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Ravensridge
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*More Great Plays From
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Militant Language
a play with sand

by Sean Christopher Lewis

5 Males, 1 Female

Synopsis: Set in modern Iraq, this savage contemporary fable ignites when a pair of American soldiers return from a routine surveillance detail covered in blood. The barracks are no safe haven. The Captain fights to control his troops as they walk the high-wires of a secret homosexual affair, the sexual abuse of a female soldier, a missing Iraqi boy, and a baby found in the desert, ala Moses. This play explores how violence begets violence, lies beget lies, truth is born from trust, and understanding war makes as much sense as sand raining from the heavens.

Shakespeare, Moses and Joe Papp
by Ernest Joselovitz

6 Males, 1 Female

Synopsis: A crackling human drama that chronicles the epic battle between New York City planning czar Robert Moses and impresario Joseph Papp over the institution of free Shakespeare in Central Park.

RAVENSRIDGE

A play by
T.S. Cook

“RAVENSRIDGE” had its world premiere on February 23, 2008, at the Fremont Centre Theatre, 1000 Fremont Avenue, South Pasadena, CA. It was produced by Lisa Reynolds and Emily Button. Set design was by Victoria Profitt, light design by Carol Doehring, costume design by Lois Tedrow. The production was directed by James Reynolds.

The cast was as follows:

Major Davidykov - Robert Trebor

Will Torrey - Vaughn Armstrong

Richard Miller - Jon Sklaroff

Lilly Matthews - Emily Adams

Mikhail Tamarygen - Jed Reynolds

SETTING:

Klebnikov Prison, Moscow.

TIME:

1992, two years after the collapse of the Soviet Union

CHARACTER LIST:

WILL TORREY, 40, American steelworker

MAJOR VIKTOR DAVIDYKOV, 50, Russian law enforcement officer

LILLY MATTHEWS, 28, American steelworker

MIKHAIL TAMARYGEN, 30, Russian junior officer

RICHARD MILLER, 41, American businessman
(doubles as dead bodyguard)

GUARD, Russian prison guard
(non-speaking)
(doubles as U.S. Marine, US Marshal's officer, union member)

List of music referenced in "Ravensridge" and listed authors

"Joe Hill" Hayes/Robinson

"Dark As A Dungeon" Merle Travis

"Daniel Prayed" Carter & Ralph Stanley

"Never Leave Harlan Alive" Darrell Scott

"Which Side Are You On?" Florence Reece

RAVENSRIDGE

SCENE 1

(From the wings of a dark stage, Lilly sings.)

LILLY: I dreamed I saw Joe Hill last night
Alive as you or me.
But Joe, I said, you're ten years dead.
I never died says he,
I never died says he.

VOICES: What do you want?... Not permitted... Hey, watch it! Let go! Let go, you son of a bitch...

(Two sharp buzzing sounds. A short strangled scream. The sound of a body hitting the ground hard, bones breaking.)

(A spot downstage. A man's broken, bloody body on a gurney, attended by a police guard.)

(Viktor enters. He goes to the body and examines it.)

VIKTOR: Very well.

(The body is pushed off by the guard. Viktor follows.)

VIKTOR: Time of death approximately 1730 hours. Cause of death, massive skull fracture, resulting from a fall. Fall resulting from a fist fight with suspect.

(Reveal a grim holding cell upstage. Torrey sits on the bed, dressed in a dark red prison jump suit. He wears handcuffs. He is cold, disoriented, afraid.)

MIKHAIL: *(off)* Stand on the designated spot.

WILL: What?

MIKHAIL: *(off)* Stand on the designated spot.

(Will slowly rises, favoring a very painful left side. He moves slowly to a mark on the floor.)

MIKHAIL: Head to the front.

(Complies. A flash as his picture is taken.)

MIKHAIL: *(off)* Head to the side.

(Another flash.)

MIKHAIL: *(off)* Any marks or tattoos?

WILL: Eagle. On my shoulder.

(Now Mikhail, a junior officer in uniform, appears in the cell with a clipboard.)

MIKHAIL: State your name.

WILL: William Hayes Torrey.

MIKHAIL: Age?

WILL: Fifty-one.

MIKHAIL: Occupation?

WILL: Steelworker. Local 688.

MIKHAIL: What's that?

WILL: That's a union.

MIKHAIL: Date of birth?

WILL: June 5, 1941.

