

# **Blue Electric**

Opera in two acts

## **Dramatis Personae**

**Maya**: the central character  
(in the first and last scenes in her forties, otherwise a teenager)

**Bella**: her younger sister  
(in the first and last scenes in her forties, otherwise a teenager)

**Barbara**: her best friend  
(a teenager)

**Sarah**: her mother, a poet  
(in the first and last scenes in her seventies, otherwise in her forties)

**Sam**: her godfather, Samuel Beckett  
(in his seventies)

**Leon**: her father, an artist  
(in the first and last scenes in his seventies, otherwise in his forties)

**Chorus (8)**: mourners (adults), revellers (teenagers)  
Small roles for a solo alto (the Nurse), solo tenor (the Lustful Youth) and solo bass (the Teacher)

**Libretto below**

## Blue Electric Libretto (Alba Arikha)

### Act 1

#### Scene 1: Leon's funeral: a sombre occasion

(Aramaic words from The Kaddish)

Chorus: *Y'hei sh'lama raba min sh'maya*

May there be abundant peace from Heaven

*v'chayim aleinu v'al kol yis'ra'eil. V'im'ru: Amen.*

and life upon us and upon all Israel. Now say: Amen.

Sarah: *Y'hei sh'mei raba m'varakh l'alam ul'al'mei al'maya.*

May His great Name be blessed for ever and ever.

Bella: *Y'hei sh'mei raba m'varakh l'alam ul'al'mei al'maya.*

May His great Name be blessed for ever and ever.

Maya: *Y'hei sh'mei raba m'varakh l'alam ul'al'mei al'maya. Shalom, Amen.*

May His great Name be blessed for ever and ever. Peace, Amen.

Chorus: *Oseh shalom...* He who makes peace...

Maya: Goodbye, my father, goodbye. May you rest in peace.

Bella: Peace. Goodbye, my father, goodbye, may you rest in peace.

Sarah: Peace. Rest in peace, my love.

Maya/Bella/Sarah: Rest in peace.

Sarah: You will not be cold down there. You have your gloves on.

Maya/Bella: But mother what, what are you saying?

Chorus: Rest in peace.

Sarah: He will not be cold.

Maya/Bella: He will not be cold.

Chorus: *Oseh shalom bim'romav hu ya'aseh shalom*

He who makes peace in His heights, may He make peace

*aleinu v'al kol yis'ra'eil. V'im'ru: Amen.*

upon us and upon all Israel. Now say: Amen.

## Scene 2: Leon is attempting to teach his young daughters about art

Maya: Why Father? Why do we have to do this again?

Bella: Yes Father, why?

Leon: Because I said so. Because it's good to rinse your eyes.

Maya: With what?

Leon: With beauty.

Bella: But I have homework.

Maya: And my eyes don't need rinsing.

Leon: Yes they do, oh yes they do. The more you see, the more you know.

Bella: I like to know. I like to know.

Maya: But I don't care, I just don't care!

Bella: Maya is a teen. She likes to be provocative.

Maya: Not true!

Bella: Yes it is!

Maya: Not true!

Bella: Oh yes it is!

Leon: You don't know what's best for you! You will, one day.

Bella: I do now. I think I do.

Leon: 'Wisdom begins in wonder', says Socrates.

Maya: I like to wonder and write in my head.

Leon: He went barefoot and never washed.

Maya/Bella: Yuk!

Leon: He cared about the virtues of the mind, not shoes or clothes; he had no time for such small matters.

Maya/Bella: He had no time for such small matters.

Leon: Look. Look at this. This is Mademoiselle Riviere.

Look at the composition, the rhythm, the light and shade. Speaking, breathing. The contrast between her white skin, her white dress and her ebony black hair. Do you see? It's alive! The painting is alive! This is the power, the power of art! It's not about reason, but feeling. Do you understand? Do you feel it too?

Maya: I don't know.

Bella: I do.

Maya: You always do...

Bella: Not true!

Leon: You must! You are my daughter.

Maya: I see blushed cheeks, full lips, a long neck, gloved hands and those eyes...

Bella: A young girl from another world.

Leon: Yes, young and beautiful. Caroline was her name and she died when she was fifteen.

Maya: So young to die.

Bella: Too young to die.

Maya: She could have been a sister, a loved one, or my friend perhaps.

We would have walked the streets of Paris together, or sunned ourselves in St. Tropez. Wearing yellow bikinis and pink nail polish.

