

Angélique Aubrit & Ludovic Beillard - *Le moineau* (2026)

Ines & Roberta are two sisters who have decided to live together in the same apartment. To survive, they carry out sewing work and make lace decorations that they offer for sale.

Rita is a neighbor of the two sisters who is starting out in singing. After giving birth, Rita makes the decision to entrust her daughter Clod to the two sisters so that they raise her in her place. 16 years later, after the collapse of the system, Rita decides to take her daughter back.

The two sisters are in the living room.

ROBERTA: Are you sure she didn't get lost?

INES: Stop asking me the same question all the time! She knows the way!

ROBERTA: It's taking a long time though.

ROBERTA: I'm hungry.

INES: It's not ready.

Ines goes into the kitchen (silence).

ROBERTA: It's already night.

INES: What?

Ines finally comes back into the living room.

ROBERTA: It's already night.

INES: She won't be long now.

There is a knock at the door.

Roberta gets up from her chair.

ROBERTA: It's her!

INES: No, she has her keys!

Roberta sits back down.

There is a knock at the door.

Roberta rushes toward the entrance.

ROBERTA (loudly): Yes!

Ines stops her by standing in front of her before she reaches the door.

INES: Be quiet!

RITA: Open the door! I need help.

ROBERTA: But?

INES: Be quiet!

There is a knock at the door.

RITA: Help me!

RITA: I know you're there! I can hear you!

INES: We can't help you, leave us alone.

INES: I'm going back to the kitchen, don't open the door for her! Understood?

Roberta goes to sit back at the table and covers her ears with her hands.

A knock at the door (very loud).

RITA: Open the door!! Help!

Roberta presses her hands tightly against her ears. It lasts a moment.

After 20 seconds, Roberta removes her hands from her ears and approaches the telephone. Seeing that the phone is not ringing and that there is no more noise, she walks toward the front door, which she looks at. Still no noise. After a moment, she opens the door.

Roberta steps out onto the landing.

ROBERTA: Is that you, Clod?

Rita takes advantage of the open door to rush in. She pushes Roberta aside and runs into the living room.

RITA: They are emptying the city! There is no one left! They want to make me disappear! They canceled my tour! They say everything is over and that we have to leave! They want to stop me from singing.

Roberta stays on the doorstep, a bit stunned and still looking for Clod.

ROBERTA: Clod! Where are you?

Ines, who heard noise, leaves the kitchen for the living room, where she finds Rita.

RITA: Help me! They made everyone run away!

They say there is no more money and that it doesn't interest anyone anymore, that I have to leave too.

But that's not possible! I don't know where to go anymore!

INES: Go back home!

RITA: I can't! They don't want to let me go back in! They say it's over! I have nowhere to go. What am I going to do?

Roberta comes back into the entrance and closes the door. She slowly enters the living room. Ines turns toward her and glares at her.

RITA: What is that smell? Close the door, it's unbearable! They are going to take us into the forest, that's where they put the sick. Tell me something! Why are you not answering me! I need to call.

RITA: It seems there is still space in the basements. Down there you can't be sucked in, but you have to be quick if you want a place!

INES : You have nothing to do here.

RITA: Close the door! The soldiers! Do you see them? AH!!!

RITA: They took everything from me! I have been hiding for three days. I'm going to go to the South, there I am sure they will let me sing. People are waiting for me. Let me make a call. They took my house, my dog, all my things. They say I am not responsible, that I am dangerous. They are lying! I can't go back there, there is nothing left, do you understand? Do you remember me? Close the door! They are going to suck us in! They suck everything!

Roberta goes to get the bucket (which contains water) that is in the corner of the living room and throws it on Rita, then she puts the bucket down. Rita freezes and screams.

RITA: Ah!!!!

Roberta lays Rita on the bed and goes to sit in an armchair. Ines goes into the kitchen and comes back with a dish of steamed potatoes, which she puts on the table and sits down. Roberta gets up from her armchair and joins Ines at the table.

Ines serves the food and the two begin to eat and talk.