MIKHAIL: Place of birth?

WILL: Ravensridge, West Virginia.

MIKHAIL: United States of America.

WILL: Yes.

(Mikhail snaps the clipboard shut and turns to go.)

WILL: Wait a minute. I've been in here all night. When do I get to talk to somebody?

MIKHAIL: Didn't I just talk to you?

(Mikhail exits the cell. Lights fade.)

(Lights up to reveal Viktor sitting in the interrogation room, reading his notes. The room is furnished with two chairs and a table only. One telephone. Some surveillance cameras.)

(Viktor puts down the clipboard and picks up the phone.)

VIKTOR: Bring him now.

(The guard escorts Will into Viktor's presence. He removes Will's cuffs, then salutes and leaves.)

VIKTOR: Sit.

(Will complies. The pain in his left side is terrific.)

VIKTOR: William Hayes Torrey. Steelworker from....

WILL: Ravensridge. *(He makes a note.)*

VIKTOR: Oh, raven, like the bird. A big black bird, is it not?

WILL: Yeah.

VIKTOR: Do you have a nick-name? What do they call you at home, William?

VIKTOR: They call me Will.

VIKTOR: Perfect.

WILL: Suits me.

VIKTOR: Americans have a gift for making things simple. Scotty. Hank. On the contrary, Russians like things complicated and formal. I, for example, am Major Viktor Viktorovich Davidykov.

WILL: Major?

VIKTOR: You see? You call me by one name already.

WILL: The one name that makes my hairs stand up.

VIKTOR: Hairs stand?...Ah, yes.

(He writes the phrase in notebook.)

VIKTOR: Of course. You are afraid that I am some kind of political prosecutor. Set your mind at rest. I am MVD...

WILL: Don't sound any better.

VIKTOR: We're just cops, that's all. I don't care about your politics. It only matters to me that you killed a man.

WILL: I didn't kill him! It was an accident!

VIKTOR: An accident, that you traveled halfway around the world?

WILL: No...

VIKTOR: So, not an accident...

WILL: An accident that he fell!

VIKTOR: Not an accident that you fought.

WILL: The son of a bitch zapped me with a cattle prod. Twice. Right here.

(Will lifts his shirt revealing some ugly reddish marks.)

VIKTOR: The doctor should look at that. We don't want you to die of natural causes. Where's the fun in that? Can you tell me the full name of your traveling companion?

WILL: Lilly...Lillian Matthews. Where is she? You've got no right to hold her.

VIKTOR: We are not holding her.

WILL: She's got nothing to do with this. She was nowhere near when the fight started.

VIKTOR: There are no charges against her, at the moment. We are just concerned, a young girl alone in a strange and dangerous city. I could arrange for her to visit. Would it put you more at ease if she visited you?

WILL: Yes.

VIKTOR: I will make it so.

WILL: Do I get a phone call?

VIKTOR: No.

WILL: What about a lawyer?

VIKTOR: (*Viktor is amused*) You want a Russian lawyer?

WILL: Better than nothing.

VIKTOR: Not really. Besides, you may not need a lawyer. The work before us...before me...is to determine what actually happened and charge you accordingly. Or turn you loose. So you see, it is to your advantage to co-operate.

WILL: Said the spider to the fly.

VIKTOR: Said the... (*studies phrase book , gets it, writes...*) Spider to the fly. Very good.

WILL: Where the hell am I?

VIKTOR: Klebnikov. I don't think you appreciate, Will Torrey from Ravensridge, West Virginia, the history that surrounds you here. Klebnikov was one of the first prisons built by Stalin. The whole history of modern Russia can be read in these walls. Thousands of people, thousands of years, paying for their thousands of crimes.

WILL: How many of 'em were innocent?

VIKTOR: "Innocent?" I don't think I know this word.

WILL: Means the feller didn't do it.

VIKTOR: Oh, that. No, no, no...Did you know the cell where you sleep held Melnikov, the master forger. And the Malanishya twins. I personally put the twins in here, for their murders of little boys. Political heretics and religious fanatics, muggers and rapists and thieves. This was home to them all. And in the basement five tiled rooms, with drains.

WILL: Showers?

VIKTOR: No.

VIKTOR: Now I'll ask the questions, if you don't mind. Why are you here?

WILL: I was arrested.

VIKTOR: Why are you in Russia?