Leon: Bikinis? Polish?

Bella: I want to go to St. Tropez.

Maya: Swimming in the sea, lying on the beach, in those yellow bikinis.

Swimming in the sea, lying on the beach, singing 'Layla, Layla, Layla' in the sand.

Leon: Who? What?

Maya: It's a song!

Leon: What are you talking about?

Bella: What are you talking about?

Maya: A song! It's a song!

Bella: Caroline lived in another world.

Maya: Dreams have no age.

Bella: But she died in

Both: 1806

Maya: But that won't stop me from dreaming, Mademoiselle Riviere

Both: And Layla, Layla.

Leon: Are you paying attention? Are you listening to me?

Both: Mademoiselle Riviere! Mademoiselle Riviere! And Layla, Layla!

Leon: Maya! Bella! Maya! Bella!

### **Scene 3: Maya is bullied at school and is then abandoned by her best friend**

Schoolgirl 1: What's that?

Maya: It's a back brace for my scoliosis. I have a back deformity.

Schoolgirl 1: She has a scoliosis.

Schoolgirls 1, 2, 3: She has a scoliosis! She is deformed!

Schoolgirls 2, 1, 3: Scolololo

Schoolgirl 2: I don't like deformity.

Schoolgirls 1, 3: Scolololo

Maya: Scoliosis

Schoolgirl 2: A coat hanger for a deformed girl.

Schoolgirls 1, 3: Scolololo... Where's your wheelchair Maya?

Schoolgirl 2: I'll hang my coat on you.

Schoolgirls 1, 3, 2: Hunchback girl! Hunchback girl! She's just a weirdy hunchback girl!

Maya: No, no I'm not a hunchback.

Schoolgirl 2: Pick it up!

Maya: No!

Schoolgirl 2: Pick my coat up now!

Maya: No I can't do that.

Schoolgirl 2: Pick it up!

Schoolgirls 1, 3: Why can't you do that? Why not? Scaredy cat! Scaredy hunchback!

Schoolgirls 3, 2, 1: Scaredy cat!

Maya: Stop!

Schoolgirls 1, 2, 3: Weirdo!

Schoolgirl 1: She's just a weirdo, always alone.

Schoolgirls 2, 3: She has no friends

Schoolgirl 1: because she's

Schoolgirls 1, 2, 3: weird.

Schoolgirl 1: She is alone.

Schoolgirls 1, 2: She's always alone.

Maya: That's not true. Barbara is my friend.

Schoolgirl 1: Not for long, that I can tell you.

Maya: That's not true, that's just not true!

Schoolgirls 2, 3: That's just not true, that's just not true.

Schoolgirl 1: Pick up my coat! Now say I'm sorry.

Maya: No!

Schoolgirl 1: Now hunchback Maya.

Schoolgirl 2: She doesn't like us.

Schoolgirls 1, 2, 3: And we don't like the hunchback do we now?

Teacher: Stop that, right now! All of you! Now!

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Barbara: Are you all right, Maya?

Maya: I'm fine. Yes I'm fine.

Barbara: Why did you let them hurt you? You really should defend yourself.

Maya: I did.

Barbara: No you didn't, I saw you. They're horrid, horrid, stupid, horrid, stupid girls. And we all know it. They would never, never do that to me. I wouldn't let them, you see.

Maya: Oh I know, but I don't mind them; I don't mind how far they go.

Barbara: I don't think that's true. I think you do mind. I would mind. I would never, ever let them do that to me.

Maya: It doesn't matter. It's over now.

Barbara: But you should mind how far they go.

Maya: I should be strong, I should be firm.

Barbara: You should be strong, you should be firm.

Maya: And yet I'm not. I want to be.

Barbara: And there's something I must tell you.

Maya: What?

Barbara: it's about my mother.

Maya: What? What? What about your mother?

Barbara: She says...

Maya: What? What?

Barbara: We can't be friends. Because of Jesus.

Maya: What are you saying, what on earth are you saying? I don't understand.

Barbara: The Jews killed Jesus and you're a Jew. That's what she says. I can no longer play with you. I can no longer be your friend.

Maya: But what. But why?

Barbara: That's what she says and she's my mother. Your people killed the Son of God.

Maya: But that's not true.

Barbara: Goodbye, Maya.

Maya: I don't want to say goodbye. You're my best friend.

