
LA PRUDENCIA

(PRUDENCE)

de CLAUDIO GOTBETER

Traducción al inglés SOFIA DAVID

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Only scene

A small room. A door, a table, two chairs, curtains through which one goes toward the kitchen. An accordion melody is heard. The lights go up. Margarita is sitting at the table. Trinidad, between two cups and a bottle from the kitchen, leaves them on the table and sits down. A long silence. The music stops.

TRINIDAD.-

(Sigh. Margarita likewise. Suddenly they lift up their glasses) To your health, Margarita!

MARGARITA.-

To your health, Trinidad! (They drink)

TRINIDAD.-

(Silence) ...new year, new life

MARGARITA.-

So they say.

TRINIDAD.-

May this year be better than the last.

MARGARITA.-

That's what I wish every year.

TRINIDAD.-

So do I. The truth is, I'd give anything to go back to the safety of childhood.

MARGARITA.-

Anything would not be enough.

TRINIDAD.-

How nice it would be to go back in time, wouldn't it?

MARGARITA.-

Nice? It would be marvelous!

TRINIDAD.-

Yes, to your health Margarita!

MARGARITA.-
To your health Trinidad! **(They drink)**

TRINIDAD.-
(Silence) ...I feel unwell.

MARGARITA.-
I accompany you in your feeling.

TRINIDAD.-
Thank you.

MARGARITA.-
No don't thank me. If I could avoid it, I would. Lamentably, I feel equally or worse than you do.

TRINIDAD.-
Look, I feel very unwell, alright?

MARGARITA.-
And I horribly and dreadfully unwell.

TRINIDAD.-
Mmm... **(Silence)** To your health, Margarita

MARGARITA.-
To your health, Trinidad **(They drink)**

TRINIDAD.-
I was just thinking... Well, it seems to me that... It seems to me that I feel worse.

MARGARITA.-
Why?

TRINIDAD.-
Because on top of my deplorable state, my head hurts.

MARGARITA.-
My head and my stomach hurt.

TRINIDAD.-
Wait! You didn't let me finish! My head hurts, my stomach, my kidneys, my liver, my breast, my pancreas and I have a backache that I won't get rid of with even fifteen years of massages. Oh! My joints also hurt. All of them.

MARGARITA.-
Are you done?

TRINIDAD.-
Yes.. No... Add to all that a disease.

MARGARITA.-
What disease?

TRINIDAD.-
A... an incurable disease!

MARGARITA.-
Which one?

TRINIDAD.-
I don't know!.... It's so incurable that the doctors aren't able to diagnose it.

MARGARITA.-
Then, they can not assert that it's incurable.

TRINIDAD.-
Yes, the doctors assured me.

MARGARITA.-
And why do they assure it if they still don't have a diagnosis?

TRINIDAD.-
Because they're doctors, Margarita.

MARGARITA.-
First, they need to find out what disease it's about, Trinidad.

TRINIDAD.-
I already told you. It's an incurable disease, Margarita.

MARGARITA.-
But which, Trinidad.

TRINIDAD.-
Once more with the same. Enough of questioning my sanitary state. If you intend to challenge the entire scientific community, at least have the decency of making the Hippocratic oath.

MARGARITA.-

What are you saying! I'm not challenging anyone. All I'm doing is seeing and drawing conclusions from what I see.

TRINIDAD.-

Then look! It's evident that I'm ill. Anyone who observes their peers a little, immediately perceives how they are. And I'm a wreck. Believe me! I'm sick down to my bones! There's no solution. Look! Look at these eye bags: It's been days since I've slept.

MARGARITA.-

And me! It's been months since I've slept!

TRINIDAD.-

Yes, but it's been years that I choke on all the variety of sleeping pills that you can imagine!

MARGARITA.-

They no longer have any effect on me!

TRINIDAD.-

They no longer have any effect on me!

MARGARITA.-

Then, why do you take them?

TRINIDAD.-

Because I'm very unwell, Margarita! But you don't want to recognize it.

MARGARITA.-

And you don't accept that I'm worse, Trinidad!

TRINIDAD.-

I'm a disappearing specter! A chronically ill specter, Margarita!

MARGARITA.-

And I am an animal deeply wounded at the end of its agony! Since I have use of reason, I do nothing but wander blindly. Hanging from a thread, clutching with my hands to avoid falling.

