**Ice Road**

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**Cast**

**Leah 25 A Musician**

**Tati 16 A Waif**

**Zoya 14 A Lost Girl**

**Kub 12 A Lost Boy**

**The Beginning**

*The audience give their ticket in at the box office that is covered in pro Stalin*

*Propaganda.*

*In return they are given a hat or gloves or scarves or a coat or a jacket from large wicker baskets.*

*Each item has a luggage tag on it with a landing number on it.*

*In the pocket of one of the coats is a tin whistle.*

**One : The Story of Doing What Needs To Be Done**

*The bar.*

*Lit by siege lamps*

*Russian propaganda posters urging citizens not to give into the advancing Nazi army.*

*A woman gives each audience member a flower, asking them to keep hold of it for to apy their respects.*

*The lamps fizzle and distant bombing is heard.*

*Then.*

*Silence.*

*Darkness.*

*A metronome starts to tick.*

*Loud.*

*The lights come up but dim and sporadic.*

*Then from nowhere….*

*Tati and Zoya.*

*They take us by surprise.*

*They do not look human*

ZoyaTy videla ego? (Have you seen him?)

Vot takoj? (About this big?)

Ego videli na Nevskom prospekte okolo chasa nazad (He was seen on Nevsky Prospekt not an hour ago.)

A vy baryshnya? (You lady?)

Kakie novosti? (Any news?)

Emu tolko dvenadcat (He’s only 14.)

TatiTy (You).

Chelovek so strashnym licom(Man with the really ugly face).

Ty videla Kuba (You seen Kub?)

On stal nebolshim (He’s only this big.)

Sovsem blednyj? (Really pale?)

Nosit ochki? (Wears glasses?)

Skulit vse vremya? (Whines all the time?)

Zoya Nichego ot etih (Nothing from this lot).

Tati Oni bespolezny. (They’re useless.)

Glupy kak korovy (As stupid as cows)

Posmotrim chto u nih est (Let’s see what they’ve got.)

*Tati goes amongst the crowd to see if there’s anything she might steal.*

*She takes some stuff off the tables and puts them in her pockets.*

*She tries people’s pockets.*

*Tugs at bags.*

*Gets people to open their hands.*

*She finds a tin whistle in a pocket.*

*She put it to her lips and blows.*

*A noise.*

*She slips it into her pocket.*

Tati Vy baryshnya (You lady).

Pokazhite (Let me see).

Chto zhe tam togda? (What’s in there then?)

Poshel ty (Fuck off).

Ne tolkai menya gromadina (Don’t push me big fella)

*Leah enters and sees her.*

Leah Tati!

Kakogo cherta. (What the hell.)

Ostav ih v pokoe (Leave them alone.)

Nashla ego? (Have you found him?)

*The metronome stops.*

Tati He’ll be fine.

He’ll have talked some old lady out of her bread ration and be stuffing his face.

Leah Did I tell you to stop looking for him?

Tati How are we supposed to find an orphan in a city full of orphans?

Leah I told you not to stop until you find him.

Zoya We’ve been all the way up to Smolnaya but people turn their heads away when we ask.

Leah He has to be here.

Tati There’s no-one left to ask.

 And this bunch of arseholes have nothing we need.

Zoya It’s getting dark Leah.

Tati And what good can we do in the dark? Can’t see fuck all.

 And you don’t want to get stuck out here when…

Leah We start again first thing.

Zoya But Kub….

Leah He’ll remember what he was taught. He’ll have found a place to hole up until he can get home.

*Leah leads the way, Zoya follows, Tati is left in the bar with straggling audience*

Tati What’s the fucking point? Out here freezing my tits off….

*The audience are shown through the doors by ushers.*

*They enter into a large space.*

*It is the quadrant of a bombed out housing block.*

*It exists on several levels.*

*Spikey.*

*Ugly.*

*Fierce.*

*On the ground, in rows, are small ugly Soviet radios.*

*They have straps on.*

*The audience stand behind a radio each.*

*They are summoned to pick them up and wear them.*

*They see a sleeping place.*

*A tattered metal sled.*

*A stove rusted and tiny.*

*A rusty bed frame.*

*An upturned old bath.*

*Seige lamps.*

*There is nothing else but sacking for sleep.*

*The building is whistling.*

*Then a plane overhead.*

*A drop of Nazi propaganda leaflets.*

*Suddenly from nowhere race in Tati, Leah and Zoya.*

*They collect the leaflets in buckets.*

*They jostle the audience for them.*

*They warn the audience off.*

*They will burn these for warmth.*

*Keep them safe.*

*The large state speakers in the space stutter into action as the audience enters.*

*Stalin addresses the country.*

*It splutters out…*

Tati Do you have anything in your pockets?

Leah What I had you’ve eaten

*She passes to Zoya two pieces of sacking.*

 Zoya sit on those to keep them warm. When Kub comes back he will need them.

Tati *When*?

Leah Now is not the time for you to be flapping your mouth.

Zoya Did you save something for him Leah?

Leah Yes.

Zoya And he will be here.

Leah Of course.

Tati Jesus Christ.

*Leah and Tati – a moment.*

Zoya He’ll freeze to death.

Leah He knows what to do.

Zoya Or someone will take him…

Leah Enough.

 Whining isn’t going to help him.

Zoya He hasn’t eaten today.

Leah And who in this city has?

Zoya He will lie down in the snow and he won’t get up again.

Leah You do not speak like that.

 Do you understand?

 Zoya look at me.

 We cannot speak like that.

*Zoya weeps.*

*The, out of the darkness, a speaker bursts into life.*

Audience speaker *crackle*

Give it to me.

 Be kind Natalia.

 Give it to me if you don’t want to feel the end of my fist.

 I’m reading it.

 So we should die from cold so you can read?

*Tati starts to pick lice out of Zoya’s hair*

*Placatory.*

*There is a long moment.*

Leah So what will we eat?

Tati And that doesn’t help.

Leah When the war is over Zoya, what will we eat?

Tati It just makes us fucking hungrier.

Zoya …

Leah Come on Zoya.

You made a list.

Zoya I will have black black bread and sausage.

Leah What kind of sausage?

Zoya Spicy sausage that makes your mouth burn and is so thick you have to saw through it like a log.

Leah And the bread.

Zoya Dark dark rye.

 As dark as Tati’s soul

Leah And Tati?

Zoya Tati would have dumplings.

*The aroma of fresh dough*

Georgian dumplings.

 Stuffed full of pork and covered in sour cream

 A little burnt on the outside so they’re crispy.

Leah Yes.

 And I will have?

