

*Irene Koronas*

**House Of Wind**

In 3 Acts

Dion

Thena

The Reader

ACT 1

scene 1

Cypriot hill side. Outside chapel in Pendakomo village

Morning. farm house

*the stage:* a large viewing screen on stage showing slides of Zeus, Athena and Dionysus. while the reader speaks

**THE READER:** this play began before the two main characters were born. it starts in mythology and is influenced by that past as well as the present time.

**Athena** is the daughter of Zeus. She sprang full grown in armor from his forehead, thus has no mother. She is fierce and brave in battle, but, only wars that define the state and home from outside enemies. She is the goddess of the city, handicrafts, and agriculture. She invented the bridle, which permitted man to tame horses, the trumpet, the flute, the pot, the rake, the plow, the yoke, the ship, and the chariot. She is the embodiment of wisdom, reason, and purity. She was Zeus's favorite child. Her favorite city is Athens. Her tree is the olive. She is a virgin goddess.

**Dionysus** wandered world actively encouraging his cult. He was accompanied by the Maenads, wild women, flush with wine, shoulders draped with a fawn skin, carrying rods tipped with pine cones. While other gods had temples the followers of Dionysus worshipped him in the woods. Here they might go into mad states where they would rip apart and eat raw any animal they came upon.

The festival for Dionysus is in the spring when the leaves begin to reappear on the vine. It became one of the most important events of the year. Its focus became the theater. Presently, our two characters, Dion and Thena meet each other again on Cyprus the island of love. This is the story of their struggle to reconcile their differences. It is March, early spring on the island.

An empty cocoon hangs from an olive tree, three aqua chairs close to a small white church in the foothills, built when an earthquake caused damage to the church in the village. Dion offered his land to build this small chapel. Thena has come to Cyprus from the United States, to visit with family. She takes daily walks into the white chalk foothills. She sits outside the white washed chapel and writes poetry and draws the images around her. Four horses graze close by, white moths flit, yellow flowers close to the ground underfoot. An older Greek Cypriot man with no shirt on, a dog by his side, is hammering down a post. This is the first time they meet. It is warm.

*the stage:* slides of the chapel, the farm, animals and foothills

Dion: are you an artist?

Thena: how can you tell?

Dion: you are drawing in a book and who would sit there day after day looking off into space. Sorry to disturb your peace, missy. (he walks over to where she is sitting) you come, I make you some Nescafe or maybe you like strong Cypriot coffee. I live right over there in bright yellow and red house. come. I make you coffee. come.

Thena: okay.

Dion: come. sit here. (he offers her a seat on a small screened in porch) I be right back. sit. this your place too.

Thena: okay

Dion: (after he brings the coffee he starts to tell her his story) I have been at sea for many years not lost my faith in God just the church and the people. I come here to play with my horses. I come in the morning after I work at my taverna in Limassol., (a city about 10 miles away.) have you ever seen a baby donkey. over there. look.

Thena: (Thena smiles and looks over at the donkey and a peacock, kittens, cats, goats) how long have you lived here?

Dion: ahh. I come back here after I leave south Africa. I married a young woman who just want my money and I give it all to her. she likes the drugs. so I leave her. we Cypriots can live anywhere, we can live without water, without family, family always wants something. (he points) see that peacock? I liberate that peacock from the zoo. now we both are free.

Thena: may I ask what happened to your leg?

Dion: ( he looks at his leg) ahh. two young people hit me when I was walking. I lay on the ground, my foot broken, my leg, my spine slipped. I ask them, did you not see me as a human being. why would you run me over like an animal. they tell me they were fighting over wedding invitations. ahh. I ask them when they will marry. they tell me the same time as my daughter in south Africa. so I tell them to go. leave me here. go. go before I burn your house down. don't tell me your name, just go.

Thena: I'm sorry. (she sips her coffee then gargles water. he continues to talk)

Dion: my brother was 33 when he died of a heart attack. I lose my mind. I hate the old, the sick. why should they live and my brother die? ahh. but now I am philosophical.

Thena: I don't ask why. I believe God takes us when it is time.

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Dion: (smiling) so you believe in destiny?

Thena: (stares off toward the mountains) I'm not sure what destiny means

Dion: come. come. I show you the house I am building near here. you can live in for nothing.

Thena: I must go

Dion: ahh. not many do I entertain or ask to visit or stay or treat this place as their own. you think about it. love you. love you.

Thena: thank you. I will see you again (she leaves)

**scene 2**

*the stage:* slides of the foothills, the foothills

**next day. same place**

**The Reader:** Thena's walk back to her village home is about 20 minutes. she stays there alone. but has promised her cousin in Nicosia, to call every day. she enjoys her alone time and her time on the top porch drawing and painting. across the small path an old woman wears black, hangs her clothing on a clothesline hung between two trees. she lets her chickens out to peck through the dirt. this happens the same time every day. on the corner a young English couple live and invite her for tea to gossip about the Cypriots. a young artist and his older wife live a few ancient stone homes away. attached to Thena's home is another English woman who takes her into Limmasol to grocery shop. there is a very small shop, a café for men, a small restaurant, the church and lots of swallows nesting in doorways. the wind blows through the houses leaving a coat of chalk that must be swept and washed away every day. wild cats roam.

