

Ilyas Afandiyev

YOU ARE
ALWAYS

WITH ME





Ilyas Afandiyev (1914–1996), a great writer and playwright, classic of the 20th century Azerbaijani literature, was born in one of the beautiful sights of Azerbaijan, Garabagh – Fizuli region. He graduated from the Faculty of Geography of the Azerbaijan Pedagogical University. His first book "Letters from the village" was published in 1939, and his second book "Serene nights" was released in 1945.

His plays "The Atayevs' Family", "Willow channel", "Bright ways" and first voluminous novel "Spring floods" written in 1945–58 brought him great success. His works attracted interest and attention of the wide audience, and were highly appreciated among the literature society. In his works Ilyas Afandiyev did not promote the Soviet ideology; instead he praised the richness of inner worlds, feelings and dreams of ordinary people.

High level artistic and aesthetic samples of Azerbaijani literature as "Comel bridge", "Three friends beyond mountains", "Fairy tale of Sarikoynek and Valeh", "Old man, don't look back" saw the light in the 60–80th years of the last century.

With "You are always with me" (1964) he laid the foundation of the psychological drama on the Azerbaijani stage. "My gull", "I can't forget", "Erased diaries", "The song stayed in the mountains", "Weird boy", "Khurshidbanu Natavan", "The ruler and his daughter" and other plays created "Ilyas Afandiyev's theatre" aesthetic concept.

Ilyas Afandiyev was honoured with a big number of prestigious awards, honorary titles, and his works were published in different languages all around the world.



National Commission
of the Republic of Azerbaijan
for UNESCO

Ilyas Afandiyev

*You are
always
with me*

1-39A20



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Ilyas Afandiyev

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The play "You are always with me" written by the great writer and playwright, classic of the Azerbaijani literature Ilyas Afandiyev is about the young girl who is deprived of the family heat and loves a man much older than her. This work laid the foundation of the lyric-psychological drama on the Azerbaijani stage.

"You are always with me" has been repeatedly staged at different theatres, also a movie of the same name was released in 1987.

The book published on the occasion of 100th anniversary of the birth of Ilyas Afandiyev celebrated at the UNESCO Headquarters in the framework of commemoration of historic events and anniversaries of eminent personalities, is presented for the wide audience.





CHARACTERS

- Hasanzade – Factory director
Khurshid – his wife
Aydin – his son
Nargile – young girl,
finished school
Nazaket – her mother
Faraj – Nazakat's second
husband
Farajov – Head of HR
in factory
Blonde Girl – Nargile's friend
Old Man
First Boy
Second Boy
Factory workers

Train station. Everyone is seeing off their relatives. Standing in the foreground Hasanzade is smiling, looking at someone. But he is nervous. He is in his own world, busy staring at someone. Nargile is coming towards him, when she notices him she stops. Nargile is watching him. He doesn't notice her.

Aydin's voice – Don't wait any longer, father, it's hot.

Hasanzade – Close the window when you sleep.

Aydin's voice – Be sure I will!

Hasanzade – Don't drink cold water. You've only just got over tonsillitis.

Aydin's voice (*frustrated*) – I told you, don't worry!

Nargile turns from Aydin to look at Hasanzade. But Hasanzade is not upset by his son's tone.

Hasanzade – Don't eat tinned food on the way.

Aydin's voice – Okay, dad, go! (*Final call. Train departs.*) Take care Dad! I'll send you a telegram once I've arrived. Don't worry about me.

Hasanzade says no more. He is very sad.





Waving his hand slowly in the air, he bids a silent farewell to his son. The sound of the train fades away. Hasanzade, breathing deeply, bows his head and leaves.

All this time Nargile, anxious and excited, has been staring at Hasanzade but he doesn't notice her and passes by. She follows him with the same anxious and mournful eyes...

Scene changes Hasanzade goes to the balcony and lights a cigarette. He smokes anxiously while gazing at the branches of a willow tree bending in the breeze. Nargile in the opposite building stares up at Hasanzade's window. It seems she wants to attract Hasanzade's attention but he doesn't see her.

He is preoccupied with his own thoughts. Music is heard in the distance. Within the surrounding silence it seems that this music has existed since times immemorial and will continue forever. Lights down.

The music fades away with the light. Kurshid appears from a blue light.

Kurshid – Why are you so upset? Aydin is a big boy now. What can happen?...

Hasanzade – In all his 22 years this is the first time he's gone away from me for such a long time.

Kurshid – What parent stays with their child forever?

Hasanzade – True...



Kurshid – I know... it will be hard for you to be alone...

Hasanzade – What can I do... I hope he's safe and sound. *(Pause. Music continues)*

Kurshid – You should have married.

Hasanzade – That terrible night, you told me not to marry.

Kurshid *(guiltily)* I was wrong...
Hasanzade – Ah... it doesn't matter... Even if you'd said "Marry!" then, I wouldn't have been able to do it...

Kurshid – You should have married... *(Short pause. Music continues...)* Aydin was upsetting you too much. He was so naughty when he was little...

Hasanzade – He was a sickly child...

Kurshid – I couldn't stand you being awake for one night... But he, he kept you awake for months on end...

Hasanzade – There was no other way. I had to make sure he didn't get cold.

Kurshid – He slept so badly when he was little...

Hasanzade *(thoughtfully)* – And school as well... *(smiling)* it seemed that his teacher called to complain





every day... Anyway... it's all in the past now... our efforts weren't wasted...

Kurshid – Not "ours", yours! He was two when I died!

Hasanzade – True... and I could never replace you... I was angry, making mistakes... (*short pause... Music continues*) We moved into a new apartment three or four months after your death. One day he told me that he saw you next to the gates. He said to me "I told mother we live here, I asked why she doesn't come in."

Kurshid – I was always proud of your strong character. Why would you remember such things?

Hasanzade – Looks and character don't always remain the same...

Kurshid – Get married!

Hasanzade – It's too late!

Kurshid – Forty-six is not old... yet...

Short pause

Hasanzade – You were always too good for me...

Kurshid – They say love is like a living organism. It gets old and then it dies...

Hasanzade – Maybe...but I guess twenty years is not long enough for that...



Kurshid – It was your right, a long time ago, to get married and start a new life... you weren't even twenty eight when your hair turned grey...

Hasanzade – I don't blame anyone for that... I've never done anything that goes against my heart... I never intended to deprive myself of happiness. What I mean is that I have simply fulfilled my duty... What is surprising or strange about that?...

Kurshid – Don't say it like that... You were young, handsome... even after we married you were still getting calls from all the girls.

Hasanzade – When you died perhaps someone else in my shoes would have married after one or two years... as you said, would have started a new life... Maybe that would have been good for Aydin as well... But... I couldn't do it... Every time I thought about it... No, it was impossible and I don't reproach myself for not doing it!... I am not disappointed with my life... my fate.

Door bell rings. Music stops. Lights down on Kurshid. Hasanzade opens the door. Nargile enters, carrying some newspapers and magazines.

Nargile (*suppressing her excitement*) The postman gave me





them at the front door... He wasn't feeling well, so I brought them up.

Hasanzade – Thank you very much. *(takes the newspapers and magazines from her and puts them on the round table)* Aren't you the daughter of my neighbor...the accountant?

Nargile – no... he is my stepfather...

Hasanzade – Are you studying?

Nargile – I finished school this year. But couldn't get into university.

Hasanzade – Why?

Nargile – Just one point! *(suddenly angry...)* the language teacher was an ugly thing. Instead of grade B, I got a C.

Hasanzade *(smiling)* – It's not nice to speak about your teachers like that. Nargile *(ashamed)* Sorry...

Hasanzade – Don't worry, you can always resit and get in next year.

Nargile – I don't think so.

Hasanzade – Well... don't lose heart. What are you doing now?

Nargile – Nothing.

Hasanzade – Don't you want to work?

Nargile – There are no jobs. I even went with my Mom to the HR department in your factory, but there was nothing.



Short pause.

Hasanzade – Would you want to work as a shift administrator?

Nargile – Why not, if you say so?

Hasanzade – If I say so.....? That's different to you wanting to...

Nargile – Yes, I want to.

Hasanzade *(he smiles and goes to the phone. He calls)* Hello, Farajov...

Lights up on Farajov, on the other end of the line...

Hasanzade – I'm sending a girl to see you, her name is... *(to Nargile)* what's your name?

Nargile – Nargile

Hasanzade *(to phone)* Her name is Miss... Nargile. Give her the shift administrator job in place of the boy who went to the army the day before yesterday.

Farajov *(hiding his displeasure)* Of course, sir.

Hasanzade hangs up. Lights down on Farajov.

Nargile – Yesterday he told us he had already taken on someone else.

Hasanzade – You can start tomorrow. 50 manats¹ will be your salary...

¹ Currency in Azerbaijan



Nargile (*proudly*) That doesn't matter.

Hasanzade (*joking*) You are so rich?

Nargile – I get 60 manats pension for my father as well.

Hasanzade – Your father passed away?

Nargile – Yes... when I was one... shot in the war. He was a senior lieutenant. (*Hasanzade lights a cigarette*) Where was your son going?

Hasanzade – To Bashkortostan.¹

Nargile – To work there?.....for ever?

Hasanzade – Who knows... just three years for now...

Nargile – I think he is an engineer...

Hasanzade – Yes. Graduated from the Oil Institute.

Nargile – Do you miss him?

Hasanzade – What?.....what if I do miss him?

Short pause.

Nargile (*moved*) Maybe I can do something for you?

Hasanzade – Thank you no. I can look after myself.

Nargile – I know... when your son came home from university for holidays you always woke up before him to make him breakfast...

Hasanzade – True...

Nargile – I stood at my window watching you ... But you didn't know that.

Hasanzade – I knew.

Nargile (*joyful*) Really? I thought you'd never noticed.

Hasanzade – Why not? Aren't we neighbors?

Nargile (*wistful*) Right... we are neighbors... (*short pause*) I was always happy when your son was coming home.

Hasanzade (*joking*) Really?

Nargile (*understanding his meaning*) I was happy for you!

Hasanzade – For me?

Nargile – Yes. When he was coming you were happy; speaking, laughing...when he wasn't here you would sit in this chair for hours, smoking and thinking...

Hasanzade (*smiling*) Ha! What else do old people do?

Nargile – Are you old?

Hasanzade Of course!

Nargile (*angry*) Maybe you think I am a stupid little girl?

¹ A federal state of Russia



Hasanzade – Absolutely not!
Nargile – Then why do you talk like that?

Hasanzade – What is it to do with you, me saying something about myself?

Nargile – Alright... I just wouldn't expect such rude words from you.

Hasanzade – My apologies.

Nargile – No, no need for apologies... even if you hurt my heart, I wouldn't want you to apologize.

Hasanzade – I am grateful. *(short pause)* Do you read very much?

Nargile – Why do you ask?

Hasanzade – Just interested...

Nargile – No, I haven't read any books apart from Robinson Crusoe. *(grandly)* I am a mathematician. I never miss a thing as far as math, physics are concerned...

Hasanzade – Ok... I get it...

Nargile – I couldn't explain to that ugly woman that I wanted to be a mathematician. I could get by even with a C in grammar.

Hasanzade – I thought we'd agreed that it is not nice to talk about your teacher disrespectfully...

Nargile – Sorry, I forgot. Promise... *(pause. Hasanzade smokes, Nargile*



looks at him) Nature has strange secrets...

Hasanzade – What do you mean?

Nargile – Your son, looks so much like you...

Hasanzade – Yes, a little bit...

Nargile – not a little, almost identical! His eyes, the way he walks, acts, even smoking...

Hasanzade *(surprised)* He smokes?

Nargile *(confused)* No... maybe... just to keep himself busy... I saw only once... after a couple of puffs he threw it away, coughing... Honestly...

Hasanzade – Alright. I suppose you're telling me the truth...

Nargile *(scrutinizing him)* No! I lied! He smoked the whole cigarette!

Hasanzade *(joking)* and didn't grimace?!

Nargile – No! *(rebellious)* So what if he smokes?... He's a strong boy. What can 'one' cigarette do to him?! *(slow and wistful)* I don't want you to be worried about anything.

Hasanzade – I understand... thank you...

Nargile – Happiness is like the sun, shining down on him.

Hasanzade *(suddenly alive)* Do you think so?





Nargile – Of course. Well educated, clever, healthy, handsome... Has a father like you!... What else do you need for happiness?!...

