

With Eyes, With Shoes, With Fury,  
With Forgetfulness

An excerpt from the script by

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WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK, NEW YORK CITY. AUTUMN. A WELL-WORN TRUNK ON WHEELS, UPSTAGE CENTER. SITTING ON THE TRUNK, FACING UPSTAGE: THE SINGER IN SCANT, CASUAL CLOTHING. TO HER RIGHT, SQUATTING, THE IMPRESSARIO.

**FROM SCENE 1:**

The Impressario stalks downstage, starts noticing passers by. Rushes upstage, grabs the trunk, wheels it downstage center, opens it up efficiently, removes folding screens, looks to the singer, shakes a maraca to get her attention.

SINGER

Quiero tomarme el dia libre

IMPRESSARIO

Basta con eso. Basta. (Setting up a screens) Can you unpack the curtains?

SINGER

No. No quiero

IMPRESSARIO

Then pass me the flags?

SINGER

Forzame Jorge, forzame

IMPRESSARIO

(Firmly) Enough of that. Enough

The Impressario finishes setting up both screens; the Singer does not budge. Finally the Impressario drives the Singer by her waist towards the trunk. He puts a box in her hands and sends her off downstage left. He moves to the gramophone and sets a record playing: SOMOS by Chavela Vargas. They build the set and prepare themselves for the crowd. The Impressario upstage, standing on a crate:

IMPRESSARIO (CONT'D)

There are events in life that are incomprehensible, strange, uncontrollable - our will is weak and dull, it's anything but free. It's a sham, a pose, nothing but a prop. There's no touch - we never actually get *in touch*. We paw and pinch and grab and lay on hands, but, I ask you, what flows quietly from the middle of one to the middle of another? What unites being and being and being? As it happens, I am tired of being a man.

(MORE)

## IMPRESSARIO (CONT'D)

As it happens, I am tired of my feet and my nails and my hair and my nose. Why do humans lust to be imposed upon? Why this lust after imposing creeds, imposing deeds, imposing language, imposing works of art? Give us things that are alive and flexible, which won't last too long and become an obstruction in the end. Let us be flexible and pliant, and weak, let us be weak! When we are strong we are stiff and brittle. Let us be vulnerable. Give us -

Pauses. Sees that he has failed to attract a crowd. Nobody stops, few listen, people walk by.

## SINGER

Hombre, si quieres que vengan, tienes que parar de filosofar!

## IMPRESSARIO

Get in character then!...I'll stop philosophising, and you get in character. (Motions to zip her lips)

(To himself:) Stop philosophising Geroge. Get it together. (Slaps himself around, straightens cuffs)

## IMPRESSARIO (CONT'D)

(With a Cockney accent) Ladies and Gentlemen! Sirs! Madams! Misterns! Misses! Alright there mate? Come in a bit now. All of you come in a little closer. Come on love, stop here a minute. Please my dear? I tell you on my honour this bird can sing a few words that'll make you glad you paused! No? O.k. Go on your way now, have a very pleasant afternoon, hope you don't get hit by a bus...

Let there be no lack of singing for the soul, no lack of dancing for the knees and the heart! If you need a song - and who doesn't? Well, we've got songs for you!

(MORE)

## IMPRESSARIO (CONT'D)

This lady, she don't speak a word, can't speak a word - been scarred into silence by the violence she's incurred, but believe you me she can sing like a bird. She's got the most beautiful voice I've ever heard - and I've been more than twice around the world - but more than that she's touched the truth and she sings it over and over again straight out of her silent soul. Listen: her country's a slaughterhouse on the edge of a knife: the song's that we have saved out of the murder are dedicated to every ruined life. You know, pain and suffering have inspired some great artists. If Leonardo DaVinci had never felt pain, he wouldn't have cut his ear off. I tell you, the songs this woman weaves will echo inside of you and set your spirit lighter than a laugh- I tell you now, stay a minute and you'll add years to your life...

The Singer moves upstage with a basket of tomatoes and eggs, places them in front of the Impressario. He plucks out an egg and a tomato:

## IMPRESSARIO (CONT'D)

Ladies and Gentlemen: this is an egg. This is a tomato. I am a performer. You are an audience. People have thrown eggs and tomatoes for centuries to show their disapproval of the behavior of rulers, politicians, lame celebrities, common criminals, and bad actors. It is one of our oldest forms of expression. Enough said...

NOTE ON THE SET:

The entire set fits into a large travelling trunk.

There are:

Two large folding screens, painted on both sides

Six small boxes containing: costumes, strings of flags, small-instruments, tomatoes, eggs

A portable record player with SOMOS by Chavela Vargas

A guitar

Two pieces of fabric used for curtains

A weathered stand fitted with rotating wooden placards

Strapped to the outside of the trunk is a folding chair.