

THE BORDER WITH STARS AND WRITINGS

Treatment:

Assuming four actors—two male and two female—I've divided the narrative into eight scenes to streamline it. I plan to include a musical interlude of a couple of minutes between scenes (possibly with a musician, accordionist, in attendance), and a shorter musical interlude within some scenes. I imagine the actors will have slight changes in clothing and accessories to characterize the various characters. The set will be minimal, with photos.

START OF THE SHOW

FIRST PICTURE

(The war in Slovenia in June 1991)

Interpreters: Lina and Licia, two women from Gorizia

START

LINA (*moves excitedly on the stage, in a loud voice*): Run, run, hurry. Go up to Borgo Castello to see what's happening. In Rozna Dolina, just past the Casa Rossa border, there's shooting. It's war.

LICIA (*arrives running*): War? My God, it's real. Look over there, the tanks are there. And the soldiers are shooting at them. What's happening, Virgin Mary?

LINA: And don't you know that in Yugoslavia it's all a remit? The Slovenians wanted independence: in the referendum they all voted in favor of an autonomous state. But Belgrade wants to prevent it. They don't care who won the referendum.

LICIA: And if he misses his shot, a cannon fire will follow all the way to Piazza Vittoria. Even under Tito, Yugoslavia was not so afraid.

LINA: Our police have blocked access from Via Alviano, the Casa Rossa square is isolated. Via Giustiniani is deserted, poor people who live there.

LICIA: The barbed wire has reappeared at the Rafut crossing. In Piazza Transalpina and Via San Gabriele, there's not a single dog on the streets.

LINA: The people of Gorizia are full of fear. I can tell you that more than one xe will go and hide in the Bombi tunnel, like at the time of our Second World War.

LICIA: Is it possible that our Gorizia has never passed? That '47 border is truly a curse. Today it's a piece of the Cold War era.

LINA (wearing a vest): You're right. Even though it's June, it's very cold today.

LICIA (shakes her head in a dejected manner, looks at her friend): What a shame this is. The idea of a monad can be felt even in dramatic moments like this (then turning to her friend): I'm talking about the Cold War, I'm not talking about how cold it is. In fact, tonight, Friday, June 28, 1991, it's particularly hot here in Gorizia.

LINA: But listen to me Licia, maybe this isn't the right time to ask you something like that, but I never understood what the Cold War was.

LICIA: I'm not surprised, Lina, there are so many things you never understood. But how lucky you are to have those things, without so many worries in your head, you live blissfully for twenty years.

END

MUSICAL BREAK

FIRST PICTURE BIS

Interpreters: two narrators

START

LUCA: June 28th is an important date for the people of the former Yugoslavia, especially the Serbs. It is Vidovan Day, the anniversary of the Serbian defeat by the Turks at Blackbird Field in 1389, as well as

the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo in 1914, which triggered the First World War.

ALESSIO: On June 28, 1991, the Slovenian war reached the gates of Gorizia. It had begun following the declaration of independence adopted by the Slovenian parliament the previous day and marked the beginning of the end of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The conflict resulted in 65 deaths, mostly Yugoslav army soldiers, but also civilians and ten foreign citizens.

LUCA: On December 23, 1990, a referendum was held on Slovenian independence from Yugoslavia. 88.5% of voters supported the establishment of a sovereign nation. However, the independence program did not materialize until six months later, on June 21, 1991.

ALESSIO: In those turbulent days 34 years ago, the people of Gorizia experienced the unfolding war with anguish, fearing for the fate of their neighbors, but also for themselves. On the evening of June 28, intense fighting broke out between the Yugoslav Federal Army and Slovenian special forces at the Rožna Dolina (Red House) border crossing.

LUCA: The Slovenians prevailed, managing to destroy two federal tanks and seize three others. The battle resulted in four casualties. About fifty soldiers surrendered to the Slovenian territorial defense unit. Several dozen members of the federal army were wounded, some of whom were treated at the hospital in Gorizia.

END

MUSICAL BREAK

SECOND PICTURE

(The 1991 meeting between Cossiga and Kucan)

Interpreters Lina and Licia

LICIA: So, Lina, did you want to save the Cold War? Now I'll explain...

LINA: Yes, thanks, but wait, let me tell you something before I lose my mind.

LICIA: Ah, I didn't know you had a head...

LINA: I was on Via San Gabriele on November 3, 1991. I saw him, I was next to him like you and I are now. I remember it as if it were today. He was also a handsome man, if you will... with a beard that was a little whitened like talcum powder.

LICIA: My goodness, Lina, what a captivating speech. When I listen to your stories, I either get a headache or I feel like I'm kicking myself in the ass. But come on, tell me: who is this man with the beard bleached white with talcum powder? What happened that day on Via San Gabriele? And above all, what were you doing there?