TRINIDAD.-

I'm also on the same thread, ripped apart, mutilated!

MARGARITA.-

No!!! Not on my thread!!! No one can grab onto my thread!!! Let alone someone ripped apart and mutilated, because they would have surely fallen down!

TRINIDAD.-

I'm dealing with that! Leave me with a little time and you'll see!

MARGARITA.-

I can't give you time! Don't you see that I'm being sliced up like a dry orange?!!

TRINIDAD.-

How do you expect to see me if I'm falling apart. I am sinking like a little boat adrift.

MARGARITA.-

When you stop sinking with your ridiculous metaphor, I'll be under the earth! Dead and buried a thousand years!

TRINIDAD.-

I don't know! I don't know! We'll see who dies first!

MARGARITA.-

If you knew the secret I keep, you would change your opinion right away.

TRINIDAD.-

(Silence) What secret?

MARGARITA.-

A secret.

TRINIDAD.-

...I also have one.

MARGARITA.-

Don't ask me to tell it because it is un-speak-able..

TRINIDAD.-

Fine... but don't ask me to tell mine.

MARGARITA.-

Allright. I'm not asking you.

TRINIDAD.-

Perfect. No one asks... To your health!

MARGARITA.-

To your health (**Drink silence**) ...It's an abominable secret.

TRINIDAD.-

And mine?!.... Ha! (**Nina enters the scene and rings the bell. Trinidad and Margarita are frightened**) Oh! Who could that be?

MARGARITA.-

I don't know.... Are you waiting for someone?

TRINIDAD.-

Yes, Nina, like every year.

MARGARITA.-

Oh Nina! Of course! It must be her, open up.

TRINIDAD.-

...And if it's not?

MARGARITA.-

...Don't open. **(Nina knocks again)**

TRINIDAD.-

...What do I do? Do I take a risk?

MARGARITA.-

Ask who it is, Trinidad. In what world are you living in? One doesn't open the door to just anyone.

TRINIDAD.-

You're right.. Who's there, Nina?

NINA.-

Yes, it's me.

TRINIDAD.-

(To Margaret, applauding) It's Nina! It's Nina!

MARGARITA.-

Of course, asking that way. What do you want her to answer? No, I'm not Nina! I'm a thief! Open, I'll steal, rape you and go home!

TRINIDAD.-

How did I ask?

MARGARITA.-

You anticipated the name. You said: "Who's there, Nina?"

TRINIDAD.-

Oh, how stupid I am! It's true! And now?

MARGARITA.-

What do I know?.. Ask something personal. Something she alone could know.

TRINIDAD.-

You're right. **(They kiss)** It's a very good idea. **(Goes to the door)** What day were you born?

NINA.-

What?

TRINIDAD.-

Say the date of your birth, please!

NINA.-

... Why?

MARGARITA.-

For safety's sake! Say it!

TRINIDAD.-

Yes, Say it!

NINA.-

The 21st of March.

TRINIDAD.-

(To Margarita, happy) The 21st of March.

MARGARITA.-

Is it her?

TRINIDAD.-

You don't know what day she was born?

MARGARITA.-

No.

TRINIDAD.-

Me neither... It seems I asked a dumb question.

MARGARITA.-

Dumb? I would say that it's a ridiculous question.

NINA.-

What's going on, girls, why don't you open?!

TRINIDAD.-

Because we don't know if you're Nina or an impostor!

NINA.-

Oh Trinidad! It's me! Let me in!

TRINIDAD.-

(To Margarita in a hushed voice) She said my name!

MARGARITA.-

She was listening from behind the door. It's obvious.

NINA.-

Open up for once and for all! I feel unwell!

TINIDAD

and

MARGARITA.-

And me?!

NINA.-

Please! If all these years we meet on this date the three of us!

TRINIDAD.-

...Let's see. Why do we meet?

NINA.-

To celebrate the New Year.

TRINIDAD.-

It's true. She's well informed.

NINA.-

Of course, if I'm Nina!... This is irrational. Why don't you trust me! What do I have to do for you to believe me?

MARGARITA.-

Excuse me, but this is not about trying to believe or trusting. If you read the newspapers, you ought to know that the only reasonable thing is "prudence". These days whoever wants to survive, must above all be "prudent".

TRINIDAD.-

"Very prudent".

MARGARITA.-

The smallest carelessness usually leads to a fatal end. In these times one can't trust anyone.