Hasanzade (*breathing deeply*) No...that's not real happiness. Real happiness is how you use those attributes for good, for people's benefit, for...

Nargile (*miserable*) For people...

Hasanzade – Yes. True?

Nargile (*suddenly*) No!

Hasanzade – Maybe... perhaps you hate everyone?

Nargile – Apart from you and those who are helpless!

Hasanzade – Who do you mean, helpless?

Nargile (*in thought*) Surik, my mother...

Hasanzade – Who is Surik?

Nargile – My friend... We studied together. Sometimes she's just stupid... but helpless... my mother is helpless as well... because she is a coward and has no self-will. Let's not talk about this...I don't want to bother you with all this.

Hasanzade – Don't worry... my heart is not so weak.

Nargile (*passionately*) I want to tell you something good now that your son has gone away.

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Hasanzade – Many thanks. Why don't you tell me more about yourself?

Nargile – If my life was worth anything, I would tell you a hundred things.

Hasanzade – Who said your life has no value?

Nargile (*suddenly angry*) Who? My Mother! My stepfather, that mole who took my father's place. Boys, those deadbeats who try to seduce me with ugly smiles to get me into their beds! That teacher who stopped me getting into university..... grade C! Everyone...everyone!

Suddenly falls back into an armchair, hiding her face as she cries

Hasanzade – calm down... please don't cry.

Pause. Same music again.

The music seems to have been playing for a thousand years.

Nargile (*taking her hands from her face*) Do you really want to hear about my life?!

Hasanzade – Of course. Tell me.

*She becomes thoughtful.
Music starts again,
lights dim.*



Nargile – I don't remember my mother's second wedding. They say when I was a baby... I was a chubby baby, healthy and full of joy. But over the years that's all gone. (*music stops. Lights down. Nargile in darkness*) Then began my unhappy, joyless, miserable days life...

Lights up. Dining room in Nargile's father's apartment. She brings plates from the kitchen. It is clear that she doesn't like doing it. Her mother, Nazakat, laying the table. Nargile spills some water on the table as she puts down a water jug.

Nazakat – Why can't you be careful? Now I'll have to change the tablecloth.

Nargile – It's just a drop.

Nazakat –You know what he's like. We've forgotten the pickles as well. (*She hurries to the kitchen. Nargile takes a deep breath and turns on the radio. Gentle music fills the room. Nazakat rushes in with the pickles, puts them on the table and turns the radio off.*)

What are you doing? You know he can't stand music playing when he's hungry?! (*footsteps are heard*) He's coming...

(looks at her daughter with an imploring expression. Understanding her, Nargile goes to the back room.





Faraj enters full of self-importance, fear in Nazakat's eyes. Faraj gives his straw hat to Nazakat and goes to the kitchen. She follows him. The sounds of Faraj spluttering and splashing as he washes hands and face are heard. The noise upsets Nargile and makes her angry. Nazakat returns with a plate full of food and places it carefully on the table. Faraj comes in, holding out his wet hands).

Faraj – Towel!

(Nazakat runs to bring a towel. Faraj dries his hands and returns the towel to his wife. Then he sits authoritatively behind the table. Nazakat returns from replacing the towel and stands watching him. Her gaze is submissive and fearful.)
Pepper!

Nazakat – Oh no... forgot again...

She quickly fetches pepper. Pause. During this action Nargile, sitting in the other room, first picks up a book, but she cannot read. She puts the book down and picks up some unfinished sewing. But she cannot do this either and puts it aside. She is made increasingly angry by the clattering of knife and fork from the other room.

Faraj – Compote!

(Nazakat brings a glass of compote. He takes a sip, looking at his wife.)

Faraj – It's hot!
Nazakat (*guiltily*) I finished work late today.

Faraj (*indicating the back room, where Nargile sits*) What was she doing?

Nazakat – She was at her friend's.

Faraj – So this is a hotel...

Nargile bites her fingers in anger.

Nazakat (*takes compote*) I'll put it in the freezer for a while.

Faraj – Tea!

Nazakat – It will boil in two minutes.

Faraj (*furious*) Boil! (*Stands up and goes to the door upstage, suddenly turns back and, points to the room where Nargile sits*) Have you spoken to her?

Talk to her! (*exits. Nazakat watches him go, she takes on a poor, helpless expression. Nargile comes from the other room.*)

Nargile – What happened?

Nazakat – (*hesitantly*) Nothing.

Nargile – He was saying something about me. (*short pause*) Why are you silent?

Nazakat – Please be quiet.

Nargile – I won't be quiet! This is my father's apartment.





Nazakat – Nargile, my daughter...
Nargile (*softly*) Ahhh! If I could just understand...you were a beautiful woman like you, how did you fall in love with him!

Nazakat – I've never told anyone this, but you are a big girl now. I don't love him and never have!

Nargile – If that's the case... then why's he been here all these years?

Nazakat – After your father died I was alone under this roof... you were a baby.

Nargile – How alone? You were working.

Nazakat – Yes I was working days... but the nights...it was very difficult...it's like everything in this apartment was... walls, table, chairs were taunting me: "he is not here anymore...he will never come back..."

The same music plays, as if it has done so from the beginning of the world...

Everywhere... his absence everywhere... it was as though life had left me alone and gone with him... And you...a baby...looking at me with those eyes innocent of the world, smiling at me, frightening me... I imagined that a war could take you from me as well... I saw a soldier's



cold bayonet at your lips and you sucked at it like a dummy....I had terrible dreams every night...Every night I heard your wounded father calling me from some open place far away... (*music continues*) The loneliness was terrible. (*cries*) I couldn't live on my own... understand me.

Nargile (*gently*) Alright, be calm!

Nazakat (*cries more than ever*) I could never replace my memories of your father; not for all the happiness in the world.

Pause. Music continues, then stops.

Lights down.

Lights up. Hasanzade listening to Nargile and smoking a cigarette. Nargile continues her story, agitated.

Nargile – I believed my mother... once I saw her looking secretly at my father's photo and crying... I felt sorry for her...but her weakness was driving me mad.

Hasanzade – What happened after that?

Nargile – It was like this...

Lights down.

Lights up. Evening. Faraj is standing, facing his wife. Nargile, in the other room, is slumped on her bed, asleep. A book lies on her chest; there is an anxious expression on her face.





Faraj (*to his wife*) So, did you speak to her?

Nazakat – But this is her father's apartment. How can I tell her to go and live somewhere else?!

Faraj – Her aunt lives on her own. She can stay with her.

Nazakat (*guiltily*) I can't do it... my heart won't let me.

Faraj – So you mean that she is your own and the others are like adopted?

Nazakat – Why adopted?!

Faraj – Then why don't you care about them too? She has a bedroom to herself...But we are five jammed into two small rooms...they don't have anywhere to study...(*angrier*) and you don't care.

Nazakat – She is always happy for the kids to do their homework in her room...actually... she even helps them.

Faraj – Don't tell me these fairy tales (*suddenly*) I do not want her here! That's it! Decide, either her or me!

Faraj exits. She watches him go for a while. She goes to Nargile's room and sits next to her. She gazes at her daughter. The same music plays. Time stops... Nargile wakes up. Seeing her mother she tries to organize her thoughts.



Nargile (*sits up*) I had a terrible dream.

Nazakat – What dream?

Nargile – I was in a green forest, rushing somewhere...suddenly a tall, gray-haired army officer appears in front of me. We both stand there. And then you came... the officer is looking at me with his sad eyes, but doesn't speak; I am confused...and you say, 'Don't you know him? He is your father'... and I search in my heart: 'Look, how handsome my father is!'

Nazakat – He was 23, with black hair, when he went to war...

Nargile – But in the dream he was older and his eyes were so sorrowful... (*she stands up and looks at herself in the mirror, as she does so she begins to sing*)

*As brave as a falcon and handsome
as an angel you were,*

*A knight of knights you were.
In some distant place you were shot
in the chest...*

*An eagle flew down from the mountains
to your side.*

*The crows circling around your
head saw the eagle and fled,
Your friends returning from victory in battle
Buried you under an oak and moved on.
From then every morning, every evening
The eagle circled your strange grave*





*Then soared into the infinite skies.
Faraj enters from the other room.
Nargile's song angers him. He angrily
pushes chairs aside.*

Faraj (*sitting on a chair in the dining room*) Borjomi mineral water! (*Nazakat is startled, runs to the kitchen and fetches a bottle of water*)... well, did you speak to her?

Nazakat – No.

Faraj – Why not?

Nazakat – I can't do it!

Pause. Faraj quietly pours water into a glass and drinks it. Then gets up and stands in front of his wife.

Faraj – Me or her! I won't come home tonight. If anyone asks, I'm at my cousin's. Call me in the morning and let me know your decision.

*Takes his straw hat and exits pompously.
Nazakat stands rooted to the spot.*

Nargile (*enters*) Why was he throwing the chairs around again?

Nazakat – Nargile my child! Move to your aunt's for a while?! She is on her own...

Nargile – Okay...I understand.

Nazakat – I will come and visit, and look after you, like before.

Nargile – No, I won't go anywhere...This is my father's apartment! I'd feel better if you all left.



Nazakat (*angry*) You are one, but we are five!

Nargile (*repeats her*) We? But you said you don't love him?!

Nazakat (*shouting*) I've got children!

Nargile – Children.

Nazakat – What?! You are talking to your mother!

Nargile – No! I am talking to Faraj's wife!

Nazakat (*gently*) You are an adult now... you understand everything... I have already explained to you...

Nargile – I don't blame you for getting married.

Nazakat – Perhaps you doubt my love for you then?

Nargile – I don't doubt it.

Nazakat – Then what are you accusing me of?

Nargile – Slavery!

Nazakat – Whose slave am I?

Nargile (*shouting*) The mole's! A villain, who has no right to humanity! All these years you never spoke to me in front of him! You are afraid that the mole will get angry and leave you!

Nazakat (*shocked*) Just listen to the way you're talking to your mother, instead of feeling sorry for her.





Nargile – I.... those people in a healthy family who make people feel sorry for them, I ...

Nazakat – You hate them, don't you?

Nargile – Sorry, you make me so angry that...

Nazakat – Without that damned war we wouldn't be having this conversation.

Nargile – Anyway... it's too late now... ok, you and your husband want me to leave this apartment.

Nazakat – Not me... please understand me.

Nargile – I understand ... you can't imagine how clearly I understand you.

Nazakat – He's gone. If you stay here, he won't come back... and I have three kids with him.

Nargile – Stop using those poor kids... it's not right to use them to justify your guilt... He does that, don't you do it.

Nazakat – I am guilty before you.

Nargile – Please, I beg you to drop that speech. If you want me to go, I will. *(starts packing)*

Nazakat *(in tears)* Only God knows how much I love you...you are my first...you are the only memory I have of him.



Nargile *(shouting)* I told you, drop that speech! Or I won't go ...The mole knows that if I go to the law at least one of these rooms is mine.

Nazakat *(frightened)* Of course... *(pause. The same music continues as if from the beginning of time. Nargile takes her father's photo from the wall and puts it into her suitcase and then takes a couple of men's ties from the wardrobe, shakes the dust from them...)* At least leave me one of his ties.

Nargile *(putting the ties into the suitcase)* You've got the whole apartment, why do you need one tie?

Nazakat – Why are you so cruel to me? *(Nargile is no longer listening to her. She packs her suitcase. The music continues)* I will visit you every day.

Nargile *(scrutinizing the walls, paying no attention to her mother. Speaking to herself)* Grandma Govher told me that my father was born in this room and later he used it as his study.

Nazakat – It's true.

Music stops.

Nargile *(threatening)* If you make this your bedroom I promise I will get





it back from you through the law...
'bye for now!

(She exits. Nazakat watches her go for a while. Lights dim. Nazakat looks around the room, terrified. It's as if the walls are moving in towards her. In the dim light Faraj walks towards her and stands before her. Nazakat looks at her husband and with wide-open eyes, whispers in horror.)

Nazakat – She's gone!

Faraj stares at Nazakat. Lights down. Lights up. Nargile's new apartment. This is a small, narrow semi-dark room. There is a single iron bed in one corner, covered with a cheap but clean blanket. Also an old sofa. Her young father's photo is on the wall, near the bed. In the middle are two old chairs and a table covered with clean, white table-cloths. Nargile is in a dressing-gown, cleaning the room. The phone rings. She answers. Lights only up on Nargile and a phone box. In the phone box there is a trendy blond girl. There are two boys with her, wearing fashionable clothes; one is holding her hand.

