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The Fausto Proyect

de
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traducción de
Jim McCarthy

(fragmento en inglés)

Characters

LUZ

FELA

MARIEL

NÉLIDA

The four actresses play all the roles. When a role is not allocated to a particular actress it can be played by any of them.

The following distribution of roles probably works best: Fela and Miguel are played by the same actress, Mariel and Ramón by another, Nélide and Julio by another, and Luz, Esneido and Viterbo by another. However, other combinations could also work.

ONE

LUZ

The baby's sick, Julio. She's very poorly. He can't stop coughing. The doctor came and gave her an injection, but he she's the same. I don't know what to do. I'm scared. *(Pause.)* Fifty years have passed but I remember our conversation as if it were only yesterday. I still seem to hear his voice at the other end of the phone, telling me he was leaving next day with some fishermen from Tazacorte. I can see him now with his green briefcase, his brown jacket and his blue and white striped shirt, arriving at the quayside. They would be there, getting ready for the trip. Are you going to La Palma –he would have asked them.

(JULIO on the quayside. RAMÓN on the boat.)

JULIO

Are you going to La Palma?

RAMÓN

To La Palma we're off.

FELA

...he'll have replied. Ramón. My husband.

JULIO

Is there room for one more?

LUZ

If only they'd said no. We can't take you.

RAMÓN

This isn't a passenger boat.

FELA

Perhaps that was what Ramón replied. Perhaps he didn't want to get involved in problems.

RAMÓN

This isn't a passenger boat.

JULIO

If it's about money, I can pay.

RAMÓN

No. It's not about money. I don't have a license for passengers. If I take you and the Civil Guard find out, they'll fine me, or worse, they'll lock us all up. You'll have to wait for the mail boat.

JULIO

It doesn't leave 'til Tuesday and I need to be in La Palma tomorrow.

LUZ

Hasn't he told you you can't go? Why are you insisting? Why don't you just turn around and walk away?

RAMÓN

Sorry. I don't want problems.

LUZ

Walk away, Julio. Walk away.

FELA

But Julio is thinking of Luz's call.

LUZ

The baby's sick.

JULIO

I'm begging you. My little baby's sick. She's very poorly. She might die. I can't wait three days.

FELA

Then Ramón will have looked at him through half-shut eyes, like he always did when he looked at the horizon.

LUZ

Tell him no!

FELA

And he thinks about me and our daughters.

RAMÓN

Well, if there's room for three there's room for four.

(LUZ stifles a groan.)

JULIO

Thank you. Thank you.

(RAMÓN and JULIO shake hands.)

RAMÓN

We sail tonight. Be here about two, but don't tell anyone. The fewer people skulking around here the better.

JULIO

I get you. See you later, then. Don't go without me.

(JULIO leaves. ESNEIDO appears next to RAMÓN.)

ESNEIDO

Why did you say yes?

FELA

It's Ramón's brother, Eliberto, whom everyone called Esneido.

RAMÓN

It makes no difference. There's room enough. Even if everyone on the quayside wanted to come. As soon as we reach port tomorrow it'll be thanks a lot and goodbye. Tell Miguel.

ESNEIDO

And do we tell Fafo?

RAMÓN

I'll deal with that.

ESNEIDO

Well, let's hope nothing happens.

MARIEL

That nothing happens.

FELA AND LUZ

That nothing happens.

MARIEL

So three fishermen from Tazacorte, Ramón, Miguel and Eliberto, whom they all called Esneido, will share the night crossing with the mechanic from El Paso who can't wait to get home because his daughter might die.

LUZ

Fifty years have passed but I remember it as if it had just happened. I was at home, in this same room, finishing folding the children's clothes. Then I heard it, downstairs, at the foot of the stairs. The telephone. A cursed invention.

(The phone rings.)

JULIO

Luz, it's me.

LUZ

Julio.

JULIO

How's the baby now.

LUZ

The baby's sick, Julio. She can't stop coughing. The doctor came this morning to give her an injection.

JULIO

An injection? Why?

LUZ

He says it'll make her better, but she's the same. I don't know what to do. I'm scared.

JULIO

It'll be alright. Stay calm. Tomorrow morning I'll be home.

LUZ

Tomorrow?

JULIO

But say nothing. I met some fishermen from Tazacorte who are bringing me. Tomorrow ask for a lift and get down to the harbour early to meet me. Tell Mili to get you there in his car. But don't tell anybody I'm on that boat because they don't have a licence and I'm going on the quiet. You understand?

LUZ

Yes. But which boat is it?

JULIO

A fishing boat called Fausto.

LUZ

Fausto.

JULIO

I'll be in the harbour before nine. But say nothing.

LUZ

No, don't worry.

JULIO

And as soon as I get there we'll head straight for the city with the baby and they'll see her at the hospital. I've got to hang up now. I'm going to get my things ready.

LUZ

Alright.

JULIO

I'll see you tomorrow, my love.

LUZ

Safe journey.

MARIEL

And then, like a premonition.

LUZ

Be careful.

(Pause.)

FELA

Fausto. Good name for a boat.

MARIEL

Wasn't Fausto the one who made a pact with the devil?

NÉLIDA

Don't mention the devil. Not in this play.

FELA

A lot's been said about the Fausto.

MARIEL

True enough.

FELA

And a lot written.

LUZ

Rivers of ink, as they say.

NÉLIDA

Oceans, more like.

MARIEL

A whole mountain of newspapers.

FELA

Articles, interviews.

LUZ

They wrote a book about it a few years back.

MARIEL

'Fausto: History and Myth of a Tragedy'.

NÉLIDA

And they made a documentary by Íker...

ALL THREE

...Jiménez.

NÉLIDA

Jiménez. That's the one.

FELA

And the latest to come were the theatre people.

MARIEL

They asked a lot of questions.

LUZ

They wanted to know all about it too.

MARIEL

We're interested in the story of the boat. But above all we're interested to know what happened to you.

NÉLIDA

That's what they told us.

FELA

What happened to you.

MARIEL

To write a play.

LUZ

Well, something like a play... more like a project.

NÉLIDA

That's what they said.

LUZ

Something that'll be re-made at each performance.

FELA

That changes each time it's performed.

MARIEL

So that's why we're here. In this project about us.

FELA

The Fausto women.

LUZ

But hasn't it all been said? Is there anything left to tell?

NÉLIDA

What's known is known. There's no more.

FELA

And what's known is that on that night, July 20, 1968, a mechanic from El Paso arrived at the quayside at Las Puntas, in Frontera, to travel on board the Fausto.