

Eric Morgan

Young Parnassius (Pim) adores his ballerina mother, Dilli, but discovers she was not only incarcerated for an unspeakable crime, but had escaped from the asylum for the criminally insane with a blind assassin. Pim sets out to write her story and redeem her, piecing together the clues in his mother's immaculate drawings and scraps of memoir, to untangle the mythic trail of fornication and carnage the pair leave behind.

He finds Sýla, his newfound friend to be writing her own parallel story, 'Das Veilchen und der Schmetterling,' beginning with the same escape scene, but from a POV antagonistic to his. Daughter of the torturer of the asylum; she hated the bitch of a ballerina. Syla's wider story arc covers her own teenage years disguised as a boy, pushing a trader's trolley through Persia and Kazakhstan with Rudo, master storyteller and dollmaker. It encompasses her collaboration with Pim in the writing of his story, through their spiralling Catharine wheel descent, a deceitfully passionate battle of penmanship, pillaging, translating, annotating and correcting each other's manuscripts.

Violet the assassin is revealed as linguistic muse and teacher of both the young lovers. Taught by Baudelaire and Goya, she is a fusion of lies and theologies; across her chest the stigmata of the stars of Orion, the mythic hunter with whom she identifies, while her back is that of a demon rusalka, flesh flayed to the internal organs.

All converge in the chateau of Volovyy Mist for Syla's 19th birthday to write, rehearse and act in their play, 'The Ballerina and the Demon,' where the struggle to control the core of the ballerina's story plays out.

On the opening night, Syla's Maistrian theology of the reversibility of original sin is pitted against Pim's pagan ideology, a feminist interpretation of Nietzsche's Übermensch after the death of god. The gulf between audience and theatre vanishes with Dilli's unscripted highjacking of the final scene by allowing herself to be crucified live on stage by her nemesis, Chloe, against the high stained glass windows, a redemption for her indescribable sin.

But before the curtain falls, the cracks in the walls of the theatre open with a revelation.