When the great Greek pacifist leader Gregory Lambrakis was slain in Salonika 400,000 men and women mourning in silence followed his body to the grave. For months after the murder, on walls all over Greece there appeared the letter "Z" for *zei*— He Lives!

Now Vassilis Vassilikos has dared to expose the story of a political murder and the corruption of a ruthless and powerful military regime in a novel charged with anger, passion and mounting suspense.

"SHATTERING VALIDITY, exciting reading . . . This haunting semi-documentary . . . racing in and among what seems to be half the population of Salonika, is exhilaratingly wide-ranging and cinematic in the best sense of the word. . . . Vassilikos's gifts are dazzling."

—New York Times Book Review

"MOVING AND EXCITING . . . With this book Vassilis Vassilikos borrows the mantle of the deceased Kazantzakis."

—Saturday Review

This extraordinary novel, by Greece's foremost young novelist, is both an act of political daring and a work of art.

Needle sharp and harsh as a documentary, *Z* is based on an actual murder—the political assassination of a celebrated Greek patriot and pacifist, and the subsequent investigation by an extremely courageous young attorney who followed the trail of responsibility and guilt to the highest levels of a ruthless military regime.

Delving into the lives of dozens of people —a carpenter, a fruit seller, a truck driver, a reporter—*Z* shows how each played a role either to toady to the regime or to bring the crime to light. A beautiful elegiac passage, "A Train Whistles in the Night," rises to heights of lyric power as Vassilikos describes the slow passage of the funeral train bearing the shattered body of *Z* back to Athens.

Although *Z* is officially banned in Greece and Vassilikos, for daring to write this book, is now an exile from his native land, *Z* has been a best seller throughout Europe and the motion picture of the book, soon to be released in America, was the official entry of France at the 1969 Cannes Film Festival where it won the coveted Jury Prize.

A train, the train, non-stop, engine out-of-breath, coach with lights dimmed, and then Car Z-4383, in which he was traveling the same route traveled by air three days before, one hundred May hours before, as many hours as the agony of his soul had lasted, as many hours following his fall as his soul needed to prepare her departure, the eviction having struck her so brutally that at first she could scarcely credit it; in another coach his wife, veins swollen in her neck, a brother, the one who hadn't studied, and his mother, her face a carved image of the earth, thinking of earth, which soon was to receive her beloved son; and in the last coach, filled with their rough stench, a squad of policemen, weapons between thighs, terror-stricken on this death train, prepared to intervene in any incident, however trivial, gaping at countrysides which could not penetrate the sealed door of his coach, whose coffined body descended from North to South while his soul, following above the coach like a helicopter, hovered, dawdled, careful not to leave the train behind, a lepidopter spraying the fields against mildew, its fleet shadow setting foliage aquiver, refreshing the parched soil for an instant only, and the earth, thirsting for rain these hundreds of years, vibrated at its mere caress, this shadow's light as if one hand had lightly grazed another, the fingers not intertwining, because that would mean brotherhood, signal for blood and revolution, no, only an imperceptible plume stroke,

waking the blood in the veins, and the earth (fields of Thessaly, plains of Macedonia, Bralos, Pinios, Sarandaporon, Thebes, Levadia) knew that it would soon receive his body, the "forty-first brave lad" of the song, the earth (so the winged soul reflected) whose blood, her eaters, seeking their own level, in their own sweet time, undermine foundations, prepare the great, tidal revolution, in view of which the engineer's orders were explicit: "No stop anywhere," from the Communications Bureau of the Presidency of the Council in Athens, where an entire general staff was following the route of the train by radio, conferring with local police and regulating the trip accordingly, in touch by telephone with the engineer, all scheduled runs canceled, no trains approaching, none following behind, all postponed in order to clear the way for this one, in order that it not be sidetracked into some backwater whose sailors and whores and stevedores would rise up in revolt; these authorities panic-stricken, exposed, could not cover their shame, a child having shouted as in the fairy tale, "The King is naked!", causing utter dismay after countless ceremonies had persuaded him of his rich clothing, of his own beauty, of his power rooted in the people's enduring love, and then, at this one cry, havoc, whereupon, seeing no other way, they chose to remove the child, find peace once and for all, remove the witness to their deception, for it had not sufficed to cry "The King is naked!" but he had dared to strip the Queen as well, that time in London, a hired hand ripping her dress at the shoulder; and now the train was racing through a world suddenly stilled by his thunderbolt, a world wanting only the signal to rise up, but in the end everything would be orderly, there were to be no incidents even at the funeral, the slogans disseminated were soothing ones, appeals to avoid further bloodshed at all costs, the times not being ripe, and politics, its eye on final victory, must prudently, if temporarily, forfeit the great opportunity his death afforded, while the other side, all during

his soul's long agony, tried with vain words to cover their nakedness:

"The true facts concerning the sanguinary incidents incited by the Communists in Salonika.—Deputy Z. accidentally injured by a motorcycle while he was leading an illegal Communistic demonstration.—The Police had offered to transport the Communists from the scene by buses, but the Communists refused in order to organize a march upon the EDA headquarters.—A police captain was gravely wounded when he attempted to protect Deputy Pirouchas from being molested.—Such has been the solicitude manifested by the government in this affair that it even provided a military aircraft to transport a great surgeon to the bedside of the accident-injured deputy, Z."

