

After

A screaming comes across the sky, the explosion distant

The clucking of frightened chickens

A bare tree, under the tree a shelter; a woman in shelter, another dragging a sack

Woman one: Leave the silver

Woman two: No.

Woman one: Leave the silver.

Woman two: No.

A screaming comes across the sky, the explosion closer

Don at a distance watches the women

Woman one: There's a man.

Woman two: What?

Woman one: He has a gun, leave the silver.

Woman two: No.

Woman one: He's aiming at you.

Woman two: Hail Mary full of grace -

Woman one: It's not a gun, it's a camera.

Woman two: What?

Woman one: It's not a gun, it's a camera. He took your picture.

A screaming comes across the sky, the explosion closer still

Woman one: Hurry.

Woman two: Almost there.

Woman one: You and the fucking silver.

Woman two: I'm in. Who is that man?

Woman one: He looks familiar. He took our picture again.

Woman two: Close the door.

Woman one: Hey!

Woman two: What are you doing?

Woman one: Don't stand there, are you mad? Find shelter.

Woman two: Don't talk to him, just lock the door.

Woman one: I know him.

A screaming comes across the sky, they close the door, the explosion closer still

The door opens

Woman two: What the fuck are you doing?

Woman one: He's mad. He's just standing there.

Woman two: Close the fucking door.

Woman one: He took our picture again.

Woman two: Close it. Close the door.

Woman one: He's mad.

She closes the door, locks it

Woman two: All right. All right. We're safe.

A screaming comes across the sky, direct hit on the shelter

The smoke clears, the tree covered in silverware, gleaming in the moonlight

Feathers float everywhere, no more chicken sounds; Woman one lies on the ground

Woman one: Dumb luck, wasn't the shelter, wasn't the shelter, never been the shelter, dumb luck, thought we were safe, dumb luck, wasn't the shelter at all *Don approaches her* You... you... I know who you are... Yes you may... *he takes her picture* Thank you... it's true... God was just jealous... remember me... Lucifer.

*A lone chicken clucks, a screaming comes across the sky
two strippers backstage, in winter coats; one reads a newspaper, the other with a bowl of
water and a razor shaves her pubic hair, music thumps off*

stripper 1: The war's over.

stripper 2: Fuck off.

stripper 1: Says here.

stripper 2: "Gee, must be true, then -" *coughs* I cut myself.

stripper 1: I'm trying to figure out – Oh don't use the water.

stripper 2: What?

stripper 1: I wouldn't trust the water on a cut. Just tamp up the blood with a towel, whatever.

stripper 2: Yeah.

stripper 1: Don't know why you bother still shaving. It's not like they're concerned about our grooming. 'member when we started, I'd shave my pussy into a little heart and things? Now I'm like, why bother. *stripper 2 coughs* Whoa! Not this way please.

stripper 2: God I feel like shit.

stripper 1: It's going around... Fuck it's cold in here.

stripper 2: "Really? I hadn't noticed."

stripper 1: They're not really saying who won.

stripper 2: Would you stop with that, "the war's over".

stripper 1: Here, read.

stripper 2: They signed a cease-fire. The Germans actually got both sides to negotiate. The Germans negotiated a peace settlement. Now we know the world has gone mad. There's no real victor... Interim government... Democracy yadayadayada... They'll soon call an election... Nothing has really been decided.

stripper 1: Honestly I never really figured out who was fighting who. Like one day, my neighbour's suddenly not talking to me.

stripper 2: What day is this?

stripper 1: Uh... November?

stripper 2: How old is this paper? Nobody tells us anything.

Gunshots afar

stripper 1: Ha listen, nobody told the boys either, they'll keep killing themselves until they get word ha

stripper 2: Let them all wipe each other out.

stripper 1: Oh now, guys are human too. I never thought about that, the war ending, about what I'd afterwards. Maybe I'll go back to University. What about you, what will you do? What did you do before the war?... Oh my God are you crying again?

stripper 2: It's nothing.

stripper 1: What now? The war being over? You better stop, you're going to have to go back out there soon.

