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## Tea with Suleyman A Play

Omer Kerem Durdag

*College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University*

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**TEA WITH SÜLEYMAN**  
**A PLAY**

**The Honors Program**  
**College of St. Benedict/St. John's University**


**In Partial Fulfillment**  
**of the Requirements for the Distinction of "All College Honors"**  
**and the Degree Bachelor of Science**  
**In the Department of Theater**

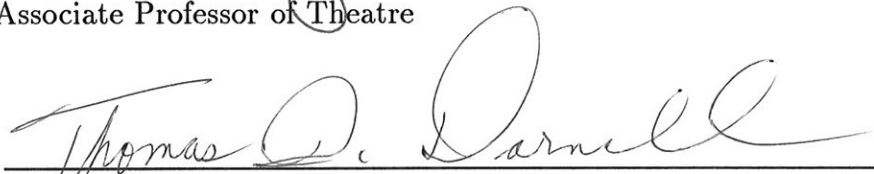
by  
**Ömer Kerem Durdağ**  
May, 1991


THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

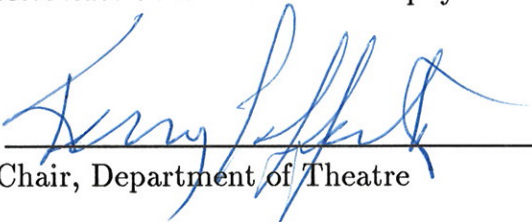
PROJECT TITLE: TEA WITH SÜLEYMAN — A Play

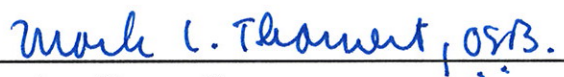
Approved by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Associate Professor of Theatre

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Associate Professor of Theatre

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Associate Professor of Philosophy

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair, Department of Theatre

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Director, Honors Program

TEA WITH SÜLEYMAN

by ÖMER KEREM DURDAĞ

*For my parents,  
Ismet and Şenel Durdağ*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Writing this play has been more than a creative process — it has been the evolution within me a sense of communication towards an audience I will never know nor recognize in its entirety, myself included. Like the play, the playwright, went through acts and scenes of human encounters that perhaps make him realize that even if he were to pass away into nothingness, his memories and his play would still stand on their own.

Without Tom Darnall introducing me to the theater and giving me the gift of expression on stage, this play would still be an idea. If young writers indeed need guidance, constructive criticism and the joy of meeting another playwright who is able to feel the core of the novice's struggle in purgatory, I am glad and thankful that person was Kaarin Johnston, my advisor. And if it were not for Fr. Rene McGraw and the philosophy of *everything* that he taught me, there would be no play nor a playwright here.

The ideas and inspirations which I see myself consciously understand and relate to in the play are a result of endlessly energetic conversations between me and my friends, our rooms like bustling tea cafes — friends and companions of life that I don't want to name lest I forget someone.

I would also like to thank the late Nazim Hikmet and Ghalib for providing me with mystical lines of song and poetry — I find myself ecstatic at times in having their lines breathe with mine. The poems I used fully or partially of Hikmet's are "One Living," "Hazel are My Lady's Eyes," "The Old Man on The Shore," "Optimistic Man," "Elegy for Satan," "I'm Getting Used To Growing Old," and "My Funeral." From Ghalib I used one of his *ghazals*.

Kerem Durdağ  
Collegeville, St. John's, 1991

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

YILDRIM (Lightning), a man of twenty-seven.

SÜLEYMAN, a man of forty-five.

YAĞMUR (Rain), a man of twenty-nine.

LEYLA, a woman of twenty-four.

GRANDFATHER, an old man of seventy.

SECOND GRANDFATHER, another old man of seventy.

HIKMET (Trustworthy), a boy of twelve.

MAHMUT, a man of forty.

HASAN, a man of fifty.

CRAZY ALI, a man of thirty-three.

The action occurs during a hot summer day and night in Mahmut's tea cafe in Istanbul. The time is the present.

## SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

### ACT I

Mahmut's tea cafe. Early afternoon.

### ACT II

The same. Early evening.

### ACT III

The same. Midnight.

**SETTING:** The stage is a cafe. There is no door into the cafe. Instead the front of the cafe, where one can see the three thin iron bars supporting the aluminum shutters, spills out to a fairly wide footpath. There are empty tables and chairs on the badly cracked footpath. On top of the middle shutter is a sign, which has painted in red, "MAHMUT'S CAFE". There is a lamppost to the right of the stage which has a bare bulb. Inside the cafe, on the left is a high cabinet-like table, which is the cafe owner's table, adjacent to which is an exit to a kitchen. At the far left corner of the cafe is a divan with two pillows and to the side of the divan is a nargile pipe. To the right are three eating booths which can accommodate two people on each side. All the wooden tables in the cafe are worn and badly scratched while the wooden chairs are old and in need of repair. The floor is dirty and littered with scraps of garbage. On the walls of the cafe there are cheap lithographs and posters of filmstars and football players. On the wall behind the cafe owner's table is a framed picture of Atatürk and beside it on a empty shelf is a copy of the Holy Quran. The cafe has several ceiling fans which hang neatly in rows. Between the fans are light bulbs.



TEA WITH SÜLEYMAN  
PROLOGUE

[All the street lights are out and only the faint name of the cafe, MAHMUT'S CAFE, is visible. There is a lone lamppost at the right of the stage which illuminates a small area. Under the lamppost is SÜLEYMAN, a man of forty-five, with grey hair, dressed in black jacket and grey trousers and he is holding a piece of paper in his hand.]

SÜLEYMAN

(A little irritated.) I have to go to a cafe in Istanbul. No rhyme, no reason. Sometimes I wish I am not who I am. This letter doesn't say anything about anything. I am always called to do strange things; I mean it says over here that I should go and do what I am supposed to do but nobody who is supposed to do it ever does. I must be special. (In a happier tone.) I knew I was special because I always work the hardest; maybe too hard. I should get a little time off, I am always running around. I know I am good at what I do but even then this seems a bit too strange... I guess it is better to think of it as a sacrifice to become the chief around here even quicker. Now that would be something. The youngest ever. Why not? Ey, why not? Who knows it even might be a memorable adventure; it should be since where there is tea there is always something interesting happening. O yes, I am sure of that, after all Süleyman is there.

[Black out.]

END OF PROLOGUE

TEA WITH SÜLEYMAN  
ACT I

[The lights come up. We see Mahmut's cafe. It is about midday. There is noise from the neighboring cigarette shops and vendors. On the left hand side, inside the cafe, is a high cabinet-like table behind which MAHMUT sits, a man of forty going bald with a gruff voice dressed in a light blue dirty shirt and soiled brown trousers, barking orders at his troop of waiters.

YILDRIM who is twenty-seven with curly black hair, unshaven face and wearing light blue short sleeve shirt with blue jeans is sitting at the table with SÜLEYMAN in the center of the cafe. The cafe is half full. On MAHMUT's table is a small hand radio that is audibly playing classical Turkish music (the reception is quite bad.) There are newspapers lying on some tables. The table at which YILDRIM and SÜLEYMAN are sitting has both the Milliyet and Cumhuriyet. On the right hand side of the cafe are middle aged men smoking nargile. The inside of the cafe is well lit. HIKMET, a boy with straight black hair wearing a red t-shirt and blue trousers, is serving tea.]

MAHMUT

(To the cafe in general.) Ey, you stupid oaf! Who told you to spill the tea? We are trying to run a tea shop here, not having a party for your mother's family. Where the hell is Murat? (To a customer on the far side.) Abi, the tea will be in your hands in a few minutes. (Towards the kitchen, loudly.) Murat. Are you delivering tea here or love letters to your darling? Murat! We are waiting for your highness to show kindness towards us lowly peasants.

[HIKMET runs in a hurry into the kitchen. Comes back out immediately carrying a tray of tea and delivers it to a table.]

YILDRIM

I hope you find the tea, to your satisfaction. This cafe may be cheap, but in my opinion the tea they make is the best in the city.

SÜLEYMAN

Oh, the tea is fine, just fine. It is just that the smoke is a little irritating to the eyes and nose. I have never been to this part of the city. Sort of out of my way, you know. But I like it.

YILDRIM

Where are you originally from?

MAHMUT

(Loudly to HIKMET.) Where is Murat? Hikmet, my son, wipe those tables in front of you. You have to first learn how and when to wipe tables if you are to succeed in life. Wiping tables is like politics, it is dirty and not easy but somebody has got to do it.

SÜLEYMAN

Is it really essential to know?

[Enter CRAZY ALI and HASAN. CRAZY ALI is a man of thirty wearing a fez, white shirt and white trousers and has a thick moustache. HASAN, is a man of fifty with black hair combed backwards, wearing spectacles and a stethoscope on his neck. HASAN is wearing black trousers with a white lab coat.]

YILDRIM

Not very much. But it would be nice to know more about a stranger whom one is treating to a cup of tea. Part of our hospitality. Tradition. (To CRAZY ALI and HASAN.) Ey Hasan amca, can I have a tablet for my headaches? It's getting worse. Crazy Ali, remind me to pay you for the cigarettes tonight because I got some money with me.

SÜLEYMAN

Okay, I am from around.

HASAN

I will bring the tablets tomorrow. Don't drink too much rakı tonight, that's what gives you the headaches.

CRAZY ALI

Be true to yourself Crazy Yildrim. Go on a long journey and give my regards to the prophets when you see them.

YILDRIM

(To CRAZY ALI.) I will give your regards to Satan too, it is only fair that he get

some attention and sympathy from you. (To SÜLEYMAN.) You are from around Istanbul?

[HASAN and CRAZY ALI sit at the adjacent table.]

SÜLEYMAN

You can say that.

YILDRIM

Turkish?

SÜLEYMAN

O, yes. First a Turk, then a Muslim.

[Voice from with the kitchen, "Mahmut amca, there is something wrong with the kettle."]

MAHMUT

(Towards the kitchen.) What do you mean there is something wrong with the kettle? Did you kick it by mistake? This is a tea shop, not a football stadium. And then you say Mahmut amca forgive me. I forgive you all, you donkey's behind. There is no need to thank me for it. No need. I will die earlier than I should but there is no need to thank me for that either. (Voice from kitchen, "Hasan amca, please come!") I am coming, I am coming. (To HIKMET.) Hikmet, take care of the money, I will be back soon from the depths of hell. (He exits to the kitchen.)

YILDRIM

I myself don't particularly believe in that sequence of beliefs. I don't think beliefs have got anything to do with being a Turk or a Muslim. Maybe in Kemal Paşa's time but not now.

SÜLEYMAN

I am surprised by your words.

YILDRIM

I don't see why you find that surprising. There are a lot of us around.

SÜLEYMAN

But not those who treat a stranger.

YILDRIM

My friend, drink your tea. We are sons of the same heritage.

SÜLEYMAN

A young man and yet a traditionalist. Doesn't go with your beard or your wrinkled shirt.

YILDRIM

For a stranger you make quick judgments. I don't mind. Why should I? (Scratches head.) It is good for people to find faults and contradictions in me, keeps me straight. Not at ease but straight.

SÜLEYMAN

A host that is not at ease but straight. I like that. I like all youths. I was surprised that you offered me the tea. I am not used to it.

YILDRIM

From Istanbul and not used to it?! This is the first time I have seen you here and frankly you looked a bit lost. And since I was alone, I thought of making a new friend. Besides, it is good to offer a stranger a cup of tea.

SÜLEYMAN

I am glad I came. It is hot.

YILDRIM

I like it when the sun is bright. Nothing is hidden.

SÜLEYMAN

But the smoke from the cars, everybody shouting their lungs out. Also the dirt that is piled up by the footpath. The noise, it is incredible. And the heat, it wears on you. You feel tired very quickly. And then there is the thirst. I can't be stopping in cafes every minute.

YILDRIM

I wouldn't worry. There is a limonata cart at every street corner. Besides the cafes are cheap and a bit cooler. Also it provides a view of the outside. I like it here.

SÜLEYMAN

Have you lived in this area for long?

## YILDRIM

Came here after finishing university. Education I got wasn't of much use. Now I help to run this cafe with Mahmut Abi. Sometimes I do small jobs for the Party. Sometimes I do nothing but play with the kids on the street. Yes, I am not a professional. But I like what I do now. I don't know how long I will continue to do it. Let's see what happens. You didn't tell me what you did?

## SÜLEYMAN

I am still a stranger. Don't worry, we will get to know each other. Let me stay a stranger for a while.

## YILDRIM

(Scratching his head.) Nobody in this cafe is a stranger after five minutes. We are friends today. Tomorrow you are a brother and after that it is up to God. God. Funny how I was praying to God so that Fenerbahçe will win today's game.

## CRAZY ALI

When I was in the hospital, everyone betted on Galatasaray. But the stupids never won. The fools were crazy to bet on Galatasaray.

## HASAN

What does that make you? A wise man?

## CRAZY ALI

Not wise, just smart. Fenerbahçe always wins on Tuesdays and today, my friend, is Tuesday.

## HASAN

I remember the day you came out of the hospital was Tuesday. You think everyday is Tuesday... you are crazy.

## CRAZY ALI

Yıldırım Abi, his excellency Dr. Hasan said I was crazy. (To HASAN.) Congratulations.

## YILDRIM

(To HASAN.) Congratulations. (Laughs.) Come sit with us.



[HASAN and CRAZY ALI join YILDRIM at the table.]

SÜLEYMAN

It always surprises me how tea, a diluted drink, bonds people so strongly. I myself should take more advantage of tea, and not leave everything up to God. I didn't expect you to pray to God.

YILDRIM

I don't. Never did, never will. Praying for Fenerbahçe is reflex, after all that is the only way they will win!

CRAZY ALI

Tea cafes are like my hospital. Full of crazy people who think they are not crazy.

HASAN

Patients of life, Ali Abi.

SÜLEYMAN

(To YILDRIM.) Maybe your prayers are a fervent hope for God's existence or maybe a skeptical invitation for Him to show Himself. Which one?

YILDRIM

Skeptical invitation. (Scratches head, small pause.) I mean look around you. You, yourself, saw the dirt. (Laughs.) By the way which team are you supporting?

SÜLEYMAN

You mean in football? None of the two, I don't like supporting something in which I have no direct involvement. As for God, I personally believe in him with reservations.

CRAZY ALI

I never make reservations. If you want to go and eat, you go and eat. That is my philosophy of life.

HASAN

I don't have a philosophy of life — it takes too much effort. (HASAN and CRAZY ALI laugh.)

## SÜLEYMAN

Humor in the midst of cynicism, dangerous but necessary. No, really, I have my doubts. I should have doubts. I have faith but I have my doubts. What do you think?

## HASAN

(To SÜLEYMAN.) Nobody over here thinks. I can give you a certificate for that if you want.

## CRAZY ALI

(To SÜLEYMAN.) Don't ask him for it. If you do, he will go crazy trying to make you the certificate that he is not authorized to give. (Starts to giggle.)

## YILDRIM

(Smiles.) Let's drink some more tea. (Calls out loudly, looking at his empty cup.) Hikmet... Hikmet, two cups of tea, two cubes of sugar with each.

## HIKMET

O.k. abi.

[Enter GRANDFATHER. An old man of seventy, he has a white beard and moustache with flowing white hair. He is wearing an old well-tailored blue jacket with matching trousers and is carrying a walking stick. Sits on a table on the far right. Starts to read a book.]

## YILDRIM

People have talked a lot about God and I have nothing new to add. What is the point of repetition? I wish I was a Greek or something like that, then whatever I said or did would have been original. Do you like to hear a good poem?

## CRAZY ALI

Poetry is dead. How can one write a good poem if poetry is dead?

## SÜLEYMAN

(To YILDRIM.) Hear your poem?

## HASAN

(To CRAZY ALI.) If poetry is dead, what are all the poets going to do?

## CRAZY ALI

Become crazy like us. (HASAN and CRAZY ALI both erupt in laughter.)

## YILDRIM

(With enthusiasm.) Yes, mine. Of course, Süleyman Bey.

## SÜLEYMAN

Maybe later. I think you can add something to the subject of God. (Points to his head.) After all these grey hairs I sincerely believe that.

## HIKMET

(Coming to the table with the tea, reciting poetry.)

