

Waiting
(EXCERPT)
by
Christina K. Caralis

[] = IN GREEK.

FADE IN:

EXT. TAYGETUS BLACKMARKET - 1940 - DAY

A tiny, crowded, make-shift village lies hidden on the freezing mountain. Bursts of amber and rust-colored foliage scatter the grey devastated terrain.

Goats and lambs frolic, weave between people. CHILDREN play, Romani people beg, pickpocket from VISITORS.

ATHINA (19), MARIZA (20) stroll through the market. They barter goods for olive oil and meat. Athina trades her bread and eggs, Mariza offers medicine to the sick and injured.

EXT. BLACKMARKET TENT - SAME

Athina bickers with OLD MAN. He shakes in the cold mountain air, tugs on the large tear of his coat.

His wife, OLD WOMAN, fumbles to keep him warm with her gnarled fingers.

ATHINA

[*Géros*], each time I come here we go through this.

OLD MAN

And each time you return, [*koukláki mou*].

Athina GROANS in annoyance, fishes her sewing kit from her basket. The eyes of the Old Woman look to Athina.

ATHINA

Three olive oil bottles for eggs, bread, and my service.

OLD WOMAN

[*Nai*], now sit, sit!

Old Woman makes room for Athina to mend the Old Man's tattered coat. He gruffly huffs at his wife's acceptance.

Athina collects the oil, begins sewing with care.

OLD MAN

(Grumbling)

Be careful not to take the fabric in too much.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Athina finishes her last stitch.

ATHINA

I am as sure of my stitches as I am
my next breath.

A barrel of SHOUTS erupt from the other end of the market.

OLD WOMAN

(Panicked)

[O Theós na mas sósei. Oi Italoí--
Oi Italoí!]

Tents and goods are tossed in the air. They CLATTER to the ground. ITALIAN SOLDIERS appear, they burn out the market.

ATHINA

Mariza! Mariza!

Athina bolts up, the marketplace goes up in flames. People scatter across the village, they trample over each other.

Athina looks back, the old couple stand frozen at the chaos around them. Athina lurches towards them.

ATHINA

Come with me, out of sight near the
cliffs.

Athina leads them away from the roar of the fire. The couple hurry toward her. Concealed by black smoke, they climb away.

EXT. MOUNTAIN CLIFF - DUSK

At the top of the cliffs, Old Man, Old Woman, and Athina watch the market burn.

ATHINA

Wait here. Do not leave until I
return or it is morning.

OLD WOMAN

The soldiers!

Old Woman clutches her husband, implores him to stop Athina.

OLD MAN

The guts you have now will spill if
you go back.

ATHINA

There is no use in waiting for them
to rot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Athina picks up a sharp slab of rock from the ground, hurries back down the mountain.

EXT. BLACKMARKET - NIGHT

Flames tear away the trashed market, the heat of the blazing fire smolders the air, lighting the dark night.

Athina grabs extra fabric from her bag, covers her eyes and mouth from the soot and heat.

ATHINA
(Coughing)
Mariza! Mariza!

Bodies lay etched on the ground, dried blood and grains warp together. Athina clutches the sharp rock in her palm.

MARIZA
Athina? Athina!

Athina turns a corner to see Mariza towered over by a grizzled ITALIAN GUARD(50s). He is leering at Mariza.

ITALIAN GUARD
Oh, so you have a friend, *stupida stronza*.

The Guard grabs the trembling Mariza.

ATHINA
Let her go!

Athina runs up to him, bashes her sharp rock on his head. The attack has little impact.

The guard throws Athina to the ground, laughs. Athina's grocery bag CRUNCHES under her weight. An olive oil bottle cracks, the fracture spiders across the length.

The guard kicks Athina's stomach. The heat disorients Athina.

ITALIAN GUARD
Wait your turn, *piccola ragazza*.

Athina pushes herself off the ground. She grabs the thick glass handle, CRACKS it on the head of the guard.

The guard falls back; his skin begins to SIZZLE as the heat of the fire cooks the oil on his face. The guard screams out in agony, attracting the FOOTSTEPS of other soldiers.

Athina grabs Mariza, runs towards the cliffs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EXT. SERIES OF SHOTS - DAWN

The market burning transforms, the camera reveals the word "Oxi" burned in flames on a mountain with a large greek flag pinned to the side.

Sprawling Peloponnesian seaside cliffs engulf the screen with sparkling blue water and rocky beach shorelines.

A Shepard in a vrakas guides his flock of sheep with a cane across the rugged Taygetus mountain terrain.

Olive trees scatter the earth, twisting through their groves.

In a small village pier, old men pull nets full of fish into their weathered boats.

Nuns cross cobbled streets by the Ypapanti Church.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

Murky figures emerge from the cloudy, gray mist of the sky. They float down to reveal they are german soldiers, heavily armed with billowy white parachutes.

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

Greek citizens riot, they fight Italian soldiers. The Italians attack the crowd back.

MONTAGE

EXT. FIELD - DAY

German soldiers continue to parachute from the sky. They are shot down by Greek soldiers in the field, who in turn are shot at by Italians soldiers.

EXT. ACROPOLIS - DUSK

A flag guard soldier is wrapped in the greek flag, standing at the edge of a cliff. He sways with the wind.

EXT. TOWN CENTER - DAY

Greek crowds are inconsolable as German soldiers parade into town, joining the Italian army lined in the street.

A group of young men yell at the injustice. They are beaten, dragged away. A young woman weeps with her arms outstretched.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Old men watch on with anger and sadness written across their hardened faces as German soldiers knock over carts with food.

EXT. ACROPOLIS- DUSK

The flag guard closes his eyes. A tear slides down his cheek.

EXT. TOWN - AFTERNOON

Children on the street are bone and bloated flesh.

EXT. ACROPOLIS - DUSK

The flag guard throws himself off the acropolis.

EXT. TOWN CENTER - DAY

News paper clips reads, "EVZONE KONSTANDINOS KOUKIDIS SUICIDE" with an image of the Nazi flag flying in the Greek flags place on the acropolis.

END MONTAGE

**SIX MONTHS LATER
- APRIL 1941**

END OF EXCERPT