Enter Don

Don: I saw you dance.

stripper 1: Who are you? How did you get past the guy? *Don coughs* Whoa, not this way please.

Don: I saw you dance.

stripper 1: Where's the guy?

Don: I was watching you and I said I know that girl and then I placed you. I saw you dance. Before the war.

stripper 2: I didn't dance before the war.

Don: You did. Not like this. You danced for Ivan.

stripper 2: You knew Ivan?

Don: You don't recognize me, I've changed. We met backstage when you premièred the Stravinsky. In Munich. You were the sacrifice.

stripper 2: Stravinsky...

stripper 1: Well, this is nice, this is touching, I love a reunion as much as the next gal but who the fuck are you? You're not even a soldier. How did you get past the guy?

Don: I won't keep you. I just wanted to say: Thank you. I've never understood strippers, I've never understood looking without being able to touch but I was sitting there watching you and I remembered who you were and suddenly it came to me. What I must do and I'm rambling aren't I? I'm sorry. Anyway. Thank you. For my revelation. And as a token I've brought you this. There's a chicken in this bag, I was saving her for me but you should have her. Miracle chicken really, everything else at that farm was dead. And this. *his camera* I don't need this any more. The war is over. I'm through. Take it, sell it, although I suggest you wait, you won't get much now but you could probably get good money for it in a few months. It's all I can give because I have a fiancée and I must remain faithful. No, no: "look but don't touch". Yes. *he coughs, exits*

during the next two women cross each carrying a plastic jug full of water

stripper 2: *with the camera* 'the fuck was that?

stripper 1: *looks in the sack* There's actually a chicken in here. And it's breathing. **Stripper 2** *starts laugh/coughing* What's so funny?

stripper 2: Stravinsky. *Laugh/coughs* Stravinsky. *Laughs, coughs violently a gunshot; one of the water women falls, the other runs to safety*

water 1: Mina! Mina!

water 2: What?

water 1: Where did he get you?

water 2: I'm not sure.

water 1: The jug -

water 2: It doesn't hurt yet - what?

water 1: Roll the jug. The water.

water 2: No.

water 1: It's right there, just roll it -

water 2: I'm not moving.

water 1: It's two meters -

water 2: If I move he'll shoot me again.

water 1: Just push it, roll it here, then play dead.

A UN peace-keeper with a rifle, a megaphone and a head-set walkie-talkie comes next to water 1

U.N.: megaphone Not to shoot.

water 1: Oh here we go.

water 2: Peace-keeper?

water 1: Here to strike fear into the sniper's heart.

U.N.: mega Not to shoot! War is over.

water 2: What did she say?

U.N.: OK. OK. *steps out, shot fired; she's British* Fuck!

water 1: Fuck!

water 2: Fuck!

U.N.: mega Not to shoot! Not to shoot!

water 1: Shoot him! Shoot the bastard.

U.N.: No understand.

water 1: What's your gun for?

U.N.: mega Not to shoot.

water 1: “Not to shoot.” Useless.

U.N.: radio Home, this is one-four I have a situation. Over.

water 1: Mina, just roll the jug.

U.N.: radio I’ve got a sniper and a woman down, over.

water 1: Nudge it, with your foot.

U.N.: radio No, I’m alone, in the panic I got separated from the others, over.

water 1: Roll it

U.N.: radio I’m not sure, it’s not like there are street signs.

water 1: with your foot

water 2: Would you shut up!

U.N.: radio I’m near the beach , it’s like an alley.

water 2: If he sees you talking to me he’ll shoot me again.

U.N.: radio No, I said I’m near the beach, near the hotels.

water 1: The water -

U.N.: radio What do I do, do I engage him, over?

water 2: Take yours home and then come back.

U.N.: radio Well no he’s not shooting at me per se, he seems to be shooting at anybody, over.

water 1: It won’t be here.

U.N.: radio What do I do, over?

water 1: Someone’ll come and take the water while you’re lying there.

