

THE FALLING STAR AND THE FALL OF THE BORDER

by Roberto Covaz

FIRST PICTURE

(the war in Slovenia in June 1991)

Interpreters: Lina and Licia, two women from Gorizia

LINA (moves excitedly on the stage, in a loud voice): Run, run, hurry. Go up to Borgo Castello to see what's happening. In Rozna Dolina, just past the Casa Rossa border, there's shooting. It's war.

LICIA (arrives running): War? My God, it's real. Look over there, the tanks are there. And the soldiers are shooting at them. What's happening, Virgin Mary?

LINA: And don't you know that in Yugo it's all a reinitur. The Slovenians wanted independence: in the referendum they all voted in favor of an autonomous state. But Belgrade wants to prevent it. They don't care who won the referendum.

LICIA: And if he misses his shot, a cannon fire will follow all the way to Piazza Vittoria. Even under Tito, Yugoslavia was not so afraid.

LINA: Our police have blocked access from Via Alviano, the Casa Rossa square is isolated. Via Giustiniani is deserted, poor people who live there.

LICIA: At the Rafut crossing the fences have reappeared. In Piazza Transalpina and Via San Gabriele there isn't a dog on the street.

LINA: The people of Gorizia are full of fear. I can tell you that more than one xe will go and hide in the Bombi tunnel, like at the time of our Second World War.

LICIA: Is it possible that our Gorizia has never passed? This border of '47 is truly a curse. Today it is a piece of the times of the Cold War.

LINA (wearing a vest): You're right. Even though it's June, it's very cold today.

LICIA (shakes her head in a disconsolate manner, looks at her friend): Let's see what this is like. The shore will say monad even in dramatic moments like this (then turning to her friend): let's talk about the cold war, let's not say it's cold. In fact, this evening, Friday 28 June 1991, it's particularly hot here in Gorizia.

LINA: But listen to me Licia, maybe this isn't the right time to ask you something like that, but I never understood what the Cold War was.

LICIA: I'm not surprised, Lina, there are so many things that you never understood. But how lucky are you, without so many worries in your head you live happily for twenty years.

FIRST PICTURE BIS

Interpreters: two narrators A and B

A: June 28 is an important date for the people of the former Yugoslavia, especially for the Serbs. It is Vidovan Day, the anniversary of the Serbian defeat against the Turks on the Blackbird Field in 1389, as well as the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo in 1914, which started the First World War. , Done

B: On 28 June 1991, the Slovenian war of independence reached the gates of Gorizia. It had begun following the declaration of independence adopted by the Slovenian parliament the previous day and marked the beginning of the end of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The conflict caused 65 deaths, mostly soldiers of the Yugoslav army, but also civilians and ten foreign citizens.

A: On 23 December 1990, a referendum was held on Slovenian independence from Yugoslavia. 88.5% of the electorate voted in favour of establishing a sovereign nation. However, the independence programme did not materialise until six months later, on 21 June 1991.

B: In those turbulent days 30 years ago, the population of Gorizia experienced the unfolding war events with anguish, fearing for the fate of their neighbors, but also for themselves. On the evening of June 28, intense fighting broke out between the Yugoslav federal army and Slovenian special forces at the border of Rožna Dolina – Red House.

A: The Slovenians prevailed, managing to destroy two federal tanks and taking possession of three others. The battle resulted in four casualties. About fifty soldiers surrendered to the Slovenian territorial defense unit. Several dozen members of the federal army were wounded, some of whom were treated at the hospital in Gorizia.

SECOND PICTURE

(the 1991 meeting between Cossiga and Kucan)

Interpreters Lina and Licia

LINA: So Licia, did you want to save the Cold War? Now I'll explain...

LICIA: Yes, thank you, but wait, let me tell you something before I go out.
head.

LINA: Ah, I didn't know you had a head...

LICIA: I was in Via San Gabriele on November 3, 1991. I saw him, I was next to him like you and I are now. I remember it as if I were today. He was also a handsome man if you want to say... with a beard that was a little whitened like talcum powder.

LINA: Oh, Licia, what a gripping speech. When I listen to your stories, either I get a headache or I get a kick out of the foot of the pedal that I wanted to give you. But come on, talk plainly: who is this man with the beard bleached with talcum powder?

What happened that day on Via San Gabriele? And above all, what were you doing there?

LICIA: I was riding my bike back from the Nova Gorica mesnica, with bags on each side of the handlebars full of straculo, slices of horse meat, chops, masinada. The dogs on the road ran right behind me.

LINA: Yes, he asked you the Proustnica... Continue with this fact instead of saying monad. And above all, make it short.

LICIA: It was November 3, 1991, it was a cold bora, like war. By the way: will you tell me what this cold war was?

LINA (insistent): Come on, Licia, the sun is eating the hours.

LICIA: Well, I was cycling along Via Ursiza...

LINA: And where would this street be? I've never heard it mentioned.

LICIA: It is the long street that goes to Nova Gorica after the San Gabriele pass, the one full of busts of Yugo heroes. Hard faces, I'm telling you no.

LINA: The street is called Erjaceva Ulica Licia, not Ursiza (she rolls her eyes to emphasize her friend's stupidity). Is it possible that she hasn't learned a single word of Slovenian yet?
Let's move on now.

LICIA: There, I was pedaling like a rocket, chased by a pack of dogs...

LINA: You have no finger.

LICIA: Of not being able to breathe the spray that grew from the Corno torrent...