TRINIDAD.-

Exactly! So if you are Nina, we offer you a thousand apologies but you're not coming in here. (To Margarita) Let's go. (Steps toward the table)

NINA.-

What?!

TRINIDAD.-

It's nothing personal. Understand. Margarita has already told you, it's a matter of prudence.

MARGARITA.-

People are most dangerous. They rob and kill as if it were a matter of eating biscuits. And the worst is that no one cares about what happens to others.

TRINIDAD.-

Without going much further on this subject, last week three apartments on the same floor were burglarized.

MARGARITA.-

Don't tell me!

TRINIDAD.-

Yes, they entered the first one by forcing the lock. They chopped the inhabitants into chunks, covered each piece in cellophane, they kept those in the refrigerator, they had a bite to eat, and then they stole everything. Later, they made a hole in the wall and entered the neighboring apartment.

MARGARITA.-

What barbarians...! Did they make a hole in the wall?!

TRINIDAD.-

This surprises you?! ...In the last apartment they entered in the most unusual way you can imagine: through the pipes.

MARGARITA.-

Nooo!!!

TRINIDAD.-

Yes, yes. Although you don't believe it, they entered through the pipes...

MARGARITA.-

...They use more and more sophisticated means.

TRINIDAD.-

So it appears... We live in difficult times.

MARGARITA.-

Oh, yes...

TRINIDAD.-

(Brief silence) To your health, Margarita.

MARGARITA.-

To your health, Trinidad. **(They drink)**

NINA.-

Excuse me... I'm still here...

MARGARITA.-

Oh, Nina! We know you're there! We're not dumb. **(Sits at the table)**

TRINIDAD.-

Logical! How are we not to know since it's been an hour that you insist on entering! **(Sits down)**

NINA.-

But you don't let me! You treat me as if I were a stranger. And it's not fair. I'm Nina! Open up! **(Rings the bell)** Come on!! **(knocks)** Until you let me in, I'm not moving from here!

MARGARITA.-

(To Trinidad, laughing) The truth is, I have to recognize that she possesses an astounding perseverance. In her place I would have already given up.

TRINIDAD.-

(Laughing) Now that you mention it, it's true... What do we do? Do we let her enter? So much insistence is moving.

MARGARITA.-

(Laughing) I don't know. The house is yours.

TRINIDAD.-

...There's not much to steal so...

MARGARITA.-

(Laughing) You decide. If you want to begin the year taking risks... risk it.

TRINIDAD.-

(Goes to the door) Nina!!! Are you still there?!!

NINA.-

Of course! I haven't moved an inch!

TRINIDAD.-

(Applauds. Margarita imitates her) Your perseverance has triumphed! Get ready! I am opening!.

NINA.-

I've been ready for a while, Trinidad!!

TRINIDAD.-

Well... Opening, eh...

NINA.-

Open when you want. **(The door has many bolts. Trinidad unlocks a pair and suddenly stops. She exchanges a few looks with Margarita and doubts opening)** So? Now what happens?

TRINIDAD.-

Put your hands on your head, please!

NINA.-

(She do it) Oh! All that was missing! It's unbelievable!

TRINIDAD.-

Done?

NINA.-

Done.

TRINIDAD.-

(Opens the door with great care. To Margarita, applauding) It's Nina, it's Nina!

NINA.-

Can I come in?

TRINIDAD.-

Of course you can! Why did I just open?!! Come in, come in. Hurry up.

NINA.-

(Entering with her hands on her head. Trinidad, closes the door) Do you want to search me for weapons?

TRINIDAD.-

Don't be ridiculous, Nina! You're a friend.

MARGARITA.-

Ridiculous?! Don't be ungrateful! We've let you in and now you're answering with sarcasms!

TRINIDAD.-

It's true... We opened up for her and the lady goes so far as to make jokes in bad taste. You ought to have a little shame!!

MARGARITA.-

Do you understand the risk, the 'danger' that signifies opening a door in this day and age?

TRINIDAD.-

Yes. Anyone who opens a door, is risking their life.

MARGARITA.-

Not only their life. Also the ones of those who are in the house!

TRINIDAD.-

Much more! What would happen if just now a group of drugged evildoers entered? Huh? Surely they would rape us, they would chop us up, they would put us in the fridge and then they would turn to making holes in the walls until they leave the building in ruins!