WILL: Because of the strike.

VIKTOR: A labor action?

WILL: Yes.

VIKTOR: In America?

WILL: Why is that so surprising?

VIKTOR: Never mind. Go on.

WILL: Ravensridge Steel is about the only steady work in my part of the country. My father worked there, my uncle...

VIKTOR: Do you owe your soul to the company store?

WILL: No. You got to buy some new records, Major. Ravensridge isn't like that, like coal towns, Harlan County and such. It had always been a good place to work. The management was local folks, not pretending to upper class...

VIKTOR: Upper class? Did you say upper class?

WILL: So what?

VIKTOR: I've never heard an American talk about class before.

WILL: We never used to. We never used to have to.

VIKTOR: Go on.

WILL: Well, our contract's about to expire and we sit down in the conference room of the Holiday Inn, I'm on the Negotiation Committee, see. And some guys come and sit down across from us, and that's where the trouble starts. 'Cause it's not the same guys we're used to dealing with, the local people. It's a whole new team, all of them lawyers we find out later, lawyers from Pittsburgh who specialize in whittling unions down and busting them. They got a new Governor in Charleston and now they're going on the attack. Bunch of Goddamn suits, sent 'em in fight us on every point. They want to soften the safety rules. They want to modify seniority. They want to cut benefits and pension. Well, bull-shit!

VIKTOR: So you went on strike.

WILL: Hell, no. No sane person takes a union out on strike these days. The odds are stacked against you like you wouldn't believe. All the Federal Laws are against you. The newspapers and the cops are against you. Even in a nothing town like Ravensridge, there's people who blame the Union for keeping them down. That's bullshit but that's what they think. And they're real ready to cross that picket line and take your job.

VIKTOR: Scabs.

WILL: You got that word right.

(Viktor writes in his notebook.)

VIKTOR: Go on. This is interesting.

WILL: You writing a book?

VIKTOR: I study Americans. It's part of my job.

WILL: An American's not an American if you take away his freedom.

VIKTOR: Ah, "freedom."

WILL: What's so funny?

VIKTOR: In the squad room, we were making bets how long it would be before you would use the "F" word.

WILL: Yeah? How'd you do?

(Viktor checks his watch)

VIKTOR: I won. Please, continue.

WILL: September 13, we're on the floor just doing our regular work and all of sudden the managers tell us to leave. Drop our tools where we stand and leave. And as we're going out one door, scabs are coming in the next, picking up our tools and taking our jobs.

VIKTOR: They just took your jobs? Like that?

WILL: Called a lockout.

VIKTOR: And what did the authorities do?

WILL: What authorities you talking about?

VIKTOR: The government.

WILL: Bought and paid for. Only one thing we could do: Call a strike back on 'em. Somebody puts a gun to your head...

VIKTOR: I do this. *(He throws up his hands in surrender.)*

WILL: Well, we couldn't do that, Major. This was our homes, our families, our whole lives.

VIKTOR: Yes, I see.

(The telephone rings. Viktor answers it.)

VIKTOR: Yes? All right...Miss Matthews is downstairs.

WILL: Can I see her?

VIKTOR: What is your relationship to her?

WILL: She's in the local. Motor pool.

VIKTOR: Motor pool?

WILL: She's a truck mechanic.

VIKTOR: That little girl? Is a truck mechanic?

WILL: Yeah, why not?

VIKTOR: Interesting.

WILL: Can't you just leave her out of it?

VIKTOR: I haven't had time to investigate her role in this.

WILL: I told you, she was all the way on the other side of the lobby. She had no part of it.

VIKTOR: I'll be the judge of that, thank you.

WILL: You'd better not put her in one of these...

VIKTOR: I'd better not what?

(Will shuts his mouth.)

VIKTOR: You are being very protective of her.

WILL: Well, yeah. I'm senior. Don't you have young cops around here that you protect?

VIKTOR: Yes.

WILL: Same thing.

VIKTOR: I wonder.

(The door to the room opens, admitting Lilly, escorted by Mikhail.)

VIKTOR: I will leave you alone...except for the cameras, of course.

(Viktor and Mikhail exit. Lilly and Will embrace but without much warmth.)

LILLY: Will, what the hell happened?

WILL: I'm sorry, Lil. I...I was this close to him. But this bodyguard steps in and starts getting pushy. And all I can think of is the folks back home, and this guy's responsible for it all and I'm this close. Then this thug hits me with an electric shock and...

