HARD RAIN

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HARD RAIN

This play is a fiction based on the life and death of Victor Jara, a Chilean songwriter who was killed in the soccer stadium of Santiago de Chile during the Pinochet coup of 1973. Many of the scenes follow Jara and his family in a regular chronological sequence on vacation a week or two before the coup. These alternate with scenes that occur four days after the coup, in which Jara debates and gradually befriends a young American traveler who has also been rounded up into the stadium.

CHARACTERS

VICTOR JARA, 37

JOAN JARA, his wife, slightly older

MANUELA, 10, their daughter

AMANDA, 8, their daughter

MARIA, a woman in her fifties

JAMES MIDDLETON, 21

MAN IN STADIUM

The songs in the play were written by Victor Jara. The events take place in 1973.

The play occurs in two separate arenas: the soccer stadium of Santiago de Chile, and the world of Jara's family. The stadium scenes are set in the grandstands, in the hours before dawn.

ACT I

PROLOGUE

Jara house. Day. Joan is on the telephone.

JOAN

Hello, yes I'm trying to get through to a number and I'm having difficulty... yes... Oh would you please? You're so kind, it's Pueblo 8-3422... yes, the British Embassy, and I'm trying to – Hello? (pause, re-dials) Hello Operator. yes, Hello? (pause, re-dials) Hello would you help me place a call please? No, no the dial's been giving me trouble, Oh, Pueblo 8-3422. Sorry? Yes, it's the... it's my mother-in-law. Thank you so much. Bless you... Hello? (exaggerating her British accent) This is Joan Roberts. I am a citizen. May I speak to Mr. Clyde-Philips? Thanks awfully. Oh no I don't want his number. You see, the phone is... Yes, I'm prepared to wait, but please understand, this is an emergency. My husband's disappeared in the uprising and I feel that my daughters and I are in... Victor Jara. No, Chilean. But my daughters hold dual citizenship. Oh thank you so much. You are very kind. Bless you. Yes, I will hold. Thank you...
Jesus.

SCENE 1

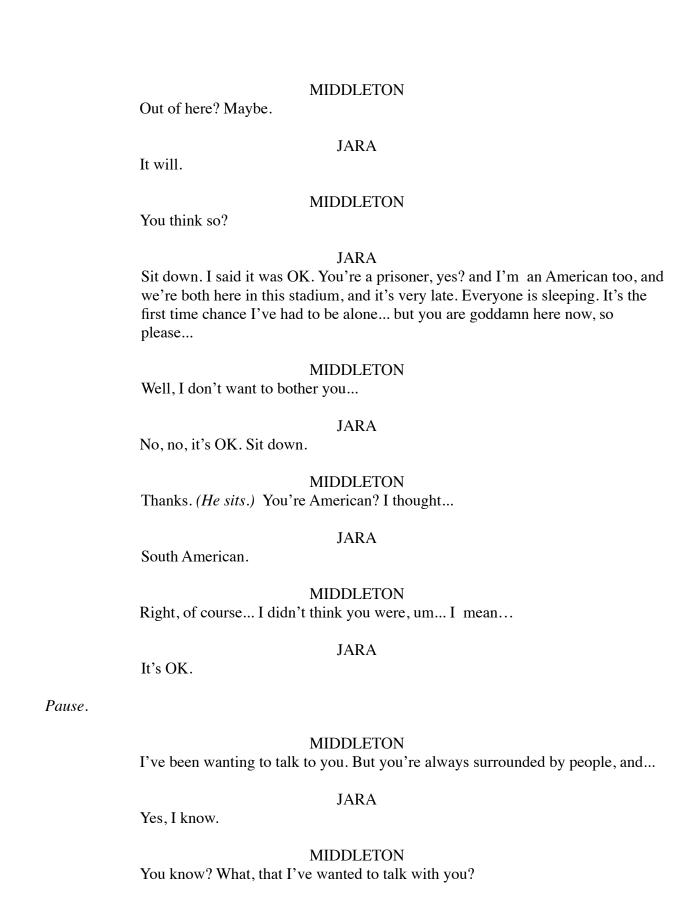
Stadium, 3 am. Moonlight.

A herald.