LINA: I was cycling back from the Nova Gorica mesnica, with bags on each handlebar filled with straculo, slices of horse meat, pork chops, and masinada. The dogs in the street were running right behind me.

LICIA: Yes, he asked you the Prepustnica... Continue about this fact instead of saying monad. And above all, make it short.

LINA: It was November 3, 1991, and a cold wind was blowing, like war. By the way: will you tell me what this Cold War was?

LICIA (intolerant): Come on, Lina, the sun is eating the hours.

LINA: Well, I was cycling along Via Ursiza...

LICIA: And where would this street be? I've never heard it mentioned.

LINA: It's the long street that goes to Nova Gorica after the San Gabriele pass, the one full of busts of Yugo heroes. Hard faces, I'm telling you no.

LICIA: The street is called Erjaceva Ulica Lina, not Ursiza (she rolls her eyes to emphasize her friend's naivety). Is it possible that she hasn't learned a single word of Slovenian yet? Let's move on now.

LINA: There you go, I was pedaling like a rocket, chased by a pack of dogs...

LICIA: You got a finger.

LINA: Of not being able to breathe the spray that grew from the Corno torrent...

LICIA: Don't be a snide peddler like you usually are. Take one thing at a time. And what does the Corno snout have to do with it? This whole snout thing is meant to be a blow to Nova Gorica, if we want to tell the whole truth. Go ahead, Lina.

LINA: So when I arrive at the San Gabriele pass I see lots of policemen, blue cars with sirens blaring, lots of elegantly dressed but stern-faced men...

LICIA: Like the heroes of Yugoslavia?

LINA: No, with the stubbornness my grandfather Severino had; may God bless him.

LICIA: Was that grandfather of yours buried in Nova Gorica?

LINA: No, it's in the central cemetery, one of the oldest graves. When you saw the tomb of the Vodopivec family, are you aware of the Vodopivecs, Licia?

LICIA: Natural or sparkling Vodopivec?

LINA: If this doesn't happen, I'll ask Jole Vodopivec, Stanko Bevilacqua's sister.

LICIA: Two brothers with different surnames that mean the same thing. The story of Slovenian surnames being Italianized by fascism is very sad.

LINA: Also because certain Slovenian surnames in Italian *xe vignudi fora proprio stambi*.

LICIA: Like the Staundinger *xe* I became Chiaruzzi, the Wegscheider Mauri.

LINA: But Mauri was also the Maders, the Kirchers, the Dalla Chieras, the Daneucigs, the Danellis...

LICIA: Yes, Lina, enough, we understood. The historians wrote about the lost identity. By the way, Lina, I didn't understand you because first I told you that your grandfather Severino, the stubborn one...

LINA: Hard that I don't tell you...

LICIA: Well, well, you're indifferent. Well, you don't understand why this Severino was buried in Nova Gorica.

LINA: You must have made a mistake, Licia.

LICIA: It's like giving her a mousse candy. I just wanted to remind you that the center of Nova Gorica, built starting in 1948, stands where the old Gorizia cemetery used to be, in the Grassigna area. Near the bus station, there's still a gravestone.

LINA: But the Nova Gorica cemetery is in Stara Gora, on the road to Aidussina. X and in the middle of the woods, you know it's beautiful to tell the truth.

LICIA: Good Lina, we'll get back to the story you told me about Via San Gabriele. By now, the idiot who hit you on the handlebars will have gone rancid.

LINA: You're the one who makes you lose the thread.

END

SECOND TABLE BIS

Interpreters: Cossiga, civil servant, Kucan

START

COSSIGA (speaking with a Sardinian accent); (addressing the official): Now that the ceremony at the Redipuglia shrine in Gorizia is over, take me.

OFFICIAL: President Cossiga, that's not possible. It's not covered by the protocol.

COSSIGA: I am the President of the Republic. They call me the Pickaxe. I'm in charge.

OFFICIAL: Excuse me, Mr. President, but how do you do it? You have to organize an escort, notify the Prefecture, and then what's the point of going to Gorizia?

COSSIGA: I want to take a walk in a street called San Gabriele.

OFFICER: A walk? In this weather?

COSSIGA: I want to meet my friend Milan Kučan. The President of the newly formed Republic of Slovenia is waiting for me in Nova Gorica.

OFFICIAL: Mr. President, do you want to cross the border to Nova Gorica to meet President Kucan?

COSSIGA: You understand me.

OFFICIAL: But the European Union has not yet recognized Slovenia's independence. There's a risk that its move could cause a serious international diplomatic incident.

COSSIGA: Nothing matters to me. I will be the first president of a state to recognize Slovenia's independence. Even the borders are shrinking... and now I want to go to Gorizia at full speed.

MUSICAL INTERCURSION (hints at the Italian and Slovenian national anthems)

(Cossiga Kucan Meeting)

COSSIGA (hugs Kucan): Dear Milan, it's such a pleasure to meet you. How are you?