Living is no laughing matter:  
 You must take it seriously,  
 so much so and to such a degree  
 that for example, your hands tied behind your back,  
 your back to the wall,  
 or else in a laboratory,  
 in your white coat and safety glasses,  
 you can die for people —  
 even for people whose faces you've never seen,  
 even though you know living,  
 is the most real, the most beautiful thing.

It is crazy working in this weather. It is crazy.

## CRAZY ALI

(Starts to recite poetry.)

Moi is crazy,  
 crazy is oui,  
 where is our destiny?  
 pity me, pity me,  
 laugh at your stupidity,  
 I am at peace, where are my sheets,  
 bury me, bury me.

HIKMET

Yes Ali Abi, you are definitely a crazy poet.

CRAZY ALI

Crazy but not stupid.

HASAN

As your doctor, I advise you not to be stupid. Yes, write a crazy poem everyday, and you will not be stupid.

YILDRIM

(To HASAN.) Without your medicine, we would all be very sick. (To HIKMET.) Ah my savior, Hikmet, thank you. (To SÜLEYMAN.) Hikmet here is even better than the radio.

SÜLEYMAN

Hikmet, it seems a huge responsibility.

HIKMET

With words like Nazim's I don't care.

YILDRIM

You better get back, before your father catches you chatting around.

HASAN

Otherwise, when he hits you on the head, you will become the second Crazy Ali.

CRAZY ALI

The head is a very sensitive area because it also has your heart in it too.

HIKMET

But it will never be as your head. Holler when you need tea again, abi.  
[Starts to wipe tables on the right hand side of the cafe.]

SÜLEYMAN

Even that child in some way is thinking about God.

## YILDRIM

(To HASAN.) Be careful of your patient doctor, he is becoming a doctor just like you. (To SÜLEYMAN.) God doesn't exist. And if He does, I don't care or want to care.

## CRAZY ALI

I wish I was a big fish that swam all day. Then I wouldn't have to worry or care about anything.

## HASAN

Ali, you don't know how to swim.

## SÜLEYMAN

O, come on, tea demands that we become less dogmatic. (Taking a deep breath.) That felt nice. When the wind hits you, when your sweat has cooled on your skin.

## YILDRIM

They call it Allah's breath. (Scratches head.) The tea does not say that we become more stupid. Look, who cares? I am not God, and I don't know of anyone else who confessed up to it. I have things to worry about, such as... how to pay for the cups of tea. To listen to the radio. (His ears catch a song on the radio.) I like that song very much. (After catching the words, nostalgically.) This is life, Süleyman Bey. Really, it should always be like this.

## CRAZY ALI

But it is. It is.

## SÜLEYMAN

I have never liked the radio. But excuse me, but I didn't know you couldn't pay. I feel embarrassed now, having imposed myself.

## YILDRIM

Keep on drinking. There is no imposition. (With a comforting tone.) This cafe is like my home — we settle our accounts at our graves.

## SÜLEYMAN

(To YILDRIM.) Yildrim that is not a pleasant thought. Especially when there could be other ways.

YILDRIM

Believe me I have tried. Pleasant things are a luxury for me. But then ugly things are a luxury to people like you.

SÜLEYMAN

(To YILDRIM.) You have already started to generalize me.

YILDRIM

First you generalize, then out of that bunch you pick and choose.

CRAZY ALI

Like grapes.

HASAN

I prefer apples.

SÜLEYMAN

Very pragmatic, Yildrim Bey. I suggest you incorporate it with the idealism of your poetry.

YILDRIM

I agree with Hasan Abi. I don't write idealistic poetry. At least I try not to. But you haven't even heard it yet.

SÜLEYMAN

I don't need to. I just know.

GRANDFATHER

(Calls out to HIKMET.) Hikmet my son, can you make me a small cup of coffee? Otherwise I will fall asleep with the book in my hand. Don't tell your grandmother that I had coffee. For her coffee is the second worst sin after the apple. (Laughs.)

HIKMET

Of course Dede, whatever you say. (Exits.)

YILDRIM

Very sure of yourself. Mark of an obstinate man. You are not one of those show people who can tell people birthdays and phone numbers when they see them, are

you? I hope not. I hate those people. What jokers!

SÜLEYMAN

Well, look at it any way you want to. Angels, though I think are open-minded and well...

YILDRIM

An angel? (Emphatically.) Angel? You look like a well off, content, middle class government clerk. Angel, hah! Like the t.v. program? Hah! (Chuckles loudly.)

CRAZY ALI

I have already been an angel. Who is this imposter?

HASAN

A crackpot. (To CRAZY ALI.) You forget that you were relieved of your duties when you got sick. Relax. (To SÜLEYMAN.) But you are a crackpot.

SÜLEYMAN

(To HASAN.) I am not a crackpot I assure you. (To YILDRIM.) I was a human, and probably still am. But technically I am an angel.

CRAZY ALI

I give you a zero for technique but a ten for performance.

YILDRIM

I think you have watched too much t.v. Are you sure your wife didn't kick you out of the house today?

HASAN

(To SÜLEYMAN.) Can I check your fever? Fever effects everything in the body.

SÜLEYMAN

(To HASAN.) Doctor, I don't get ill easily. (To YILDRIM.) You have a quick mouth. Just like the vendors out there. I am an angel. A true angel. Look, were you not born on Thursday, Oct 25 at 6:00 a.m.?

YILDRIM

Maybe. Like a conscientious government clerk, you could find that out from anywhere.

Did you run away from the circus?

CRAZY ALI

I have not gone to the circus for a long time.

HASAN

I feel like I have been in one for a long time. (Pause.)

[HIKMET comes in and gives cup of coffee to GRANDFATHER. Starts to wipe tables.]

SÜLEYMAN

Born at 6:00 a.m. with a birth mark under your left armpit and a desire to have a girlfriend, which was duly accomplished four times in your life, where the last time you were in bed actually resulted in you getting mad at your girlfriend's view of optimism at finding a meaning to your existence. More?

YILDRIM

So, the rumors were true. Big deal. Everybody knows. Even Hikmet. He even wrote a poem for me. (Sees HIKMET wiping tables.) Hikmet, Hikmet, bring yourself, not any tea.

HIKMET

Yes abi. (Walks up to YILDRIM.) What do you want?

YILDRIM

Recite your poem "Hazel are my lady's eyes." Süleyman should hear it.

HIKMET

But that poem's just for you. (Bending forward.) For you know what.

YILDRIM

It is about time we shared it.

HIKMET

No. If you want it, you say it. Everybody wants me to do something. It must be this hot weather. (Exits a little angry.)

CRAZY ALI

Impossible. Hot weather does not affect people as much as cold weather.



## HASAN

When it is cold, nothing moves.

## YILDRIM

Kids and lunatics. Anyway the poem goes like this. (Starts to recite.)

Hazel are my lady's eyes,  
 with waves and waves of green:  
 gold leaf overlaid with green moire.  
 Brothers, what is the story?  
 For nine years our hands haven't touched —  
 I got old here,  
 she there.

There is more but this is enough. So, you see, my exploits are even made famous in eternal words of another guy. You have sharp ears for a stranger. But I should have expected it, you seem like a smart man. I think that is the only problem with this place; every Ali, Hasan, Mahmut hears and knows things they really shouldn't care about.

## SÜLEYMAN

(Starts to recite lines.)

There is no life but mine,  
 there is no love but mine,  
 there is no faith but mine,  
 there is no hate but mine,  
 there is no sorrow but mine,  
 there is no poetry but mine,  
 there is no word but mine,  
 there is no joy but mine,  
 there is no struggle but mine,  
 there is no victory but mine,  
 there is no humanity but mine,  
 there is no sexuality but mine,  
 there is no nationality but mine,  
 there is no politics but mine,  
 there is no justice but mine,  
 there is no death but mine,

there is no knowledge but mine.  
And all these I have stolen from you.

Nobody else knows of this poem. Correct. You wrote it yesterday.

CRAZY ALI

Yes, I did write it yesterday.

HASAN

No, you wrote it the day before yesterday. Yesterday you started to write your first novel.

[Enter YAĞMUR. A man of twenty-nine, he has dark brown hair and a muscular body. He is wearing jeans with cream yellow shirt that is wet with sweat and not tucked in.]

YILDRIM

(Very surprised, points out to YAĞMUR.) Here is our real cafe poet. (To YAĞMUR.) Sit down Yağmur. Read us one of your new poems, enlighten us, O dear poet. (Shouts loudly.) Hikmet, one more tea for Yağmur abi, and add the bill to the cost of my death. (To YAĞMUR.) Yağmur, this man says he is an angel. I think this tea is so good, that it has driven him crazy.

YAĞMUR

No poetry today Yildrim, I couldn't write last night. Now I know why. It is because of Süleyman Bey here. He is crazy but he is an angel. (To SÜLEYMAN.) Nice to meet you. People like me have long aspired to have God come down, or up, not his agents. You must do for now. (To HASAN and CRAZY ALI.) Hello Crazy Ali, Dr. Hasan.

YILDRIM

Yağmur abi, tell me, did you contemplate yourself to sleep last night because I think you are still in a dream state.

YAĞMUR

I am alive. Just alive.

YILDRIM

Living and believing in angels. And I thought you were the only sane person around here.

CRAZY ALI

What?! What about me?

HASAN

You are God. You are beyond sanity.

CRAZY ALI

O yes, I forgot. (Pause.) I have been very busy these days.

YAĞMUR

(To YILDRIM.) I just know he is an angel. I just believe. How much would it hurt you?

SÜLEYMAN

Tell us, how much would it hurt you?

YILDRIM

(Quietly angry.) Hurt... hurt. What do you two care? Yağmur is numb because he has felt too much of it and you are a part of it. People like me with no singular divine characteristic that would make the heavens proud of me, me, a person of neglected ideals, a virtuous rebel; the hurt is that I am not a poet or an angel or even crazy. (With conviction.) I think I would do a good job. But I have always been treated as a lesser one. Even my father used to slap me. You know, he never saw me play football. What a man. What makes you God's emissary? I am as good as you and yet you get to fly around and impress people. (Softly.) Hurt... yes it hurts goddammit.

CRAZY ALI

I am here because I like it. Ask my doctor.

HASAN

He is right.

SÜLEYMAN

(To YILDRIM.) Spoken like a true yildrim. No wonder you are a rebel. Angels are angels. Angels are not prophets.

## CRAZY ALI

Angels are crazy. (Pause.) Now I know why I am an angel.

## CRAZY ALI

Angels are crazy. (Pause.) Now I know why I am an angel.

## HASAN

(To CRAZY ALI.) And doctors are divine. That is why I always wanted to be a doctor. (HASAN starts to poke CRAZY ALI.)

## YILDRIM

(To HASAN and CRAZY ALI.) If I had your logic, life would be a gift. (To SÜLEYMAN.) You forget, my dear angel, that both angels and prophets, are people like me. No distinctions exist. (Pause.) Why should there be one? Look at us. We are drinking the same tea, have the same ugly walls around us. I should wash these walls one day. (Looking towards the ceiling.) Ah, I wish I was in love.

## YAĞMUR

(To YILDRIM.) Maybe one day. (Fixing his gaze to a spot on the wall.) I think believing in angels is like unappreciated romance. I have tried so hard to fall in love with angels — I know God could be too busy, I don't know doing what, but he is busy, so angels are my love. Only my love though. One of the many. On some nights I just breathe slowly and try to construct a beginning of a romance, like an artist of no belonging. I start an unattainable dream. And as I breathe, I slowly sink my arms, up to my elbows into an accepting earth, an earth that has hills that are the undulations of my desires, the tall grass the extension of my words and the tree the frame of my soul. But there is no angel, nobody. My mind becomes a storm and I breathe forth a sky, just a simple sky, with a breeze that wafts over the surface of my existence, softly settling under my veins. And then there is an angel. We don't look at each other, but float towards each other. A gentle floating, coming closer, closer and then we pass... pass each other quicker than our dreams. And no more angel. I start to think, and drift towards the ground. No more sky, no more grass, no breeze, no love, just me. And then I realize I am breathing slowly, just slowly realizing I have failed again. (Is looking outside.) I wonder if that woman's back hurts?

## CRAZY ALI

No, don't worry, her back is strong.

## HASAN

Maybe, maybe not, How do you know?

CRAZY ALI

Because I am also a woman.

HASAN

And I am your man. We are such a great team, just like Fenerbahçe.

YILDRIM

Whose back is hurting?

YAĞMUR

(Pointing out towards the footpath.) The woman there carrying the vegetables on her head. She looks tired.

YILDRIM

Who isn't?

SÜLEYMAN

Everybody has to live a life. (To YAĞMUR.) Yağmur you may have failed but now I am here.

YAĞMUR

You are too real, no room for love or imagination.

[Enter Leyla. She is a woman of twenty-four and is very attractive. Her hair which falls half way down on her back is braided and is wearing a pink blouse with an ivory colored skirt. She is smiling.]

YILDRIM

Even our poet has rejected you. (LEYLA is carrying a newspaper in one hand and an apple in another.) Aaa, Leyla, come and sit with your Mecnun. Yesterday you met my illegitimate kid, today it is an illegitimate angel.

LEYLA

(To SÜLEYMAN.) Please don't mind him. My name is Leyla, and yours? Have you read the paper today? They mentioned the accident we had on the street right in front of us, which happened last week. Funny isn't it? I thought news was supposed to be fresh.

YILDRIM

Leyla you are like a fresh flower and that is good enough for all of us.

CRAZY ALI

Even for me, without doubt.

HASAN

Even for me, but with some doubt. Doctors always have some doubt.

SÜLEYMAN

(To LEYLA.) Süleyman. Just Süleyman from around here. No, I haven't read the paper. And where are you from?

YILDRIM

(To LEYLA.) Don't let him get too nosy.

LEYLA

I am originally from Antep but I am here looking to earn some money. Reading the paper is a good habit. I taught it to Yildrim.

CRAZY ALI

But I taught Yildrim how to read. I taught him everything he knows. In fact I am his adopted father.

YILDRIM

(To LEYLA.) You were just lucky with me. (To CRAZY ALI.) You were a good teacher.

SÜLEYMAN

Money. Amazing to see what it makes people do.

LEYLA

(To HASAN.) You are absolutely right. (To SÜLEYMAN.) I don't understand you.

YILDRIM

Money may matter more than prayer or belief, especially when you don't have any of the three.

CRAZY ALI

I have everything. (Pause.) Everybody has everything.

HASAN

And I believe you.

LEYLA

(To SÜLEYMAN.) Are you really an angel?

SÜLEYMAN

In the flesh.

LEYLA

Can you do some magic?

CRAZY ALI

I gave up doing magic, it was too easy.

HASAN

That is why it is useless.

YAĞMUR

(To SÜLEYMAN.) Show Leyla some magic — at least let us make her happy.

SÜLEYMAN

(Presents a flower from thin air.) Here, a fresh jasmine!

CRAZY ALI

I prefer a tulip.

HASAN

Sometimes Ali, we cannot be choosers.

LEYLA

Incredible. I have to write to my mother about this. I write to her every week, even though there is not much to write. But this will definitely cheer her up. I hope she doesn't tell the relatives though, their gossip knows no limits. But can you give me yellow dandelions? (SÜLEYMAN produces yellow dandelions.)

YILDRIM

Well, angels don't have limitations either. Or do they?

SÜLEYMAN

O, I don't know. I have never seen my limitations. I am what I am, perhaps that is a limitation.

YILDRIM

Do you have the answers to my problems or at least a solution to my questions?

SÜLEYMAN

I don't know.

YAĞMUR

It was one of the reasons that I died so many times.

YILDRIM

Perhaps, you can give little hints.

SÜLEYMAN

I am an angel, maybe hints will come more naturally than solutions.

LEYLA

I prefer solutions. Then you know or you do not know.

YILDRIM

True. I never would have thought that doubt resided even in angels. Sort of makes you one of us, still a servant, still a nobody; except that you don't have to worry about death. (To LEYLA.) You know Leyla, I was thinking that I wish I was in love. Shall we fall in love with each other?

LEYLA

Wouldn't work. We are both too stubborn. Besides we are friends. Here have an apple. (Gives apple to YILDRIM.) Do you know today is the championship game?

YILDRIM

Fenerbahçe all the way.



CRAZY ALI

All the way to heaven.

HASAN

I hope there isn't much traffic.

LEYLA

Today is a good day for an upset. I have this gut feeling that Fenerbahçe will win. It is a day for the underdogs. My mother used to say that a lot.

