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Maria Of The Night Nikos Engonopoulos

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Nikos Engonopoulos

MARIA OF THE NIGHT

On the day immediately following my death—or should I say my execution—I picked up all the newspapers to find out everything I could concerning the particulars. It seems I was led out onto the scaffold under heavy guard. I was purportedly wearing a yellow overcoat, a woven neck-tie, and a helmet. My hair resembled bristles—the bristles of a paintbrush perhaps, or perhaps the brush used in the application of tar. Afterwards they dumped my body in a remote swamp, which the Frenchman Descartes had once used as a hideout, and where for years now the corpse of glorious Karamanlakis has lain, prey to vultures and to a temple-slave by the name of Euterpe. And while there were rumors regarding my whereabouts at the time—some said Maracaibo in South America, others claimed Pasolimani in Pireas, the plain truth is that I was in Elbasan (Albania). And the only thing of note I read at the time was a long-winded letter from my dear and only friend, the Italian Guillermo Tsitzes, whom I have never met and whom, moreover, I suspect has never existed. In a word, the entire contents of the letter consisted in the following: "You" —meaning, of course, Polyxena—"You are an old gramophone with a bronze horn, sailing under a black sail."

Translated from the Greek
by **Martin McKinsey**