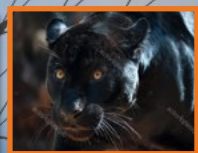
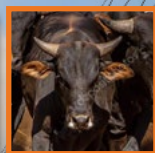
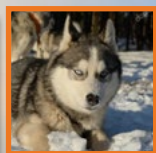
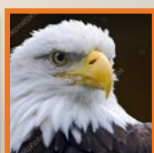
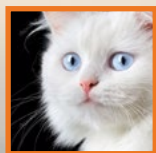


THE ANIMALS SPOKE UP



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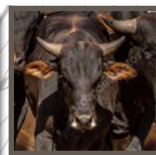
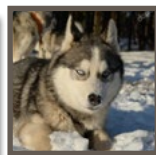
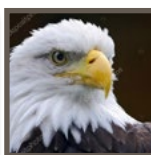
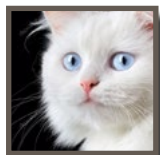
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ZWIERZĘTA PRZEMÓWIŁY



Iwona Gajda





THE BULLS



The rules of the fight are outlined in the Reglamento de Espectáculos Taurinos. Everything in the arena is precisely planned. We move as the toreador wishes.



BLAZE OF GLORY!

-Ole! - called Sanchez and jumped into a creek.

Water was splashing in every direction while he was sweeping, rocks under his hooves and his body moving in a way that enabled him to keep balance. And even though there were wonderful Andalusian fields around him, he was thinking only about Pasiphaë. His imagination prompted him to see the image of that Greek Queen of Crete who was admiring his dance in the water.

-Wake up! - cried Carlos suddenly. He was running along the shore. - El trapío is going to begin in a second!

-Today? - he stopped.

-Yes, they are going to weigh and measure us.

-Have you seen them? What are they like? - questioned Sanchez.

-I saw them only from afar. They built a fence by the pasture.

-Are they afraid?

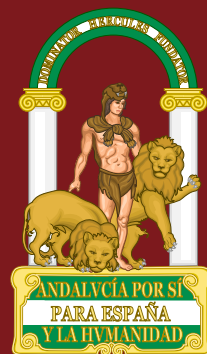
-They don't want us to watch them. During corrida de toro we have to listen to our natural instincts, they want us to be wild. Because of that we cannot meet the man himself.

-But that's too much! - added Sanchez shortly and then he briskly started off, heading to the rock. - The rules of the fight are determined in the Reglamento de Espectáculos Taurinos. Everything is precisely planned, back on the ring. We have to move in a way the bullfighter wants us to.

-Yet we can win, after all! - said Carlos with both some defiance and a little bit of hope in his voice.



Spain is made up of 17 autonomous communities (*Comunidades Autónomas*), commonly referred to as regions. Andalusia is the second largest region in Spain (occupying 17.3% of the country's area). It is often referred to as the „meeting place of seas,” „bridge between continents,” or „gateway to Europe” because it is located between Europe and Africa and between the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean. The picture shows the coat of arms of Andalusia (in use since 1918).



-We can't - Sanchez cut him off.

-And what about indulto!?

-You should forget about that right of pardon. It happens very, very rarely. We are going to die honourably and that is our goal. We should think so - declared Sanchez firmly and picked up the pace.

Right by the oak forest they passed a herd of several toro bravo bulls that were returning from the measurement. All of them were black and extremely muscular. Their steps were springy, chests - broad and slightly lowered, and on their mighty necks were embedded their heads with long, sharp horns. When they saw Sanchez and Carlos, they came to a halt.

-Today the people only weigh us - said one bull in the vanguard and then he looked at them with his big eyes. - They are piecing together the squad - he added.

-When will they publish the results? - asked Sanchez.

-Benicio will present them today, after the lecture.

-Will they inform us about the overall score?

-We don't know.

The bulls set off again, while Sanchez and Carlos raced to the rock. They saw, already from a distance, that something is different than usual. There were two cars and some men by the measurement site. They were gesticulating, their faces turned to the forest.

-Let's watch them for a while - whispered Sanchez. They stopped, but at the same moment Antonio spotted them.

-Come here, both of you! - called. - And climb the scale one at a time.