YAĞMUR

(To SÜLEYMAN.) Leyla's gut feelings are more accurate than instruments used by scientists.

YILDRIM

And more beautiful. I still say we would make a great couple. How about it just for one day?

LEYLA

What's the point? We wouldn't be able to have a decent conversation because we would always be looking into each other's eyes like stupid fools.

YILDRIM

(Resigned. To LEYLA.) You are right. You are always right. We are going to a movie tonight, remember?

LEYLA

(Nods head.) Of course. Should get my mind off everything else.

SÜLEYMAN

I haven't seen a movie for a long time. Maybe it is one of my weaknesses; I cannot watch unreal things.

YILDRIM

Süleyman Bey, stupid movies are unreal. Good movies like this one, are real.

SÜLEYMAN

Maybe you are right. It just crossed my mind that one of my other weaknesses is compassion.

YILDRIM

I haven't seen you give an example of any. Or is it one of those invisible, metaphysical miracles? C'mon Süleyman, the only thing you can give to humanity is to take back your divinity.

HASAN

Please take it back. We have kept it here long enough. (CRAZY ALI nods.)

LEYLA

Don't taunt him, Yildrim. Give Süleyman some time. Do you think that compassion is as easy to get as a cup of tea? Besides, I think you are being too harsh towards him. He is an angel, you know.

YILDRIM

Angels are supposed to be understanding. To hell with the false respect reserved for angels. I respect Süleyman Bey for what he is in front of me. And if he is an angel, he will answer my questions.

YAĞMUR

A demand of reason. (Pause.) No, a demand for reason.

SÜLEYMAN

Angels are divine. They are the holy overseers of your destiny. That is the answer. Take it or leave it.

CRAZY ALI

Of course!

HASAN

Of course?

YILDRIM

(A little angry.) Neither I nor the the common folk, have the time to do that. We live by the moment for a little piece of future. And then we are told to take it or leave it. You are giving me a choice when I don't want one. You take it or leave it — the fact is, you depend on us for your living. It is your decision. (Chuckles.) Just

like Leter and Pele on the wall, we are kicking the ball around.

CRAZY ALI

I am imagination. I am an angel. Angels are imagination.

HASAN

What intellect. What intellect. What a great patient. (CRAZY ALI takes a bow.)

SÜLEYMAN

I refuse to admit that I depend on you for my living.

YAĞMUR

You shouldn't. You are still a Turk. Turks historically have never refused anything.

LEYLA

Yağmur is right. Just like that the guy over there refusing to stop shouting his head off. (A man is calling the public for prayers from the mosque.) Yağmur, one of these days you should tell me how you are so smart.

YAĞMUR

(Jokingly.) Well it is a gift from God.

CRAZY ALI

I am God's gift, which is even better.

LEYLA

(To YAĞMUR.) Next time I go home you should come with me. My mother will like you. You are just her type. And of course my father. For the first time in a long time he will finally have a smart man in front of him to talk to. Really Yağmur. I should remember this. In fact I should put it in my letter.

LEYLA

(To YAĞMUR.) So many times we have talked for hours, you, me and Yildrim. It is about time we got to know each other's families. None of that marriage stuff but just so that we can become even closer friends.

YILDRIM

Yağmur and I do not have a family, Leyla.

LEYLA

(With light admonishment.) Stupid, that is where my family comes in. You are a bit radical for them but you also have a gentle side. Just like Yağmur. First Yağmur, then you. So that my parents can get warmed up.

YAĞMUR

Leyla, one of these days I am going to write a poem about you.

LEYLA

I thought you already had. (Laughs loudly. YILDRIM and YAĞMUR also start to laugh.)

YILDRIM

You know Süleyman Bey, your refusal to admit that you depend on us for a living maybe the first straight, honest answer you have given.

SÜLEYMAN

I am an angel. I can't lie.

CRAZY ALI

I can.

YILDRIM

Good, Süleyman. So tell me, do I own my own mind, my soul, my reason. Are they mine?

SÜLEYMAN

If you want them to be.

YILDRIM

Should I show my anger about the dead and the dying?

CRAZY ALI

(Interrupting.) If you choose to be angry.

YILDRIM

(To SÜLEYMAN.) Can you raise your fist so as to tempt me to strike without guilt

or conscience?

SÜLEYMAN

There are better ways to be a good enemy.

CRAZY ALI

Yes there are. People make good enemies.

YAĞMUR

(To SÜLEYMAN.) But are you willing to demonstrate ways to be a good enemy?

SÜLEYMAN

Angels like wolves know what to do and when to do it.

CRAZY ALI

And we are smart as well.

LEYLA

In Antep wolves are not welcome. I don't like them.

YILDRIM

You speak in riddles, riddles that are riddles because we have an inherent need for them. (Calmly.) Just why doesn't your God come before me, for an interrogation? (A little more loudly with desire.) Just once.

[MAHMUT enters.]

SÜLEYMAN

A challenge or an invitation? They are two different things.

LEYLA

(Worried.) Say invitation, Yildrim. God's wrath is immeasurable. People like us know.

YILDRIM

But what about my wrath?

YAĞMUR

But at least you can think; we don't know if God can.

YILDRIM

(With a marked frustration.) Why do I have to live up to these responsibilities of challenging invisible authority or inviting them for a dialogue? Was it written in my book of kismet? (Strongly.) I would like to rip that piece of paper upon which you have written my responsibilities and commitments. Yes, a challenge.

MAHMUT

(Shouting to HIKMET.) Ey Hikmet, clean those tables more vigorously. They are not your lover's cheek, there is no need to be gentle.

SÜLEYMAN

(To YILDRIM.) You are not being smart.

YILDRIM

Pah! Maybe you are divine, because you are an elitist.

SÜLEYMAN

Yes, I am different, not of my own desire. I am puzzled by your anger. It does not have a reason, and a vision.

YILDRIM

There is a reason. There is a reason. There always was a reason.

LEYLA

(In a calming tone.) Yildrim, please, drink your tea. Don't torture yourself. As my mother says, these kinds of conversations are meant to take place after 11 o'clock in the night.

YAĞMUR

But perhaps that this is a part of his destiny, Leyla.

LEYLA

I want to make my own destiny.

MAHMUT

(Loudly.) Murat! Murat, the kettle breaker! Go and place my usual bet at the stadium for today's game. On Fenerbahçe, to win by two goals. And if you don't come

back quickly, I will change your destiny.

[Voice is heard on stage, "Yes, Mahmut Amca."]

SÜLEYMAN

(To YILDRIM.) Tell me the reason for your anger, Yildrim!

CRAZY ALI

There is no reason. (Laughs.) Sometimes there is no reason for reason.

YILDRIM

(Gently but with passion.) I want a reason for my pain. I want a reason for my poverty. I have been locked up, slapped, kicked out of school, had sex; all I think, for a reason. But I never have found a reason for having been doomed to do those things. I muster my courage, listen to the ney flute, treat friends to tea for a living, write antiquated poetry of heroism and suffering, and yet I don't know what I am. A prophet or just a nobody? A solitary individual that will in time melt away like prayers? (Getting angry.) And yet I fight for justice; the right thing, an absolute ethical standard, and I see myself losing. Look at me, and you should understand what I am saying.

CRAZY ALI

(Gently to YILDRIM.) I understand. I understand.

SÜLEYMAN

I am an angel. I am not necessarily wise.

HASAN

(Sighs.) Now, I don't understand at all.

YILDRIM

And neither am I a wise man. (Scratches head.)

YAĞMUR

(To himself.) So who is? Me? No.

[HASAN and CRAZY ALI point at each other.]

LEYLA

(To herself.) Süleyman, you are too humble.

YILDRIM

But there are others who think they are, trying to dictate my life. These wise men try to construct the future, when they do not know what they are. How can they pass judgment? To which final second of my dying breath am I supposed to wait for change? They don't know shit. You don't know shit.

CRAZY ALI

There is not much to know about shit.

SÜLEYMAN

You are falling.

YILDRIM

Let me fall. I am falling with a vision of people. My falling, my struggles — this is my present.

SÜLEYMAN

Yıldırım, you are like a kid, who thinks martyrdom is a grand thing. That is an illusion.

YAĞMUR

Let that illusion remain.

CRAZY ALI

Illusions are good.

HASAN

Just like ice-cream. (Pause.) Illusions melt like ice-cream.

LEYLA

I don't understand. Maybe I shouldn't understand. That way I will be happier, eh, Yağmur, what do you say?

YAĞMUR

I think no matter what Leyla, you will never be unhappy.

HASAN

(To YAĞMUR.) Yağmur abi, you are wrong. Everybody will be unhappy in their life.



YILDRIM

I don't deal in false humility. Maybe that is why I am not wise. Let me be a kid, if I want to. (Pause.) I want to be a kid. I want my dreams back.

SÜLEYMAN

(To YILDRIM.) You are alone, aren't you? You have suffered in solitude among people. I am not sure how that would feel.

LEYLA

I have never been lonely.

YAĞMUR

I have.

SÜLEYMAN

Yıldırım, you didn't have a choice. What a righteous man! (Gently.) You expect a reward for your sacrifice, don't you? (Chuckles and shakes his head in light jest.) You are a selfish bastard.

LEYLA

Süleyman! There is no need for that. My mother always said that only the bastards call each other bastards.

CRAZY ALI

Dr. Hasan, you are a bastard.

HASAN

Patient Ali, you are a bastard. (They break out into a roaring laughter.)

YILDRIM

(Smiling.) Süleyman is a selfish bastard with honesty at least.

SÜLEYMAN

So?

YILDRIM

You don't understand, do you?

SÜLEYMAN

What?

YILDRIM

My loneliness is not out of wisdom, or my politics, or my lack of love. It is out of my desire for this world to make sense. How can you look away? You are part of my world that does not make sense. Leaving me to burn in my fire will not result in your wings escaping the flames. You will go down with me. Wait and see.

SÜLEYMAN

(To YILDRIM.) You are scared, but proud. You have imprisoned yourself. You are a fool for doing that, a fool.

LEYLA

Süleyman, talking like that is not going to solve anybody's problems. Let us talk about the game.

YAĞMUR

Leyla, let them be.

YILDRIM

Don't get me wrong, but how many people have succeeded in being fools and live to tell it? My prison takes getting used to. I have my parks, my benches, the warm soil upon which I sit, nights that I have dinner with my ideals. I sometimes think that life is like a glass of limonata, that I once drank gleefully, but now only have its taste to live on.

LEYLA

My mother makes great limonata. (Pause.) I feel like some right now.

YAĞMUR

We all have our prisons, our glasses of limonata's. And we all drink our limonata to the last drop. That is why we have to die. Some in loneliness, some in faith, some on purpose, some without knowing. But we all drink our glass of limonata.

LEYLA

(Loudly.) Hikmet, a glass of your limonata. What do you say?

CRAZY ALI

(Loudly.) Hikmet abi, bring the limonata of knowledge.

HASAN

Together with the sugar of purpose. (CRAZY ALI and HASAN both laugh.)

HIKMET

(At the far right of the stage wiping tables.) Of course abla, of course abi. (Exits.)

YILDRIM

But why should I die in loneliness. My loneliness is stupid.

SÜLEYMAN

You will only find rest when you see that a meaning for life may not be essential.

YILDRIM

Is that what your divine mind says? That wonderful channel of God.

LEYLA

There is some static in that channel, like our radio over here. (Laughs and starts to hum a tune.)

SÜLEYMAN

I don't like the radio. Forget my mind. I just inspire people, I leave the thinking to them.

YILDRIM

Süleyman Bey, I accept your fallibility, but not your existence. You don't matter to me, not much anyway. Just remain a stranger, we can appreciate our company and our tea much better. (Looking outside, scratching head.) What great weather for football!

SÜLEYMAN

I want to help. Rejecting me is a rejection of truth.

YILDRIM

Which is?

SÜLEYMAN

That you need me.

LEYLA

Everyone needs angels. Especially me because I find them kinder than people. They are just and capable of pure love. What more can you ask for? To play football with you? (Humming the tune from the radio.)

YILDRIM

Leyla, sshhhh. No, Süleyman I don't need you. But if it makes you comfortable you can think that I do. I am on fire. Fire. Do you want to cure me? Go ahead. Do your magic. (Pause.) I am still the same. So, help me! The truth is that I am dying in fear. This is my life. My heart, my soul, my mind, all in front of you. I will fight. I will struggle for meaning. I will struggle. (Sipping tea.) I will have to struggle.

SÜLEYMAN

What do you want me to do? I cannot do what you want me to do, I don't know how.

LEYLA

Don't you feel helpless? I would. That's why I would want to be an angel and not be an angel. I would want to be an angel because I can show that even angels can be helpless. I wouldn't want to be an angel because if people see me helpless they will lose hope. (Sighs.) Decisions, decisions, decisions. But I like the way it is. (YAĞMUR and YILDRIM chuckle.)

CRAZY ALI

Enough thinking.

HASAN

Yes, enough thinking.

MAHMUT

(Shouting.) Hikmet! Where is the limonata? Our guests are waiting for limonata juice, not for official government paperwork.

SÜLEYMAN

(To YILDRIM.) You are all free to believe in me or not to believe in me.

## YILDRIM

You know, Süleyman, you are like a cobbled street, that wanders on and on, in front of the houses, without any particular aim, just like the street outside. Not looking left or right, up or down, you just keep going. But where? To Izmir? You just can not shrug us off because we travel upon you, we depend on you for a lot of things.

## SÜLEYMAN

I just want to help people. I don't want to care about them.

## MAHMUT

(Loudly.) Hikmet, are you bringing the limonata? Just the limonata, not the whole world.

[HIKMET comes in with the glasses of limonata on a tray.]

## YAĞMUR

Ahh, we should have said you are a street of asphalt instead of cobblestone, because asphalt is more difficult to dig up.

## LEYLA

Süleyman Bey, I think you are a confused angel. Something which I am not sure if I like or dislike.

## YILDRIM

He will never admit it.

## SÜLEYMAN

(Quickly.) I am not confused. I know exactly what to do.

## YILDRIM

Do something purposeful. (Pause.) Like making me an angel.

## LEYLA

You can't make angels, just like that (Snaps fingers.)

## CRAZY ALI

But God made us, just like that. (Snaps fingers.)

HASAN

I don't think God would snap his fingers. It would make a very loud noise.

SÜLEYMAN

(TO HASAN and CRAZY ALI.) You two are making some unnecessary noise. (To YILDRIM.) Leyla is right. Why should I, even if I were to take you seriously?

YILDRIM

You are inept, and you know it. We have been talking here for a long time and you have not done a single thing. That is inept. At least if I had your powers things would change.

SÜLEYMAN

I thought you did not like charities.

YILDRIM

I don't. I challenge you to a game of backgammon. If I win, I become an angel. If I lose, I pay for another cup of tea, ask for redemption and perhaps believe in God.

YAĞMUR

(To YILDRIM.) I think lightning has struck your head. But I am with you. If you need my advice, I will be happy to give it. You know I always beat you in backgammon.

CRAZY ALI

Actually, I am the world champion.

HASAN

You are the champion of everything and everybody.

LEYLA

Backgammon with an angel? That is suicide. But what a letter I will have this week!

SÜLEYMAN

You have much more to gain, if you win and even if you lose; you don't give up anything.

YILDRIM

Asking for redemption from God, having faith in him? That is a big gain for God, even if the effects on me were negated.

SÜLEYMAN

But there is nothing in it for me?

YILDRIM

You are an angel. You are selfless and compassionate. Okay, in addition, I will admit that I need you.

SÜLEYMAN

(To YILDRIM.) You are appealing to my emotions.

LEYLA

(To SÜLEYMAN.) I knew you were sensitive.

YILDRIM

(To LEYLA.) Leyla, you are our female prophet. (To SÜLEYMAN.) Why shouldn't I?

CRAZY ALI

I was the first male prophet and I never got credit for it.

HASAN

Even in prophethood there is unfairness. What is the world coming too? (Pause.) What is heaven coming too?

SÜLEYMAN

(To HASAN.) You are incurable. (To YILDRIM.) I am not sure if such a duel is the best way to cure you.

YILDRIM

My intellect is cancerous. It has invaded every inch of my being. This is the only way. A game of backgammon, where it is the dice and the brains that do the talking and the moving.

SÜLEYMAN

No, I refuse.

YAĞMUR

Maybe another time? Maybe with some one else?

YILDRIM

Where is your desire to help people? Where is that reaching out? If I lose, you gain a believer. Then you can use me as a tool for whatever you want.