MARGARITA.-

That's nothing. And if they decide to take us at gunpoint to the bank ...and rob all our life savings?

TRINIDAD.-

I don't have any savings, Margarita.

MARGARITA.-

Neither do I, Trinidad! I barely have enough to eat! We're supposing here!

TRINIDAD.-

Oh, well then, yes! It's a possibility.

MARGARITA.-

Of course. Everything is possible.

TRINIDAD.-

(Brief silence) Do they take us as hostages?

MARGARITA.-

Of course! But no one knows we're hostages. People think that we're part of the band because the low lives hide arms in their clothes... And since we all enter together!

TRINIDAD.-

We enter just like that? No putting masks on our faces?

MARGARITA.-

Logically! Unmasked!

TRINIDAD.-

But in the banks there are always cameras. They tape everything! We're better off wearing a hood so no one recognizes us.

MARGARITA.-

Well alright, we wear hoods.

TRINIDAD.-

Or at least a large scarf. Something. If not we're lost...

MARGARITA.-

You see? All for opening a door.

TRINIDAD.-

What horror!

MARGARITA.-

They should change the urban planning code and prohibit buildings from having doors.

TRINIDAD.-

And while they're at it, those buildings that have pipes too!

MARGARITA.-

Yes...

TRINIDAD.-

(Lifting her glass) ...To your health, Margarita

MARGARITA.-

To your health, Trinidad! **(They drink)**

NINA.-

(Lowering her arms, with stupor) Excuse me, I don't want to keep insisting on the same, but I'm Nina.. Besides, I entered and nothing happened.

TRINIDAD.-

Beacause we were lucky!! It's your fault! Were almost accused or robbery and assassination!.

MARGARITA.-

A minimum, twenty years of jail...

NINA.-

Once more?!! This is incredible!! I did nothing!! What is with you?!!

MARGARITA.-

No, clearly no! Knocking all day on any door you come across, that's nothing.

TRINIDAD.-

The truth is, if it weren't because I loathe violence, I would kick you out right now.

MARGARITA.-

And I, don't test me ..because if I have to defend myself, I defend myself, aha.

TRINIDAD.-

Ah! Me too! If my life is in danger, I wouldn't doubt not even a second.. And you Nina?

NINA.-

Me?... Umm, Well I suppose yes, in that we coincide.

TRINIDAD.-

What do mean to say, Nina?

NINA.-

With what?

TRINIDAD.-

With that of coinciding. You said "In that we coincide". What does that mean?

NINA.-

Nothing, well if.. if I'm in danger, if I feel threatened by someone, I also would without a doubt defend myself.

TRINIDAD.-

Attack?!

NINA.-

No, not attack. Defend myself.

TRINIDAD.-

...And how would you defend yourself?

NINA.-

What do I know! ...I imagine I would use.... Anything. Whatever I might have nearby.

TRINIDAD.-

(Looks at Margarita, and quickly at all the objects in the place) So, then... you mean to say, if your life is in danger, you would "attack" with the first thing you find.

NINA.-

Well... I think so, yes... But to defend myself!!

TRINIDAD.-

(Rapidly twists the arm on the back of Nina. Margarita helps) Who hits first, hits twice.

NINA.-

What are you doing? Be careful, it hurts!

TRINIDAD.-

(While they tie Nina in a chair with Margarita's scarf and Nina's shawl) The best defense is a good attack.

NINA.-

Have you gone crazy?!! Please, stop!

MARGARITA.-

In these cases, the surprise factor Is most important.

NINA.-

Ouch!

TRINIDAD.-

You said it!

MARGARITA.-

If you give the enemy time to plan an attack strategy, you have no possibility of survival.

NINA.-

I never thought of attacking you! How would I do that, if you are the only people I trust!
What's more, I even have something that proves that! A very important personal letter.
Very risky! If you let me go, I'll show it to you.

MARGARITA.-

Yes, of course. Now we'll let you go.

TRINIDAD.-

Humph!

NINAN.-

I'm not lying! It's connected with life. With my life! If I had had any intentions of attacking you, I would never have written such a letter. When you read it, you'll understand.

MARGARITA.-

Of course, of course..

NINA.-

It's an irrefutable proof of what I'm saying.

MARGARITA.-

Yes, Nina, a good try. But it failed. Stop insisting.

NINA.-

Well, alright! I won't insist more. Do what you want.. but when the..inevitable happens, because I never back down, thus it is inevitable, you will recognize that you were wrong. Absolutely wrong!