Blonde Girl – Nar, congratulations on your new home!

Nargile – Thanks! But my new apartment doesn't deserve congratulations.

Blonde Girl – What are you talking about, Nar? You're a free bird



now... No one will ask you why you left early, why you came late, that's great. I envy you.

Nargile (smiles) Really?

Blonde Girl – Yes! (smiles while looking at Second Boy.) Nar!

Nargile – Yes?

Blonde Girl – Get changed quickly. We are waiting for you at café Nargiz.

Nargile – Who do you mean, "we"?

Blonde Girl – You'll find out when you get here...(smiles while looking at Second Boy) I've got a surprise for you (Second Boy smiles).

Nargile – What surprise?

Blonde Girl – I told you, if you come you will see.

Nargile – Who's with you?

Blonde Girl – I'm with Dodik.

Nargile – Which Dodik?

Blonde Girl – Don't you know... 'Scarface' Davud?

Nargile (laughs out loud) Why do you say that about his face?!

Blonde Girl – That's enough, boy! (Davud squeezes her hand tightly, she shouts) Oh!..

Nargile – What's happened?

Blonde Girl – You know how wild he is... (Davud with a wild expression,





bares his teeth) Ohh Dod, stop it!..
(into the phone) Stop it! You'll spoil
the surprise.

(Second Boy sings into the phone)
Time passes... the days fly like a bird
Life is a glass of water,
Hurry, drink it quickly
For our worthless planet
Can at any time become a painful
of ash.

Life is a glass of water,
Hurry, drink it quickly...

Blonde Girl (singing)

An unhappy, ugly teacher
Cut us down to grade C
Didn't let us go to Uni
We will get our revenge
On life and the ugly teacher...
By draining love's glass
We will taste all the world's pleasures...
We will get our revenge
On life and the ugly teacher

All three sing

We will get our revenge
On life and the ugly teacher

**Blond Girl – Nar, quick, we're
waiting.**

*Lights down on the phone box. Nargile's
room. She takes off her clothes and puts
on a new dress. She is serious and*



*thoughtful. She starts putting on make-up.
After the lipstick she puts on powder.
She thinks for a moment and angrily wipes
it all off. She brushes her hair and leaves.
Lights down.*

*Lights up. Hasanzade's balcony. The top of
the weeping willow next to the door is lit by
the sun. He is standing and smoking.
Nargile stands in front of him, one hand
playing with the leaves of the willow.
She is irritated.*

**Hasanzade – So, you didn't go
to meet your friend?
Nargile – (not looking at him)
I came here.**

*Pause.
(she stops playing with the willow leaves)
Why don't you ask the reason?!*

**Hasanzade (smiling) Do you ask
a guest why they came?
Nargile – I am not a guest. I am
here to see you and hear your voice.
I like you more than anyone else in
the world!**

**Hasanzade – I am grateful. But
I don't think that you know many
people in the world.**

**Nargile – I have seen enough.
(suddenly angry) I've told you
everything. Even about Surik and
her boy friends calling me. It doesn't
mean that I'm a stupid, naive girl.**





Hasanzade – On the contrary... I think you are a very clever girl.

Nargile *(after a deep, probing look)* I expect you to be sincere.

Hasanzade – I am sincere.

Nargile – My Grany once told me that as well, when I was child.

Hasanzade – Perhaps it wasn't the right moment. Otherwise many people could say that to you.

Nargile – But people usually say the opposite.

Hasanzade – For example, who?

Nargile – For example my step-father. He has always told me that I am a frivolous and a silly girl. When I was sixteen or seventeen, he tried to convince my mother that it was dangerous for me to be single, that she should find a husband for me and get rid of me as soon as possible.

Short pause.

Hasanzade lights a cigarette.

Hasanzade – He said this in front of you?

Nargile – Sometime he said it to my face. But other times I overheard it from my room.

Hasanzade – What about your mother? What did she say?



Nargile – I told you my mother is afraid of him.

Hasanzade *(after a short pause)* These things happen in life... You shouldn't be offended by what your mother says.

Nargile – If her husband wasn't such a monster I wouldn't be. He is so disgusting I feel sick when I see him. *(angrier)* Stingy, petty, bitchy, a coward, a villain... whatever you can say, that's him!

Hasanzade – Please be calm... you promised that you wouldn't get angry again...

Nargile – Sorry... *(about to cry)* He hurt me so much.

Hasanzade – All that's in the past... You live alone now.

Nargile – Even though I live alone, his stupid sheep's eyes are always before me.

Hasanzade – You are working now... you'll be busy and forget about everything.

Nargile – Do you think I wasn't working when I lived with them? I was cleaning the apartment, doing six people's laundry...

Hasanzade – I could see how much washing you were doing... how many times you went to the bins.





Nargile – Ah...at least someone knows.

Hasanzade – But you know... working that way is one thing but working with people is another matter... You'll meet new people in the factory. You'll hear new things.

Nargile – I don't want to hear or see anyone apart from you.

Hasanzade – Why?

Nargile – Because I don't trust anyone!

Hasanzade – Why do you trust me?

Nargile – I don't know! (*short pause*) But it's true. If I hadn't been able to see you from the window for the last two years I don't know what I'd have done. And I lied to you earlier... the postman wasn't sick... I was waiting for him on the street. When he was at the front door I told him that I was going up to the Hasanzades' and that I'd take the papers.

Hasanzade – That's ok... I am happy to meet you.

Nargile – Thank you.....

Hasanzade – No need to thank me.

Nargile – But if someone like you is happy to know me then.....

Hasanzade – Are you a bad girl?





Nargile – I don't know... anyway fate has been a bit unfair to me.

Hasanzade – You are mistaken... If there is a 'fate', you have no right to blame it. It gave you all you need to be happy... intellect, beauty, health... what else do you want?... You were saying all this about my son earlier...

Nargile – He is one thing... I am different... He is your son!

Hasanzade – It doesn't matter... daughter, son... none of us live with our parents forever.

Nargile – Ah, how good you are... I imagined you that way.

Hasanzade – You are good as well... Why be bad anyway?!

Nargile – True... *(short pause)*
Let me clean your house.

Hasanzade *(laughs)* I don't want to make you work.

Nargile – Look I have always worked for a bad person. Now... I want to do something for someone I like more than anyone in the world... someone that I believe is the best person in the world... you have no right to deprive me!!

Hasanzade *(joking)* In that case, you can put my bookshelves in order. Aydin messed all the books up. I'm going to check things at work. When



you want to go just pull the door to; it will close.

Nargile – Ok. *(Hasanzade goes to fetch his bag. Nargile starts looking at the books on the shelves. Taking one, she first reads the title then opens it. A dried flower falls from it. She picks the flower up and smells it. Hasanzade is about to leave, carrying a large file.)* What is this flower?

Hasanzade – It's a special alpine flower, it grows on high mountains.

Nargile – What an unusual flower... it's dried and pressed, but it still smells fresh.

Hasanzade *(breathing deeply)* Yes, even when it is very dry, it always smells as fresh as new. See you later.

*He exits. Nargile puts the flower back into the book. She dusts the books.
Puts the kettle on.*

Nargile *(singing)*

His hair is gray as silver
He always has deep sorrow in his eyes...
I asked, looking at his noble hands,
My dear, why are you always sad?
He answered smiling:
"do you think it is easy...
to say what you have in your heart..."

*The door bell rings. Nargile opens the door.
Nazakat is there. Tense pause.*





Nazakat (*angry*) What are you doing here?

Nargile – I just got here.

Nazakat – What business is it of a young girl, being in a single man's house?

Nargile (*very calm*) He helped me with a job.

Nazakat – Why? How does he know you?

Nargile – I got acquainted with him.

Nazakat – You're so stupid. He has a son your age.

Nargile (*calm*) You are mistaken, his son is three years older than me.

Nazakat (*fearful*) Have you known him a long time?

Nargile – Yes..... an hour.

Nazakat (*angry again*) You will get the hell out of here this minute.

Nargile (*smiles*) I've lived in hell for a long time, now I want to have a little bit of heaven.

Nazakat – Alright, you're making fun of your mother, aren't you?

Nargile (*quietly*) No, I'm not making fun of you.

Nazakat (*calm*) What do you think people will say? You're not working for him as a maid are you?



Nargile – No, I am not working as a maid, a servant, any more. I asked him myself to clean his house.

Nazakat – People say you are crazy, but I didn't believe it.

Nargile – Eh...what was the point of not believing?

Nazakat – If you don't get out of here now, I am going to call the police!

Nargile (*laughs out loud*) Since I was 11 years old, exactly nine years ago, I have lived on my father's pension and as a servant to Faraj Sardarov. And in the end he kicks me out of my father's apartment. Why didn't you call the police then?

Nazakat – It is immoral, a young girl like you being in a strange single man's house.

Nargile – What about anguish... torture... injustice...bullying... what are they?!

Nazakat (*sensitive*) Why are you talking like that... talking like someone was beating you?!

Nargile – There are some injustices that would make a beating seem like a gift... his two wide open eyes staring every day and insulting me with cold, disgusting looks. I was a thirteen year old girl, washing his





dirty underwear... looking after his children... working like a dog all day...and in return I was hearing things that I can't even repeat... Ah... you shouldn't be here, mother.

Nazakat (*crying*) Nar...my daughter... please don't do this...don't make me unhappy a second time.

Nargile – I forgive you Mom... forget me...you have three children... they are enough for you.

Nazakat – Nargile, my daughter!
Nargile – Go, Mom

Nazakat – Promise me that you won't come here anymore. (*threatening*) Promise me!

Nargile – I told you I would think.

Nazakat – Remember that for someone who mistreats their mother, their bones will burn even in the grave.

*Nazakat exits. Pause.
Hasanzade enters.*

Hasanzade – Are you still here?! What's happened? Why are you so sad?

Nargile – Will there be a time when slavery disappears? Or is it a rule of life?

Hasanzade (*laughs*) What are you talking about?...We abolished slavery a long time ago.



Nargile – I am talking about the heart, mental slavery. That feeling of fear.

Hasanzade (*serious*) Of course, you can't just remove all the evils that have been in people's blood for a thousand years all at once, but...

Nargile (*interrupts him anxiously*) Ah... if you only knew how much I hate people who are scared of and crawl to someone...

Hasanzade – I understand you... but what do you gain from hate?... (*sharply*) You need to find and destroy the reasons that drug people into fear and hatred!... (*inspired*) You will see boys and girls in our factory who are not afraid of anyone getting on by honest effort. Then you will believe that not everyone is the same and that being scared is not a one of life's rules!

Nargile – Because you are their boss!..

Hasanzade – It doesn't matter, me or....

Nargile (*interrupts him*) It really does matter...when I was watching you, your big, beautiful hands, from there, that window, I was wondering; has this person ever been afraid of anyone or any problem? Your hands



seemed to me to be a symbol of true manhood, courage, commitment and generosity.

Short pause

Hasanzade (*changing the subject*)
Wow!...How well you've cleaned up.

Nargile (*proud*) Do you like it?

Hasanzade – Of course...who wouldn't like such neatness?

Nargile – I moved the sofa. Hope you don't mind?

Hasanzade – On the contrary... it looks like it was meant to be here. (*joking*) It makes you want to lie down and stare at the sky through the willow's branches.

Nargile – Yes...Especially when the stars come out.

Hasanzade – What a romantic girl you are?!

Nargile (*embarrassed*) Do you mean that?... or...?

Hasanzade – I do mean it.

Nargile – Thanks...I've never heard such good words about me from anyone.

Hasanzade (*wittily*) Not even from your knight?

Nargile – What knight?

Hasanzade – What do you mean what? Such a pretty girl....



Nargile – I had one once, but we broke up.

Hasanzade – Why?

Nargile – He had a girl's face. Also, he had a smile that made you think he was going to fall apart any minute.

Hasanzade (*smiling*) What about intellect?

Nargile – Intellect... (*blows on her hand*) Air... he thought he was a modern Don Juan.

Hasanzade – How come then that you liked him before the break up?

Nargile – I saw that some girls liked him so I got interested. I wouldn't give him a second look now, I wouldn't even sp...(*wants to say "spit", but then quickly changes her mind*) look at his face. This was way before you moved here...I was sixteen.

Hasanzade – What about your friend's surprise?