SÜLEYMAN

The stakes are too high for me. Look, making you an angel is not business. And I am in no mood to burn in hell. God would be angry if I lose. No, it is too dangerous.

LEYLA

I agree fully with Süleyman Bey.

YILDRIM

I don't. Where is your confidence? You are an angel. C'mon and be an angel. Can you not risk something?

SÜLEYMAN

I need to confer with others. I have to...

YILDRIM

You are here on earth. Here. (Points to the table.) Take a stand and prove to yourself that you really are an angel. An angel that can do something.

LEYLA

(To YILDRIM.) He has already done a lot by drinking tea with you.

SÜLEYMAN

I want to think more.

YAĞMUR

A believer and at your command as you wish. A total surrender of self to you and God. That is a good offer.



YILDRIM

Thinking too much might kill you. While you are at it, disappear into thin air. Your tea is finished. Thank you for your company.

SÜLEYMAN

But if I lose I would no longer be an angel. I would be dead. (Pause.) You want me to leave?

YAĞMUR

The game will be a good one.

LEYLA

(To SÜLEYMAN.) Stay. Just stay.

SÜLEYMAN

(Waits.) I accept. With the conditions that you will do anything that I see fit for yourself and for others. Complete control.

LEYLA

I still say it is dangerous. It is stupid.

YILDRIM

Ey, the angels are getting smarter, the more they are around humans.

YAĞMUR

(To YILDRIM.) And when you win, you will make sure it works the other way around too.

SÜLEYMAN

Overconfidence befalls the ones with the beards and wrinkled shirts.

YILDRIM

We will see. I need to get a cigarette from Osman abi. Clear my mind. I will be back in a little while. (To HIKMET who is wiping tables.) Hey... Hikmet, bring the backgammon board, there is going to be a serious battle. (To YAĞMUR and LEYLA.) Let's go.

CRAZY ALI

We should also go. We have to.

HASAN

Why?

CRAZY ALI

Things are starting to get crazy here. (As both CRAZY ALI and HASAN leave, they recite a poem.)

The executioner said to the victim —  
 my friend, this is my job.  
 And the victim said to the executioner —  
 my friend, this is my fire,  
 of my life.  
 The deed was done,  
 even the ashes were invisible  
 to the confused devil's henchman.

[YILDRIM, LEYLA and YAĞMUR leave stage.  
 SÜLEYMAN sits still and after a short while  
 closes his eyes, as if in deep thought.]

HIKMET

(With backgammon board.) Abi? Abi? (Seeing YILDRIM is not there, starts to pick up the cups and glasses from other tables. Starts to recite poetry.)

You're like a scorpion, my brother  
 you live in cowardly darkness like a scorpion.  
 You're like a sparrow, my brother,  
 always in a sparrows flutter.  
 You are like a clam, my brother,  
 closed like a clam, content.  
 And you're frightening, my brother like the  
 mouth of an extinct volcano.  
 Not one, not five —  
 unfortunately, you number millions.  
 You're like a sheep, my brother:  
 when the cloaked drover raises his stick,  
 you quickly join the flock

and run, almost proudly, to the slaughterhouse.  
I mean, you're the strangest creature on earth —  
even stranger than the fish  
that couldn't see the ocean for the water.  
And the oppression in this world  
is thanks to you.  
And if we're hungry, tired, covered with blood,  
and still being crushed like grapes for our wine,  
the fault is yours —  
I can hardly bring myself to say it,  
but most of the fault, my dear brother, is yours.

GRANDFATHER

(Looks up towards HIKMET.) Hikmet, come here. Sit down. You have been working hard my son, you deserve some rest.

HIKMET

(Sitting down.) Thank you. I am tired.

GRANDFATHER

I heard you recite some lines, old and forgotten lines. Where did you get them?

HIKMET

I found a book by the footpath outside the cafe, long time ago. Torn. But I can still read it. The words are very beautiful.

GRANDFATHER

Just like your dreams.

HIKMET

I don't know. I never remember them.

GRANDFATHER

But you should. That is what you will be when you grow up.

HIKMET

Naa, I just want to own a bigger and cleaner cafe, with musicians and dancing girls.

GRANDFATHER

(Laughs.) Maybe. (Coughs hard.)

HIKMET

Are you sick?

GRANDFATHER

It is life. To be old, to be sick. But when I talk to you, I don't care, I don't want to care. With you I find peace and quiet.

HIKMET

Do you remember when you were a kid?

GRANDFATHER

I was just like you. What stories I can tell you. That was another time; perhaps when I tell you what it was like, it may still live on. Memories are like women, Hikmet. They never stay around forever.

HIKMET

But the one I marry will. I will love her and she will love me.

GRANDFATHER

Remember that! Love with your head in the mornings and with your heart in the afternoons and don't care about the nights.

HIKMET

Did it work for you?

GRANDFATHER

That's my secret. You should make up your own.

HIKMET

I am still a kid.

GRANDFATHER

Just like me.

HIKMET

How is that?

GRANDFATHER

Old people are children too; except that they are children who know that they are no longer children.

HIKMET

I like you.

GRANDFATHER

Thank you (laughing heartily), thank you for your kindness.

HIKMET

Dede, recite some poetry for me, before I have to go back.

GRANDFATHER

(Adamantly.) No, no.

HIKMET

Just a little.

GRANDFATHER

I am an old man. I will run out of breath.

HIKMET

If you recite something, only then will I go back. If you don't recite anything, my father will get angry at me for not working, and because of that you will get sad.

GRANDFATHER

You should be a politician. (Starts to recite.)

deep mountains lined up in rows  
 the pine forest reached to the sea  
 on the shore an old man lay  
 stretched out on the pebble beach.  
 and this sun-ripe September day  
 the distant news of sunken ships

the cool blue of the northeast breeze  
caressed the old man's face.

his hands were folded on his chest  
stubborn and tired like two crabs  
the tough hard-shelled triumph  
of a journey out lasting time.

his salt-wrinkled eye-lids  
were softly closed  
and in the gold-speckled darkness  
the old man listened to the roar.

(To HIKMET.) Your turn Hikmet my son.

HIKMET

(Starts to recite.)

the sea, the sharp-toothed fish  
the flaming dawn  
the rocks blooming at the bottom  
the nets and the fisherman's home.

or maybe the roar came from high  
in the pines near the clouds  
he knew it would make him dizzy  
to look up at them from below.

[Reciting together.]

deep mountains lined up in rows  
the pine forest reached to the sea  
on the shore an old man lay  
stretched out on the pebble beach.

HIKMET

(Surprised but very happy.) That was from the book.

GRANDFATHER

(Absent-mindedly.) I read it a long time ago. (Gently.) Now go, before your father finds out.

HIKMET

I will come back later. (Exits stage.)

END OF ACT I

TEA WITH SÜLEYMAN  
ACT II



[YAĞMUR comes in with LEYLA. Both sit and wait for SÜLEYMAN to open his eyes. HIKMET is sitting by the board on the table on the left hand side of the cafe. The radio is off. It is just sunset and the light on the lamppost is on. A few lights are on in the cafe.]

LEYLA

(Humming a tune.) So are you ready?

SÜLEYMAN

Mmm... well, sort of. It is a matter of concentration and I am having a few problems. But nothing that I can't iron out. Other than that, I am ready. Where is Yıldırım?

YAĞMUR

Outside, smoking a cigarette. You were in deep in sleep. What was your heart saying?

LEYLA

(To SÜLEYMAN.) Did you turn the radio off?

SÜLEYMAN

(To LEYLA.) Yes, I think it needs to be quiet when one is playing backgammon. (To YAĞMUR.) My heart was saying that this is the start of an adventure, an adventure from which will change me forever. (To LEYLA.) At such a time the radio is a distraction. The noise affects the roll of the dice.

LEYLA

Even angels are superstitious. My mother is going to be amazed.

YAĞMUR

Our lives are like folk tales; myths for the world we will never know.

SÜLEYMAN

How does that help you?

YAĞMUR

I don't think it does. But it helps me realize that even angels can feel lost. I was already lost. That is not important. What is important is finding where I became lost and where I will be found.

SÜLEYMAN

Getting lost would be frightening.

YAĞMUR

Only if you don't admit that it is okay to be lost.

SÜLEYMAN

Death without redemption does not frighten you?

YAĞMUR

Yes, but I know that in my death there will be a purpose. Poets always have a purpose. Redemption is not my job.

SÜLEYMAN

It should be. You control your destiny.

[HIKMET puts his head on the table for a quick nap.]

YAĞMUR

Maybe. I don't want to be a prophet. It would be too lonely.

LEYLA

For me too. Also it would be too tiring. (Pause.) And I wish we could have the radio on.

SÜLEYMAN

I thought poets liked loneliness.

YAĞMUR

Loneliness with pain I welcome, for it teaches.

SÜLEYMAN

Do you have a companion?

YAĞMUR

No, only my words.

Are you bitter? SÜLEYMAN

No, only with my words. YAĞMUR

I sense you don't mind really. SÜLEYMAN

Loneliness I mind. Solitude I make love to. YAĞMUR

Sounds very romantic. SÜLEYMAN

(Laughs.) I know. YAĞMUR

Tell me how it feels. SÜLEYMAN

Why? YAĞMUR

I want to know. SÜLEYMAN

Want? Even angels? YAĞMUR

Please. SÜLEYMAN

YAĞMUR  
 (Shaking his head.) Solitude is like an easy quietness that rests like a gentle nudge on your arm, the mind starts to feel free, then the lights in the room start to fade and my eyes start to see. The intention of wanting to make sense of what I do settles

in, but there is no pressure, just maybe a slight breeze, only a very slight breeze. My head begins to burn and I start to write, in my mind I write with a fear. It is quiet, and I don't talk to myself, I feel love and hate with the darkness, and then it comes without notice, tears, clear tears. From somewhere within, from here (points to chest), from here (points to head), it just comes. I get angry, then sad, then calm, then hopeful, a little hopeful. Then my mouth opens and says I have to search for myself in cafes like this, and I remind myself that I have to live and die for myself. And the fire burns out, the breeze leaves and I fall exhausted. Every time it is the same. (Notices that LEYLA has fallen asleep on her chair. To himself.) Hmm, how she rests in the middle of our turmoil.

SÜLEYMAN

I will never feel such things.

YAĞMUR

Maybe you are not meant to. Maybe it is only our right.

SÜLEYMAN

It is all too innocent for me.

YAĞMUR

That's interesting. Are you a creation of our innocence?

SÜLEYMAN

In the beginning. Now we are more.

YAĞMUR

What can you do?

SÜLEYMAN

Look around you. The world is slowly improving.

YAĞMUR

Don't take credit away from us.

SÜLEYMAN

I am just claiming an angel's share.

YAĞMUR

What is your share in the death of the innocent?

SÜLEYMAN

I am not responsible for them.

YAĞMUR

(Strongly.) I remember the innocent.

SÜLEYMAN

So do I.

YAĞMUR

But I cry. I cry and fight with my memories that don't die with the dead.

SÜLEYMAN

One day all will be forgotten, it is the nature of things.

YAĞMUR

You are so dark.

SÜLEYMAN

It is the way things are, even I can not change it.

YAĞMUR

Push the darkness away, before it kills you.

SÜLEYMAN

What darkness? It is reality. Accept it my dear poet.

YAĞMUR

Dream. Imagine. Think. Do whatever you want, but don't accept!

SÜLEYMAN

But that is way it is and always will be. And I know it. I guarantee it.

YAĞMUR

I don't believe in guarantees. I believe in my simple desires and my imagination.

SÜLEYMAN

C'mon stop being humble. You are very smart. Smartest of anybody around here.

YAĞMUR

You say that just because you are nearly old. The smartest is Hikmet.

SÜLEYMAN

Hikmet?

YAĞMUR

He doesn't know something yet but one day he will know. He is just waiting. Like an eagle. At the right time, he will fly and nobody knows what will happen.

SÜLEYMAN

What doesn't he know? What do you think will happen?

YAĞMUR

It is something that is not available for angels.

SÜLEYMAN

Then we can do without it.

YAĞMUR

Oh yes, but it is ours.

SÜLEYMAN

And that is the only thing that you have.

YAĞMUR

Perhaps. But at least I can walk on the cobblestone with bare feet and see my invisible imprints. Stones talk to us. They don't even feel you.

[Enter Yildirim.]

## YILDRIM

Mr. Angel, are you ready? Hikmet, abi, get up, this is no time to dream. (HIKMET gets up.) Two cups of tea. Leyla, get up, the game is about to begin. (Jostling LEYLA out of her sleep.) Oh, the board is already here. Ah, my lovely red dice. Is fate trying to tell us something here?

## SÜLEYMAN

Only you.

## YILDRIM

Let's start. You are our visitor. You move first.

## SÜLEYMAN

Thank you. (Throws dice.) Pah, that's what I call an opening throw. (Moves.)

## LEYLA

The start of an ordeal. This will make the middle of my letter. A letter that will become a village classic.

## YILDRIM

It is all in the movement of the hand. (Throws dice.) There. (Moves.) Hey, hey, hey, we are moving like a locomotive, right through the countryside. Counter that.

## HIKMET

(Coming to the table with the tea.) You have to teach me that, Abi. Then I can become the champion player after you retire.

## YAĞMUR

Be careful.

## SÜLEYMAN

Heed those words, Yildrim. (Throws dice.) Look at this. The numbers are useless. (Moves, by slamming the pieces on the board.) Hah, but the moves are great.

## YILDRIM

Yağmur, talk with your heart to me, no need to say anything. Just as when we were in the university.

YAĞMUR

O.k. just like those times.

YILDRIM

Concentrate, Yıldırım, concentrate. That is the key to winning. (Throws dice.) O, for the sake of my father and mother, dear dice, let's have some better numbers. (Moves.) No problem, next time.

HIKMET

No problem, we will get him next time.

LEYLA

(To SÜLEYMAN.) Do you know if you are going to win?

SÜLEYMAN

No. (Throws dice). Not bad. (Moves.)

LEYLA

My mother says that angels talk with God. Do you?

SÜLEYMAN

In a way. To his presence.

LEYLA

What happened when you talk to Him?

SÜLEYMAN

Light, lots of bright light. Couldn't really tell if it was He, just felt his presence.

LEYLA

What did you say?

YILDRIM

(Jokingly interjecting.) Let me win! (Laughs and throws dice.) Thank you, my darling dice. Tratratarata, first kill. (Slams piece on board.) Your move, Süleyman.



HIKMET

Abi, why do you call the dice, your darling?

YILDRIM

Because right now they are my life.

YAĞMUR

Unfortunately. (Laughs.)

SÜLEYMAN

(To LEYLA.) I asked for forgiveness.

LEYLA

For what? Only people like me sin.

SÜLEYMAN

I asked for forgiveness for my sins that I commit without knowing them. But I know what I am doing when I am playing backgammon. (Throws dice looking at YILDRIM.) Perfect. (Moves.)

HIKMET

I don't think it is perfect. You will see.

YAĞMUR

My dear Hikmet, how would you know if it is perfect or not?

HIKMET

(Pointing to his head.) Brains. Brains.

YAĞMUR

Ah, yes I forgot that. Please remind me again if I forget. (Laughs.)

LEYLA

So you think you can sin. My mother will be surprised. Are angel's hearts all pure?

SÜLEYMAN

I think so.

YILDRIM

Keep on thinking, while my hands are talking. (Throws dice.) C'mon dear, this is not a time to desert me. (Moves.)

YAĞMUR

Don't worry, just concentrate and play on.

LEYLA

Don't you ever have a bad thought. I do all the time.

SÜLEYMAN

No, never.

LEYLA

Perhaps thoughts of love?

SÜLEYMAN

Why do you think love is impure?

LEYLA

For you I think it would be. (YILDRIM and YAĞMUR both smile.) Isn't it? (Looking around.)

SÜLEYMAN

No. I never think of love. (Throws dice.) But in this case, maybe I will think of Lady Luck. (Moves.)

LEYLA

(To SÜLEYMAN.) Have you ever fallen in love?

HIKMET

I have.

LEYLA

I have many times. I can fall in love anytime, and I like falling in love. But I try to have my wits about me.

SÜLEYMAN

How can I fall in love if I don't think of love?

LEYLA

I do. Every single time. I am not a stupid village romantic who does not know how to think.

HIKMET

We know, Leyla abla.