Zoya What you always have.

 An apple.

 Green

So the juice runs down your chin.

 And your teeth squeak when you bite into it.

Because for 9 years you never had one.

Leah And then there is our little prince….

Zoya Kub would have cake.

 With cream and jam.

Tati Served to him on a silver plate no doubt.

 Something a nice round Bolshevik babushka would have bought in on her knees for the little prince.

Leah There’s no need for that.

Zoya We were only playing Tati.

Tati Just stop talking about fucking food.

*Looks that flash.*

Tati I’ll just shut my hole and get rid of lice then shall I?

*Leah starts to get ready to go out.*

*Wrapping herself.*

*She is surreptious about it.*

*There is the droning sound.*

*Then the sound of bombing*

*Dust falls onto the women*

*They pay almost no attention.*

*Leah puts on a coat.*

Tati No.

Leah I have to.

Tati I said no.

Leah …

Tati Not tonight.

Leah ...

Zoya Are you going?

Audience speaker I need water to clean this.

Take the bucket Nonna.

 Stay close to the edge.

Don’t walk too far out.

 The ice on the canal might not be so thick as we think.

 Take your brother with you.

 And don’t let him out of your sight.

Tati Leah?

Leah …

Tati Every fucking night.

Zoya Don’t leave us.

Leah I go and I come back.

With food.

Zoya Once she came back with cabbage.

Tati It was rotten.

Zoya It was still sort of green.

Leah So what does it matter where I go, or why, or how often as long as I come back with something to keep us going.

Zoya Because we need to eat.

 Because we need to stay alive.

Leah Yes.

Zoya So we can go on the ice road.

Leah Yes.

Tati You are fucking unbelievable.

Leah I am sick of this conversation.

Tati Then tell us where you go and we’ll both shut the fuck up.

Leah ...

Zoya What about Kub?

What if he comes back?

Leah He will be cold. You’ll know what to do.

Tati Stay.

Leah I can’t, so don’t ask.

Tati We fucking need you here.

Leah ...

Zoya Where do you go every night?

 Leah?

 Kub is missing and I am afraid.

 Leah?

 You can’t go.

Leah …

Tati Shall I tell you where she goes Zoya?

She skips down to Yusopov Gardens with all the other skeletons selling what little meat is left on their bones.

Then she goes down on her knees in the snow in front of some yellow faced halfwit to earn something you wouldn’t even feed to cattle.

Or maybe tonight it’s a sweaty politburo man who fancies a bit of siege rough?

*Leah* *grabs Tati by the hair*

*It is quick and viscous.*

*It really hurts.*

*Then she lets her go.*

*Leah does up her coat*

Leah Be very careful Tati.

 I can just bring enough for one if you like.

Audience Speaker What are you good for?

 *A man cries*

That was for the baby.

 You ate what I had put aside for your baby.

 Be a man.

 For chrissakes will you be a man.

Zoya I need to do the ice road tonight Leah.

 Just stay for the ice road.

Leah You don’t need fairy stories.

Audience speaker Listen to them go at it.

 Keep it down.

 Some of us are trying to starve quietly here.

 *Laughter*

Zoya I do.

Kub has been gone for eight hours.

Leah I have played enough.

I don’t have time.

Zoya I think Kub is dead.

I am so cold it feels like my bones will snap.

I need the ice road.

Leah …

Then be quick.

*As they do this projected images appear on objects round the room.*

*They surprise.*

*Images of snow, of trucks, of siege, of the road itself.*

*It is a litany and as they give it they climb up and over the structure*

Leah To the north east of the city.

 Lays a lake.

Tati A lake so large that you can’t see the other side.

Zoya Lake Ladoga.

Tati And in this winter.

 Colder than any one’s ever known it.

Zoya The lake froze.

Tati And it froze so deep.

Zoya And it froze so wide.

Tati That you could build a road over it.

 A road that could carry trucks.

Zoya And when the bombs fell from the sky and the world turned its back on Leningrad.

Tati The truck took the children out across the frozen water.

 Leah?

 This is your part?

 Leah?

Leah Away from the bombardment.

 Away from the blockade.

 Away from the cold.

Zoya Away from hunger.

Tati And soon…

Leah Maybe the day after tomorrow.

Zoya Maybe the day after that.

Tati Tati…

Zoya And Zoya…

Leah And Leah…

Zoya And… Kub…

Tati Will find a driver.

Zoya With a big friendly face.

Tati Who has a truck.

Leah A big stout truck.

Zoya That no plane can blow up.

Leah That will not fall through the ice.

Tati And we will climb onto that truck.

Zoya Zoya

Leah Leah

Tati Tati

Leah Kub

Zoya And we will cross the ice road.

Tati And comrades …

Leah … we will show our arses to the fascists

Zoya And at the top of our frozen lungs…

Tati … we will all fucking sing.

*They sing a Russian soviet WWII song – Katyusha*

Zoya And on the other side the Russian army will have padded trousers and hot buns, soft beds and the biggest stove you have ever seen.

Leah Bigger than this room.

Zoya So we can toast our toes.

Tati And drink vodka.

Zoya And we will live.

Tati And we will live.

*The litany is over.*

*There is a moment.*

Audience SpeakerHere are city dwellers, men, women, and children

Next to them, [Red Army](http://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%A0%D0%B0%D0%B1%D0%BE%D1%87%D0%B5-%D0%BA%D1%80%D0%B5%D1%81%D1%82%D1%8C%D1%8F%D0%BD%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B0%D1%8F_%D0%9A%D1%80%D0%B0%D1%81%D0%BD%D0%B0%D1%8F_%D0%B0%D1%80%D0%BC%D0%B8%D1%8F) soldiers

They defended you, Leningrad

The cradle of the [Revolution](http://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%9E%D0%BA%D1%82%D1%8F%D0%B1%D1%80%D1%8C%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B0%D1%8F_%D1%80%D0%B5%D0%B2%D0%BE%D0%BB%D1%8E%D1%86%D0%B8%D1%8F)

With all their lives.

Tati Except now there are just three.

Zoya Kub will come back.

Tati What are his chances?

Leah Not now.

Tati And we’ll never find the money the drivers want.

 Or else they want food.

 Or something… young and soft.

Leah Tati…

Tati And all the trucks will be full.

Zoya Please don’t.

Tati More often than not the trucks fall through the ice and you can see the faces of children trapped beneath, floating past. Mouths open in terror.

Zoya You’re ruining this …

Tati Or they are blown up by Nazi planes as they drive jet black against the white snow. Little Russian legs and arms fly in all directions. And no one to save them

Zoya Our truck won’t. It won’t.