LINA: Don't jump around like you usually do. Take one thing at a time.

And then what does the Corno splash have to do with it? This story about the splash was meant to be used against Nova Gorica, if we want to tell it all. Go ahead, Licia.

LICIA: So when I arrive at the San Gabriele pass I see a lot of policemen, in blue with sirens blaring, a lot of men in elegant clothes but with stern faces...

LINA: Like the heroes of Yugoslavia?

LICIA: No, with the stern face like my grandfather Severino; may God give him glory.

LINA: Was that grandfather of yours buried in Nova Gorica?

LICIA: No, it's in the central cemetery, one of the oldest tombs. When you saw the Vodopivec family tomb, are the Vodopivecs present, Lina?

LINA: Natural or sparkling Vodopivec?

LICIA: If I don't know this, I'll ask Jole Vodopivec, Stanko Bevilacqua's sister.

LINA: Two brothers with different surnames that mean the same thing. The story of Slovenian surnames Italianized by fascism is very sad.

LICIA: Also because certain Slovenian surnames in Italian xe vignù fora strange.

LINA: Like the Staundinger xe I became Chiaruzzi, the Wegscheider Mauri.

LICIA: But Mauri was also the Maders, the Kirchers Dalla Chiesas, the Daneucigs Danellis...

LINA: Yes Licia, enough, we understood. The lost identity was written by historians. By the way Licia, I didn't understand you because first I told you that your grandfather Severino, the one with the stubborn face...

LICIA: It's hard that I don't tell you...

LINA: Well, well, indifferent. In short, you don't understand why this Severino was buried in Nova Gorica.

LICIA: You must have made a mistake, Lina.

LINA: With you it's like giving him a mouss candy. I just wanted to remind you that the center of Nova Goriva, built since 1948, stands where the old cemetery of Gorizia used to be, in the Grassigna area. Near the bus station there is still a tombstone.

LICIA: But the Nova Gorica cemetery is in Stara Gora, on the road to Aidussina. It's in the middle of the woods, you know, to tell the truth.

LINA: Good Licia, we'll get back to the story you told me about Via San Gabriele. By now the idiot who hit you on the handlebars will have gone rancid.

LICIA: I'm the one who makes you lose the thread.

SECOND TABLE BIS

Interpreters: Cossiga, civil servant, Kucan

COSSIGA (speaking with a Sardinian accent); (addressing the official): Now that the ceremony at the Redipuglia shrine in Gorizia is over, take me.

OFFICIAL: President Cossiga, that is not possible. It is not foreseen in the protocol.

COSSIGA: I am the President of the Republic. They call me the Pickaxe. I am in charge.

OFFICIAL: Excuse me, Mr. President, how do you do it? Do you have to organize an escort, notify the Prefecture, and then what do you go to Gorizia for?

COSSIGA: I want to take a walk in a street called San Gabriele.

OFFICER: A walk? In this weather?

COSSIGA: I want to meet my friend Milan Kučan. The President of the newly formed Republic of Slovenia is waiting for me in Nova Gorica.

OFFICIAL: Mr. President, do you want to cross the border to go to Nova Gorica to meet President Kucan?

COSSIGA: You understand me.

OFFICIAL: But the European Union has not yet recognized Slovenia's independence. There is a risk that your initiative could cause a serious diplomatic incident at the international level.

COSSIGA: Nothing matters to me. I will be the first president of a state to recognize the independence of Slovenia. Even the borders are falling... and now I want to go to Gorizia at full speed.

BREAKOUT

(Cossiga Kucan meeting)

COSSIGA (hugs Kucan): Dear Milan, meeting you gives me great pleasure. How are you?

KUCAN: President Cossiga, your visit is an honor. You are the first Head of State I have met.

COSSIGA: I know. Italy will be the first state to recognize your independence thanks to me.

KUCAN: This November 3, 1991 is a memorable day for us Slovenians. Dear Francis, Slovenia will be eternally grateful to you.

COSSIGA: Thank you, Milan. This day is truly special (Cossiga takes Kucan by the arm as when revealing a confidence): By the way, dear Milan, here I met a woman on a bicycle. Bags full of goods were hanging from the handlebars. And she was chased by a pack of dogs. Do you know anything about it?

KUCAN: Don't worry, Francesco. It must have been a spy from Belgrade. Our dogs will sort it out.

THIRD PICTURE

(the free zone)

Interpreters: actor A and actress B

(music for at least two minutes with the stage empty).

A enters the scene staggering, clearly intoxicated. He mumbles some incomprehensible words to himself.

B enters the scene from the opposite side at the same time, conspicuously chewing gum.

Both linger to turn on the stage, looking towards the audience with an expression somewhere between surprise and a frown.

After about thirty seconds they speak to the audience.

A: Well, what's up? Haven't you ever seen a man a little tipsy? Don't worry, I walked to the theater tonight, so I don't risk my license.

B: Does it bother you if I chew the gumdrop? Don't you know, dear ladies, that it is a very effective system to keep the skin of the face elastic and delay aging?

A: I think they're taking us for fools. And they're wondering what we're doing on stage, one tipsy and the other cheeky, for a show that's supposed to talk about the border of Gorizia.

B: And instead, dear friends, we are neither tipsy nor rude. And you didn't get the wrong show. Stories don't always start out the same way.