U.N.: radio No, I’m not really in danger, I could just go back the way I came but -

water 2: No one would be stupid enough.

U.N.: radio How long will that take? Well... but... All right... over. Fuck.

water 1: Fuck.

U.N.: Yes, very good, “fuck”.

water 1: Fuck.

U.N.: That’s right. Fucking country, fucking job, what the fuck am I doing here, fuck.

water 2: What’s she saying?

water 1: I only understand “fuck”.

Don runs on, skips over the prone woman, to next to the others, shot fired.

U.N.: Fuck!

water 1: Fuck!

water 2: What happened?

water 1: Are you crazy?

Don coughs

water 1: Whoa, not this way please.

U.N.: The man is mad.

water 2: Who is he?

water 1: I don’t know.

water 2: Does he have a gun?

water 1: I think he might have that flu, he’s coughing his lungs out.

water 2: Don’t give it to me.

U.N.: radio Home, this is one-four, any word on that armored car, over?

water 1: What the fuck were you thinking?

Don: I have to get to that apartment building across the street.

U.N.: radio Well when will you get authorization, over?

water 1: You’re crazy. You should have waited till the Peace-keepers come.

U.N.: Fuck.

Don: Who’s he shooting at? War’s been over a week.

water 1: Who knows.

U.N.: *mega* No to shoot! War is ever!

water 1: What?

U.N.: *mega* War is ever!

water 1: *laughs* What the hell is she saying?

water 2: *laughs* Is she saying “war is *ever*?”

water 1: *laughs* Yes.

water 2: Ow ha she shouldn’t make me laugh ha ow he can’t see me laughing ha

Don: What are you saying?

U.N.: You speak English?

water 1: He speaks English.

Don: What are you trying to say?

U.N.: That the war is over.

Don: You’re saying “ever”.

U.N.: I am?

Don: It’s “over”.

U.N.: Oh-ffer.

Don: O-ver.

U.N.: O-ver.

Don: That’s it. War is over.

U.N.: War is O-ver. Thanks. *mega* War is O-ver.

water 1: Where you from?

Don: Canada. *coughs*

water 1: Canada? You married? Seriously, haven’t we met before?

Don: I’m going to make a run for it.

water 1: No, don’t. -

Don runs off, a shot fired

U.N.: Fuck.

water 1: Fuck.

U.N.: The man is mad.

Water 1: Mina, the water. Mina? Mina?

Don at a door, about to knock, hesitates, gathers himself, about to knock, coughs, composes himself and knocks

Sonya: *behind the door* What do you want?

Don: I’m... hello. Who am I speaking to?

Sonya: *behind the door* What do you want?

Don: My name is Odon, I’m looking for -

Sonya: *opens the door* She’s not here. Odon.

Don: Moved?

Sonya: Fled. You know...the war.

Don: When?

Sonya: Oh two, three years now.

Don: Would you know where?

Sonya: Crank.

Don: Crank.

Sonya: Yeah, I know. Why would anybody move to Crank?

Don: There’s been no fighting up there.

Sonya: Nothing to fight over.

Don: And they had a country house -

Sonya: You don’t recognize me do you? *Don coughs* Nasty cough, that.

Don: I know you?

Sonya: I didn't recognize you at first either. I'm Sonya.

Don: No.

Sonya: What, you expected me to stay a kid forever?

Don: What are you doing here?

Sonya: I live here.

Don: Alone? Dangerous.

Sonya: No more than any place else.

Don: Why aren't you with your family?

Sonya: Well, let's see: As soon as the war broke out Lars went to Italy.

Don: Who's Lars?

Sonya: My step-father, supposedly. This was after you left. Anyway he turned out to be a waste of time. First car-bomb in the city and he was gone. I guess, in his haste, he forgot to take us with him. Wants to come back, apparently, now things've calmed down, I got a letter.

Don: So who went to Crank?

Sonya: Me. Mother. And Fyona.

Don: So she's in Crank. Has she gotten any of my letters?

Sonya: Letters.