Tati We are not children.

 So we need to stop thinking like them.

Leah I am telling you to shut your mouth….

 Right now.

Tati What is the fucking point?

 Kub is dead.

 And we’re not getting out of here.

*There is a bomb.*

*Not far away.*

*The building screeches and screams*

*The smell of burning*

*Distant rat tat tat of guns*

*A shout.*

*A harsh voice.*

*A call for help.*

*Leah decides.*

*Unbuttons her coat*

*She removes it.*

*She takes off enough layers to reveal her left arm*

*She climbs up onto part of the building.*

*Her arm is covered in tattoos*

*Old blue ones*

*Gulag drawn*

*They tell a story.*

Leah In another time there was once a girl.

She lived in a big city, in a house that was as wide as it was tall.

She had a handsome, long faced horse of a mama.

A dark eyed, stubborn mule of a papa.

And a short legged terrier of a sister who drove her mad with her ceaseless yapping.

One day, in April or maybe it was later, seven men in big boots strode down their street and kicked open their front door.

The girl’s father had opened his big mouth one too many times and those fat hairy boars in Moscow were furious.

Blood spitting, crimson faced, vein bursting furious.

So like a pack of Borzoi the big booted men rounded up the family.

They herded them out of their city in open sided trucks and then onto a shit stained train.

Where they found themselves at the end of the line.

A gulag.

In the arse end of Siberia.

The place that even God has forgotten.

Children tell your fathers to keep their mouths firmly shut

The family had not been there for long when….

The horse mother simply disappeared.

One morning she was there.

By nightfall she was gone.

Sometimes the camp just takes a big gulp and swallows you up.

Then, not long after, the terrier sister gave a gentle sigh and laid down with dysentery.

And then misfortune called a third time.

The mule father handled one too many sticks of old dynamite in the mine and took 60 men to heaven with him.

What an unfortunate family.

And so the girl was left alone with a hoard of vultures and hyenas and grey stinking wolves

That’s when the girl was first inked.

*Tattoos appear above her and move into her skin, three crosses and a knife*

Held down against her will by a woman with wooden teeth whilst a Moscovite gangster scratched the first three crosses onto her white white skin.

So her loss was visible, indelible, inescapable.

One day, not long after roll call, a pitiless shark of a man from Dudinka held her down with his big paws and tried to own her.

So she took the knife her papa had left behind and she stabbed him.

She hit his arm.

When he simply laughed and swiped at her again, she stabbed him in the other arm.

And finally when he had his hands in her trousers, she stabbed him in the chest.

And so my comrades, my children.

Listen to this.

The Story of Doing What Needs to Be Done.

*Leah does up her coat*

*She exits.*

Zoya Where does she go?

Tati To the devil.

*We watch her journey to the upper gantry.*

*She is furtive.*

Audience Speaker Let me tell you this one.

 It’s funny Alyona you’ll love it.

In biology class, the teacher, Marivanna, draws a cucumber on the blackboard

"Children, could someone tell me what is this?"

Little Ivan raises his hand

*She pulls on a rope.*

*She retrieves something in a sack.*

*We cannot see what it is.*

Audience speaker"It's a dick, Marivanna!"

The teacher bursts into tears and runs out.

Shortly, the [principal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/School_principal) rushes in:

"All right, what did you do now? Which one of you brought Marivanna to tears? And who the hell drew that dick on the blackboard?"

*She then exits the space amongst us.*

Audience speaker If you are so cold then don’t sit near the window.

 Yulia move over for your grandmother.

 Put that blanket over her.

 Let me rub your feet.

*She acknowledges us.*

Evening comrade….

What you looking at….?

Marta. How is your mother? It’s so cold no?

Clear off Vladimir Ivanovich I have nothing to give you.

*Night descends.*

*Distant bombing can be heard like a lullaby*

**Two : The Story of How Trust Must Be Rationed.**

*The next evening.*

*Barely any light from a siege lamp.*

*There are three huge bundles of sacking*

*The building is singing with the wind.*

*Kub walks through us.*

*His face is covered in blood and he is covered in fine white dust.*

*He looks unearthly.*

*He has on lots of clothes so he waddles.*

*Shoes hang from his neck.*

*He begs from us.*

*He looks at the three bundles and makes his choice.*

Kub I’m hungry.

 Leah.

 I need something to eat.

*The bundle moves.*

Kub Do you have anything in your pocket?

 Leah?

 Wake up.

*One of the other bundles moves.*

Kub It’s me.

 I need something to eat.

*One of the bundles leaps up.*

*Zoya.*

*She grabs Kub*

*Holds him tight.*

*Then Tati.*

*Punches him on the arm.*

*Takes the shoes from round his neck and holds them up.*

*She tries them on.*

*Finally Leah.*

*She moves slowly.*

*Like she is a century old.*

*She sits on the edge of an old metal bed frame and watches him.*

*Kub starts to disrobe.*

*The clothes are for the women.*

*They realise and start to take them off him.*

Audience speaker *A woman giggling, a man shushing her*

 *They are doing something they shouldn’t*

*They are ill fitting and mainly for boys.*

*But they put them on.*

*Even Tati is taken by the moment.*

*They revisit their childhood.*

*They find an energy as they put the clothes on, snatch from each other, laugh and preen.*

*Leah remains unmoved.*

*Tati finds in Kub’s pocket a tatty red ribbon.*

*She takes it out and starts to put it round her neck.*

*Kub snatches it back and offers it to Leah.*

*There is a moment.*

*Leah rises.*

*She moves quickly.*

*Takes the ribbon and then snatches the boy roughly.*

*She smells his hair.*

*She takes a piece of cloth from her pocket and licks it. She tries to wipe away the blood.*

Leah Tati. Fetch some water.

Tati It’s not my…/

Leah .../I want you to go.

Tati I heard yesterday someone cracked the ice, fell in the canal and drowned fetching bloody water.

Leah Tati you are a cockroach.

You will survive the canal, the fever, the cold, starvation and this war.

 So you need to be the one to go.

Audience Speaker 28 December 1940 - Zhenya died.

25 January 1941 - Granny died.

17 March - Lyoka died.

*Tati takes a battered tin pail and leaves.*

*She nicks a hat from Kub as she does so.*

Audience Speaker 13 April - Uncle Vasya died.

10 May - Uncle Lyosha died.

13 May at 7.30am - Mama died.

The Savichevs are dead.

Everyone is dead.

Only I am left.

I am 12.

Zoya Does he need a doctor?

Leah I don’t think so.

Zoya But it looks deep.

