

GERARDO. I would not stain my soul with someone like him.

PAULINA (*throws him the keys to the car*). He's free. You just have to go and get his car.

GERARDO *begins to untie ROBERTO's ankles.*

I don't think you understood me, Gerardo. When I said you, I didn't mean both of you.

GERARDO. What are you talking about?

PAULINA. I'm not letting him go alone with you.

GERARDO. Paulina, we agreed that . . .

PAULINA. Didn't you hear what this man just confessed? He's violent and dangerous.

GERARDO. He's a poor defeated bastard. When somebody confesses like that, he grades himself in that way – he can't hurt you anymore, Paulina.

PAULINA. You're the one he can hurt.

ROBERTO. How could I possibly harm the man who –

PAULINA. You can overpower him, you can run him over – come back here and take those papers and the cassette and – I know you, Doctor. There is no way I am going to leave him alone with you, Gerardo.

GERARDO. All right, all right, I'll go get the car.

He stands up and goes towards the door.

PAULINA. Oh, Gerardo. Don't forget to give his jack back.

GERARDO (*trying to smile*). And don't you forget to return his Schubert cassette. You have your own

Brief pause.

Take care of yourself.

He exits. PAULINA goes to the window, watches him leave.

ROBERTO. If you wouldn't mind, I would like to go to the bathroom. I suppose there is no reason why you should continue to accompany me?

PAULINA. Don't move, Doctor. There's still a little matter pending. (*Brief pause.*) It's going to be an incredibly beautiful day. You know the only thing that's missing now, Doctor, the one thing I need to make this day really truly perfect? (*Brief pause.*) To kill you. So I can listen to my Schubert without thinking that you'll also be listening to it, soiling my day and my seagull and my Schubert and my country and my husband. That's what I need . . .

ROBERTO. Madame, your husband left here trusting that you – . . . You gave your word . . .

PAULINA. But when I gave my word – I still had a doubt – a teensy weensy doubt – that you really were that man. Because Gerardo was right, in his way. Proof, hard proof – well, I could have been mistaken. But I knew that if you confessed, – and when I heard you, my last doubts vanished and now I want you dead. Now that I know, now, that you are that man, I could not live in peace with myself and let you live.

She points the gun at him.

You have a minute to pray and really repent, Doctor.

Roberto slowly stands.

ROBERTO. Don't do it. I'm innocent.

PAULINA. You've confessed, Doctor.

ROBERTO. It's false, ma'am.

PAULINA. What do you mean?

ROBERTO. I made it up. We made it up.

PAULINA. It seems very true to me, Doctor, painfully familiar as far as I'm concerned . . .

ROBERTO. Your husband told me what to write, I invented some of it, some of it was invented by me, but most of it was what he got from you, from what he knew had happened to you, ma'am, so you'd let me go, he convinced me that it was the only way that you wouldn't kill me and I had to – you must know how, under pressure, we say anything, but I'm innocent, ma'am, God in Heaven knows that –

PAULINA. Stud, Doctor.

ROBERTO. What?

PAULINA. Several times in your confession you mention Stud. He must have been a large man, muscular, he bit his fingernails, right, he bit his goddam fingernails. Stud.

ROBERTO. The name was given to me by your husband. Everything I said comes from what your husband helped me to invent. Ask him when he comes back.

PAULINA. I don't need to ask him. I knew that he'd do that, I knew he'd use my words for your confession. That's the sort of person he is. He always thinks that he's more intelligent than everybody else, he always thinks that he's got to save somebody. But I don't blame him, Doctor. He loves me. We deceived each other for our own good, because we love each other. But I'm the one who came out on top in this game. I gave him the wrong name, Doctor, to see if you would correct it. And you did. You corrected the name Bud and you substituted the name Stud and if you were innocent - .