LILLY: The famous Torrey temper.

WILL: Don't start with that. What was I supposed to do?

LILLY: I don't know. Back off, maybe. We're not in some honky-tonk out on County Line Road. Jesus...

WILL: Is that what you told them back home? That I lost my temper and started a fight?

LILLY: Think they'd believe me?

WILL: I hit him and he fell down the stairs. It was an accident.

LILLY: Okay, okay. I haven't told them anything. I tried to call but the phones are really screwed up here. I stood in this glass booth at a post office for an hour trying to get through to home, people staring at me like I'm a monkey in a zoo. I'll keep trying.

WILL: You've got to keep trying, Lil.

LILLY: I...

WILL: There's rooms in the basement here I don't want to end up in.

LILLY: I went to the Embassy. They said seventy-two hours.

WILL: What?

LILLY: That's the longest they can keep you, unless they charge you.

WILL: They never told me that. These cops lied to me.

LILLY: They seem pretty handy at that.

WILL: At the Embassy, did you mention...our American friend?

LILLY: Yeah. They perked up some at that. But they're not going to do a thing for us. I don't know what to do. They told me you could get thirty years.

WILL: They told me you're in line to be a suspect too.

LILLY: Me?

WILL: You've got to get out of the country now.

LILLY: Can't. They took my passport. Will, I... I know I can come across like a screaming bitch, like just now, but I'm really really scared.

(Will puts his arm around her.)

WILL: We'll get through it.

(Lights in interrogation room dim. Lights up stage left. Viktor and Mikhail watch a TV monitor.)

VIKTOR: Not emotionally involved, that much is clear.

MIKHAIL: I talked to her a little bit.

VIKTOR: What did you think?

MIKHAIL: A nice girl. Simple, talks straight.

VIKTOR: So you like her?

MIKHAIL: No, Major, I was just...

VIKTOR: I'm assigning you to her.

MIKHAIL: Surveillance?

VIKTOR: No. In the open. Go with her, in the streets. It lets the other side know she's under our protection. Lets her know we could still pick her up, anytime. You can't say it's the most unpleasant thing I've ever asked you to do.

MIKHAIL: No, Major.

(Blackout.)

SCENE 2

(Lilly sings off stage.)

LILLY: Where it's dark as a dungeon
And damps as the dew.
Where the dangers are many
And the pleasure are few.
Where the rain never falls,
The sun never shines,
It's dark as a dungeon
Way down in the mines.

(Lights up in interrogation room. Will and Viktor across the table.)

WILL: You lied.

VIKTOR: I'm Russian.

WILL: That's an excuse?

VIKTOR: More like a tradition.

WILL: You have to let me go after seventy-two hours.

VIKTOR: Who told you that?

WILL: Is it true?

VIKTOR: For your peace of mind, I have assigned one of my best men as security for your Miss Matthews. Mikhail Tamarygen. You met him the other day.

WILL: Do you think she's in danger?

VIKTOR: Before too long they will connect you with her.

WILL: Who?

VIKTOR: Chechnyan Mafia. The man you killed was one of them. The nightclub, where it happened, they own it. Brutal, stupid gangsters from a stupid, brutal country. They murder and rape and sell girls and drugs and then build casinos where they go celebrate.

WILL: Why don't you stop it?

VIKTOR: Believe me, once upon a time, we would have collapsed them in a week. We used to be such a beautiful police state. Now, they're protected, everybody's getting something on the left...under the table, you would say. And we can do nothing. We are pathetic.

WILL: What happened to you?

VIKTOR: You happened to us.

WILL: I'm not Chechnyan.

VIKTOR: You're American. What you did was worse. Continue. You let scabs take your jobs.

WILL: We didn't *let* scabs take our jobs! We were locked out!

VIKTOR: You let yourselves be locked out...

WILL: You don't know what the fuck you're talking about!

VIKTOR: Very well, I'll stop--you talk.

WILL: It wasn't just scabs they brought in. There were all these big guys dressed in black, private security. They set up roadblocks all over the county, harassed our members day and night. So, it's about this time...I remember it was at one of the barbecues...and we were all so frustrated, and somebody says, you know, we don't even really know who owns the mill. Used to be you'd know the guy who was your boss. He'd live up on the hill. He wasn't your friend but he was kinda your neighbor. That's all changed. Now, there's a name on the gate, Three Rivers Corporation, but nobody knows who Three Rivers is. All we know is that they're acting like a bunch of criminals. So we shaved some cash off the strike fund and hired a private detective, a Wall Street guy.