And the train whistled before entering the tunnel, emerging presently with the darkness for its trail, while the helicopter soul had started to tremble during the few seconds she had lost sight of the body and one of her great colored wings had begun to flutter as though a valve had loosened, soul the *Papilio cresphontes*, soul the *Argynnis cybele*, soul the *Neonympha eurytus*, soul the *Satyrodes canthus*, soul the *Vanessa atalanta*, a butterfly emerging on schedule from its cocoon woven of the strong threads by which men attach their dreams, like balloons, like anchors dropped on fine cord into the bosom of the deep, but the soul grew calm as she saw the diesel engine's nostrils reappear from the tunnel, followed by the dimmed coach, his own sealed coach, tear-stained windows of the relatives' coach, and finally that tent of green caterpillars, plague of the pine tree, the coach full of policemen, which, if it were to burst, would have drowned the world in slobber; and he, unseeing, saw nevertheless everything from his lepidopter, this earth, his earth, earth of his fatherland, mother earth, sagely fashioned by the aeons, an ever-living land-

scape, and of a beauty for which human beings ought always to suffer, always wallow in blood to defend from the barbarian hordes, from the neo-Fascist gangs, always, with no justification other than the safety of the mountains beneath the blessed, blessing sun; he saw the trees, little prayers, resting on the sea's doorstep like old women spinning on thresholds; he saw a sea gull veer in fright as the train brushed against the sea by the Moschofs' villa where the locomotive leaves the tunnel; he saw villages imprisoned forever in mountain ravines, no human eye to see them, villages emptied clean by emigration; soon he saw Olympus too, snow-covered in the glory of May, and Mount Kissavos opposite, the two still unreconciled, like the rival Resistance camps during the Occupation; the Venetian fortress above Platamon, a fortress abandoned centuries ago, now the redoubt of crows keeping watch over the sea, if no longer for pirates, then for the mine-sweepers of the Sixth Fleet, and just here the soul, wishing to rest a moment, entered a cranny in the wall, displaced a green lizard; she saw the marble, wind-veined sea, hoped for a sail, a sea temple facing Olympus; she welcomed the breeze, because it is said that the soul, so long as the body remains unburied, wanders insouciant, but once the body has returned to its dark womb, her self returns to air, dissolves into molecules which then become oxygen for the living to breathe; and the soul knew that on this last journey she was seeing the fortress for the last time, how she had loved it once, crown of the little mountain turning and turning beyond the windshield as on a revolving stage, only it was in fact the road itself winding and winding, memories for whose sake she had lingered a moment today until the train whistled her back to Tempe, the propeller started to whirl, the butterfly soared off the ground, leaving no trace of its momentary presence in the fortress, carving no date, returning the cranny to a green lizard much put out by the whole affair, and hastening off in the wake of her body—a stranger to all this —a body terribly damaged, appallingly mutilated, which

would have chosen for its own crown the very tar of the streets, though perhaps not, after all, because:

"The fracture found on the skullcap of the aforesaid Z. could not have been caused by a fall on the macadam pavement of the street and the ensuing blow; it can only have resulted from a blow dealt when the victim was standing with his head erect, for it is only in such circumstances that one finds symmetrical lesions of the brain in the underlying region and in the region opposite to the wound. In the autopsy of the said Z., such lesions of the brain were in fact found, accompanied by a cerebral hemorrhage of the left hemisphere, while the fracture occasioned by the blow was located in the right temporal bone, and had it resulted from a fall onto a hard surface such as the pavement of a street, these typical symmetrical lesions would not have been found."