ROBERTO. It's a mere coincidence, it's natural that I should think it was Stud rather than Bud, because it would be a natural for that sort of person to -

PAULINA. It's not the only correction that you made, Doctor. There were other . . . lies.

ROBERTO. What lies, what lies?

PAULINA. Tiny lies, little variations that I inserted in my story to Gerardo, and often - not always, but often enough - as in the case of Stud, you corrected them. It turned out just as I planned. You were so scared that if you didn't get it right . . . But I'm not going to kill you because you're guilty, Doctor, but because you haven't repented at all. I can only forgive someone who really repents, who stands up amongst those he has wronged and says, I did this, I did it, and I'll never do it again.

ROBERTO. What more do you want? You've got more than all the victims in this country will ever get. A man who's confessed, at your feet, humiliated,
He gets down on his knees.

begging for his life. What more do you want?

PAULINA. The truth, Doctor. The truth and I'll let you go. Then you'll be free as Cain after he killed his brother. Nobody dared touch Cain after he repented - that's why God marked him. The truth. Confess and I'll let you go. You have ten seconds. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight. Time is running out, Doctor. Confess!

ROBERTO *stands up.*

ROBERTO. No. I won't. Because even if I confess, you'll never be satisfied. You're going to kill me anyway. So go ahead and kill me. I'm not going to let any sick woman treat me like this. If you want to kill me, do it. But you're killing an innocent man.

PAULINA. Nine.

ROBERTO. So we go on and on with violence, always more violence. Yesterday they did terrible things to you and now you do terrible things to me and tomorrow the same cycle will begin all over again. Isn't it time we stopped?

PAULINA. Why is it always people like me who have to sacrifice, who have to concede when concessions are needed, biting my tongue, why? Well, not this time. If only to do justice in one case, just one. What do we lose? What do we lose by killing one of you? What do we lose?

They freeze in their position as the lights begin to go down slowly. We begin to hear music from the last movement of Mozart's Dissonant Quartet. PAULINA and ROBERTO are covered from view by a giant mirror which descends, forcing the audience to look at themselves. For a few minutes the Mozart quartet is heard, while the spectators watch themselves in the mirror.

GERARDO. Because first – first you have to say yes.

PAULINA. Well then: yes.

GERARDO. That's not the yes I need.

PAULINA. It's the only yes I've got.

GERARDO. I've heard others.

Brief pause.

If I were to accept, I must know I can count on you, that you don't feel . . . If you were to have a relapse, it could leave me . . .

PAULINA. Vulnerable, yes, it could leave you vulnerable. Stripped, you'd have to take care of me all over again.

GERARDO. That's unfair.

Brief pause.

Are you criticising me because I take care of you?

PAULINA. And that's what you told the President, that your wife might have problems with . . .

Pause.

GERARDO. He doesn't know. Nobody knows. Not even your mother knows.

PAULINA. There are people who know.

GERARDO. I'm not talking about those sort of people. Nobody in the new government knows. I'm talking about the fact that we never made it public, as you never – as we never denounced the things that they – what they . . .

PAULINA. Only if the result was death?

GERARDO. Paulina, I'm sorry, what do you – ?

PAULINA. This Commission you're named to. Doesn't it only investigate cases that ended in death?

GERARDO. It's appointed to investigate human rights' violations that ended in death or the presumption of death, yes.

PAULINA. Only the most serious cases?

GERARDO. The idea is that if we can cast light on the worst crimes, other abuses will come to light.

PAULINA. Only the most serious?

GERARDO. Those beyond redemption.

PAULINA. Only those beyond redemption, huh?

GERARDO. I don't like to talk about this, Paulina.

PAULINA. I don't like to talk about it either.

GERARDO. But we'll have to talk about it, won't we, you and I? If I'm going to spend the next few months listening to relatives and eyewitnesses and survivors – and each time I come back home I – and you wouldn't want me to keep all that to myself. And what if you . . . If you . . .

He takes her in his arms.