Don: I've written her.

Sonya: "Oh our postal service these days". You should have called.

Don: Your line is dead.

Sonya: She isn't here anyway.

Don: You have the number in Crank?

Sonya: You have a pen?

Don: I don't have any paper though.

Sonya: Here. *she writes on his hand* Don't know if it's still good. I haven't called in months. Where you sleeping tonight?

Don: What?

Sonya: Want to sleep here?

Don: I should go. *coughs*

Sonya: Crank's far. It's going to rain. Stay the night.

Don: Nice to see you again.

Sonya: Yeah right.

Don: I should get to the train station.

Sonya: Requisitioned.

Don: What?

Sonya: I love that word "requisitioned". Peace-keepers took over the station house. "Head-quarters". Trains, Jesus, trains haven't been running for... Where have you been?

Don: The mountains, mostly - *coughs*

Sonya: I hope you don't have that thing, people are dropping like flies.

Don: It's going around.

Sonya: Yeah. We've had War and Famine. Now comes Pestilence and Death. *It begins to rain* Here it is. Probably the last rain of the year. It'll start snowing soon. You're going back to Fyona? You going to apologize? *a distant rumble*. Guns?

Don: There was a sniper just down the street.

Sonya: What was he shooting at?

Don: Anything. Nobody told him the war was over.

Sonya: "Only the dead know the end of war". Some guy told me that. We were hiding behind the cabbages at the market during a fire-fight and he turns me, all serious and says: Only the dead know the end of war.

Don: That's Plato.

Sonya: Could be. I didn't ask his name. *Don laughs, coughs* Maybe it's thunder. We could get struck by lightning. Wouldn't that be ironic. Make it through the war and then... *Don coughs* You're not getting to Crank tonight, Odon. Come inside.

Don: Just for a minute.

Sonya: Whatever.

Don: Just for a minute.

a cot, rain dripping from the ceiling into a bucket

Don: Jesus. Where is everything?

Sonya: "Oh my God we've been robbed". While we were gone. They took everything they could carry. Ripped the stove out of the wall. Sit on the bed, it's clean. I was just about to have a bath. You want one?

Don: You have hot water?

Sonya: Did I say hot bath?

Don: It's raining on your piano.

Sonya: Yeah well. That was one thing they didn't steal.

Don: Costs a fortune, that piano.

Sonya: Never thought I'd see you back in this room. I thought you'd go home. Once the war broke out. Why didn't you?

Don: I had my reasons.

Sonya: You weren't even born here. It was your mother was born here, right?

Don: Yes.

Sonya: Say something in English.

Don: What?

Sonya: I remember you used to be teaching Fyona English. I would hide just outside the room and listen to you. Teach me something.

Don: ... I don't know what to say.

Sonya: What did that mean?

Don: I don't know what to say.

Sonya: Sounded prettier than that. Do I look like Fyona?

Don: Not at all.

Sonya: I know, it's weird eh? You'd never have known we were sisters. I take after my father. When I was young I always wished that I would look like her, she was so beautiful.

Don: You've turned out to be a lovely young woman.

Sonya: Wow, that sounded sincere. That's nice of you but you're full of shit. She was beautiful. My eyes though, look at my eyes.

Don: Yes.

Sonya: They're a bit like hers aren't they? Sometimes when I stare at myself in the mirror, after a while I start to think I'm looking at her. Look.

Don: Yes.

Sonya: You're just saying that.

Don: You shouldn't sit so close to me. I might be contagious.

Sonya: I wish. No, don't worry, there's nothing you could give me. I've had it all already. I'm immune. *She begins to undress*

Don: What are you doing?

Sonya: I'm going to have a bath.

Don: Don't.

Sonya: Don't what? I can't bathe dressed. It's so funny, I never thought I'd see you again. Not like I ever thought about you. But here you are.

Don: Sonya, please. Don't.

Sonya: Don't what? *Looks in his knap-sack* You got anything to eat in here?

Don: Please don't do that.