THIRD TABLE BIS

Interpreters: the waitresses Fides and Idelma in a bar

(voice-over like an old transistor radio): "If your favorite team has won, toast with Stock 84, if it has lost, console yourselves with Stock 84..."

On stage

IDELMA: I never understood what he was drinking if his favorite team drew.

FIDES: I was drinking a spritz, neither wine nor water.

IDELMA: But what about the spritz, the one I drank before the match. Stock 84 was good, brandy, fine stuff.

FIDES: And I don't know. Invented in Trieste in 1884. In Roian there is still the factory of the Stock, just the walls. Botilie nosba.

IDELMA: Now in the old factory I have set up specialized clinics for cirrhosis. It seems fair to me.

FIDES: I remember when my dad and I went to the Grezar stadium to see Triestina.

IDELMA: And did dad drink a Stock 84?

FIDES: At half time also the bikers when the Bora was beating.

IDELMA: So to speak...

FIDES: Between half-time and half-time, the stadium loudspeaker gave the first half results of the other matches. First, the theme tune was silent: if your team... (dreamy): what beautiful memories with dad.

IDELMA: I didn't know that El Grezar was a racetrack.

FIDES: In fact, it was the stadium in Trieste, built in the early 1920s with the name of Littorio. I don't know what the drivers have to do with it.

IDELMA: First I told you about speakers, I don't know if I can explain myself.

FIDES: Yes, the microphones shaped like a bubble, sorry, piria.

IDELMA: If you use speakers, you become a woman.

(Fides shrugs her shoulders mortified)

IDELMA: But how come Fides dragged the story out of the Stock advert?

FIDES: So, just to chat. There's no one in the bar right now. I'll get tired if I don't talk.

IDELMA: Listen Fides, what if we were to get some Stock 84 glasses? I'll give you a couple of bottles in the closet.

FIDES: Good idea Idelma. Do you want me to put a cube of iazo inside?

IDELMA: What is it in brandy? It's blasphemy. Like putting cheese on heavy.

The two waitresses sip their glasses leaning inelegantly on the bar counter. And after the first two glasses they drink more.

FIDES: How good is Stock 84.

IDELMA: I tell myself that even if Stock was eighty-nine it would have been just as good (sobs)

FIDES: It's always the same old story with you: as soon as you drink two little bikes you start sobbing. And now I bet you start singing a romantic song?

IDELMA: You guessed it. How did you save yourself?

FIDES: We've been working together in the bars of Gorizia for thirty years. What would you like to sing to me today?

IDELMA: The song "Champagne" by Bobby Solo.

FIDES: “Champagne” sang Peppino di Capri, who was actually from Naples.

IDELMA: Right, Bobby Solo sang “A Tear on the Face”. He also made me shed tears easily.

FIDES: Of course, and also the franza ispirata with the brilliantine... come on Idelma you stopped doing it. You have to sugar the bicycles because when you take them out of the dishwasher the halo always remains. And afterwards people grumble.

IDELMA: And you don't want to hear the song "Champagne"?

FIDES: Ok, come on, but just a little something

IDELMA (original background music): Champagne/to toast Gorizia/which is/the most beautiful city/remember/there was an invitation/tonight everyone is going to Nova Gorica/so/the party was starting/and already/my head was spinning/for us/the bikers weren't enough/I only followed El Stock with my gaze/if you want/I'll take you if you want/The most banal excuse/to help each other stand/and not tumble on the stairs/and drink the last drop/before going to bed/waiter Champagne.

THIRD TABLE 3

Interpreters: two customers

Two customers enter the bar. They find Idelma and Fides asleep because they are drunk.

Customer A: Every day it's like this. Idelma and Fides can't control themselves. It's never been clear if they're more than the glasses they served to customers in their decades-long activity as bartenders...

Customer B: Or those who shouted themselves hoarse. But we have to understand them. Because after all, in their own way, they are telling us a chapter of no small importance in the history of Gorizia.

A: A story that takes us back to the years following the Second World War, when Gorizia, having returned to Italy after three years of Allied Military Government administration, found itself with three fifths less of its provincial territory.

B: And with some parts of the city remaining in Yugoslavia. A very hard blow for the city's commercial economy which had been flourishing thanks to the vast clientele coming from the Isonzo and Vipava valleys.

A: To make matters worse, there was the significant arrival of exiles from Istria, from Pola in particular. With them, a special... and rather cumbersome object had also arrived: the statue of Caesar Octavian Augustus. Taken from Pola and then placed in Via Roma in front of the Auditorium.

B: The exiles had not wanted to leave the bronze statue that represented the Romanity of Istria in Yugoslavian hands. So, to sum up, the situation in Gorizia was very difficult also because the exiles, initially hosted, so to speak, in the barracks of Montesanto, had swelled the ranks of the unemployed.

A: Already full of many unemployed civilian employees of the Allied Military Government. But the people of Gorizia did not lose heart and so, ideally, we go to Piazza Cavour, at the point where Piazza Sant'Antonio begins. Before Palazzo Strassoldo there is Casa Morassi. On the ground floor there was the grocery store of Mario Morassi, a historical figure of Gorizia commerce, son of that Giovanni - called Giovannino - pioneer of emporialism but above all a paradigmatic character of the tragic history of the twentieth century in Gorizia.

B: Casa Morassi, designed by the architect Max Fabiani, can be considered the cradle of the Free Zone of Gorizia. In the hall on the first floor, immediately after the war, a group of merchants met with Mario to try to get to the bottom of the terrible crisis that was gripping Gorizia.