KUCAN: President Cossiga, your visit is an honor. You're the first head of state I've met.

COSSIGA: I know. Italy will be the first state to recognize your independence thanks to me.

KUCAN: This November 3, 1991, is a memorable day for us Slovenians. Dear Francesco, Slovenia will be eternally grateful to you.

COSSIGA: Thank you, Milan. This day is truly special (*Cossiga takes Kucan by the arm as if revealing a confidence*): By the way, dear Milan, I met a woman on a bicycle as I was coming here. Bags full of goods were hanging from the handlebars. And she was being chased by a pack of dogs. Do you know anything about it?

KUCAN: Don't worry, Francesco. It must have been a Belgrade spy. Our dogs will sort it out.

END

MUSICAL BREAK

THIRD TABLE

Interpreters: the waitresses Fides and Idelma in a bar

START

(Voiceover like an old transistor radio): "If your favorite team wins, toast with Stock 84; if it loses, console yourself with Stock 84..."

On stage

IDELMA: I never understood what he was drinking if his favorite team drew.

FIDES: I drank a spritz, not just wine nor just water.

IDELMA: But what about the spritz? That's what I drank before the match. Stock 84 was good, brandy, fine stuff.

FIDES: And I don't know. Invented in Trieste in 1884. The Stock factory is still in Roian, just the walls. No bottles.

IDELMA: Now in the old factory they've set up specialized cirrhosis clinics. It seems fair to me.

FIDES: I remember when I went to the Grezar stadium with my dad to see Triestina.

IDELMA: And did dad drink a Stock 84?

FIDES: At half-time, even the bikers who were hitting the Bora.

IDELMA: So to speak...

FIDES: Between halftimes, the stadium loudspeaker would announce the first-half scores of other games. Before that, the theme tune would go silent: if your team... (*dreamily*): what wonderful memories with dad.

IDELMA: I didn't know that El Grezar was a racetrack.

FIDES: In fact, it was the stadium in Trieste, built in the early 1920s with the name of Littorio. I don't know what the drivers were involved in.

IDELMA: First I told you about loudspeakers, if you know what I mean.

FIDES: Yes, the bubble-shaped microphones, sorry, piria.

IDELMA: If you call speakers, I can't stand it.

(*Fides shrugs her shoulders mortified*)

IDELMA: But how come Fides took the story out of the Stock advert?

FIDES: So, just to chat. There's no one in the bar right now. I'll get tired if I don't talk.

IDELMA: Listen, Fides, what if we got rid of some Stock 84 glasses? I'll give you a discount on the bottles in the closet.

FIDES: Good idea, Idelma. Do you want me to put a cube of iazo in it?

IDELMA: What I'm doing in brandy: it's blasphemy. Like putting cheese on fish.

The two waitresses sip their glasses, leaning awkwardly on the bar counter. And after the first two, they drink a few more.

FIDES: How good is Stock 84.

IDELMA: I tell myself that even if Stock was eighty-nine, it would have been just as good (*sobs*)

FIDES: It's always the same old story with you: as soon as you drink two little drinks, you start sobbing. And now I bet you'll start singing a romantic song?

IDELMA: You guessed it. How did you save yourself?

FIDES: We've been working together in the bars of Gorizia for fifty years. What would you like to sing to me today?

IDELMA: The song "Champagne" by Bobby Solo.

FIDES. "Champagne" sang Peppino di Capri, who was actually from Naples.

IDELMA: Right, Bobby Solo sang "A Tear on My Face." He also made me cry easily.

FIDES: Of course, and also the French woman covered in grease... come on, Idelma, stop doing it. You have to sugarcoat the bikes because when you take them out of the dishwasher, the stain always remains. And afterward, people grumble.

IDELMA: And you don't want to hear the song "Champagne"?

FIDES: Okay, come on, but just a little something.

IDELMA (original background music): Champagne/to toast
Gorizia/which is/the most beautiful city/remember/there was an
invitation/tonight everyone's going to Nova Gorica/so/the party was
starting/and already/my head was spinning/for us/the bikes weren't
enough/I only followed El Stock with my gaze/if you want/I'll take you if
you want/The most banal excuse/to help each other stand/and not
tumble on the stairs/and drink the last drop/before going to bed/waiter
Champagne.

END

MUSICAL BREAK

THIRD TABLE BIS

Interpreters: two customers

START

Two customers enter the bar. They find Idelma and Fides asleep because they're drunk.

LUCA: It's like this every day. Idelma and Fides can't control each other. It's never been clear whether the glasses they served to customers in their decades-long career as bartenders are still there...

ALESSIO: Or those who shouted themselves hoarse. But we have to understand them. Because ultimately, in their own way, they're telling us a significant chapter in Gorizia's history.