INES: It's true that there is a strange smell.

ROBERTA: It's too dry! Is there no more butter?

INES: It's eaten like that. Take some sauce.

ROBERTA: It's too liquid.

INES: It's made to go with the potatoes.

ROBERTA: Do you think what she says is true?

INES: Of course not! She is always inventing new stories. She is completely crazy. Why did you open the door for her?

ROBERTA: I thought it was Clod. Do you think it's drugs?

INES: It's deeper than that.

ROBERTA: It would be enough to roll her to make her go out.

INES: No. Wake her up.

Roberta gets up and goes to wake Rita by shaking her arm.

RITA: Did I sleep for a long time?

RITA: I dreamed that I was being chased by a red truck, it was very hot. I stopped, I got out of my car and I went to see the driver of the truck. He told me that he could continue to follow me if I wanted or that he could follow someone else, so I accepted and then in the end it was me who was driving the red truck behind me. Do you have any salmon? With bread and 2 eggs.

Roberta goes back to her place.

Rita gets up and looks at the decoration while smoking.

RITA: We should go to the sea, it would do us good.

RITA: Do you like oysters?

RITA: They told you that my career was over, is that it? Well that's false! Who told you that?

RITA: Before everything stopped, I was playing to full houses every night!

INES: Before everything stopped...

RITA: It's the system that stopped, not my career! You're not aware? There is no more system? Do you ever go out?

INES: More stories.

INES: You're mixing everything up!

RITA: Go out! Go outside then! You'll see!

INES: We don't need to go out!

ROBERTA: Now that your career is over, you remember that you have a daughter, that's the truth!

RITA: I would have abandoned my career for my daughter?

ROBERTA: No, it's the opposite that you did.

RITA: How is that?

INES: You abandoned your daughter for your career.

RITA: That's what they say?

ROBERTA: That's what you did!

RITA: I did what was best for my daughter! I knew what I wanted to do with my life!
That's why I entrusted her to you!

INES: It's better to cut the cord in time, before it's too late!

RITA: What cord? What do you mean? Do you think it was easy for me?

Ines moves the chair she is sitting on closer to Rita.

INES: After that, it's too late.

Rita does not look at her, she hums with her eyes unfocused.

RITA: You have nothing to listen to music? But how do you live here?

RITA: I'm sorry, I'm tired. I need a coffee.

She looks at Roberta timidly.

RITA: Would you bring me a coffee? Thank you.

Rita continues humming with her eyes unfocused.

RITA: People are becoming stupid at a speed... When they are young, one can still do something, but one must act fast, very fast.

Roberta comes back with the coffee on a tray. She puts the tray on the table and serves the coffee.

Ines gets up from her chair suddenly.

INES: You must leave now!

Rita looks at the table in front of her.

RITA: I'm staying.

INES: That's out of the question!

Rita turns toward Ines.

RITA: I will not leave without Clod!

INES: She is not here!

INES: Go get her money!

Roberta goes to get it from a cupboard in the kitchen and comes back with a bag, which she gives to Rita.

INES: Do you think we did this for money! You are mistaken! Take your money and get out of here now!

Rita throws the bag across the room.

RITA: I don't care about money, I want my daughter!

ROBERTA: Oh yes, that's right. Money doesn't interest anyone anymore... is that it?!
You don't have a daughter anymore!

INES: You get out!

RITA: I'm staying!

Rita gets up and goes to lie down on the bed.

Ines and Roberta put their hands on their heads at the same time because it is horrible for them to see Rita lying on their bed; it disgusts them.

INES & ROBERTA: aaaaaaah grrrrrrr aaaaaah gr gr gr gr

They hit their bodies out of nervousness while standing in front of the stage (punches on their chest).

RITA: I'm staying!

Ines and Roberta go to talk in the entrance and glance at Rita.

INES: She must leave before CLOD returns!

RITA: So the two witches are plotting?

Silence.

The two sisters come back into the living room.

ROBERTA: Very well! You want to stay? Then stay!