A: Mario Morassi, who later also assumed the presidency of the provincial and then regional traders' association, was among the most tenacious supporters of Gorizia's right to be economically supported by the State as compensation for the consequences of the border closure and the painful losses of the province.

B: The establishment of the Free Zone of Gorizia was sanctioned by laws 1438 of December 1, 1948, and 1226 of December 11, 1957. The measure provided for the distribution, free of taxes, of quotas of certain products, such as sugar, coffee, seed oil, butter, etc., and to favor local industries with the supply of raw materials (sugar, cocoa, wood, iron, etc.). The Free Zone was renamed "The Gold of Gorizia".

Idelma and Fides wake up

IDELMA Indeed, the Free Zone was Gorizia's gold. Even in the textile industry we obtained many concessions.

FIDES: Not to mention gasoline, which was discounted for us otherwise the people of Gorizia would have gone to Yugoslavia to fill up.

IDELMA: At a certain point I also established the Gorizia Fund, and I distributed the money among the merchants and not only among them.

FIDES: But the European Union has arrived at a good time and goodbye to concessions. Cussì Gorizia has once again been dressed in canvas trousers. The industry disappeared and even today I still don't understand the vocation of this city.

IDLEMA: And yet, without factories, without workers, and now even without borders, Gorizia has become the European capital of culture. What more do you want from life?

FIDES (the bottle of Stock 84 reappears, he pours two glasses for the customers too, all in chorus): Champagne/to toast Gorizia/which is/the most beautiful city/and if the bubbles are missing/at least here no one gets tired.../Champagne...

FOURTH PICTURE

(the writing Tito)

Cast: Sabato, a fake former Army captain; Goredò, a former Army sergeant

(they whisper together and look around warily)

SATURDAY: Pinuccio, did you get everything?

GOFFREDO: Yes sir, captain...

SATURDAY: How many times do I have to tell you? This is a stealth mission. Don't call me captain, just call me by my name: Saturday.

GOFFREDO: Yes sir, captain...Oh, excuse me: captain Sabato.

SATURDAY: Dear Goredò, and then you wondered why you remained a sergeant throughout your stay in the Italian army... Sabato, just call me Sabato. And I will call you Pinuccio.

GOFFREDO: As you always called me, Mr. Capt.... Mr. Sabato. Even on Sundays...ah ah, did you like the joke?

SATURDAY: Is it possible that you can't come up with anything but silly jokes?

GOFFREDO: Forgive me, Captain, but up there in the barracks on Mount Sabotino there wasn't much else to enjoy other than making up silly jokes.
How cold I got on night shifts.

SATURDAY: And how much your comrades took you for a fool because of the name you bear when you complained about the guard shifts. Even in the summer you were cold...with that name.

GOFFREDO: A patriotic name chosen for me by my father, good soul.

SATURDAY: Okay, let's forget about that. Let's focus on the secret mission.

GOFFREDO: Is it dangerous?

SATURDAY: Very much, the enemy has ears and eyes everywhere.

GOFFREDO: But you can't see a damn thing. Here in the hamlet of San Mauro there isn't even a street lamp.

SATURDAY: Better, Pinuccio. Listen to me. Let's recap: yellow paint, green, red, blue, the colors of the rainbow, in short?

GOFFREDO: They're there.

SATURDAY: Shears?

GOFFREDO: Statement.

SATURDAY: And don't answer like in the barracks. Damn?

GOFFREDO: With forty-two teeth, even an ox could cut this one.

SATURDAY: Save the details. Flashlight?

GOFFREDO: Yes, with charged batteries.

SATURDAY: Yes, because without batteries, do you know what we'd do with the flashlight?

GOFFREDO: I don't know, Captain. Oh, if Sabato would excuse me.

SATURDAY: Gloves?

GOFFREDO: As a soccer goalkeeper, I didn't find any others.

SATURDAY: Ball?

GOFFREDO: I didn't take it. It wasn't on the list.

SATURDAY: I was joking Goredó, but I understand that certain nuances are not for you.

GOFFREDO: Excuse me, Sabato, but what mission is this? Why are we gardeners and painters incognito?

SATURDAY: What gardeners. You'll soon understand what this is about. Now let's get going, we have to climb Mount Sabotino. It's going to be a long night.

GOFFREDO: At your orders, mister cap...

FOURTH TABLE BIS

Interpreters: Ester and Sonia, sisters from Gorizia

ESTER (looks through binoculars from the window of the house): And yet there is something about Sonia that doesn't make sense to me.

SONIA: Ester, come over and look at that canoe now. Is it possible that you don't want to go to Mistress Armanda's house?

ESTER: I know what I'm looking for in Armanda's house. You'll see, sooner or later I'll find out.

SONIA: For two flowers, what a life she plows.

ESTER: Do you give flowers? A nursery stole them from my mother's grave in the last few months.

SONIA: But how can you say that this is where she is?

ESTER: It's her, it's her. Do you know those blue tulips I used to pick from Bettina? Those beautiful ones that all the girls in the cemetery complimented on?

SONIA: Very nice. Did those disappear too?

ESTER: Of course not. Do you know where you end up?

SONIA: No, continue.

ESTER: In the crystal vase on the table in Mrs. Armanda's living room.

SONIA: But it will be others, come on. It's been three weeks since we bought them. I remember because it was my mother's anniversary.

