

THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG

A play by Bea Carmina

In a new translation by Caridad Svich

This translation was commissioned and developed at the Lark Play Development Center, New York City, as part of the 2010 US/Mexico Playwright Exchange Program, where it received a rehearsed reading under the direction of Julian Mesri with actors Franca Sofia Barchiesi, Frank Harts, Bryant Mason and Daniela Thome.

The Tip of the Iceberg

This story is as amusing as the one that we live here on this earth, that is, if we were to see ourselves from a distance with smiling eyes. What wonder, what incandescence! to be able to strip ourselves of pomp and circumstance. It's been some time now that the theory of the superego was surpassed. All we need now is to open our eyes and see ourselves boldly and brazenly.

The Tip of the Iceberg is a passing glance at how we wish to be seen, at how we search deliriously for love and are burdened by the everyday weight of life that squashes us in our pursuits. We are forever in exile from ourselves, in exile from the truths we refuse to accept, whose baseness we evade fleetingly through convex mirrors of deceptive reasoning and distorted images. The foot replaces the head, the hat conceals the face. Words mask feeling. But the depth of the iceberg is our very grief, and it moves impetuously raising storms, crows, messengers of ill fortune, roots that invade our universe of plastic flowers, toads which try to reach the sky and fall instead and splat and splash against us, threatening our precarious stability - a stability staggering for its balance upon razor sharp stiletto heels. Can a human being live on the tip of the iceberg without slipping, descending into grief? Do we need little oak boxes to protect us, store our worries and serve as our amulets? What stirs the fire of a verb, a question mark, syntax, punctuation or the lack thereof? What stirs an inverted or illuminated word, the spoken word turned into a meow? What is shape of the iceberg that contains silence?

bea Cármina

translated by Caridad Svich

CHARACTERS

This play could be performed with four actors.

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|--------------------|--|
| Roberta | Agua's mother. Very attractive. With gorgeous, sculptural legs. Ever since Agua was born, she's retreated from reality and lives more and more in a world governed by her own obsessions. |
| Lope | Roberta's husband, Amelia's lover, and Agua's father. Ever since Agua was born, he can't stand Roberta. |
| Agua | Autistic. She drags a suitcase around with her. Sybil, the cat, is inside of it. Between 13-16 years old. |
| Amelia | Lope's lover and cousin. May be played by same actor who plays Roberta. * |
| Oliverio | Serial killer, adores Roberta's shoes and wants to possess her collection. Hates Agua and Sybil. |
| Teodorovich | Psychiatrist, uses his patients to experiment with them. Silent figure. May be played by same actor who plays Lope. |
| Zeus | the god, lives on Mount Olympus. May be played by actor who plays Lope. |

AGUA (water) enters, dragging a suitcase. Inside of the suitcase is a mewling cat. Her presence on stage is constant, save for occasional moments when she enters and exits, at the director's discretion. When Agua is offstage, the dissonant music of a violin is heard, reminiscent of a mewling cat. ROBERTA enters.

Roberta.- Agua, take Sybil out. *(to the audience)* A cat has to eat, whether her name is Theorem, the square root of a parallelogram or Sybil. Think of it this way: it's as if you were stuck in an elevator, and spent the entire day going up and down, and down and up. You'd have to throw up eventually, even if you hadn't eaten anything. All that mewling...and scratching... I hate Schoenberg's music.

LOPE enters with a cup of coffee and newspaper. A moment. Roberta looks at the garden.

Roberta.- I don't remember that in the garden yesterday.

Lope.- No?

Roberta.- Yesterday or ever.

Lope.- Mmmmmmm...

Roberta.- I walked through the garden two days ago. Yesterday I watered it. I'm not blind. I see things.

Lope.- Ah...

Roberta.- The gardener does whatever I say.

So, it couldn't have been him.

Lope.- Tsktsktsktsk...

Roberta.- I've known him for years.

Lope.- Hohohoho...

Roberta.- He's a pro.

Lope.- NNNNíiiiiii...

Roberta.- If another gardener came through here, I wouldn't have let him in.

Lope.- Ah...

Roberta.- It couldn't have been Amelia. She would've told me.

Lope.- Amelia?

Roberta.- Did you come through here with your little squad and ruin my garden?

Lope.- In the afternoon?

Roberta.- It was you, wasn't it?

Lope.- Today?

Roberta.- Last night my flowers weren't wilting.

Lope.- Yesterday?