YAĞMUR

(To HIKMET, feigning a serious look.) Why don't you shut up and keep your valuable comments to yourself. (Laughs. YAĞMUR and HIKMET make faces at each other.)

SÜLEYMAN

Fallen in love for no reason?

LEYLA

Yes, for no reason. In all the seasons. The best is in autumn.

YILDRIM

Because there are more lonely men. (Chuckles and throws dice.) Ah, the game is getting interesting. (Moves.)

SÜLEYMAN

Leyla, why autumn?

LEYLA

The leaves are all around you, the sky is blue as blue ever can be and... (Pause.) I don't know. It just happens.

SÜLEYMAN

Strange. Love is always strange.

HIKMET

Of course love is always strange. Don't you think so, Yıldırım abi? Don't you think so, Yağmur abi?

YAĞMUR

(To YILDRIM.) Don't say anything. Keep your mind on the game.

LEYLA

(To SÜLEYMAN.) But if you fall in love often, it becomes a friend. That's what my mother says. Encouragement for me, you know. She gave me encouragement when I used to play football with the boys too. I will always remember the thrill of...

YAĞMUR, HIKMET and YILDRIM

(In unison.) Tripping the boys when they had tripped me. (All three laugh loudly. LEYLA sticks out her tongue to all of them.)

SÜLEYMAN

What did your father say? (Throws dice.) Hmmm. (Moves.)

LEYLA

Not much. He stills grumbles and reads his paper. He is retired. Keeps to himself which I don't mind. Doesn't approve of me being alone in the city.

SÜLEYMAN

He cares about you, perhaps. Another kind of love.

LEYLA

Maybe. One day maybe I will understand it. My mother says I will.

SÜLEYMAN

It seems you are close to your mother.

LEYLA

My closest friend. But I don't want to be like her. She is herself and I am myself.

YILDRIM

And I am myself and Yağmur is himself. (Tries to repress his chuckling.)

YAĞMUR

And I am myself and Yıldırım is himself. (Looks at YILDRIM and starts to chuckle.)

HIKMET

(TO YILDRIM and YAĞMUR, imitating his father MAHMUT.) Both of you are stupid oafs. Now let us get this game going before I break your leg in ten thousand places. This is a game not your mother's wedding party. (Bursts out laughing loudly.)

LEYLA

Monkeys. All of you are monkeys. (Trying hard to be serious.)

SÜLEYMAN

You must love your mother a lot.

YILDRIM

She is her mother you know. Mahmut abi is not here right now, he had to go to his in-laws to solve a family crisis, (smiles) so I better close the cafe, nobody is here anyway except us. (Starts to get up.)

HIKMET

Abi, I'll do it. Champions need to worry about the game, not the shutters. (Gets up.)

YAĞMUR

Leave one of the shutters open for the air. It is pretty hot in here.  
[HIKMET closes the two shutters in the middle and right hand side of the cafe.]

LEYLA

My mother is my closest friend. I don't love her a lot, I mean, that is strange. She has her faults like my father. I love writing to her and she loves writing back to me. We give each other dignity and respect, because we do not get it from anybody else.

SÜLEYMAN

It is another kind of love, a love of dignity and respect.

LEYLA

Could be.

YILDRIM

(Throws dice.) The heavens are starting to smile. Yağmur, I know you approve.  
(Moves.)

HIKMET

(Just in time to see the move.) Good move, Abi.

LEYLA

Who is your closest friend?

SÜLEYMAN

Myself.

YILDRIM

Ah, one of us maybe after all.

SÜLEYMAN

(Correcting himself). Myself and God.

LEYLA

Wouldn't you want someone like us? Maybe a villager like me, who wants to make a life, have friends in a cafe, to laugh, to watch football.

YAĞMUR

Poets and singers make the best companions. (With a British accent.) Wouldn't you agree, Hikmet Bey?

HIKMET

(With a British accent.) I agree completely, Mr. Yağmur.

SÜLEYMAN

(To LEYLA.) The need for companions has never arisen.

LEYLA

What if you do not know you have a need? Just like love sometimes?

SÜLEYMAN

For me there is no need.

LEYLA

Even love for God? I need it. Just as there is a need to play football. There is always a need for a game, for love. That's good advice from my mother.

## SÜLEYMAN

(To LEYLA.) For me love is automatic. I never think about it, or want it. It just happens.

## LEYLA

My mother says that when she finds the right man for me, that is what will happen between us. Love at once. She wrote to me saying that she had a dream of a man who came from a far and strange land, a man who was decent and shy. Then in the dream, the man declared his love for me, and married me after a long and hard courtship. Now that's a dream I know will come true.

## YAĞMUR

(To YILDRIM.) Yildrim, stop dreaming, there will be time for that later. Try to figure out what Süleyman is doing.

## SÜLEYMAN

So your mother is trying to find you a man? What do you want? (Throws dice.) Hey, two sixes. (Moves.) Times might be starting to get tough. (Throws dice again.) It's all in the movement of the hand. (Moves.)

[HIKMET shows a thumbs down sign.]

## YILDRIM

Times are going to get tough for you Süleyman, not for me. You agree Hikmet?

[HIKMET enthusiastically nods.]

## SÜLEYMAN

So, tell me, what do you want in a man?

## LEYLA

(To SÜLEYMAN.) O, I don't know. God knows. I would like him to be somebody who likes to go out and dance, be able to talk without getting boring, one who likes children and who will make a good father. I don't know. Kind, gentle but firm when necessary. I don't know. Somebody who is just good. Somebody who is different and hard to win over.

## SÜLEYMAN

Men like that are not easy to find.

YILDRIM

Who says?

SÜLEYMAN

(To LEYLA.) How would you like him to look?

LEYLA

Anyway is fine with me, as long as heaven does not come between us.

YAĞMUR

I think that might be asking for too much.

SÜLEYMAN

Maybe it won't be so hard. Heaven is wrapped up in other things.

YILDRIM

O, I think we can remedy Leyla's dilemma and yours. (Throws dice.) Ah, at last I can move this piece and start the offensive. (Slams the piece on the board and moves.)

HIKMET

That's good. Otherwise that piece could have troubled your strategy later.

YILDRIM

Thank you maestro. (Both laugh.) Don't you have work to do?

HIKMET

My father is away solving a family crisis, so it is time to rest.

YAĞMUR

Your logic is overwhelming. (Laughs.) Can you please get us some more tea?  
[HIKMET gets up to get the tea.]

LEYLA

(To SÜLEYMAN.) Who do you think it will be for me? Anybody from my village?

SÜLEYMAN

I have no idea. Love and marriage are not my concern.



LEYLA

So try at least. Look at me, I am trying. With all this trying I know it won't be a man from my village. Impossible. Not when I know what I am doing.

YAĞMUR

Leyla always knows what she is doing.

SÜLEYMAN

(Looking at the board.) You must have the time, Leyla.

LEYLA

Of course. Looking at what you do for a living, you should have time too. Angels don't need sleep do they?

SÜLEYMAN

No.

LEYLA

I think that is your problem. you need some kind of rest. Everyday when I come back, after roaming around for a job, I have to rest, or the next day turns out really bad. One needs rest.

[HIKMET comes in with the tea.]

YILDRIM

Thank you Hikmet. How is the football match going?

HIKMET

Seems Fenerbahçe and Galatasaray are playing well. That's a surprise. The radio in the kitchen said it was a damn good game. No score yet.

YILDRIM

Fenerbahçe is my team.

HIKMET

Be ready to lose.

LEYLA

Hikmet, can you bring me some lokum?

HIKMET

Of course, abla. (Exits.)

SÜLEYMAN

How long have you been looking for a job? (Throws dice.) C'mon, c'mon, Süleymancıgım. (Exhorting himself, he moves.)

[HIKMET runs back to the table.]

HIKMET

(Cheering YILDRIM on.) C'mon, Yıldırım abi, c'mon, Yıldırım abi.

YAĞMUR

(To HIKMET.) Your father was right. You belong in a stadium.

LEYLA

(To SÜLEYMAN.) I have been trying to find a job for a month now.

SÜLEYMAN

That is a long time. Either it shows determination or simple obstinancy.

YILDRIM

Determination.

YAĞMUR

Determination.

HIKMET

Obstinancy. (Laughs.)

LEYLA

(Looking towards HIKMET.) Obstinancy is for donkeys. (Laughs.) I will get a job soon. I have brains. I work hard. I will get it. Most of the employers are either stupid or want to be stupid. They probably realize that I have more brains than they do. No problem. Just like love, it will happen.

SÜLEYMAN

You are very optimistic. And it is something I admire in you.

LEYLA

Thank you, it is something left over from my mother. (HIKMET goes behind the cabinet and comes back with a box of lokum.) How can one be pessimistic when there is lokum in the world. (Takes the box.)

YILDRIM

Give me some, Leyla. (LEYLA gives him a couple of pieces. YILDRIM throws the dice.) And here is something for you. (Moves.) And here is something for my fans. (Gives a piece to HIKMET and YAĞMUR.)

SÜLEYMAN

(Throws dice.) Thank you. (Picks up a piece and moves). Keep on concentrating, Yildrim Bey.

LEYLA

(To SÜLEYMAN.) Here Süleyman, have a piece of lokum. (Gives SÜLEYMAN a piece of lokum.) Tell me, Süleyman, don't you get tired of being an angel? I mean we all need a change. Yildrim plays football with Hikmet every afternoon, Yağmur comes here every night, I just talk. Don't you want something different?

SÜLEYMAN

I have never thought about it. I talk to other angels sometimes.

LEYLA

That's like drinking the same tea by pouring it to a different cup from your cup. I mean don't you want to be, I don't know, a politician, a farmer.

SÜLEYMAN

No. I remember that once, I just wanted to be a folk dancer, but the permission was not given. I never bothered after that. (To YILDRIM.) Keep on concentrating. (To LEYLA.) I like a little variety, like talking to you. I like that.

LEYLA

You should love it. You should challenge authority sometimes. I do all the time. The stupid idiots think they know how I am supposed to work. No, dear sir. And I tell them, straight to their ugly faces, that people like me will be needed and no longer will we be shy while talking to them.

SÜLEYMAN

That is probably why you don't have a job.

LEYLA

And I don't want a job like yours. No variety.

HIKMET

Now a job like mine has variety.

YAĞMUR

Unfortunately, your face has no variety. (Laughs.)

YILDRIM

I think I need some variety in the numbers I have been getting for a long time.

SÜLEYMAN

(To LEYLA.) Of course there is variety.

LEYLA

You advise people, try to help them help themselves. (Eyes rolling.) You call that variety?

SÜLEYMAN

I am playing backgammon, aren't I? That is variety. I am talking to you.

LEYLA

There are not many that would play with you except for our crazy Yildrim, which might count as a bit of variety. (Laughs.) You should start to like me, instead of just liking to talk with me.

HIKMET

Yildrim is crazy, Yildrim is crazy.

YILDRIM

I may be crazy but I am winning here. (Throws dice.) My beauties are getting set for a final assault. What a great feeling to be the general. Hikmet, let us have a war cry.

HIKMET

(Loudly.) In the name of backgammon, (in a shrill tone) lalalalalalalalala.

YAĞMUR

Yıldırım, you are far from winning yet. Be careful. (To HIKMET.) Give your throat a rest.

SÜLEYMAN

(To LEYLA.) Maybe I do like you. (Smiles, turns to YAĞMUR.) You have been silent.

YAĞMUR

Oh no. I just haven't moved my mouth but I am talking to Yıldırım.

YILDRIM

I can vouch for that, he is long winded.

SÜLEYMAN

(Bending over to the backgammon board.) Time to get serious. (To the dice.) Time to get serious.

LEYLA

You are always serious. Relax. Take my advice. Don't angels have a sense of humor?

SÜLEYMAN

If there is something funny to laugh about, I will laugh. I can relax after the game.

LEYLA

My mother and I sometimes laugh at nothing. If we feel like laughing, we laugh. Have you ever felt like laughing?

SÜLEYMAN

(Laughs slightly.) Yes. Like right now. (Throws dice.) What a trap I am setting. (Moves.) Leyla, look at the trap, I love it.

HIKMET

That is a stupid trap. (To YILDRIM.) Abi, do you see the trap?

[YILDRIM nods.]

LEYLEA

(To SÜLEYMAN.) Just because it is your trap. You might not be the only one with a trap.

YAĞMUR

Everybody builds traps.

LEYLEA

I don't. It is cruel.

SÜLEYMAN

It is life. That's the way, even in life. Even in love.

LEYLEA

I did not expect you to know that about love. Maybe I am falling into a trap of yours that you don't even know about.

SÜLEYMAN

I don't understand what you are talking about. (Looking at YILDRIM.) Oh, he is about to move.

YILDRIM

In the name of this beautiful sip of tea (he sips tea), there. (He throws the dice.) Uff. (With frustration scratches head, looking at the dice.) Not even in the name of tea. No matter. (Moves.)

HIKMET

No matter.

YAĞMUR

It does matter. But hopefully their tea will help. It has to.

SÜLEYMAN

Not necessarily.

LEYLEA

You don't believe in the powers of tea. What else don't you believe in?

SÜLEYMAN

That is a personal question.

LEYLA

(Firmly.) It is time we became personal. We have talked to each other enough to be open about ourselves. And besides you are angel and I am a woman, two beings that can handle being personal to each other.

SÜLEYMAN

(Ignores LEYLA, is engrossed in the game). The master in action. (Throws dice.) The master moves. (Moves.) I didn't hear you Leyla, what did you say?

LEYLA

That we should be open with each other. We are friends right now. Maybe by morning who knows, we can be more than friends.

SÜLEYMAN

I think that I am still an angel and by morning will remain an angel. And angels by rule are private. That is the way we are.

YILDRIM

Sad. (YAĞMUR gestures in agreement.) I know, I am concentrating. Hikmet, concentrate with me.

HIKMET

O.k. abi. I am concentrating with you.

LEYLA

I am not very private. We should not be private, it makes life lonely and doubtful. I thought maybe you had changed by talking to us.

SÜLEYMAN

Too early to say.

YILDRIM

And too late to save yourself. (Throws dice.) Hey, bring the zurna and the davul. (Moves.) What a move. Absolutely brilliant. What do you think Yağmur?

YAĞMUR

I think you know.

HIKMET

I wish I had a zurna and davul. I wonder how the football game is going?

YILDRIM

Fenerbahçe is winning.

LEYLA

I find backgammon so complicated game unlike trying to figure you out. I never know who is winning till the very end.

SÜLEYMAN

That may be good. (Throws dice.) Mmm... here, a little modification (moves), adapting to the situation. Hallmark of a good backgammon player.

LEYLA

I have already chosen a side.

SÜLEYMAN

Who?

LEYLA

(Very jovially.) You!

SÜLEYMAN

(A little shocked.) Me! Why?

LEYLA

Well, you are an angel, you should win since it is the right thing. And besides I like Yıldırm the way he is. As an angel who knows, what he will be like. Also, you won't have to do something that you don't like; Yıldırm can struggle the old traditional way through his problems and we can have more tea. Things will work out better.

YILDRIM

(Jokingly.) Leyla, Leyla, you have deserted me. (Seriously.) I've got to concentrate.



SÜLEYMAN

I am surprised but I am glad. Somebody is on my side. It is comforting. Thank you, Leyla.

YAĞMUR

Just don't take it for granted.

SÜLEYMAN

I won't. But it is still comforting, a feeling I've never had.

YILDRIM

(To himself.) Where is the glory of the Ottoman empire? (To SÜLEYMAN.) You are a good player, but not a great player. You see, I have the great throwing style. (Throws dice.) Ah at last a good juicy victim. Here. (Moves.)

HIKMET

(Waving his arms.) Yıldırım abi, Yıldırım abi.

YAĞMUR

(To HIKMET.) Can we celebrate when he wins?  
[HIKMET shuts up.]

SÜLEYMAN

It is only an illusion, my friend. I am never a victim.

LEYLA

And neither am I.

YILDRIM

Illusions have a strange way of becoming real.

SÜLEYMAN

We shall see. (Pause.) Now I have to move and plan for the future.

YILDRIM

Remember to plan for the pain of your loss, my friend.

YAĞMUR

Yıldırım the game is not over yet.

LEYLA

Yes, even I can see that. (To YILDRIM.) Take it easy Yıldırım. (To SÜLEYMAN.) You should be careful too, I don't want to see my side lose.