MARGARITA.-

They also told Galileo he was wrong.

TRINIDAD.-

It's true!.. and they threatened him with death in order to twist his convictions!

NINA.-

What do Galileo and convictions have to do with all of this?

TRINIDAD.-

Everything has to do with everything! The result of today, is intimately related with the history of yesterday. If I have a good reading of the past, it raises my probabilities of existing in the future.

MARGARITA.-

What's more, one could say that the secret of a long life is learning from history. From the crimes of our dearest ancestors.

TRINIDAD.-

Exactly! That is the secret.

NINA.-

What secret or not! Here the only secret is insanity! You both ill!

MARGARITA.-

She's the ill one. **(Trinidad nods with her head)**

NINA.-

Both of you are ill. You have no idea what you are doing! You're crazy! Absolutely nuts! Heeeeeeelp! Soooooomboooooody help meeeee!

TRINIDAD.-

(Frightened) Shhh! Don't shout!

NINA.-

Two nutcases have tied me to a chaaair!

TRINIDAD

and

MARGARITA.-

(Together) Shhhhhhhh!

NINA.-

(Standing up) Please coome! They want to chop up in pieces and stick me in the refrigerator! **(Margarita and Trinidad pin her down and throw her behind the table. Only Nina's legs can be seen)** Heelp! They're attacking me! Heeelp! **(Margarita begins to strangle her)** Aaaah.... Aaaaah!

MARGARITA.-

Stop shouting like a hog! It's making me very nervous....

NINA.-

Ah...ah..

TRINIDAD.-

(Trying to separate Margarita) No, Margarita! No... Stop.. Let go.. Please, Margarita! Leave me a little! **(Pushes Margarita and takes her place)** Stop shouting like a hog! It makes me very nervous!

NINA.-

Aaaaaah.....aah!

MARGARITA.-

Me too **(They both strangle her)**

NINA.-

Uuh...

TRINIDAD.-

This is a family residence. Of civilized people! What will the neighbors think with so much scandal?!

MARGARITA.-

We don't shout here! Is that understood?

TRINIDAD.-

Yes. Here we speak well or not at all! As long as your don't register that in your squealing brain, you are forbidden to open your mouth. Is that clear, Nina? **(They let her go. Brief silence. To Margarita)** It's been made clear.

MARGARITA.-

Well done!

TRINIDAD.-

Thank you. She deserved it... She's a hysteric.

MARGARITA.-

This teaches us that revealing a secret to a friend, can turn them in to a very dangerous enemy.

TRINIDAD.-

It's true! What began as a celebration, almost ends in a tragedy. Luckily, we reacted quickly.

MARGARITA.-

Sincerely, I congratulate you!

TRINIDAD.-

And I congratulate you! **(The kiss. Nina is immobile on the floor. They watch her for a moment)** What 's your opinion, Margarita? Is she... as one says... still?

MARGARITA.-

Well... She seems still.

TRINIDAD.-

I know. I wonder if she is... very still! As one... with intentions of not moving any more.

MARGARITA.-

Instead of asking, why don't you take her pulse?

TRINIDAD.-

You're right. It's a good idea. **(Hints at doing it but stops before touching her)** Oh no! I'm queasy about touching her. What if she's dead?

MARGARITA.-

Well... then do the mirror test.

TRINIDAD.-

Don't be ridiculous... Her eyes are closed!

MARGARITA.-

It's not for her to look at herself! You have to put it in her nose. Like this, below! If it becomes misty, it means she's alive and if not, it means the contrary.

TRINIDAD.-

Oh yes, I saw it in a movie.. Yes, but there is a little inconvenience. The only mirror I have is above the bathroom sink. And it's stuck to the wall.

MARGARITA.-

What? You don't have a purse mirror, to put on make up?

TRINIDAD.-

No. Do you?

MARGARITA.-

I do, but I left it at home. I don't like to walk around with my purse on the street tempting thieves.

TRINIDAD.-

Well that's no help. It's the same as nothing.

MARGARITA.-

Yes... It's true... What a shame! **(They keep looking at Nina)** What is that?

TRINIDAD.-

Isn't that Nina?

MARGARITA.-

That white.. what does she have under her arm! What could it be?

TRINIDAD.-

Uum, let's see **(Picks it up)** An envelope! And without stamp or address!