Roberta.- Rose buttons bound by roots curled against their thorns. They'll asphyxiate.

Lope.- Asphyxiate?

Roberta.- They'll asphyxiate and die.

Lope.- That's impossible, right?

Roberta.- The gardener wouldn't come sneaking around at midnight to make this mess... You slink about, furtively, at dawn, even though you say otherwise. Even if you don't take the trouble to tell me what time you get home... dammit!

Lope.- One has to work to progress.

Roberta.- Or regress.

Lope.- Shrink, you mean?

Roberta.- This house stinks.

Lope.- The flowers, the roots...?

Roberta.- You should take a shower to get rid of that stink.

Lope.- Good night... see you later.

Roberta.- Send someone to tear up those roots; they're killing my garden.

...

Lope walks away.

Roberta.- Lope, I'm talking to you!

Lope turns around.

Lope.- If you told me that the flowers or the plants were covered in dust, that they were

torn or faded or had been warped by time...but that they've wilted...?

Roberta.- Flowers rot and...

Lope.- You're obsessed with what plagues your garden. If it's not crows, it's scarecrows, or creeping roots. We'll send someone to spray the flowers...

Roberta.- ... and eggs abound in the rot.

Lope.- You should see doctor Teodorovich.

Roberta.- ...mountains of worms crawl, walking piles of bugs invade our dreams and stain our sheets.

Lope.- A tranquilizer.

Roberta.- A useless dawn plagued by eggs, worms that crawl on our hands, legs, chests...vermin that enters our skin, sucks us dry, and leaves us in waste.

Lope.- You need a sleeping pill. It'll do you good.

Lope exits.

Roberta.- *(to the audience)* Wouldn't it bother you if you suddenly saw hundreds of roots, coarse roots that overnight entwined themselves through your tender, newly planted clusters of orange blossoms, and arose like snakes through the hydrangeas, sweet poppies and blooming rosebuds of your garden? Can you honestly tell me that it wouldn't infuriate you to the point that you'd want to tear out the roots of your hair, throw yourself against the walls of the house until your head split open and your brains scattered everywhere like gobs of paint? From now on, nothing but nightmarish roots. How is it possible that all of a sudden roots and more roots emerge from the ground, crawl over the fence and break through my roof? Would it seem normal to you that a person's nerves would all of a sudden burst through their skin, snake up and through their body until their face was completely covered and their eyes were blinded? Wouldn't you have a heart attack if you looked in the mirror and saw such a horrific sight? Will the roots grow and grow until they burst through the house? Agua! Agua! We have to go shopping.

Agua drags her suitcase. Sybil the cat is inside. Agua hands Roberta a small oak box and a key. Roberta opens the box and takes out from inside of it another box, which is identical in shape and design to the larger one, except it is smaller. She hangs it around her neck.

Roberta.- You had breakfast, right?

Agua.- And my hand?

Roberta.- I told Amelia to give you breakfast.

Agua.- I can't find it.

Roberta.- Amelia?

Agua.- That there, you call that a hand?

Roberta.- The same as this one.

Agua.- Well I can't find it anywhere.

Roberta.- These are your hands, Agua.

Agua.- Who says?

Roberta.- Linguists, historians, academics, translators...

Agua.- They lie.

Roberta.- Why would they lie?

Agua.- Because they're grown ups.

Roberta.- A hand is a hand.

Agua.- Well, I can't find what those grown-ups call a hand.

Roberta.- It's right here, child.

Agua.- Why smack one hand against the other?

Roberta.- Did somebody hit you? Hurt you?

Agua.- That's not my hand.

Roberta.- Was it Amelia?

Agua.- It's dad's hand, right? If only...! Amelia's? It's not mine.

Roberta.- Are you saying they stole it?

Agua.- My hand...suddenly...vanished.

Roberta.- Want me to help you look for it?

Agua.- Between one meow and another...poof, whoosh, wow...it disappeared.

Roberta.- Just like that?

Agua.- One listens, one turns around.

Roberta.- Who turned around?

Agua.- Besides Sybil?

Roberta.- A key?

Agua.- One turn... or two? One turn or two?

Roberta.- She locked you up?

Agua.- Five little fingers on the other side of the door.

Roberta.- She dared punish you?

Agua.- Without a hand or fingers, it's impossible to greet anyone.

Roberta.- Greet a...stranger?

Agua.- Agua hiding with her ugly stump.

