

ANDRÉS: Nice having some company. I'm always on my own. Stuck in here. Alone. *(He stands. Leaves the tools on the table.)* Anyway. Fucking socket!

MIRANDA: Have you fixed it?

ANDRÉS: Yep.

*ANDRÉS sits on his seat. He stares at MIRANDA.*

ANDRÉS: I spend the whole day in here. Alone. I go walking through the corridors sometimes. Into the corners. Take a stroll, keep myself occupied.

MIRANDA: I'm not surprised.

ANDRÉS: What do you mean?

MIRANDA: This place, it's...

ANDRÉS: It's...?

MIRANDA: It's full of dead bodies. Do you know how many dead bodies there are here?

ANDRÉS: Exactly thirty-three thousand, eight hundred and forty-seven.

MIRANDA: This place only stays up thanks to them. A cave carved out of the mountain and crammed full of corpses.

ANDRÉS: What's the matter?

MIRANDA: Nothing.

ANDRÉS: You seem a bit nervous.

MIRANDA: There was an inspection the other day. They were checking what state the remains were in.

ANDRÉS: Right.

MIRANDA: I wanted to see it. I asked for permission to go with them. In the crypts where they were buried, the water's leaked through. It's damaged the corpses. The bones have all got mixed together. I had to rush straight back out. I thought I was going to throw up. Ever since then...

ANDRÉS: What?

MIRANDA: Nothing.

ANDRÉS: I'm used to hearing all kinds of comments about this place. Everyone gives me their theory. Some call it a work of art. Some call it a terrifying fascist theme park. All kinds of comments.

MIRANDA: Can I really say what I think?

ANDRÉS: Go ahead.

*Pause.*

MIRANDA: There was a dictatorship in this country that lasted for forty years. Forty years of terror. People were so hungry they were going mad, like stray dogs. There was a dictator... a... dictator... who staged a coup and proceeded systematically to exterminate anyone who opposed him. This horrific place was built in a country that was dying of hunger, cold and fear. And yet, all those corpses... are holding up the basilica. They're sustaining the tomb of the man who had them murdered.

ANDRÉS: How old are you? If you don't mind me asking.

MIRANDA: Twenty-nine.

ANDRÉS: I'm surprised a twenty-nine-year-old woman should talk with such rage about something she's never experienced. About a story. Because that's what it is to you. A narrative.

MIRANDA: I have two degrees. History and Restoration. I've studied history. Do you understand?

ANDRÉS: So?

MIRANDA: I've read a lot more books than you can imagine. And I don't read them in fragments to see what a single sentence tells me.

ANDRÉS: And you believe them?

MIRANDA: What?

ANDRÉS: Books.

MIRANDA: I've read books by very important people. Great writers, historians... What do you think?

ANDRÉS: But you didn't experience it.

MIRANDA: There are some things you don't have to experience to realise that... *(Pause. Tries to contain herself.)* My parents experienced the dictatorship. And my grandparents lived through the war.

ANDRÉS: And those are the people who've told you the story that's making you so nervous now. Told you it in pieces. Phrases disjointed in time. After-dinner chats, family get-togethers. Discussions with friends. Advice for the future. Telling you who your enemies should be.

MIRANDA: That's ridiculous.

ANDRÉS: They've forced you to suffer from their wounds. Look at how you get when you talk about it.

MIRANDA: This monument is built on the victims. Perishing here with their executioners. Isn't that true? The remains of hundreds of Republicans were transferred to this Valley. Without their families' consent. And they were put here with their own murderers. All together as a sign of reconciliation.

ANDRÉS: Why shouldn't that be a reconciliation? The past is the past. You can't change what's already happened.

MIRANDA: We live in a democracy.

ANDRÉS: And?

MIRANDA: This place was built by Republican slaves. They were forced to build their own graves. It's shameful. Democracy should condemn the atrocities of dictatorship. It was barbaric what was done here. Hundreds of the dead stolen from their families. They spent years and years looking for them, missing them, waiting for them to come back.

ANDRÉS: It's all over now. Why think about it?

MIRANDA: Why?

ANDRÉS: There's no reason to go on thinking about it.

MIRANDA: It was barbaric!

ANDRÉS: Sometimes, to survive, you just have to leave your dignity aside.