unborn Audience and an Audience*

Valentina Temussi*
Institute of the Arts Barcelona

João Pecegueiro's *Freya's Story to an Unborn Audience and an Audience* is a deeply unsettling and profoundly lyrical exploration of motherhood, agency, and memory. Through fragmented narratives, overlapping identities, and a radical redefinition of storytelling, Pecegueiro constructs a theatrical landscape that challenges conventional notions of pregnancy, autonomy, and the interplay between past and future. The play weaves together monologue, movement, improvisation, and audience engagement to create a visceral experience that is as much about performance as it is about self-exploration.

The Duality of Freya: Identity and Performance

At the core of the play is the figure of Freya, who exists in multiple dimensions: as a performer, as a pregnant woman, as a storyteller, and as an ambiguous historical presence. This layered identity challenges the boundaries of reality and fiction, suggesting that the act of performance is not simply an artistic endeavor but an existential state. The fact that the performer and the

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character share the same name blurs the lines between artifice and authenticity, forcing the audience to question the reliability of narration and the nature of selfhood in a theatrical space.

This theme is reinforced through the improvisational structure of the play. The performer is given the liberty to reshape Freya's story, making each performance a unique manifestation of the character's experiences. By doing so, Pecegueiro creates a dynamic interplay between authorial intent and performative agency, highlighting how identity—especially that of a mother—is in constant flux, molded by experience, memory, and social perception.

Motherhood as a Liminal Space

One of the most striking aspects of *Freya's Story* is its unfiltered depiction of pregnancy as both a biological and psychological battleground. Far from the sanitized or romanticized portrayals of motherhood that dominate mainstream narratives, Pecegueiro presents pregnancy as a space of contradiction—of love and resentment, attachment and alienation, creation and destruction.

In Scene 5, the mother's letter to her unborn child oscillates between affection and hostility, between a declaration of unconditional love and an admission of deep-seated ambivalence. The text reveals an unspoken truth about motherhood: that the process of carrying and birthing a child is not always accompanied by a sense of fulfillment or certainty. In fact, it is a state of existential rupture, where the mother must reconcile the loss of personal autonomy with the emergence of a new life.

This complexity reaches its peak in Scene 6, where Freya articulates the unthinkable: the imagined killing of her unborn child. This shocking moment forces the audience to confront the darker, often unacknowledged, realities of pregnancy—the fear, the exhaustion, the resentment. By doing so, Pecegueiro refuses to reduce motherhood to a simple act of nurturing; instead, he portrays it as an act of endurance, resistance, and sometimes even rebellion.

The Body as a Site of Resistance

Pecegueiro's use of movement as a storytelling device reinforces the physical and emotional toll of Freya's experience. The birth scenes (Scenes 1, 3, and 7) function as both literal depictions of labor and metaphorical representations of struggle. The fragmented poetry interwoven with these scenes suggests a rupture between body and self, as Freya fights to reclaim agency in a situation that is largely out of her control.

The body in *Freya's Story* is not merely a vessel for childbirth—it is a battlefield of desire, trauma, and power. The references to past sexual encounters, ranging from moments of pleasure to instances of coercion and regret, highlight the complex relationship between bodily autonomy and societal expectation. Freya's experiences with men, some named and others forgotten, serve as a counterpoint to her pregnancy, emphasizing the stark contrast between moments of choice and moments of inevitability.

The most haunting expression of this theme appears at the climax of the play, when Freya, exhausted from labor, collapses on the floor. The abrupt transition from the raw physicality of childbirth to the mythic imagery of Don Giovanni's descent into hell ("There was a statue of a man. It came to life. He stretched his arm. When I gave him my hand, he dragged me to hell.") suggests that the process of giving birth is itself a form of existential reckoning. This moment reinforces the idea that motherhood is not simply about creation—it is also about surrender, about entering an unknown and often terrifying realm.

Storytelling as Survival

At its heart, *Freya's Story to an Unborn Audience and an Audience* is about the necessity of storytelling as a means of survival. Throughout the play, Freya narrates her past to the unborn child, weaving

together anecdotes that range from tender to traumatic. These stories serve as both an attempt to prepare the child for the world and a method of self-preservation for Freya herself.

The act of telling stories to the unborn, particularly in Scene 2, underscores the theme of inheritance—not just of biological traits, but of history, memory, and trauma. Freya’s stories are messy, contradictory, sometimes crude, sometimes poetic, but they are ultimately a testament to her existence. She speaks because she must, because silence would mean erasure.

The final moment of the play—Freya acknowledging the audience and thanking them before exiting—reaffirms the cyclical nature of storytelling. By breaking the fourth wall, Pecegueiro invites us to become participants in Freya’s narrative, implicating us in her joys, her struggles, and her uncertainties. It is a powerful reminder that the stories we tell, and those we choose to listen to, shape the world we inhabit.

