PRELUDE

I am going to describe the terrible events that happened in Eduard Rey's life, a farmer from Campredó who had to go into exile after the Republican defeat in the 1936-1939 Civil War. Once in foreign land, he went through his young son's death, who was run over by a lorry. This tragedy added pain to his life.

A MAN IN EXILE, EDUARD REY

Eduard Rey was born in 1910. He was the second son of a working family. From a very young age he started to work in the rice fields of a little village in the Ebro lands, Campredó. During his youth, he enjoyed happy moments in a village where a cinema was opened and there was entertainment every weekend. He loved writing poetry, in fact he wrote quite a few romantic poems to his girlfriend, whose name was Lola, who he married during the agitated years of the II Republic. She came from Albinyana, a little village near the town of Vendrell. . Later on, he lived through a very bad period when a civil war, which would change everything, broke out.

As far as his political views were concerned, when he grew up he joined the trade union UGT (Working General Union, Unió General de Treballadors in Catalan) and the communist political party PSUC (Catalonia Unification Socialist Party, Partit Socialista Unificat de Catalunya) because he was inspired by the republican ideals of justice, fraternity and equality. Thus, he followed the left-wing ideals, specifically the communist ideology. He wanted the best rights for the working class, he believed in a classless society with no bosses and where the land belonged to the ones who worked it.

When the war began he was part of the local Revolutionary Committee, and his idealized desires made him a kind of leader who became the mayor of his village. A few months later he was sent to the bloody war front, in Aragon. Later, he needed to run away after the Republican defeat in the Battle of the Ebro in November 1938. Three months later, in February, he arrived in the Pyrenees. He escaped across the Coll d'Ares, the hills that separated southern and northern Catalonia, like half a million people that left everything behind.

But there was still the worst part to happen. Eduard was caught by the French gendarmerie and sent to the Sant Cebrià concentration camp. There he was forced to do the worst tasks and was treated painfully. Luckily, in 1940 he was liberated and could find a job in the agricultural fields of the region. He couldn't return home because he was afraid of being arrested by the francoist regime. He wasn't the same, he was a stateless man. He got tired of fighting and chose a simple life. In France he was not allowed to get involved in any kind of politics.

He missed his wife Lola and his son Eduard. He used to send them lots of letters, through which he could know what was going on in his country. A terrible accident happened in 1948, when his teenage son was run over by a lorry. Then, he dared go back just to help his wife and give her the necessary comfort. After years of separation, he found her with tears and could never overcome his son's tragedy.

As for politics, silence was the response. He never talked about his ideals any more. Fear was the rule.