#### **Scene 4: Leon and Maya bond as he asks for her help, but the happy moment does not last**

Leon: Maya come here. I need your help.

Maya: My help? He never needs my help!

Leon: You see these drawings here? I need to make a selection.  
I would like your opinion on the drawings I should save, and the ones I should burn.

Maya: Burn?

Leon: Yes, burn.

Maya: But what if I choose the wrong ones? What if you don't agree with my choice?

Leon: You have a good eye. I trust you.

Maya: My father trusts me. He just said so. 'You have a good eye, I trust you', he said.  
I've never heard those words before. Never, never.

And if he only knew what just happened to me, would he still trust me? Would he, would he?  
The way I just stood there with all those girls throwing stones, throwing spite and scorn and searing words.

And I doing nothing, saying nothing, because I'm weak and I don't know how to defend myself.  
Yet I have a good eye, fresh and young, a love of beauty, so yes I can tell him what's good, what's bad, what should stay, what should go. Stacks of 'em I see before me, Yes I can do it, oh yes I can.

Leon: We're starting now, the fire's burning. Help me choose now, what do you think?

Into the fire? The fire?

Maya: Yes.

Leon: Into the fire?

Maya: No

Leon: Into the fire?

Maya: No

Leon: This?

Maya: Yes

Leon: This?

Maya: No

Leon: This?

Maya: Yes

Leon: This?

Maya: Yes

Leon: This? This?

Maya: No

Leon: This?

Maya: No

Leon: This?

Maya: Yes

Leon: Now we are done. Those drawings in the fire are worth lots of money. But it doesn't matter because they were no good, the drawings were no good.

Maya: No.

Leon: And you're the one who chose them.

Maya: Did I do well?

Leon: You did, and now we're done my daughter. Now we're done.

Maya: But can't I stay?

Leon: No. Leave me alone and go away.

Maya: Why?

Leon: We're done. I need to listen to the news now. The Hadashot, from Jerusalem. Leave me alone and close the door behind.

Maya: But I wanted to stay longer with you

Leon: I need to listen to the news! There's about to be a war in Israel! This is important! Don't you understand anything? Don't you know anything!?

Maya: I...I...I...I don't know

Leon: I need to listen to the news. Go now, go!

Maya: Ok then I will.

This? Yes. This? No. This? No. This? Yes. You have a good eye. I trust you. I don't care about the news. I don't care about his war. I don't care if people die. All I care about is my father. But he doesn't know because I cannot tell him, because I don't know how, because I don't want him to know.



## Scene 5: Maya is off to a party, but her father does not approve

Maya: Fishnets and freedom, boys and lipstick and maybe, maybe a kiss.  
Yes I must hurry, oh what to wear? Blue skirt or black? This? No, no that.  
Olivier, Olivier will be there and he likes me. His hair is long, but I don't care.  
Oh how to leave before it's too late, before Papa sees me, before he hears me, before he stops me.

Leon: Where do you think you're going? How can you dress like this?  
What do you think you're doing? How dare you dress like this?

Maya: Sophie is having a party and I want to get dressed up.

Leon: So?

Maya: Sophie is having a party and I just have to go.

Leon: No!

Maya: I promised I would and I will.

Leon: You're only sixteen.

Maya: So?

Leon: Too young for parties, too young for decadence.

Sarah: Nothing decadent, Leon, really.

Leon: She's not leaving, leaving this house.

Maya: But all my friends will be there! All my friends will be there! And Olivier will be there.

Sarah/Leon: Who?

Leon: A boy!

Maya: Yes a boy! So what?! How old do you think, do you think I am?

Leon: So what? So everything! You're still so young, you're still so naïve.

Sarah: Darling please don't be unkind, she may be young, but she knows her mind.

Leon: She knows nothing, nothing!

Sarah: Oh darling let her be!

Leon: She doesn't know her mind.

Sarah: You need to learn how to respect...

Leon: She knows nothing, how dare you in..., how dare you interfere!

Sarah: Not in front of the girls, Leon please.

Leon: I know what I am doing.

Sarah: Then do it gently like any normal man; let's speak to each other gently now, like an ordinary family.

Leon: Ordinary? Who's ordinary? I hate ordinary!

Maya: Maybe, but I don't! I am sixteen and ordinary and that's the way it should be.

Sarah: You're not ordinary at all.

Bella: Why are you all shouting?

Leon: Your sister thinks she's going to a party.