Usually everything used not to take a lot of time, usually the bulls weren't told about their results. They used to get to know them only afterwards, in the farmhouse. After all the tests Antonio tacked the whole list of El trapío to



Andalusia is known for its beautiful, diverse landscapes. There are both sandy and rocky beaches; volcanic landscapes in the Tabernas desert; gentle, forested mountains, such as the *Sierra de Grazalema*, *Sierra de Aracena*, and *Sierra Norte de Sevilla*, as well as much higher, snow-capped peaks, including the *Sierra Nevada* beyond Granada. For centuries, Spanish fighting bulls, *toro bravo*, have been raised on the meadows of Andalusia.



the fence. It was divided according to the bulls' many characteristics, such as: measurements, weight, the shape of their head, their horns, the appearance of their skin and fur. Each fighting toro bravo bull had also marked their strain and the model parameters.

However, that time Antonio approached Sanchez while he was walking out of the barred site.

-Twelve hundred pounds, three years - he said, stroking his body. - It means that you qualify. I heard that they are looking for your breed, that is the casta andaluza bulls - he added.

Sanchez looked at Antonio. It was the only man he had ever seen. He didn't think that he was a bad guy. Actually, throughout those three years he even started to like him, although they didn't see each other very often.

Could I kill him? - a thought came to him suddenly. - Spear him on my horns or trample over his body? In fact, someone has to die in a fight, but why me? Then, unexpectedly, Antonio raised his hand and gave him a hard slap in the back.

-Get yourself ready - he said. - They may choose you.

That stroke made Sanchez furious all of a sudden. He felt disregarded. In only one second the literal wave of anger filled his bowels. He ceased to think and he turned right. Then he lowered his gourd and, at full tilt, began running where the scale was placed. Antonio jumped into his car. Sanchez bumped against the vehicle's front fender, and the next minute he was already trotting up the hill. Not until reaching it he was finally able to calm down.

-What was it? - he asked himself after those emotions inside him subsided. He was terrified.

He looked down. There were people bustling around the car. Carlos was already home.



Toro bravo bulls have the appropriate temperament and body build (they are heavily muscled, have a broad, lowered chest and sharp horns), which predisposes them to fighting.

El trapío is a group of external characteristics of a bull, such as size, weight, head shape, horn shape, skin and hair appearance. If these features meet certain criteria, the bulls are given *el trapío* and are allowed to fight in *corrida*.



-He might have gone to the lectures - he thought and slowly headed out to the glade.

He knew that professor Benicio doesn't like when someone is late, nevertheless he both didn't want to and couldn't move faster. The sound of the blow was still echoing inside his head, his heart was beating like mad.

-Am I going crazy? - he pondered. - Or maybe it was some kind of uncurbed anger? - he schized out a bit. - And they won't qualify me for the fight?

When he entered the clearing the lesson had already started. The bulls were sitting in a semicircle on the grass and the professor was talking about something. Sanchez approached Carlos and took a seat next to him.

-What's going on? - he asked him silently.

-He will be asking us from history in jig time.

Professor Benicio stood vis-à-vis them and looked around. He was a huge toro bravo bull, strain Casta Castellana. The magnitude of him awe-inspired everyone on the pasture. However, he earned real respect thanks to indulto. He was the only bull in the Petros's breeding who got that power of pardon. Solely those bulls who, by their intrepid struggle, provoked the matador's admiration, are able to receive such an honour. Since Benicio's fight the legends began to be told about the president who supposedly put up a green shawl on the balcony of his honorary lodge. It was the sign that Benicio became a semantal and could return to the pasturage in order to pass his genes to the future generations. Therefore, for several years so far, he hadn't competed in any corrida de toros and he can stay in the meadow up to his senility.

-People are assessing our appearance - he said, continuing the lecture. - But also gallantry and nobleness. They watch how we behave within the herd. Since time began we are important to them.

-Alfonso - he turned to one of the bulls who was sitting rightwards. - Tell

us, what did people see in us in the prehistoric age?

The massive black bull rose to his feet and took a glance at his chums. His expression clearly demonstrated that he wasn't prepared for that type of question at all. Some even started to snicker and giggle when they saw his immense puzzlement.

-We were worshipped by them - began Alfonso tentatively. - They esteemed us for our strength and fertility.

-Where do we know it from? - asked Benicio.

-From the paintings found on the caves' walls, the oldest ones come from the Neolithic Period.

-Very good, give us some examples.

-Altamira in northern Spain - replied Alfonso. - The paintings there had been created about fifteen thousand years ago. Or Africa, where the buffalo period lasted from six to three thousand years before the common era.

Benicio looked at him with delight.