If you knew how much I love you. If you knew how it still hurts me.

Brief pause.

PAULINA (*fiercely holding on to him*). Yes. Yes. Yes. Is that the yes that you wanted?

GERARDO. That's the yes that I wanted.

PAULINA. Find out what happened. Find out everything. Promise me that that you'll find everything that . . .

GERARDO. Everything. Everything we can. We'll go as far as we . . . (*Pause.*) As we're . . .

PAULINA. Allowed.

GERARDO. Limited, let's say we're limited. But within those limits there is so much we can do . . . We'll publish our conclusions. There will be an official report. What happened will be established objectively, so no one will ever be able to deny it, so that our country will never again live through those excesses . . .

PAULINA. And then?

GERARDO. I don't understand.

PAULINA. You hear the relatives of the victims, you denounce the crimes, what happens to the criminals?

GERARDO. That depends on the Justices. The courts receive a copy of the evidence and the Justices proceed from there to –

PAULINA. The Justices? The same Justices who never intervened to save one life in seventeen years of dictatorship? Who never accepted a single *habeas corpus* ever? The Justices who said that nobody had been kidnapped, that if some poor woman's husband was missing it was because he was tired of her and had found another woman? What did you call them? Justices? Justices? Justices?

As she speaks, PAULINA begins to laugh softly but with increasing hysteria.

GERARDO. Paulina. That's enough. Paulina.

He takes her in his arms. She slowly calms down.

Silly. Silly girl, my silly little kitten. I'm so sorry. This is all my fault. I shouldn't have made so much of the tyre and that stupid car jack. It just struck me, suppose it was you out there, caught on the road, the lights screaming by you, nobody stopping, suppose you'd have been alone in the –

PAULINA. Someone would have stopped. Probably that same – Miranda?

GERARDO. Probably. Seems to be his mission in life. To rescue idiots and damsels in distress.

PAULINA. Sounds familiar.

GERARDO. Yes, we're kindred spirits.

PAULINA. Must be nice then.

GERARDO. Couldn't be nicer. If it weren't for him . . . I invited him to come to drink on Sunday. Was that all right?

PAULINA. Sunday's fine. I was frightened. I heard a car. When I looked it wasn't yours.

GERARDO. But there was no danger.

PAULINA. No.

Gerardo. You already said yes to the President, didn't you? The truth, Gerardo. Or are you going to start your work in the Commission with a lie?

GERARDO. I didn't want to hurt you.

PAULINA. You told the President you accepted, didn't you? Before you asked me? Didn't you? I need the truth, Gerardo.

GERARDO. Yes. I told him I'd do it. Yes. Before asking you.

Lights go down.

Scene Two

One hour later. Nobody on stage. Only the moonlight, weaker than before, coming in through the windows. Dinner has been cleared away. Sound of the sea beyond. The sound of a car approaching. Then the headlights light up the living-room, are switched off, a car door is opened and closed. Someone knocks on the door, first timidly, then stronger. We hear the voices of PAULINA and GERARDO from their bedroom.

PAULINA (voice off, whispering, terrified). Don't go.

GERARDO. Don't be silly. Nothing's going to happen, love.

A lamp is switched on from offstage and is immediately switched off.

PAULINA. They're coming for me, they're coming for me because I told you, because I didn't –

GERARDO. Easy, love.

The knocking on the door gets more insistent.

No one is coming to get you. No one knows –

PAULINA. Be careful. Promise me.

GERARDO. Nothing is going to – all right, all right, love, I'll be careful.

some lunatic waving his arms like a windmill. Look, it's up to you to get me out of here.

GERARDO. I know.

ROBERTO. Everything hurts, my ankles, my hands, my back. Couldn't you untie me a little, so –

GERARDO. Roberto, I want to be honest with you. There is only one way to save your life . . .

Brief pause.

I think we have to – indulge her.

ROBERTO. Indulge her?