Maya: I am going to the party! I'm just like all the other girls, and all my friends will be there!

Leon: But you're not like those other girls, you fool, and their fathers are not like me. None of them are artists and none of them understand.

Maya: What? Understand what? And you're the fool!

Bella/Sarah: Don't you insult our/your father!

Leon: I have lived and nearly died and I've seen things you just don't know.

Maya: And I don't want to know you see? I just want to live! I just want to be happy!

Sarah: Leon, that's normal, you see that, don't you?

Maya: He never listens, he never understands me.

Sarah: Your father was never an adolescent... He never knew what you know now.

Maya: So how can he tell what's right and wrong, what's young, what's old?

Leon: Because I'm wise and you are not!

Maya: That's not true!

Sarah: My darling you must listen and be fair.

Leon: But it's wrong, it's wrong! All that horrible music, it's wrong, it's wrong.

Sarah: Please don't scream

Bella: Please don't scream

Maya: Please let me go, you have to let me go. If you don't I'll hate you. You have to let me go.

Maya: Go!

Bella: Stop!

Sarah: Stop!

Leon: Wrong!

Sarah: Look what you've done! She's fainted again!

Bella: Maya come back! Maya! Maya!

Sarah: Call a doctor you fool!

Leon: I'm sorry, I see, I'm sorry, I see.

Sarah: She will wake up, she did last time.

Sarah/Bella: Maya, wake up! Maya, wake up, come back to us!

Leon: I'm sorry, I'm sorry, my Maya.

All three: He's (I'm) sorry.

Maya: I must go. I'll be late.

Leon: Yes, all right.

Sarah: You see he listened after all.

Maya: Yes, he did. And now goodbye.

Leon: Be careful now, my daughter.

## Act 2

### Scene 1: Maya and Leon are in a café, discussing his early years

Leon: It is a long story. I don't know where to start.

Maya: Start with you as a child.

Leon: What do you want to know?

Maya: What it was like.

Leon: What?

Maya: The nineteen thirties, life before the war.

Leon: It was a different world.

Maya: I want to know more, it's for my history assignment. And I also...

Leon: What?

Maya: I also want to know about the war and what happened to you. You never tell.

Leon: So you pick this place to discuss it?

Maya: I thought it would be better to talk away from home.

Leon: Better for you, but not for me.

Maya: I didn't realise.

Leon: This is not the place to discuss the war.  
A noisy café with horrible smokers and horrible music!

Maya: But I like it here.

Leon: I cannot see why.

Maya: Please.

Leon: Okay, okay, okay, okay.

Maya: Tell me about the early days.

Leon: We lived in Czernovitz where East meets West, a place of beauty and peace.  
I've never returned.

Maya: Why not?

Leon: Because what I knew has disappeared.

May: Why?

Leon: All is gone. And we were uprooted and taken away.

Maya: Did they hurt you?

Leon: Me and many others.

Maya: I'm sorry, Father.

Leon: I am here, sitting with you in Paris. That's what matters. That I am alive.

Maya: Yes. Do you remember Czernovitz?

Leon: Very well. I can see it all: our house, our garden, our freedom.  
I can see the shape of my room, the face of my father.  
I can smell the cream on my mother's cheeks.

Maya: And school?

Leon: Learning was my life, I had a prodigious mind.

Maya: Nothing's changed.

Leon: I wanted to know everything. I wanted to become what my father never was.

Maya: How?

Leon: You must learn, no play he said, learn, no play.

Maya: That's so cruel.

Leon: It was love, not cruelty.

Maya: So you never played as a child?

Leon: I played the violin.

Maya: That's not the play I mean.

Leon: I had a stamp collection, my pride and joy.

Maya: That's cool.

Leon: That's what?

Maya: Never mind.

Leon: There is something blue and shiny on your eyelids.

Maya: Make-up Father. Blue Electric is its name.

Leon: Why would you wear such a thing? You are beautiful.

Maya: I like it.

Leon: Blue Electric...

Maya: He doesn't know about the bright red lipstick I apply on the street,  
the fishnet stockings underneath my trousers, the mini skirt inside my bag,  
the cigarettes in my pocket, the chewing gum to hide the smell,  
the boy I kissed yesterday, the music I stash beneath my bed,  
the troubled dreams inside my head.

Leon: Are you listening? You look distracted.

Maya: Yes I'm listening.

Leon: What else do you want to know?

Maya: What happened when you turned twelve?