LUCA: A story that takes us back to the years following the Second World War, when Gorizia, having returned to Italy after three years of Allied military government rule, found itself having lost three-fifths of its provincial territory.

ALESSIO: And with some parts of the city remaining in Yugoslavia. A severe blow to the city's economy, which had flourished thanks to the large clientele from the Soča and Vipava valleys.

LUCA: The situation was made worse by the large influx of exiles from Istria, especially from Pula. With them came a special... and rather cumbersome item: the statue of Caesar Octavian Augustus. It was taken from Pula and then placed on Via Roma in front of the Auditorium.

ALESSIO: The exiles had refused to leave the bronze statue representing the Roman nature of Istria in Yugoslavian hands. So, to recap, the situation in Gorizia was very dire, partly because the exiles, initially housed, so to speak, in the barracks of Montesanto, had swelled the ranks of the unemployed.

LUCA: Already filled with so many unemployed Allied Military Government employees. But the people of Gorizia haven't lost heart, so let's head to Piazza Cavour, where Piazza Sant'Antonio begins. Before Palazzo Strassoldo is Casa Morassi. On the ground floor was the grocery store of Mario Morassi, a historic figure in Gorizia's commerce, son of Giovanni—known as Giovannino—a pioneer of emporialism but, above all, a paradigmatic figure in the tragic history of twentieth-century Gorizia.

ALESSIO: Casa Morassi, designed by architect Max Fabiani, can be considered the cradle of the Gorizia Free Zone. In the first-floor hall, immediately after the war, a group of merchants met with Mario to try to resolve the dire crisis gripping Gorizia.

LUCA: Mario Morassi was among the most tenacious supporters of Gorizia's right to financial support from the state.

ALESSIO: The Free Zone was established by Laws 1438 of December 1, 1948, and 1226 of December 11, 1957. The measure provided for the tax-free distribution of quotas of certain products, such as sugar, coffee, seed oil, and butter, and to support local industries with the supply of raw materials (such as cocoa, timber, and iron). The Free Zone was nicknamed "The Gold of Gorizia."

Idelma and Fides awaken

IDELMA Indeed, the Free Zone was Gorizia's gold. We also obtained many concessions in the textile industry.

FIDES: Not to mention the petrol, which was discounted for us otherwise the people of Gorizia would have gone to Yugoslavia to fill up.

IDELMA: At a certain point I also established the Gorizia Fund, which distributed the money to traders and not just to them.

FIDES: But a great moment for the European Union to arrive and goodbye to concessions. Cussì Gorizia has once again been dressed

in canvas trousers. The industry disappeared and even today I still don't understand the vocation of this city.

IDLEMA: And yet, without factories, without workers, and now even without borders, Gorizia has become the European capital of culture. What more do you want from life?

FIDES (the bottle of Stock 84 reappears, pours two glasses for the customers too, all in chorus): Champagne/to toast Gorizia/which is/the most beautiful city/and if the bubbles are missing/at least here no one gets tired.../Champagne...

END

MUSICAL BREAK

FOURTH TABLE

(The writing Tito)

Cast: Sabato, a fictional former Army captain; Goffredo, a former Army sergeant

START

(they whisper together and look around cautiously)

SATURDAY: Goffredo, did you get everything?

GOFFREDO: Yes, sir, captain...

SATURDAY: How many times do I have to tell you? This is an undercover mission. Don't call me captain, just call me by my name: Saturday.

GOFFREDO: Yes sir, captain...Oh, excuse me: captain Sabato.

SATURDAY: Dear Goffredo, and then you wondered why you remained a sergeant throughout your time in the Italian army... Sabato, just call me Sabato. And I'll call you Goffredo.

GOFFREDO: As you always called me, Mr. Cap... Mr. Sabato. Even on Sundays... ah, did you like the joke?

SATURDAY: Is it possible that all you can say is make stupid jokes?

GOFFREDO: Forgive me, Captain, but up there in the barracks on Mount Sabotino there wasn't much to amuse oneself with other than making up silly jokes. How cold I got on night watch.

SATURDAY: And how your fellow soldiers took you for a fool because of the name you bore when you complained about guard duty. Even in the summer you were cold... with that name.

GOFFREDO: A patriotic name chosen for me by my late father.

SATURDAY: Okay, let's forget about it. Let's focus on the secret mission.

GOFFREDO: Is it dangerous?

SATURDAY: Very much, the enemy has ears and eyes everywhere.

GOFFREDO: But you can't see a damn thing. Here in the hamlet of San Mauro there isn't even a streetlight.

SATURDAY: Better, Goffredo. Listen to me. Let's recap: yellow, green, red, blue paint—the colors of the rainbow, basically?

GOFFREDO: They're there.

SATURDAY: Shears?

GOFFREDO: Affirmative.

SATURDAY: And don't answer like you're in the barracks. Jerk?