GERARDO. Make her feel that we – that you, are willing to cooperate . . .

ROBERTO. I don't see how I can cooperate, given my rather peculiar position . . .

GERARDO. Indulge her, make her believe that you . . .

ROBERTO. Make her believe that I . . .

GERARDO. She promised me that if you – confessed she would be ready –

ROBERTO. I haven't got anything to confess!

GERARDO. I think you're going to have to invent something then, because the only way she'll pardon you is if –

ROBERTO (*raises his voice, indignant*). She's got nothing to pardon me for. I did nothing and there's nothing to confess. Do you understand?

Upon hearing ROBERTO's voice, PAULINA gets up from her seat on the terrace and starts to move towards them.

Instead of proposing dishonourable solutions to me, you should be out there convincing that madwoman of yours to cease this criminal behaviour before she ruins your brilliant career and ends up in jail or in an asylum. Tell her that. Or can't you impose a little order in your own house?

GERARDO. Roberto, I –

PAULINA *enters from the terrace*.

PAULINA. Spot of trouble, darling?

GERARDO. None.

PAULINA. I thought you looked a little . . . agitated.

Brief pause.

Well, I see you've both finished your soup. No one can say I'm not a good cook, can they? That I'm not an ideal housewife? Little cup of coffee, Doctor? Teasy weasy one, Doctor, I am talking to you. Didn't your mother ever teach you that . . .

ROBERTO. Leave my mother out of this. I forbid you to mention my mother.

Brief pause.

PAULINA. I'm sorry, you're absolutely right. Your mother is not responsible for what you do. I don't know why men always insist on attacking mothers instead of –

GERARDO. Paulina, would you please do me the favour of leaving so we can continue our conversation?

PAULINA. Okay. I'll leave you boys to fix the world.

She leaves and turns.

Oh, and if he wants to piss, darling, just snap your fingers and I'll come running.

ROBERTO. She's absolutely insane.

GERARDO. When crazy people have power, you've got to indulge them. In her case, a confession –

ROBERTO. But what could a confession – ?

GERARDO. I think I understand Paulina's need. It coincides with a need of the whole country. The need to put into words what happened to us.

ROBERTO. You believe her, don't you?

GERARDO. If I thought you were guilty, would I be trying so desperately to save your –

ROBERTO. From the beginning you've been conspiring with her. She plays the bad guy. You play the good.

GERARDO. What do you mean by good –

ROBERTO. Playing roles, she's bad, you're good, to see if you can get me to confess that way. And once you've got me to confess, not her, she's not going to do it, you will kill me. It's what any man would do, any real man, if they'd raped his wife, it's what I would do if somebody had raped my wife. Cut your balls off.

Pause. GERARDO stands up.

Where are you going?

GERARDO. I'm going to get the gun and blow your fucking brains out. That's what a real man does, doesn't he. Real macho men blow people's brains out and fuck women when they're tied up on cots. Not like me. I'm a stupid faggot because I defend the son of a bitch who screwed my wife and destroyed her entire life. How many times did you screw her? How many times, you bastard?

ROBERTO. Gerardo, I . . . –

GERARDO. Gerardo, the faggot, is gone. I'm here. Me. But thinking it over, why should I dirty my hands with scum like you – when there's somebody who'll take much more pleasure in your pain and your death? Why take that one pleasure away from her? I'll call her right away so she can blow your fucking brains out herself.

ROBERTO. Don't go. Don't call her.

GERARDO. I'm tired of being in the middle of this. You reach an understanding with her, you convince her.

ROBERTO. Gerardo, I'm scared.

Brief pause. GERARDO turns around, changes his tone.

GERARDO. So am I.

ROBERTO. Don't let her kill me.

Brief pause.

What are you going to say to her?

GERARDO. The truth. That you won't cooperate.

ROBERTO. I need to know what it is I did, you've got to understand that I don't know what I have to confess. If I were that man, I'd know every – detail, but I don't know anything. If I make a mistake, she'll think I'm – I'll need your help.

