

ZIVA
NEVER –N EVER LAND
(A SYNOPSIS)

While in the air, on land, and by sea rage the last bloody conflicts of the World War (1944) ZIVA, the 30-year-old wife of BRANKO - the keeper of the lighthouse that dominates a small island forgotten by the sea-charts off the Dalmatian coast - has been waiting for two years for her husband to return from the line of battle.

Four goats, a few chickens, the fish and the mussels from the generous Adriatic Sea keep her company and help her to survive.

Every now and then the waves wash up on the foreshore the bodies of soldiers of various nationalities tom from the war by the sea, which she piteously gathers up and buries.

One morning, among the seaweed and the wreckage from a corvette of the Italian Navy, Ziva notice the inert body of MARCO, a young Venetian sailor.

The lady of the lighthouse brings him around, succours him, heals him, feeds him, pulls him back together and loves him.

And with love and sensuality she tries to bring back his humanity mortified by the horrors of war, to persuade him to put down his weapons, and to rebel against the monstrous butchery that has devastated everything and everyone.

This is what she will also do soon thereafter with GORDON, a British paratrooper with the RAF who plummets down on the impervious cliffs from the sky one stormy night. To him as well Ziva offers help and love in exchange for his promise to give up making war.

The "peaceful co-existence" between the two castaways, once the initial public and political hostilities that divides them have been conquered, is rendered harsh by the inevitable private and personal rivalry that the figure of Ziva soon brings to the forefront between them.

A rivalry complicated by the arrival on the island of a third party, FRANZ, a Nazi officer who has no need of being persuaded by Ziva to lay down his arms, since he is already disgusted by the crimes he has seen and lived throughout half of Europe.

One after the other, the three castaways, having come within a step from death, return to life in the arms of Ziva, strong and generous Circe who, with her attentions, her love and her refusal of violence, offers them all a chance of revenge and redemption from having been both executioners and victims in the universal massacre.

Finally, under the protective arch of a coruscating rainbow, a boat discharges Branko onto the island.

The war is over, Ulysses has returned, the three castaways take their leave of Ziva accompanied by the strains of Boris Vian's song "Le Déserteur". Illuminated by the physical and metaphysical beam of the lighthouse now back in working order, Branko and Ziva make love on the foreshore: -his voice breaking with emotion, the husband recounts to his wife how he, too, was saved by a woman, KATARINA, a Hungarian country-girl who found him in a cavem, hid treated, nourished, and loved him as Ziva had done with her "deserters". "Never-never land" as a metaphor for a different route, "Ziva" as the celebration of female intelligence and vitality.

TINTO BRASS

CATERINA VARZI

And I saw her: she was there, mysterious and seductive as a mirage, observing slay the foyer of the hotel.

I was overcome by vertigo, an obscure and very strong call like the sexual one, inspiration and stimulus to nutritious transgressions.

My glances darting around her, I walked over to her "Actress?" I asked her gallantly.

"Lawyer" she answered unexpectedly she had, indeed, come to the appointment to discuss the contract of DVD on my work as a director. Which was never done.

Or better yet, it was transformed into another project, also about me, but more ambitious and articulate, in which Caterina Varzi would carry out the role of interviewer/interlocutor, exploiting the competence of her second profession, that of Jungian psychoanalyst, student of Aldo Carotenuto.

And that's when the truth came out.

Because the job rapidly transformed itself into reciprocal seduction: she for the "person" of Tinto Brass during which she stripped it of the stereotypes of the "personage" in order to clarify my soul; I for the ardent expressiveness of her unusual and very beautiful face, changing and lively like the reflections of the sun under the bridges of Venice, the disarming lucidity of her mind, the disturbing sensuality of her true woman's body, not artificially redone, during which I stripped it of the trappings and quirks of the head-shrinker in order to clarify her eros.

I don't know if Caterina found my soul, I know for certain that I found in her the confirmation of my initial intuitions/intentions: that of "seeing" her immediately as the ideal interpreter of the character of Ziva, the female lead in the eponymous film I was preparing.

Therefore we interrupted the "sitting" and moved the confrontation to the "set" of Ziva.

TINTO BRASS