Victor Jara sits alone in the stands, writing on a scrap of paper. James MIDDLETON approaches him.

MIDDLETON Hola!Tu eres Victor Jara?		
Aha!	JARA	
Jara.	MIDDLETON	
	JARA	

	MIDDLETON Como?
	JARA A herald. You've come to herald the end of my solitude.
	MIDDLETON Oh, you speak English.
	JARA Yes.
	MIDDLETON OK if I join you?
No answer.	
•	MIDDLETON (cont'd) It's so beautiful out here, you almost forget that
	JARA Es la culpa de la luna.
	MIDDLETON The phase of the moon?
	JARA No, the fault. It's the fault of the moon. Es la culpa de la luna.
	MIDDLETON La culpa de la luna.
	JARA The moon deceives us with her beauty. (pause) It's OK.
	MIDDLETON Thanks. I mean, what's OK?
	JARA That you're American. You can't help that, can you?
	MIDDLETON Huh I guess it's written all over me.
	JARA Thank God for it. It'll get you out.



JARA

Yes, you're very enthusiastic. You've been threatening to talk to me for week	for weeks
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MIDDLETON

But we've only been here a few days.

JARA

But at the café...

MIDDLETON

You saw me at the café? But I could never even get close to you.

JARA

I saw you. Your admiration was very piercing.

MIDDLETON

And you remembered me from that night?

JARA

Yes I went home and I said to my wife there was an American in the crowd. She said really? How did you know he was American? And I said, Oh you can always spot an American, they stand out.

MIDDLETON

Oh.

JARA

We have many American things down here in Chile, cars and soda pop, the Lone Ranger. Some of us pretend to be American, you know, in order to appear on television, but not many real Americans. Very rare. I have an interest in Americans. And here you are, a Real American. I have been wanting to talk with *you*.

MIDDLETON

I see.

JARA

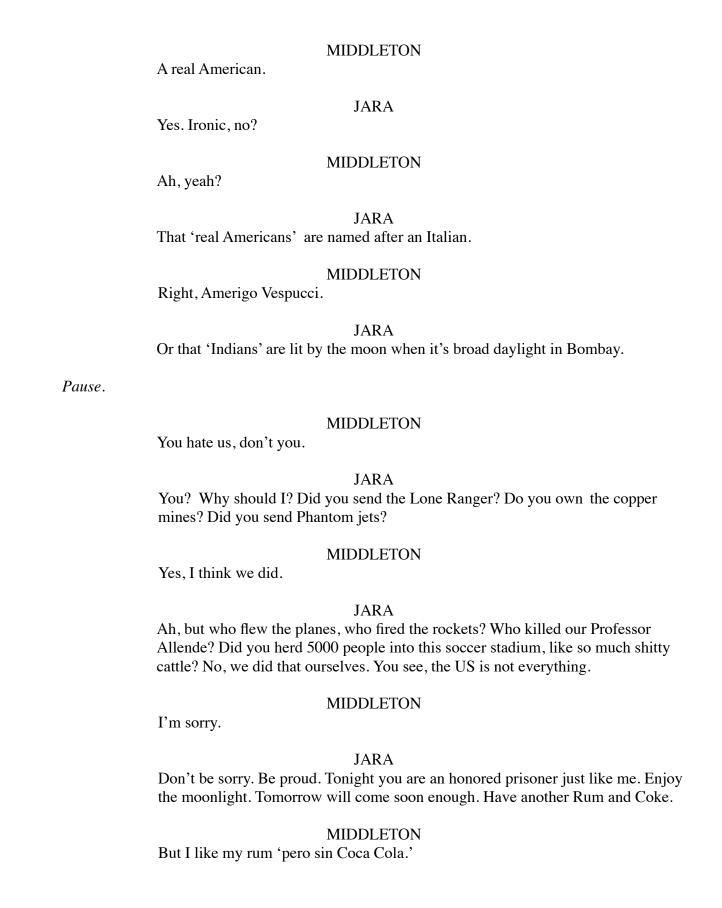
Don't worry...

MIDDLETON

It's OK?

JARA

It's A-OK.