-I see that you prepared for today's classes the best out of all of you here - he commented. He was about to say something else but he didn't finish. Carlos, outraged by that praise, had already been standing in an attack position. With his head lowered he slowly moved towards Alfonso.

-Calm down! - cried Benicio. - What happened to you?

-He flipped - said Sanchez. - Thinking that he would be the best.

-This isn't a way to prove one's knowledge - Benicio tried to convince him, putting himself in front of Alfonso. Unfortunately, Carlos didn't listen. Envy blotted out his eyes. Furious, without regard for any argument, he took the field. Benicio, in an attack position as well, was gradually moving towards the tree. When Carlos fell upon him, he deftly hid behind it. The young bull bumped into the thick bough. The force of it was so huge that Carlos fell down

and almost fainted.

-The end of classes for today - said the professor, watching the bulls.

All of them started getting up and dispersing throughout the forest. Only Sanchez stayed and then looked at Carlos, still lying on the ground.

-What's happening? - he asked Benicio.

-The time has come for you to reach for the pot - he looked into his eyes.

- You and Carlos have already approached the proper age and measurements. Now you are ready to participate in the corrida de toros.



The sun gently illuminated the Gwadalkiwir vale. Dew was still covering grass and leaves, but life seemed to be going on full blast. Sanchez and Carlos stood by the mountain stream. Water was flowing down the hillside, then across the fields through the river bed.

-Our final speech is today - said Sanchez, gazing at the creek. - And tomorrow is going to be our last day on the pasture.

-Are you afraid? - Carlos looked at him.

-A bit.

-What do you fear the most?

-That it will be the end. It's so good here. One would love to live, yet we have to die.

-But you said it yourself that everyone has to die. Do you remember? Yesterday they took Pablo to the slaughterhouse. He was unfitted for fighting.

-You're right - ruefully acknowledged Sanchez. - One has to die. It's better to lead a happy life and die honourably, like toro bravo bulls, than be cooped up in some narrow fold and end up on the hook afterwards.

-So, what are we going to do during those final days? - asked Carlos,



Toro bravo bulls grow up in herds, spending time on open green pastures.

suddenly excited and full of energy.

-Let's jump in our harems! - called Sanchez and they both took off hurriedly.

A herd of several cows was browsing near the calcic rocks. It was obvious that a lot of them were rutting at the time. Some were trying to stand heat on each other, some were raising their tails and howling. Sanchez ran up to the group pasturing by the birch grove. When the cows saw him, they immediately stopped talking. Suddenly one of them came closer to him. She began sniffing and preparing for standing heat. A moment after she turned around, showing him her rump. He put his head on it, then he jumped and forced his penis inside her. He remained like that about two minutes, later mounting her three times more. After he finished with that heifer he breezed into the middle of the flock and started sniffing at other cows. In the meantime he tucked up his upper lip in order to scrutinise a given dam's pheromones more thoroughly. That morning Sanchez mounted ten cows altogether. Unfortunately, he had to put that activity to an end about midday because he had to go to the final lecture.

-How it was? - questioned Carlos when they were returning to the vale.

-I'll come here tomorrow as well - he snorted.

They were walking in silence for several minutes. They both fell into some weird gloom that soon, unwarrantably, began to turn into fear.

-We can't give up - said Sanchez. - We've been waiting for that moment for three years. It has to be the time of our lives, like we've always wanted it to be. If we doubt now, we'll lose.

-You're right - confirmed Carlos. - Let's brace for the last performance then.

-Are you two going to the lectures? - all at once they heard some familiar voice that was reaching them from behind the beds. They turned around and they saw Leonardo, a year old bullock who was starting anything during the



Within toro bravo there are several breeds (castas), which differ in size, fighting spirit and the build of some body parts. The most popular are: *casta navarra*, *casta jijona*, *casta castellana*, *casta andaluza*, *casta cabrera*, *casta vazqueña*, *casta vistahermosa* and *casta atanasio-fernández*.

last few days. He cannot understand the meaning of corrida and he doesn't want to be killed there.

-Yeah - replied Sanchez. - And you? Are you coming?

-Dunno - he faltered. - I wonder if I'd better flee.

-Where?

-Doesn't matter, maybe to the woods.

-They would find you there.

-Today is our final speech - said Carlos. - Come, listen.

Leonardo went quickly over it. He decided to join them, all in all.

Professor Benicio approached them right after they appeared on the glade.

-Which one of you will be speaking first?

-I can - put forth Sanchez.

When the bulls sat on the grass, creating a semicircle, professor Benicio got into the central position between them.