And the train raced on, whistling in a paralyzed world, on a day when only stationmasters and switchmen gave way to panic, "Never before in a lifetime spent in the service of the railroads," thought the master of the little station at Papapouli, "have I seen such a thing," telephones buzzing with reports that the funeral train had passed this or that station "without incident," only here at Papapouli, whose stationmaster had just eaten a chicken decapitated by the previous day's express, and could not manipulate the switch, so that the train got onto another track and all but collided with some freight cars seen fortunately by the engineer in time to put on his brakes, and slid two hundred yards before coming to a stop, the coffin, fastened down, though it was rocked in its bolted enclosure, the relatives glued their masks to the windowpanes, a suitcase fell from above, and the caterpillars, the policemen, into a tangle from which it seemed doubtful they would ever extricate themselves; for a moment the officer in charge suspected sabotage, feared that the corpse was going to be stolen, signaled, as soon as the train stopped, for his

men to jump down from the coach and spread out like sharpshooters along the tracks, until of course they saw the train backing up and the engineer's gesture of reassurance and realized that no hostile force was threatening them. The soul, watching the confusion from on high, came to rest on an elm tree at whose roots a young Thessalian shepherd was playing the flute, charming a snake or two thereabouts, while the stationmaster, once the train had got back onto the right track, breathed with relief and duly made his telephone call, adding yet another buzz to the telephone wires crossing the Pinios, that sweet green river indifferent to the rest of the plain, flowing in inchanging servitude ever since its Liberation; only the river, reflected the soul, dream of the plain-dwellers, which alone bore their dreams seaward to liberation, only the river, soul of the leveled life, its banks embroidered with willows, deep-rooted plane trees wading in its waters, would give way to the tremors and gooseflesh of adolescence before disappearing into the sea, just as she—his soul—before disappearing into cloud, could look beyond his dead body upon the world she was soon to lose. Now she descended, passed the vale of Tempe, passed the National Highway, the sugar factory with trucks full of sugar-beets lined up in front of it, reached the station at Larissa, through which the train shot like an arrow, leaving the little yoghurt vendor, hand in air, unable to understand why the peasants were brandishing rakes with red handkerchiefs tied on top, he thought it must be some Minister, one of the big landholders of the plain who often became Ministers in order to defend their interests, and so all the more expected the train to stop, but it shot past like a rocket, leaving behind only a veil of smoke and a bundle of newspapers thrown from a window to burst at his feet like a grenade. Morning newspapers, which said:

"But, from whatever angle one surveys the incidents at Salonika, no one can entertain any doubt that they were a consequence of truly unendurable provocation on

the part of Communistic elements. Unless the populace of Salonika had felt this provocation, why would anyone have bothered the assembled Communists? Had there been no loudspeakers broadcasting incendiary slogans, what law-abiding inhabitant of Salonika, happening on the vicinity, would have thought it necessary to take action? Wasn't it precisely because of the provocation emanating from the Red orators that they felt such a need? And if, after this provocation, the Communists had not attempted to organize a protest march headed by the Communist deputy who was to meet with a fatal accident, would any of these events have occurred?

"From the instant that the Communist organizers decided to conduct this march, in defiance of an order not to do so, the subsequent events became inevitable. At that point in the demonstration the motor vehicle of Gazgouridis appeared. He was coming out of Spandoni Street—conceivably not by chance, just as the Communist and the Center parties claim—and he lunged intentionally upon the column of demonstrators. But here questions arise. How could Yango know that the Communists were organizing a march, how could he arrive with his pickup at just the right moment and get into just the right position to cause an unavoidable accident? Might he not have feared that the Communist demonstrators would attack him, lynch him? Even granting that the act may in fact have been premeditated—as has been brought out, the Communists murdered Yango's father—once he had decided to assault the line of marchers with his vehicle, how would he have recognized the EDA deputy among so many demonstrators, and aimed for him, even if he was marching in front?

"Communism, the bloody Communism which rages in our land and which has already in the recent past shed whole rivers of Greek blood, is attempting to exploit these incidents for the purpose of casting our country into disrepute abroad and of creating internal upheavals. We believe that the state is duty-bound at this juncture to take a decisive stand, and that it must begin with the

IMMEDIATE DISSOLUTION of the subversive Bertrand Russell League and of the swindlers of 'peace,' who today are serving as the spearhead of revolutionary Communism."

The body imprisoned in the train saw nothing. The body was without memory. Memory had abandoned it at two minutes to ten on Wednesday evening. Clinically speaking, Z. was dead. From that moment on, no organ, no sense functioned. The body, the beautiful athletic body, lived inanimate, like wheels of a capsized car which—all contact lost with brakes and gears, everything smashed in the disaster—nevertheless keep spinning in the void. So it was with the body, the deep rattle in its throat serving as a kind of basso ostinato to the doctors' efforts. There were many doctors. Some had come from abroad: Hungary, Germany, Belgium. They could do nothing. They marveled that an organism was still alive when all its centers had been paralyzed. The organism refused its death. It was too early for it to die. The headless body clung to an existence of its own. But now at last it had surrendered. And it was journeying in peace toward the grave. What bothered the soul was not so much having been evicted and forced to watch the autopsy. (Of course, it is disagreeable to discard a costume because they've botched it, to see it ripped to shreds before your very eyes. This part, however, she could bear.) What bothered her was a coroner, who had insisted from the outset—before the autopsy, as indeed after it, with all that it had brought to light—that the fracture could not have been caused by a blow dealt while Z. was standing upright. The sole cause, he said, was the "violent collison of the head with a stable, hard surface, such as the pavement": in other words, the fall onto the asphalt. A coroner's profession is a gruesome one. But death has not room for politics. Professional detachment is one thing, reflected the soul, and quite another to indulge in low politics over a corpse. Leave low politics to the living. For the dead, let there be only