Nargile – Forget that... I told you, I didn't go. Why are you asking again? Don't you believe me?

Hasanzade – I do...absolutely, I do believe you.

Nargile (*with pride*) I would never lie to you... I hate lying, it's cowardly, isn't it?





Hasanzade – It is.

Nargile – I have made tea for you.

Hasanzade – Really? How did you know I wanted a cup?

Nargile (*happy*) Should I bring it?

Hasanzade – Please.

Nargile goes to the kitchen and brings a cup of tea and some biscuits.

Nargile – Is it strong enough?

Hasanzade – Excellent! Why didn't you make one for yourself?

Nargile (*embarrassed*) Am I going to drink tea with you?

Hasanzade – And what will happen if you drink with me? (*Nargile hesitates*) Please, make yourself one as well.

Nargile fetches tea for herself and takes a chair sitting facing Hasanzade. She doesn't know how to behave. Sometimes smiling, sometimes serious. Hasanzade understands.

Nargile – You don't need to know what my stepfather and mother did to me. In general, I get what I want in life.

Hasanzade – Really?

Nargile – Really... (*short pause, encouraged*) For example, on this balcony, sitting in front of you, speaking with you, doing something for you,



was my biggest wish. (*looking down, speaking quietly*) there wasn't a single night in two years that I went to sleep before you did.

Hasanzade – It is nice to hear these words from a clever girl like you. (*short pause*) You know, we people are strange. It doesn't matter how strong you are, regardless of all the cherished memories you are tied to, you still want someone to think about you and be interested in your life.

Nargile – Of course... you can't live like Robinson Crusoe when you're surrounded by people.

Hasanzade (*lights a cigarette*) That's true.

Nargile – Loneliness is terrible. I was lonely, even when I was living with my mother.

Hasanzade – I understand...

Phone rings. Nargile answers quickly.

Nargile – Hello, who do you want?... Hasanzade?... just a moment...

Hasanzade walks to the phone. Nargile gives it to him with great pleasure, as if it completes her happiness.

Hasanzade (*into phone*) Okay, let them unload, I will be there in half an hour. (*hangs up*)





Nargile – Work?

Hasanzade – Yes. New machines have arrived, I need to receive them.

Nargile (*hesitant*) Then...I should go...

Hasanzade – So, you start work tomorrow... Of course, it's not easy work in a cement factory.

Nargile – So what if it's hard?... You work there.

Hasanzade (*smiles*) I am different... My lungs are already used to the dust.

Nargile (*putting on her jacket*) Will you let me come here sometimes?

Hasanzade – Of course.

Nargile – Not sometimes, often! Every day!

Hasanzade – Come as you wish!

Nargile – But please don't think badly of me!

Hasanzade – Are you a bad girl?

Nargile (*decisively*) No, I am not a bad girl!

Hasanzade – Then why should I think badly of you?!

Nargile (*as if to herself*) Really... (*short pause*) Can you believe this? I have never been alone in a room with a strange man before?



Hasanzade – I do believe it. And what if you do stay... Men are not people eaters.

Nargile – No...That's not true.

Hasanzade – Why?

Nargile (*angry*) Because there are some who are!

Hasanzade – We should always look for the good... the bad do not live long...

Nargile – The opposite, the bad ones always take their time... (*short pause*) They say my father was the cleverest, most handsome and politest of people... He didn't return from the war... But Faraj did... and he has no intention of dying in the next hundred years.

Hasanzade – It is not about dying early or late...life is relative... But... remember that alpine flower ... it has been dry for a long time but we are still enraptured by its fragrance... good people are the same...even though they are not with us, their memories help us to live a good life... that is our consolation.

Nargile (*whispering*) It's true... for the sake of my father's dear memory... (*cries*) Thank God that I haven't done anything wrong or bad that he'd be ashamed of and have never been





tempted by a boy. I don't know, but if that is one of the reasons for my father's death then you know what the second reason is? (*Hasanzade looks at her in wonder*) You! (*short pause*) Watching you from the window, all those bad things that have happened in my life seemed very small to me and I was surprised how they hurt for only a while... it was like I was looking at those people from the sky: all the Farajs, the Dodiks... it felt that the world didn't have a place in my heart... I heard so many good things about you in the factory...and it made me happy... I was proud to tell everyone that you were our neighbor...

The phone rings. Hasanzade picks it up ...

Hasanzade – Speaking. I'm coming, coming... (*hangs up*)

Nargile – Sorry, I held you up.

Hasanzade – Don't worry.

Nargile (*pathetically*) Thank you... thank you very much.

Hasanzade – Thank you.

Nargile – See you soon.

Hasanzade – See you soon.

Nargile exits. Hasanzade watches after her for a while. Lights down.



Nargile's angry voice in the darkness.

Nargile's voice – I thought that the only Faraj was in our apartment.

Lights up on Nargile and Farajov, who is standing in front of her...

Nargile – Director Hasanzade sent me here, do you understand?

Farajov – I un...un... understand. B...b...but you are late; you were m...m...meant to come yesterday. I w...w...waited for you yesterday. You didn't come.

Nargile – (*mimicking his stammer*) I t...t...told you I was sick.

Farajov – That's your problem.

Nargile – Is it my problem, being sick?

Farajov – O...o...of course... I didn't make you sick.

Nargile – You are making me sick! You turn me into a bag of nerves... I am up to here with fighting you Faraj.

Farajov – M...m...my name is not Faraj. I am Badal.

Nargile – No! you are Faraj!

Nargile picks up the phone next to her. Farajov tries to stop her.

Farajov – D...d...don't touch the phone. Use the staff phone outside.





Nargile – Take your hands off me, this isn't your apartment. I am calling your director!

Farajov lets go...Nargile calls...

Nargile – Sorry to disturb you but there is another Faraj here; he's saying that he won't let me work and that the position is gone.

Nargile gives the phone to Farajov

Farajov – I h...h...hear you Mr. Director... but you told me she would come yesterday... and sh... sh...she is a strange girl... a b...b... bit wayward.

Nargile (*angry*) You are the crazy one!

(Farajov turns the phone towards her so that Hasanzade can hear her). You Farajs are ogres!

Farajov – Sister, my name is Badal.

Nargile – No! You all have one name.

Farajov (*into the phone*) M... M...Mr Director, do you hear? What? Ta...ta...take her on? Yes sir, I w... w...will.

Takes the phone from his ear but doesn't put it down yet...





Nargile – Okay? I've got my eye on you Farajs.

Farajov (*angry*) For God's sake... I s...s...said my name is Badal.

Nargile – No way! You are Faraj!

Farajov puts the phone down rather angrily.

Lights down...

Lights up on Hasanzade's room.

The same music...Hasanzade looking out the window, cigarette in hand...he turns back with a deep breath...

Khurshid enters...

Hasanzade – Aydin telegraphed just once to say he'd arrived safely, but that was eighteen days ago and I haven't heard anything from him since then.

Khurshid – Don't worry! He probably hasn't settled in properly yet.

Hasanzade – I can't stop worrying. Thousands of thoughts come to mind. (*short pause*) If you were still alive maybe I wouldn't be so close to him. You left us too early.

Khurshid – You have done your fatherly duty. Now Aydin should think about you.

Hasanzade – No...I don't want anyone to worry about me. I think about all this in my heart. I don't want anyone to hear about it.



Khurshid – You know, I wish I was alive more than ever now to support you at this lonely time.

Hasanzade – Don't blame me for being weak. I am not alone. I have a good job. The factory staff like me. The governors value and appreciate me. But I want to share all this only with you, the one who is closest to me.

Khurshid – This is how I knew you.

The music plays again...Hasanzade sits down on the sofa, tired.

Hasanzade (*smiling*) Today's celebrations in the factory have tired me out. We have produced much more cement than last year.

Khurshid –All of your successes in the plant were like a holiday for me. At those times there was such happiness and kindness in your face.

Hasanzade – In those days I had two wings to help me fly... one for you and the other for my job, (*short pause*) but then I lost my inspiration. I always believe that you see me and are happy for my success.

Slowly drowns towards sleep...

Music continues...

Do you remember?... You'd sing this song sometimes...





Lights dim and the music gradually becomes a song that Khurshid sings... it seems to come from far away... from another world... lights up and we see Hasanzade asleep on the sofa. He has a very happy expression on his face. Kurshid is no longer there... The balcony door opens. Nargile enters carrying an envelope. After looking for a while at Hasanzade, she goes to kiss his cheek. She bends very carefully over him.

Hasanzade moves. She jumps away quickly. Hasanzade sleeps on. She brings a blanket from the other room and covers him. Then she takes a half-empty tea cup from the table to the kitchen. She picks up the tablecloth, shakes it and lays it down again. She sits very carefully on the sofa near Hasanzade. She looks at the envelope she has brought. She folds it carefully and keeps it in her hand. She looks again at Hasanzade. She touches his hair with her other hand.

The same music continues. Lights dim. It is evening. There are flashes of lightning outside. Lights down. Lights up on Nargile, who is entering from another room with a swaddled baby in her arms. Hasanzade emerges from the darkness, looks at the baby, smiles and goes to touch it with his finger, but Nargile pulls the baby away. She threatens Hasanzade with her finger, "Not allowed!" Then she gestures with her hands that the baby is asleep. She puts it into a cradle...

She raises her head and looks at Hasanzade. With closed eyes she moves her face to Hasanzade's. A terrible crash



of thunder is heard outside. Lights down. Lights up. Nargile jumps up from the sofa. Hasanzade is woken by the noise. At first when he sees Nargile, he doesn't understand anything... but fully awake he smiles at her. Removing the blanket, he sits up.

Hasanzade – Sometimes dreams are so happy.

Nargile – What did you dream? Hasanzade (*humorously*) It won't come true if I tell you... Better that you tell me what you are doing here.

Nargile (*upset*) Why don't you want to share your dream with me?

Hasanzade lights a cigarette. Again a loud clap of thunder...the wind can also be heard in the willow leaves.

Hasanzade – It will pour with rain soon. What's that in your hand?

Nargile (*back down to earth joyfully*) It's a letter. From your son. (*handing over the envelope*) The postman recognized me; I met him at the door.

She is silent when she sees that Hasanzade is not listening and already opening the letter, he reads it very carefully and then puts it back into the envelope.

Nargile – What does he say?





Hasanzade – He is fine. And working as chief engineer in one of the oil fields.

Nargile – Has he got an apartment?

Hasanzade – Yes, he's rented one.

Nargile – He is a clever boy, he'll be fine.

Hasanzade – Did you put this blanket over me?

Nargile – (*nodding*) Who else?

Hasanzade – I thought perhaps Aunt Ayna did; she was coming for the laundry today. Why are you standing? Come, sit.

Nargile (*angrily*) I don't want to.

Hasanzade – Why?

Nargile – Because you don't love me.

Hasanzade (*with genuine surprise*) I don't love you?

Nargile – I don't mean that kind of love.

Hasanzade – What do you mean then?

Nargile (*angry*) Like me!

Hasanzade (*humorously*) I can't love like you. You are young.

Nargile – And you are old?

Hasanzade – Yes, twenty-six years older than you.



Nargile – Not twenty-six, twenty-five! I turned twenty the day before yesterday.

Hasanzade – Then we were born on the same day.

Nargile – Really?

Hasanzade – Yes...the day before yesterday, I turned forty-six.

Nargile – So what? Forty-six is nothing... (*suddenly angry*) I can't understand why age matters so much to everyone.

Hasanzade (*smiling*) Age is real. You can't ignore the fact!

Nargile – For love age doesn't matter...

Hasanzade – You think that way when you are young. When I was eighteen or nineteen, I was in love with a lady twenty-four years older than me.

Nargile – What happened then?

Hasanzade – Then... (*short pause*) Then I married Aydin's mother.

Nargile – Did you love her?

Hasanzade – Yes.

Nargile – Then... the love you had for the previous one was puppy love!

Hasanzade – Oh I don't know... maybe.

Nargile – What about her now?



Hasanzade – I guess she is a seventy year old woman now.

Nargile (*after a short pause, puzzled*) What are you saying?

Hasanzade – Nothing...just making conversation.

Nargile (*sitting near him, kindly*)

– Even if you don't love me, I will always...even when I'm seventy... love you and you'll be something like a hundred. I will soon get older and die before you... You will see... (short pause) Please, don't talk about age any more. Ok?