Pause.	
	JARA Do you do you taunt me with my own songs?
	MIDDLETON I'm not taunting you.
	JARA What are you doing then?
	MIDDLETON Nothing. I just want to talk to you.
	JARA You came all this way to talk to me?
	MIDDLETON Yes.
	JARA But you didn't expect to get caught in the middle of a coup.
	MIDDLETON No.
	JARA So talk.
	MIDDLETON I don't know what to say.
	JARA Then do us a favor and shut up.
	MIDDLETON I was just kidding.
	JARA Of course you were. You're just a kid.

SCENE 2

Jara household. Day.

AMANDA (running around, jumping off things)

Ruana-dee! We're going in the car!

MANUELA

Do we have to go, Mama? I'm sick of driving in the car.

JOAN

Yes, sweetheart, we have to go, now cheer up. Help me pack the lunch.

JARA (entering from above)

Ah! Explorers, are you? Senor Coronado by any chance?

AMANDA

No, I'm Amanda.

JARA

And you are...

MANUELA

Don't be silly, you know who I am.

JARA

Nice to meet you. Are you going to look for the fountain of youth?

AMANDA

No we're going to look for a big volcano.

JARA

The Volcano of youth!

JOAN

The volcano of Villerica is where we're going. Will you get the raincoats, Victor?

JARA

Did Coronado take his raincoat?

MANUELA

Is it far from here?

JARA

Only a few hour's drive, Senor. Come with me, caballeros, I'll show you the secret

of eternal life.
MANUELA I'd rather go bowling.
AMANDA Let's go to the movies!
JARA First eternal life, then bowling and the movies when we get back tomorrow.
Jara exits back to stands and watches the girls go, and sits.
AMANDA OK let's go. (singing) Ni chicha ni linoma, ni chicha ni limona
JOAN Wait! The raincoats!
SCENE 3 Jara and Middleton at the stadium. Night.
MIDDLETON I Well, I wanted to I wanted to talk. But it seems like you
JARA (quietly) Ni chicha ni limona, ni chicha ni limona I think it's about time to change the oil, in the Peugeot.
MIDDLETON Oh. When did you start playing the guitar?
JARA Empieza la entrevista.

MIDDLETON

The opening... view? **JARA** No. The interview commences... Are you a reporter? No, too young, no Spanish. How old are you? Eighteen? **MIDDLETON** Twenty one. **JARA** We've been here 3 days, yes? **MIDDLETON** Yeah. Three days. **JARA** Have you slept alright? **MIDDLETON** No, I haven't been able to sleep much. **JARA** The beds are hard, ha? You are like the Princess and the Beanstalk. **MIDDLETON** No, I just can't seem to relax. Either I can't sleep or I can't stay awake. **JARA** Fear. **MIDDLETON** Maybe. **JARA** It's true the tension is mounting. Although nobody has been killed yet.

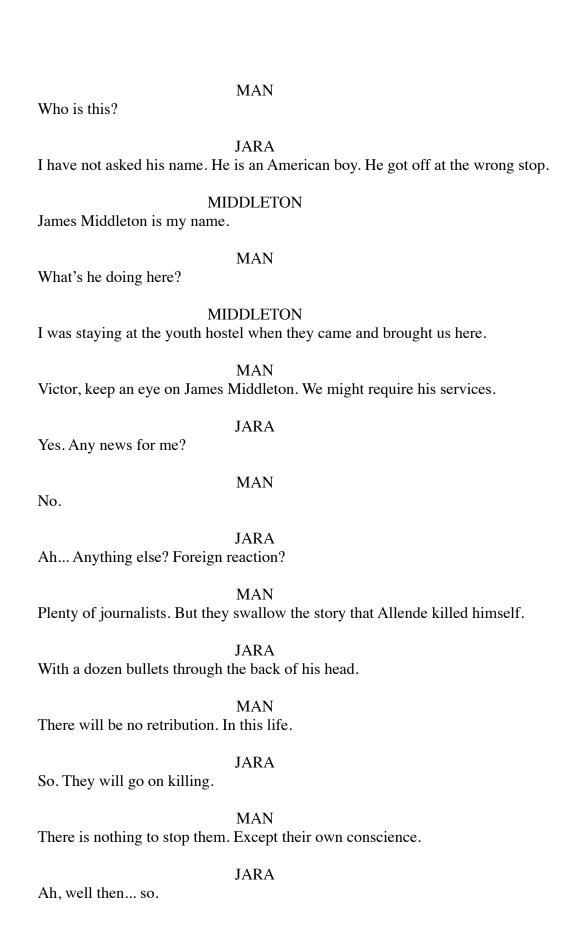
The man appears suddenly, as always. He gives Jara a sandwich.