GOFFREDO: With forty-two teeth, even an ox could cut this one.

SATURDAY: Spare the details. Flashlight?

GOFFREDO: Yes, with charged batteries.

SATURDAY: Yeah, because without batteries, do you know what we'd do with the flashlight?

GOFFREDO: I don't know, Captain. Oh, if Sabato would excuse me.

SATURDAY: Gloves?

GOFFREDO: As a soccer goalkeeper, I couldn't find any others.

SATURDAY: Football?

GOFFREDO: I didn't take it. It wasn't on the list.

SATURDAY: I was joking, Goffredo, but I understand that certain nuances aren't for you.

GOFFREDO: Excuse me, Sabato, but what mission are we talking about? Why are we gardeners and painters in disguise?

SATURDAY: No, gardeners. You'll soon understand what this is about. Now let's get going; we have to climb Mount Sabotino. It's going to be a long night.

GOFFREDO: At your command, Captain...

END

MUSICAL BREAK

FOURTH TABLE BIS

Interpreters: Ester and Sonia, sisters from Gorizia

START

ESTER (looks through binoculars from the window of the house): And yet there is something about Sonia that doesn't make sense to me.

SONIA: Ester, you spend hours looking at that canocial. Is it possible you don't get tired of going to Signora Armanda's house?

ESTER: I know what I'm looking for in Armanda's house. You'll see, sooner or later I'll find out.

SONIA: For those flowers, what a life she plows.

ESTER: Do you give flowers? A nursery stole some from my mother's grave in recent months.

SONIA: But how can you say that this is where she is?

ESTER: It's her, it's her. Do you know those blue tulips I used to give Bettina? Those beautiful ones that all the girls in the cemetery complimented on?

SONIA: Very nice. Did those disappear too?

ESTER: Of course not. Do you know where you end up?

SONIA: No, continue.

ESTER: In the crystal vase on the table in Mrs. Armanda's living room.

SONIA: But it must be someone else, come on. It's been three weeks since we bought them. I remember because it was my mom's anniversary.

ESTER: You're wrong, Sonia. It's the anniversary of Mom's death in two weeks.

SONIA: But I was referring to the anniversary of when Daddy took her away. She couldn't wait that day. Alright, now I'm going to the garden to tidy up the flowerbeds.

ESTER: I still hang out with the canocial. Today, strangely, I don't see Mrs. Armanda's husband, that bubez Goffredo. In forty years in the army, he's never left the rank of private sergeant. Besides, he had a general at home: Mrs. Armanda.

SONIA: That's right, Ester. I can't find my gardening tools anymore. And not even the goalkeeper gloves we wanted to give to our nephew.

ESTER: He'll have them put in the cellar among my mother's crazy people.

SONIA: It could be, but I don't see a clinker down there. It's all dark. And I can't even find my flashlight. And not even the paints I need to paint the railing: I wanted to make it like a rainbow now that in Gorizia we're all talking about peace.

ESTER: Come, come, we'll look for them together.

END

MUSICAL BREAK (Hymn to Peace or European Anthem)

FOURTH TABLE THREE

START

GOFFREDO: Damn, what a drag climbing Sabotino. So what are we going to do on Saturday?

SATURDAY: How dare you call me Saturday. I'm your commander.

GOFFREDO: Damn, did the effort make your mind spin?

SATURDAY: Oh, that's right, we're on a secret mission. So, you have to paint the stones that spell out "Tito." Remember? Paint a stripe for each color of the rainbow.

GOFFREDO: And what if we turned Tito into a pacifist marshal?

SATURDAY: Do as I say. Meanwhile, I'll use my garden tools to clear away the vegetation from the nearby "Long Live Italy" sign. It's not far from our barracks.

GOFFREDO: Damn, now I remember. We wrote it in our spare time, a big one that could be seen from Gorizia. Yes, it was right next to the old "Nas Tito" sign.

SATURDAY: Well done, Goffredo! Tomorrow morning, the people of Gorizia will be able to admire the Tito and Long Live Italy slogans in a new version.

GOFFREDO: Excuse me, Sabato, but I'd like to ask you a question. What does this fuss about the graffiti have to do with Nova Gorica and Gorizia being the European Capital of Culture?

SATURDAY: What does it have to do with it? What does it have to do with the fact that they've been filling us up with nonsense about the fact that borders no longer exist...

GOFFREDO: True.

SATURDAY: So, instead of the rifles of the Cold War, today we arm ourselves, so to speak, with paints and brushes to paint the stone inscriptions with the colors of peace. Are we perhaps harming anyone?

GOFFREDO: What a great idea, Sabato. Now, allow me to call you Captain. (They exit arm in arm.)

END

FOURTH TABLE QUATER

START

ESTER (*still through the binoculars*): Sonia, you won't believe me. But on Sabotino the writing "Long live Italy" has reappeared, painted in the colors of the rainbow.