ESTER: You're wrong, Sonia. In two weeks it's the anniversary of the death of mom.

SONIA: But I was referring to the anniversary of when Daddy took her away. She couldn't wait that day. Well, now I'm going to the garden to tidy up the flower beds.

ESTER: Instead I still enjoy the canoe a little. Today strangely I don't see the husband of Mrs. Armanda, that bubez Pinuccio. In forty years in the army he has never left the rank of private sergeant. Besides, he had a general at home: Mrs. Armanda.

SONIA: That's Ester, I can't find the gardening tools anymore. And not even the goalkeeper gloves that we wanted to give to our nephew.

ESTER: He'll put them in the cellar among my mother's crazy people.

SONIA: It could be, but I don't see a clinz down there. It's all dark. And I can't even find the flashlight. And not even the colors I need to paint the railing: I wanted to make it like a rainbow now that in Gorizia we're all talking about peace.

FOURTH TABLE THREE

PINUCCIO: Damn, what a chore it is to climb Sabotino. And now what do we do on Saturday?

SATURDAY: How dare you call me Saturday. I'm your commander.

PINUCCIO: Damn, did the effort make your brain spin?

SATURDAY: Oh, that's right, we're on a secret mission. So, you have to paint the stones that spell out Tito. Remember? Paint a stripe for each color of the rainbow.

PINUCCIO: And what if we make Tito a pacifist marshal?

SATURDAY: Do as I say. In the meantime, I'll use my garden tools to clear away the vegetation from the nearby W Italy sign. It's not far from ours.
barracks.

PINUCCIO: Damn, now I remember. We had composed it in our free time, nice and big that you could see from Gorizia. Yes, it was right next to the old sign Nas Tito.

SATURDAY: Well done Pinuccio. So tomorrow morning the people of Gorizia will be able to admire the writings Tito and W l'Italia in an unpublished version.

PINUCCIO: Excuse me, Sabato, but I'd like to ask you a question. What does this fuss about the writings have to do with it now that Nova Gorica and Gorizia are the European capitals of culture?

SATURDAY: What does it have to do with it, what does it have to do with it. What does it have to do with the fact that they filled our cabasisi with the fact that there are no more borders...

PINUCCIO: It's true.

SATURDAY: So instead of the rifles we carried during the Cold War to defend the border, today we arm ourselves, so to speak, with colors and brushes to paint the stone writings with the colors of peace. Are we perhaps harming anyone?

PINUCCIO: What a great idea, Sabato. At this point, allow me to call you Captain.

FOURTH TABLE QUATER

ESTER (still through the binoculars): Sonia, you won't believe me. But on Sabotino the words Long Live Italy have reappeared, painted in the colours of the rainbow.

SONIA: Come on, what do I see? (takes the binoculars): It's true and...that's how the rainbow painted the word Tito too. Only our railing is still in ruins.

ESTER (again with the binoculars): But that man up there seems to me to be... yes, he really is that bubez Pinuccio. And that other one is his friend Sabato: the captain has himself called. Even if he has him reformed from the army for lack of money, he has taken over. He has soldiers every day. Do you really think so?

SONIA: I'm sorry, up to a certain point. We say we're two naive people, but deep down we understand the meaning of the border no longer exists more than anyone else.

ESTER: You know you're right, Sonia. But now let's go to the cellar to look for the goalkeeper's gloves.

SONIA: And the colors to paint the railing with the colors of the rainbow. So we will also spend time with Miss Armanda.

FIFTH TABLE

(the red star)

Interpreters: An actor A and an actress B

A: But if you had to tell the story of Gorizia with the most significant dates, which would you choose?

B: Good question, not easy to answer. Just to stay from the second post-war period to today I would start with May 4, 1980, the death of Tito and the beginning, first latent and then disruptive, of the disintegration of Yugoslavia. And for you, what is the most significant date?

A: April 13, 2015. I have no doubts.

B (reflects, thinks): April 13, 2015? I have no idea what happened that day. Can you explain it to me?

A: That day, the exhibition on twentieth-century Gorizia was inaugurated in the library of the Senate of the Republic in Rome, commissioned by the late Dario Stasi, journalist and founder of the periodical Isonzo-Soca, the first newspaper to tell the story without borders.

B: And why was that exhibition so important?

A: Because it brought Gorizia, with its complex load of history, to the heart of the Italian republican institutions. I remember the engaging speech given by Senator Sergio Zavoli, one of the greatest Italian journalists of all time.

B: Like Gianni Bisiach from Gorizia, who also created the programme "Radio anch'io".

A: Yes, that's true. He's a great journalist too. And do you know what was the most appreciated item on display by visitors to the exhibition in the Senate?

B: I think I get it.

A: The red star that Tito had placed on the roof of the Transalpina station in 1947.

B: To throw the symbol of its federal republic in the faces of the people of Gorizia.

A: Yes, that's right. But it's not just that.

B: Explain yourself.

A: Between the end of 1947 and 1948, many young volunteers arrived at that station, which was once called Montesanto station, from the distant republics of the newly formed Yugoslavia to build the new city of Nova Gorica.

For them too, therefore, the symbol of the new homeland was very important and they saw it as soon as they got off the train, understanding that they were building a new city and a new society.

B: If I remember correctly, that star, symbol of Tito's socialism, became, almost by magic, a comet.

A: You remember well. In Christmas 1990, before Slovenia had even become an independent republic, the star went from being a socialist icon to a comet.

