

M  
A  
N  
M  
A  
D  
E

by

r o l a n d  
r e y n o l d s

*Roland Reynolds*

© 2017

*"Art is not a mirror with which to reflect reality  
but a hammer with which to shape it."*

- Bertolt Brecht

## ***The Characters***

Ag	the political leader
Cas	a foreigner, prophet and Ag's best friend
Elek	Ag's daughter
Cly	Ag's wife
At	Ag's father, formerly the leader
Aeg	At's 3 <sup>rd</sup> and current wife
Hip	At's 2 <sup>nd</sup> and divorced wife
Ede	National Security Adviser, later Secretary of the Judiciary, Ag's oldest friend from childhood and an invalid
Sponge	Ag's chief adviser
Laş	communications adjutant (ie. 27 year-old intern)
Lorr	a grotesquely handsome young revolutionary
Dag, Sans, Urs, Jaal and others	Students who have become revolutionary soldiers under Lorr's leadership
Ays, Seefa, Lula, Ula and Jetah	old women in the marketplace
Shevek, Mehm, Benj, Tük and Jeb	old men in the marketplace
Alan	a foreign journalist out of his depth
Buch, Iria, Düg, Harf	journalists
Ion, Kal	security officers
Photographers	
Police Officers	
Luk, Reuf and others	police troopers
Ada	hoax terrorist
Pol, Uve & Issa	Palace cleaning women

# PART I

things fall apart much faster  
than they come together

Order the neurotic spinster half-sibling  
of lonely promiscuous Chaos

"No customers," the men curse over the game rattle  
as dice chatter like cats over the board

sugar dissolves in a tulip full of apple tea  
like tulips kissing in a dusty summer wind

the dark-haired bite-eyed beauty Uncertainty  
bends her curved lips over the tulip field

laughter rings false bells in the nervous vaults  
of the hollow bazaar below her leaden breasts

as Chaos and Uncertainty fuck a new government  
into the battered people; Order sniffs knowingly –

"Things fall apart much more easily  
than they come together."

## **ACT I**

### ***ATRIUM, THE PEOPLE'S PALACE. WINTER.***

*At, a wheelchair-bound old man in a trilby hat, sits alone in the centre of the atrium. Deeply reflective, he chain-smokes the old-school strong, unfiltered cigarettes.*

*It is night in the People's Palace and all the lights are off. Only the moonlight casts deep shadows over his craggy face.*

*At his side everywhere he goes are his drip and blood bag; he's fully wired up and carries his sickness with him everywhere he goes.*

*For a long time, he sits alone, slumped, smoking. For an almost unendurably long time, he sits alone in the semi-darkness. Slumped. Smoking.*

*All of a sudden the strip lights in the high ceiling blink and flicker into life. He doesn't notice at first. When he does realise the change in atmosphere and looks around him, he is quickly disinterested and returns to his thoughts.*

*Cly is bustling about from room to room and she cuts right through this atrium from one side and out through the other. Under one arm she carries a rolled up purple rug, and on the other shoulder she lugs a basket of white laundry.*

*She disappears but quickly comes back with an*

*Cly – Ah, shit.*

*under her breath. She drops the basket of laundry down near the wheelchair and takes the cigarette from At's mouth.*

*Cly – No. No!*

*She stubs it out on the sole of her shoe but doesn't know where to throw it away so takes it with her as she leaves the room from the door she came in by.*

*At doesn't respond to her snatching away the cigarette. However, he soon realises he doesn't have one between his lips and this rouses him from his reverie. He takes a pack out of his pocket, pops in another and lights it.*

*He puts the pack and lighter back in his pocket. He takes a pair of sunglasses out of another pocket, puts them on and slumps back down again.*

*Cly bustles back in carrying three bouquets of flowers, gifts. She snatches the new cigarette out of At's mouth, crushing it in her hand in frustration.*

Cly – No! NO.

*If he had the strength, he would hit her but in this state he can't even make eye contact. He shrugs, a sly smile creeping into the corners of his mouth.*

Cly – Don't misbehave with me.

*She takes out a piece of chewing gum and pushes it into his mouth; he chews it without resistance.*

Cly – Don't you misbehave. Not today.

*Her phone rings. She answers as she leaves again, tucking it under her ear on one shoulder.*

Cly – Ok? [...] That better be ready, yes? Ok.

*At alone, chewing vigorously.*

*Aeg finds him there. Her arms glide around him from behind.*

Aeg – Baby.

*She kisses his head, his face, his hair, his hands. She moves to walk away from him but he reaches out, grabs her by the arm and yanks her onto his lap.*

*She yelps with delight at his insistent caresses though, while he has stopped chewing his gum, his face betrays no change, no hint of excitement. He suddenly stops.*

At – I swallowed. I swallowed my gum.