INES: But if you want to stay, you will have to work!

RITA: I can sing if you want.

ROBERTA: NO!

RITA: I don't know how to do anything else.

INES: If Clod understood how to sweep, you should manage.

RITA: I did not come here to sweep.

Ines takes the broom and gives it to Rita.

INES: Then you can leave now!

Rita tries to sweep.

The two sisters dust.

RITA: Have you noticed that time has started to turn backwards?

No response.

RITA: You never look at the time?

INES: No.

RITA: But have you noticed that draft?

ROBERTA bursts out laughing: I don't see the connection.

Rita stops.

RITA: You're not aware?! For some time, the system has stopped, and it seems that now time is going backwards.

RITA: All this would be due to a nuclear test that went wrong and that would have caused a magnetic discharge too strong for the atmosphere.

INES: Does that mean it's going to rain all week again?!

RITA: No one really knows... The streets are empty, but it seems that the dogs are everywhere.

INES: Be careful Roberta, the dogs are going to attack us.

Roberta starts laughing.

RITA: That makes you laugh? Is that all it does to you?

ROBERTA: Be quiet! We don't need your stories!

INES: Keep sweeping!

RITA: Dogs eat humans!

ROBERTA: Oh!

INES: Dogs do not eat humans, pigs are the ones that eat humans.

RITA: Dogs too.

Roberta rushes at Ines and bites her.

INES: Aie! Help! There!

Ines starts running and Roberta follows her like a rabid dog.

INES: Ah!

ROBERTA: First the sick in the forest, then the nuclear tests that make time go backwards, and finally the dogs that eat humans. And after that what? Is it going to rain salt?

Rita starts sweeping again.

RITA: You are right not to believe me.

RITA: How long has it been since you have gone out of here? And besides, why do you never go out?

INES: That's none of your business!

Rita makes a bad swing at Roberta...

RITA: You are afraid of people!

ROBERTA (*frightened*): Ah!

INES: You will have to leave now!

RITA: You have known for a long time what is happening outside, haven't you?

ROBERTA: You are delirious, Rita!

RITA: I just want to help you.

INES: We didn't ask you anything!

RITA: I thought you would understand, but you are like the others.

ROBERTA: You reap what you sow, Rita. The others are not wrong!

RITA: And what do the others say then?

INES: Nothing!

RITA: I am speaking to your sister!

ROBERTA: You only think about yourself!

INES: You are a bad mother!

RITA: You are right!

RITA: I thought I had the right to follow my dreams.

Rita continues sweeping.

RITA: I thought I had the right to choose what is good or not for me, but I forgot love, I may have lost myself. You are right, one must not forget where one comes from and those who surround us. I am tired.

INES: People are cruel because they cannot stand the truth; you must not listen to them.

Rita straightens up and throws her broom.

RITA: Yes, but you—you are two! I am alone!

The two sisters drop their cloths at the same time and go to lie down on the bed.

RITA: What am I supposed to do now?

RITA: I have finished sweeping.

RITA: Do you want me to do something else?

RITA: I know that you are not sleeping. It is impossible to fall asleep that quickly. I can never fall asleep before three or four in the morning.

Silence.

RITA: Have you never wanted to live separately?

RITA: You could live in a house with floors, so each one would have her own floor.

RITA: In the South there are houses with floors that are not expensive.

RITA: That would allow you to have some intimacy.

RITA: I know two brothers there.

RITA: Twins! They also do everything together like you.

RITA: You could all live together in the same house, but each one would have her own floor.

RITA: And I could live with Clod in the house next door, so we would not be far.

RITA: Do you think she will be here soon?

RITA: I have never been so alone.

RITA: I miss her.

RITA: I would like to meet someone who understands me.

RITA: People say that I am mysterious.

RITA: Do you think I am mysterious?

Rita gets up and goes to look at the two sisters who are sleeping.

RITA: You are not listening to me!

The two sisters raise their arms in the air at the same time and after 3 seconds let them fall onto the bed.