Sonya: Any water, anything?... Passport... Canadian passport. You know what I could get for this?

Don: Put my things down Sonya - *He coughs*

Sonya: Or what? Is that a threat? Are you threatening me? Fuck you.

Don: You watch your mouth young lady.

Sonya: You don't like my mouth? I bet you would. I bet you'd love my mouth. You're really bad at doing the father thing. Look at you, you can barely sit up. Lie down a bit. Close your eyes. That's it. Wow, you're burning up. Let's take your jacket off.

Don: I should go.

Sonya: Sh. You should but you won't.

Don: Maybe the trains are running now the war's over.

Sonya: Shut up about the trains. I lied before. I do think about you sometimes. The man who broke my sister's heart. And look where you are. In my bed. Lie back. Relax. Let the fever pass. You can go to Crank in the morning. Tonight you stay with me. *his hand floats up between her legs* Oh. Yes. See? You're already feeling better. Yes. And your little friend is doing just fine as well. Take your pants off.

Don: What?

Sonya: Yes. Lie back.

Don: No. No.

Sonya: Where you going? Come back to bed.

Don: I can't I can't I can't. *Piano begins, faintly* Your piano is playing.

Sonya: Is it.

Don: What are you, deaf?

Sonya: If you say so. What's it playing?

Don: Schubert. I have to go now. I'll go in a minute. I'm trying to change. Trying to be faithful. Trying to learn something. From the war.

Sonya: In order to learn something from it you'd have to understand it.

Don: What?

Sonya: In order to learn something from it, you'd have to understand it.

Don: I shouldn't have come in.

Sonya: You're going to fall.

Don: I have to get to Crank.

Sonya: Fall on the bed. That's it. You can do what you want with me, you know. Fuck me up the ass, fuck me in the mouth, I don't care.

Don: What did you say?

Sonya: I said: you're going to have very hard time convincing Fyona that you've changed.

Don: What?

Piano increasing in volume

Sonya: I said: I think you're the devil. I think you are Satan. And Satan can never change. It's not in your nature. I think you started this war, I think it began because you came back to your mother's country. That you bring war wherever you go. And I think I'm the lucky one: I have the devil in my bed but he's sick. He's weak. He can't hurt me. And like any self-respecting girl I have to take advantage of it. So I think I'm going to fuck you.

The piano plays, she keeps speaking but we can no longer hear it. She slaps him, he doesn't respond, she spits on him and leaves in disgust, taking his bag with her; two angels in surgical masks come hover over him; a loudspeaker

Loudspeaker: Remember to keep masks on at all times: better safe than sorry.

Don: The number.

Angel 1: This one's awake.

Don: The number.

Angel 2: What did he say?

Angel 1: "The number."

Angel 2: ' the fuck does that mean?

Don: On my hand.

Loudspeaker: Report anyone who leaves the quarantine zone immediately. Immediately.

Angel 2: This is the guy they found in the street, no papers. Do you know who you are?

Don: The number on my hand.

Angel 1: What did he say?

Angel 2: Sounded like English.

Angel 1: You speak English?

Angel 2: No but I recognize it. English? Are you English? Are you married?

Loudspeaker: Remember to keep masks on at all times: better safe than sorry.

Don: The number...

Angel 1: He's fading.

Angel 2: Leave him. He probably won't make it anyway.

Loudspeaker: Burn all gowns immediately after contact with the sick. Immediately. And in other news:

The Piano music ends; loudspeaker becomes television.

television: Accusations of biological warfare fly from all camps although no one has claimed any responsibility.

a scrawny Christmas tree: Helna watches television

television: It seems quite clear that there were no biological weapons used - the deadly epidemic seems to have started with chickens.

Anna, the Maid enters

Anna: There's a -

Helna: Agh!

Anna: Agh!

T.V.: The World Health Organization has ordered the slaughter of all chickens in the country before any more aid can be brought in -

simultaneously with T.V.

Helna: Don't sneak up.

Anna: I didn't sneak, I -

Helna: Are you trying to kill me?