It was the Slovenian railway workers who transformed it into a symbol of peace.

B: But already at that time, Esther was standing at the window of her house looking through the telescope.

FIFTH TABLE BIS

Interpreters Ester and Sonia

ESTER (looks through the telescope): And yet Sonia there is something that doesn't make sense to me.

SONIA: You'll go blind from looking through the canopy. What's up this time?

ESTER: Do you remember the star?

SONIA: Don't talk to me. Last night I got up from bed to go to the toilet and I didn't turn on the light. I banged my foot on the edge of the bed. I saw the stars in the sky. I still don't know my foot.

ESTER: I have seen all the stars in the sky and yet I think one is missing.

SONIA: If you see that the big cart has a bang, it has brought a star from the tire dealer. But what do you want to miss? Stars. Those at the Farra observatory will eventually notice that.

ESTER: Ah, good. I'll ask them where the x ended.

SONIA: Anyway, last night, when I went back to bed, my foot and back were hurting because I was limping around...

ESTER: What happened Sonia? Did you meet Mrs. Armanda?

SONIA: What, Miss Armanda, she must have been out stealing flowers... I don't have a feeling, a sixth sense, a premonition, a shiver, a warmth...

ESTER: Madonna, Sonia: you sound like someone who makes the tables swing... since you're an old man who doesn't have any more heat...

SONIA: Anyway, I heard a voice telling me to close the window.

ESTER: And did you tell it to her?

SONIA: Sure, the voice insisted. And when I opened the shutters I was dazzled by an intense light. Like that of a shooting star.

ESTER: And were the Three Wise Men?

SONIA: No, that certainly wasn't it. I stole them, Miss Armanda. You must see more of the Magi that I stole from your head.

ESTER: But where was this comet?

SONIA: In the direction of the Montesanto station. Up there, instead of the red star, there's also a red star.

ESTER: Look, you see I was right? Now I understand what was wrong with me. I also saw with my canopy that instead of the red star a comet star had emerged.

SONIA: Yes, but did you see who was on the roof taking out the lights from the red star?

ESTER: No, tell me, Lori?

SONIA: Exactly them, dressed as railway workers: Sabato and Pinuccio.

DETACHMENT

B: I understand that it is not easy to overcome the shock caused by the adventures of Sonia, Ester, Sabato and Pinuccio but the end of the true story of the red star demands attention.

So, I remember that after January 12, 1991, the Yugoslavian railway workers removed it permanently. From there, it was moved to the Goriški muzej depot, until the first border museum was set up in 2005. Where the red star is the main attraction.

SIXTH TABLE

(the cold war)

Lina and Licia return to the scene.

LICIA: Before I go home, Lina, I want you to tell me what this Cold War was. And also this Iron Curtain. My dad and I went one summer to Ravascletto which is near Cortina d'Ampezzo but I didn't see any iron around.

LINA: Yes because Cortina d'Ampezzo and Ravascletto are visible. What does Ravascletto have to do with it. If I ever asked you, you wouldn't have this nervous ulcer that comes to hear you.

LICIA: Good, come on. No anger. Tell me what this Iron Curtain is. And the Cold War. Is it the same stuff?

LINA: Are you familiar with the Mainizza road in Gradisca, near Borgo Saletti?

LICIA: Where once everything went under water when the Isonzo was in flood?

LINA: Yes, right in that logo.

LICIA: So the Cold War was a flood?

LINA: Yes, de spriz: water from the Isonzo and grapes from the Collio vineyards. Shut up, if you want saver.

LICIA: What manners Lina has for you.

LINA: In short, on the Mainizza near Borgo Saletti it's like a garage on the edge of the road in the direction of Gorizia.

LICIA: A workshop like that?

LINA: Yes, spare parts for zervei. If only I could drop by... But what a workshop. That kind of garage was like a tank hideout ready to shoot if there was an invasion of Yugoslavia. And like that one on Mainizza along the Vizin line at the border there were lots of positions.

LICIA: All with the tank?

LINA: No, some were throwing slingshots... Of course with tanks. And there were also bunkers, hidden caves, in short from Muggia to Brenner there was a first line of positions to neutralize the enemy.

LICIA: In fact, up in the mountains, near the Brenner Pass, it's cold. I understood: that's why they called it the Cold War.

LINA: Congratulations Lina. You never disappoint me.

LICIA: And what was the iron curtain yesterday?

LINA: I'll read you Wikipedia: Iron Curtain is an expression used in the West to describe the border line that divided Europe into two separate zones of political influence from the end of World War II to the Cold War.

LICIA: I don't understand a kaiser Licia.

LINA: Me neither. But you know what I'm telling you.

LICIA: What do I hear Licia.

LINA: Let's make a presentation, a swipe of lipstick, a pass of the razor under our arms and we'll go to Piazza Transalpina to celebrate this European capital of culture.

LICIA: Good idea Lina. But do I have to bring the pass?

LINA: You are no longer needed Licia, where is the time. Now Gorizia and Nova Gorica are all one, as I said. Goodbye borders, iron curtain, cold war and pre-Christian war.

LICIAS: And I'll wait for you to take a nice walk along Uriza Street.

LINA: Yes Licia, long live Uriza Street with the doorways of the Slovenian characters. It's about time you laughed a little at them too.