Leah What happened when you had pneumonia Zoya.

Zoya You walked the streets for hours until you found a doctor.

Leah That I did.

Zoya And he came.

Leah Yes

Zoya You paid him with the chair we had left.

Leah Yes

Zoya And he left.

Leah Yes.

Zoya With all our bread and our ration cards.

Leah He was?

Zoya A thieving lying bastard.

Leah Who do we trust?

Zoya / Kub No-one.

Leah He needs a couple of stitches.

We can take care of that.

Zoya Shall I fetch your box?

Leah Yes.

Kub I don’t want you to.

Leah I know but if we don’t it will get infected…

Zoya And we’ll have to chop your head off.

*Zoya brings over a rusted tin box.*

Audience Speaker *A man singing a lullaby.*

 *A baby cries*

*In it there is a medley of weird and wonderful objects.*

*From it Leah takes a needle and a piece of thread.*

Leah I am going to do this as quickly as I can.

 You need to hold still.

*She prepares him.*

*She starts to sew.*

*Kub yelps.*

*Zoya folds together strips of sacking.*

Leah Here.

Bite on this.

No no no. Still.

*Sewing*

 So the question is.

Where has our Kub been?

Kub ...

Leah And how did he get a battered head?

Kub …

Leah And then there are all these clothes.

 Boy’s clothes.

 What did you do?

Kub ...

*Tati enters with water.*

Tati The main waterpipe has burst in the street outside.

 Water’s spurting out all over the place.

 Didn’t need to go to the canal.

Leah You *are* a cockroach.

Tati What the fuck are you doing?

Leah Sewing a cracked head.

*Kub starts to cry.*

Audience Speaker I just need your boots comrade.

 Just give me your boots and you can go.

 Oh and just empty your pockets if you please.

 Don’t struggle now.

 Stepan, help our friend out.

Leah One more and done.

 …

 Done.

*She starts to wash the wound with the water.*

*From her pocket she brings out a hard black flaxseed cake and gives it to Kub.*

*He snatches and wolfs.*

Tati What the…?

Leah If you want one too you need to let me stitch your head.

Tati You have spare food.

Leah Not spare.

That one was mine.

 So Kub.

 Where’ve you been?

*A mighty crash of a bomb.*

*Houses split.*

*The building screams.*

*Shouting from the audience speakers*

*Lights go out.*

*A light comes on held by Leah.*

*From amongst the audience.*

*Another Zoya.*

*Then another Tati.*

Leah Kub?

Tati He’s with me.

*They congregate together.*

*Just four lamps.*

Leah Wait here.

 Let the building settle.

 She’ll need some time to settle.

 We can’t go back in there until later.

Zoya How’s your head?

Kub It hurts.

Zoya Oh Kub.

Tati Where the fuck have you been?

Zoya. I’ll be honest.

I thought you were dead.

Kub I….

Leah We need to know.

Kub I….

Leah Now Kub.

Kub There was this horse.

*The horse appears.*

*Projection mapped.*

*It is lying down but once in a while it twitches.*

Kub On Fontanka embankment.

 I was helping Tati.

 With the sled.

Leah She never said.

Tati You don’t like him helping me….

Leah It’s no work for a child.

Tati He’s not a fucking kid.

Kub And I lost her.

 She had the sled and the body.

 And I wandered off and….

 I don’t really know.

 I don’t know how to begin.

Zoya Shall I be you Kub?

Kub Yes if you want to.

Tati So who will I be?

Kub I have a part for you. Wait.

Leah I can’t see a bloody thing.

*Kub encourages the audience to stand in a circle and make a playing space.*

*The girls then help to tell his story*

Kub So.

There was this horse.

 It was dying.

 Behind it followed a huge crowd.

 Waiting for the horse to lie down.

Tati So they could eat it.

Kub I followed too.

 I wanted to bring something home.

 I am small.

Zoya But I am nimble.

 So I made my way to the front of the crowd.

Kub But as the horse fell…

Zoya The crowd surged forward.

 Like a flock of…

Tati Black crows.

Kub Knives at the ready.

 And although the horse was still breathing they sliced it.

Zoya Some knives were blunt and those people had to hack at it and howl in frustration.

Kub I didn’t have a knife but hoped I could…

Tati Steal some of the horsemeat.

 Maybe push someone over and take it.

Leah Maybe someone old.

Zoya But everyone just kicked me or punched me and I realised it was useless.

Kub I turned to go and there was this man.

Leah No Kub.

Kub He stood right in front of me.

A bit too close.

Tati you are the man.

Tati Hello

Kub Said the man.

Tati You lost?

Kub I say nothing.

Tati Where’s your mother?

 Your father?

Leah You idiot.

Kub His eyes.

Zoya They were green and they twinkled.

Kub I haven’t seen anyone’s eyes twinkle for a long time.

Tati My name is Sergei.

 What’s yours?

Leah I have told you never….

Kub And I didn’t tell him.

Tati Do you know what?

Kub Said the man.

Tati By some good fortune I have managed to get my hands on a cat.

Zoya A cat?

Kub I haven’t seen a cat in months.

Tati And I have roasted it.

Zoya You have fire?

Tati Yes not so very far from here.

Leah I have told you time and time again Kub…

*One of the audience speakers starts coughing.*

Tati Will you come? It looks like you haven’t eaten anything substantial for some time.

Kub I know it was wrong Leah.

 I know and I thought hard.

 I’ve heard the stories.

 But….

Leah You went.

Zoya We walked by the side of the canal and he hardly said a word apart from…

Tati You’re an orphan?

Zoya Yes.

Kub I said.

Tati Good.

Kub He said.

It was a thin apartment block that leaned over and was open on one side, like a doll’s house.

Tati I have lived here all my life…

Kub Said the man

Tati No fascist bombs will see me off.

Kub I told him I wouldn’t be in Leningrad long.

 I was going to leave.

 On the ice road.

 With girls who were like sisters to me.

Zoya He didn’t like that very much.

Kub We climbed up stairs that weren’t good for much, they moved sometimes and half of them were missing.

Zoya It was not good. This is not good.

Kub We climb and I get dizzy.

 He takes my arm.

 I can feel his breathe on my cheek.

 And I am afraid.

Zoya But think about it Leah.

 Meat.

Leah After everything I have told you.

 Can you not remember your lessons?

*Animation.*

*The man’s apartment falls into view.*

*Many different perverse things are hanging from the ceiling.*

Audience Speaker Anna Kolnikov’s daughter’s missing.

 And that affects me how?

 She sent her out to get the bread coupons

 And… poufff

 Vanished. Into thin air.