high politics. And this coroner, after returning to Athens —whence he had come uninvited—dispatched a report to be countersigned by his opposite number in Salonika. Backed up by two other doctors, however, the Salonika coroner maintained a contrary opinion. He believed the fracture to have been caused by a blow on the head, and he refused to sign. At that point the doctor from Athens was obliged to draw up another report which admitted as "probable" the contingency of a blow caused "by some contusive instrument, but without personally sharing this view." All this sickened the soul through and through.

The train raced demoniacally on, passing mountains and plains, a zipper drawn upon this great affair. But it was a broken zipper, one of those that reopen in back what they have closed in front. For no affair could be closed by a drugged train stopping nowhere. The case remained wide open like doors in the dog days. The train blew its whistle and raced on, panicked and guilty. The relatives feared the worst. The wife looked out the window, seeing nothing. Her mind was in the next car, where her husband was shut alone, as if in a dungeon, while the policemen ate their meal. She got up. On the one hand, he was dead. On the other, those who had killed him slept on. She could not stir, could not go anywhere. The train became a prison on wheels. She could stand no more. She was stifling. The alarm signal? Not to be left with this last image of him: under the oxygen tank, gasping for breath, pulsebeats getting feebler and feebler, surrounded by doctors no longer hoping for the miracle. One mountain followed another, one plain followed another. She saw nothing.

Only at some point so high that the air was rarefied, they stopped to wait for a local connection, apparently a scheduled run there had been no time to cancel. There, high in the mountains, the policemen got down and stood guard around the train. There on the mountains, the high mountains, the soul perched herself on a post and waited for the klephts to come and steal the body.

Waited for the brave men of the Resistance, for Ares Velouchiotis, to come out of their hideouts and fall upon the policemen and take possession of the body. For them to carry it to the peak, adorn it, roast many lambs and drink much wine, and then bury it up there among the eagles. All night long to dance—old Dimos with Leventoyannis—and when they were good and drunk, to start firing shots into the air, the way the cannons on Lycabettos boom out for royal funerals. Thus would the body find its place in Greekland, and be honored in keeping with ancestral tradition, though today the brave men of the Resistance were not on the mountains but in the cities. A whistle summoned the policemen from their thicket-urinals and they climbed back aboard the train. The connection had passed, they could start up again. The body was aware neither of the stop nor of the starting up, nor did it smell the mountain thyme. The body was like those third assistant engineers, who spend their lives deep in the bowels of ships, who, if the engine breaks down, never see a port or breathe the salt air of the open sea.

At one station, somewhere after the train had returned to flat country, a steam engine replaced its diesel. And now the butterfly soul—the *Papilio cresphontes*, the *Argynnis cybele*, the *Neonympha eurytus*—must fly through smoke. Her beautiful iridescent colors blackened. Her wings grew heavy. And she grieved, needed protection, wanted to reenter a skin where nothing could touch her. Night was falling and the soul had always been afraid of darkness. These three nights without a roof over her head had been harrowing. But the body received no message from her, and she despaired. His batteries had broken down, his antennae, everything. A crippled typewriter in the junkshops of Monastiraki; a deaf-and-dumb machine. That's how the soul felt when the sun's fires began to dim.

The train passed through level fields where the grain took courage from the setting sun. The ears of grain straightened as the light diminished. And in the breeze that came in the great benefactor's wake they all rustled

together, the ripe ears rise up, my love, let us dance till dawn! Formless waves, like those of the ocean, lapped the breakwater of the railway line. The deep breathing of a woman surrendered to the stars. And this beauty grieved the soul still more.

An old woman drew the chain at the intersection. A tractor crossed the tracks. Now the sparse villages with their sparse lights glittered in the foothills. Night had fallen. The stations were projected upon the darkness like colored slides. The train did not pause at any of them. It raced and whistled demoniacally. A train whistling in the night, a train, the train, compartment Z-4383, engineer Kostas Konstantopoulos, assistant engineer Savas Polychronidis, a train, the train, and the body mute, a door closed at nightfall, the body, a tree uprooted in a thunderstorm, the body deprived of the caresses which once restored it, in a walnut coffin, a good coffin, but how desolate in there, without its soul!

"Greece—we shall never weary of proclaiming it—needs to silence its discords and quarrels. Our enemies are jealous of our progress, and a number of foreign states would like to see us plunged into the abyss of anarchy. It has become customary for people to excuse Mr. Papandreou's insane mistakes by suggesting that they are a consequence of his passion for power. But however violent this passion may be, the leader of the Center Union Party cannot possibly be unaware that it is not the knight's steed of Democracy he has mounted, but the rebellious bull of Communist anarchy."