-Even though we are all fighting toro bravo bulls, we are differentiated by our race, traits - like trapio, and alegria, which means bravery and prowess in the contests inside our herd - began the professor. - But there is also one, very important feature, that is nobleza, nobility. With that quality a bull can always attack in a straight line, without any uncoordinated, sideways head moves. By that trait we recognise the strong bulls among us, those prepared for participation in the corrida de toros. Carlos and Sanchez are leaving us tomorrow. They had the best results in all of the categories. So, we can proudly define them as toro nobles. Today they are going to stand here for the last time and say what was and what is the most important to them.

The bulls looked at Sanchez who had just taken his place in the central position.

-I'd learned a great deal of things here - he got a sight of the professor

Benicio. - And I believe that I'm going to make it to stand on the ring and fight with honour. Right now it's the most significant issue of mine. I don't want to die in the abattoir, with my throat cut by a knife.

-Give us some advice! - cried Leonardo. - How to live with the knowledge of looming death?

-Each has their own way - answered Sanchez. - Personally, for me dreams are really important. Because of them every day makes more sense. During hard times I used to imagine a better world out there. I believed that it existed. Thanks to my dreams I could cope with the difficulties in a normal life. I was fighting with faith and passion inside me, believing that I'm able to achieve whatever I desire.

-Were you achieving those things?

Sanchez smiled mysteriously.

-Everything I had ever fantasised about - he replied.

-And what about freedom? Were you dreaming about it? - questioned Leonardo.

-Many times.

-Tell us about Pasiphaë - asked Carlos.

-Greeks believed that one day a bull emerged from the waves - said Sanchez.
- And because of that fact it should be sacrificed to Poseidon. However Minos, the king of Crete, became fascinated by the bull and he presented it to his wife Pasiphaë. She lost her heart for the animal and, afterwards, gave birth to a Minotaur - a man with a bull's head.

-Why do you like that myth so much? - inquired Benicio.

-Because I believe in love which can break all the limits.

When Carlos was heading to the centre of the glade, the rest of the bulls only wanted to learn some practical advice.

-Hold it! - Benicio tried to settle them down. - During their last speech every bull may speak about whatever they wish to.

-Me, I'm not such a castle-builder as Sanchez is - informed Carlos at the outset. - I like good wine and blasting in the harems.

In that second the bulls howled loudly, showing appreciation for the speaker.

-Dionysus is my hero. He's a jolly god who was shuttling with his train of drunk Sileni and half-naked maenads singing wild and swinging songs. In Thrace he was worshipped in the guise of a white bull, they were organising beer bacchanals in his honour. There were fun, music, and a lot of sex and pleasure of course. It's also worth mentioning that - added Carlos gravely - that he's a very important, great god, he's actually watching over life and death, as well as he's the theatre and drama in his keeping.

-Are you afraid? - asked Leonardo suddenly.

-Yes. But in such moments I sing Gloria! to myself. Let my Dionysus guide me!

After those words Benicio stood in the midst again in order to picture the work schedule for tomorrow.


-We don't want to listen to you anymore! - called one of the bulls. - We want to large it up!

All at once they started up and began to run along the meadows. They were snorting, sniggering, chasing and goring each other. Some were standing heat on the others and pretending to copulate, and some were scuttling with their tails up.



Female bulls live in fear and pain. After their calf is taken away, they sometimes cry for a whole day and night. People take their milk and then impregnate them again.

THE LIE



Sanchez had been always preparing to participate in the corrida de toros. Many times Benicio explained during his lectures the rules which the Reglamento de Espectáculos Taurinos comprises, as well as the overall sequence of operations. He had always emphasised that every element of that ceremony is a ritual on its own that is also mirrored in the law. Any deviations are impossible, to begin with the birth of a bull, through its breeding, its fights, on the death itself ending. Knowing that Sanchez equably underwent all the necessary veterinary tests before setting off to the plaza de toros.

After several hours of exhausting journey he expected to see Cabestros there, the conveyor-bulls who would guide him to the assigned pen and put him at ease. There should be seen the cheering audience on his way, the people who would watch him before the fight. It has always been like that. Thus Sanchez was extremely puzzled when there he saw neither the Cabestros, nor the immense, circular edifice. Instead he was hitched to some metal pole, its hook inserted into his nasal septum, and then led to the farmhouse by two men. There they showed him the grass to settle in and left. He looked around. He was standing on a vast, green piece of land, here and there were growing wild flowers and bushes. The whole area was surrounded by the mountains, layered in a way that gave an impression of creating greater ranges afar.