(Viktor writes in his notebook.)

VIKTOR: A private eye! Wonderful! What did your Wall Street "dick" come up with?

WILL: Turns out it was a real puzzle box, interlocking this and shadow that. But three weeks later he comes back and takes us officers into the back room, shuts the door and tells us we were right all along. Three Rivers is owned by criminals. By one criminal, anyway: Richard Miller.

(Viktor reacts.)

WILL: You know that name.

VIKTOR: This name appeared in your arrest report.

WILL: But you heard of Richard Miller before that.

VIKTOR: I think so.

WILL: Don't bullshit me, Major. Miller 's a big fish. He's wanted in the U.S. for stock fraud, before he ran. He's an international fugitive and he's found a home here in Russia. The US government has asked a dozen times for you guys to turn Miller over for extradition. That just echoed down the holler and died.

VIKTOR: So, you found out Miller was in Moscow and you came to kill him.

WILL: God, no. Not to kill him. To talk to him. To tell him about the people back home and what they're going through and try to get this thing behind us.

VIKTOR: (*amused*) And you thought you could just walk up to him, stick out your hand and...Howdy Pardner.

WILL: Something like that, yeah.

VIKTOR: Americans...What stopped you?

WILL: Like I said: a goon with a cattle prod.

VIKTOR: A goon in the employment of Citizen Bereberinsky, the richest man in Russia. Everybody knows Miller is under his wing.

WILL: I know that now.

VIKTOR: Why did the union send you? And Miss Matthews?

WILL: Well, I'm kinda known 'round home as being a guy who doesn't take any shit.

VIKTOR: I believe it.

WILL: Besides, we were the most qualified in international relations. Meaning we were the only ones who had valid passports. Lilly and the bluegrass band went to Holland once.

VIKTOR: And you?

WILL: I was in Germany, a few years ago.

VIKTOR: Where?

WILL: I, uh... I went to see my little brother Mike. He was in an Army hospital.

VIKTOR: Wounded?

WILL: Yes.

VIKTOR: In Iraq.

WILL: Wounded in Iraq. Died in Germany.

VIKTOR: Shit happens.

WILL: Well, thank you, for the sympathy.

VIKTOR: I am supposed to mourn the death of an American Mercenary?

WILL: He wasn't a mercenary!

VIKTOR: He volunteered.

WILL: He got laid off. He couldn't find work.

VIKTOR: Ah, American class mobility.

WILL: What?

VIKTOR: From working class to unemployed class to military class.

WILL: There is no military class in America.

VIKTOR: Even you can't believe that. Anyway, I am sorry. For his children the most.

WILL: He didn't have any.

VIKTOR: What is going to happen to the Torrey name then?

WILL: What do you mean?

VIKTOR: Mike didn't have children. You don't have children.

VIKTOR: How do you know?

VIKTOR: Because you would have used them by now. (*whiny voice*)
Please let me go, I'm a daddy, please, please...

WILL: You are one heartless son of a bitch. I pray God has mercy on you.

VIKTOR: Well, I thank you, Brother Torrey. You are a true Christian.

WILL: And what the hell do you know about it?

VIKTOR: Nothing. I'm a godless Russian.

WILL: You say that with such pride. Just like before you said you were a liar, real proud of that too. You don't know the meaning of the word "innocent," put hundreds of poor souls through this damn place. Seems like you're about as far down in darkness as a man can get.

VIKTOR: Not much light in that cell of yours either.

WILL: There's a light there.

VIKTOR: Jesus.

(Will doesn't reply.)

VIKTOR: Good Christian all your life? Church every Sunday. Or at least often enough to keep your wife from nagging. She's the real Christian in the family, right?

WILL: She's a better one than me, that's the truth.

VIKTOR: Because you've been known to stray from the path. You drink a little too much. You got a temper. And when somebody beats your poker hand, you'll shout "God damn it all!" I bet you do that.

WILL: God forgives me my little slips.

VIKTOR: Like murder?

WILL: God knows that wasn't murder.

VIKTOR: Maybe. Or maybe He's trying to make up His mind about you, just like I am. Maybe God's got his own Klebnikov Prison up there.

