

LETTER FROM LORCA

Written by

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A Short

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FADE IN:

EXT. - BALCONY OVERLOOKING ORCHARD - DAY

SUPER: GRANADA: August 6, 1936

Early morning. A Spanish hacienda balcony. FREDERICO GARCIA LORCA (38) sits at a small table with coffee and a writing pad. An orange and an apple rest on a small plate. He's dressed in a grey suit, and his black hair is slicked back. He crosses his legs and watches the brilliant morning reds and purples pulse in the sky.

He picks up the pad and begins to write.

LORCA V.O.

My American Friend; I have received your second letter, dated June 23, and this in reply. In your first letter, you asked me for advice, as a young artist, on how to become a poet. My answer, such as it was, failed to satisfy. I apologize for my "reticence" and for my "oblique detours." Your second letter was a surprise, however. You cite "rumors" of my friendship with the artist Salvador Dali, rumors of liaisons with indecent men when I visited New York last year, and you implore me, if the rumors are true, to confess my sins to God, and to repent.

In the far distance, beyond the orchard, several young men and women appear with scythes and begin to harvest wheat. Below Lorca's window, a YOUNG GIRL (8) in rags stands and watches him.

Lorca sees her, takes the orange and tosses it over the balcony. The girl catches it, delighted. She sits and begins to peel the orange. Lorca sits down and writes.

LORCA V.O. (CONT'D)

My dear friend, know that God, if He deigns to observe my private life, would chuckle at the notion that I have not already confessed the totality of my sins. What is art but to confess one's failings, to illuminate the darkness with truth?

He gets up and paces slowly. He sets the pad of paper down.

LORCA V.O. (CONT'D)

Today, it is early morning. I have breakfasted under the cool shade of orange trees and I rest now on a balcony overlooking the orchard. I am 38 and my life is just beginning. The morning moon is struggling through the branches. I write to you as I wait for my brother-in-law, the mayor of Granada. I have promised to accompany him to the center of town, where there will be a protest against Franco's Nationalists. Civil war has broken out. Socialists, monarchists, fascists, it is all the same to me. I am the most apolitical man I know. Yet I know repression all too well. I have written a little poem as I wait for the sun to follow the moon and climb into the sky's balcony.

He rests his hands on the railing and gazes out, a smile on his face. He speaks the following lines to the air.

LORCA

Farewell. If I die / leave the balcony open. / The little girl is eating oranges. / (From my balcony I can see her). / The reaper is harvesting the wheat. / (From my balcony I can hear him). If I die / leave the balcony open!

He sits and begins writing again.

LORCA V.O.

Do you see, friend, that in poetry, one can assume many voices: the poor, the driven, the dying, the young, the innocent, the misbegotten, gypsies, Quixotes all? But they are all one voice--your voice. Let me confess my sins to you here on paper where my voice briefly abides:

(MORE)

LORCA V.O. (CONT'D)

I confess the intimate theaters,
the struggling bed, the poison
truths like sand, the children
under the table begging for scraps.
I confess that I am the intense
shadows of my tears. I confess that
I want to sleep the dream of
apples. I confess that I want to
live with that dark child who
wanted to cut his heart on the sea.
I confess that when joy entered the
truth, I flowed over the grass as
wind and entered --open-eyed-- the
long sierra valley.

The young girl has climbed the trellises, and she shyly pokes
her head over the top of the railing. Lorca sees her and
smiles brilliantly. He motions for her to climb over. The
girl does carefully, cautiously.

LORCA

Forgive me, for I have sinned, my
angel of the dark magnolia, my
Gacella of unforeseen love. (he
laughs) Can you speak?

The girl shakes her head, and touches her mouth. She holds
something hidden behind her back. Lorca shrugs, sits and
picks up his pad. He speaks out loud as he writes

LORCA (CONT'D)

I miss my family. I long for the
unforeseen love that comes as ivory
letters on a milkman's coach each
day. Yet the things I cannot say,
the half-eaten heart of my heart,
not even the last Catholic in
Madrid could confess. Thus, let us
not speak of that which cannot be
spoken, let us not speak with dark
stones in our mouths. Stone is a
forehead where dreams grieve; life,
poetry, art is for the spoken.

EXT. THE ORCHARD - DAY

From beneath a peach tree, a small deer grazes on fallen
fruit. In the distance, we can see the hacienda with Lorca
and the small girl.

LORCA V.O.

How can I help you write? I cannot. What advice can I give? None. Where should you turn? Everywhere. It is your song, waiting to be written, waiting to be performed, waiting to be lived. In Andelucia, it is flamenco. In America, it is jazz. In the entire world, it is the voice of struggle against poverty, against barbarism, against repression and darkness. It is the gypsy, playing her parchment moon. It is the river, offering us her opera of mist.

EXT. BALCONY OVERLOOKING ORCHARD - DAY

Lorca sets his pad down as a MAN enters the balcony, bends and says a few words to Lorca. Lorca nods. The man leaves and Lorca stands, hands the remaining apple on the plate to the girl, then looks out over the orchard again.

He takes a photograph from his pocket and looks at it. It is him among beautiful flowers. He sets it on the notepad. Then he kneels down and speaks to the wide-eyed girl.

LORCA

Now the day has swept up its hem and it appears that I must cut this short. You see? It is always politics, the science of windbags and war, which silences song. It is time for us to leave. My brother-in-law, the mayor, the man of politics that I mock lovingly, says that it is dangerous, that they are shooting our brothers and sisters. I am not afraid; please don't worry about me. Look here: I leave my soul with you in this letter--a photograph of me among Granada's flowers. (shows the girl the photograph) No one will recognize me. May it become a poem that you can write when you confess your own sins to your God.

She reaches behind her and hands him what she had hidden. A beautiful hyacinth flower.

LORCA (CONT'D)

In this great battle, I'll be
wearing a river's disguise, the
hyacinth wild on my shoulder. What
armor will you don?

Lorca places the hyacinth in his lapel. He bends down and
kisses the girl gently on the top of the head. Lorca signs
the letter.

LORCA V.O.

Your Friend in Truth and Art,
García Lorca.

He looks out once more in the distance, smiles, then turns
and leaves.

The girl eats the apple and waves from the balcony.

SCROLL:

Federico García Lorca (1898-1936), was arguably Spain's
greatest poet. On this date, August 19, 1936, at the age of
38, he was viciously beaten and shot to death by Franco's
fascist thugs. His body, along with many others, was dumped
in a shallow grave.

FADE TO BLACK.