Hasanzade – Alright, I won't. (*lights a cigarette and there's a pleasant sound from outside. Someone singing 'Dark Eyes'. Nargile takes on a cold expression. Hasanzade listens.*)

*I came to your room to wake you,
Dark Eyes, to wake you.
How beautiful He created you,
your Maker,*

Dark Eyes, your Maker.

That's our excavator driver, Rashid.

Nargile (*coldly*) I know.

Hasanzade – How do you know?

Nargile – I saw him in the factory. He's a self-centred guy.

Hasanzade – Self-centred? No, then you don't know him.



Nargile – I know him. I wrote out his duty-sheet twice. Just because he is quite handsome and has a pretty voice, he thinks he's somebody!..

*The song continues.
The rose is blowing,
My patience is going...*

(Nargile stands up before the song is over) You said you have some laundry.

Hasanzade – Don't worry, Aunt Ayna will take it. Some time you will make strong Turkish coffee for us and we'll drink it.

Nargile (*joyfully*) If you like I'll make it now.

Hasanzade – No, I've called a meeting at the factory.

Nargile – Whenever I come over you always have a meeting or something to do (*laughs*) Whenever they told us there was a meeting at school, I would bunk off.

Hasanzade – What did you do?

Nargile (*laughing loudly*) Ran away!..(*Rashid's singing continues. Nargile becomes cold and serious*) It seems the excavator driver is determined to give us a concert today.

Hasanzade – He is a young boy; he enjoys singing.





Nargile – Oi...oi... young boy.
Hasanzade – Of course...being young means singing.

Nargile (*abruptly*) I don't know! I don't think about such things. See you (*wants to leave*)

Hasanzade – Wait. Why are getting upset?

Nargile (*sharply*) Because my words don't mean a thing to you.

Hasanzade – What are you talking about! Which words?

Nargile – Which words!... asked you not to talk about age again, and you promised.

Hasanzade – Oh, sorry, I forgot... Alzheimer's.

Nargile – You see?! You'll never change. You have Alzheimer's do you? But you can remember all 800 workers' and their children's names in the factory!?

Hasanzade – How do you know?

Nargile – People talk, I listen. Should I block my ears?

Hasanzade – Why should you block your ears, it's good to hear nice things.

Nargile (*suddenly laughs out loud*) You see, you admit that you are good.



Hasanzade – I was speaking generally.

Nargile – Okay. Let's not have this conversation again....I'm going...

Walks quickly towards the door. Suddenly returns to Hasanzade. Standing in front of him, she looks into his eyes...with her left hand squeezes Hasanzade's hand and then exits quickly. Hasanzade holds the hand she had squeezed. It is clear that his thoughts are far away. The usual music plays. Lights fade and down. Lights up on Nargile's room. She is singing to herself and rolling dough on the table; then she cuts it to prepare a meal. She is in a good mood. The phone rings. She runs to pick it up. Lights up only on her and on the opposite end two boys and the blonde girl.

Blonde Girl – Hello, Nar. Where have you been?

Nargile – At the factory...or at home...I am very busy now.

Blonde Girl – Wow!...busy.

Nargile (*joking*) Of course.

Blonde Girl – Nar, is it true, everyone is saying that you are with the cement factory director Hasanzade?

Nargile – We're not just together... I like him...I love him... is that clear?

Blonde Girl (*coquettish*) I understand Nar, of course... Silver hair,



handsome... car...position...money...
in a nutshell.....great American style!
(hushed tone) A bit of a Don Juan?

Nargile (very seriously) Don't
you speak about him like that!

Blonde Girl (still coquettish) It
seems we are very serious....perhaps
you want to marry him?

Nargile - I'm in the middle of
something, call me later...

*The Boys urge Blonde Girl to get to the
main point.*

Blonde Girl - Nar, there's
a dance tonight at the Sailors' House.

Nargile - Dance?

Blonde Girl - Ahaaa...(short
pause) are you coming?

Nargile - No I can't.

Blonde Girl - (coquettish to the
Second Boy) There's someone still
waiting to meet you.

Nargile - Who?

Blonde Girl - I told you the other
day.

Nargile - I'm not coming

Blonde Girl - Ah, you are
getting old now Nar! Okay... See you.

*The Second Boy, who wants to meet
Nargile, speaks into the phone.*

Second Boy - Bye, bye, Nar!



Scarface Davud, baring his teeth and wild
expression bites Blonde Girl's ear. She
shouts and hangs up the phone. Lights on
them down. Nargile puts the phone down
and returns to her work. Nazakat enters
carrying a plate covered by a white cloth.

Nazakat (putting the plate on
table) Hello daughter.

Nargile - Hi, Mom.

Nazakat - I brought a cutlet for you.

Nargile - Faraj is on a business
trip? (Nazakat looks aside and nods)
Why have you put yourself to this
trouble?

Nazakat - Why do you say such
things? Are you taking revenge?

Nargile - I have never thought of
taking revenge on you, Mom. If I had
such power...

Nazakat - Think about your own
life first. Then think about changing
the world. Faraj's boss wanted to
come on a matchmaking mission
for his son. After hearing about
Hasanzade, he gave up.

Nargile - Did Faraj tell you this?

Nazakat - And if he did?

Nargile - I'm just asking.

Nazakat - Faraj convinced him
that it's not true.

Nargile - Why did Faraj have to
lie for me?





Nazakat (*very kindly*) You can make mistakes when you are young, but not such bad ones. I am not here to argue with you. Be wise and enjoy your youth, your beauty... Perhaps Faraj's boss will come to us soon.... you know his son, he's not a bad boy...well educated, a good job.

Nargile – If he's such a good boy, why did he throw his young wife and two kids onto the street?

Nazakat – Threw them out?...He didn't want her and divorced her. He's not the only one to do that. It's not right to interfere in a family's secrets!

Nargile – Sunik knows him very well.

Nazakat – Oh!...One day you'll make me throw myself under a train.

Nargile (*sincerely surprised*) Because of me?

Nazakat – You are my daughter... I gave birth to you.

Nargile (*upset*) Eh, Mom... I shouldn't have been born?... But unfortunately, sometimes having a child doesn't depend on people's wishes. You had better tell Faraj that I won't marry his boss's son!

Nazakat (*standing up, angry*) Fine! Don't marry him. If you find anyone to marry you in this town, I will change my name.



Nargile (*laughing loudly*) Look how you want to frighten me!

Nazakat – Alright... we will see.

Nazakat exits. Nargile continues her work. Lights down gradually.

Lights up and we see Nargile on Hasanzade's balcony. She lays a white tablecloth. She fills a jug with water and puts flowers into a small vase. The door bell rings. She opens the door and Hasanzade enters. He is very tired, but does not want to show it.

Hasanzade (*looking at the table*) How splendid!

Nargile – I've made some Turkish coffee for you...(runs to bring it in)

Hasanzade (*sincerely*) You are a good girl!

Nargile – In what way?

Hasanzade – In every way: intellectual, beautiful, witty.

Nargile (*looking at him sharply, excited*) I beg you, on your son's life, tell me the truth. Do you really think that or are you just trying to make this miserable girl happy?

Hasanzade (*seriously*) I always say what I think. A girl like you, who has had such a life, does not need false praise.

Nargile – (*touched*) Thank you, thank you very much!





Rashid's song is heard:

I came to your room to wake you,
Dark Eyes, to wake you.

How beautiful He created you,
your Maker,
Dark Eyes, your Maker.

Nargile starts and looks out of the window angrily. This doesn't escape Hasanzade. Short pause... song continues....

Hasanzade (*not looking at her directly*) Today is a special day for Rashid.

Nargile (*thoughtfully*) Because he had his photo published in a newspaper?

Hasanzade – Not just that... He became the Republic shooting champion yesterday.

Nargile – Ooh..ooh... (*the song continues*) You had better ban him from singing this song.

Hasanzade – Why?

Nargile – Because he's getting at me...

Hasanzade – How do you know?
Nargile (*angrily*) I've told him a hundred times, my name is Nargile... He's started again, Dark Eyes, Dark Eyes...

Hasanzade – So what? Let him say Dark Eyes.

Nargile – I don't want him to.





The song continues:

The rose is blowing,
My patience is going.
Wipe your tears Dark Eyes,
Enough, no sobbing

Hasanzade (to himself) He's a good boy.

Nargile – Well, I think hitting a target and doing four days' work in one doesn't make you a good person.

Hasanzade (seriously) True. But his goodness is in his attitude towards people, in his loyalty to our company and the state... (humorously) on top of that, his courage and nice singing...

Nargile (Oh hold me up, I'm going to faint...

Hasanzade (dreamily) Maybe I see my youth in him, that's why I like him.

Nargile (sarcastically) Perhaps you used to sing like him as well?

Hasanzade (smiling) You're being sarcastic, but I really was a good singer.

Nargile (still sarcastic) Why don't you sing now?

Hasanzade (breathing deeply) I gave up. It's been a long time since I stopped.

Nargile (angry) Such sentimentality doesn't suit you.



Hasanzade – You are right...but you can't always live quietly. You were right that day when you said you can't live among people like Robinson Crusoe.

Rashid sings:

You put a braid of your hair around
my neck,
Dark Eyes, a braid of your hair.

Nargile (angrily) Please, don't praise him anymore in my presence.

Hasanzade – The words are true. And what's wrong with praising him?

Nargile – I don't want that. Do you want another coffee?

Hasanzade – This is enough, thank you. (pause. Nargile in a bad mood) Why are you suddenly upset?

Nargile – Because I am right... (raging) What is the difference? Before it was Faraj ruining my life and now you...why? Whichever way, it doesn't matter... I had hope that one day I would be free of Faraj's slavery (short pause. Hasanzade smokes) Stop smoking, it'll kill you! (pause) it is impossible to understand you... Sometimes, it seems that you love me too... but when the conversation becomes serious.....





Hasanzade – You are a clever girl... The reason...

Nargile – I beg you, stop this tired old excuse... I told you before and I'm telling you now, age has nothing to do with love. Such stupid reasons can't stop real love (*suddenly agitated*) Why are you so concerned about the welfare of others, but not your own?

Hasanzade – As with everything, altruism has its place in this life... (*short pause*) Love is like a living organism... it gets older and one day it dies.

Nargile – Are you saying that I might not love you in the future? That will never happen!

Hasanzade (*smiling*) I am not worried for myself.

Nargile – Don't be afraid for me at all. I yearned for you so much ... (taking his hand) My dear!... My hero!

Hasanzade (*politely taking back his hand*) Come, sit down please. I want to ask you something.

Nargile (*very happily takes a chair and sits in front of him*) Ok... ask!..

Hasanzade – Aren't you afraid of gossips, or people's tittle-tattle?

Nargile (*the same happy face*) No, I am not afraid!

Hasanzade – Why?



Nargile – What do you mean "why"? Good people don't gossip. Bad people burn in hell!

Hasanzade (*laughing*) Sometimes you speak sobeautifully.

Nargile (*very upset*) Sometimes?! So...you wouldn't expect good speech from someone like me?

Hasanzade – Not sometimes, always!

Nargile (*not listening, to herself*) Perhaps Faraj was right?.. Maybe I really am mad?

Hasanzade (*agitated*) I was joking.

Nargile (*the same thoughts*) You wouldn't joke for no reason.

Hasanzade – (*with regret*) Why not? Sometimes even very clever people can say stupid things... (*Nargile looks at him, shaking her head. It is as if she has just noticed his gray hair, the lines on his face. As if every second Hasanzade is getting older before her eyes.*) A thousand apologies. I shouldn't have said that, it was bad of me.

Nargile (*smiling, sadly*) You bad?

Hasanzade (*confused*) Believe me, in my eyes, you are always a clever, sensitive girl.

Rashid sings:

I am your captive, you question me
Dark Eyes, you question me.



Nargile (stopping her ears, shouts)
Go and shut him up!

Nargile falls onto the sofa, sobbing loudly. Hasanzade gives her water.

She drinks it all and then sits up, listens to the outside. Gathering that the singing has stopped, she gradually calms down. She dries her eyes and gets up, smoothing her dress as she does so.

I am sorry, I ruined your day, 'bye.
Hasanzade (anxious) Wait, where are you going?

Nargile – I feel very tired... I'd better go home and rest.