Leon: We were taken away by men in uniform.

Maya: And where did they take you?

Leon: To a place of cold and fear.

They told us to pack a small suitcase and they herded us away to an end unknown.

Walk east, they said, east, always east and snow, there was snow, always snow.

It was our doom, that still, white beauty.

Maya: God. How did you survive?

## Scene 2: Sam comes to the family home for dinner

Leon: That will be Sam, right on time, *comme d'habitude*. Don't forget your manners, girls. No shouting, no interrupting, no silly stories. This is Samuel Beckett, after all.

Maya/Bella: We know, Father.

Leon: You need reminding that a man like Sam...

Leon/Bella: ...comes along only every three hundred years.

Maya: Sam! Hello.

Sam: Hello Maya. Good to see you.

Bella: Hello too.

Sam: Hello Bella.

Leon: Sam! Come in, come in, how are you?

Sam: Could be better, could be worse.

Leon: Whisky?

Sam: Thank you.

Sarah: Sam! Hello darling, darling Sam. We must eat now, I'm sorry, I hope you don't mind. Children, school and all of that.

Sam: Yes, of course.

Maya/Bella: Every three hundred years.

Leon: Haut Brion, sixty four.

Sam: Nectar. How are you?

Leon: I painted my coat yesterday, but I don't know, I never do.

Sam: One never does. It's difficult.

Leon: Yes. The painter needs to see what's outside to capture the inside. The writer needs to look inside to capture the truth of what's outside.

Maya: Why is that difficult? It's just the definition of art, isn't it? Interpreting the world as we feel it.

Leon: I told you not to interrupt.

Maya: I was giving my opinion, that's all.

Leon: That's all?

Maya: That's all.

Sarah: Please, Leon.

Sam: What she says is right.

Leon: That's all?

Bella: Please don't shout.

Sam: What she says is right Leon. The world as we feel it.

Leon: Yes, it's true.

Sam: Literature and art are like oil and water and I don't know which is which.

Bella: That's nice.

Sam: Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea...

Maya: Who's that?

Leon: How can you ask such a question?

Sarah: It's Shakespeare darling, sonnet sixty five.

Sam: Good fish. Fine source of calcium.

Bella: Sam swallowed the fish bones.

Bella/Maya: Sam swallowed the fish bones.

Leon: Enough! Enough!

Sam: It's fine. They're young.

Maya: I'm not.

Leon: Then don't behave like a child. How are things?

Waiting for Godot will be opening soon in London.

Sam: Yes, the Young Vic, next week.

Leon: Next week? Bravo!

Sarah: Next week? How wonderful?

Maya: Can we go?

Maya/Bella: Can we go? Can we go?

Leon: Certainly not.

Maya/Bella: Why not? Why not?

Leon: Because I say so. You are too young to understand it.

Maya: That's not true.

Leon: Yes it is. You will not understand its nuances, its profundity.

Bella: I am profound. I understand.

Maya: No you don't!

Sarah: Please girls, not now, when Sam is here.

Sam: I don't mind. I'm pleased they want to see my play.

Maya: What's it about?

Sam: I cannot answer that question.

Leon: Never ask Sam about his work.

Sam: It's all right. I don't mind Leon.



Leon: No it's not, it's not!

Sam: Leon

Bella: Father.

Sarah: Leon! Will it be playing in Paris soon?

Sam: I don't know. Perhaps.

Maya: But you wrote it so you should know.

Sam: It doesn't always work that way.

Leon: Enough! Is that any way to speak to your godfather? You should be ashamed of yourself.

Maya: What did I do wrong?

Sarah: Gently, gently Leon.

Sam: Don't be too harsh on her Leon.

Leon: Go to your room!

Bella: Please father.

Sarah/Sam: Leon.

Maya: I wanted to stay, find out more about the play. There was no shame in what I said. I hate him. How I hate my father.

### Scene 3: Maya takes advantage of the empty flat and throws a wild party

Chorus (*whispered*): Father, Father, my father, my father,  
I hate you, I love you, I love you, I hate you!

Chorus (*sung*): Father, Father, I hate you, I hate you, I love you, I love you, I hate you, my father.  
You me, Father, Father, Father, see me Father, know me Father, love me Father.  
Father, my father.

No father, no father. Mother, no mother, mother.

Maya, no Bella, just Maya, no Bella, we're here for a party!