The train tore the fabric of night, and the lady watched her little Pekingese trying to cover up its "misbehavior," unsuccessfully, because there was parquet underfoot, not dirt. However, the mess did have to be concealed because it spoiled the aesthetics of the floor. She pressed the button on her desk, summoning the maid, and ordered her to clean it up. And then, taking her little dog in her arms, she went on writing:

"The nationalists in this country are sincerely grieved about the death of Z., because respect for human life is one of their fundamental guiding principles. And it is these citizens who are today being shamelessly accused of responsibility for Z.'s death. The truth is that, in accusing the nationalists, the extreme left wing and all the dark forces standing behind it mean to undermine the foundations of the entire edifice of our national, civic, and religious way of life: our Church, our educational system, our Armed Forces, our police system, our judicial system . . . Mr. Papandreou and the people on his side are gravely deluded if they think that, by outdoing the extreme left with their slanderous charges . . ."

The little dog was squirming in her arms. The lady broke off writing to soothe it. Then the maid came back with a plastic dustpan, bent down, picked up the droppings, and sprayed the area with deodorant. The lady got up, still holding her Pekingese in her arms, went over to the spot, and rubbed his little snout in it. In protest the Pekingese tried to sink its teeth into her wrist, but the lady, who knew all about little dogs, let him go in time. Then she returned to her desk and continued, just as the train was passing the royal residence at Tatoï:

"If we examine candidly the attitude of the extreme left in this matter, it would not be difficult to show that it is by no means grieved by what has happened. If the respect due a dead man permitted, we might say that, on the contrary, its members rejoice. For now they have their Person, their Victim, their Hero. And, indeed, precisely he whom they wanted: a brilliant scientist, a top athlete, a good husband and affectionate father; not a Communist Party member, a young, enthusiastic politician recently celebrated for his strivings for peace rather than for his efforts on behalf of the politics of the Kremlin. Their exploitation of the funeral bier, the free rein given to naïve emotionalism, the laments and

the weeping women, the petitions from the seamstresses and the construction workers, all show clearly how the extreme left seeks to profit from the tragedy . . ."

The soul sighed above Tatoï, where the royal estates are carefully fenced in to keep the pheasants from running away. She saw the palace where the train whistle crept in like a snake, chilling to whoever noticed it; she saw the pine trees weeping tears of resin, and she too wept because of the fenced-in woods. Gliders from the airport at Tatoï approached, reminding her of the great flight she herself would soon be making. But now Athens came into distant view, a meadow of lights tremulously playing, candles lit to welcome his body, behind the smoke curtain of Eleusis, whose mysteries would remain mysteries forever (for the initiates disappeared without leaving texts or bas-reliefs or ikons), under the protective smokestack and the blue flame of the oil refineries, huge metal tanks, like silver dollars seen under a magnifying glass; sweet Athens, across from ancient Salamis, where the cargoless ships were moored, alongside the dockyards of Scaramanga, where starvation wages no less than its layers of polluted air after so many hours in the open country caused the lepidopter soul to tremble. The lies were over and she had reached her destination. At a moment like this she wanted to be like the body: to understand nothing, to suffer nothing.

However, she had no reason to complain, she reflected, as she spied in the distance the skeleton of the Acropolis, all lit up (if only for the Sound and Light performance), since so very many had died before her without having given the least bit of what they carried within them. She at least had been able, had given something that would outlast her dissolution: she would become a symbol. Old streets, beloved streets, neighborhoods where every tree stood sentinel, little houses built on the sly, whole households inhabiting the remains of trucks, without water, without light, though everything around them was lit with electricity.

"It's mad of Z.'s relatives and friends to insist on displaying the body in the Chapel of St. Eleutherios, by the Metropolis Cathedral."

"Tako, did you phone the Archbishop again?"

"I did phone."

"And what did he say? Will he give in to them?"

"He talked out of both sides of his mouth. I don't like that at all. They phoned him from the Palace too, but apparently he did the same with them."

"Phone him again. He has to give a clear answer. Tell him there'll be disturbances; tell him that blood will be shed, that they'll burn down the church, that . . . Tell him whatever comes into your head, only convince him! I'd phone him myself, but I'm afraid of losing control and telling him where to go. Phone him again."

These hands will never again touch human hands. These hands will return to water. They will become rich earth to nourish the flowers. These hands that held the lancet and cured human pain, free of charge. This face will never plunge into the sea again. These lips will not kiss again. A body enclosed, and returned to its sender; a letter stamped "Departed without a forwarding address." Body with blood frozen in the veins, like a photograph on the screen, frozen at the moment of greatest movement in the street, in the shops. Now, at this very moment, everything comes to an end.