 Serves her right.

 I know.

*A bit of trumpet.*

*An old puppet.*

*A chamber pot.*

*Odd wood – some singed*

*Things someone might have bartered.*

Zoya His flat stinks.

Kub It smells really bad.

 Like something had gone off.

*A smell pervades the space.*

Tati Don’t be afraid.

We are only going to eat.

Isn’t that what you want?

Zoya I think I have made a mistake.

Tati Look at all these things.

Why don’t you choose one?

This walking stick.

You could burn it.

Kub And then the man.

Zoya Sergei.

Kub Brings out a sturdy rope.

*In the animation a rope drops down.*

Zoya There is no cat is there?

Kub I ask.

Tati ‘Fraid not my dear.

Kub And I knew what he was going to do.

Leah Did you run Kub?

Kub He was blocking the door.

Leah Did you fight Kub?

Zoya You are so small.

Kub But I am nimble.

 He started to move toward me.

Leah Run Kub run.

Kub And I thought I was a goner when …..

*Light on the large oak walking stick.*

*Knobb’ed, thick and viscous*

Kub I leapt for it but he saw my move… and so…

*Zoya and Tati act out the fight but it is tame and tentative and lacking drama…*

Kub Not like that.

 Like this

*A projection appears in the house – maybe on strips of cloth?*

*It is a scratchy raw Bauhaus style animation of Kub and Sergei fighting*

*The government speakers rouse into some sort of tune.*

*Sergei is winning easily*

*Sergei grabs the walking stick and swings it at Kub.*

*It connects.*

*Blood.*

*But Kub manages to grab the end of it and with one mighty roar he pushes Sergei out of the flat onto the ground below.*

*Black fabric falls from a great height to the ground, the image of windows rushing by.*

Kub Sergei fell.

Leah Out of the side of the doll’s house.

Tati And speared himself on the railings below.

Kub One through his neck.

Leah One through his thigh.

*A moment*

*One of the audience speakers breaks into music – something folky, played at home.*

Zoya Fuck him.

Kub I found the clothes.

In his filthy bathroom.

 They belonged to…

Leah You’re not to say it.

Kub I picked as many as I could find, but I couldn’t carry the other things too.

Tati Do you remember where it is?

Kub I think so.

Tati We can go back. Strip the place before any other yellow skinned bastards find it.

Leah What else Kub?

Kub …

Leah You’ve been gone a whole day.

Kub …

Audience Speaker Yury you lazy bastard.

 Shift your arse.

 If we don’t take over that tram right now then those little shits from the Kalininskiy district will take it.

Leah What else was in the house?

Kub Nothing.

Tati He’s lying.

Kub Nothing.

Tati You always were a grubby little piece of shit.

*Leah has to sit.*

*Her energy is waning.*

Tati Fucking punch him until he tells us.

Leah There was food wasn’t there Kub?

Kub No.

Zoya Oh Kub.

Leah You stayed until you ate it all.

Tati Jesus Christ.

Leah Just tell us the truth.

Kub Maybe a bit of bread.

Tati How much?

Kub Not much.

Leah What else?

Kub Some meat.

Zoya Did you eat it Kub?

Tati You filthy pig.

Zoya And you knew where it came from?

Kub …

Leah What else Kub.

 There was something else?

Kub I can’t say it.

Leah If I am to forgive you Kub you need to tell me.

Audience Speaker *Coughing. It’s bad*

 *It gets worse*

 *And worse*

 *A massive spit full of phlegm*

What the fuck?

Kub There was….

 An apple.

 It was brown and wrinkly.

Leah But you ate it?

Kub Yes

Audience Speaker That motherfucking boy.

 He brings shit down on everyone’s heads.

That’s what comes from having a silver spoon rammed up your arse

Leah All of it?

Kub Yes.

Leah Then?

Kub I went to sleep.

 When I woke…

 I was sick.

Tati See, the party member’s son.

Even though the whole city is starving he can still find the energy to be a spoilt, selfish little fucker.

*There is a moment.*

*Held.*

Leah I have to go.

Tati No.

Leah I am too tired to do this again Tati.

Tati Beat him.

Leah No.

Tati Then whilst you are gone I’ll beat him.

Leah Don’t lay a hand on him.

Kub Don’t leave me with her.

Tati I will knock him unconscious.

 Do you hear me?

 I will hit him until his brain bleeds out through his ears.

Zoya And I will help her.

Leah Tati I have to go.

Tati No you don’t.

Zoya Please.

 Things aren’t right Leah.

 It feels like they will just…. shatter.

Tati If you go tonight…

After all this…

You go tonight and I swear to God I will nail Kub to the Hermitage door.

*Kub starts to cry*

*Leah decides.*

*Unbuttons her coat*

*She removes it.*

*She takes off enough layers to reveal her right arm*

*She climbs up onto part of the building.*

*Her arm is covered in tattoos*

*Old blue ones*

*Gulag drawn*

*They tell a story.*

Leah In her fourth winter in the place that God had forgotten our girl fell in love.

In a land so bleak, so barren, love is a precious thing no?

A sharp-eyed sparrow of a girl lay next to the girl in the dark dark darkest part of night and showed her tender soft things we should not speak of.

They often held each other and cried out together whilst the rest of the camp slept, or gave into nightmares, or stumbled in the murk to take a piss in the latrine.

And there they stand, holding hands, shyly smiling, the sophisticated young Leningrader and her urchin sparrow lover.

Our girl soon discovered that Sparrow had a marvellous gift.

One she had carefully honed with the gangs she ran with in Chechnya.

She could pick a pocket, steal a kiss, forge a note, embezzle food, swindle favours like no-one else. Like absolutely no-one else in that camp.

And our girl benefitted greatly from this and she flourished.

Of course she did.

*Tattoos appear on her flesh and spill out of her into the space.*

*They move.*

And to mark her love, her first love in this dead place, the Moscovite gangster tattooed her arms with hearts and kisses, music and flowers.

Because why not?

The world is beautiful.

And love was special until one day a baboon of a guard felt a sparrow’s hand searching his pocket and he felt a sparrow’s hand removing his money. So the baboon hit the sparrow with his fist until the sparrow cried out.

*Stop*

*This was not my idea.*

*The girl whose father was killed by dynamite makes me do these things.*

And then, for good measure.

*I heard she will not be happy until you are all dead.*

A terrible lie you agree.

The baboon and his baboon comrades took our girl to a shadowy part of the wood and there they beat her so long she almost bit through her tongue.

And they beat her so hard she almost lost an eye.

They beat her so hard her shins broke.