-Yo, who're you? - he suddenly heard a voice coming from behind.

He turned around. There was an old bull heading in his direction.

-I'm Sanchez - he replied.

-Are you from Andalusia?

-Yes. I was going to take part in corrida de toros. But they placed me here, just a moment ago.

-I'm Luciano - the old bull introduced himself. - A toro bravo bull of Castilian breed. There is no corrida here anymore, they shut down all of them.

-What are you talking about!?! - wondered Sanchez. - But there are rings everywhere in Spain!

-There's been a prohibition of bullfighting in Catalonia since January 2012 - explained Luciano. - However, people think that the corrida would return very soon and that the ban would be revoked.

-Am I in Catalonia? - asked Sanchez and had one more look around.

-Yeah. Near Tarragona.

-But... if there's no corrida in Catalonia, why did they bring me here? - Sanchez began to analyse out loud.

-Maybe they want you for Encierro? - tried to guess Luciano.

-What's this?

-A kind of entertainment for people, they are running and chasing the bulls in the streets. Yet, on the other hand - he pondered - they could get you with the aim of breeding.

-What do you have in mind? - Sanchez looked at him more closely.

-We have a harem of thirty cows here. Each of them is gallant, brave, all have already been examined thoroughly. The problem is that they have no bulls to impregnate them.

-I don't understand anything from what you're saying - sighed Sanchez and took another short glance around. - So why aren't you impregnating those

heifers? - he queried.

-I'm seventeen years old, I'm far too old for this.

-So why was I trained for corrida while now I would become a breeder?

-What was your El trapío?

-I'd the highest one, as well as the rest of the parameters.

-Maybe they decided to spare you, your genes are pretty good. Or they are already preparing for bullfights that'll happen after cancelling the ban. But, after all - Luciano scoped him out - a sire's life is rather better than death.

-Perhaps you're right - admitted Sanchez and ran to the other end of the pen. There he halted to survey the neighbouring area. Suddenly some red spot on the grass drew his attention. He couldn't get up-close because it was beyond the fence.

-Isn't it blood? - he thought. - But where could it come from?

Yet he felt a sort of strange anxiety inside his body. The longer he was staring at the stain, the more he became convinced that it had to be blood. Nonetheless, he was so tired due to his journey that he had no more energy for future ruminations about it. He stretched out on the grass and immediately fell asleep.



Sanchez was lying on the pasture with his eyes closed when all of a sudden he felt some gentle strokes in his thigh. A moment later it sounded for him like somebody was touching his horns. He lifted his eyelids and tilted his head. There was a tiny calf waddling around him and watching him attentively.

-Why are you looking at me like this? - Sanchez queried.

-He has never seen a bull until now - said a heifer who was approaching them.

-Are you his mother?

-Yea, he's only two months old.

Sanchez got up and stretched his muscles.

-What's your name? - he asked.

-I'm Olivia, and my son's name is Pedro. Aren't you, by any chance, our new breeder? - she inquired looking right into his eyes.

-I'm Sanchez and I was prepared to participate in the corrida de toros. I still don't know what I am doing here.

-There are various cows living here - said Olivia. - I'm, for example, a toro bravo bull of Castilian strain, same as Luciano. They impregnate us artificially today. However, long since there has been talking about bringing a real bull here. They simply want to make more money by using us.

-I don't understand - Sanchez regarded her carefully, once in a while taking a peep at the young calf trotting him underfoot.

-They want to raise the price of meat - she informed him ruefully. - This is why they've chosen several cows to impregnate them naturally.

-Who do they kill and when?

Olivia bursted into tears and took a look at Pedro.

-Are they taking your kids away from you? - asked Sanchez.

-There's a slaughterhouse nearby. They've been killing for years the cattle that they are keeping here. They desire children the most, they say their meat is the most expensive. Owing to this we are perpetually inseminating.

-What? - Sanchez came closer to her.

-When we are rutting there appears a man who puts an inseminating gun into our rectums.

-And what then?

-We get pregnant. After the birth they take our kids away from us.



Every year in Europe about 30,000 toro bravo males are born, one sixth of them fight in the arena.



Sometimes at once, sometimes after two or three months. Soon they'll take my Pedro - Olivia broke down again.

While they were talking Luciano walked up to them.