Freya's Story to an Unborn Audience and an Audience

João Pecegueiro*

A performer that plays a young woman; both have the same name. (scenes 0, 5, 6, 8)

A young woman becoming a mother. (scenes 1, 3 and 7)

A mother telling a bed-time story to a restless unborn baby. (scenes 2 and 4)

Scenes 1, 3 and 7 were thought to be movement scenes, hence the choice of a dancer/s.

The performer can improvise the speeches, following the structure of the written text. The performer/s is/are free to create her/their version of the content of this play.

0

FREYA enters.

Hej, jag heter Freya. Thank you for coming. We're happy to have you here.

[Hello, I am Freya]

1

A hospital room. FREYA is in labour. Movement scene.

“My heart is stronger

Than this honour

You want to give me

‘Cause I

As a simple human being as I am

* João Pecegueiro is a Portuguese director, actor, light designer, and playwright based in Lisbon. He develops work in the performing arts, in both creative and technical fields. He has signed the creations, text, and design of “Basic Notions of Theatre Very Well Explained #1: Character,” “The Hospital Receptionist and his Wife,” “Freya’s Story to an Unborn Baby and an Audience,” and “Why Doesn’t the Madman Dance?”, premiered in Barcelona, and “Hay Copistas en el Prado” and “AUDIÇÕES um manual de sobrevivência – considerando A Arte de Resolver Homicídios Depois de os Planear,” premiered in Lisbon. He has collaborated with companies such as the Experimental Theatre of Cascais, Comuna – Theater of Research, La Tristura, La Petite Mort, Marionet Teatro, Foco Lunar, A Barraca.

I fight with you”

2

FREYA, *trying to settle the baby down.*

A simple story about FREYA. Can be from the performer’s life, have characters, be about an event, a scar, a birthmark, the time she won a school contest, or

– SUGGESTION OF A STORY #1 –

Silence. After a while:

do you really want to know?

I know you’ll want to know,

and have every right to do

so,

but I’m worried, my love. My beautiful thing. You are my world, you are, believe me.

You’re mine, my love, my world, yes yes yes, yes you are, believe me.

Yes you are,

yes, you are,

and I’ll tell you everything, and you can rest, and stop kicking me and moving inside me.

But you won’t remember a thing.

FREYA takes out a list and reads through it. As the baby can’t see it, the list can be blank or something else. FREYA shows it to the audience, making them aware of it.

“...” represent the baby talking, although only FREYA can hear it.

[Reading through the list]

So, who will I tell you about today? I’ll start with Anne. She was taking me to see the camping...

Stop kicking! Okay, I’ll do it from the beginning.

So, this was the first day at the festival. There was alcohol, drugs, sex, and me, once upon a time, just out of granny’s house. All I could ask for. I got drunk with two mixes of something a girl gave me. My memory’s perfect, her name was Anne.

Anne just take it, I had three of these, you’ll have fun, let yourself go.

I did. Then, she takes me to the camping part of the festival. I see an empty tent, and, don’t know why, I look at her blue eyes and take her inside. She got the message. I

remember during it, the owners came back. ... I don't know what they were saying. She was sitting on my face, so I couldn't fully concentrate on the shouting. I remember thinking 'I can't forget her name', so after we were evicted from the tent, I wrote her name down. Right here, number one, Anne Christine. ... She was prettier than her name. Then followed all these, good, bad, these one I have no memory at all, god knows what we did. But I remember this guy... wait... he's here somewhere... Right here!, Disgusting Stan. He was the first one I nicknamed. Imagine this: he wants to fuck me. And is trying to. And keeps trying to. I'm not sober enough to fight back, so during his

Disgusting Stan shut up and come here, show me those titties

I think 'I'll be the one fucking you'.

He gets naked, he's hard already, I get on top of him

Freya tell me when you're near

He does, in his

Disgusting Stan ooooooh yeah... almost... there

I start riding him harder.

Freya tell me when you're really near

and again the

Disgusting Stan ooooooh yes... i'm going to

I feel it. He's almost there

and I get up and leave.

Poor fucker was screaming.

Imagine if I had bitten his dick off.

I hope I left in time. He *really* could've been your father.

My love, never be an idiot to a woman.

3

FREYA *is giving birth. Movement scene.*

"There's this incredible

Voice

Inside my body

It's the feeling

That nothing happens
That nothing is real
That nothing
– neither me –
Exists
’Till I see it’

4

FREYA, *continuing the story.*

The story about the father can be a real story of the performer’s life or not, also improvised, as long as we believe it. It can be as simple as

– He made me breakfast one morning. I was the happiest kid in the world. or

– I smiled at him, he smiled at me, the world stopped. or

– And I ran to kiss him. or

– SUGGESTION OF A STORY #2 –

Falling in love high on weed is poetry. I fell in love with Mike. I had him as Pretty Little Mike. He had this low and delicate voice. And –

Pause.