YILDRIM

Hah, I have him thinking. how can I be calm? In a few minutes I will be an angel. C'mon, Süleyman, move.

SÜLEYMAN

In a minute. Just like Michaelangelo adding the last touches.

HIKMET

Who is Michaelangelo?

LEYLA

A famous but dead sculptor. I wish I could see Michaelangelo's stuff.

YILDRIM

No problem. I will take you to Florence as soon as Süleyman Bey moves to his doom, into the depths of hell.

SÜLEYMAN

I don't think so. Angels reside in heaven.

YILDRIM

Words, words, words. In backgammon it is the mind that moves, not the tongue.

SÜLEYMAN

Here. (Throws dice.) En garde. (Moves).

LEYLA

Just like one of those French knights in the movies. I wish they would make those movies better, people are not that gullible anymore.

YILDRIM

(To SÜLEYMAN.) Thank you for that last move. (Scratches head, turns to LEYLA.)  
And thank you, Leyla, for your movie review.

[HIKMET scratches his head too.]

YAĞMUR

Take your time.

LEYLA

You know this is getting exciting. I can't wait to write the ending of my letter.

YILDRIM

Soon, very soon.

SÜLEYMAN

I am waiting.

YAĞMUR

Tea, Yildrim?

YILDRIM

No, not now.

LEYLA

I will have some. C'mon Süleyman let's have a cup together. C'mon, otherwise before you know it, you probably will have to leave.

YAĞMUR

Let's wait.

SÜLEYMAN

We will be ordering in a few minutes I am sure. (To LEYLA.) Don't worry, I won't be leaving without another cup of tea. There is no need to threaten me. (Laughs.)

YILDRIM

Maybe. Maybe not. (Throws dice.) Not good, not good. (Moves.)

HIKMET

Not good, but we will make a comeback.

SÜLEYMAN

Maybe. Now we are ready for the big numbers. (Throws dice.) Yes! (Moves.)

YILDRIM

Hmm, trouble.

YAĞMUR

Remember the game we once had when you won after many hours; think of that game.

YILDRIM

I can't right now. Also, I think I am losing.

LEYLA

Hope always keeps everyone alive. I am sure you'll win. Just take it slow and easy.

SÜLEYMAN

Advice may be a little late. Good advice is always late.

HIKMET

It is never too late. My father always says that.

YAĞMUR

Go out for some fresh air, it will help you.

YILDRIM

No, my place is here.

SÜLEYMAN

It might help you.

YILDRIM

Will everyone please shut-up! (With frustration.) This is a backgammon game, not a meeting of village grandmothers.

[HIKMET for the benefit of everybody puts his finger on his lips. Silence.]

LEYLA

(Softly.) Yağmur, what are you doing tonight?

YAĞMUR

I don't know. We will figure something out later. Let's watch the game.

LEYLA

Nobody is doing anything. (Exhales heavily, demonstrating fake boredom.) And I wish the radio was on; it would liven this place up, specially when we have an angel in front of us.

YILDRIM

Fear not Leyla, get the firecrackers ready, it is time to celebrate. (Throws dice.) Try to match this one, Süleyman Bey. (Moves.) I hope you screw up, otherwise I am going to be in deep trouble.

HIKMET

(To SÜLEYMAN.) I hope you screw up.

YAĞMUR

Hikmet, keep quiet.

SÜLEYMAN

(Softly.) Shouldn't be a problem. That's one thing good about being an angel, problems are not an obstacle. They are easily removed.

YAĞMUR

Good move, Yildrim.

SÜLEYMAN

Only for dreamers. (Throws dice.) Hah, two sixes. (Moves.) One more go. (Throws again.) Hoppa! (Moves and throws again.) Where is the zurna and the davul? The end is near. (Moves.)

HIKMET

Get your own zurna and davul. This is not a rental shop.

YILDRIM

Damn. Yağmur, suggestions?

SÜLEYMAN

No, no. Play your own game and be responsible for your moves.

YAĞMUR

He is right.

LEYLA

Is it written anywhere, in a rule book?

SÜLEYMAN

Yes.

LEYLA

Just making sure. But who the hell cares? I don't, nobody over here does, except Süleyman. And I know that one day he will say to hell with the rules of love and life.

YILDRIM

Damn!

HIKMET

Damn.

[Silence.]

LEYLA

Yağmur, maybe reciting some poetry will help.

YAĞMUR

Sssh. Also I don't feel like it.

LEYLA

Hmpft. Waiting and waiting. Let's have some action.

HIKMET

We want some action. We want some action.

YILDRIM

Hopefully, this will save me. (Throws dice.) How am I supposed to play when the dice are so stupid? (Moves.)

SÜLEYMAN

The dice are not stupid, not in this game. (Throws dice.) See? (Moves.)

YILDRIM

Shit.

LEYLA

What happened? Did you lose?

YILDRIM

Almost.

YAĞMUR

Don't give up. Think and fight back.

LEYLA

Now, it is finally getting exciting. Excitement in a game is unavoidable; the only problem is that it takes a long time to happen. I should tell that to my father, maybe he will do more than read newspapers.

YILDRIM

No more options left. Shit. My last chance. C'mon my love. (Throws dice.) What a time to lose touch! (Moves.)

SÜLEYMAN

For what? (Throws dice.) Two sixes. (Moves.) One more left. (Throws dice.) Done. (Moves.)

HIKMET

Stupid dice.

YAĞMUR

(To YILDRIM.) You played well, but Lady Luck was on a vacation for you.

YILDRIM

Fuck! Goddammit! Goddammit!

LEYLA

He lost?

YAĞMUR

Yes.

LEYLA

That is good. Now we can all drink tea calmly. Hikmet, can you please get us our tea now?

[HIKMET is not listening to LEYLA.]

YILDRIM

Goddammit! Stupid dice. Stupid hand.

YAĞMUR

Only a game Yıldırım. Life goes on.

YILDRIM

Fucking shit. Goddammit. I lost the game. (Angry.) I lost the game. (Gets up abruptly and starts to leave.)

YAĞMUR

Yıldırım wait. Where are you going?

YILDRIM

Mmmm, O yes. (Takes out some money.) For the tea, Süleyman Bey. Excuse me I need some air. (Exits the cafe.)

LEYLA

It was only a game.

SÜLEYMAN

For some people.



YAĞMUR

I am going to talk to him. He needs someone to talk to.

LEYLA

Oh, he will be fine.

SÜLEYMAN

I agree with Leyla.

YAĞMUR

No, you don't know him. This wasn't just a game for him. (Exits.)

END OF ACT II

TEA WITH SÜLEYMAN  
ACT III  
SCENE 1

[When stage brightens up, YILDRIM and YAĞMUR are outside the cafe. Both are leaning against the closed shutter on the right hand side of the cafe. The two bulbs that light up the cafe sign are right above them. The night is quiet.]

YAĞMUR

What are you thinking?

YILDRIM

Nothing. What is there to think about? I lost. Funny, that a moment ago, there was anger and now there is just resignation. I don't know what to do.

YAĞMUR

Neither do I.

YILDRIM

I feel as if I can no longer find the answer to everything. It is useless. Look at me. I am a living proof that it wasn't meant to be. I mean, what more can I do? I just feel so empty, so drained. I am so tired. I don't think it was the dice or my hand, it was luck. Sometimes it is good and sometimes it is bad. I don't know, maybe luck had nothing to do with it either.

YAĞMUR

Do we care?

YILDRIM

(Pause.) Not really. (Pause, scratches head.) You know what bothers me most?

YAĞMUR

What?

YILDRIM

That a middle aged, boring government clerk beat me. (Laughs, but then becomes silent momentarily.) My soul is in so much pain. I think for the first time I have felt this much pain because never before had I really lost an important game like this, not even when I played football when I was a kid. There is so much pain. And I can't share it with anybody. Not even you, Yağmur, my closest friend, I can't even share it with you.

## YAĞMUR

Sometimes you can't. It is then you have to cry on your own and wipe your own tears.

## YILDRIM

I don't want to cry. But I am so alone now. Alone, like that silent dice in that board. So alone that I don't even want to look up. Do you know how it gnaws in your insides and you feel... just empty.

## YAĞMUR

I know.

## YILDRIM

Empty just like death. I am alive and I am empty just like death. Here I am a mediocre, angel to-be. Hah! And then I say I am not going to cry. How can I not cry when I am scared of death. Who knows how many people lost with me? Empty just like death, tired and spent. I am still babbling on, babbling on and on, maybe then death will understand.

## YAĞMUR

Death is not here for understanding. If you have to die, you will. But not today. Someone else will, but not you.

## YILDRIM

Why?

## YAĞMUR

Because the fire in your gut will die in the ashes of your loss. You will burn but you will live, you have no choice. You never did.

## YILDRIM

What, kismet ey?

## YAĞMUR

You are the author of your own book, the trick is that someone else publishes it from the printing presses high above. (Points upwards.)

## YILDRIM

(Laughs, scratches head.) I have no books to my name, my poems are forgotten and the lovers I had have disappeared. And I am a rebel. I will probably dissolve in my

own myth.

YAĞMUR

One day the world will understand your myth.

YILDRIM

Don't give me any prophecies. They don't make good travel companions.

YAĞMUR

Travel? What travel?

YILDRIM

Somewhere. Anywhere. To the middle of Anatolia.

YAĞMUR

To join the wolves?

YILDRIM

After I live with the hares. (Laughs.) Away from the lights, away from the noise, away from the streets.

YAĞMUR

Away from people.

YILDRIM

Away from myself. I don't even know who I am because all my life I believed I was destined for glory, destined to a living martyrdom. And now I know that is not true. (Pause, shakes and scratches his head.) You know Rumi once said that if once in this world I win a moment with thee, I will trample on both worlds, I will dance in triumph forever. Yağmur, I want to dance forever too, dance in the music of the plains, dance till my legs tire. I don't need to trample on any worlds because I am not going to be asking for a moment; I am asking for a life. If God is in my life, He is welcome, if not, the loss is His.

YAĞMUR

Be patient. Breathe for the sake of living not for the sake of breathing. You and I are like two wolves in the mountains. You are the one that howls, I am the one that silently looks at the moon. You and I are the same because we will die in the same way... in peace after a long war.

YILDRIM

Just now, after a long time I remembered that when I was a kid, I wanted to be an old man with a lot of tales. And now that I have so many stories, I want to be a kid, since stories and struggles don't leave the comfort of innocence. And I need innocence.

YAĞMUR

If innocence is what you desire, then remember to see death as the end of your life and your life as a meaning for death. Both life and death are innocent. They are our innocence.

YILDRIM

I am only interested in life.

YAĞMUR

Life and death are two poems and you are the poet. Which one would you pick as your favorite?

YILDRIM

Life.

YAĞMUR

I would pick death.

YILDRIM

So?

YAĞMUR

I told you we were like two wolves. Wolves that in the end will fight. (Pause.) I wish I were like you. (Pause.) I see a sadness on your forehead.

YILDRIM

Is there a sadness? I can't explain it. A sadness of knowing that there are others who feel the same way as you and I. That is so strange. You, I, nobody deserves this kind of sadness. I want to feel happy, without any strings attached, without any conditions. (Pause.) This is such a struggle to see my world be so useless.

YAĞMUR

So create a new one.

YILDRIM

Maybe. (Scratches head.) Maybe it is destiny. Maybe it is not destiny. How can I make sense of this confusion?

YAĞMUR

Maybe you are not supposed to worry so much about it.

YILDRIM

How can I not worry? Look at my life, look at the life of others. (Pause.) But you have a point. I am not going to fight for reason anymore. I am not going to fight for anything anymore.

YAĞMUR

Then what are you going to do?

YILDRIM

Just try to live for once; if it requires any fights, then I will fight. I just have to sit somewhere and think. I have to be at peace with myself. I have to accept this damn pain and this damn solitude.

YAĞMUR

It is hard.

YILDRIM

Then I will have to cry sometimes then. Maybe when I cry, my frustrations will gently leave me. Who knows. Maybe if I cry often I will become a guru. (Laughs.)

YAĞMUR

I don't think so.

YILDRIM

You are right. Guru's are lazy. But I need to rest and think by myself. I think I will leave this place, leave Istanbul.

YAĞMUR

I agree.

YILDRIM

I need to get away, but I will be back. Tea over here is too good to be forgotten.

YAĞMUR

What about the bet?

YILDRIM

Well, I paid for the tea. And as for the other conditions, I will find God or whatever, befriend it, but not surrender to it, on my terms, after my own battles. Not just out of a backgammon game. I have to do this the hard way. Ultimately, I will achieve what the angel wants; I will believe in something. Maybe in the end believe in life. That's what any angel would want. That's what God would want. What do you think?

YAĞMUR

You agreed he would have control over you.

YILDRIM

That is a lesson for him. Nobody has control over anybody.

YAĞMUR

That's a good lesson.

YILDRIM

I think that is my first one.

YAĞMUR

Süleyman will understand. If he doesn't, he can go to hell. Anyway, he can't hurt you.

YILDRIM

Why?

YAĞMUR

Because you are starting to rest and think.



## YILDRIM

(Laughs.) What a day, eh Yağmur. I wonder how the football game went.

## YAĞMUR

It's still probably going, if they haven't killed the referee yet. (Laughs.) You are right, today is the day of all days.

## YILDRIM

I am going to leave now. But before I go, shall we recite our favorite poem, the one that is a mixture of two poems? As a memento to this time and moment.

## YAĞMUR

I was hoping you would want that. (Both start to recite.)

Give me the open plains of Anatolia  
upon which dogs and lovers roam,  
where the sky is eternally present  
and the rivers always sing.

I have left my home, my parents  
to come to the plains of Anatolia,  
but now I feel so lonely and alone  
gifting my tears to a silent night.

What am I to do, but wait for the heavens to descend,  
so that I may learn what life means,  
what this pain and struggle means,  
because I know sweet destiny waits for me.

But where is my God?  
Burnt has been the heart  
By the hidden heat within,  
Burnt as though it were  
A fire smouldering.

How long, O thought, the grief  
For warmth of friend's company?  
The heart has been consumed  
By the heat of longing's wounds.

No longer remains desire  
For union, nor memory  
Of love; such fire raged  
All that there was, was burnt.

How then can I express  
The heat of fire of thought?  
I had only thought of despair  
when the desert was consumed.

I have no heart or else I would  
Have shown the landscape of wounds;  
What use this tree of lamps?  
Burnt is the source of light.

I am left with only a longing  
For sadness, as the heart  
Seeing the ways of the world's  
Esteem, was impetuously burnt.  
But perhaps the ashes will reveal my God.

YILDRIM

I will remember our lousy voices for a long time. I should go now.

YAĞMUR

If you can, from time to time, try to let us know if you are well.

YILDRIM

Tell Leyla, that I will be back to love her one day. (Both laugh.) And remind Hikmet that he is my past and my future.

YAĞMUR

I will.

YILDRIM

And Yagmur, (pause) you know what I want you to do, just like the backgammon game.

YAĞMUR

Don't worry.

YILDRIM

Be careful.

You too.

YAĞMUR

[YILDRIM exits. YAĞMUR sits by the lamppost.  
Stage black out.]

END OF ACT III, SCENE 1

TEA WITH SÜLEYMAN  
ACT III, SCENE 2

[It is inside of the cafe. LEYLA, SÜLEYMAN and HIKMET are sitting at the table in the center of the cafe.]

LEYLA

Hikmet, can you please get me some tea?

HIKMET

(Dejected.) Well, o.k. (Runs into the kitchen and comes back at once.)

LEYLA

Careful Hikmet, slowly, you can hurt yourself otherwise.

HIKMET

I am an expert tea boy, that's why I had the kettle boiling all the time. But I still can't believe that the best backgammon player around lost.

SÜLEYMAN

He is not the best anymore. But I don't want to argue about it. The game is over.

LEYLA

Oh, it was only a game.

HIKMET

That doesn't matter. (To SÜLEYMAN.) Did you cheat? There is no other way Yildirim abi can lose.

SÜLEYMAN

No, I didn't cheat. I was just better. At least for today.

HIKMET

I bet he can beat you if you play again.

SÜLEYMAN

How do you know?

HIKMET

It is just a feeling. I just know. You wouldn't know.

LEYLA

Hikmet, you should not talk to an elder like that.

SÜLEYMAN

You should listen to her, Hikmet.

HIKMET

I know I am right.

LEYLA

(To SÜLEYMAN.) Don't mind him. (To HIKMET.) Here sit down and read the football scores. (HIKMET obliges.)