WILL: I reckon you'll find out.

VIKTOR: You reckon I..Will Torrey, I think you just damned me to Hell.

WILL: You won't need my help getting there.

VIKTOR: Have you been praying? In your cell?

WILL: You can't stop me from praying to my God.

VIKTOR: No, of course not. Not anymore, I should say. We're an enlightened police force now. I've got a dozen guests downstairs who bow to Mecca five times a day. Not that it's going to do them any good.

WILL: If it eases their suffering...

VIKTOR: Terrorists and bomb-makers? Why should God ease their suffering?

WILL: He is merciful.

VIKTOR: In the way poison is merciful. He talks the rag-heads into strapping on bombs...

WILL: My brother died...

VIKTOR: Your brother died propping up a family business called Kuwait. Do you think he prayed to God in his last minutes?

WILL: I know he did. I prayed with him.

VIKTOR: But it didn't save his life, did it? Think he prayed to come home safe? Think he prayed to have children?

WILL: Maybe.

VIKTOR: I'll bet you prayed to have children. I'll bet you prayed for no strike, I'll bet you prayed for protection on your trip to Russia. So, Will, how's it paying off so far, all this knee time?

WILL: Why are you doing this?

VIKTOR: Because I don't get the chance very often.

WILL: To destroy a Christian?

VIKTOR: To destroy an American. It's a time-honored pastime inside these walls.

WILL: So, if I just said what you wanted to hear...I killed the man in cold blood, pushed him down the stairs, just to watch him fall...would that be it? Would you leave me be?

VIKTOR: No. No, we have so much more to talk about.

WILL: Like what?

VIKTOR: Like what? Like Local 688. Let us sit upon the ground and tell legends of Local 688.

WILL: You say that like it's a joke.

VIKTOR: Because it is.

WILL: Think I could black your eye 'fore they come a-running?

VIKTOR: Take a poke....If American labor unions had any balls at all, you'd be running that country. You used to be a force, you used to *be* America. What happened to you?

(Will says nothing.)

VIKTOR: I'll tell you: You started to believe it.

WILL: Believe what?

VIKTOR: The big lie! The American lie. Every man a king. Your home is your castle. Up by your bootstraps. You don't need collective action, you can make it on your own. Don't ask the rich to pay because you too might be rich someday, someday, someday. Everybody's strong enough and free enough to build his own little pile. What I've got is mine: my house, my car, my TV, my... microscopic slice of Wall Street. I am a player in the great game called America. Ha! When, in fact, you're nothing but a big dumb worker. You don't own those things, they own you, at 18%. You're just a consumer. Part of a... how do you say... market share. If you stopped buying all that crap tomorrow, you'd disappear, and nobody would miss you, and the scab or the Chinaman would still have your job.

WILL: You're wrong.

VIKTOR: Oh, I'm sorry. Maybe you're paying 22%?

(Will's reaction suggests that Victor has hit the right number.)

WILL: Nobody runs my life.

VIKTOR: Maybe they should.

WILL: You mean like Communism.

VIKTOR: Oh, you said the "C" word. I hope there's nobody listening.

WILL: You're one, aren't you?

VIKTOR: You mean a "Red?" A "Commie?"

WILL: Sure you are. You'd have to be, right? It's only been, what, two years since they booted those guys out? And you been a cop a lot longer than that. I'll bet you don't get to be a major if you don't play the game.

VIKTOR: Am I now or have I ever been? The answer is yes. Would you like to see my old Party card?

WILL: Real proud of that too, are you?

VIKTOR: I am.

WILL: All them millions killed and sent off to prison camps?

VIKTOR: Please. I was 13 when Stalin died.

WILL: What about...what's his name? Said he was going to bury us.

VIKTOR: Typical Khrushchev got everything backwards. You buried us!

WILL: Secret police 'round every corner. Can't own nothing, can't go nowhere. Can't even get out of the way of an atomic cloud, 'cause nobody's got the guts to tell you its a-coming your way.

VIKTOR: You need to buy a new record, Will.

WILL: Look, you can't be in an American labor union for fifteen years and not run across your socialists now and then. Flat out Communists too. I met 'em. I had beers with 'em. Good folks, care about things, want to make it better. But at the end of the day, there's a flaw in that.

VIKTOR: A flaw?

