

# ROSA'S LAMENT

## By Sandra Dempsey

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**CAST: one female**

***\*This monologue is designed to be performed by students. However, this drama may be played by a female of any age.\****

***(ROSA is a dignified Old-European woman of Russian-Slovakian descent with a thick accent; her speech is careful and measured. SHE is in the hereafter, being judged on her life, as SHE recalls the indignation that she endured during a very hard existence on earth.)***

ROSA

***(Despairing, clutching at her head)*** Sometimes, when I hear the voices, I just want to fold over my ears and stop the words from getting in. I think, "If I don't hear, how can they hurt?" But it's not so simple as all that. Instead, what I get is all those words, every last, lousy one of them, trapped inside, like some gritty sand in all those wrinkles in my brain. Maybe, sometime, if I'm lucky, those words, they get worn down and they're not so sharp, not so loud. But never are they ever gone away, never are they not so awful.

***(Angry)*** You know nothing of my heart! The story you read from is not mine! It is his version, his claim, his words! All this from a man, a beast who would steal your own false teeth to smile back at you!

I ask no more consideration than for my life to be judged, my history to be remembered! I was a good wife, a good worker; The days of my best years were given over to help us, the both of us, to live and prosper and work the land. There was never any reason for him to hit me, to beat me, to fill my head with terrible hurtful names...no need, no

need at all. We were partners. I was not meant to be some kind of caged creature, kept alive only for his amusement.

There should not have been such hate, such problems. A fist will not leave a heart print on someone who knows respect.

We worked, we farmed, we turned the dirt beneath our feet from gray to green...soil so eroded you could walk up to your knees in its absence. If I had known the "we" ended with the plow instead of the bank, I would not have been such a willing workhorse.

But only one name was painted on the box for the mail.

**(Reciting, sing-songy)**

"The woman, the dog, the walnut tree,  
The more you beat them, the better they be!"

That rug that wiped his feet could only have the dirt beaten from its fibers so many times. After the dirt, life-blood itself was all that remained to be thrashed away. And rugs, like the people they serve, will only be brave so as not to die of sorrow.

The worst fire does not just burn the branches and the trunk of the tree. The heat goes all the way down into the roots in the ground; That is what smolders the hottest, that is what is so often unseen. And he made sure that he destroyed even the deepest foundations of my soul.

**(Pause)**

**(Quiet, beseeching)** Am I not wanted at all by anyone anywhere?  
It is getting late.

**(Pause)**

Every night, still, the pillow knows my tears, so much hard truth soaking into so many soft feathers.

**(Remembering)** I was out walking before, every day I would walk, with all kinds of excitement, and not one single worry inside my heart.

That good time, all out along the edge of the lake, or on that sweet grass lining my beautiful park...always, step forward and strong.

There was no snow, and it could have been springtime, but the earth was still hard, and that wind still blowing cold. I was good, walking for ages and ages, without the daylight moving hardly anywhere. And soon, my feet turn me onto this...um **(searching for the word)**...sidewalk, yes, on the street at the side. Big, nice houses, one beside each other from start to finish, with trees, small and young – lovely homes.

***Thank you for reading this free excerpt from ROSA'S LAMENT by Sandra Dempsey. For performance rights and/or a complete copy of the script, please contact us at:***

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