GERARDO. You're asking me to deceive my wife?

ROBERTO. I'm asking you to save the life of an innocent man, Escobar. You do believe that I'm innocent, don't you?

GERARDO. You care that much what I believe?

ROBERTO. Of course I do. She isn't the voice of civilisation, you are. She isn't a member of the President's Commission, you are.

GERARDO (*bitter, sad*). No, she isn't . . . Who gives a fuck what she thinks. She's just . . .

He starts to leave.

ROBERTO. Wait. Where are you going? What are you going to say to her?

GERARDO. I'm going to tell her that you need to piss.

Lights go down.

PAULINA. That I didn't count. I always kept count. I know how many times.

Brief pause.

And that night, Gerardo, when I came to you, when I started to tell you, you swore, I remember you said: 'Some day, my love, we're going to put these bastards on trial. Your eyes will be able to rove – I remember the exact phrase, because it seemed, poetic – your eyes will be able to rove over each one of their faces while they listen to your story. We'll do it, you'll see that we will.' So now, darling, tell me who do I go to now?

GERARDO. That was fifteen years ago.

PAULINA. Gerardo, do I go to your Commission now?

GERARDO. Mine? I don't think it will be mine much longer after today. I shall have to resign.

PAULINA. Always so melodramatic. And then your forehead gets all wrinkled up which makes you look ten years older. And then people will see your photograph in the newspaper and won't believe that you're the youngest member of the Commission.

GERARDO. Are you deaf? I just told you I'm going to have to resign.

PAULINA. I don't see why.

GERARDO. You don't see why, but all the rest of the country will see why, especially those who don't want any kind of investigation at all. A member of the President's Commission, who should be showing exemplary signs of moderation and equanimity –

PAULINA. We're going to suffocate from so much equanimity!

GERARDO. – and objectivity, that this very person has allowed an innocent human being to be bound and tormented in his house, without a shred of evidence against him admissible in a court of law.

PAULINA. What court of law?

GERARDO. Paulina, do you know how the newspapers that served the dictatorship, do you know how they'll

use this episode to make me and even wreck the Commission?

Brief pause.

Do you want these people back in power? Every minute that passes, every second, that you've got this poor man tied up, makes it harder for us. Free the man, Paulina. Apologise for the mistake and free him. I've spoken to him, politically he seems to be a man we can trust or so it –

PAULINA. Oh, my little man, you do fall for every trick in the book, don't you? But let's not waste . . . If you could just listen to me for a change, my love. I'm not trying to harm your career and I most certainly don't want to jeopardise the Commission. But you see the Commission only deals with the dead, with those who can't speak. And I can speak – it's been so long since I as much as whispered a word, even a breath of what I'm thinking, years living in terror of my own . . . but I'm not dead, I thought I was but I'm not and I can speak, – so for God's sake let me have my say and you go ahead with your Commission and believe me when I tell you that none of this will be made public.

GERARDO. The only way that will happen is if the man out there benevolently decides not to make the matter public. And anyway, I have to resign no matter what. The sooner, the better.

PAULINA. You'd have to resign even if no one knew about this?

GERARDO. Yes.

PAULINA. Because of your mad wife, who was mad because she stayed silent and is now mad because she suddenly began to speak?

GERARDO. Among other reasons, yes, that's so, if the truth still matters to you.

PAULINA. Oh it does, the real real truth.

Brief pause.

Hang on a sec.

GERARDO. Mafia.

ROBERTO. Mafia, yes, a secret brotherhood, nobody gives out names and they cover each others' backs. The Armed Forces aren't going to allow their men to give testimony to your Commission and if you people call them in they'll just ignore your summons. Whatever they please . . . they've got the guns . . . Maybe I take back what I said about the children. It was a nice dream.