"A secretary entered from the next room and whispered something in his ear. The Archbishop shook his head. 'I'll take it in the next room,' he said. And addressing the relatives and friends of Z., he added: 'More telephone calls.'

"He left the room and in a few minutes returned. As he sat down with a sigh, he murmured: 'It was about this matter again. They communicated to me the wishes of a very high personage whom I would not like to displease. And I put a question to myself: if all these emi-

nent people in responsible positions are so anxious, mustn't there be something to it? Mightn't trouble indeed occur? In this new telephone call they mentioned bloodshed and the danger that hundreds of people might be killed. My responsibility is great. I'm in a most difficult position, my children.'

" 'Your Holiness,' said a cousin of Z.'s then, 'no trouble is going to break out. You may rest assured on that score. But if you did refuse us the chapel, your action would have highly unfavorable repercussions among the people, and you would become a target for criticism abroad. The man in question died with Christ's message on his lips, the message of peace and love.' "

May, too, is a cruel month. The earth reabsorbs its fruits. The first flowering and the second are over. Now, heavily, like ears of grain, everything returns to its beginning. Everything is over. Even memory will be lost. To live again perhaps in others, nourished by their blood. His own memory, that of his own soul and body, will wane and be eclipsed. And yet, no, no, reflected the butterfly soul *Satyrodes canthus*. It cannot be, everything must not be over. Where a hero falls, a people is born. It cannot be, it isn't possible for me to die. When? How? I do not know. You too will remember me, sweet, beloved body. You will remember me eternally, because I loved you very much. You will remember me. You who reveled in the sea, you whom the sun wearied, you who wanted to make love even without me, you, body, will remember me. Now that you are going into earth, remember my love for you; it will never let you die. My love, if only at this moment I could take your hand! If you could talk to me, look at me. I am tired. How? Why did everything end like this? Without my enjoying you as you declined, without my learning to lose you little by little. You left me too abruptly, and I have a sharp emptiness in my arms, through which the wind whistles. I am all of me an empty cistern, without you.

"The Archbishop paused a moment in thought. Then he turned to the EDA representative and said: 'Do you guarantee that there will be no trouble?'

" 'We give you our word, Your Holiness, that on our side absolute order will be preserved. If there is any breach of order, it will be created deliberately by the government and the police.'

" 'Very well, I give you the chapel. God help you.' "

Body beloved, adored in the stadiums and in the fire, body which even the most horrible alterations have left so much my own, if only I might have you near me one single evening more, I'd give you leave to go. My eviction was too sudden. I'd never supposed that anyone else could possess you. And now what? Your hands, just your hands, and that quickening—how I miss it all! I'm so alone! I have literally no place in this world. No place and no pleasure. As for reincarnation—there is none! I shall lose myself too. I shall become vapor, atmosphere for the birds to stir on their migrations. The solitude is unbearable without your nerves to explode with. Your nerves, threads of a warm sweater unraveled stitch by stitch. A warm sweater that I wore, and the world was mine. You held life and the living in your embrace, and I rested easy. Now you are going to leave me. You are leaving me. And I shall remain alone.

"The hour, four minutes before midnight. The special train comes into the station at Athens with a wail that resounds like a funeral chant. It brakes, it stops; the crowd shoves, people trample one another to get up front, nearer the door of the sealed freight car which contains Z.'s remains.

"The door is unsealed. A coffin laden with wreaths of flowers, and now overspread with the Greek flag, is borne to the hearse. And the throng of people instantly divides to make way for the dead deputy.

"A one-minute silence. Then two sobs are heard. And cries:

" 'Z., our hero, you're not dead!'

" 'Z., you will live with us forever!'

"A thunderous shout shakes the station and immediately afterwards the National Anthem rises from thousands of throats.

"Outside car Z-4383, an employee affixes a sign: NO ADMITTANCE ALL PERSONS FORBIDDEN TO ENTER TO BE DISINFECTED."

The procession advanced slowly and the soul reveled to see so many bodies protecting her own. From on high, they became one single body, as on Good Friday, with the flag in the middle. The streets ran in new directions. The lights were transformed into candles, which melted as he was carried past. And the policemen escorting the procession might have been those who officiate at the Good Friday ceremonies, armed with rifles.

They were taking him to the chapel by the Metropolis Cathedral. There they would leave him until Sunday. Day of Resurrection. And the crowd tightened further and further around his dead body, as if Roman soldiers might steal it.

The omnipresent Caiaphas radioed instructions to all the police patrol cars. When the body had been deposited in the Chapel of St. Eleutherios—without any incident—he felt relieved; he accompanied Pontius Pilate home. On the way they talked about Sunday.

"Strict measures must be taken, Draconian measures."

