

Morte

By

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2018

Inspired by global conflicts, including WW1 and WW11

Cast of Characters

- Rasputia: 93. Motherly figure. Great aunt to Meredith. Secretly ill. Mildly depressed and 'crazy' from old age. Italian. Dressed in a long vintage skirt, blouse and ballerina flats. Older sister of MAY. Aunt of RUTH.
- Meredith: 23. Family orientated. Great niece to Rasputia. Ambitious, determined. Italian. Dress unspecified - 1960 style
- May: Spirit. Mother of MEREDITH, daughter of RUTH. Ghost, died in war. Italian. Dressed in white silk dress.
- Ruth: Spirit. Sister of RASPUTIA, mother of MAY. Ghost, died in war. Italian. Dressed in white silk dress.

Scene 3

Afternoon. Three black flats located upstage, separated by negative space. This space forms the frame for a series of vignettes. CS a suitcase.

BLUE SPOTLIGHT ON SUITCASE.

RASPUTIA walks on stage from USL to the suitcase. Back arched, shaky hands.

RASPUTIA

(Grabs suitcase)

Per sempre aspetterò...[Forever I wait...]

MEREDITH enters stage left.

MEREDITH

Great aunt RASPUTIA? Here, let me help you with that.

MEREDITH tries to grab the suitcase from RASPUTIA. RASPUTIA tugs it away, distressed.

RASPUTIA

(insistently)

Let me tell you something about this suitcase... Your grandmother, who was my sister, and your mother, both went off to war to get themselves shot! I wont - I cant open this suitcase. I promised them I would open it with them only upon their return...

RASPUTIA starts to cry.

MEREDITH

(Hugs RASPUTIA, pause before speaking) May I open it?

RASPUTIA shocked by MEREDITH'S request. RASPUTIA relents upon realizing MEREDITH'S family history is contained inside.

RASPUTIA

When the right time comes...

RASPUTIA slightly hunched over, turns to her left, lightly coughing. MEREDITH walks to DSC and kneels behind the suitcase.

RED SPOTLIGHT ON RASPUTIA

MAY and RUTH enter from stage left and stage right.

BLUE SPOTLIGHT ON MEREDITH

RASPUTIA, MAY and RUTH form a line CS, facing the audience. RASPUTIA in the middle standing, MAY on the left kneeling, RUTH on the right kneeling.

RED SPOTLIGHT ON RUTH, MAY AND RASPUTIA

SPOTLIGHT TURNS WHITE ON RUTH

RUTH stands up, steps to her right and takes a piece of paper and a pen out of her pocket. She begins to write.

MEREDITH

(opens suitcase and picks up RUTH'S letter. Begins to read)

"My dearest sister RASPUTIA, please forgive me, for I will not return from war. Take care of my daughter MAY, and treat her as your own. Stay safe RASPUTIA. I will forever be thankful. Per sempre aspetterò...[Forever I wait...]"

SPOTLIGHT ON RUTH GOES BACK TO RED

MEREDITH puts RUTH'S letter down. RUTH steps back to her kneeling position next to MEREDITH.

SPOTLIGHT WHITE TURNS WHITE ON MAY

MAY stands up, steps to her left and takes a piece of paper and a pen out of her pocket. She begins to write.

MEREDITH

(picks up MAY'S letter)

"Dear Aunt RASPUTIA, thank you for everything you have done. I have always seen you like a mother. Please forgive me, for I will not return from war. Take care of my daughter MEREDITH. Treat her as your own. I owe you my life, and will forever be grateful. Per sempre aspetterò...[Forever I wait...]"

SPOTLIGHT ON MAY TURNS BACK TO RED

MEREDITH puts MAY'S letter down. MAY steps back to her kneeling position next to MEREDITH.

SPOTLIGHT TURNS WHITE ON RASPUTIA

RASPUTIA steps forward and takes a piece of paper and a pen out of her pocket. She begins to write.

MEREDITH

(picks up RASPUTIA'S letter)

"My great niece MEREDITH, recently I have become terminally ill. Please forgive me, for I am already too far gone. Take care of yourself, live a happy life. Dont let history repeat itself. Per sempre aspetterò...[Forever I wait...]"

RED SPOTLIGHT ON RUTH, MAY AND RASPUTIA

RASPUTIA remains in her position. MEREDITH puts RASPUTIA'S letter down. RUTH and MAY walk on either side of RASPUTIA.

RUTH, MAY and RASPUTIA walk forward behind MEREDITH, RUTH and MAY place their outer hands on MEREDITH'S shoulders.

3 SECOND FREEZE, SPOTLIGHTS ON MAY, RUTH AND RASPUTIA FADE AWAY.

MEREDITH remains kneeling behind the suitcase with MAY, RUTH and RASPUTIA behind.

MEREDITH

(to audience)

Per sempre aspetterò...[Forever I wait...]

BLACKOUT.