When they tired and left, the girl crawled on her belly back to the camp.

Where the Muscovite gangster saw her, slumped in the white white snow and felt something strange move him.

Pity visited him for the first time.

So this bear of a criminal picked her up in his blue inked arms and carried her to his bed.

And as he carried her almost lifeless body, he whispered in her ear.

*And now you know. People like us must ration our trust.*

So listen to this.

The Story of How Trust Must Be Rationed

*Leah pulls on what coats she can find.*

*She grabs Tati by the hair as she passes her.*

Leah You do not touch him.

 He is ours.

*We watch her journey to the upper gantry.*

*Tati goes to Kub.*

*Gestures for him to follow and kicks him on his way.*

*Kub follows Leah.*

*She pulls on a rope.*

*She retrieves something in a sack.*

Audience Speaker Yes yes. It is as you requested.

 We have worked diligently and the city’s grainstores are full.

 Tell Comrade Stalin Leningraders are well fed and happy.

*We cannot see what it is.*

*She then exits the space amongst us.*

*Her broach shines out.*

Audience Speaker Jesus Andrei when he finds out…

You’ll spend the rest of your days freezing your hairy bollocks off in the Urals.

Good luck on that comrade.

*Kub follows so far.*

*Waits.*

*Furtive.*

*He takes an old brown apple from his pocket and eats it like a wolf.*

*He goes back to Tati*

Tati Show me.

*They climb.*

*Night swallows them whole.*

*Government speakers play some unrecognisable music.*

*It’s awful.*

**Three : The Story of Making Hard Decisions**

*Early morning.*

*Blue, white, unforgiving.*

*Four bundles on the floor.*

*A sled with a long thin object sewn into a sheet.*

*A bundle moves.*

*A face appear.*

*Zoya.*

*She sees the sled.*

Zoya Leah

 Leah

 She’s done it again.

 Leah

*A second bundle shifts.*

Leah Leave it Zoya.

 I will deal with it later.

Zoya Not where we sleep.

 You told her.

 Leah.

 There is a dead body near my bed.

Tati Shut the fuck up.

Zoya You can’t…

 It’s horrible.

Tati I’ll move it in a bit.

Zoya Please I don’t like it.

 Leah?

 Leah?

Leah Tati move the sled.

Tati Not now.

Leah See it as your duty to the Great Patriotic War.

Tati Fuck the Great Patriotic War.

*We hear Zoya sobbing.*

Audience

Speaker Be mindful, O Lord, of Andrei Egorov, grant that he may have mercy, life, peace, health, salvation and visitation, pardon and remission of their sins; that they may ever praise and glorify Thy Holy Name.

Tati The ground is too hard.

 I can’t bury it.

Zoya Just leave it outside.

Tati It is too cold.

I’ll lose my fingers and toes.

Stop whining

 It doesn’t smell.

Kub She’ll only cry louder.

Tati If I leave it outside someone else will take it and get payment for burying it or someone will take a knife and….

Kub There is a place off Sadovaya Street where they make pies.

 With meat in.

Tati And I lugged it all the way from the concert hall.

Leah The Philharmonia Hall?

Tati Yes.

Leah But the Philharmonia?

Tati Didn’t I just say that?

Leah Is it a man or a woman?

Tati It is hard to tell.

Leah Let me see.

Tati It’s basically some yellow skin held together with bone.

Leah I said let me see.

*Leah unwraps the bundle*

*A jolt.*

Kub Who is it?

Zoya It’s a man.

Leah Pieter Osinov.

Tati You know him?

Zoya I don’t understand.

From the Philharmonia?

Tati He was rehearsing.

 Violin player.

 He dropped dead before the first movement was over.

 He had no family left so the doorkeeper came and found me.

Asked if I’d bury him.

Knows I do that sort of thing.

People round here knows I am the one to fetch when there’s a body and no-one to give a shit for it.

 I thought he might still have the violin on him…

So I said I’d take him.

But no.

 Some other nifty fucker had had it away.

Leah I will take him.

Tati By rights he’s mine.

Leah They paid you?

Tati They might have…

Leah Keep whatever you got.

I just need to…

Tati I made the deal.

Leah I said I will take him.

*She is broken.*

Tati Up to you.

Zoya I can help you.

Leah He was…

 I need to do this.

Tati The ground’s too hard so bugger knows where you’ll stick him.

Leah If you say another word Tati I promise you I will make sure you don’t see the end of this war.

Tati It’s just a body.

*Leah has had all the air taken out of her.*

*She takes a moment to get her balance.*

Audience

Speaker I can smell onions.

 Shush baby shush

 I can smell onions

 Can you?

 Smell them. Aren’t they lovely?

*She looks at the sled and summoning up all her energy she puts on the harness to*

*the sled.*

*She pulls.*

*It is hard to move.*

*She pulls again and the momentum is built.*

Kub Where is she taking it?

Zoya Tati go with her.

Tati She’ll be fine. She walked across Russia didn’t she?

 Dragging a corpse up the street will be nothing to her.

*Leah leaves.*

*A moment.*

Zoya I had a dream….

Tati You do know how boring they are right?

Zoya You weren’t just a cemetery wolf Tati…

Tati Do not call me that.

If I had a belt….

Zoya You were a huge hound.

Tati There’s worse things to be.

Zoya With yellow teeth and stinking breath

With long grey greasy fur.

You tossed Kub up in the air and with one gulp you swallowed him whole.

Leah tried to run but you caught her by the leg and chewed it clean to the bone.

And then you looked at me.

And sunk your teeth into my neck.

Tati There’s not enough meat on your scrawny carcass to satisfy this hunger.

*A moment.*

*The government speakers play a snippet of Stalin’s speech but it is slipping.*

Kub Will there be anything in the sack to eat?

Zoya What sack?

Tati Fuck’s sake of course.

Get up.

 Both of you.

 Get up now.

Whilst we have our chance.

Kub The sack.

Zoya What sack?

Kub Where Leah keeps her secret.

Zoya Is it food?

Tati If she’s hiding it what else can it be you retard.

*They have sudden energy.*

*They climb the building.*

*Zoya is last. She is struggling.*

*They lower the sack.*

*Kub goes to open it.*

*Tati knocks him out of the way and opens the sack.*

*She is astonished.*

*Kub pushes past to look and then Zoya.*

Tati What the fuck?

Kub No food?

*Zoya brings out of the bag the flute.*

*Tarnished and scuffed.*

Tati It’s a whistle.

Zoya Have you never seen a flute before?

Tati Why the fuck should I have?

Kub She probably stole it.

Tati Where does she take it every night?