"The entire force will be on hand," Caiaphas assured him. "With tear gas, fire hoses, and all the paraphernalia."

"I'm quite anxious," said Pilate.

They took leave of each other at three o'clock in the morning, wishing each other pleasant dreams.

But events belied their fears: no incident occurred, not even on Resurrection Day. The only "incident," reflected the soul, was this extraordinary mass of flowers, the like of which had never been seen. The entire springtime came to the funeral, floating in from all sides,

passing first through the suburbs and then for three whole hours occupying the city of Athens, fragrant at her heart of hearts. "There was no flower left in all of Attica."

"Immortal!"

"He lives!"

"No more blood!"

"He lives! He lives!"

With battle cries such as these, the Romans might rest easy. Wars are not waged with carnations, however many, however red. Neither are revolutions. And yet the finger remained on the trigger. And though ineffably bitter, the butterfly soul *Neonympha eurytus* tasted deliverance of a sort. It wasn't that cowds inundated streets and squares around the Cathedral: it was the fact that this crowd constituted a single body. And if one person had been missing, nothing would have been altered. Even if ten, a hundred, a thousand persons had been missing, the body of the people, come to restore their hero to life, would have remained indissoluble. This was the soul's consolation. Her body had served to bring about a sudden, unbreakable union of numberless human molecules. So be it! What she had lost, the others had gained a hundredfold. And the idea of peace, for which the one body had been sacrificed, suddenly became flesh and blood in the rarefied air. The same immortality that flooded the streets flooded also the hearts of men. The sea is inexhaustible; it is full of unexploitable riches. It will not dry up when you lean from your small boat and draw a pail of water. The sea is what never ends.

And so, between two heavens, the soul followed the procession of the Resurrection. She well knew, now, that the body had not died, since a whole people thronged around its coffin. She knew too that immortality is whatever survives in the memory of others. And the cry that reigned throughout the whole journey was "He lives!" No one would admit that death existed in the realm of the idea. Death exists only for the individuals who one day discover with stupefaction that their private little lives come to an abrupt end. At that point they panic. And must shut themselves up in psychiatric hospitals to recover. There is no death when by falling you help a people to rise, when your monument has become the very scale and standard of a people.

"In the foreground came the young people with the wreaths of flowers. Each wreath was held by two boys and two girls, taking turns. The members of the Peace Committee and the Bertrand Russell League followed, holding sprays of roses and carnations. Not far behind came the Philharmonic Municipal Band of Piraeus. An enormous banner with the symbol of disarmament was carried by the young people of the B. Russell–Piraeus branch. Z.'s fellow athletes marched in front of the hearse, displaying the trophies won by the dead Balkan champion. All along the route, people crowded on balconies of apartment houses threw flowers as the procession passed. Citizens of every age and class lined the whole length of Mitropoleos Street, Philhellinon Street, Syngrou Avenue, Anapafseos Avenue. The cries 'Long live Z.' 'No more blood!' 'He lives!' 'Peace—Democracy!' were rebroadcast as though this ceaseless mass of people were an electric cable accompanying the procession along the whole endless way to the cemetery."

When they arrived there, the soul came to rest, in profound anguish, like the kite at its zenith when you see it suddenly halt, a motionless speck in the sun, while on the ground the kite string in the child's hand relaxes, just as above deep waters his fishing line slackens inward without revealing the exact spot where it has touched the sea's floor—so proving once again that up and down are the same; arrived there, the soul came to rest, waiting for them to set the body down so that she could ascend, waiting for the earth to receive him so that she could head high up, up and down, body and soul, making only one; until after having come to a halt above

the huge body of the halted world, at one point she had to descend again for a clearer view of an old woman dressed in black who darted through the crowd, pulling her hair hysterically and crying just as they laid him in the grave: "Wake up, Z.! We're waiting for you! Wake up!"

Which sent a shock through the crowd, for this old woman with her simple words had expressed precisely what an entire people was feeling at that moment. And the soul sighed, knowing that what the old woman had said in her simplicity could not be, for the body had plainly not gone to sleep, it had been cleft asunder, disfigured, deprived of its foundations, and the total demolition of the house was being completed.

Big rooms where they had lived together, she and he, with windows open to the sun and wind, spacious rooms without a spider or a figment of mold, this house, his body, was descending into earth. In these rooms they had seen innumerable suns rise through the bodies of neighboring houses, through her thickets who lay all night long at his side. Here the soul had built her heart, her nest, a house adored by her as well as by that other woman, those other women. In its place now remained nothing but wind. The house had displaced a certain volume of air, and now the gap was closing. The house was sinking, in ruins, into the earth from which it had risen. Its raw materials, now mere worthless rubble, were returning to earth. And her grief was boundless as she watched earth reassume this house, her hearth, big rooms with windows open, Thessiou Street, number 7.