SONIA: Come on, what do I see? (*takes the binoculars*): It's true and... that even the writing Tito painted it like a rainbow. Only our railing is still in ruins.

ESTER (again with the binoculars): But that man up there seems to me to be... yes, he's that real bubez Goffredo. And that other one is his friend Sabato: the captain calls himself. Even though he's been dismissed from the army due to lack of salt in his skull. He's harassed by soldiers every day. Really.

SONIA: I'm fine up to a certain point, though. We're two naive people: they understand the meaning of "the border no longer exists" better than anyone else.

ESTER: You know you're right, Sonia. But now let's go to the cellar and look for the goalkeeper's gloves.

SONIA: And the colors to paint the railing like a rainbow. So we'll also spend time with Miss Armanda.

END

MUSICAL BREAK

FIFTH TABLE

(the red star)

Interpreters: Two actors A and B

ALESSIO: But if you had to tell the history of Gorizia using the most significant dates, which would you choose?

LUCA: Good question, not easy to answer. Just to stick with the post-World War II era, I'd start with May 4, 1980, Tito's death and the beginning, at first latent and then explosive, of the disintegration of Yugoslavia. And for you, what is the most significant date?

ALESSIO: April 13, 2015. I have no doubts.

LUCA (reflects, thinks): April 13, 2015? I haven't the faintest idea what happened that day. Can you explain it to me?

ALESSIO: That day, the exhibition on 20th-century Gorizia was inaugurated in the library of the Senate of the Republic in Rome. The exhibition was commissioned by the late Dario Stasi, the journalist and founder of the periodical Isonzo-Soca, the first newspaper to report on current events without borders.

LUCA: And why was that exhibition so important?

ALESSIO: Because it brought Gorizia, with its complex history, to the heart of the Italian republican institutions. I remember the engaging speech given by Senator Sergio Zavoli, one of the greatest Italian journalists of all time.

LUCA: Like Gianni Bisiach from Gorizia, who also created the program "Radio anch'io".

ALESSIO: Yes, that's true. He's a great journalist too. And do you know what was the most appreciated item by visitors to the Senate exhibition?

LUCA: I think I can guess.

ALESSIO: The red star that Tito had placed on the roof of the Transalpina station in 1947.

LUCA: To throw the symbol of his federal republic in the faces of the people of Gorizia.

ALESSIO: Yes, that's true. But it's not just that.

LUCA: Explain yourself.

ALESSIO: Between late 1947 and 1948, many young volunteers arrived at that station, once called Montesanto Station, from the distant republics of the newly formed Yugoslavia to build the new city of Nova Gorica. For them, too, the symbol of their new homeland was very important, and they saw it as soon as they stepped off the train, realizing they were building a new city and a new society.

LUCA: If I remember correctly, that star, symbol of Tito's socialism, became, at a certain point, almost by magic, a comet.

ALESSIO: You remember well. At Christmas 1990, even before Slovenia became an independent republic, the star went from being a socialist icon to a guiding star. It was the Slovenian railway workers who transformed it into a symbol of peace.

LUCA: But already at that time, Ester was standing at the window of her house looking through the telescope.

END

MUSICAL BREAK

FIFTH TABLE BIS

Interpreters Ester and Sonia

START

ESTER (looks through the telescope): And yet, Sonia, there's something that doesn't make sense to me.

SONIA: You'll go blind from looking through the canopy. What's up this time?

ESTER: Do you remember the star?

SONIA: Don't talk to me. Last night I got up from bed to go to the toilet and I didn't turn on the light. I banged my foot on the edge of the bed. I saw the stars in the sky. I still have my foot.

ESTHER: I will give you a glimpse of the stars in the sky, and yet I think one is missing.

SONIA: If you see that the big cart is knocking, it's carrying a star from the tire shop. But what if there are stars missing? The people at the Farra Observatory will eventually notice that.

ESTER: Ah, good. I'll ask them where the x ended.

SONIA: Anyway, last night, when I got back to bed, my foot and back were hurting because I was limping...

ESTER: What happened, Sonia? Did you meet with Ms. Armanda?

SONIA: No way, Miss Armanda, she must have been out stealing flowers... I didn't have a feeling, a sixth sense, a premonition, a shiver, a warmth...

ESTER: Madonna, Sonia: you sound like someone who makes the tables shake... since you're too old to be warm anymore...

SONIA: Well, I heard a girl who told me to open the window.

ESTER: And did you get it?

SONIA: Sure, the voice insisted. And when I opened the shutters, I was dazzled by an intense light. Like that of a shooting star.

ESTHER: And were there also the Three Wise Men?

SONIA: No, that certainly wasn't it. I stole it from Miss Armanda. You must be more of a Magi than a head-turner.

ESTER: But where was this comet?

SONIA: Heading towards Montesanto station. Up there, instead of the red star, there's a red star too.