(She exits. Lights alternate quickly between Hasanzade anxiously watching her go and on Nargile hurrying to go home. Rashid's song is heard throughout – it seems to follow Nargile's every move. By the time she has disappeared and the music has faded, the lights have dimmed. Finally, lights down. Lights up. Hasanzade standing, anxious, in front of the window. There are flashes of lightning, followed by thunder. Suddenly the thunder is replaced by the ringing of the phone. He walks quickly to the phone, as if expecting good news. Lights up on Nazakat on the other end of the line; she is angry and accompanied by Faraj.)

Hasanzade – Hello.

Nazakat – Behave yourself!



Hasanzade – Excuse me?
Nazakat – I'm not asking you, I'm telling you to behave yourself!

Hasanzade – Who is speaking?
Nazakat – This is Nargile's mother.

Hasanzade – Ah, her mother...

Nazakat – You have a son older than her. I will disgrace you.

Hasanzade – My dear woman, what have I done?

Nazakat – You know very well what you have done! (*Faraj nods*) She is a child; she doesn't know what she's doing. But you?! Why are you using your job, your position to seduce a young girl? (*Faraj nods*). You should be ashamed of yourself! If you don't have a conscience at least fear God. I will report you. I will stone you in the street.

Hasanzade – You are talking rubbish. She is a very clever girl. And I have never had any bad thoughts about her.

Nazakat – She rejects everyone who loves her because of you.

Hasanzade – She returns it to those that she likes.

Nazakat – Why do you invite her to your place? (*short pause*) You see, you can't answer!





Hasanzade (*calmly*) Have you talked to your daughter about this?

Nazakat – You have seduced her so that she doesn't even talk to me.

Hasanzade – If you were a good mother, she wouldn't hide anything from you.

Nazakat – It's not your business if I am a good or bad mother. (*Faraj nods*)

Hasanzade – No, it is...because I take an interest in her life.

Nazakat – Who do you think you are to be interested in her life?!

Hasanzade (*cannot contain himself*) Who are you then?

Nazakat – I am her mother! Do you hear! Her mother!

Hasanzade – Just because you gave birth to her? If you think like this, you are mistaken...giving birth is just the beginning of the work... your main job is to raise the child, to prepare them for life, for society... but you, together with your husband, kicked her out of her father's house at a time that she really needed help... and human communication.

Nazakat – Did she tell you this?

Hasanzade – It doesn't matter who told me...What would you say if her father came back now? How



could you look him in the eye? Of course you were young; you wouldn't be without a husband all your life...No one, even he, would have asked that from you. But getting married doesn't give you the right to violate your duty as a mother and forget your parental responsibilities. It doesn't mean not talking to a helpless girl who has lost her father, and destroying her personality by kicking her out of her apartment. If your husband is there, let him hear this as well. You are also answerable to justice, (*very angry, agitated*) criminals... you are no different to those who kill their child. But some do it quickly, you did it gradually!... Is that clear? You have destroyed her self-belief.

Nazakat slams the phone down, wails loudly. Faraj looks at her angrily and goes to another room. Lights down on Nazakat.

Lights stronger on Hasanzade Terrible thunder outside. Raining hard. Frequent lightning sometimes illuminates

Hasanzade, sometimes Nargile, who is standing by the window in her room. She is suddenly terrified. She steps away from the window and looks around the room, scared. She goes over to the radio and turns it on; loud music fills the room. She quickly turns it off. In silence she listens. The thunder continues, she goes

to the phone and dials a number.





Lights up on Hasanzade, who is still looking out of the window. The phone rings. Hasanzade answers.

Hasanzade – Hello. (the girl remains silent. Her frightened expression calms as she hears him) Hello... (she doesn't speak).

Hasanzade hangs up patiently.
Lights down on Hasanzade's room.

Lights up on Nargile's room.
Nargile reluctantly puts the phone down.
She has a sorrowful expression.

Thunder is heard again, but she is not frightened this time... Nothing matters for her now. She walks over to the sofa and sits there. Pause. Thunder continues.

The phone rings. She jumps up to pick it up. Lights up on Blonde Girl on the other end of the line. The latest dance music is playing on a gramophone. Blonde Girl's two friends are dancing with two girls; there are two other boys dancing with each other. There are wine bottles etc on a table. Blonde Girl holds the phone so that Nargile can hear the music. Nargile listens.

Blonde Girl – Hello, Nar...

Nargile – Hi.

Blonde Girl – Can you hear.....?

Nargile – Yes, I can.

Blonde Girl – This is your favorite dance.

Nargile – I know.

Blonde Girl – We are at Scarface Dodik's place.



Nargile – Have fun.

Blonde Girl – Come over!

Nargile – Me?

Blonde Girl -Aha

Nargile (weakly) Nooo

Blonde Girl – Honestly, your problem make me crazy.

Nargile – Why...what problem?

Blonde Girl – Do you really need to ask? (upset) Nar, why are you doing this? Why do you spend all your precious time like this? You won't be young forever! (tearful) No conscience! Do you know how my heart aches for you?! I didn't want to call, but couldn't not call. I can't enjoy anything without you. Understand?

Nargile (in the same weak voice) Thank you, Surik.

Blonde girl – No need to thank me, get up and come over.

Nargile (hesitant) Have you see the weather outside?

Blonde Girl – At the moment I don't know anything, and don't want to know...I told you, come over! (short pause) Are you coming?

Nargile (slowly) Ok.

Blonde Girl – Yes?

Nargile (decisive) Yes.

Blonde Girl – Big kiss Nar!
(happily hangs up, shouts) Nar is coming!





*Boys (all together) Coming?!
Lights down on that end of the line;
only Nargile is seen. She puts the
phone down and begins to change.
She puts on make-up. She picks up her
bag and is about to leave the room
when the phone rings again. She
returns and picks it up. Hasanzade is
seen on the other end of the line.*

Hasanzade – Nargile.
Nargile (*trying to contain her
excitement*) Yes.
Hasanzade – Are you alone?
Nargile – Yes. (*angry*) Who else
could be here?
Hasanzade (*gently*) I thought
perhaps your friend.
Nargile (*breathing deeply*) I have
no one in...
Hasanzade – Aren't you afraid?
Nargile – Of what?
Hasanzade – You told me that
you were afraid of thunder in your
childhood.
Nargile – I'm not a child anymore.
Hasanzade – True... (*pause.*
Thunder continues) It seems you are
still angry.
Nargile – What if I am?
Hasanzade – I apologize again.
(*pause*) Why don't you speak?
Nargile – Are you apologizing for
hurting me?





Hasanzade – No. I apologize for my bad mistake.

Nargile – Ok... Let's not speak about it anymore.

Hasanzade – So you forgive me?

Nargile (*kindly*) Are you alone as well?

Hasanzade (*humorously*) I was born alone.

Nargile (*very kindly*) Aren't you bored?

Hasanzade – You get used to it.

Nargile (*sad*) Ah, poor you.

Hasanzade – Why poor me?...

I'm trying to say that I am used to being bored.

Nargile (*more sadly*) I know...it hurts me to see you feeling lonely.

Hasanzade – Thank you.

Nargile – Oh... (*shouting*) I didn't ask you to thank me, do you understand? No need to thank me.

Hasanzade (*humorously*) Please! My ears.

Nargile – I don't care.

Hasanzade (*with the same humour*) Why not? I won't be able to hear you....

Nargile – I don't think you hear me anyway.

Hasanzade – I always want to hear your voice – as long as the world exists.



Nargile – Enough...Stop it... I don't want to hear such banal words. (*patiently*) The twentieth century requires concrete action... you understand?!.. (*pause*). Hasanzade seems to have come up against a brick wall. He seems bewildered. He recognizes for the first time the sadness of his life... What's happened? Why are you quiet?

Hasanzade (*breathing deeply*) Nothing...I'm listening to you.

Nargile – I've said all I need to. Didn't you hear?

Hasanzade – I heard.

Short pause.

Nargile – Ok then, good night.

She puts the phone down. Hasanzade holds the phone before his eyes and looks at it hopelessly. Then he hangs up. Lights down on him. Nargile moves away from the phone and stands in the middle of the room. She raises her bag and looks at it. She recalls something and in anger she throws it to one side. With the same anger she takes off her coat and jacket and lies down on the sofa with her face in her hands. Lights down.

Lights up on Hasanzade checking and signing some papers behind his desk... In the distance, Rashid is heard singing 'Dark Eyes'. Hasanzade pauses for a moment and listens, then continues





with his work. The song suddenly stops.
Pause. Farajov enters hurriedly.

Farajov – M...M...Mr. Director...
that girl...

Hasanzade (raising his head)
Which girl?

Farajov – The one you employed
the other day...Nargile...

Hasanzade – Yes, what has she
done?..

Farajov – Sh...sh...she nearly
killed Rashid.

Hasanzade – Why?

Farajov – T...t...telling him not
to sing.... You kn...kn...know
Rashid. He is a funny guy, likes jokes.
He a...a...asked her 'A b...b...
beautiful girl like you takes notice
of this song?...and she took the
locksmith's knife and threw it at him!
I...i...if he hadn't d...d...ducked he
wouldn't be a...a...alive...

Hasanzade (calmly) And?

Farajov – Then she was really
ashamed and was about to cry.

Hasanzade – What did Rashid say?

Farajov – What could he say?
He stood and looked at her for a while
and th...th...then said 'I'm sorry
Nargile. If my song irritates you that
much then I won't sing anymore.' She
is v...v...very dangerous.



Pause. Hasanzade lights a cigarette.

Hasanzade – Okay... you can
go... (Farajov exits. Hasanzade walks
round the office. The phone rings.
Hasanzade picks it up).

Hasanzade – Hello...speaking.
Nazakat – I guess you know who
is speaking?

Hasanzade – Yes, I do.

Nazakat – Have you mentioned
our conversation to Nargile?

Hasanzade – No I haven't.
What's happened?

Nazakat – Nothing...I just
wanted to ask you not to tell her. She
has been so angry these last few
days. She is very scared. I am
worried.

Hasanzade – Don't worry, she
will be fine.

Nazakat – I hope I didn't disturb
you?!

Hasanzade – No, you're not...

Nazakat – I was very rude to you
the other day.

Hasanzade – It doesn't matter.

Nazakat – Since then I can't hate
you. I could sense truth in your voice
and you spoke with such feeling.

Hasanzade (impatiently) Please...

Nazakat – You have a right to
reproach me. I've been cruel and



cowardly. But do you really think I have lost my maternal right to her?

Hasanzade (*sharply*) I don't know... Maybe not.

Nazakat – Her heart is as cold as ice towards me. She wants me to forget her, but I swear I have always loved her more than my other three children.

Hasanzade – I believe you...but let's not talk about this. 'Want' is used such a lot.

Nazakat (*in tears*) My biggest wish in this world is for her happiness. I have never said anything to her.

Hasanzade (*interrupts, angry*) That is the problem. You haven't said anything, but she needed to talk...do you understand? People. You are her mother, you could tell her many things... (*short pause. With these words Hasanzade seems to have got something off his chest. He continues slowly*) She hasn't seen all life's difficulties yet... She wasn't selfish. Her wings weren't strong enough. She needed others' care and encouragement. (*short pause*) But you were scared to even talk to her in your husband's presence...

Nazakat – I was a weak woman. I wasn't free.



Hasanzade – Why? You haven't been kept locked in the basement.

Nazakat – I have always lived in fear. (*Faraj approaches from behind her. He stops on hearing Nazakat's last words. Nazakat doesn't see him*) Even now, I still feel that I am his slave.

Hasanzade – Why? Does he beat you? Hurt you?

Nazakat – No.

Hasanzade – I am sorry for speaking so candidly... Perhaps you love him so much?

Nazakat (*sharply*) No. I'm just afraid. I thought that if he leaves me, I'll be a useless, helpless.

Hasanzade (*angry*) You've lost your grip on reality. While the country and its people have been going through very hard times. You were only thinking about yourself!...If it had become a little harder, you could even have left your small daughter and run away!

Nazakat (*angry*) How dare you talk like this?!

Hasanzade – Why are you getting angry? You really did leave her!

Faraj coughs. Nazakat is startled and sees him. Automatically she hides the phone behind her back.





Faraj – Who are you talking to?
What are you talking about? (*Nazakat stares at him with wide open eyes.*
Faraj repeats the questions in the same tone) Who are you talking to?
What are you talking about?

Nazakat – The talk was about my daughter...

Faraj – Put the phone down!
Nazakat (*with sudden unbelievable anger*) I won't!.. And stop chasing me all day and night, like an ugly phantom...she is my daughter! I gave birth to her! She is the only memory of the man who was my first and only love in the world.