Thena walks back to Dion's place in the hills, the next morning. Thena

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doesn't see Dion, so she looks on the side of his yellow house. on the upper porch Dion is taking a piss, it streams out over the yard. he notices her. she is embarrassed.

Dion: hello missy. come. take off your clothes. sit outside. there. (he points to a lounge chair) no one is here. be free. take off your clothes.

Thena: thank you. I'm comfortable.

Dion: suit your self. café?

Thena: yes

Dion: (brings coffee) why you come here to this country?

Thena: I came to see where my father grew up. my cousin gave me her village home to live in for 6 weeks.

Dion: why did he leave?

Thena: because he loved a young woman whose family did not like my father and the family wanted to kill him. so his brother helped him escape to America.

Dion: ahh. the feudal villages. where did he live?

Thena: agastina

Dion: ahh the other side. (the occupied side of the island). you come tonight to the taverna to be with me. I show you good time. we eat and sing.

Thena: okay. (he gives her directions)

Dion: you stay. I go feed the animals. (he leaves. she draws in her notebook)

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scene 3

**that night in Limosol tavern**

*the stage:* greek musicians, music, barroom

Dion: ahh you look lovely. come sit by me. have some wine

Thena: I don't drink. but I'll have some water

Dion: (orders 7 side dishes) please eat. I order this for you

Thena: (picks at the food while dion smokes and drinks) Dion can I have a cigarette? and I'll take a small glass of wine.

Dion: are you sure? I don't want you to smoke if you don't. but here. here is some wine.

Thena: you look so handsome in your black leather jacket. the music and you are helping me to loosen up. (she drags on the cigarette, quickly drinking the wine. she leans close to him)

Dion: I tell him to play a love song for you. sit eat. I be right back. ( he leaves to tell the musician something. she watches him walk away. she feels hot and afraid of herself)

Thena: can I have another glass of wine. who cooks all this food? I can't possible eat all this.

Dion: (he fills her glass with wine) you don't have to eat all of it. just eat a little from each dish. the woman you see over there, she cooks everything. she work for me for many years. come we dance a line dance. (they dance around the tables, laughing)

Thena: (they sit back down) will you stay in cyprus or will you travel?

Dion: I stay here. I'm too old to travel. maybe I go to see my daughter

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now and then. but I stay here. have you thought about staying with me. I give you your own home. you see it. I'll get it ready for you. you stay. you be happy here. I take care of you.

Thena: your serious?

Dion: yes. I serious. you think about it?

Thena: its getting late I must get back to the village

Dion: why you want to leave. stay. I take you back. we close in two hours. stay.

Thena. no no. I must leave. I'll drive myself back

Dion: I go with you

Thena: no no. I'll see you tomorrow

Dion: let me walk you to your car

Thena: I'm okay. okay. you can walk me to the car. ( they walk out to the car. he kisses her goodnight. she rushes away from his embrace. afraid of her own need to stay in his arms.)

**ACT TWO**

the struggle

*the stage:* slide show of ancient homes, rock stairs. icons of Mary

**THE READER:** the house is built around a courtyard with an upstairs bedroom and two porches, one in front the other in back. views are very important to the villagers. downstairs in the kitchen area, Thena sits talking to God. she struggles with herself and her relationship with what she thinks God expects of her. she has not been in love for many years and considers herself in a relationship with only God, the triune God. these talks are not unusual but

today she is begging, something she rarely does. it is lent and she has been going to church every day, so this attraction to Dion is very disturbing to her. how could she feel so womanly.

Thena: look at me God, look at me. (standing. her hands trace her body, her head moves up and down looking at herself) this is not me, this is not twenty years ago. does this look like the body of a forty year old woman. come on. give me a break. why do you put another wild man in my face. now really. yes I still have the mouth, the moves. this is about my heart, God. yeah, I know when I was younger my heart took last place in this game but now I'm in the running for first place, a place with you Lord. please God help me, lead me not into temptation. look at me God. do I look like I can deal with another wild man. wild. he is wild. I can smell his wildness, his black leather jacket, tough as his skin his lips even his limp rubs against me. listen God, you know I'm not a saint. you know this temptation is too great for me, so why are you allowing this to happen. yeah I know I'm not powerless. why do you think I'm here alone talking to the wind. (she falls to the floor and spreads herself out, prone) look at me. I'm begging you to keep me from touching his face, his arms, his chest beside me. (she starts to cry. slapping her hands on the stone floor) couldn't I just be with him for a few weeks, a night, a few days, an hour, oh please God let me feel him beside me. I know. I know I might stay here with him if I let myself be with him, I'll never leave. and why do I need to leave. let me stay here with him. yes yes I know I will have to wait every night for him to return home. wait while he is out doing his wild man dance. oh for God sake I'm tired of thinking about him this way. what if I just, just, just once or twice. oh God save me from myself. listen. I haven't been attracted to a man for a long time. yeah I know what I said, (she sits up) I said if I'm attracted to a man it means he's crazy, a misfit, an alcoholic or a drug addict. I know what I said. but just one more time. please just one more time. i know I know, you've told me to put on the full armor I was born with. (she falls faint with fear, puts her hand over her eyes)