I wonder if I’m in anyone’s list. And if they rank it by quality. Of all of these ... Well, not of all, I’ll admit that, but I know I’m in the top three of more than half ... Yeah, it wasn’t always good for me either, even the best fail sometimes. ... Most of the times I was amazing. And generous; example: one looked at me and yelled

Shy Martin Kristy!

Freya who?

Shy Martin come here Kristy!

Well, who am I to disappoint someone? So, I was Kristy for thirty-something minutes. And apparently Kristy loves the sixty-nine. ... Yes, even when I was pregnant. ... Of course you felt nothing, at one point I got afraid, so I only had sex with women. Your grandpa would’ve loved you, I’m sure, the boy he never had. You won’t meet him. ... You want to hear that as well? ... Okay, try to calm down, try to sleep. Granny sits next to me on the couch, turns the TV off and tells me grandpa isn’t coming back. She explains it to me like I was a child, but I’m old enough to understand what being run over

by a car does to you. But it all made sense when she told me, the screaming I heard from her room when she went there in the middle of a phone call. She stayed there for a long time. I actually forgot. She was in there for so long, I got distracted watching cartoons. Courage the Cowardly Dog was on. Even if he was the most brave being on the planet, not even him would want to hear what granny said. Then she comes to me, and she has a spoon in her hand, I don't know why. She's waving the spoon as she's moving her hands telling me my father is dead. I stare at the spoon. It's fascinating. Her hands going like this

and the spoon going like this

The wooden handle

Mom Freya, dad has died

the neck slightly bent

Mom Freya?

the metal tip all worn out. Then she hugs me.

Mom Freya, daddy's not coming back

And the spoon now behind me, and our eyes meeting, and our tears coming out at the same time

and it hurts.

Not dad coming home and saying

Dad where's my little devil?

just me then,

me at the wake,

me at the funeral,

me looking at a casket with my father inside.

The rain that fell during the funeral, I still feel it. That annoying one. My mother crying, and the rest of the people bowing their heads, and after that

People he was a good man, Freya

I know he was a good man. Why wouldn't he be? Where did you even know him from?

I know his way of walking, of holding my hand, of lifting me in the air, of hugging me when he got home, of telling me I should get better grades.

... It hurt, my love. ... At least, you won't go through the same thing.

5 a mother's letter to her son

You, my son,
You who drain all my strengths,
You who eat what I eat,
You who are part of me,
You who I don't know if I want to accept
but keep carrying,
You that fall asleep when I tell you stories,
know that thinking about you is still thinking about me.
I don't know if I'll protect you or want you
when you rip me open
coming out of me.
You are blood of my blood
flesh, muscle, bone, soul, that I'm generating,
that I send out into the world,
my screams of pain will be your cry.
I won't forgive you what I bled for you.
Tear by tear
You'll pay me.

6 what a mother wants to say but doesn't

I killed you. In my mind I killed you over and over, day after day, I made you disappear and now you're here, almost out of me, and I don't know what to name you. You can't speak to me, you can't understand me, but you've spent all this time inside me, my dear, you parasite, do you know what you've done to mommy? Do you? All the pain you've caused me, all the sitting, all I wanted to do and couldn't. Stop moving! Stop kicking me! Just fall asleep! So what, I don't remember who came inside me, I can't remember all the faces, I don't even know if I asked for it. I'm sorry that I had fun. I'm sorry that my mother was all worried and I said nothing to her. Everyone can have fun but me. You can search for your father when you grow up, if you're that interested. I've been more than caring and I know you're crying in there,

you're crying about fuck knows what, because no one understands you, and I never will. I hope granny comes here and likes you and takes you.

“Well, someone tell me, when is it my turn?
Don't I get a dream for myself?
Starting now it's gonna be my turn.
Gangway, world, get off of my runway!
Starting now I bat a thousand!
This time, boys, I'm taking the bows
And –”

This morphs into:

7

FREYA is still giving birth. Movement scene.

Movement sequence that always comes back to something like a birth giving position.

Playing is a remix of La ci darem la mano, from Don Giovanni, or something else.

LET ME LIVE MY LIFE.
I DON'T KNOW WHO HE IS.
I DON'T KNOW YOUR FATHER.
YOU HAVE NO FATHER.
NEITHER OF US DOES.

As FREYA finally gives birth, she falls on the floor, exhausted.

Music stops.

We hear only her breathing.

There was a statue of a man.
It came to life.
He stretched his arm.
When I gave him my hand
He dragged me to hell.

8

Performance over, FREYA acknowledges the audience, thanking them.

Leaves.

Tack.

[Thank you.]

Special issue of *Mise en Abyme* - International Journal of Comparative Literature and the Arts

ISSN: 2284-3310

Edited by Armando Rotondi

The issue is part of the final outcomes of
the Artistic Residency

"Ecosystems of Theatre and Performance"

(28 October-1 December 2024)

funded by

CULTURE
MOVES EUROPE



Funded by
the European Union



This work was made possible with the financial assistance of the European Union. The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the European Union.



ISSN: 2284-3310