Roberta.- She locked you up so you wouldn't see what they were doing?

Agua.- Agua slipped through the eye like a cyclone.

Roberta.- Do I know who it was? Do you?

Agua.- And Sybil can't walk, because how could she without feet?

Roberta.- Amelia! Amelia!

Agua.- I want my hand.

Roberto.- I'll help you find it. Amelia!

Agua.- If you can, so can I.

Roberta.- Amelia!

Agua.- I'll look for it in dad's bedroom...

Roberta.- It's best if you looked in yours.

Agua.- Amelia must've stolen it.

Roberta.- She was in my bedroom? Amelia! Did she shout at you? Amelia! Did she put on my shoes? Amelia! Did they fill my garden with roots? Amelia! Did she hurt you?

Agua.- Hurt you more.

Roberta.- Me?

Agua.- Shshshshshshshshshsh

Agua drags the suitcase. Sybil meows from inside of it. Sybil and Agua exit.

Roberta on the phone:

Roberta.- Doctor Teodorovich please. ... It's urgent... When he gets in, tell him to call Roberta, Agua's mother...she's had a relapse, it's urgent... Thanks. I'll wait for

his call.

Time shift. A day or so later. Lope enters.

Lope.- You're still up (at this hour)?

Roberta.- Amelia's gone.

Lope.- Where?

Roberta.- I fired her.

Lope.- You're crazy.

Roberta.- My garden's full of roots because of her.

Lope.- Agua needs someone to take care of her when you're not at home.

Roberta.- I work from home. Dog therapy.

Lope.- Canine counseling? You're a compulsive shopper, Roberta. Face it. You need Amelia.

Roberta.- I only buy shoes.

Lope.- Agua gets sick when she goes shopping with you for four or five hours; she doesn't sleep. She throws up. Can't you see that what you do is bad for her? Three hundred minutes from one shoe store to another? One thousand eight hundred minutes from one mall to another? What else do you do with yourself but buy shoes? Why don't you wait to wear them at home? I've seen them all, and they've all been used, and don't lie to me that you wear them out of every store, only to buy another pair and do the same. Where do you go to show off your new shoes?

Roberta.- I didn't want her around anymore.

...

Roberta.- I didn't want Amelia in the house.

Lope.- She's my cousin.

Roberta.- Even if she were your mother.

Lope.- What bug bit you, eh?

Roberta.- What could an uneducated woman like her teach our child?

Lope.- She didn't have the same opportunity you had to study and have two useless careers.

Roberta.- She's illiterate... ignorant.

Lope.- What bit you? A little pest?

Roberta.- She wasn't good to Agua.

Lope.- (are you) Confirming, deducing, opining, affirming or dreaming?

Roberta.- I didn't want her around anymore.

Lope.- Give me a reason.

Roberta.- She brought someone home.

Lope.- She brought... whom...?

Roberta.- She locked Agua up so that she wouldn't see what they were doing.

Lope.- I'm asking, demanding, that you give me a reason...not a delusion.

Roberta.- She locked Agua up in her room.

Lope.- Amelia told you this?

Roberta.- Agua did.

Lope.- Since when do you interpret Agua's half-formed phrases accurately?

Roberta.- Well, I fired her.

Lope.- Since when do you feel sufficiently capable to translate the primitive thoughts of your child, her syntax plagued by chaos...?

Roberta.- What does it matter to you if Amelia's here or not...

Lope.- Don't tell me you're a psychic now!

Roberta.- ... if you never stop by my house for a second.

Roberta exits.

Lope.- It's our house, don't forget, ours. Amelia adores Agua, I know it, and the

decisions that have to do with Agua: we'll take together. She's our daughter, not just yours, and I won't allow you to decide things for her without consulting with me first, and making sure we agree. And if I'm at the firm, you have my phone number. And my mobile. And my e-mail. In case you've forgotten: it's Lopelope@yahoo.com.mx

Lights and time shift. Flashback to a few days earlier. [Translator's note: the following scene is optional.]

Amelia enters (she is played by the actor who plays Roberta).

They kiss and laugh.

Amelia.- Shut your pretty little mouth, cousin. Agua can hear us.

Lope.- What? Roberta didn't take her with her?

Amelia.- Agua didn't want to leave with your wife, even though I tried to convince her. Every time Agua goes out with her she gets so tired; it makes her crazy. It's a wonder Agua doesn't get worse every day she's with that woman. Your wife's a spectacle, a...