Zoya Maybe she plays it?

Kub What for?

Zoya I dunno.

Tati What good can a flute do?

Zoya Put it back.

Tati Let’s just think about this.

Zoya It’s Leah’s. Leave it alone.

Tati It does no good sat up there.

Kub Maybe we could sell it.

Tati Who is going to want a bloody flute?

Zoya You won’t get much for it anyway, it’s only made of wood.

*Tati grabs Kub and hugs him.*

Zoya No. Please.

*The others are clambering down.*

Zoya Leah hasn’t got anything else.

 Just let her have this.

Tati Shut up.

*They reach the bottom as Zoya slowly makes her way down. She is exhausted.*

Zoya Who gives us food?

Tati If I get paid for a burial then I do.

Zoya Who gives us most of our food?

Kub Leah.

Tati As she is supposed to. She is our mother.

*Tati throws the flute in the fire.*

Tati Kub, Leah keeps an old tinderbox in her special tin.

 Fetch it.

Zoya Kub no.

Kub I don’t know…

Zoya Kub….

Kub I think maybe we wait for Leah. It was her flute.

Tati Jesus….

*Tati goes to the box and rummages through.*

*She finds the tinderbox.*

*She strikes it and lights the sticks*

Audience Speaker *A shriek goes up.*

 *Madness*

 *Deranged.*

*She sits right up against the fire.*

*She looks at the others.*

*Kub goes to move.*

*But steps back again.*

Tati What do you two know of surviving?

 Fuck all.

Having had mama and papa wipe your noses and arses makes you soft.

Having had money, an apartment, warms beds and food whenever you want makes you weak when the shit rains down.

You’re not ready for this.

You wanna know something?

Something I have known for a long time and protected you from?

You’re not going to make it out of this.

Either of you.

Kub will get his head bashed in for stealing food from someone big and ugly and Zoya will just lie down and drown in her own tears.

Kub That is not true.

Tati Comrades, this is it.

Kub Why don’t you just shut up?

Tati This is Poppa Joe’s great Soviet Russia.

And this is the Great Patriotic War.

Kub You need to shut your ugly face right now.

Tati Don’t you just love it?

Zoya ….

Tati …

You can have some heat.

 Stand next to me.

Zoya No.

Tati Your loss.

Kub?

Kub …

Tati Come on boy, warm your arse.

Kub No Tati…

*A bomb hits.*

*Hard*

Audience Speaker You need to stitch it this way.

 See, so nothing can…

 Nothing will fall out.

 It will be strong enough to carry her.

*Leah comes through the audience.*

*She pulls the empty sled.*

*She has dust in her hair and blood on her face.*

*Broken glass has hit her.*

Tati Were did you take it?

Leah To the orphanage.

 They will store him there until there is a thaw.

 Nobody is getting buried.

 The ground is harder than your heart Tati.

Zoya Leah….

Leah You found wood?

Kub No.

Leah There is heat from the stove.

 Where did you find wood?

Zoya Leah…

Leah Tati?

*A moment*

Tati Why did you hide it?

Leah No.

Zoya I said not to. I said it was wrong.

Leah Please God no.

*Leah shrinks further.*

*The she gathers herself and regards them.*

*A moment.*

*Decisions being made.*

Audience

SpeakerThis blockade smothers all our good intentions Leonid Abramovich.

 Give your mother what she wants.

*Bomb*

*Leah decides.*

*Unbuttons her coat*

*She removes it.*

*She takes off all the layers on her torso.*

*Projection*

*Her body is covered in tattoos*

*Old blue ones*

*They tell a story.*

Leah So the Moscovite s bear, who had stolen much and killed many, nursed the girl day and night and night and day.

He slept on the floor next to her, spooned bitter gruel into her mouth, changed her filthy bandages and talked to her of his life before, when a whole city shat itself whenever he raised his voice.

They played chess as she got stronger.

He whittled the pieces himself from old bone he stole from the kitchen.

He did odd jobs for the guards to earn an apple for her that made her gasp with delight.

He would kill anyone who disrespected her.

And so, one particularly sunny day, the sparrow disappeared.

Of course she did.

He taught her many things that she would never have guessed he knew.

What plants to eat and what to avoid.

How to tell the time from the sun.

Who was next to disappear from the Kremlin.

And what happens when you put a cylinder of wood to your mouth, press the keys and blow.

The gulag was amazed.

A true miracle.

What was once a sharp-clawed bear had now become a man.

And so comrades two years slipped by and our girl was strangely, inexplicably… happy.

But I ask you how could these things last?

And of course, in the gulag, they cannot.

One day, whilst they were playing chess the bear man took a while to make his move, and, in the silence, she regarded him.

There was little doubt.

He had got thinner.

His face had changed shape.

One day she noticed he had tied rope round his waist to keep his trousers up.

Maybe it was nothing.

He was as strong as a grizzly no?

But after a few weeks he coughed and turned his head away.

She knew why.

She had seen it many times before.

They did not speak of it.

But as he got thinner and thinner

And as he got weaker and weaker.

Others from the camp began to exact their revenge on him in his declining state.

Those he had once terrorised now came for him.

Day and night and night and day.

His punishment was ceaseless and unending.

It was brutal and inhumane.

The bear was now the dog.

Our girl could stand it no more.

She bribed a palid runt of a guard from Sevastapol to bring in the red berries.

She crushed them with tea and before the bear man slept she lay next to him in his bed, she kissed his face and his hands, she stroked his hair.

He told her about his childhood in the jagged Altai Mountains.

And how he had wanted to be a lawyer.

She told him he had saved her life.

And then she made him drink the brew.

In the morning, the bear was no more.

She hid the chess pieces in a hole in the wall.

She hid the wooden cylinder under the floorboards in the latrine.

She wept for him just the once.

But every night she would go to the fence and open her mouth in one long silent unbearable shriek.

And so my friends, citizens, comrades.

This is…

The Story Of Making Hard Decisions

*Leah falls to her knees.*

*A moment.*

*Then onto her hands.*

*Leah then lies down.*

*And becomes a bundle.*

*The others cover her up.*

Zoya Leah. Leah.

 We’re sorry.

Kub Leah say something.

Zoya She is laying down Tati.

 Tell her to get up.

 She must get up.

Tati Leave her.

 Her anger will fade.

Kub Leah?

Zoya She is laying down.

Tati Leah?

 Don’t piss about.

 Get up.

Zoya Shout at us.

Kub Kick me.

Tati Get up and kick Kub.

Zoya What will we do?

Tati Leah you have to get up.

 It’s just a stupid flute.