Chorus Men: We want to drink and smoke and kiss and maybe more. What do you say?  
Bring on the music and...

Full Chorus: the bliss! The bliss! The house is empty, they're away.  
Bring on the music and the bliss. We're here for a party, we're here for a party!

DIRE STRAITS: Tunnel of Love

Lustful Youth: You're beautiful, you're sexy, I've liked you for so long.

Maya: Really? Oh really?

Lustful Youth: When are your parents back tonight, tonight?

Maya: Not for a long time...

Both: Not for a long time.

Chorus: Party, party, no mother, no father, Party, party, the house is empty.

Maya: Stop! What are you doing? Stop! Stop! Stop!

Chorus: We want to drink and smoke and dance. Bring on the music and the bliss. Bliss! Party!  
Party! Party! Party! Party! Party!

#### **Scene 4: An unseen Maya witnesses her father's deep distress**

Maya: What is that noise? What are they saying? Who is this?

Leon: My father.

Maya: His father?

Leon: My father died.

Maya: What is he saying?

Sarah: Leon darling, you had a dream.

Maya: It was a dream.

Leon: I lost the comb.

Maya: What comb?

Leon: I lost the comb my father gave me. I know I had it there in my pocket.

Maya: My father doesn't cry, my father never cries. He had a dream.

Leon: I lost my comb.

Maya: What is he saying?

Leon: He gave it to me when I was ten, to look more like a gentleman.

Maya/Sarah: Oh Father./Oh Leon.

Leon: I carried it always in my pocket, but then our feet turned to ice.

We walked and walked into the cold. The Kapo followed close behind.

Our feet were blue, wrapped in old newspaper. He said to me, before he died: 'Sei frei, my son'.

Sarah: Be free, he said be free and you are free.

Maya: So this is why.

Leon: I have my freedom, but not my father.

Sarah: He would have been so proud of you.

Leon: I threw men's bones into the pit, small children too and their poor mothers.

Maya: My father threw bodies, bodies into a pit!

Sarah: Darling, the girls will hear you.

Leon: I had no choice, I had to live.

Maya: So this is why.

Sarah: You are alive, you are our love.

Leon: My world is one of many shadows, they whisper to me in the darkness.

Maya: You must be strong, you cannot fall.

Sarah: You must be strong, you cannot fall.

Leon: I had no choice, I had to live.

Maya: I never knew, but I know now. What does this mean for me?  
I live and love, but I've lost nothing. This is why he's so angry.

Maya/Sarah/Leon: This is why our/your/our minds can't meet.  
This is why he treats me so / he treats you so / I treat you so.  
This is why he is my father / he is your father / I am your father.

## Scene 5: Maya and Sam are in a café discussing life in general and her father in particular

Sam: How are you Maya? It's good to see you on your own.

Maya: Oh yes it is, I think so too.

Sam: Your father says that school has been trying.

Maya: It always is. I don't like school.

Sam: Your father tells me you read a lot.

Maya: I do. I've just read Simone de Beauvoir, the story of her childhood. I loved it.

Sam: Why?

Maya: She speaks to me. I feel as if I knew her, as if I could be her friend.

Sam: That's wonderful, that's just what books should do.

Maya: My father doesn't know me or who I am inside. He is a dark man.

Sam: The darkness is his fire, it make him who he is.

Maya: But it burns, it burns.

Sam: Yes it must, it must.

Maya: You have darkness too.

Sam: But mine is friendly.

Maya: It doesn't burn?

Sam: It smoulders.

Maya: Smoulders is softer.

Maya: Not like my father.

Sam: Your father is soft; you will see it one day.

He is different; he doesn't see things as most people do.

Maya: Neither do you, yet you are not angry.

Sam: I am otherwise

Maya: My father is angry but now I know why, because I heard him, after my party. I went too far, it was too late. I meant to stop it, I really did!

Maya: I went too far, it was too late. I meant to stop it, I really did!

Sam: You went much too far, it really was much too late.

Maya: I heard his voice through the bedroom wall, wailing whispers in the dawn, about the war and its machines, about his father and his mother, about the bodies with falling faces, who hung on until no more, and all that hell he kept inside, he kept inside.

Sam: This knowing is the beginning. This knowing will bring you closer together.

Sam: This knowing will bring you closer together.

Maya: I hope it does. I hope it will. I understand him more I think.

Sam: And he understands you more than you know.

Maya: I want him to love me, love me as I am

Sam: He does and always will. He just doesn't know how to show it.