GERARDO. The President told me — and this is strictly between us —

ROBERTO. Strictly.

GERARDO. He told me that there are people who are ready to make statements, just so long as their confidentiality is guaranteed. And once people start talking, once the confessions, the names will pour out like water. Like you said: in this country we end up knowing everything. So your dream may still . . .

ROBERTO. I wish I could share your optimism. I'm afraid there are things we'll never know.

GERARDO. We're limited, my friend, but not that limited. At the very least we can expect some sort of moral sanction, that's the least . . . As we can't expect justice from the courts . . .

ROBERTO. I hope to God you're right. But it's getting late. Good Lord, it's two o'clock. Look, I'll be back to pick you up tomorrow, let's say at — how about nine?

GERARDO. Why don't you stay over unless you've got someone waiting for you back at your . . .

ROBERTO. Not a soul.

GERARDO. Well, if you're alone.

ROBERTO. Not alone. My wife and kids have gone off to Disneyland of all places. God, I hate Disney, and anyway I've got patients to look after.

GERARDO. Not at your beach house you don't. So why don't you stay over.

ROBERTO. It's very kind of you but I like being by myself, watching the waves, listening to my music. Look, I came to help, not to be a bother. I'll be back tomorrow, say at —

GERARDO. I won't hear of it. You're staying. You're what? You're half an hour away?

ROBERTO. It's around forty minutes by the coast road, but if I —

GERARDO. Not another word. The spare room's made up. Paulina will be delighted. You'll see the breakfast she'll make for us. Eggs. French bread. Melon and ham. You like melon and ham?

ROBERTO. I love melon and ham.

GERARDO. You can devour as much melon and ham as you want. And then we'll go and get the car.

ROBERTO. Done. And the real real truth is that I am incredibly tired . . .

PAULINA *quickly returns through the terrace, to her bedroom.*

GERARDO. I wonder if there's anything else you might . . . ? A toothbrush is really the only thing I think I can't offer you . . .

ROBERTO. One never shares one's toothbrush, my friend. Or one's woman.

GERARDO. No . . .

ROBERTO. Goodnight.

Both GERARDO and ROBERTO exit in different directions to their respective bedrooms. A brief pause: silence and moonlight.

GERARDO *(voice off)*. Paulina, love . . . That doctor who helped me up on the road, he's staying the night. Love? He's staying because tomorrow he's going to help me pick up the car. Darling, are you listening?

PAULINA *(off, as if half-asleep)*. Yes, my love.

GERARDO *(voice off)*. He's a friend. So don't be

~~PAULINA. Tell him if he doesn't confess, I'll kill him.~~

~~GERARDO. But what if he's not guilty.~~

~~PAULINA. I'm in no hurry. Tell him I can wait months for him to confess.~~

~~GERARDO. Paulina, you're not listening to me. What can he confess if he's innocent?~~

~~PAULINA. If he's innocent? Then we're – then he's really screwed.~~

~~Lights go down.~~

~~Scene Two~~

~~Lunch. GERARDO and ROBERTO sit at a table.~~

~~ROBERTO still tied, but this time with his hands in front.~~

~~GERARDO has just finished serving plates of soup.~~

~~PAULINA watches from the terrace. She can see but not hear them. ROBERTO and GERARDO remain for several silent instants looking at the food.~~

~~GERARDO. You're not hungry, Dr Miranda?~~

~~ROBERTO. Roberto. My name is Roberto. Please treat me with the same familiarity as before. Maybe it will make me feel better.~~

~~GERARDO. I'd rather speak to you as if you were a client, Dr Miranda. That will help me out. I do think you should eat something.~~

~~ROBERTO. I'm not hungry.~~

~~GERARDO. Let me . . .~~

~~He fills a spoon with soup and feeds ROBERTO as if he were a baby. During the conversation which follows, he is continually feeding ROBERTO and feeding himself.~~

~~ROBERTO. She's mad. You'll have to excuse me for saying this, Gerardo, but your wife is mad, you know.~~

~~GERARDO. Bread?~~

~~ROBERTO. No, thanks.~~

~~Brief pause.~~

She should be receiving some sort of psychiatric treatment for –

GERARDO. You are her therapy, Doctor.