Anna: Sorry.

Helna: I'm old. ***Turns off television*** What do you want?

Anna: There's a letter.

Helna: What?

Anna: A -

Helna: A letter?!

Anna: Look -

Helna: I don't want it!

Anna: What?

Helna: Is that it?

Anna: Yes -

Helna: Put it down! Down give it to me!

Anna: I -

Helna: Put it down! Down! ***Anna drops the letter*** Are you mad?

Anna: It's a letter.

Helna: God knows what it is.

Anna: You think there's something wrong with it?

Helna: Who would send me a letter?

Anna: It's not for you.

Helna: Then why are you trying to give it to me?

Anna: It's -

Helna: Not even addressed to me.

Anna: It's for Fyona.

Helna: ... What?

Anna: It's addressed to Fyona. What do we do?

Helna: Pick it up.

Anna: What if it's poisoned?

Helna: Don't be stupid.

Anna: You pick it up.

Helna: Who's the Maid?

Anna: Oh hang on.

Helna: Pick it up!

Anna: Don't call me that: Maid.

Helna: You'd make me bend?

Anna: I'm not your Maid, I'm... I live here.

Helna: At my age.

Anna: I'm your orphan, your foundling -

Helna: My hip could go out -

Anna: Oh for God's sake. *Picks up letter* There.

Helna: Open it. No don't. Is there a return address?

Anna: A hospital.

Helna: Hospital? Give. *Opens the letter, reads* Have you locked the doors?

Anna: Locked?

Helna: And the windows? Check to see if you locked the windows.

Anna: I will. Who's it from?

Helna: Go upstairs.

Anna: What?

Helna: Don't you have something to do? Clean the toilet.

Anna: I did.

Helna: There's a smell there you never get rid of.

Anna: There's no smell... Oh. Oh I get it. You don't want to tell me who the letter's from...

It's from the guy isn't it? Odon.

Helna: "...it must have been you that kept me alive..."

Anna: So, he doesn't know about Fyona?

Helna: "I've changed..."

Anna: Nobody told him?

Helna: He thinks he's changed...

Anna: He's in the hospital. He must have the virus. But he didn't die. He's amazing.

Helna: Would you shut up.

Anna: What?

Helna: I have to think.

Anna: Some of it's in another language.

Helna: Really.

Anna: Yes, and... oh.

Helna: He was teaching her English.

Anna: Read it for me. Just a little. Parts. I'll go over here. I won't say a thing. It'll be like you're reading alone, aloud. Please.

Helna: "I have thrown myself recklessly at Death time and again... He won't take me... it must have been you that kept me alive... they died one after the other in the beds beside me... I sit here and write to you... I've changed... let me come home..."

Anna: *simultaneously mouths "let me come home", then:* I'm going to cry.

Helna: What?

Anna: He's realized he loves her but it's too late.

Helna: Were you born this stupid?

Anna: What?

Helna: Is it in your family's genes?

Anna: Hey now, no call for that.

Helna: Your father: Let's light that barbecue up in the living room.

Anna: It was freezing. Not everybody could afford heat during the war.

Helna: You were lucky to survive.

Anna: Yeah, lucky. Lucky enough to be taken in by you. And what joy that has been.

Helna: Let me think.

Anna: What are we going to do?

Helna: Quiet.

Anna: We have to tell him. We have to write him.

Helna: Sh.

Anna: What are you thinking?

Helna: I wanted to die. I've been trying to figure out why I'm still alive. Rotting up here, bored out of my mind, in "safety". I wanted to die.

Anna: You're smiling.

Helna: I have a reason to live. I know now. I know why God has kept me alive.

Anna: But he won't come. Not if Fyona doesn't write him back.

Helna: He'll come.

Anna: Why would he?

Helna: He will.

Anna: Without an answer?

Helna: You don't know him.

Anna: No but I can imagine him.

Helna: Imagine. And what do you see?

Anna: It's not what I see, it's what I feel.

Helna: And what do you feel?

Anna: The kind of man could do that to a woman. To Fyona. Make her nuts.