ESTER: Look, you see I was right? Now I understand what was wrong with me. I also saw with my canon that instead of the red star a comet had emerged.

SONIA: Yes, but did you see who was on the roof taking out the lights from the red star?

ESTER: No, tell me, Lori?

SONIA: Exactly them, dressed as railway workers: Sabato and Goffredo.

LUCA: I understand that it's not easy to overcome the shock caused by the adventures of Sonia, Ester, Sabato and Goffredo but the end of the true story of the red star demands attention.

So, I remember that after January 12, 1991, the Slovenian railway workers finally removed it. From there, it was moved to the Goriški muzej depot, until the first border museum was established in 2005. Where the red star is the main attraction.

END

MUSICAL BREAK

SIXTH TABLE

(The Cold War)

Lina and Licia return to the scene.

START

LINA: Before I go home, Licia, I want you to tell me what this Cold War was like. And this Iron Curtain too. My dad and I went to Ravascletto one summer, which is near Cortina d'Ampezzo, but I didn't see any iron anywhere.

LICIA: Yes, because Cortina d'Ampezzo and Ravascletto are visible. What does Ravascletto have to do with it? If I ever bothered you, you wouldn't have this nervous ulcer that comes to hear you.

LINA: Good, come on. No anger. Tell me what this Iron Curtain is. And the Cold War. Is it the same stuff?

LICIA: Do you know the Mainizza road in Gradisca, near Borgo Saletti?

LINA: Where once everything went under water when the Isonzo was in flood?

LICIA: Yes, right in that logo.

LINA: So the cold war was a flood?

LICIA: Yes, de spriz: water from the Isonzo and grapes from the Collio vineyards. Shut up, if you want to know.

LINA: What manners Licia has for you.

LICIA: In short, on the Mainizza near Borgo Saletti it's like a garage on the edge of the road in the direction of Gorizia.

LINA: A workshop like what?

LICIA: Yes, spare parts. If only I could drop by... What a workshop. That kind of garage was like a tank hiding place, ready to fire if there was an invasion of Yugoslavia. And like the one on Mainizza along the Vizin line at the border, there were tons of positions.

LINA: All with the tank?

LICIA: No, someone was using slingshots... Of course, with tanks. And there were also bunkers, hidden caves, in short, from Muggia to the Brenner Pass, it was a front line of positions to neutralize the enemy.

LINA: In fact, up in the mountains, near the Brenner Pass, it's cold. I understood: that's why they called it the Cold War.

LICIA: Congratulations, Lina. You never disappoint me.

LINA: And what was the iron curtain yesterday?

LICIA: I'll read you Wikipedia: Iron Curtain is an expression used in the West to describe the border line that divided Europe into two separate zones of political influence from the end of the Second World War to the Cold War.

LINA: No, I didn't understand a kaiser.

LICIA: Me neither. But you know what I'm telling you.

LINA: What do I hear, Licia?

LICIA: Let's have a presentation, a swipe of lipstick and we'll go to Piazza Transalpina to celebrate this European capital of culture.

LINA: Good idea, Licia. But do I have to bring the pass?

LICIA: You're no longer needed, Lina, where's the time? Now Gorizia and Nova Gorica are all one, as I said. Goodbye borders, Iron Curtain, Cold War and Pre-Pustnic War.

LINA: And I'll wait for you to take a nice walk along Uriza Street.

LICIA: Oh yes, Lina, long live Uriza Street with its tough-minded Slovenian characters. You'll see, now they'll be laughing too.

END

SEVENTH AND FINAL PICTURE

(Gorizia tells its story and concludes with Go2025)

Interpreters: narrator A and B; Gorizia

START

NARRATOR: The public will forgive us if we have mocked the history of this area, but a smile never hurt anyone.

We are well aware of what happened here during the troubled twentieth century. But what happened today is just a bad memory.

And before leaving you, we think it's only right to introduce the absolute protagonist of this story: Gorizia.

IPAVEC INTONA NOTES GENERAL CADORNA

NARRATOR continues (surprised and annoyed): But, but... what is this music? Who's singing?

(off-screen the satirical song is sung):

“General Cadorna wrote to the queen: if you want to see Trieste I'll send it to you as a postcard.”

IN PLACE OF BIM BOM BAM NOTES BY IPAVEC

“General Cadorna has written the sentence: take Gorizia from me and I will send you on leave.”

LATEST NOTES FROM IPAVEC

ALESSIO: Yes, exactly. Gorizia was taken from Cadorna between August 8th and 9th, 1916. Sixth Battle of the Isonzo.

RAFFAELLA: What are you talking about? A city can't be taken, conquered, killed, or razed to the ground. A city is like a woman; if you love it, you have to protect it. But that wasn't the case with Gorizia.

ALESSIO: The Italians reduced it to rubble, the Austrians abandoned it.