At the moment when I'm losing you, she thought in her pain, at this last instant, after which I shall neither see you again nor caress your beloved form, this voice of yours that uttered my everything I felt, your arms linked with the cypresses, your nerves, conductors of a whole world's power and light, at the moment of losing you, do not say that what we lived was a lie. Suddenly this earth which is swallowing you consumes me as well. I rise

without wanting to, I am rising higher, higher. We are losing one another.

Ships from the North no echoing trace of your passage, fires that have burned and left no ashes behind, and you, my house, my warmth, who gave me new faith in life, legs on which my world rested, you, now, hands of light, eyes without my image, why, why are you leaving me like this, with so much pain, such anguish and fatigue, a stopped clock in the sky, I keep ascending, ascending without wanting to, as you are descending without wanting to, there is no hope of finding you again, I know there is none, I do not want to leave, let me at least stay near what you loved, when we lived, in our house, with our pictures, the very chinks in the wall, I want to stay near the streets where you lived, but I cannot, I am rising, leaving, vanishing into space and I don't know how to tell you, my house, my love, I miss you, I miss you horribly, there is no wine to drown your memory, I knew you or did not, if I had truly known you, you would not now be escaping from me, me, raving on because I can less and less make out what is happening below, more and more the people, the crowd gathered to see you off, are turning into an inkblot, a black smudge on the map of the world, this world that I am leaving and do not want to leave, for the grain is sweet before the harvest, and your hair sweet shining like grain to the wind's touch and mine, and your large mouth molded for kisses, I miss you now shamelessly, I curse you, hate you, worthless body that they killed, thing, cipher, house that surrendered to the city planner, dumb thing, and defenseless, ridiculous thing too, disappearing like this without a pang of remorse, without the least alarm sounded in the almond grove of the stars, and stupid, don't even feel that you might miss me also, don't even know that I am orphaned by you, I who know you don't know it, ah, why spend so much precious time with you, why not try to slip in somewhere else, form some lasting relationship, don't know how

good it is never to have been born and how horrid to die just when you want most to live, I see nothing below me any more, a poor photograph of land and water in some intermediate state, neither city nor Greece; I don't know where I'm going or who cut my string, only that I am going, and tell me why, why don't I have your hand now to caress me, tell me, why don't I have your smile, where are you, what are you doing, I am losing myself as you are, and I need to know how you are faring in that darkness, that dampness riddled with furtive subterranean railways and undermined foundations, I need to know, in that inferno you have entered, what you feel as the fever sears you, for up here, in this intense light hardly different from your own intense darkness, I have lost contact, the Hertzian waves bring me no messages from that world, and yet that world exists, it does, only you and I exist no more, only you and I, my house with curtains and tall palm trees, with all the things that made us one, what will become of me now, I've never been sentimental, I am losing myself but not my feeling for you, it is terrifying, if at least I could forget you, if at least I weren't suffering, I am losing myself, it isn't the sky here, big birds lie sleeping on couches of air, a different kind of transparency, a different depth and density, yet more than anything now I miss your voice, miss more than anything your laugh, your bravado, your strong arms round the whole world. That embrace ended, the world ends as well.

I hate you. I always hated you. I always envied you. Without the olive trees, even the vineyards look like orphans. Without the rocks, even the sea seems unreal. Without your kiss, my lips are two worms. Without you I am nothing. I hate you for betraying me, my beloved house, I hate you tonight for being late to our rendezvous. I shall never believe that you aren't coming back. I shall never believe that you have canceled your trip. Do you know why? Because I am incapable of suicide. I must carry you in me until I become utterly dissolved, voice of a voice that has faded away, chaos of my time,

the sun's rays burn savagely here, high up here. Burn and are beginning to singe my wings. Now I'm melting. How pleasant it is! Disappearing at last. Forgetting you. Yes, so suddenly. Who were you? Where was it? I remember dimly that once . . . No, it can't have been you. On earth? You mean that planet? Yes! Yes, of course, yes indeed. Oh, very well, thank you. Yes. Yes. I don't know. What was that? I don't understand. I don't know. I never knew you. What pleasure, this losing of oneself! What a relief! Once, perhaps . . . No. It's you who betrayed me, you are faithless. You abandoned me first and left me homeless. And I became a whore and forgot you in the brothel of the Great Bear. I forgot you. You deserved to be forgotten. You betrayed me. Betrayed me. I have lost you and myself alike. I do not know you.

"In the course of the funeral of Deputy Z. yesterday there were no incidents or clashes with the police. Why? because the EDA decided to give orders for the funeral ceremony to be conducted in an orderly fashion. When the EDA does not want incidents, there are no incidents. And when entanglements with the police are provoked, they are provoked because the EDA wants them, organizes them, creates them. These are the conclusions to be drawn from the funeral of Z."