Spanish drama: *Blood Wedding*
*by Federico Garcia Lorca (1898-1936)*

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As the play opens, the Mother speaks with her son, the groom. It is revealed that the son's father had been killed a few years ago by a family named the Felixes. The Mother reacts violently when her son attempts to ask for a knife to cut grapes in the vineyard, going into a long rant before giving him the knife. The groom leaves, after hugging his mother goodbye.

The Neighbour arrives to chat with the Mother, and reveals to her that the Bride was previously involved with a man named Leonardo Felix, a relative of the men who killed the Mother's husband. The Mother, who still hates the Felix family with all her soul, is furious, but decides to visit the girl before bringing the matter up with her son.

Leonardo, who is now married, returns to his home after work, where his Mother-In-Law and Wife have been singing a lullaby to Leonardo's son. (The lullaby's lyrics foreshadow the tragedies that will occur later in the play.) It is clear that Leonardo's marriage is not a joyous one. A Little Girl enters the house and tells the family that the Groom is preparing to marry the Bride. Leonardo flies into a rage, scaring his Wife, Mother-In-Law, and child, and storms out of the house.

The Mother goes to the Bride's house, along with the Groom, where she meets the Bride's Servant and the Father of the Bride. The Father, an old, tired man, tells the Mother about his dead wife and his desire to see his daughter marry and bear children. The Bride enters, and speaks with the Mother and the Groom. The Father then shows them out, leaving the Servant with the Bride. The Servant teases the Bride about the gifts that the Groom brought, then reveals to her that Leonardo has been coming to the house at night to watch the Bride's window.

That night, Leonardo comes to see the Bride again. He speaks of his burning desire for her, and the pride that kept him from marrying her before. The Bride, clearly disturbed by his presence, attempts to silence him, but cannot deny that she still has feelings for him. The Servant sends Leonardo away, and the guests begin arriving for the wedding. The Father, Mother, and Groom arrive, and the wedding party moves to the church. Before the party leaves, however, the Bride
begs the Groom to keep her safe. Leonardo and his Wife go as well, after a short and furious argument.

After the wedding, the guests, the families, and the newlywed couple return to the Bride's house. The party progresses, with music and dancing, but the Bride retires to her rooms, claiming to feel tired. Leonardo's Wife tells the Groom that her husband left on horseback, but the Groom brushes her off, saying that Leonardo simply went for a quick ride. The Groom returns to the main room and speaks with his Mother. The guests then begin searching for the Bride and Groom, hoping to begin a traditional wedding dance. But the Bride is nowhere to be found. The Father orders the house searched, but Leonardo's Wife bursts into the room and announces that her husband and the Bride have run off together. The Father refuses to believe it, but the Groom flies into a rage and rides off with a friend to kill Leonardo. The Mother, frenzied and furious, orders the entire wedding party out into the night to search for the runaways, as the Father collapses in grief.

Out in the forest (to which Leonardo and the Bride have fled), three Woodcutters emerge to discuss the events (in a manner somewhat similar to that of a Greek chorus, except that they speak to each other, not to the audience). They reveal that the searchers have infiltrated the entire forest, and that Leonardo, who is, after all, carrying a woman, will be caught soon if the moon comes out. As the moon emerges from behind the clouds, they flee the stage.

The Moon (a feminine symbol, The Moon is preferably played by a woman), who is very powerful and godlike, talks to the forest and tells the trees of her desire to let blood be shed in order to punish mankind for shutting her out of their homes, and confesses her loneliness, but is still furious. She shines her mystic light on the forest, illuminating the paths for the searchers. She is joined by her priestess, personified as an old beggar woman. They plot to kill the two men and let blood be shed. The bloodthirsty, conniving moon then departs in a very sinister way.

The Groom, still caught up in fury, enters along with a Youth from the wedding party. The Youth is disturbed by the dark forest and urges the Groom to turn back, but the Groom refuses, vowing to kill Leonardo and reclaim his Bride. Death, disguised as an old beggar, enters, telling the Groom that she has seen Leonardo and can lead the Groom to him. The Groom and Youth exit with her.
Elsewhere in the forest, Leonardo and the Bride discuss their future together. Both are filled with romantic angst, and consumed by their burning, unsustainable love for each other as passion like no other is shed between the two of them. The Bride begs Leonardo to flee, but he refuses. The couple hears footsteps; the Groom and Death are coming near. Leonardo exits, and two screams ring out in the darkness. The Moon and Beggar woman reappear at the end of the scene. Leonardo and the Groom have killed each other.

In the town, the women (including Leonardo's Wife and Mother-in-Law) have gathered near the church to whisper of the events. Death arrives in the disguise of the beggar woman and, before departing, announces that doom has visited the forest. The Mother enters the church, full of anger and black bitterness, only to see the Bride returning—her dress covered in the blood of her lovers who killed each other in the forest. Presumably, (although this is never explicitly stated, and it happens after the play's end) the bride is afterwards killed as a sacrifice to restore the family's honor. Still, in some incarnations of the play, it is suggested that the Mother allows the Bride to live based on the idea that living with the pain of her lovers' deaths is a more severe punishment than death.