Helna: Really.

Anna: And then write a beautiful letter like that. What's so funny?

Helna: I'm always amazed at how sentimental people are in their letters. Perfectly cynical folk go all a-mush when they put pen to paper. It's pathetic how corny our inner-most thoughts really are.

Sound of the sea, Don on a beach, looking out to sea

A young woman ragged, patched winter clothes, held together with rope; plastic bags in her boots holds the remains of a wooden chair, plastic bags full of effluvia the rag-picker sees him, stares; after a while:

Don: Hello.

Rags: Hello.

Don: ... You're seeing what the sea brought in?

Rags: No. What they've thrown from the hotel. Everyday we find more things. No matter how many times you go over the beach, the same place, you always find something you missed.

Don: That's the sea. The tide. Stirs things up.

Rags: I never thought of that. Are you cold?

Don: It's cold out.

Rags: This is nothing. You should have been here two days ago. That was really cold.

Don: Sorry I missed it.

Rags: No, you wouldn't have liked it, it was cold.

Don: Yes, I... Yes. Thank you.

Rags: Were you sick? Did you have the thing?

Don: Yes, I did.

Rags: You're one of the few that survived. Wow. You must be very special. Where are you from?

Don: Why do you ask?

Rags: You say some words funny.

Don: You have a good ear.

Rags: Eh?

Don: You... hear well.

Rags: Thank you.

Don: Do you play an instrument? Music?

Rags: Music? ... Where are you from?

Don: Canada.

Rags: Canada. I have an aunt in Canada. In... Wi... Whip...

Don: Winnipeg.

Rags: Yes, Winnipeg. Is that where you're from?

Don: No.

Rags: Is it close to where you're from?

Don: No.

Rags: Is it far?

Don: Like from here to, say, Finland.

Rags: No. The other end of your country, then.

Don: No. Canada's big. Crossing Canada is like crossing the ocean.

Rags: No.

Don: Yes.

Rags: That's too big. And it's cold there.

Don: In the winter.

Rags: Colder than here.

Don: Cold like in your mountains, have you been to the mountains?

Rags: No.

Don: Well it's cold like that. In the winter. But the summers, the summers are hot.

Rags: What're you doing here?

Don: I came before the war broke out.

Rags: Still. So, Canada... you married?

Don: I have a fiancée - what's funny?

Rags: People still have "fiancées"? People still "get married", "start a family"?

Don: Maybe now the war's over -

Rags: How long since you've seen her?

Don: Who? My fiancée?

Rags: What's her name?

Don: Fyona.

Rags: What kind of name is that? You think she's being faithful to you?

Don: I don't know.

Rags: You been faithful to her? ... You see?

Don: See what?

Rags: Everything. Just goes to show. Look at everything. The world. Our beach where people used to lie about, relax. The hotel where I used to work. First of all it's winter, just that, just knowing that where we're standing there were people lying in the sun. And today, so cold. New Year's Eve. Did you know it was New Year's Eve?

Don: No.

Rags: The trees, bare: sleeping or dead? You can't tell the sleeping from the dead. The mattresses where people used to sleep and fuck all thrown all over the beach. This chair, someone sat in this chair. I'm going to burn it tonight, stay a little warmer. Your love, your fiancée, probably in someone else's arms right now.

Don: I get your point.

Rags: Running her tongue down his chest.

Don: You watch your mouth young lady.

Rags: You don't like my mouth? I bet you would. I bet you'd love my mouth.

Don: What?

Rags: Well. That's all the exposition out of the way. What do you want to do now Canada? You want company? You can do what you want with me, fuck me up the ass, fuck me in the mouth, whatever. Got a price for every wallet. What, you thought I was actually interested in your origins?

Don: "If you can't be with the one you love, honey, love the one you're with."

Rags: Is that English? What did it mean?

Don: I'm going back to Canada in a few hours.

The widow enters, talking on a cell phone

Widow: I'm on the beach now.

Rags: You're leaving.