SEVENTH TABLE

(the iconic scene of Casa Rossa)

Interpreters: actor A, Silvana and Vittorio

A (addressing the audience): Do you know what the Friars say before drinking their last glass of wine? Are we not going to leave you without remembering when we went to Yugo to do the shopping and had to go through the checkpoint at the Casa Rossa border crossing?

VITTORIO - Meat?

SILVANA - Half a kilo of minced meat, two kilos of chops, it's good, tender meat.

VITTORIO - Where?

SILVANA - Under the cover...

VITTORIO - The covrisedil?

SILVANA – Under your ass! Didn't you notice?

VITTORIO - I thought I felt a little straighter. I also felt your back, Silvana...

SILVANA - Does this seem like the time to complain? Rather: grappa, Stanigranica?

VITTORIO - Three bottles of grappa, in the spare room.

SILVANA - Three botilias? Is it that big for the spare compartment?

VITTORIO – No, go get the rioda.

SILVANA - And the Stanigranica?

VITTORIO - Four bottles! One for your mother. Signora Ines asked me so much for the ciorghelo.

SILVANA - So why do you always go to my mom lately... Where did she put the bottles?

VITTORIO - Fit and glue behind the bumper.

SILVANA - Gasoline, how many liters?

VITTORIO - The full tank. But before we cross the border I have to remember to reset the fuel tank lever. I put it on reserve so I can't argue with having filled it up.

SILVANA - What a genius!

VITTORIO - Look, you're wearing your blouse.

SILVANA – Where? Ostro pig, look here! I'm ready to get rid of the bureaucrat who is going to discount this regime... (ironic) And do you, do you like the colirium?

VITTORIO - The eye drops? What's in them?

SILVANA - You must burn your eyes.

VITTORIO - No, apart from my back, I'm fine.

SILVANA - Strange, when I was in line at the butcher's, I looked at you while you were waiting for me. Yesterday I stuck you in front of the poster for Brigitte Bardot's film, photographed completely naked, without the black censorship stripe like in Italy.

VITTORIO – What do you want... Here in the US, you are more welcome. Yugoslavia wants to prove that it is an open, modern country...

SILVANA - Showing Bardot's tits to those how-tos? Simple and blind! (showing her breasts)
You men don't see what's going on around you. All real stuff, not just posters.

VITTORIO - Yes, you're right, but now shut up. It's our turn. The granary man is approaching our car. You know, here at the Casa Rossa border crossing the checks are much more thorough.

SILVANA - The granary will dismantle the machine piece by piece. Seats on one side, carpets on the other, spare wheels...

VITTORIO - No, not that one, I told you that I took it away...

SILVANA – Virgin Mary! What a fool's face he has!

VITTORIO - And what a bastard's face! What a face! It gives me the shivers. If you discover our smuggling, do you know what will happen?

SILVANA - We have to leave the goods behind and pay the fine.

VITTORIO - Nooo, much worse. They'll throw us in for a night on top of everything else. I've heard that their cells, here at the Casa Rossa pass, are all crusty and infested with worms... cockroaches.

SILVANA - Be my man, then think of Bardot to give you courage. Face the enemy!

GRANICIARO - (Jugo-type slang, severe and threatening tone) Doberdan, kaj prinesi?

VITTORIO - (to his wife) Are you asking if we are from Doberdò?

SILVANA - But what does Doberdò have to do with it, mind you, it doesn't take much for him...

GRANICIARO - (more and more threatening) What are you hiding under your ass or in your car? Tell the truth or I'll dismantle your car. What do you say?

VITTORIO - (pretending to be naive) Nothing, we were just taking a stroll in the cool of Panovec Park...

GRANICIAR - You're not fooling me, Italian. And now you're going to turn the bonnet on. You'll see that you're no longer interested in joking with me...

DETACHMENT

VITTORIO – (at the wheel) Silvana, today it's very easy to cross the border.
This time it's not even about the trunk. Ghe said: "Nothing to declare!".

SILVANA – And do you believe him?

VITTORIO - At that moment the madman from Milita wouldn't have seen him at all even if we had a canon in the car. (the Brigitte Bardot poster unfolds)

SILVANA – And do you think that the granary seller was struck by the photo of the half-naked Brigitte?

VITTORIO – And why then!

SILVANA - Your eyes have made something quite different... (emphasizes her breasts) Be careful, watch the road!

VITTORIO – Oh, what a thing to do for two glasses of Stanigranica. But she couldn't stay with the granary...

EIGHTH PICTURE

(Gorizia tells its story and ends with Go2025)

Interpreters: narrator, grandfather Igor, granddaughter Maia, Gorizia

NARRATOR: The public will forgive us if we have made fun of the history of this territory a little, but a smile never hurt anyone.

In any case, we are well aware of what happened here during the tormented twentieth century. But today that ugly story is only a memory.

And before leaving you we think it's right to introduce the absolute protagonist of this story: Gorizia.

(surprised and annoyed): But, but... what is this music? Who sings?

(off-screen the satirical song is sung):

General Cadorna wrote to the Queen: if you want to see Trieste I'll send it to you as a postcard.

General Cadorna is full of lice, he wrote to the queen if she wants to have a "few".

General Cadorna wrote the sentence: take Gorizia from me and I will send you on leave.

BREAKOUT

IGOR: You know, my beloved niece Maia, at Cadorna Gorizia they took it from her between the eighth and ninth of August 1916. Sixth battle of the Isonzo. Six more would be fought before the last one: Caporetto.