Aeg – It doesn't matter, baby.

At – But it doesn't digest for seven years.

Aeg – That's make-believe. You're going to be ok

At – Really?

Aeg – You don't trust me?

At – Don't

Aeg – Why d'you marry me if you don't trust me?

At – Come on, I trust you.

*He wheels after her as she turns her back on him.*

*Cly is storming through again, Sponge on her heels.*

Sponge – I tell you if he comes back now there can ONLY be a constitutional crisis.

Those demonstrations of a mass hysteria are not meaningless.

Cly – He's not set foot here for 12 years and now you say he mustn't come back?

Sponge – All I'm saying is that we must be careful. We don't know exactly what he's bringing our way.

Aeg – Fair winds under his fine hot breath, I'm sure.

Cly – Pithy.

Aeg – 12 years without his hot breath at your fair winds, no wonder you're nervous at him coming back.

Cly – Sponge, would you take my father-in-law out of here, somewhere a little more conducive to rest.

At – Getting in the way, am I?

Cly – Getting in your way, daddy, that's what we're doing and I'm sorry.

At – Don't patronise me.

*Aeg smacks him on the head.*

Aeg – Stop it! You're not a silly King any more.

Cly – Sponge?

Sponge – With all respect, this conversation is not closed. I'm coming back.

*The old man is wheeled away. Cly and Aeg are alone. Cly exhales her tension and lies flat on the floor, spread-eagle, eyes closed.*

*Aeg straddles her, bends over and kisses her on the lips.*

Cly – Are you a fucking idiot? Get off me or someone's

Aeg – No-one, no-one's going to see us.

*They kiss passionately but it's not long before Cly is back on her feet.*

Cly – I really need to get stuff ready, he's going to be here any second.

Aeg – Wouldn't it just be great if he arrived and came right in here and we were on the floor fucking each other's brains out?

Cly – It might be, sure, but I'd rather he didn't see that.

Aeg – You're ashamed of us?

Cly – I just have to get everything ready, I didn't realise that no-one had done anything at all about this, I mean the city is all decked out and the harbour looks just lovely, fabulous, but the palace! It's a mess!

Aeg – When did you become so materialistic?

Cly – It's not about the stuff, it's about him, I just want to give him a good welcome, make him feel good.

Aeg – What, you want to make him feel good while you're fucking his stepmother?

Cly – You're 30 years younger than him

Aeg – I'm still the guy's stepmother. You're going to hurt him when he sees what's going on here. But if there's got to be pain then there's got to be pain. The time has come.

*Cly wrings her hands silently, unable to form the words. But Aeg knows.*

Aeg – Of course.

Cly – I have to be loyal.

Aeg – Oh, loyal. To him?

Cly – What do you expect?

Aeg – Sure, what did I expect?

Cly – It's been fun

Aeg – It?!

Cly – It, us, this, whatever, but now it's time for it to go on the back-burner for a while.

Aeg – There is no back-burner. Either we're together or we're through.

Cly – Then we're through. It's done.

Aeg – That's it?

Cly – That's that.

*Hip has been standing at the door and they're both suddenly aware of her presence, though neither knows how long she has been there for.*

Hip – I just swung by to collect some things.

Aeg – Oh sure, swing by my fucking palace whenever you fucking please.

Hip – I left some of my equipment in the old laboratory. Is it possible to get it?

Aeg – Today is not the best.

Cly – I don't see it's going to be a problem for us, only you might bump into one of the servants moving stuff around getting ready. Why don't I just get someone to send it over to you, wouldn't that be easier? Tomorrow, or the day after.

Hip – I'd rather it was today. I'm on the verge of a substantial breakthrough but quite a few of my notebooks are here, some readers, measuring tools

Aeg – Oh, readers, notebooks, measuring tools!

Hip – but I'm sure you don't need me to bore you with the details.

Cly – What are you on the verge of?

Aeg – Yes, what are you on the verge of? She wants to know.

Hip – It's nothing

Aeg – we'd be interested in? Or is it beyond us?

Hip – I don't know who's digging the hole here, me or you.

*The two stand off, before Aeg bursts into laughter.*

Aeg – Have you two ever thought of getting together?

Hip – What do you mean?

Aeg – You know, hooking up? You have a lot in common, you'd get along very well.

Cly – I really need to be getting on with stuff. It's been great to see you, just help yourself to whatever you need to get from upstairs. It's fine, we'll take care of anything you need to leave behind, just drop a note off in my office or something. We'll take care of it.

*Before Hip can even thank her, Cly is already gone. Aeg shrugs and follows her. Hip is left alone. She is about to leave when Ag and Cas come into the atrium from the opposite door.*