But the estate of Julia's father was still very far away from these events. No matter how many Portuguese soldiers came to Bahia, or how many Jesuits they took away, the sea breeze still blew through the latticed window on the garden and filled her bedroom with the moon and the stars and the perfume of the hibiscus, and the Reina del Noche which was said to drive men mad, or madmen sane, if they drank a tea made from its petals. Her mother still brooded in the garden and her abuela still sang the songs of another country in the kitchen, and at night in the street in front of the iron gate where she held court with her Cafuza friends, the servants of neighbouring houses and plantations, she would talk about the foreigners: The Portuguese, the French, the Dutch, the English - any and all who had come to Bahia to conquer or trade or bring industry or slaves for the plantations. Then a hush would fall as the hour grew late and they moved into the courtyard to mutter in a tongue Julia didn't know, in tones too low to hear from the street, although she heard them from her window because she listened. Julia had a talent for languages. Father Quadra said so.

On that night too the courtyard had been full of men, and the air heavy with the heat and exotic scents and one said greedy jew and threw a stone at the door.

The cacao that came from Martinique had been of little interest to the Jesuits, less so because it was cultivated by Dutch Jews who were fleeing the Inquisition. As the taste for chocolate spread throughout London and Paris, however, the Portuguese began to take note of the fledgling plantations at Bahia. The Jesuits too became a subject of considerable interest as the winds of liberty began to blow through the palaces of Europe. Liberty had its price, and the kings in Europe and their confessors in Rome and their converts in the colonies of the new world would have to pay it. The rich Jesuit lands became chattels for Madrid and Lisbon to barter with, pawns in an elaborate chess game that even Father Quadra would never understand, although he knew one thing very well: The garden of eden they had laboured for two hundred years to build was being lost forever.

What's wrong child," repeated the Jesuit. "What do you have in your hand?" She did not reply but only opened her fingers and released a fly into the perfumed air of the night. Father Quadra smiled: 'Only a fly', he said. To Julia it had seemed a thing of infinite grace.

The rest followed with stones they picked up by the portico that lay half finished at the iron gate and one found its mark as the family scurried into the coach. Then abuela loomed before them, and they fell back murmuring among themselves, and she said, "não tem dinheiro."

"A poor jew, I never heard of that," said one of the men and ...they laughed, chanting, "poor jew, poor jew...".

"But they drink cognac, I sold it to them," said the merchant Sim, and the crowd rallied at this.

"I drink cognac because it is liquid," shouted abjuela, " - se fosse sólido comê lo ia - if it were solid I would eat it!" Then the men laughed again, and parted as Mario started the coach and it clattered over the cobbles to arrive too late at the Infirmary in Bahia.

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... and hand in hand on the edge of the sand, they danced by the light of the moon, the moon, the moon, they danced by the light of the moon ...

... Julia's abuela was Cafuzo, the part of her that still punted along silent rivers in dugouts and worshipped household gods....