

SCENE IX - March 15th, 1789

(Lights up in LUÍS' library. GONZAGA stands before TIRADENTES, ANDRADE, DOS REIS, MACIEL, and ALVARENGA all at attention. There is a projection with the date "March 15th, 1789" in bold font.)

GONZAGA

A beautiful plan.

ANDRADE

It really is, sir.

GONZAGA

Alright, gentlemen, at ease.

(The four men relax.)

I'm going to go take care of some business before we start the riot tonight. I'll be back in a few.

(GONZAGA exits.)

DOS REIS

If you all don't mind I'm going to the kitchen to grab a glass of wine to ease the nerves before tonight.

ALVARENGA

I'll come with. I could use a good drink.

(ALVARENGA and DOS REIS exit. TIRADENTES breathes, then beams at MACIEL.)

TIRADENTES

Well Maciel, we did it. Revolution comes tonight.

ANDRADE

It couldn't have happened without you Tiradentes.

TIRADENTES

Andrade, you flatter me.

MACIEL

You'll make his ego inflate into a balloon.

TIRADENTES

Under God's sky, that wouldn't happen. (beat.) I haven't started a riot before. This will be interesting.

MACIEL

But you're an excellent orator, so I'm sure it'll come naturally.

TIRADENTES

I'm sure it will. Remember that night in Rio? That night when the doors to heaven opened up to us?

MACIEL

The stars were really shining something special that night.

(ANDRADE starts playing cards by himself.)

TIRADENTES

I never imagined that we would make it this far, imagine all we went through to make it to where we stand now. All the people we've aligned with. Even Alvarenga and all his blustering, I wouldn't trade it for the world. We have become a force to be reckoned with.

MACIEL

This really is quite impressive.

TIRADENTES

What was your friend's name? José?

MACIEL

José Joaquim Maia. He'd be in awe, this really is the future he wanted.

TIRADENTES

It's a shame he died before he could even come home. He probably would have fit right in with this bunch.

MACIEL

He might have been more philosophical than Cláudio.

TIRADENTES

That would have been something to see. Well he's surely smiling down on us tonight.

MACIEL

I'm sure he is.

(A moment of silence.)

TIRADENTES

Is there something on your mind?

MACIEL

Oh, not at all. There's just been so much happening.

TIRADENTES

Here's to that. I haven't even been able to begin looking for a wife! One thing at a time I guess.

MACIEL

You'll find one I'm sure, you have plenty of time.

TIRADENTES

Maybe I'll meet someone special during the riots.

MACIEL

That'd be something. A love story started during a revolution.

TIRADENTES

Now that's a story I could enjoy reading. (beat) Andrade!

ANDRADE

What?

TIRADENTES

Are you excited to be marching tonight?

ANDRADE

As excited as ever. It's just another march. It'll be fine.

TIRADENTES

Good to hear it. Well... I think I might go join Joaquim and Alvarenga in the kitchen for a moment. A glass of wine might cool my nerves too.

MACIEL

Bring me back a glass, would you?

TIRADENTES

Of course. Andrade! You?

ANDRADE

What? No, I'll be fine.

TIRADENTES

Whatever you say!

(TIRADENTES exits. MACIEL sits by ANDRADE.)

MACIEL

Deal me in.

ANDRADE

It's solitaire.

MACIEL

Then play a different game and deal me in.

(ANDRADE deals MACIEL in.)

MACIEL

Are you ready for tonight?

ANDRADE

We already did all the hard work, all we do is wait now. I feel like you should have told Tiradentes. You two are good friends, right?

MACIEL

He's probably my best friend, but I couldn't tell him.

ANDRADE

That's cold. Draw.

MACIEL

Damn.

ANDRADE

You really had a friend at Coimbra who was more of a philosopher than Cláudio?

MACIEL

Yeah. God that was a lifetime ago.

ANDRADE

The paths we take, huh? We weren't the same people a year ago.

MACIEL
I suppose that's true. Draw.

(GONZAGA enters.)

GONZAGA
Where is everyone?

MACIEL
Drinking in the kitchen.

GONZAGA
Ah. I might join them.

ANDRADE
Knock yourself out.

(ALVARENGA, DOS REIS, and TIRADENTES re-enter from the kitchen.)

ALVARENGA
Now that was the good stuff.

DOS REIS
Gonzaga, don't tell Luís we went through his last bottle of Meneses' wine.

GONZAGA
You didn't save me any?

TIRADENTES
I saved some for Maciel.

GONZAGA
And is that me? No.

TIRADENTES
Here you go, straight from heaven.
MACIEL
Oh, it smells perfect.

ALVARENGA
And it was!

GONZAGA
Well I'm glad you all enjoyed it.

(The revolutionaries share a laugh.)

DOS REIS
Well I better start my expedition if I want any sun on my back today.

GONZAGA
Joaquim, I was thinking. Perhaps you should stay and help Tiradentes tonight.