*Kub hits Tati.*

Tati She never even played that thing?

Zoya Why else would she take it out?

Tati Fuck.

 Leah.

 Get up.

*Silence.*

*A distant rat tat tat of guns*

*A shout in the street.*

*One of the audience speakers starts moaning.*

*Leah looking truly dreadful.*

Zoya You play don’t you?

Leah …

Zoya At the Philharmonia Hall.

Leah …

Zoya Is that how you feed us?

Tati Well why the fuck didn’t she say something?

Kub Because she knew what we’d do.

*A moment.*

*The crackling sound of faded cello’s tuning up*

*Leah twitches*

Leah I can hear them.

Gather them.

Kub I don’t understand.

Leah Stand.

 Cello’s to your right.

 Don’t let them get away.

*The crackling sound of a faded brass section tuning up*

*Then one by one the audience speakers start to identify themselves as a different member of the orchestra – this one is the lead violin, this one a bassoon, this one a viola. Each audience members’ speaker plays a different individual instrument. But together? Together they play Shostakovich’s Symphony No 7, Leningrad.*

Kub I don’t….

Leah Of course you do.

 The brass section is in front of you boy, a row back.

Kub ……?

 *A moment*

 Okay. Okay.

We organise them.

 Can’t you see?

 We need to….

Leah The trumpet players, the trombonists, the beautiful young man who plays the French horn.

 How can anything be so witty and sad in one breath.

*Zoya, Kub and Tati start to organise the audience into the different sections of the orchestra according to the instrument their speaker is playing.*

Kub. My brass section.

Tati They can’t play music.

 That guy there can hardly piss straight.

Zoya It doesn’t matter.

 Just take them.

Kub Where’s the French horn player?

 He’s late.

 Katrina make sure he is docked accordingly.

*The crackling sound of faded violas tuning up*

Leah There you are Viola.

A pretty but cruel young woman who eats too much chocolate and who weeps until she gets her own way.

Put her right in front of you boy.

Right under your nose.

Quickly now.

Kub Violas.

 Rouse yourself.

There may be only ten of you left in this godforesaken city but you still need to earn your place.

*The others organise.*

Zoya Tell me what you want done.

Leah *Hallucinates that Zoya is Ludmilla*

There you are. Ludmilla Buklin.

*Then Tati*

Yanna Mirsky!

Leah *To audience member*

 Pietr Osinov.

 *The crackling sound of faded violins tuning up*

 All my beautiful violinists

 I weep for you.

 Take your place.

 Raise your bow.

Kub To my left.

 What am I supposed to do with a lead violinist?

 Straighten your jacket man.

Leah Yes. Tuck them tightly under your arm. They are so beautiful they might just float away.

Hurry.

*The others organise.*

Kub Violins. Quickly now.

 Hold her up comrade.

 Don’t let her lay down.

 Not yet.

*The crackling sound of faded clarinets and oboes tuning up*

Leah Aha.

 The cat and the duck.

 Waiting for the wolf to devour them.

 Monsieur Oboes to his right if you please.

 Madam Clarinet to his left.

Kub Oboes here in front of me

 Clarinets don’t dawdle.

 Try to keep to time.

 Don’t let him fall asleep.

 For God’s sake give me those gloves

*Crackling sound of faded percussion and harps tuning up*

Kub Comrade Dubinsky?

 Leah?

Leah Percussion.

 The clash of waves and the sound of war.

 Harps.

 The ending of a sad sad love affair.

 Put them at the back.

 So they don’t drown us all out.

Kub And now.

 The flute.

 Play well tonight comrades and we all get to eat.

*She takes her stand.*

*She prepares.*

*Kub conducts the preparation*

*Leah nods.*

*She stands.*

*It is difficult.*

*Leah brings her hands to her mouth.*

*Her muscles remember the space.*

*It is her flute.*

Tati But her flute, we…

Audience Speakers Sssssssh Tati.

Zoya You know how this works Tati.

*Her fingers twitch and start to play the air.*

*She falters.*

*She stops.*

*She looks at Kub.*

*He raises his arm and starts her off.*

*She closes her eyes.*

*She plays and the music comes.*

*Shostakovich – who else?*

*She stops.*

*Then quiet. It is over.*

Leah I have grown old before I was even 30.

 And I know that I won’t see the other side of the winter.

 So how will you get to the Ice Road without me?

*She whispers to Tati.*

*Tati does not want to do what is asked.*

*She remonstrates*

*Leah puts knives in Tati’s hand.*

*Tati hesitates.*

*The others are appalled at what they have been asked to do.*

*Tati takes her knife.*

*They come together, heads bowed.*

Leah To the north east of the city.

 Lays a lake.

Tati A lake so large that you can’t see the other side.

Leah Lake Ladoga

*She stands behind Leah.*

*The knife is at Leah’s throat.*

*Blackout*

*Lights up*

*Zoya and Tati are dragging Leah’s body.*

*Blackout*

*Lights up*

*The girls have their back to us.*

*Zoya turns her face to us.*

*Startled. Found out.*

*She has blood round her mouth.*

*Blackout.*

*Lights up*

*Drone of approaching planes.*

*Kub climbs up.*

*The planes are getting nearer.*

*They pass overhead and then a crescendo of bombing.*

*Flashing in the sky.*

*The earth shifts.*

*It is so loud.*

*Not synchronised.*

*Little small explosions.*

*Kub raises his hands.*

*He closes his eyes*

*He is lost.*

*He conducts and as he does the planes’ drone turns to music.*

*Shostakovich No 7.*

*Big, booming, bold and brilliant*

*It fades.*

*Flickering lights.*

*Zoya and Tati carry a small bloodied bag.*

*They offer it to Kub.*

*He hesitates.*

*Reluctantly he takes it.*

*The house goes dark.*

*The girls stride out.*

*Kub hesitates but follows.*

*The speakers all call out.*

And in this winter.

Colder than any one’s ever known it.

The lake froze.

And it froze so deep.

And it froze so wide.

That you could build a road over it.

A road that could carry trucks.

And when the bombs fell from the sky and the world turned its back on Leningrad.

The truck took the children out across the frozen water.

*Projection all around*

*Leah Dubinsky*

*1917 -1941*

*Cause unknown*

*Alexander “Kub” Nikolayev*

*1929 – 1942*

*Starvation*

*Zoya Marinkin*

*1927 – 1961*

*Factory explosion*

*Tatiana Kazakov*

*1925 – 2008*

*Heart Attack*

*The audience lay their speakers back where they found.*

*They lay their flowers down.*

*For remembrance.*

***-End-***