Faraj – What?

Nazakat – I hate you!

Faraj – You hate me?

Nazakat – I've never loved you!

Faraj – Put the phone down.

Nazakat (*holding the phone to herself*) I won't...all these years you have deprived me of my rights as a mother... (*crying*) You forced me to throw out my dearest daughter from her father's place... you... you did!

Nargile enters Hasanzade's office... he puts the phone down quickly. Lights down on Nazakat and Faraj.



Nargile – Tell them to give me my papers, I don't want to work at the factory any more.

Hasanzade – Why? Rashid has already promised you he won't sing again.

Nargile – I can't work with him anymore.

Hasanzade – But why?

Nargile (*agitated*) Because I don't want to love anyone, apart from you!

Hasanzade (*smiling, humorously*) You don't "want" to love anyone, or do not love?

Nargile (*after a long and attentive look*) I don't love anyone apart from you and don't want to love either! Is that clear now?

Hasanzade (*serious and upset, very softly*) It is clear!..

Three young workers enter.

First Worker (*to Nargile*) – To be honest, we wouldn't have expected such behavior from you.

Second Worker – How could you throw a knife at a man like Rashid?!

Third Worker – Perhaps you don't know him well?! Everyone loves him like a brother.





First Worker – This is the first time anything so serious has happened in our factory.

Nargile (*angry*) – Why don't you mind your own business?

Second Worker – What do you mean our business?!

Hasanzade – Nargile is not familiar with factory life... (*indicating the workers*) They are Rashid's friends. They work in the same team. That's why they care.

First Worker – Did he insult you?

Nargile (*angrily*) No!

First Worker – Does his singing remind you of something bad in the past?

Nargile (*losing control*) Are you here to judge me or what?

First Worker – There could be charges. You could have killed him!

Hasanzade (*gets up from his chair*) Okay guys, let's hope we don't have a repeat of this incident. Now let's end this conversation. I will speak to Rashid as well. (*humorously*) If you want I'll apologize.

Nargile – What? Apologize? Never!

Hasanzade (*the same humorous expression*) Look I gave you this job,



so I am responsible for your actions. Aren't I?

Short, tense pause

Nargile (*softly*) I will apologize myself.

First Worker – Since you understand your mistake, there's no need to apologize.

Second Worker (*to Nargile*) In the future you will see how good people like Rashid and his friends are.

Third Worker (*humorously*) Then you won't throw knives at him but.....flowers.

As the workers exit, First Worker slows and turns to Nargile.

First Worker – But you should know that Rashid has never liked anyone as much as he likes you!

Nargile turns her head quickly to say something, but the workers have already gone. Tense pause.

Nargile (*softly, guiltily*) I am sorry. (*exits quickly*)

Hasanzade (*watching her go*) Why do I feel so lonely and upset every time she leaves? As if she won't come back again? (*short pause*) If that's how it is, why can't I make a definite decision? Maybe the unusual





beauty of this new spring morning frightens me? Maybe I have become addicted to belief in the power of human love? Maybe I am afraid of the light and turn to the darkness?

Lights gradually down.

Lights up. Nargile's room.

She is sewing and listening to the radio.

The door bell rings.

Nargile (without pausing) Come in.

Blonde Girl enters.

Blonde Girl – Hi, Nar... (*kisses her*) you have no conscience. I wanted to see you. I couldn't stand waiting, so I came to you (*looking around*) You have such a nice room!

Nargile – Welcome, have a seat!

Blonde Girl (*looking at her*) What is this? You're making your dowry?

Nargile (*smiling*) Aha.

Blonde Girl – Nar, are you really going to marry Hasanzade?

Nargile – You asked that before ... Yes, I love him!

Blonde Girl – Then it seems there is something between you two that I can't see, or understand.

Nargile – Maybe.

Blonde Girl – Although he's older, he is still very handsome.





Nargile – It is not about being handsome.

Blonde Girl – If it's not about being handsome, money, or age, what is it then?

Nargile – I don't know.

Blonde Girl (*with a coquettish smile*) You know very well. Yesterday, as he was going home from the factory, he caught my attention and Dodik lost control (*laughs loudly*). Aren't you jealous?

Nargile – On the contrary... I want all the girls and women to be dumbstruck when they see him; he deserves it.

Blonde Girl – Really?

Nargile – I don't know how I existed before I knew him! He is the air, water and life to me. (*Blonde Girl suddenly takes on a sad expression*) What about you and Dodik?

Blonde Girl – Eh!

Nargile – What eh...?

Blonde Girl (*slowly*) I'm fed up with him... every day the same jokes, same conversations....

Nargile – Aren't you getting married?

Blonde Girl – He used to say, "let's get married" every day,, but now he doesn't say anything. Why should



I care about him? (*pause. Nargile still sewing. Blonde Girl looks out of the window*) Nar.

Nargile – Yes?!

Blonde Girl – Can you ask Hasanzade to give me a job at the factory?

Nargile – Are you serious?

Blonde Girl (*nods*) Would he? Nargile (*excited*) Of course... But you need to know that the workers there are very serious people.

Blonde Girl (*smiling*) Don't worry... you know that I can be serious when I want.

Nargile (*humorously*) You can't be late for work.

Blonde Girl – I know...I'm tired of sleeping till midday anyway.

Nargile (*puts her sewing to one side, passionately*) Hasanzade will definitely help. We can work together. It's great, the day whizzes by.

Short pause.

Blonde Girl – Nar, I am so unhappy.

Nargile – Why? What's happened to you?

Blonde Girl – I don't know... Night outs...dancing...wine...I don't think there is any joy or meaning to





my life... mother and father at work... empty apartment... I don't know what to do... How many times can you alter one dress to be fashionable (*about to cry*) and how many times can you kiss that Scarface Dodik? ... sometimes I even want to smash his face in and throw myself into the sea.

Nargile – Slow down.

Blonde Girl – I'm not joking Nar... (*pause*) Ah... how good it was at school ...At least I knew what I was going to do tomorrow... At least I had an aim – to finish school... but now.

Nargile – School was great because we were connected by a common bond. Even though we had bad times at home, we could forget them at school...

Blonde Girl – I could kill that teacher who didn't let us go to university.

Nargile – We would have finished university as well one day. That's not it.

Blonde Girl – What is it then?

Nargile – Hasanzade says that a person cannot be happy on their own, outside society and its struggle.

Blonde Girl (*covers her ears*)
Argh, more propaganda.



Nargile – No I think that too now, that's really how it is. While everyone else is living, working towards a goal, how could you stand aside from that?

Blonde Girl (*thoughtful*) I don't want anything... I can't love anything, Nar. We are living in a nuclear age... what about love?... If millions of people could die at the push of a button, then what about love?

Nargile – Stop thinking like that. I promise you everything will be fine... we will work together, like the old days at school, we'll meet every day... There is a nice film club at the factory, we could go there every night to watch movies... We could do part-time uni. Hasanzade can help us... (*proud*) We aren't helpless like before!

Blonde Girl – I can't trust anyone, Nar... I feel I'm millions of kilometres from people. My father is with his lover every day after work and my mother is dying of jealousy... they fight and argue every day, eh!

Nargile – Don't worry, we won't live like them. We can start a completely new life for ourselves... If you want we can ask Hasanzade





to find a job at the factory for Dodik as well...

Blonde Girl – To hell with him... he wouldn't work.

Nargile – How long will he live off his father?

Blonde Girl – Don't worry. He's used to being spoonfed...*(stands up)* I'm off, Nar.

Nargile – What's the hurry?!

Blonde Girl – I'm seeing a dress maker.

Nargile – Oh, a new dress?

Blonde Girl – Where's the money for a new dress? I'm just revamping my old red dress. So are you going to speak to your sweetheart about me?

Nargile – Surik!

Blonde Girl – Sorry... my damned tongue's old habits *(looks at herself in the mirror...)* Nar, I met an amazing boy for the third time. I gaze into his eyes and he looks like he's about to faint. I laugh and his face goes all red. He's a very polite boy *(laughs...Nazakat enters. Looks coldly at Blonde Girl... Blonde Girl's laugh dies under her cold expression.)*

Blonde Girl – Ok Nar... See you...



Nargile – See you. *(Blonde Girl exits). (To her mother)* Why didn't you greet her?

Nazakat – I told you the other day you should stop seeing them *(tense pause)* and come home.

Nargile – Return to Faraj's place?

Nazakat – To your own home I said!

Nargile – Why start on this again? That's all over.

Nazakat – I took his desk out of your room.

Nargile – Sorry, has the world turned upside down?

Nazakat – You're torturing me! I don't know what to do...I hate Faraj, I hate myself ...I told him that I hate him. What else can I do?! *(in tears)* It's been twelve years and I never saw your father in a dream. But now he's there every night in my head...he doesn't speak to me. What do you both want from me? I have only one life, if it will help, take it from me... I swear I will be grateful, at least I will sleep peacefully in the grave... I am bad... but I haven't done anything on purpose, at my own wish. Please, you must understand me.

Nargile – *(strokes her mother's head)* Be calm, Mom.





Nazakat – My daughter! (*hugging her*)

Nargile (*upset*) Calm down, Mom!

Nazakat – After getting your love back, I want to live differently.

Nargile (*kindly*) There's no need for this.

Nazakat – No, you should come back... I won't be alright until I see you in your father's apartment, near me.

Nargile (*humorously*) What if I was married?

Nazakat – Getting married is different. I want to send you to your husband's house as a mother should. Faraj doesn't know, but I have been saving money from my wages for you for years. You will get married in style.

Nargile (*happily, half joking*) So, I will have a dowry... (*kisses her mother*)

Nazakat (*surprised and happy*) That's the first time you've kissed me in years. I give you a mother's blessing and wish you every happiness.

Nargile (*heartfelt*) Amen! (Pause. They hug. Lights only on them. Both gaze into the distance. They are both calm.) Do you remember when I was



four or five years old...a dog bit my leg...and Faraj was on holiday?

Nazakat (*whispering*). I do remember.

Nargile – The bite became infected and you stayed awake for nights ...and I asked you to tell me fairy tales every night. You were so tired and one night I asked you to sing to me... you sang...then suddenly stopped...I looked and you had fallen asleep...(*hugs her mother tightly*) Can you sing what you remember of that song?

*Short pause. The same music plays.
Nazakat is lost in thought. Time stops.*

Nazakat – No, I don't remember that song.

Nargile (*with feeling*) Don't worry, Mom... everything will be fine.

Nazakat – I will fight for the rest of my life for your happiness.

Nargile – Thank you Mom (*kisses her*) It's been so many years since I felt your breath on my cheek like this.

Nazakat (*gets up*) You are coming back today and tomorrow we'll go to the dressmaker.

Nargile – Why?

Nazakat – I've bought some fabric for us to make you a new dress.





Nargile (*happy as a child*)
Really?... Is it good quality?

Nazakat – You will like it...I think
it's very good.

Nargile (*still childishly happy*) At
last, I will wear a new dress as well.

Nazakat – Your mum bought
something else for you as well.

Nargile – What is it?

Nazakat – You will see.

Nargile – Maybe...(*coquettishly
pointing to her feet*) is it a new pair
of shoes just arrived in the shops..?
(*Nazakat nods*) Thanks Mom. I
couldn't imagine that one day I would
wear such expensive shoes...But
there is one other problem, Mom...

Nazakat – What now?

Nargile – I don't want to see that
man's face again.

Nazakat – You won't see his face
again...I have closed the middle room
door.

Nargile – Let me stay here.

Nazakat – You're starting again..?

Nargile – Ok...

Nazakat – See you.

Nargile – See you Mom.

Nazakat exits. Nargile watches her go.

*Lights fade and down on Nargile's
happy expression.*

*Lights up. Hasanzade's room. Everything
in a mess. Hasanzade is putting his*



*stuff into suitcases. The phone rings...
Lights up on Nazakat on the other end
of the line.*

Hasanzade – Hello!

Nazakat – Please forgive me
disturbing you again.

Hasanzade – It's fine, please...

Nazakat (*suppressing her
anxiety*) You know... we made up.

Hasanzade – Congratulations...
I was expecting that.

Nazakat – Please allow me to
thank you.

Hasanzade – Thank me?

Nazakat – Of course...without
you, who knows what would have
happened between us. We might
never have spoken again...(short
pause) but I have a small request.

Hasanzade – I'm listening.

