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Fever 107 degrees

de
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traducción de
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(fragmento en inglés)

CHARACTERS

SYLVIA

She was born in Massachusetts, New England. At the beginning of the play, she is thirty years old; at the end, she has just turned thirty-one. A sensual red mouth, contrasted by coffee-colored eyes, notable for their penetrating gaze, offsets her pale complexion. She has blond bangs, and wears her hair in a ponytail. She wears a straight black skirt, a dark red knit blouse and a sweater, as to the 60's.

TED

Sylvia's husband. Very tall and extremely attractive. He exudes an intense virility. He is thirty-two years old. His dark golden hair falls upon his large forehead. He has a slightly unkempt appearance. His blue-grey eyes, prominent chin and strong nose dominate his face. He wears pleasingly coordinated pants and shirt, with a honey-colored coat from the WWI.

AURELIA

Sylvia's mother. She is fifty years old. Her hair is short and grey, and lightly curled. She wears small pearl earrings, and a very conservative tailored suit. Nice but dominant. In her aims to be a good mother and be a substitute of the dead father, she has become a tough woman.

ARIEL

A creation of Sylvia's mind. Wears clothes as mercurial as his character. His movements are quick and graceful. He is both male and female in aspect. This character resembles the Chesire Cat from *Alice in Wonderland*.

2. Chalcot Square, London, England (1960)

Small apartment with low ceilings. A small table doubles as both writing desk and dining table. It is upholstered with books, loose sheets of paper, notebooks, and an old volume of Shakespeare collected works. A sofa. A kitchen counter. A staircase in the background.

Act I

Scene 4

TED enters with a package in hand.

TED

Sylvia, Sylvia, I'm home.

SYLVIA

(awakens) Oh, it's you.

TED

Things ran late.

SYLVIA

(upset) Dinner is cold.

TED removes the lid from the casserole.

SYLVIA

It's rabbit stew.

TED

I can eat it cold.

SYLVIA

No. I'm throwing it out. (She grabs the casserole)

TED

(stopping her) I couldn't help it. Sylvia...! What are you doing?

SYLVIA

You don't appreciate my cooking.

TED

Don't say that. Come now, my dear. (He embraces her) Do you want some wine?

SYLVIA

All right.

TED serves the wine. They drink. She looks at him with severity. He is in a lighter mood.

TED

I have some news for you.

SYLVIA

You're to give a lecture on Yeats.

TED

No, no. Guess.

SYLVIA

Does it have something to do with you?

TED

Not completely.

SYLVIA

(Excited) With me?

TED

Indeed.

SYLVIA

What is it? Tell me, and I will forgive you for neglecting me.

TED

William Heinemann has agreed to publish *The Colossus and other poems*.

SYLVIA

Do you mean it? (serves more wine) I can't believe it. Let us toast to it.

TED

And something else.

SYLVIA

There's more? London is treating us well.

TED

The BBC wants me to write some children's programs for them.

SYLVIA

We must celebrate.

TED goes to the door and comes back to the table with the package.

TED

A gift.

SYLVIA

It's not my birthday.

TED

Open it.

SYLVIA tears the gift wrap.

SYLVIA

I can't believe it! A three volume edition of D.H. Lawrence's poems.

(Kisses TED. She is more engaged in the conversation) Do you want to eat something? I can re-heat the stew.

TED

Let's eat it cold.

They sit at the table. While TED eats and drinks, she watches him and sips wine.

SYLVIA

Do you like the taste of mint?

TED

It's all right. (Pause) Were you able to write today?

SYLVIA

In my journal.

TED

I don't know why you devote so much time to it.

SYLVIA

I am not going to abandon the one thing I have been able to write these last few months.

TED

I am not asking you to stop, but rather to simply focus your attention more on the poetry. Your first book is about to be published, and people will be waiting for your second.

SYLVIA

Many great writers have kept a journal.

TED

It distracts you from the real work at hand.

SYLVIA

Aren't you going to tell me how marvelous, extraordinary, and delicious my stew is?