DOS REIS
But what about Sao João del Rei?

GONZAGA
I decided to send Luís out that way just now.

DOS REIS
What! Why?

GONZAGA
Because I can trust him, dos Reis, something I can't do with you.

DOS REIS
What do you mean?

GONZAGA
I mean, I've had my suspicions about your loyalty for a while now, but-

TIRADENTES
Are you implying that Joaquim isn't trustworthy?

GONZAGA
I'm not implying anything. I'm saying Joaquim thought he could use us. He's a traitor.

TIRADENTES
Joaquim is a good friend, he wouldn't betray our cause.

DOS REIS
Tiradentes is right!

GONZAGA
Oh, but I don't think so. I happened to intercept a letter from you recently.

DOS REIS
No, but-

GONZAGA
Its contents were really quite something.

TIRADENTES
Was there really a letter Silverio?

DOS REIS
It's not what you thought it was! I swear on God almighty!

ALVARENGA
Wait, what was inside the letter?

GONZAGA
Details about our revolution. It was very damning.

TIRADENTES
That doesn't sound like the Joaquim I know-

DOS REIS
It wasn't what you thought it was.
(DOS REIS drops to his knees)
Please forgive me!

GONZAGA

Ha. I knew it. See, he's a shriveling coward Tiradentes.

ALVARENGA

I for one believe that with my whole heart. Look at him, he's crying.

TIRADENTES

Is it really true Joaquim?

DOS REIS

It is. I'm sorry.

TIRADENTES

How could you do this to us? To me? This can't be what you wanted?

DOS REIS (On the verge of tears)

They promised to forgive all my debt. I couldn't keep living like I was, Tiradentes. It was terrible. Every day was like I was being crushed by an enormous weight that couldn't be lifted. I was suffocating. I was drowning in darkness.

TIRADENTES

Why didn't you tell me, I would have helped you.

GONZAGA

You're talking to a traitor Tiradentes, he'll only feed you lies.

ALVARENGA

What was in the letter?

GONZAGA

I never found a letter. I made it up.

DOS REIS

What! You tricked me!?

GONZAGA

Don't act as if it that were some great surprise. It really wasn't that hard. I just knew that you were a spineless coward, and that fact could never change. I just needed to drag it out, and it was easier to drag out than I thought. Now that we know that a letter was sent, we might need to adjust our plans.

ALVARENGA

We can't have them expecting us.

GONZAGA

If you lie to me Silvério dos Reis, I will kill you. Do you understand?

DOS REIS

(Mumbling.)

GONZAGA

What was that?

DOS REIS

Yes.

GONZAGA
Good. When did you send the letter?

DOS REIS
Just last night.

GONZAGA
Have there been any other letters?

DOS REIS
(Mumbling.)

GONZAGA
What was that, traitor?

DOS REIS
No. This was a denunciation. There were no others.

GONZAGA
Who was it sent to?

DOS REIS
The Viscount of Barbacena.

ANRADE
I'll be damned.

TIRADENTES
I don't understand.

GONZAGA
It's not that hard to understand, men are run by greed. There is nothing else.

(Suddenly someone bangs on the door from outside.
Everyone except MACIEL and ANDRADE are shocked.)

1st OFFICER
This is the Dragoons! Open up! We are here for the traitors to the crown!

2nd OFFICER
We will break this door down!

(GONZAGA grabs DOS REIS' collar.)

GONZAGA
You said that you sent the letter yesterday!

DOS REIS
I did! I did!

GONZAGA
Then why are there soldiers at our door?

DOS REIS
I don't know! I don't know! Why don't you ask the commander over there?

GONZAGA
Andrade! What is going on!

ANDRADE
Justice is happening.

GONZAGA
What do you mean!

ANDRADE
I'm saying this was a long time coming, sir.

GONZAGA
This is ridiculous!

TIRADENTES
What do you mean, this was a long time coming?

ANDRADE
We've been in chats with the Viceroy for a while now. Everything that we've been working towards? He says it's all been for nothing.

ALVARENGA
Is there anyone in this room that's not a traitor!?

(TIRADENTES, ALVARENGA and GONZAGA all look at MACIEL who is avoiding everyone's gaze.)

TIRADENTES
No. No. Not you too.

MACIEL
I'm-

GONZAGA
I cannot believe this. You should all be ashamed of yourselves.

TIRADENTES
Maciel...

(Two military officers enter the room and point their rifles at everyone.)

1st OFFICER
Everyone down on your knees!

(GONZAGA and ALVARENGA slowly lower themselves to their knees. TIRADENTES stares at MACIEL.)

TIRADENTES
How could this happen?

2nd OFFICER
Get down!

(TIRADENTES slowly lowers himself to his knees, never breaking his gaze. The lights dim around him until everything is dark except for TIRADENTES.)

TIRADENTES

As suddenly as the dream began, it was over.

(Lights out.)