MARGARITA.-

Come on! Open it, Trinidad.

TRINIDAD.-

Margarita! Opening correspondence of others is punishable by law!

MARGARITA.-

If there is no address or return address, it stops being correspondence. It becomes a simple and ordinary envelope. Besides, it was thrown on the floor of your house. Opening it is absolutely legal.

TRINIDAD.-

Perfect! (Opens it rapidly. The two have their backs to the public) Lalalalalalal (Both look at each other) Nooo! (Goes back to reading) Llllllllll (Both look at each other) I can't believe it! So.... Nina committed suicide!

MARGARITA.-

Yes?

TRINIDAD.-

Of course. It was a question of time, Margarita. A minute before, a minute after, anyway she was going to kill herself. Here it says! It's signed by her! We just anticipated a little. What's the difference? We hardly gave her a hand.

MARGARITA.-

Four hands. And on her neck.

TRINIDAD.-

Well... Yes... but it was in self-defense.

MARGARITA.-

In that you are right.

TRINIDAD.-

Clearly, Margarita. I'm right!

MARGARITA.-

It was in self-defense..

TRINIDAD.-

Of course! What could we do?

MARGARITA.-

When someone attacks like an out of control hog, shouting like mad, with infinite violence, one has the right to defend oneself.

TRINIDAD.-

Exactly!

MARGARITA.-

She used all that she had nearby. Chairs, bottles, corks..Anything was transformed into a mortal weapon!

TRINIDAD.-

Yes, the destructive imagination of criminals knows no limits!

MARGARITA.-

It was evident that she was going to chop us into little pieces! **(Crying)** It was horrible Trinidad, but we had to defend ourselves! I saw it with my own eyes! I'm a witness of what happened! **(Leans her head on Trinidad's shoulder)**

TRINIDAD.-

(Imitates her) Me too! We're two witnesses, Margarita!

MARGARITA.-

Very well.. I mean to say that, if all the witnesses present saw the same, there's no doubt. It was in self defense.

TRINIDAD.-

Perfect. Everything is clarified. By unanimity of the witnesses, it was in self-defense.

MARGARITA.-

So it was..

TRINIDAD.-

(At Nina) Did you hear?... Self-defense... **(Brief silence)**

MARGARITA.-

(Always looking at Nina) Trinidad..

TRINIDAD.-

What?

MARGARITA.-

I was thinking that ...in reality, we still haven't verified if she's dead.

TRINIDAD.-

No.

MARGARITA.-

No. You can see she's dead. And in self-defense! Of that there is no doubt!

TRINIDAD.-

Besides, she committed suicide.

MARGARITA.-

Yes, it is written in the letter but for moral and humanitarian reasons, it's fitting to officially verify it. If not, what makes us different from assassins?

TRINIDAD.-

...What makes us different?

MARGARITA.-

Oh, Trinidad. Think a little. What differentiates us from assassins.

TRINIDAD.-

(Thinks) ...Social class?

MARGARITA.-

No, there is something much more important. I would say, it is essential.

TRINIDAD.-

DNA...

MARGARITA.-

Noo...

TRINIDAD.-

Oh! Give me a clue, Margarita. I can't come up with anything out of the blue!

MARGARITA.-

Legality! The law. When things are done in an official framework, they're legal. That's why laws were created, Trinidad. .. I will give you an example. Suppose that I'm a merciless killer, a criminal without frontiers and... and... No, even better, I'm the president of a country!...

TRINIDAD.-

Of which?

MARGARITA.-

It doesn't matter, Trinidad! One doesn't have to identify it! I'm giving a random example!

TRINIDAD.-

Pardon me, go on, Margarita, go on.

MARGARITA.-

I'm the president of a country. Suddenly, I invent any excuse, cross the border, and without making a formal declaration of war, "officially" I begin to kill left and right anything that moves. Am I a vile, common assassin? Yes or no?

TRINIDAD.-

Well... Yes.

MARGARITA.-

So, that's what it's about. To not be an assassin, you have to make it official and that's all. All that is legal is permitted. It's the only way of establishing a community ethic. (To herself) Good Margarita!

TRINIDAD.-

Oooh , it's clear now. I understand. Of course, if it's legal... **(She stares a Nina a moment)**
Then... did we declare war on her?

MARGARITA.-

Don't be ridiculous! We live at war, Margarita! Or haven't you already noticed? Go out on the street for ten minutes.