MAIA: What are you saying, grandpa? You're using old-fashioned, outdated, even sexist vocabulary. You don't take one, you don't conquer one, you don't kill one, you don't raze one to the ground. A city is like a woman, if you love it you have to protect it. Instead for Gorizia it seems that it didn't go that way.

IGOR: The Italians reduced it to a pile of rubble, the Austrians abandoned it to go up into the mountains and reorganize the defensive line.

MAIA: At school I studied the First World War and imagined what Monte Santo, Santa Caterina, San Michele, San Marco, Calvary were like.

Saints scarred by the horror of a war they called Great or First but which was neither Great nor the First. Above all, it was not the last.

(Short pause, to emphasize the entrance on the scene of the actress from Gorizia, slightly worn clothes, attitude between tired and resigned)

GORIZIA: Now everyone is talking about me, Gorizia. But no one really knows me well. Of course, it's also partly my fault. I don't like to give myself up to confidences. But I don't trust anyone anymore after what they did to me.

In August 1916 I became Italian for the first time. For some, the second time, after the Serenissima, grandmother of the Italian homeland, occupied me from 1508 to 1509, leaving me a great Lion as a gift.

At the end of October 1917 I returned under the control of Vienna; this occurred after the battle of Caporetto, with the Third Italian Army protecting the retreat of the Royal Army on the Piave.

MAIA: On the Piave you mean, Mrs. Gorizia.

IGOR: Don't disturb her, Maia. Gorizia is right about the Piave.

GORIZIA: Once upon a time, dear Maia, rivers were feminine and wanted the feminine definite article. After all, water is fertility, water is female. Like the Soca.

IGOR: But the war has also erased this truth... Oh, but excuse us Mrs. Gorizia, go ahead.

GORIZIA: I returned to Italy in November 1918 and I thought that death and destruction were enough.

Before the war I had been a city of the Habsburg Empire for over five hundred years.

I have confused memories of the times of the County, I was certainly not the most important city even if I gave it my name.

As a child I was little more than a village on a hill, a goriza in the old Slavic language.

I was born on April 28, 1001, or so say the documents with which I was ceded by Emperor Otto III to the Patriarchate of Aquileia. But that's another story.

IGOR: The twentieth century was not a century of peace for Gorizia either. Scarred and frightened by two world wars, overwhelmed by dark and tragic post-war periods.

MAIA: I know, grandpa, between the two conflicts she was inflicted with the humiliation of a multilingual identity erased by the modification of her Slovenian surnames, which were unpopular with the regi

GORIZIA: After the First World War, as if what had happened was not enough, Italians and Slovenians challenged each other for a long time to have me. And after the Second World War, even worse happened. I didn't care much about being Austrian or Italian.

My people were simple: Italians, Slovenes, Germans, Jews and Friulians lived in peace and tolerated each other's periodic disagreements.

Here, irredentism was mild, in the countryside the priests helped the farmers by opening rural banks and the first insurance companies, and then I had hotels, places of entertainment, I had two railway stations and good air for holidays. They called me the Austrian Nice.

IGOR: On September 17, 1947, Gorizia became Italian for the third time. In 1953, it threatened to unleash World War III if it did not have Trieste.

Once again Gorizia trembles. Thousands of soldiers, on both sides of the border, ready to fight over the city.

MAIA: In 1948 the birth of Nova Gorica, built beautiful and bold a few steps from old Gorizia. The big red star placed on the roof of the Transalpina station which for the people of Gorizia was the Montesanto station. You remember it, right, grandpa?

IGOR: And how could I have forgotten it?

MAIA: The difficult years of the Iron Curtain, the border between the Soviet bloc and the democratic West. Then Tito's choice to withdraw from the USSR and the first openings along the border.

IGOR: Like the one on Sunday, August 13, 1950.

GORIZIA: Broom Sunday has gone down in history.

MAIA: I heard it was a memorable day. A European day before the birth of the European Union.

GORIZIA: I am a shy old lady, a little closed, reserved to the point of appearing grumpy, certainly not beautiful as Saba wrote for my sister Giuliana, the city of Trieste.

I have suffered too much and I cannot tolerate those who use history to impose their ideas.

Today I can call Nova Gorica my little cousin, but until a few years ago I would have been woe betide anyone who even spoke of it. I saw it being born, in 1948. Hundreds of boys and girls worked hard to build the city designed by the architect Edo Ravnikar, a student of the master Le Corbusier. I have always liked Nova Gorica, wide, tree-lined streets. Too bad for those barracks of the Ruski Bloki or even worse of the Great Wall of China. They thought they would scare me by building those barracks near the border.

In 1991, with the independence of Slovenia, I breathed a sigh of relief.

It's a shame for the dead at the Red House who fell in the clashes between independentists and federalists

I remember those days, hundreds of them came to see the war. Seeing the war, as if it were a video game!!! Do you understand why I don't trust men so much?

MAIA: Yes, those tragic days of 33 years ago seem far away. But then the holidays of April 30, 2004 and December 20, 2007 watered down those moments.

Slovenia's entry into the European Union and its subsequent accession to the Schengen Agreement meant that borders disappeared.

GORIZIA: My goodness, a lot of water has passed under the bridges of the Isonzo. And now that I would like to finally have some peace, what are they going to do to me? "Get beautiful for 2025," they told me.

(emphatically takes off her coat and shows off her sequined dress): Beautiful to me who have always been splendid!!!!

END