Rita faints slowly to the ground with a small cry of pain.

Ines and Roberta sleep a little longer. Then they wake up and get up as if nothing had happened and go to take a book and sit at the table, each with the same book, and begin to read.

Rita wakes up slowly, rubs her eyes, and looks around her, then stares at the 2 sisters. That's when she remembers where she is.

Rita jumps up and places her hands on the table, determined.

RITA: that's enough! Where is Clod? You know very well I came to get her!

ROBERTA: ah well there it is, you should have said earlier that you came to get the child you abandoned.

RITA: she's my daughter, I did not abandon her! and I gave you enough money so you could raise her!

INES: do you think money replaces love? Clod went out to do some shopping anyway.

RITA: You're using her, that's why you never go out. Where is she?

ROBERTA: my sister just told you: she went out to do the shopping.

RITA: there are no more shops, nothing left! The city is empty!

INES: that's impossible! You're talking nonsense! And besides, if time had started going backwards, then Clod would have come back a long time ago.

ROBERTA: She might even still be in your womb.

Roberta leans toward Rita's belly and starts shouting: Clod! Clod! Are you there? Is everything alright? Clode are you hungry maybe? Answer me Clod

INES to Rita: you are as stupid as the others!

RITA: give me back my daughter!

INES: or what?

ROBERTA: We're willing to give her back to you but we'll have to get her out. I need to go get something to open your belly.

RITA: stop making fun of me!

INES & ROBERTA: but no one is making fun of you! everything is fine.

INES: Paul left an hour ago, he shouldn't be long now.

RITA: Paul? what do you mean Paul?

INES: Clod! Clod left to do the shopping an hour ago and she shouldn't be long!

Rita sits at the table looking dejected, staring into space.

ROBERTA: I saw a dog!

INES: stop being stupid.

ROBERTA: there, behind the window, it just passed by.

Ines rushes to the window and looks outside.

INES: where? I don't see anything.

Rita still seated, eyes staring into space, calmly:

RITA: I told you.

Ines goes to Rita.

INES: You're lying!

ROBERTA: there, another one!

RITA: they must have sensed something. Do you have rat poison? I'll throw some at them, that should calm them down a bit.

ROBERTA: In the kitchen!

Rita gets up, leaves the room and heads toward the kitchen.

Ines tries to stop Rita, she chases her but it's too late, Rita has entered the kitchen.

INES: No! not the kitchen!

Rita comes back into the living room.

Rita: there is a dog in the kitchen.

INES & ROBERTA: AHHHHHH

Ines and Roberta hide under the table.

ROBERTA: make it leave!

RITA: I can't make it leave or it will bite me!

INES: throw the rat poison at it!

RITA: Why would the dog eat rat poison when there is plenty of food in your kitchen?

ROBERTA: But try!

RITA: No there is far too much food, I'm sure that if I go back either the dog will be huge or there will be several dogs.

INES: But we have never seen a dog before.

RITA: You have never seen a dog but you know very well what is happening, otherwise why have so many supplies!?

INES: we just don't like going out, that's all.

RITA: I think Clod will not come back!

ROBERTA: but why?

RITA: she is suffocating here! Look at yourselves! all your days are the same, all your conversations are the same.

INES: because you think it's better outside?

RITA: anyway you will have to go out now that the dogs are in the kitchen.

ROBERTA: You're lying! You say that because you want to take our house!

RITA: this hole?

INES: You think that by driving us out of our home you will be able to take back your role as a mother to Clod when she comes back, but Clod no longer belongs to you!

ROBERTA: anyway she won't want to see you.

RITA: You're right, I've bothered you enough.

RITA: I'll leave you with the dogs.

Rita tries to get up from the chair but she can't, she tries and struggles but it's as if she were glued to the chair.

Ines & Roberta get up, they take a cloth and wipe Rita's face.

INES: Are you still hungry?

ROBERTA (speaking loudly): Clôde your mother would like a bit more salmon!

INES: Don't let the dogs out Clod!

ROBERTA: Do you want another potato?