Lope.- I need to go.

Amelia.- She won't leave her room.

Lope.- With Agua in the house, I can't...

Amelia.- You're the one who called me up and told me how you were going to make love to me, you're the one who whispered this and that in my ear before we opened the door to the garage... you can't leave me this way, my little monkey. I'll end up trawling the bars like a bitch in heat.

Lope.- You should've told me she was here.

Amelia.- Like a cross nailed to a bedroom wall.

Lope.- She wanders through the house night and day like a phantom.

Amelia.- I gave her the new medicine. That Teodorovich is something. He knows how much these poor head cases like Agua suffer. I told him what your wife should've

told him years ago: that Agua was hysterical all the time. He tended to it immediately and gave me the prescription.

Lope.- Agua floods this house. One never knows where or when's she going to surface...

Amelia.- I worry about your daughter's well-being even though she's not mine.

Lope.- If she wakes up and sees us?

Amelia.- With that medicine?

Lope.- You closed her door?

Amelia.- Under lock and key.

Lope.- You shouldn't have.

Amelia.- How I love the sound of your knob when it turns...

Lope.- She's claustrophobic.

Amelia.- ...if you don't want to, then leave.

Lope.- And I love your breasts in my hands.

Amelia.- I burn when we're sitting there at the table. I take off my shoes, under the table... and she's there sipping her soup so properly, stupidly nibbling on a tiny crouton between her teeth, acting as if she were all elegant, while my foot caresses your ankle and moves up your leg, and she goes on about "the crows in the garden that won't let her sleep and their nightmarish caws" She stands there looking at the garden and you... oh you accidentally throw something to the floor, and bend down and lick my naked feet...only a moment ago...only a moment...

Lope.- I love how you say the word "moment," it reminds me of when I was fourteen years old...

Amelia.- and then you leave me, wet, saliva all over: and the foolish chump stays there, looking out the window...

Lope.- ...in Cuba you'd pull me into the bedroom while Dad and Mom were away at their embassy functions...

Amelia.- ... her delusion of a garden.

Lope.- You make me lose myself, cousin, when you caress me under the table and she's sitting there less than two inches away from...

Amelia.- I don't know who's crazier: your wife or your daughter.

Lope.- ...your naked foot going up and down my legs. You really took a chance with that little gadget (massager) between your toes...! When did you put it on...? No, no I couldn't keep eating...out of the corner of my eye I looked at the napkin resting over my lap: it was soaked.

Amelia.- I wish she were looking at us right now... little miss priss... little miss... To think she waters that ridiculous plastic garden and fumigates it as well. I already told you to send her to Bellevue so they can put her in a straight jacket! At the very least.

Sybil meows inside the suitcase.

Lope.- Yes... Sybil!

Amelia.- What a little baby you are. They're locked up: her and that hideous cat.

Lope walks away. Amelia stops him.

Amelia.- Haven't you noticed that for three days now your daughter has been wandering about like a sleepwalker... you call her and she's lost in some other world, quiet, as she should be. Haven't you noticed? I've been thinking about giving the cat the same medicine.

Lope.- Agua's near.

Amelia.- Wouldn't you like me to medicate Roberta with those wonderful little pills of many colors? We could sit her in front of us, and have her watch us as we make love in every corner of the house.

Lope.- With Agua in the house, I can't...

Lope exits.

Amelia discovers Agua, who's been spying on them. She hits her hand.

Amelia.- There, there, and there...if you open your mouth, I'll tear out your eyes, And cut out your tongue, idiot.

Amelia pushes Agua, forcing her to exit with her. Agua holds onto the suitcase.

Flashback ends. Time shift back to previous scene, continued...Roberta enters with Lope.

Lope.- If you didn't spend the entire night waiting to see what time I got back from work, and you actually slept like you were supposed to, you wouldn't be running around like Jack the Ripper or Doctor Hyde at all hours looking for your next victims. You're just like Javert in "Les Miserables," sniffing around here and there like a bloodhound.

Roberta.- It doesn't matter to you that Amelia let a stranger into the house?

Lope.- Roberta, the truth is you're trapped in an imaginary world; you don't see what goes on around here; you see nothing, hear nothing. The truth is, you don't want to see what's happening; you prefer your hallucinations.

Roberta.- Or do you mean that I love my hallucinations...? They make me vibrate, orgasm... they're my dopamine...? Laralara... mmm they're so good... of course they're much better than the fact that you're never here even when you are, and that at night, you're absent, silent.

