

Screams

**CHRISTINA
MIRJOL**

translated by Marion Naugrette

SCREAM N°8

The black man

I come from a country where there is no water. Water is so rare that you look for it in the dust, sometimes up to twelve miles. When the wells are dry you have to walk. The father gives a bucket to his little girl and says: go fetch water at the well. The little boy is at school. The mother crushes millet. The little girl takes the empty bucket and vanishes at the end of the trail. She walks. The well and her house are twenty kilometres apart. It takes the whole day. When the little girl comes back, the bucket is emptied of the water and the empty bucket is given back to her. On the following day, the little boy is at school, the mother crushes millet and the father watches the little girl vanish with the bucket at the end of the trail. This little girl is my sister. She died from exhaustion a long time ago, one day that she had lain down next to the bucket and fell asleep. When I sing today and it rains on the city, I am content. I tell the water what I am doing here. I tell what's dry and ought to be irrigated; what's too wet; what's too rotten.

SCREAM N°11

The writer

The image blows and splashes the screen. A Requiem is heard in the background.

A couple in front of the TV.

What's that?

Yes but...

It's a dead person. A dead person who is being filmed.

Yes.

War pictures it's called. That's the second piece.

You don't say piece, you say part.

Or bit. Can you say bit? The first one was the day before yesterday.

Not bit. You say part or episode. The first episode, the second one. I myself haven't seen the first one.

Yes you did.

No. I can't see a thing, the screen is filled with blood. Where's the dead man?

Behind the blood. The dead man is behind. Spread in the dust.

You've seen him?

Behind the blood, of course. He jumped like a crow. The camera's on it. It's filled with blood. It's the dead man's blood, of course. The dead man's blood spurted on the optical glass—splashing the screen at the same time.

Who's filming?

A TV bloke - a reporter.

I don't understand.

The dead man faces the camera. He's just been killed by someone with a machine gun. The impact is violent. Several holes at the same time, blood gushing, spurting, especially on the camera facing him—the spurting of blood splashes the screen. It's not that difficult to understand!

No it isn't. But, see, I have a question there: is the dead man real?

Of course he's real! It's not a film, it's a broadcast. The second episode. The first one we watched yesterday.

The day before yesterday.

The day before yesterday. We watched it the day before yesterday and the dead were real! I don't see why you prefer episode to bit or piece.

BRAND