Maya: He does with my sister.

Sam: They are alike.

Maya: And who am I? Who am I?

Sam: You must think six steps ahead. Like chess. The queen is all powerful.

Maya: What does that mean?

Both: Six steps ahead.

Maya: How?

Both: Six steps ahead. Six steps ahead.

**Scene 6: Leon's last hours: memories, guilt, regret, apologies, forgiveness, love - and finally death**

Nurse: Time, it's time for your medication, Mister Leon.

Leon: Not now. Leave me alone. Can't you see I'm thinking?

Nurse: You may be thinking, but you still need your medication.

Leon: Not now I said! Please go! Go!

Nurse: I...I...

Leon: Just go!

Nurse: I'll be back later then. Right piece of work, that one.

Leon: Left hand, a good one. Hot summer. A fight with Sarah that day I think.

Not a Dürer, but could be. Letter from my mother, dead and gone.

She always smelled of cream, and despair. I never liked despair, but I was very impatient.

Too late to change that now. Make do, make do with the essential.

It's always been the same with me: the essential and nothing else. But where am I?

Is this the end? It cannot be. Too much to do, to see, to hear, to feel!

*(Spoken)* I've looked for light, but still walk in shadows. Those shadows made me the man I am.

Fire fuelled my art and my love. I have both in equal measure. But I am an artist.

Like a mystic, I must stand outside history. That is the only way to enter.

*(Sung)* Through the door of truth and beauty... I need to tell my daughter this.

Through the door of truth and beauty light shall prevail.

Maya *(spoken)*: How are you this morning, Papa?

Leon *(spoken)*: I am tired, but happy to see you. I would like to speak to you.

Maya *(spoken)*: Yes, of course.

Leon *(spoken)*: But I must rest now.

*(Sung)* Is your mother coming soon? And your sister?

Maya *(sung)*: Any minute.

Leon: I have been blessed by all of you.

Maya: Oh Papa.

Leon: Blessed by all of you, blessed to be alive.

Maya: I've never heard you say such things.

Leon: There is no time you see?

Maya: But there is!

Leon: No more.

Maya: Stop saying that, stop saying that.

Leon: I care for the dead as much as the living.

Maya: Is that true?

Leon: Michelangelo whispers to me in my sleep. Napoleon too.

Maya: What do they say?

Leon: That I was not meant to be a father.

Maya: Don't say that.

Leon: I was meant to be an artist only.

Maya: You are both!

Leon: But I found myself in a house of love. It was a house that made me happy.

Maya: And we were happy with you there. Forgive me. Forgive me. For my adolescence. For being difficult. I just wanted to be normal.

Leon: Nothing worse than normality! Are you wearing that blue eye make-up again?

Maya: Yes

Leon: We are alike, the two of us. We are survivors and we share the fire. I wanted to tell you...

Maya: What?

Leon: I wanted to say...

Maya: What?

Leon: Too late, too tired...

Maya: Close your eyes, I am here.

Leon: Something about a door.

Maya: A door to what?

Leon: To beauty and...

Maya: What?

Both: What?

Leon: Love I think. And truth. You must know you have been loved. Your sister too. Where are they?

Maya: Coming soon.

Leon: Where is your mother?

Maya: She's coming

Both: Truth, love, love, truth.

Maya: Coming, she's coming.

Leon: Mother, your mother?

Nurse: Time, it's time for your medication, Mister Leon. It's time.

Leon: Not now.

Maya: What door?

Bella: How are you?



Leon: Bella!

Bella: I'm sorry we're so late. I brought you a book. I know you'll love it.

Maya: What did you mean? Please remember. What door?

Sarah: My love! My love! I need you, I love you. Still plenty of time.

Leon: My love! Beautiful faces, my loves. Your eyes, I see you.

Maya: Please remember. What door? What door?

Sarah: You must give me time, more time. There's time. Don't go!

Leon: Where is...? Who is...? Why is...? Why am I here?

Maya/Bella/Sarah: Don't go!

Nurse: It's time.

Maya: Spots of sun on your old hands.

They have held crimson, they have held blue. China paper, canvas too.

I have known you for sixteen thousand days and sixteen thousand nights.

Bella/Sarah: Sixteen thousand days and sixteen thousand nights.

Chorus: Rest in peace

Sarah: He will not be cold.

Maya/Bella: He will not be cold.

All: Rest in peace.