TED

I already did.

SYLVIA

You weren't very expressive.

TED

You want to talk about trivial matters? Very well.

SYLVIA

You find my dedication to the culinary arts trivial?

TED

Yes, I do. There are more important things

SYLVIA

Look, Ted, if you don't like the stew, just say so.

TED

No, no. It's not that.

SYLVIA

I'm serious. If you prefer, we can just throw it in the trash.

TED

We're eating. (SYLVIA clears the table, and throws the food into the trash) There.

TED

What is this -?

SYLVIA

You should know. You are late. (She draws close to him.)

TED

I thought we had put all that aside.

SYLVIA

Well, we haven't. (Sniffs him.) And well you smell of a young girl's perfume.

TED

I can't believe this. You're jealous? You know, this makes me aroused me

TED rises and draws her toward him forcefully. He kisses her violently on the lips. She hits him. He pulls her hair. She unbuttons his shirt. They fall upon the sofa and make love. Lights fade.

ACT II

Scene 19

The corridor is lit. The sound of glass breaking. ARIEL enters.

SYLVIA

Ariel!

The stage is bathed in intense light.

ARIEL

You seem like a ship at sea.

SYLVIA

(she speaks with difficulty, as if she were drugged) Ariel. My last of memory.

ARIEL

You must remember.

SYLVIA

It feels like winter here. Everything is so white.

ARIEL

It is the last day of autumn.

SYLVIA

Did you bring the tulips?

ARIEL

I brought you a robe. (He places a hospital robe on her)

SYLVIA

Everything is so quiet.

ARIEL

The rest of the patients are sleeping.

SYLVIA

That's how it was then, is it true, Ariel?

ARIEL

That's how it was. (He covers her with a white sheet)

SYLVIA

And the tulips?

ARIEL

Were there tulips?

SYLVIA

After the electro-shock, I remember there were tulips in my room.

ARIEL

If you wish. Tulips. (He places tulips on the table, next to the sofa)

SYLVIA

The white light falls down the walls and covers me in this white bed. Everything is so quiet. No, Ariel (Looks at the tulips. She becomes agitated). These tulips are too alert. They look at me with their relentless eyes.

ARIEL

The tempest rages.

SYLVIA

Storms, torments, tempests, truths?

ARIEL

You will crash against the rocks.

SYLVIA

I want to empty myself of memory.

ARIEL

You are reviving. And I help you.

SYLVIA

Ah. The tulips breathe. Take them away, Ariel. They look at me with their open mouths.

ARIEL takes the tulips away.

ARIEL

And Aurelia makes her entrance.

AURELIA enters.

AURELIA

Sylvia, look at yourself. When you're good, you're very good; but when you're bad, you need electro-shocks.

SYLVIA

(gaining strength) I am a cut-paper shadow.

AURELIA

It's for your own good You know that, right?

SYLVIA

I have no face. Look at me. (shows her the electrode marks on her temples)

AURELIA

The doctor says you are getting better. He says that you may be home for Thanksgiving.

SYLVIA

I only wanted to stop the pain.

AURELIA

(strokes her forehead) You'll be all well soon.

SYLVIA

(stops her hand) I hate you, Mommy.

AURELIA

(Tries to caress her again) But, dear...

SYLVIA rejects her. AURELIA looks at her. She is at the brink of tears.

AURELIA

We'll see each other next week.

SYLVIA

Goodbye, Aurelia.

AURELIA exits.

ARIEL calms SYLVIA. She sleeps.

TED sits looking at his poems. TED turns toward SYLVIA and looks at her with tenderness. He begins to write. Nick crying is heard from Off. TED looks at SYLVIA. She does not wake. TED rises. SYLVIA complains. She seems to be sleeping. ARIEL is at her side, like a guardian angel. SYLVIA mutters: 'daddy, daddy, nazi, shoe, achoo, achoo, shoe, black, daddy, daddy. King Minos, King of the bees.