TRINIDAD.-

No!! I wouldn't be that crazy!!

MARGARITA.-

So, there! All that is missing is to verify if she is dead and then... and then... umm... then...

TRINIDAD.-

We write up an official document, and sign as witnesses!

MARGARITA.-

Exactly! That is the procedure! It was on the tip of my tongue. I thank you very much.
(They kiss)

TRINIDAD.-

Oh, it's nothing, Margarita. Luckily, something of laws I understand.

MARGARITA.-

...What do you think if we verify?

TRINIDAD.-

I think that's fine... **(Look at Nina again. Silence)** ...How do we do it?

MARGARITA.-

...I think that the only solution is to take her to the bathroom.

TRINIDAD.-

You're right... The mirror we can't bring, so...

MARGARITA.-

Aha... If the mountain doesn't come...

TRINIDAD.-

...What mountain?

MARGARITA.-

It's not important, Trinidad. Let's resolve this once and for all. It's New Year's today... **(While they try to move Nina from her arms)** and I have intentions... of continuing... to... to celebrate.

TRINIDAD.-

Well said! Let nothing dampen our happiness! Come on! A positive attitude! **(Takes Nina from the legs)**

MARGARITA.-

Hold on, Trinidad.

TRINIDAD.-

Yes, hold on! Huh, to think that I... didn't want to touch her... In these times, in the end, one gets used to everything.

MARGARITA.-

(Can't move her) What's wrong? Help, I can't by myself!

TRINIDAD.-

And what do you think I'm doing?! Don't you see?!

MARGARITA.-

It's not enough what you're doing! Put more will power into this, please!!!

TRINIDAD.-

I'm putting more! Don't shout at me!

MARGARITA.-

It doesn't work like this, Trinidad. **(Lets go of Nina)** We didn't move her even an inch! Leave her... Let go!

TRINIDAD.-

Oh! **(Also lets her go)**

MARGARITA.-

Let's try another way...

TRINIDAD.-

Perfect. **(Watches without helping)**

MARGARITA.-

(Tries with no success) No, not like that...

TRINIDAD.-

No...

MARGARITA.-

And like this? **(Tries)** Not that way either...

TRINIDAD.-

Not that way either...

MARAGRITA.-

Let's see... Allow me think.

TRINIDAD.-

I allow you. **(She sits on a chair)**

MARGARITA.-

(Thinks) I think that...if each grabs a leg and an arm, it will be easier.

TRINIDAD.-

Perfect. **(Joins in and helps)** Let's get to work.

MARGARITA.-

What are you doing?!

TRINIDAD.-

What you said to do!

MARGARITA.-

If you grab the right leg, grab the right arm!

TRINIDAD.-

Alright, pardon me, I didn't notice...

MARGARITA.-

We'd better simplify, Trinidad. You grab the arms and I the legs.

TRINIDAD.-

Understood.

MARGARITA.-

Nooooo!

TRINIDAD.-

(Letting go of Nina) Oh! And now what happens?

MARGARITA.-

Let's first clear the area. Help me with the table, please.

TRINIDAD.-

Good idea **(They move the table and put it in front of the main door. Margarita's chair remains in the original place. For the first time Nina is seen dead)**

MARGARITA.-

Now yes.. It's much simpler.

TRINIDAD.-

One moment, please!... We must move the chair, Margarita.

MARGARITA.-

If you saw it, clear it, or do you expect me to do everything

TRINIDAD.-

No excuse me. I saw it, I'll clear it. **(Takes the chair to the table. Becomes distracted playing with the glasses)**

MARGARITA.-

Hurry up, Trinidad!

TRINIDAD.-

Oh, yes. Hurry, hurry.

MARGARITA.-

(To herself) Incredible!... **(To Trinidad)** Ready?!

TRINIDAD.-

Ready.

MARGARITA.-

At the count of three, we both join forces... One... two...

TRINIDAD

and

MARGARITA.-

There!

MARGARITA.-

(Pulling Nina's arms to one side) Mmmm! Pull strongly! Mmmm!Come on... ore will!

TRINIDAD.-

(Pulling Nina's legs in the opposite direction) Force and will!

MARGARITA.-

Wow, wait! Wait! Oh! I pulled a back muscle.

TRINIDAD.-
I sprained my wrist.