SÜLEYMAN

Well, I did win fairly.

LEYLA

So big deal? Finding a job is more important.

SÜLEYMAN

This game was more important than a job. My life was at risk.

LEYLA

You are exaggerating. And besides you had divine help.

SÜLEYMAN

No, not at all. I won on my own.

LEYLA

We both know, you had to win, so you won. Let us leave it at that. There is no need to hide the truth.

SÜLEYMAN

No, I won because I was better. Me being an angel had nothing to do with it.

HIKMET

(From behind the newspaper.) Just because you won has made you crazy. An angel.  
(Laughs.) An angel.

LEYLA

Read the scores, Hikmet. I don't understand. Why are you so proud of your victory?

SÜLEYMAN

Because I proved my point to Yıldırım.

LEYLA

Which was?

SÜLEYMAN

That humans depend on angels, humans cannot become angels and all the rest of the illusions he had.

LEYLA

I don't remember him saying that at all. He just wanted to solve a few problems. Maybe he chose the wrong method but his intentions were good.

HIKMET

(From behind the paper.) Yıldırım abi is always right and always good.

SÜLEYMAN

Just drink your tea, Leyla.

LEYLA

What do you mean?

SÜLEYMAN

Nothing. Just drink your tea.

LEYLA

You are gloating. Laughing inside. My mother once said that is a sign of weakness, an ill that can never be cured. She will enjoy the fact that you have proven her right.

SÜLEYMAN

I am not gloating. I am just proud of myself.

LEYLA

You can't love, but you can gloat. What a combination!

HIKMET

Abla, I like what you just said.

SÜLEYMAN

You look a little angry, Leyla.

LEYLA

Shouldn't I be? We take you as a friend in our cafe and here you are thinking yourself as high and mighty, just because you won a backgammon game. Your victory was because of the dice, not because of anything great that you did.

SÜLEYMAN

(Slightly irritated.) What do you want me to do?

HIKMET

(Softly, putting the newspaper down.) Leave.

LEYLA

The least you can do is to go and console Yildirim. You are an angel, a person of compassion. Go and help him.

SÜLEYMAN

In this case I don't feel that is necessary. He will get out of it, don't worry. The question is will you?

LEYLA

You are starting to show your true colors. I was wrong in my first impressions.

SÜLEYMAN

I am sorry to disappoint you, but not everything that you see in front of you is reality.



HIKMET

Yes it is. (Laughs.)

SÜLEYMAN

Hikmet, can you please keep quiet?

HIKMET

Why?

SÜLEYMAN

Because you are starting to get just a little irritating. Please go and get me some more tea.

LEYLA

I don't think we need any more tea at this hour.

HIKMET

The tea is finished and besides I only take requests from Leyla abla and Yıldırım abi.

SÜLEYMAN

(To HIKMET.) Satisfy yourself.

LEYLA

Süleyman, don't belittle my friend here.

SÜLEYMAN

I am not belittling him.

LEYLA

Yes, you are.

SÜLEYMAN

I think you are angry because Yıldırım lost. I should have done you a favor and lost.

LEYLA

Don't do me any favors. I can take care of myself. Sometimes you sound like my father.

SÜLEYMAN

Maybe by winning I lost something that I do not know of yet.

LEYLA

It is possible that you want to be like us now.

SÜLEYMAN

I doubt it. I don't like having conflicts with myself. (Pause.) But maybe I am in conflict right now.

LEYLA

Why don't you think with your heart for once? See if you can feel something within.

HIKMET

(Behind the paper.) Feelings are one of things that are good for us.

SÜLEYMAN

That would make me vulnerable. I can't do it. I can't be anything less than an angel.

LEYLA

Süleyman, are you worried about deserting God?

SÜLEYMAN

Yes, I am.

LEYLA

Süleyman, don't you see that no matter how hard you try, there will always be the question of doubt in your heart?

SÜLEYMAN

I don't want to confront any question. I don't have to. (Pause.) What question?

HIKMET

Are you deaf? The question is, which is the better team, Fenerbahçe or Galatasaray? (Giggles.)

LEYLA

The question of whether you want to remain an angel.  
[HIKMET gets up, newspaper in hand.]

LEYLA

Süleyman, you have to decide on your own. Look how screwed up the world is because no one wants to decide.

SÜLEYMAN

I am waiting for God's permission.

LEYLA

(Gently.) God does not rule over here. He just watches and gives us his blessing. Believe me.

[HIKMET reaches for the only open shutter.  
YAĞMUR whistling walks in.]

HIKMET

Yağmur abi, where is Yıldırım abi?

YAĞMUR

I don't know.

HIKMET

What did you say? Leyla abla, Yağmur abi is here!

LEYLA

Where is Yıldırım?

YAĞMUR

I wish I knew.

LEYLA

Yağmur (walks up, looks into his face)... Yağmur... Where is Yıldırım? (Puts hand on YAĞMUR'S shoulder.)

YAĞMUR

Everywhere.

LEYLEA

(Scared). Yağmur! Don't scare me. Where is Yildirim?

SÜLEYMAN

Where is he Yağmur? Is he hiding like a school boy?

HIKMET

Yağmur abi, have you gone crazy? Where is he? Where is he?

YAĞMUR

Gone. (With a smile.) Gone, my brother, he is gone.

LEYLEA

What?!

YAĞMUR

(Nodding his head.) At this moment he is on the road. My soulmate is going on a long trip.

HIKMET

No, you are lying! You are lying! (Runs outside.)

LEYLEA

Yağmur, I think you are going crazy too.

YAĞMUR

No I am not going crazy. He had to leave, Leyla. He had to leave so that he could try to see how he can be at peace with himself. It is what he wanted. It's for his own good. I didn't even try to stop him; it would have been wrong of me. We recited our favorite poem and said goodbye. He said he will be back to love you one day. I know he will come back.

LEYLEA

I know he will come back because he has to meet my mother.

YAĞMUR

He knows that.

LEYLA

I wish I had seen him before he had left.

YAĞMUR

(To LEYLA.) Don't worry, you will see each other in your dreams.

LEYLA

(Face lights up.) I hope so.

SÜLEYMAN

(To himself.) Yes, yes. (Nonchalantly.) We have enough problems of our own.

LEYLA

I hope he takes care of himself.

SÜLEYMAN

I am sorry he left. He left without completing his end of the bargain. I should have known.

LEYLA

Sorry. We don't need your "sorry."

SÜLEYMAN

I really am sorry. I didn't foresee this.

YAĞMUR

He paid the money for the tea. And he is going to try to find something to believe in, and maybe it will be your God. But you will not have control over him.

SÜLEYMAN

But we played a game of life and death over that. I won my control over him.

YAĞMUR

You should play against yourself; you might gain control over your own soul.

SÜLEYMAN

Don't twist the subject. He has cheated me.

LEYLA

You are cheating yourself.

YAĞMUR

There is nothing we can do. There is nothing you can do. Let us just keep quiet.

SÜLEYMAN

Of course not. I will seek him out.

YAĞMUR

Seek him all you want, but you will never find him.

SÜLEYMAN

Impossible.

YAGMUR

You can try if you want.

SÜLEYMAN

I will with my power. (Closes eyes as if in meditation.)

LEYLA

Try all you want.

YAĞMUR

Leyla, sit down, please, please.

LEYLA

No, no, no. I want to show our heavenly guest that I will not be afraid of his power. I am my mother's daughter. And one of my friends is gone. I will speak for him.

YAĞMUR

Leyla, Süleyman has no power. No power at all. It is a dream for him.

SÜLEYMAN

(Laughs nervously.) Let us not get into a futile argument here. (Pause.) Hmmm, I don't know where he is. (Pause.) No problem, I will try harder later. No problem at all. I look forward to having a decent chat with him.

LEYLA

Tell me, why did you win? Why?

SÜLEYMAN

I had to.

LEYLA

No, you really didn't have to win. You wanted to show off. I don't mind that. C'mon Süleyman, be more honest with yourself. (Pause.) Don't worry, you are probably still an angel, and I still like you.

YAĞMUR

Leyla, you are being a little bold.

LEYLA

I am being bold because Süleyman knows what I am saying is right.

SÜLEYMAN

I think you are mistaken. I bear no guilt.

YAĞMUR

Ley...

LEYLA

The guilt is yours. You knew at the start what was going to happen. You knew you were going to win.

SÜLEYMAN

What are you saying?

YAĞMUR

Leyla, please.

LEYLA

(To YAĞMUR.) Keep quiet, let me talk. You knew Süleyman, you know our futures. You know.

SÜLEYMAN

That is not true.

LEYLA

It is. You planned this whole thing out. You are a clever angel. I wish the people from my village were here to see you; they would show you how people nowadays are worried about the future.

SÜLEYMAN

I wish they would tell me my future.

LEYLA

It looks, Süleyman, as though you are starting to long for an ounce of companionship.

SÜLEYMAN

Why do you say that?

LEYLA

Because you want someone to tell you that there is no future in being a lone angel by yourself.

SÜLEYMAN

I don't have any complaints.

LEYLA

None that you wish to say out loud.

YAĞMUR

Leyla, let Süleyman be.

LEYLA

Why? If your kettle is broken, fix it.

SÜLEYMAN

I am in no need of fixing.



LEYLEA

Yes you are.

SÜLEYMAN

No I am not.

YAĞMUR

Süleyman, stop being so defensive. There is no need for it. And Leyla, let us talk about something else.

LEYLEA

Like what? What topic is worthy of an angel?

SÜLEYMAN

Stop making fun of me. There is no need for it.

LEYLEA

I am not making fun of you, I am serious.

YAĞMUR

Süleyman, what will you do after you leave us?

LEYLEA

He wishes that he would remain here, especially to cure my craziness.

SÜLEYMAN

(To LEYLEA.) I don't think so. (To YAĞMUR.) I don't know. That's the way it always is.

YAĞMUR

That is honest of you.

SÜLEYMAN

One has to be careful with honesty. One of my colleagues once said that honesty was like a stick of dynamite, sometimes it can be a candle in the night, sometimes a loud way of dying. What do you think, Leyla?

LEYLEA

Nothing. I don't think much about honesty. If it comes, it comes. If it doesn't come, it doesn't come. Like instinct.

SÜLEYMAN

You can say more than that. You are a proponent of honesty.

YAĞMUR

I have seen her lie once or twice. (Laughs.)

SÜLEYMAN

Have you? Really?

LEYLEA

Maybe.

SÜLEYMAN

C'mon Leyla, you can defend yourself better than that.

LEYLEA

What if I don't want to?

SÜLEYMAN

It is up to you to defend yourself, even from angels.

YAĞMUR

Something wrong, Leyla?

LEYLEA

No.

SÜLEYMAN

Then why the abrupt silence.

LEYLEA

As an angel, don't you know that silence says more than speech?

SÜLEYMAN

I have never been personally told that.

LEYLA

Well, now you know. (Pause.) Well, now you know. (Pause.) Yağmur, how well do you know me?

YAĞMUR

Why?

LEYLA

Tell me. Just tell me.

YAĞMUR

I know you very well.

LEYLA

If I request you to leave me and Süleyman alone, what would you really think about me?

YAĞMUR

You have something on your mind?

LEYLA

Yes.

YAĞMUR

Then I would think you need to talk in private with Süleyman. Nothing more than that. (Looks at SÜLEYMAN.) I have things to do in the kitchen anyway, thanks to Yıldırım. (Gets up.)

LEYLA

Don't go too far away.

YAĞMUR

I won't. (Exits to the kitchen.)

SÜLEYMAN

Why did you do that?

LEYLA

You know.

SÜLEYMAN

No, I don't.

LEYLA

(Pause.) Why do you ignore me?

SÜLEYMAN

On the contrary.

LEYLA

That's not true. Whenever I ask something of you, you never respond. I thought you were an angel.

SÜLEYMAN

I think it is just your imagination. What is really on your mind?

LEYLA

I have found the man I am looking for. The problem is that he is still looking for himself.

SÜLEYMAN

(Pause.) The stress of finding a job is affecting your judgement.

LEYLA

Love is not a matter of judgement. Right now it is a matter of fact.

SÜLEYMAN

I don't think so.

LEYLA

My mother always said that I should speak my mind. That way I would not need to

think about things. And I am telling you what is on my mind.

SÜLEYMAN

That's good. But your mind is lying to you.

LEYLA

I have found my man. It is not a matter of need anymore. There is no lie in that.

SÜLEYMAN

What do you want me to do? What do you want me to say?

LEYLA

To say what is on your mind. To do what is on your mind.

SÜLEYMAN

My mind is clear. I am an angel and I am doing what an angel is supposed to do — to listen to you.

LEYLA

That's not enough.

SÜLEYMAN

Well, I can't do more.

LEYLA

You don't want to do more.

SÜLEYMAN

I only do what is necessary.

LEYLA

Well, in my case, do something even if it is unnecessary to you.

SÜLEYMAN

Like what?

LEYLA

To admit something you don't want to admit.

SÜLEYMAN

The only thing I admit right now, is that I have immensely enjoyed the tea here.

LEYLA

Don't take refuge behind the tea.

SÜLEYMAN

I don't have anything more to admit.

LEYLA

What do you feel about me?

SÜLEYMAN

I think you are a very intelligent woman. That's all I feel.

LEYLA

That is your professional opinion. What do you really feel as Süleyman?

SÜLEYMAN

I think it would be none of your business.

LEYLA

It is your business to pry into everybody's affairs but we can not ask about you?

SÜLEYMAN

I don't pry. I assist.

LEYLA

(To herself.) I wonder what happened in the football game? (Pause. To SÜLEYMAN.) I think I should tell you my favorite Nasruddin Hoca story. Once he had become a favorite at the Padşa's court. As a favorite he used to expose the hypocrisies of the courtiers. One day the Padşa was very hungry. Some aubergines had been so deliciously cooked that he told the palace chef to serve them everyday. He asked the Hoca, "Are they not the best vegetables in the world, Hoca?" Nasruddin replied, "The very best, Majesty." Five days later, when the aubergines had been served for

the tenth meal in succession, the Padşa roared, "Take these things away! I HATE them!" The Hoca at once said, "They are the worst vegetables in the world, Padşa effendim." The Padşa looked at him and said, "But Hoca, less than a week ago, you said that they were the very best." The Hoca quickly replied, "I did. But I am the servant of the Padşa, not of the vegetable." (Laughs. Then seriously.) Whose servant are you Süleyman, your own or God's?

SÜLEYMAN

God's.

LEYLA

Maybe you need glasses to see the truth.

SÜLEYMAN

Nasruddin Hoca once during the night said to his wife, "Run quickly, bring my glasses. I am having a wonderful dream, and more has been promised to me by someone whom I have seen. I must have my glasses for this." Hoca thought that the truth was in the dream and he needed glasses for that. What a fool.

LEYLA

Maybe he is not the fool and maybe dreams are more than dreams. Who knows?

SÜLEYMAN

(Pause.) I don't.

LEYLA

(Pause.) Why do you resist, Süleyman, why do you resist?

[They both look at each other. Moments pass.]

SÜLEYMAN

Because I have to.

LEYLA

Forget your responsibilities for a while.

SÜLEYMAN

I can't. I am an angel.

LEYLEA

Then we are both doomed to frustration and pain.

SÜLEYMAN

Leyla, I am an angel. Frustration and pain are alien to me.

LEYLEA

Look at me.

SÜLEYMAN

(Looks at her.) What?

LEYLEA

Süleyman, whose servant are you?

SÜLEYMAN

I don't know.

LEYLEA

That's frustration and pain. Befriend it.

SÜLEYMAN

I am an angel. (Pause.) My thoughts are getting out of hand. (To himself.) Where is the control, Süleyman, where is the sense of duty?

LEYLEA

To hell with control and duty. Stay here. Become one of us.

SÜLEYMAN

What are you saying?! I did not win the game for nothing.

LEYLEA

For the sake of your God and yourself, give your soul some peace.

SÜLEYMAN

(Pause. Shakes his head. Nervously laughs.) I don't have a soul, Leyla.



LEYLA

Then stop playing this false game.

SÜLEYMAN

I can't. I am an angel.

LEYLA

Let yourself be.

SÜLEYMAN

No. I can't.

LEYLA

Don't play with me.

SÜLEYMAN

Blame fate, not me.

[Silence.]

LEYLA

I forgive you.

SÜLEYMAN

What?