**The Reader:** she drags herself up the stone stairs to her bed. she lights a



candle beside the icon of Mary. says her prayers and falls into a deep sleep. tonight the wind howls and bangs on the old wooden shutters. still she sleeps. in the morning she drags herself down the stone stairs. she washes the dishes, the dust off the floors, the bird dropping, then she washes her clothes, hangs them on the wooden clothes rake in the middle of the enclosed courtyard and she listens for Dion's truck to pass by on his way up the hill, on the way back from a night in Limmasol. her hands are red from scrubbing.

scene 2: Dion is driving back to his farm, talking to himself.

*the stage:* truck, roads through village

Dion: what. am I crazy. what do I think this american woman can do for me, she can drive me crazier. she will want me to come home every night. she will want me to talk to her about stupid stuff. what. am I crazy to get mixed up with an american woman. hell, any woman. I just want one night woman. yeah. that is what I want, a one night woman. I want to be free. (he turns up the greek music and thinks about dancing with Thena) ah she is sexy. mmm she have nice eyes and small hands and big breasts. she seem smart. yeah smart women make me want to do things I don't want to do. ah she is small and fit me good. I try to get her to be with me even though I know she is like a frighten wounded animal. I get her to eat outta my hand. yeah. I feed her slowly. (he drives past her house smiling)

### **ACT THREE**

*the stage:* foothills, animals, farm

in the foothills. farm house. warm morning

Dion: morning missy. you look tired. did you not sleep well

Thena: good morning Dion. no. the wind was strong last night. it spread dust over the entire house. my eyes sting from it. I don't think I'll

ever get use to the lack of water - this morning I washed almost everything with the same water - a sediment of dust lay on the bottom of the dishpan. what do you do all night in limmosol?

Dion: the taverna needs me to make sure it all goes all right. then I sleep a few hours in the backroom. why you complain so much today? this is good here. look, we are together with all the world. we see over all this land and no one sees us. we eat. come. after we eat we take a walk - I show you space and water. a place to be your self. free to do what you want.

THE READER: Thena thinks about all the walks she might take if she were to stay. all the countries she would see. travel is so much easier from Cyprus. she would be able to visit the convent across from the village. spend more time within its confine. she could walk the endless miles of hillside. visit other islands. Crete, then Greece, Italy...

Dion: come we walk

Thena: okay (she lets him take her hand)

THE READER: they walk a few miles holding hands, climb the hillside and find a rock to sit down. the vista is incredible. from where they sit they can see the mediterranean ocean for miles. cloudless sky. two red and green dotted bugs are attached to each other. butterflies and low trees. even their village is small with no other village in view. they are truly alone together. they remain quiet for a long time. a few drops of rain fall. they lift their face to the sky, then to each other.

Dion: we meet short while ago but I love you. we must not let this moment pass with out being with each other. do you think about what I said. will stay with me. don't answer yet. hear me. we are like one. we need each other. I no promise to change, but I will love you. it won't be easy for you to stay here. you can go home once a year to visit family, there is enough money for you to do what you need to do. you write, paint, help take care of this place.

you do what you want. all I ask is you love me too.

THE READER: Thena cries. she takes his hands, kisses them, presses them to her eyes, her lips, her cheeks. his hands are wept with tears. she begins to cry out loud. she stands, still holding his hands.

Thena: come. lets walk back. I promised my cousin to go to lunch with her. Dion I love you. give me time. I need to think. please lets walk back to your place so I can get home in time to meet her

Dion: yes. I give you time. I give you whatever you want. come we go now

Thena: you will be in my heart forever. there will never be anyone but you. I love you Dion. hold me for a minute.

Dion: come. we go now. we have much time to hold each other. come.

THE READER: walking back thena knows there will never be another time. there will not be more time with Dion. she did not tell him her cousin is coming today to take her back to Nicosia to visit with more family before she leaves for america. her bags are packed and her plane ticket is in her pocket. how can she tell him she must leave to save her soul. what is her soul. she is not sure of what she is doing. she thinks it is to save herself for God. if she thinks too much she will give into what she thinks will be painful, loving this man is already painful. it takes years to understand it is not God asking her to leave. it is her fear. it is only fear.

Dion hears about her leaving, from the village grocery store owner. his anger takes years to subside, and as it abates, he realizes she loved him and that what they had is always with them.