WILL: The flaw is...People are different. They want to be their own person. They want to keep what they make. They want to participate in the government, but they sure as hell don't want to *belong* to it. 'Cause if you don't have freedom...

VIKTOR: Ah, I knew we would end up back at freedom.

WILL: Okay, well, every time I say the word, you make a joke...

VIKTOR: Freedom! Freedom! Freedom!

WILL: So fuck you! I pushed the son-of-a-bitch and he died. Put me on trial or send me home.

VIKTOR: You think those are the only two alternatives?

(Viktor picks up the phone.)

VIKTOR: Draw up arrest papers for Lillian Matthews, an American citizen.

(Will's fortitude snaps. He hangs his head.)

WILL: No...wait, please. Don't do that. Please.

VIKTOR: Cancel.

(Viktor hangs up the phone. Stands.)

WILL: Thank you.

VIKTOR: Don't thank me. Thank you, Jesus.

(Viktor walks out. Will buries his face in his hands.)

(Blackout.)

SCENE 3

(Lilly and Mikhail appear, strolling together. She laughs.)

LILLY: That was silliest thing I've even seen. In some paintings he's there, in some he's not, then there he is again.

MIKHAIL: The career of Comrade Leader Stalin. Very...uneven?

LILLY: There's been some Presidents I wish we could forget.

MIKHAIL: Then you should practice history in the Russian style. All you need is...

(Stuck for the word, he pantomimes erasing.)

LILLY: An eraser.

MIKHAIL: Eraser, yes. Here, would you like to sit? It has a view.

(They sit on a park bench.)

MIKHAIL: So, you liked the Museum?

LILLY: It took my mind off things.

MIKHAIL: Maybe tomorrow, you would like to see Arbat? Like an artists' district. Theaters, books.

LILLY: You're awfully nice, to show me around on your day off.

MIKHAIL: It is my pleasure.

LILLY: Or is this really your day off?

(No answer.)

LILLY: So, I'm basically under arrest too?

MIKHAIL: No. I am keeping an eye on you, is all. For your own good. This can be a dangerous city. A pretty American girl like you. I would not like to see anything bad happen.

LILLY: I might become an embarrassment to the Moscow Police.

MIKHAIL: Better to be a friend to the Moscow Police.

LILLY: As represented by you.

MIKHAIL: At your service.

LILLY: What's happening to Will? Can you tell me anything?

MIKHAIL: I cannot.

LILLY: I worry about him.

MIKHAIL: You are related to Mr. Torrey? He is, perhaps, an uncle?

LILLY: No. I only knew him a little bit, before they sent us off together. I know that Will Torrey has a temper. He can say things in the heat of the moment that he doesn't mean. And do things.

MIKHAIL: You think this is what happened at the casino?

LILLY: He didn't mean to kill that guy, I know that. But now I'm worried he's going to say something and get himself a life sentence, or worse.

MIKHAIL: Of course, that is possible. But Mr. Torrey will get a fair hearing. Major Davidykov is a just man. With opinions, but just.

LILLY: What opinions?

MIKHAIL: Like a lot of people from the old regime. They heard so much so bad about Americans.

LILLY: Can't Will get another inspector. Someone young, like you.

MIKHAIL: Believe me, you want Viktor . Others are worse. The Major is a good man, if sad.

LILLY: Why is he sad?

MIKHAIL: His losses.

(Lilly starts to ask further but he holds up a hand. He will not talk further about it. A few beats of silence.)

MIKHAIL: Mr. Torrey said you were in a band.

LILLY: Yeah. Pure old-time bluegrass. I play mandolin and sing.

MIKHAIL: Sing something for me, please.

LILLY: Here?

MIKHAIL: Russians are not shy about singing in public.

LILLY: You sing something then.

MIKHAIL: I am on duty, as you have observed.

LILLY: Coward.

(He smiles at her spirit. He pulls his badge from his tunic and gives it to her to hold. He clears his throat and launches into a few bars of a Russian classic love song.)

MIKHAIL: By summer night sleeping, think of me, By winter night sleeping, think of me.

LILLY: That's beautiful.

MIKHAIL: Flattery from a professional...

LILLY: No, I mean it. It's... you... you're the first Russian I've heard who didn't sound like a lion tamer.

MIKHAIL: I am honored to be your first. Your turn.

(Takes his badge back, pins it on.)

MIKHAIL: That's an order.