Don: Yes. Going "home". I have to. I'm not allowed to stay here.

Widow: The beach. I'm on the beach.

Rags: You don't want to leave.

Widow: The - what are you, deaf? The BEACH.

Rags: You want to stay here. Find your fiancée.

Widow: Yes, in front of the hotel, of course in front of the hotel, what, you think I went to the beach in the dead of winter for a spot of sun? I'm looking at my hotel right now... What's left of it.

Rags: Where is she?

Don: Crank.

Rags: Crank.

Widow: No they won't let me in yet, they say it's "not safe"... But from the looks of the outside I'm expecting the inside is worse. Listen though: Have you heard from the Germans?

Rags: And she's in Crank. The asshole of the asshole of the world. And you want to go find her there.

Don: I have to.

Widow: The Germ - Well, what the fuck are you waiting for?

Rags: You're out of your fucking mind.

Widow: No, don't wait for them, call them back - wait a minute. You: Rags, get the fuck off my beach.

Rags: Fuck you, the beach is for everyone.

Widow: See that hotel? The one you've stolen that chair from? That's my hotel.

Rags: The beach belongs to everyone.

Widow: Nothing belongs to everyone anymore, the war's over, you want me to call my man?
I've got a man over there, my driver, you want me to call him, kick the shit out of you?

Rags: Pht.

Rags wanders off

Widow: And you, with the nice coat, you too, get – Oh my God. Oh my God. What are you doing here?

Don: I beg your pardon?

Widow: What are you doing here?

Don: I -

Widow: You don't recognize me? Have I changed that much? Jesus Christ you really don't.

Don: I'm sorry.

Widow: How's your fiancée? Or are you married by now? Were you married before the war?
I wasn't invited to any wedding. You really don't remember.

Don: I'm sorry, I -

Widow: Is she a good wife? Is she faithful to you? What was her name again? She must be faithful, she was such an "angel". *A distinctive laugh*

Don: Oh. You.

Widow: He remembers. You don't remember my name though do you? What's my name?
What's my name, Odon?

Don: I'm sorry.

Widow: You're so apologetic. Uncharacteristic. You're clutching your heart. Are you in pain, you poor poopsie?

Don: Since the fever.

Widow: You survived. My husband died. He forgave me. He forgave me you. He suffered more than anyone, he was the most deceived and then, when you dumped me for your "angel", he took me back. He comforted me. He helped me get over you. I did nothing to deserve his kindness and now he's dead and I see you. On the beach in front of his ruined hotel.

Don: I'm sorry.

Widow: Shut up. Say that again, I'll tear your eyes out.

Don: Your husband had the fever as well?

Widow: What? No.

Don: Was it during a battle?

Widow: It was a boating accident. In Fiji.

Don: He drowned?

Widow: No, his boat collided with a fishing boat just coming out of the bay.

Don: He was driving the boat?

Widow: No, someone else was driving the boat but she'd never steered a boat before.

Don: They must have been going fast if the collision killed him.

Widow: No, their boat was fine, the fishing boat sank but Omar was eating an oyster just as they collided and the oyster went down the wrong way and he choked. It was a big oyster.

Don: Anyway. It was nice to see you again. Now if you'll excuse me, I have to mail a letter and then I have to leave the country.

Widow: You're leaving?

Don: My papers were stolen. Then I found out that, anyway, my visa had expired. A while ago actually. I've been here illegally. So I have to go home, straighten things out. It's just a minor set-back. I'll soon return.

Widow: Why didn't you die? Men like you never die.

Don: I've changed.

Widow: Never.

Don: Don't say that. Things can change.

Widow: Things, yes. You, never.

Don: The war changed me.

Widow: A man of your talents?

Don: I've lost those.

Widow: No, you haven't.

Don: I'm sick of them, then.

Widow: You'll never escape them.

Don: I know I'm no good for women.

Widow: It's all you're good for.

Don: Rose... was your name Rose?

Widow: It's New Year's Eve. Give me a kiss. Give me a kiss goodbye.