Lope.- I'm sure you're an interesting case for Teodorovich; your pathology must make for a most compelling case study when he gives a paper. Don't forget to take the medicine he's prescribed; you need it more than Agua. Maybe then you'll stop seeing roots, crows, scarecrows and the rest of all that nonsense; maybe then you'll get rid of the habit of naming your children Agua or liquid or potion or strumpet, milk, blood, frog, fish, snake, nymph, daydream. Daydream would've been a better name for her. Agua's a nauseating name, as nauseating as a marine serpent, as nauseating as it is to plant and water an artificial garden and fumigate its plastic trees.

Lope walks away. Roberta stops him. Interior. Close-up.

Roberta .- How is it possible that Agua's birth sucked us dry?

....

Roberta.- That it created a chasm between us?

...

Roberta.- Do my feelings, my loneliness, matter to you?

...

Roberta.- Does your lack of love matter to me?

..

Roberta.- Does it hurt me?

...

Roberta.- Does your rejection wound me?

...

Roberta.- Why do I take offense?

...

Roberta.- Why do I still love you? Out of pride?

...

Roberta.- If Agua weren't our daughter?

...

Roberta.- Is she ours?

...

Roberta.- Yours and mine?

...

Roberta.- Or was she born on her own and by chance found my womb, my belly, and curled up inside of it for nine months warming me up?

...

Roberta.- Does the fact that she's different force us apart?

...

Roberta.- You reject her, but do I as well?

...

Roberta.- Do I blame you for your DNA?

...

Roberta.- Do I blame myself because I wanted Agua to be like you or me?

...

Roberta.- Are we so extraordinary that she has to be like us?

...

Roberta.- What if we accept her as she is?

...

Roberta.- Would we fall in love again?

...

Roberta.- You and me?

...

Roberta.- Do we love her?

...

Roberta.- Do you love her?

...

Roberta.- Do I?

...

Roberta.- Do I take care of her because I feel guilty?

...

Roberta.- So I wash my conscience clean with her wáter?

...

Roberta.- Do I spoil her so she will forgive me for bringing her into this world?

...

Roberta.- Do I want to love you again?

...

Roberta.- Do I want you to touch me again?

...

Roberta.- And have you ejaculate inside of me?

...

...

Roberta.- What do you say?

...

Roberta.- I'd rather die, than have you ejaculate inside of me!

Lope.- That's what I say.

Roberta.- It's nice to know we agree on something! We could keep our marriage together like this for eternity.

Lope exits.

Roberta on the phone.

Roberta.- Miss Ileri... This is Agua's mother... Tell doctor Teodorovich that I must speak with him... Conferences, conferences... when he's not at a convention, he's at a conference... What about his patients? Tearing their hair out waiting. There must be a heap of skeletons waiting for the doctor to arrive. I must speak with him. Hear me? It's urgent. *(ends call. To the audience)* This morning when I looked in the mirror, there was a question mark on my face. I tried to wash it off, but it moved with me, as if it were my Siamese twin. I looked behind me, but the backside of a mirror is merely that: its back. I walked to the right, and the

question mark walked with me. I walked back, and there it was: mocking me. Have you noticed, have you really looked at a question mark? It's not a hideous sign; it doesn't instill fear, anxiety or nervousness, yet to me, it was terrifying. If it were upside down, would it make me happier...? I stood on my head, but a sign is a sign, and the question mark remained the same. Ever since this morning I've been asking myself, have I turned into a sign? Not just any sign. No. But a question mark...What a nightmare! The garden's rotting with overgrown roots. A question mark lives inside my mirror, and Schoenberg's music rings in my ears. Agua, Agua! Please, stop dragging that suitcase! Enough! She's making me paranoid. I imagine she's dragging a dead body, dragging it by its hairs, and that suddenly it rises and falls upon us both. Well, we must make ourselves pretty today. Let's go shopping.

Roberta exits.

The phone rings. Lope enters.