He cleans ROBERTO's mouth with a napkin.

ROBERTO. She's going to kill me.

GERARDO. Unless you confess.

ROBERTO. But what can I confess? What can I?

PAULINA. You may be aware, Doctor, that the secret police used some doctors as – consultants in torture sessions . . .

ROBERTO. The Medical Council gradually learned of these situations, and looked into them wherever possible.

GERARDO. She is convinced that you are one of those doctors. So unless you have a way of denying it . . .

ROBERTO. How could I deny it? I'd have to change my voice, prove that this is not my voice. There's no other evidence, nothing that –

GERARDO. She mentioned your skin.

ROBERTO. My skin?

GERARDO. And your smell.

ROBERTO. The fantasies of a diseased mind. She could have latched onto any man coming through that door . . .

GERARDO. Unfortunately, you came through that door.

ROBERTO. Look, Gerardo, I'm a quiet man. Anyone can see that I'm incapable of violence – violence of any sort sickens me. I come to my beach house, I wander on the beach, I watch the waves, I hunt for pebbles, I listen to my music –

GERARDO. Schubert?

ROBERTO. Schubert. Also Vivaldi and Mozart and Telemann. And for some reason yesterday I brought the Schubert with me in the car. And for some even more stupid reason I stopped on the motorway for

some lunatic waving his arms like a windmill. Look, it's up to you to get me out of here.

GERARDO. I know.

ROBERTO. Everything hurts, my ankles, my hands, my back. Couldn't you untie me a little, so –

GERARDO. Roberto, I want to be honest with you. There is only one way to save your life . . .

Brief pause.

I think we have to – indulge her.

ROBERTO. Indulge her.

GERARDO. Make her feel that we – that you, are willing to cooperate . . .

ROBERTO. I don't see how I can cooperate, given my rather peculiar position . . .

GERARDO. Indulge her, make her believe that you . . .

ROBERTO. Make her believe that I . . .

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ROBERTO. I haven't got anything to confess!

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ROBERTO (*raises his voice, indignant*). She's got nothing to pardon me for. I did nothing and there's nothing to confess. Do you understand?

Upon hearing ROBERTO's voice, PAULINA gets up from her seat on the terrace and starts to move towards them.

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GERARDO. Roberto, I –

PAULINA enters from the terrace.

PAULINA. Spot of trouble, darling?

GERARDO. None.

PAULINA. I thought you looked a little . . . agitated.

Brief pause.

Well, I see you've both finished your soup. No one can say I'm not a good cook, can they? That I'm not an ideal housewife? Little cup of coffee, Doctor? Teensy teensy one? Doctor, I am talking to you. Didn't your mother ever teach you that . . .

ROBERTO. Leave my mother out of this. Forbid you to mention my mother.

Brief pause.

PAULINA. I'm sorry, you're absolutely right. Your mother is not responsible for what you do. I don't know why men always insist on attacking mothers instead of –

GERARDO. Paulina, would you please do me the favour of leaving so we can continue our conversation?

PAULINA. Okay. I'll leave you boys to fix the world.

She leaves and turns.

Oh, and if he wants to piss, darling, just snap your fingers and I'll come running.

She returns to the same spot on the terrace, watching.

ROBERTO. She's absolutely insane.

GERARDO. When crazy people have power, you've got to indulge them. In her case, a confession –

ROBERTO. But what could a confession – ?

GERARDO. I think I understand Paulina's need. It coincides with a need of the whole country. The need to put into words what happened to us.

ROBERTO. You believe her, don't you?

GERARDO. If I thought you were guilty, would I be trying so desperately to save your –