-It's our everyday here. They, the cows, live in continual fear and pain. After the people bereave them of their little calves, they often cry all day and night long. The people carry away their milk as well, and then impregnate them again and again... - he said mouthfully.

-In that case why do they need me? - queried Sanchez.

-The good sperm of a breeding bull indicates better meat for the people, and therefore higher earnings. You were fed well and kept well. It could be a reason why they've got you. Here, they have three types of meat - Luciano expounded. - The first kind comes from the bulls killed during corrida. It's called carne de lidia or carne de toro bravo. They believe that the adrenaline that's released over the time of fighting creates an inimitable pungency of the meat. In addition, it supposedly also has an incredible smell and structure. They sell literally everything: a head, brain, testes, a tail, even pelt and horns.

-What about the second type of meat? - asked Sanchez.

-It consists in a special way of murdering a cow which comes down to inflicting her an inconceivable pain. To begin with, they bring the cow to a standstill, that is they put her into a very tight cage. It has a special jib built-in that lifts the cow's head and exposes her neck. A lot of cages turn the cows upside down as well. Then, according to the kosher and halal rules, the cow's throat is cut. Then she starts to suffocate and choke with her own blood, flowing out of her air-passages.

-How long does it take? - inquired Sanchez.

-During the entire process of killing the cow is in a state of extreme panic. She can't protect herself, she can't escape. After her throat is slit her blood



There are around 1700 bullfighting breeding farms in the world, with 1175 located in Spain. The remaining ones are located in Mexico, France, Portugal, Peru, Ecuador and Venezuela

pressure starts to plummet which escalates the scare even more. The dying itself lasts about two minutes. I mean that is the time when the brain is active, when it is still fighting... which retards the exsanguinating.

Sanchez turned his head and edged away a few steps. Those facts were such a shock to him that he needed a while to bounce back and pull all the overwhelming emotions together. He returned to them after a moment.

-And the third kind of meat is...? - he asked.

-It comes from the calves. They are two to six months old. People like that meat because it's especially soft and fine, without fibres and of a mild taste. They buy it more willingly if the meat's colour is brighter, so the calves' growers develop anaemia in them. They substitute their mothers' milk with a feed that's lacking in iron.

When they were talking, Pedro scurried to the barn and Olivia followed him.

-All of this is so difficult to get - Luciano summed it up and went to the other end of the pen to drink some water.

Therefore Sanchez was left alone. He was staring at the outlines of the mountains afar and he longed for the Andalusian fields. He missed everything: the creek, the lectures, Carlos... He felt extremely lonely, as lonely as he had never been before. He wanted to hit the fence with his horns and then flee to the hills.

-Maybe Leonardo's scheme would work out here? - he thought. He looked at Luciano who was lying several yards from him.

-Why are people so wicked? - he asked himself a question. - The flavour of meat itself isn't a case - he reflected. - After all, this is pure evil. The evil which acts as some aphrodisiac. It's hidden deep under the cover of various ideologies, but it is continually looking for an outlet, at every possible



In Spain, three types of meat are produced. The first one comes from bulls killed during corridas and is called *carne de lidia* or *carne de toro bravo*. The second type of meat comes from ritual slaughter, and the third one is obtained from calves aged two weeks to six months.

opportunity. Making other living beings suffer as well as murdering them afterwards absolutely falls into that patterns of a sophisticated form of cruelty.

He sauntered a few steps by the railing. His thoughts switched on the subject of the corrida de toros.

-And now, what was all of it for? That amount of stress and fear before the event that was never supposed to happen?

He reminded himself of the restless nights when he dread fighting in the ring. He didn't want to die like this, however he had never told anyone about it. He was ashamed of going to training. He used to wander out in the woods, sweep back the trunks and leap over the stream or other things. He used to lift up various bars in order to someday win in the ring. But today, what kind of future awaits him?

The sun was hiding beyond the horizon. Air was becoming cooler, it was easier to breathe. Sanchez stretched out on the grass, resting his head in a giant, flat stone. He didn't care for getting into the barn.



In the morning a horrifying uproar woke Sanchez up. Loud hoofbeat and mooing were heard from every side of the pen. About thirty cows had been let inside and they were pacing around his head right now.

-Wake up, Sanchez - Olivia said, coming closer to him.

-What's going on?

-They had just let the cows in, you have to take care of them.

-Am I supposed to mount them all? - puzzled, he looked at her. Then he met her gaze and felt some ethereal spark flowing between them.

Olivia was as black as he was, she seemed to be perfect for his temper.