RAFFAELLA: Studying the First World War, I imagined what Monte Santo, Santa Caterina, San Michele, San Marco, and Calvary looked like. Saints scarred by the horrors of war.

JUST TWO NOTES FROM IPAVEC

(Short pause, to emphasize the entrance on stage of the actress from Gorizia; she is wearing a long coat and underneath the elegant dress that she will show at the end)

GORIZIA: Everyone's talking about me now, Gorizia. But no one really knows me well. Of course, it's partly my fault. I don't like to share secrets. But I don't trust anyone anymore after what they did to me.

In August 1916, I became Italian for the first time. At the end of October 1917, I returned to Vienna, under the control of the Third Italian Army, after the Battle of Caporetto, which protected the Royal Army's retreat to the Piave River.

RAFFAELLA: You mean on the Piave, Mrs. Gorizia.

ALESSIO: Don't interrupt her. Gorizia is right about the Piave.

GORIZIA: It doesn't matter. (Looks at B.) You should know that rivers were once feminine. After all, water is fertility, water is female. Like the Soca.

ALESSIO: The war has erased this truth too... Oh, but excuse us, Mrs. Gorizia, go ahead.

GORIZIA: I returned to Italy in November 1918. I thought I had had enough of death and destruction.

Before the war, I had been a city of the Habsburg Empire for almost five hundred years.

I have confused memories of the times of the County, I was certainly not the most important city even if I gave it my name.

As a child I was little more than a village on a hill, a *goriza* in the old Slavic language.

I was born on April 28, 1001, or so say the documents with which Emperor Otto III ceded me to the Patriarchate of Aquileia. But that's another story.

ALESSIO: The twentieth century wasn't a peaceful one for Gorizia either. Scarred and frightened by two world wars, suffocated by dark and tragic post-war periods.

RAFFAELLA: Between the two conflicts, she was inflicted with the humiliation of having a multilingual identity erased by the change of her Slovenian surnames, which were unpopular with the regime.

GORIZIA: After the First World War, as if what had happened wasn't enough, Italians and Slovenians fought for a long time to have me. And after the Second World War, things got even worse. I didn't care much whether I was Austrian, Italian, or Yugoslavian.

My people were simple: Italians, Slovenes, Germans, Jews and Friulians lived in peace and tolerated each other's periodic disagreements.

Irredentism was mild in my country. In the countryside, priests helped the farmers by opening rural banks and the first insurance companies, and then I had hotels, places of entertainment, two train stations, and good air for vacations. They called me the Austrian Nice.

ALESSIO: On September 17, 1947, Gorizia became Italian again for the third time. In 1953, Tito threatened to unleash World War III to seize Trieste. Once again, Gorizia trembled. Thousands of soldiers, on both sides of the border.

RAFFAELLA: Nova Gorica was born in 1948, built boldly and beautifully just steps from old Gorizia. The large red star on the roof of the Transalpina station, which for the people of Gorizia was the Montesanto station. Do you remember it?

ALESSIO: And how could I have forgotten it?

RAFFAELLA: The difficult years of the Iron Curtain, the border between the Soviet bloc and the democratic West. Then Tito's decision to secede from the USSR and the first openings along the border.

ALESSIO: Like the one on Sunday, August 13, 1950.

GORIZIA: Oh, yes, of course. What a memorable day. Broom Sunday. Today I am a shy old lady, a little withdrawn, reserved to the point of appearing grumpy, certainly not beautiful as Umberto Saba wrote for my sister Giuliana, the city of Trieste.

I have suffered too much and I cannot tolerate those who use history to impose their ideas.

Today I can call Nova Gorica my little cousin, but until a few years ago, I couldn't even talk about it. I watched it grow. Hundreds of young men and women worked hard to build the city designed by architect Edo Ravnikar, a student of Le Corbusier.

I've always liked Nova Gorica, its wide, tree-lined streets. It's a shame about the Ruski Bloki barracks, or even worse, the Great Wall of China. They thought they'd scare me by building those high-rises near the border.

In 1991, with Slovenia's independence, I breathed a sigh of relief.

I remember those days, hundreds of people came to see the war. Seeing the war as if it were a video game!!! Desolate!

RAFFAELLA: Those tragic days of 34 years ago seem distant. But then the holidays of April 30, 2004, and December 20, 2007, watered down those moments. Slovenia's entry into the European Union and its subsequent accession to the Schengen Agreement meant that borders disappeared.

GORIZIA: My goodness, a lot of water has passed under the bridges of the Isonzo. And now that I'd like to finally have some peace, what are they going to do to me? They asked me...

ALL TOGETHER: "Make yourself beautiful for 2025."

GORIZIA (*emphatically takes off her coat and shows off her sequined dress*): Beautiful to me, I've always been splendid!!!!

LONG CUT FOR APPLAUSE

END