Nazakat (*nervous*) I don't really
know how to say it.

Hasanzade – Say it as it comes
from your heart.

Nazakat – Please continue to be
a good person to the end.

Hasanzade – I don't understand
you.

Nazakat – It doesn't matter how
good a person you are, I still don't
want her to marry you.

Hasanzade – I know.





Nazakat – Please don't be offended.

Hasanzade – No, I'm not.

Nazakat – As you say, is it right that such a young girl...?

Hasanzade (*interrupts impatiently*) I understand.

Nazakat – Please don't get me wrong...we all do our best for our children's complete happiness... isn't that right?

Hasanzade – It is... of course, it's right.

Nazakat – If we can't be happy, at least let's help them to be. I beg you, please, keep your distance from her. Let her forget about you... you are a very good person...you can do that.

Hasanzade – I will think about it. But you need to correct your mistakes by deeds, not by words. Nargile is more enlightened than you think. (*pause, in a deep crisis*) You must do your best to make her happy!... and if you have any difficulty doing that, don't be embarrassed to ask me. (*short pause*) The factory will give you my address.

Nazakat – What do you mean? Are you going somewhere?

Hasanzade – Yes, I am going.



Nazakat – For how long?

Hasanzade – Forever.

Nazakat – What are you.....

Hasanzade (*hardly able to speak*) Do you have anything else to say?

Nazakat (*guilty*) No, thank you. I wish you all the best. You are a very noble person.

Hasanzade puts down the phone and lights a cigarette...

He has never been so anxious. The same music plays...Pause. As he smokes, his anxiety becomes absolute grief.

Old Man, Farajov and the same three young men as before enter.

Old Man – Hello.

Hasanzade – Hello. Please, come in...Have a seat.

The visitors sit.

Old Man – What is this... they say you are leaving?

Hasanzade (*humorously*) Yes, they say so...

Old man – We've worked together for nearly twenty years and we are used to each other.

Farajov – You've m...m...made such a big plant from a s...s...small workshop and n...n...now you are leaving when it's at its m...m...most productive?





First Worker – Where are you going?

Hasanzade – There's to be a new factory opening in Ganja.

Old Man – They say you asked for a transfer?

Hasanzade (*purposely ignoring Old Man's question*) Oh uncle Muradkhan...what's left in this world for us apart from building?

Old Man – Building is good, but why are you comparing yourself with me? I am over seventy, but you...

First Worker – Rashid called earlier from his village...He was very upset when he heard you were leaving.

Hasanzade – Is he enjoying his holiday?

First Worker – He said that he was bored and will return in a couple of days.

Second Worker (*with a meaningful smile*) There is a reason why he's bored.

Hasanzade (*smiles*) What's that?

First Worker – Don't you know?

Hasanzade (*interested*) No, what happened?

Second Worker – Since the new shift administrator started work there's no day or night for him.



Third Worker – Ohh... L'amour!..

Hasanzade – Do you mean Nargile?

First Worker – But she never liked him. When she sees Rashid she goes mad, gets crazy...especially when he sings!!!

Second Worker (*smiling*) – That all works in his favor.

First Worker – In his favor?

Second Worker (*philosophically*) Of course.

Third Worker (*passionately*) – Shut up...What favor? She nearly killed him....

Second Worker – You are still young...You wouldn't understand... I have read many stories like that...

Third Worker – That girl is highly strong, that's all...

Second Worker – No, it's not a matter of being highly strong (*as an expert*) Psychological!

Pause. Hasanzade looks at Second Worker and lights a cigarette. He tries to hide his deep sadness.

First Worker – Ah...we have to get her into our union...

Second Worker – Ok, get her in if you want, but what is that to do with love?





First Worker (*vehemently*) It has a lot to do with love. If she becomes a member, then she will get closer to people and won't look at people like a horse at a blacksmith.

Third Worker – At first you couldn't even speak to her... but she has changed a lot...

Old Man – If the girl was clever, she wouldn't make a fuss. There's no boy as good as Rashid in this district.

Second Worker – Of course.

Farajov – She w...w...will kill Rashid. She is c...c...crazy...

Hasanzade (*sharply*) Listen Farajov, if I hear you talking about the girl like that again, you will answer first to me... Don't think I am moving to a different planet. I'll always be in touch with the factory.

Old Man – Of course, this factory is your baby.

Hasanzade – If you respect me, take care of that girl. She's a clever girl; do your best to make her happy (*short pause, smokes cigarette*). She was brought up in unusual conditions.

Old Man – You wouldn't entrust a bad person to us. We will take care of her.

Second Worker – You can be sure of that.



Hasanzade (*short pause. Raises his head from deep thought*) You know that I like Rashid very much as well

First Worker – You helped him get into the Polytechnic Institute.

Hasanzade – If he and Nargile get together I will be happy for them as well.

First Worker – You mean...

Third Worker – Yes!

Hasanzade (*to First Worker*) I believe it's possible and I would be grateful if you let Rashid know that.

First Worker – As you wish.

Short pause

Hasanzade – I believe in fate... and I believe that sometimes our happiness depends on each other.

Old Man – True.....the world would be paradise if everyone thought like you. (*short pause*) Good people always leave good deeds behind them... (*he gets up, the others do too*) You have done a lot for us... May God help you in all you do.

Hasanzade – Thank you very much.

Old Man – Good luck to you.

They shake hands with Hasanzade and exit...He stands motionless





for some seconds, with a sad expression. The same music plays. Hasanzade continues to pack his bags...lights gradually down. Khurshid enters from semi-darkness. Lights up on Hasanzade and Khurshid.

Khurshid – Why didn't you marry her? She loves you.

Hasanzade – True...But this is an unusual love. (*short pause*) Nature creates a strange mis-match between people and love soon becomes old. It is destroyed, which is very sad...

Khurshid – You would never talk of love so coldly, so calmly when you were young.

Hasanzade – Those feelings then were like spring dew on newly-risen grass. In summer the sun dried it up long ago, in winter the dew is frozen.

Khurshid – You are leaving, what about that girl? Have you thought about her? Isn't what you're doing just selfishness?

Hasanzade – No! I am going because that is the right thing to do! (*short pause*). That young girl, who never felt a parents' care or love, sees me as someone from the sky, as a god. (*humorously*) Is it right if this



"god" uses his power to steal her happiness? Where is his conscience.

Khurshid – But she sees her happiness in you.

Hasanzade – True...But, this "truth" has such a short life. Therefore, torment now is a thousand times better than regret later. (*short pause*) As a citizen, the most important thing for me is her life and understanding people the right way.

Khurshid – Do you think you have resolved this problem?

Hasanzade – I have done whatever I could do for her... the rest is up to life itself! I'm leaving her among good people!

*Car horn sounds. The door bell...
Driver enters...
Khurshid disappears.*

Driver – Are you ready?
Hasanzade – Yes, I am

*Driver exits with two suitcases.
Hasanzade puts on his jacket and looks around the empty room. Lights down. Lights up.
Nargile's room. She is still sewing enthusiastically. The door bell rings. She hurries to open the door. Hasanzade enters.
Nargile is momentarily rooted to the spot.*





Nargile – I can't believe my eyes. You are in my room. (*jumps and hugs Hasanzade, and puts her head on his chest*) My God... How happy I am now...My dear, my life! (*laughs with joy, tears in her eyes*) Today is my happiest day!.. My mother was here just before you.

Hasanzade (*suddenly*) Really?

Nargile – Yes!... Long story... I was planning to call you now...My mother insists I return home...She has even taken Faraj's desk from my room and closed the middle door.

Hasanzade – What did you say?

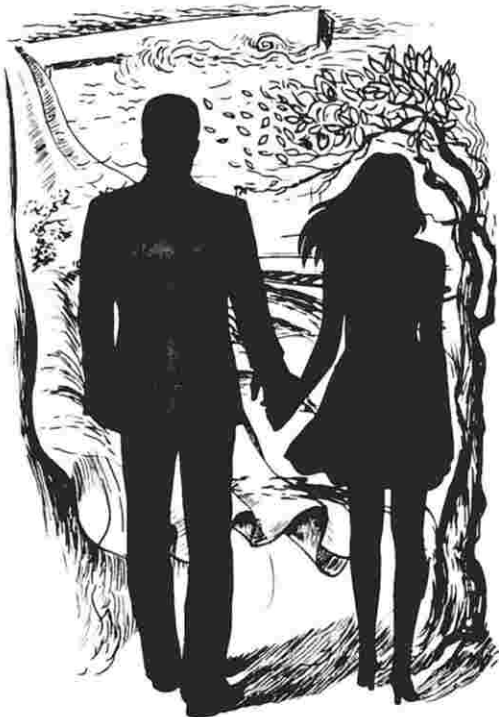
Nargile – I wanted to discuss it with you...Return or not..?

Hasanzade – Of course you must return.

Nargile – I want to go back to spite Faraj.

Hasanzade – Why to spite Faraj? You should return for your mother. As she regrets...

Nargile – If you knew how much she regrets. She says that she wants to see me leave my father's apartment as a bride. She has changed a lot.





Hasanzade - That's to be expected. A mother is always a mother.

Nargile - It looks like you are right. *(short pause. Looks at Hasanzade anxiously)* My poor little room doesn't suit you. It's like you came from the moon. Have a seat, my love from the moon *(both sit)*. When I go back to my apartment, you will still visit me often, won't you?!

Hasanzade - I'll come one day.

Nargile - What do you mean one day? You'll come every day... *(whispering slowly)* My mother doesn't hate you anymore.

Hasanzade *(a difficult smile)* Seriously?

Nargile - She doesn't say a single bad word about you.

Hasanzade - That's good to hear.

Nargile - I knew that one day my mother would understand. *(taking his hand)* How can anyone call you bad?! Surik was here as well.

Hasanzade - Oh, what was she saying?

Nargile - She wants to work. Is there a job for her at the factory?

Hasanzade - We can find one.

Nargile - Please do. Honestly, she is not a bad girl.



Hasanzade writes something in his notebook and gives the page to Nargile.

Hasanzade - Give this to Farajov; he will sort it out.

Nargile - A letter? You can just tell him tomorrow.

Hasanzade *(collects himself)* I am going away.

Nargile *(suddenly frozen)* Where? *(realizes that Hasanzade is dressed casually)* Are you going to visit Aydin? *(Hasanzade shakes his head).*

Hasanzade - A new job...

Nargile - I don't understand, what do you mean "a new job"?

Hasanzade - A big cement plant is being built near Ganja and I have been transferred there.

Nargile *(automatically)* What about me?!

Hasanzade *(taking her hand)* You are staying here...

Nargile *(in horror...withdrawing her hand, shouting)* No...no...I don't want to! I don't want to stay! I... can't live without you... *(laughs hysterically)* Maybe you are testing me?

Hasanzade - No, no, You don't need to be tested.





Nargile (to herself) So, you really are going.

Short and tense pause.

Hasanzade (taking her hand again) Listen to me.

Nargile (pulls her hand back) No need! Don't say anything!.. nothing!.. (a tear drops slowly) You have to go... You are a very kind person...You couldn't stay.

Hasanzade – Please don't say it like that.

Nargile – No, don't worry. (tears drop slowly) Leaving, you don't take everything with you... You're leaving many things behind you, in my life.

Hasanzade – Please don't cry.

Tears flow more freely.

Nargile – I told you, don't worry... If you have made up your mind, then that is what has to be. Don't let my tears make your journey a sad one. You haven't been happy in this world anyway...(smiles through her tears) Like a phoenix, I wanted to burn in your fire...you didn't want that...because you are more than a good person...(car horn sounds outside. Hasanzade gets up) Please,



wait a moment...(short pause). If there is any justice, fairness in this world, let your son be the happiest man in the world...I wish that there is no more sadness in your heart ...You will always...night and day.... be with me...(smiles through flowing tears) But how can I live without you?

Hasanzade (tense) Nargile.

Nargile – No, don't speak...You have already said what you had to... But I had a lot to tell you...You don't have time...But wherever you are I will talk to you every day.

Hasanzade – Please, don't be upset.

Nargile (smiles through her tears) Who said I'm upset?! I have never felt so calm. My love has reached eternity now! I have never felt a love so constant, beautiful, great, eternal...(taking his arms) No, please go...You are late for your train...

Hasanzade exits... The music plays again... Lights dim and down

Curtain

1963



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YOU ARE ALWAYS
WITH ME

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