

THE GIRL FROM MARIUPOL

by  
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A humble cottage in Mariupol. September 2022. Dawn.

A rooster crows. ANYA, a young pregnant woman, exits the cottage with kitchen scraps and heads into the hen house. We hear a SHRIEK. Now a long silence. The woman emerges from the hen house, dragging a naked man from the hen house by his ankles.

SHE curses him. SHE resists the urge to spit on him. SHE touches his skin. SHE tries to feel for a pulse. SHE determines he is still alive, but just barely.

SHE looks down at his naked body.

ANYA

You won't last long without boots.

HE is filthy, bleeding from his mouth, bruised, and lifeless. ANYA drags him into the house and positions him by the stove. HE rouses from excruciating pain.

ANYA

Where does it hurt?

SHE hits him over the head with a skillet.

ANYA

It's better you sleep.

HE loses consciousness.

ANYA

Good.

SHE inspects his whole body for the source of his pain. His body is so covered with cuts and bruises, it is hard to know what is dirt and what is not.

SHE goes to the cupboard and pulls out a vile of morphine, she sterilizes his arm with some kind of antiseptic and gives him a shot.

ANYA

Don't get used to this.

SHE removes her coat and puts the water on to boil for soup. SHE cuts up five potatoes and throws them in the pot with salt.

THE rooster crows again.

ANYA

Shut up!

SHE makes a warm compress with hot water and lavender soap and cleans the blood off of his face. SHE examines his swollen mouth.

ANYA

You're missing three teeth.

SHE wipes the blood out of his mouth.

ANYA

Did somebody crush your face?

HE rouses again. HE stares deliriously at her.

ANYA works in silence, cleaning his body. SHE finds a bullet hole in his leg.

ANYA

Who did this?

HE does not answer.

ANYA  
(Examining the wound.)

Not good.

SHE does what she can with the wound.

ANYA  
We have to deal with this.

HE shakes his head.

ANYA  
So, you want to die? Sepsis? Infection?

HE stares at her, plaintively.

ANYA  
We can put it off a few hours.

SHE wipes the blood from his hair.

ANYA  
Why aren't you sleeping? I gave you enough drug for a horse.

HE does not answer.

ANYA  
Did they cut your tongue? Steal your thoughts?  
(Teasingly.)  
Or you're just playing *hard to get*?

ANYA  
What do they call you?

HE does not answer. SHE goes to the drawer  
and pulls out a Ukrainian uniform. SHE  
tosses it at him.

ANYA  
Can you manage?

HE nods.

ANYA

Get on with it.

SHE turns her back to make two cups of tea. While her back is turned, HE somehow manages to get dressed. We see now, he has almost no use of his left leg.

ANYA

Do you know my brother? Oleg?

HE shakes his head.

ANYA

Well, you know him now, those are his clothes.

SHE opens a pack of aspirin, struggling with the package, chewing it open with her teeth.

ANYA

He's gone 3 months now. No coat.

SHE grinds up the aspirin, pounding at it.

ANYA

No. Fucking. Coat!

SHE pours the aspirin into one of the cups.

SHE motions for him to sit at the table. HE sits. SHE hands him the cup of tea with no aspirin, keeping the medicated tea for herself.

ANYA

You've given me a headache.

HE

Sorry.

ANYA

So you do speak.

SHE pulls a picture out of the box on the table. Please tell me. Have you seen him?

HE looks at the picture of Oleg. HE pauses. HE shakes his head.

ANYA

Are you quite sure.

HE nods.

THERE is a loud knock at the door. SHE peeks out to see a Russian soldier and a poll worker.

ANYA

It's the referendum!

(To HIM.)

Under the bed. Quickly!

HE struggles to move across the room and hide under the bed. Another sharp series of knocks at the door. ANYA hides in the curtains.

ANYA

(To HIM. Whispering.)

In case they kill you, please, what is your name?

HE

(Whispering.)

Pavlo.

ANYA

(Whispering.)

Pavlo?

PAVLO

(Whispering.)

Just sign the papers, you don't have to mean it.

ANYA  
(Whispering.)

NEVER! I will never sign!

PAVLO is now safely hidden under the bed.

A very loud pounding on the door now.  
THEY stay completely still for what seems  
like an eternity.

ANYA looks out the window.

ANYA

They've gone. For now...

ANYA throws herself onto the bed and  
begins to weep. From under the bed, PAVLO  
tries to comfort her.

PAVLO

Don't cry. There's no use in that.

ANYA

I want to die.

PAVLO

No. No.

PAVLO extends his hand to her. SHE takes  
his hand.

Silence.

PAVLO

There was a little man in my regiment. Have I ever told you this story?

ANYA

A little man?

PAVLO

He was so small. They used him to plug drains and things.

ANYA

What?

PAVLO

I'm very serious. He was s mall pygmy of a man named Deeto.

ANYA

Deeto.

PAVLO

He had a great big cock.

ANYA

Stop it!

PAVLO

He would tell us all of his conquests, the soldiers asked for new stories every night.

ANYA

Well, of course.

PAVLO

So, evidently, Deeto knew his way around a woman. They wept.

ANYA

The soldiers?

PAVLO

The women.

ANYA

I'm sure of it.

PAVLO

He learned to fuck in a brothel.

ANYA

Why do you tell me this? I could be some nun.

PAVLO

You are not some nun.



ANYA

How do you know this?

PAVLO

(Regarding her very obvious pregnancy.)

So then, immaculate conception?

ANYA

(Alarmed.)

Am I showing?

PAVLO

I shouldn't ask such a question.

ANYA

Rude.

PAVLO

(Needling.)

Are you fat? ?

ANYA squeezes his hand HARD. HE whinces in pain, but laughs all the while.

PAVLO

Ah!!!! Fine. Fine. Sorry.

ANYA

No tea for you!

(Softening some.)

I have no mirrors. I must look a fright.

PAVLO does not answer this directly, but we can see by his expression, he does not in the least consider her a fright.

PAVLO

Where is the father?

No answer from ANYA.

PAVLO

Is he fighting? Has he gone fighting with... with Oleg?

Still no answer from ANYA.

PAVLO

Sorry.

Pause.

PAVLO

May I ask your name?

ANYA

Anya.

PAVLO

Did you say Anya?

ANYA

Yes.

PAVLO

It's a pleasure to meet you, Anya.

ANYA

Alright.

PAVLO

Say your part.

ANYA

My part?

PAVLO

You're supposed to say, it's a pleasure to meet you / too, Pavlo.

ANYA

(Overlapping.)

You're a pain in my ass, Pavlo.

THEY laugh.

ANYA

Is the medicine working? Are you feeling sleepy?

PAVLO

I never sleep.

ANYA

Why not?

PAVLO

It's too much like dying.

Silence.

PAVLO

Did I lose you?

The SOUND of KNOCKING again at the door. THEY become very, very still.

The KNOCKING continues. And continues, insistently, as...

Lights fade. End of Play.