JARA

MAN

Ah, thanks. You're a genius.

Hello.



MAN So. (He exits.)
MIDDLETON What does he mean about my services?
JARA Nothing. He is joking. (pause) I wonder what they're waiting for.
MIDDLETON Do you think they'll kill us?
JARA I don't know. It takes a lot to kill five thousand of your own people. You have to be motivated. Let's talk about something else, shall we? Here, have a bite. Wha were you, eighteen?
MIDDLETON Twenty-one.
JARA Ah yes.
MIDDLETON And it's the pea.
JARA Excuse me?
MIDDLETON The pea, she slept on. Never mind.
JARA Ah I first picked up a guitar when I was a small boy.

SCENE 4

The family is in the car, the two girls in the back (four chairs). Day. They are touring the mountains of southern Chile

MANUELA

When are we going to get there?

JARA

We are there my little chicken.

AMANDA

We are where my little chicken?

JARA

We are here my little rag doll.

MANUELA

I said when are we going to get there?

JARA

Aahhh.

AMANDA

Where are we now Papito?

JARA

We are in the middle of a mighty blue ocean.

MANUELA

Noooo

JARA

We are on the edge of a plate full of lemon drops.

MANUELA & JOAN

Nooo.

AMANDA

We are on the nothing of a nothing of nothing.

JARA

Nooo

MANUELA

We are on the wing of a dove and it's Noah's Ark.

JARA & AMANDA

Noooo

Long pause. Jara hums, then sings.

JARA

And it's a hard, and it's a hard, and it's a hard, and it's a hard, it's a hard rain's gonna fall...

AMANDA

A hard rain? You mean like hail?

MANUELA

No dummy, like a lot of water, you know, a flood, a Hard Rain?

JOAN & JARA (singing)

Oh where have you been my blue eyed son? Oh where have you been my darling young one?

JARA

I don't know the rest.

JOAN

Something about six crooked highways

JARA

Mmm. Why do I always think of Bob Dylan songs when I'm in the car?

AMANDA

Six crooked highways?

MANUELA

Better than this stupid road. It's too hot in here.

JARA

Isn't that strange?

JOAN

Roll down the window sweetheart.

MANUELA

No, it's too windy.

JARA

Whoa. Just look at that. We could be on Mars. See, now you know what it's like

down in this part of your country. You must be glad you came.

MANUELA

I'd rather stay home.

JARA

Oh no you wouldn't. How could you miss this? This is adventure. We're pioneers. We're like Zapata.

MANUELA

In a Peugeot?

JARA

Well not exactly. Zapata drove a Ford.

AMANDA

Did he drive down here with his family?

JOAN

Your father is making a joke. Zapata was an outlaw, a revolutionary. He rode a horse.

MANUELA

Papa, are you a Communist?

JARA

Yes... Booga Booga Booga.

MANUELA

No Papa really are you? It's what they say in school.

JARA

Well let's see here. I'm not sure if I'm anything-ist, but I am a member of the Peoples' Party, which is full of guess what?

MANUELA

People

JARA

Very good. Full of people. Some Communists. They have purple skin and very large noses. Easy to spot. (*pause*) Just tell them your Papa was a peasant once and he believes that all boys and girls deserve the chance to eat well and to go to school, and to say what they think without going to jail or getting killed.

BOTH GIRLS

OK.

Darling	JOAN
Why shouldn't they say that?	JARA What's th

Why shouldn't they say that? What's the point of having a free country if you can't speak freely?

JOAN
Oh I don't know. Would you like a sandwich or anything?

JARA Mmmm. Sure, a sandwich. Great. Whoa. Just look at that.

Long pause.

MANUELA When are we going to get there?

SCENE 5 *Stadium. Night.*

JARA

How much longer will you live?