MARGARITA.-
Yes, but the spine is more delicate. Do you what a disc hernia is? Aaah... **(Loud fireworks are heard)**

TRINIDAD.-
(Frightened, runs for cover) The war has begun! Save yourselves all you can! Run! **(Jumps over the dead body and hides behind the kitchen curtain)**

MARGARITA.-
(Also frightened, trying to hide) My God! We're innocent!

TRINIDAD.-
(Peering out) Come here Margarita!

MARGARITA.-
Don't shoot, please!

TRINIDAD.-
Here it's safer, come on!

MARGARITA.-
Walks towards the curtain jumping over the body. The fireworks continue. We were quietly celebrating, and Nina attacked through treason! **(She hides behind Trinidad. They close the curtains. In off)** I don't lie. We're not assassins!

TRINIDAD.-
(In off. Calmer) Margarita, hold on...

MARGARITA.-
(In off) It was in self-defense! Trinidad is a witness and so am I!

TRINIDAD.-
(In off) Margarita...

MARGARITA.-
(In off) Everything was done under the law.

TRINIDAD.-
(In off) Stop, please

MARGARITA.-
(In off) Yes! Stop!! Don't shoot more!!

TRINIDAD.-

(In off) No! You stop! **(You hear two slaps on the face)** Stop for a moment! Stop screaming and listen!

MARGARITA.-

(In off with stupor) ...You hit me, Trinidad.

TRINIDAD.-

(In off) Well yes.. you were shouting like a hog. You looked like Nina... hysterical. Like that, you don't notice anything.

MARGARITA.-

(In off) And just what am I supposed to notice?

TRINIDAD.-

(In off) Listen..

MARGARITA.-

(In off . The sounds of fireworks continue more softly) What is it?

TRINIDAD.-

(In off) Listen closely..

MARGARITA.-

(Half opens the curtains to listen better. Closes them. In off) Yes, they are hitting with heavy artillery. Not even if we were the worst criminals in the world!

TRINIDAD.-

(In off) It's not artillery. What you hear, aren't shots.

MARGARITA.-

(In off) Oh, no? And what are they then? Applauses?

TRINIDAD.-

(In off) They're fireworks, Margarita.

MARGARITA.-

(In off) Are you sure?

TRINIDAD.-

(In off) Of course! If there is something I have, it's good hearing.

MARGARITA.-

(In off) They're not shots?

TRINIDAD.-

(In off) No, Think a little. Supposedly at the end of the year, people tend to light fireworks. They're rockets.

MARGARITA.-

This means that... **(Peering out)** it's midnight.

TRINIDAD.-

(Peering out) Everything indicates that.

MARGARITA.-

(Enters the scene with care. Brief silences. Some fireworks can still be heard) Rockets... **(Trinidad, enters with care)** It's a new year and we, instead of celebrating... **(Sobbing, passing over Nina's dead body)** are distracted with a stupidity. **(Sits on a chair)**

TRINIDAD.-

Well. Don't blame yourself, Margarita. We were verifying. You said it yourself! It was a humanitarian question.

MARGARITA.-

I said that?

TRINIDAD.-

Yes, when you were explaining the difference between presidents and assassins.

MARGARITA.-

Oh... I remember **(Thinks for a moment)** That's right. It's true.

TRINIDAD.-

Of course.

MARGARITA.-

Humph! After all, despite the world being terrible, one manages to not become contaminated.

TRINIDAD.-

Luckily! **(Sitting on a chair)** If not, where would we end up.

MARGARITA.-

Nature is wise, Trinidad!

TRINIDAD.-

Yes... Do you know something? Curiously, I'm feeling better.

MARGARITA.-

I've been feeling better for a while.

TRINIDAD.-

Although you may not believe it, now I am conscious of it, I feel well... "Very well".

MARGARITA.-

I accompany you in that feeling.

TRINIDAD.-

Thank you... **(Look at Nina again. Silence)** Why did she kill herself?

MARGARITA.-

(Looking at Nina) The truth is, I have not the slightest idea.

TRINIDAD.-

(Looking at Margarita) People are doing so badly... Aren't they?

MARGARITA.-

You said it!

TRINIDAD.-

(Raising her glass) To your health, Margarita!

MARGARITA.-

To your health, Trinidad!

They toast and drink. Accordeon music. A few seconds later, the sound of a door bell interrupts the music. They look at each other frightened. Lights out.

T H E E N D