Lope.- *(on phone, scrolling through photographic images)* Photographs. Finally. Hmm. I see. Yeah. Shoes. She's just wearing shoes. Where are the...? You know. The real... What? ... With the photographer? ...What am I paying you for? ... Who is she with now? ... What?! How could he...! I demand that he be fired at once... Sleeping with the woman he's supposed to be spying on? ... I want those photos today. If you don't fire him, I'll sue you. I won't put up with this mockery. ... No. You're an idiot!. It's not the same for my wife to go to a hotel to show off her shoes with whomever she finds on the street, as it is for her to do it with the person I'm paying, with the person who's... You think I won't sue you? I'll sue you! Don't think you're going to pull one over on me. I'll make sure that man never works again in one of your agencies...I swear. Not for a single one... I'll see to it.

Lope ends call. He sits. Lights fade on one side of the stage. Time shift.

Roberta enters. Light falls upon her.

Roberta.- *(to the audience)* I won't buy shoes today, no, today I'll buy some boots that

come up to my knees, ankle boots, handbags and sandals. And for Agua, all the shoes she desires. To see her walking around barefoot makes me crazy. Although with her father gone, maybe she'll decide to wear shoes or espadrilles... or at least flip-flops. I'll buy several pairs of flip-flops, in every color, girl size, women size and even diva style with feathers and glass beads and lots of glitter. Once I admired a pair of bare backed sandals that I doubt you ('ve seen)... no... they had live fish along the side....divine...simply divine. Little fish sandals, and others with bear claws, clawing after the fish. Fish diving...dying... moving this way and that... its tail like the blade of a windmill decapitating people's heads. Lope's head rolling around like a ludicrous marble. Such pleasure! Agua! Agua! We have to go shopping. And if you want to take the suitcase with you, then put it in the car. Ah! I forgot to tell you, Lope is leaving me; he says he loves another woman. Does he know how to love? Because I... It doesn't matter now. Or does it?

Light fades on Roberta, and cross-fade to Lope. Roberta enters his circle of light. Agua spies on them.

Lope.- Roberta, don't wait for me to have dinner.

Roberta.- I never wait for you.

Lope.- The days of waiting and not waiting are over.

Roberta.- Agua and I will eat out.

Lope.- For years?

Roberta.- We live in a big city.

Lope.- There are plenty of restaurants.

Roberta.- French, Turkish, Portuguese, Italian, linguini and spaghetti. It's a shame we can't find kangaroo and crocodile pizzas here like the ones they have in Australia, but at least we've escargot braised with butter and dry white wine...

Lope.- You'll make me call you.

Roberta.- Don't bother.

Lope.- So I won't go to the same restaurant that you'll go to.

Roberta.- All you have to do is ask. I usually make a reservation under my maiden name.

Lope.- I wouldn't want you to make a scene.

Roberta.- You still remember..?

Lope.- I love another.

Roberta.- It was so much fun... I swear, it was such a riot to see her...

Lope.- Roberta, I love another.

Roberta.- ...when you saw me come in, her eyes went all wide... and then she ran to the door...

Lope.- I'm leaving you for another, Roberta, another woman.

Roberta.- ...like she was running a marathon...

Lope.- People recognize me. I'm warning you.

Roberta.- ...ran all the way outside, nearly bald, and I had a bunch of her hair in my hands. Phew! Disgusting!

Lope.- I forbid you to make a fool of me in front of...Don't you dare cross me.

Roberta.- I feel like taking a knife and disfiguring her face, your face, someone's... It's all the same, right?

Lope.- When love's over, it's over.

Roberta.- I wouldn't do it out of love.

Lope.- You've no right.

Roberta.- Because you're a traitor.

Lope.- You're calling me a traitor? You? You?

Roberta.- You're running off with another, aren't you?

Lope.- I'm warning you.

Roberta.- Out of fidelity or infidelity?

Lope.- I'm leaving this house for good: out of respect for you, because YOU my wife.

Roberta laughs.

Roberta.- ME Jane, she Chita and he Boy? Yours?

Lope.- I don't lie, I don't dissemble, ergo: respect!

Roberta.- I order you to tear all the roots from the garden.

Lope.- A crew will come by tomorrow.

Roberta.- Today.

Lope.- I promise.

Roberta.- Because the rot... sickens me.

Lope.- If more roots appear, call me and I'll have someone tear them out.

Roberta.- Once you're out of here, the cursed roots will vanish; of that, I'm certain.

Lope.- I'll come by for my things in the afternoon.

Roberta.- I don't want a single thing left behind, no matter how small.

Lope.- Here's the key.

Roberta.- The rot sickens me.

Lope.- When will you be ready to sign?

Roberta.- I can't go on like this.

Lope.- The sooner you sign, the sooner I'll be out of your life.