LEYLA

I forgive you, Süleyman.

SÜLEYMAN

You seemed to have forgotten who you are. Only God forgives.

LEYLA

I can only forgive you Süleyman. I don't hold God responsible for you or anything else.

SÜLEYMAN

You need help.

LEYLA

You can't help me anymore. You need to help yourself. I forgive you for the fact that you refuse to love, forgive you for being a liar, I forgive...

SÜLEYMAN

(Gently.) Stop.

LEYLA

Why? Why? Why don't you stop yourself for a moment and see that you want to stay.

SÜLEYMAN

I can't. I can't.

LEYLA

Love me.

SÜLEYMAN

I can't. I won't.

LEYLA

Believe in yourself and love me.

SÜLEYMAN

I don't know how.

LEYLA

Let me show you.

SÜLEYMAN

(Pause.) No. What am I doing? What am I doing?

LEYLA

Becoming more human.

SÜLEYMAN

No, I am an angel.

LEYLA

Let yourself be.

SÜLEYMAN

No, I can't let you do that. No. Stop patronizing me. I am an angel. I am God's messenger. I can not let myself get involved in contradictions like this. I have a job to do and I will do it. If within my power, I will try to help people. As God desires, as God wishes, I do so too. I do not write the words of kismet, I just help people accept it. I have things to do, plans to take care of. This is ridiculous, letting myself come to this point. It is ridiculous. I have embraced solitude and loneliness because I was deemed fit to handle the responsibilities. My humanity belongs to the past. My present is to submit myself to God and He only knows the future. I have an obligation, no matter how much I may feel discomfort. I am not going to feel discomfort. I can't let myself be, because my self is not mine anymore. There is no struggle for me, your struggle is not my struggle. I am Süleyman, the angel, and I think that my mission here is complete.

LEYLA

But you are incomplete. Stay. Stay.

SÜLEYMAN

It is useless.

LEYLA

If you have doubts, it is alright. It is okay to have doubts.

SÜLEYMAN

It is useless. I do not have any doubts.

LEYLA

You can no longer be an angel.

SÜLEYMAN

It is not true.

LEYLA

You can no longer be angel because you have betrayed the principles of your duty.

SÜLEYMAN

Leyla, don't spread the fire within you to me.

LEYLA

You are becoming a human. You are no longer an angel. You have failed as an angel.

SÜLEYMAN

(Loudly.) Leyla, don't put me on fire. Remember Yıldırım; I won the game.

LEYLA

(Loudly.) But look at what you lost. Say it is true that you knew my mother's dream before you even came here. Say it.

SÜLEYMAN

(Loudly.) No!

LEYLA

(Loudly.) Say it, that my mother was right.

[YAĞMUR enters.]

YAĞMUR

What is happening?

LEYLA

(Loudly.) Say it! For my sake and for your sake, say it that you love me. (Moves towards him and clasps SÜLEYMAN'S hand.) The game is over.

SÜLEYMAN

(Pulls back.) No! Don't touch me! Let me be! (Hits LEYLA with a full open hand. LEYLA falls heavily onto the ground. Does not move.)

YAĞMUR

Leyla!

SÜLEYMAN

(In shock.) O, my God.

YAĞMUR

(Tending to LEYLA.) Leyla! Leyla. My wild flower, get up Leyla. (He bends down to listen to her heart. Tries to revive her.) Leyla! Süleyman help me!

SÜLEYMAN

(In shock.) O, my God.

YAĞMUR

Süleyman, help me! (Shakes LEYLA.) Leyla wake up, wake up. Süleyman help me.

SÜLEYMAN

(In shock sits down slowly.) What did I just do?

YAĞMUR

Leyla! I should call the doctor. (Runs to the telephone on the counter. Doesn't get the number. Is very confused.) Leyla, O my God, she is dead. No. What am I going to do? (Goes to SÜLEYMAN.) Help me, Süleyman, help me.

SÜLEYMAN

(Bewildered.) What did I do?

YAĞMUR

(Goes to LEYLA.) Leyla wake up!

[HIKMET enters.]

HIKMET

Well Yıldırım abi has... (Sees LEYLA on floor.) Leyla abla!

YAĞMUR

(To HIKMET.) Get the doctor. Hikmet quick. Get Selim amca, quick. Wake him up if you have to, it is close to praying time anyway. You know that his house is right around the corner. (HIKMET runs outside in total bewilderment. YAĞMUR tries to revive LEYLA.) Leyla, get up, please get up.

SÜLEYMAN

She is dead. She is dead. My God what have I done.

## YAĞMUR

(Shaking SÜLEYMAN by the shoulders.) Help me, God's messenger help me. (Seeing no response, runs back to LEYLA.) C'mon Leyla, my sister Leyla, try to live. You still have to write that letter to your mother. (Starts to massage her chest.) Yağmur, you can't let your sister die.

[HIKMET runs in.]

## HIKMET

Abla! (Sits down by her side.) Ablacığım. (To YAĞMUR.) Selim amca was not in. He was not at the mosque either. I don't know where he is.

## YAĞMUR

All because of tea. (Pause.) Hikmet, it is too late. Leyla abla is dead.

## HIKMET

Abla, abla. (Sniffing by LEYLA's side.)

## YAĞMUR

(Gets up to sit at the counter). My brain is about to burst. (Gets up on the counter.) I have to walk. (Gets down from the counter, picks up LEYLA and puts her body on the divan. Then goes into the kitchen. HIKMET keeps sitting on the floor.)

## SÜLEYMAN

(In a daze.) What have I done? (Puts head in hands and bends over the table.)  
[GRANDFATHER walks in. Softly crying. Sits on the far right side. Neither HIKMET nor SÜLEYMAN notice him.]

## GRANDFATHER

(With rosary beads.) What can I do? (Gets up and goes towards HIKMET. Touches him on the head.) Hikmet, get up and come and sit with me.

## HIKMET

No, I want to sit here.

## GRANDFATHER

Okay, I will sit with you. (Sits on the floor with him.) Bones keep quiet.

HIKMET

Dede, go away.

GRANDFATHER

I will just sit with you.

HIKMET

I don't want you. You will try to make me forget Leyla and Yildirim. I don't want to forget them.

GRANDFATHER

I won't say anything.

HIKMET

(Starts to cry again.) Why? Now I am alone. (GRANDFATHER is quiet. HIKMET looks at him.) Why, Dedeciğim, why?

GRANDFATHER

I don't know, Hikmet. Really I don't know.

HIKMET

But you are old, you know everything.

GRANDFATHER

Maybe I used to know, but right now I have forgotten.

HIKMET

But you remember the songs.

GRANDFATHER

Because songs are like the sky and the people are the clouds that float by.

HIKMET

Dede, I don't understand.

GRANDFATHER

Don't worry, neither do I. (Laughs and HIKMET laughs too.)

HIKMET

Dede, I can't stop crying. Leyla abla would not want me to cry. Yildirim abi would have hated it.

GRANDFATHER

Let yourself cry, my Hikmet. Cry all you want.

HIKMET

But you are not crying.

GRANDFATHER

Touch my beard. (HIKMET touches it.)

HIKMET

It is wet Dede.

GRANDFATHER

Nobody sees the tears of old folk.

HIKMET

Why?

GRANDFATHER

Because few people understand them.

HIKMET

One day I will understand your tears, Dede, I promise.

GRANDFATHER

I know, I know.

HIKMET

But I am now alone Dede.

GRANDFATHER

I am here.



HIKMET

You are different. What am I going to do? (Pause.) Who am I to play football with or how can I go to the ice-cream shop without Yildirim and Leyla? (Shouts.) I hate you God!

GRANDFATHER

God is crying too. Don't bother him now. You can bother me.

HIKMET

I feel so alone.

GRANDFATHER

I know. It is all a secret. But Leyla and Yildirim now know.

HIKMET

I want the secret.

GRANDFATHER

It will be yours one day. But for now let it go. Let it float away and then without you knowing it, you will breathe the secret in.

HIKMET

I want to breathe it in now. Now.

GRANDFATHER

Hikmet tell me, when you kick the ball in football, what do you do?

HIKMET

I kick it Dede. You should know.

GRANDFATHER

You just kick it?

HIKMET

Of course.

GRANDFATHER

Why don't you sit down and think about the ball and the beautiful girls that are

watching the handsome you, and then kick it?

HIKMET

Because I will then lose the ball. C'mon Dede, you played football!

GRANDFATHER

The secret is just like football Hikmet. If you think about it, somebody will come and steal it from you.

HIKMET

I wish Yildrim were here.

GRANDFATHER

I do too. You should go upstairs to sleep, Hikmet.

HIKMET

I want to stay.

GRANDFATHER

Why don't you lie down on my lap?

HIKMET

But you always say that your legs hurt.

GRANDFATHER

Don't worry, I say that so that your grandmother knows I am old and then she does not get angry at me for the stupid things I do. (Laughs.) Here lie down. (HIKMET lies down.)

HIKMET

You won't take me upstairs, will you?

GRANDFATHER

No. We will keep Leyla and Yildrim company in our minds. You and I, we need each other.

HIKMET

(After a minute.) I can't fall asleep.

GRANDFATHER

Do you know Yildrim's favourite poem.

HIKMET

No.

GRANDFATHER

Good. When I recite it you will fall asleep.

HIKMET

But it is after 12 o'clock.

GRANDFATHER

So what! I am old and stupid. Just close your eyes and listen. (Starts to recite.)

as a child he never plucked the wings off flies  
 he didn't tie tin cans to cat's tails  
 or lock beetles in match boxes  
 or stomp anthills  
 he grew up  
 all these things were done to him  
 I was at his bedside when he died  
 he said read me a poem  
 about the sun and sea  
 about nuclear reactors and satellites  
 about the greatness of humanity.

(Looks at HIKMET, who is asleep.) I hope you don't find this poem in the book for a long time. It used to work on Yildrim and it works on Hikmet. That is good. Sleep well Hikmet, don't worry I won't leave you. I wish I had some tea. Tea always clears my mind. (Starts to recite.)

Today it's ninety-eight in the shade.  
 I gaze at the forest from the balcony:  
 tall slender pines rise deep red  
 against the steel blue sky.  
 The people sweating,  
 the dog's tongues hanging out,

they're all headed for the lake to swim.  
 Leaving their heavy bodies on the shore,  
 they will know the happiness of fish.

Ey, yarapbiğim, I wish there was some tea. (Closes eyes and fall asleep.)

[YAĞMUR enters and sees SÜLEYMAN with  
 head in hands. Turns the radio on. Goes up,  
 jolts SÜLEYMAN from his stupor.]

YAĞMUR

Süleyman... Süleyman.

SÜLEYMAN

Hmmm.

YAĞMUR

We have to play.

SÜLEYMAN

Play? Play what?

YAĞMUR

A game of backgammon.

SÜLEYMAN

Backgammon?

YAĞMUR

Yes, backgammon.

SÜLEYMAN

Why?

YAĞMUR

Because this time there is nothing at stake.

SÜLEYMAN

Okay. It is good that you turned on the radio.

YAĞMUR

You are white this time. Your move first.

SÜLEYMAN

No you move first. I did last time.

YAĞMUR

As you say, my friend. (Throws dice.) Two sixes. (Moves, throws dice.) Excellent numbers. It is a lucky opening. (Moves.)

SÜLEYMAN

I can't believe what I just did.

YAĞMUR

Don't think about it. Let it be.

SÜLEYMAN

But I killed her.

YAĞMUR

Yes you did. But I forgive you. Now play.

SÜLEYMAN

Yağmur I killed one person and I know that you think I am responsible for Yıldırım's departure.

YAĞMUR

Death has come and left. You are still here, so it must mean something.

SÜLEYMAN

What? (Throws dice.) C'mon I can throw better than that. (Moves.)

YAĞMUR

You are going to lose this game and then the decision will be yours.

SÜLEYMAN

Decision? What decision? Lose the game? What are you talking about?

## YAĞMUR

Your soul is in ashes and very soon I am going to blow on them and spread them over the floor. (Throws dice.) No doubt about it, my friend. (Moves.) The decision to sweep them together will be yours. (Throws again.) Ah, the same numbers again. (Moves.)

## SÜLEYMAN

I may be confused but not stupid. (Throws dice.) Damn, what is this? (With frustration moves.)

## YAĞMUR

I never said you were stupid. You are an angel, and I will make you a real angel, that's all. (Throws dice.) This brings me memories of a great game with Yıldırım. (Moves.) We were both throwing the same numbers for hours and hours, dice after dice. Then in the end, he made a mistake of playing a risky move and with the same number he had gotten before, I killed his piece. After that break, I won the game. (Throws dice and moves.)

## SÜLEYMAN

I wish I had tea to clear my mind.

## YAĞMUR

Even tea can't give you refuge now. Not even God. Only me.

## SÜLEYMAN

You?

## YAĞMUR

I am giving you a second chance to live.

## SÜLEYMAN

Hah! (Throws dice.) Kismet seems to have forgotten me. (Moves.)

## YAĞMUR

You should believe me, as much as you believe in God. (Throws dice and moves.) It seems that the dice are believing in me. (Throws again and moves.) If destiny and love are ours than our past, present and future will give us no relief. (Throws and moves again.)

SÜLEYMAN

I made a mistake and I am regretting it. My punishment will be due. Though not from you.

YAĞMUR

I am going to set you free.

SÜLEYMAN

I am freer than you are. (Throws dice and moves.) Ufff. (Exhales heavily, there is a worried look on his face.)

YAĞMUR

You have chains to the sky above my friend. (Throws dice.) Meanwhile I am moving across the plains like a wild breeze in love. (Moves. Throws again and moves.) Our past, present and future will give us no relief. (Throws again and moves.)

SÜLEYMAN

Poets always exaggerate beautifully.

YAĞMUR

If it is night, the poet will say it is night, not that it is dusk.

SÜLEYMAN

I don't need your help. (Throws dice.) I need somebody else's help right now. (Moves.)

YAĞMUR

Just like the words I write, you have to be the color of the ink and the children of my hand and head. (Throws dice and moves.) Süleyman, I am your mother and I claim you back. (Throws again and moves.) I must have the right throwing style. (Throws again and moves.)

SÜLEYMAN

(Chuckles.) So who is the father?

YAĞMUR

Leyla.

SÜLEYMAN

You belong to the asylum, really to the asylum. Hmm, I might be in trouble. I have to think.

YAĞMUR

I will wait.

[Silence.]

SÜLEYMAN

I need a plan, an inspiration.

YAĞMUR

I will wait.

[Silence. GRANDFATHER snores loudly.]

SÜLEYMAN

This is not easy.

YAĞMUR

I will wait forever.

[Silence.]

SÜLEYMAN

Here. (Throws dice and moves.) Hmmm, I can't block your last pieces even. (Gently.) What a loss.

YAĞMUR

I have claimed you. (Throws and moves.) Yes. I win.

[Silence.]

SÜLEYMAN

It was as if it was meant to happen.

YAĞMUR

Kismet never goes to sleep. Not even for angels.



SÜLEYMAN

Maybe.

YAĞMUR

Süleyman, what are you going to do now?

SÜLEYMAN

You have claimed me, haven't you?

YAĞMUR

It is still your decision.

SÜLEYMAN

I don't know.

YAĞMUR

Think without inhibition.

SÜLEYMAN

I can't go up because I am scared. I don't want to wait for the judgment because I am scared. I don't want to kill myself because I am scared. I am scared. I have broken rules. Never before have I lost my bearings, and I have never seen the wrath of God. (Slowly.) I am going to be judged. (Pause.) I am scared.

YAĞMUR

Knowing and feeling it, has already made you different. As Yıldırım would say, you are becoming one of us.

SÜLEYMAN

I have to pass judgment on myself, Yağmur.

YAĞMUR

Any mother would agree on that.

[Pause.]

SÜLEYMAN

Is there a river that runs on the outskirts of the city?

YAĞMUR

No.

SÜLEYMAN

Then my final act is to become a river and flow into the Mediterranean, starting as a little spring in the Tarsus mountains. So that I can wash myself and wash the people. Any more than that I don't know. I just want to be a river.

YAĞMUR

Maybe one day I will fly over you.

SÜLEYMAN

I am sure you will. You are my mother after all.

YAĞMUR

Goodbye, Süleyman.

SÜLEYMAN

No more advice?

YAĞMUR

There is no need.

SÜLEYMAN

I am sorry for all that...

YAĞMUR

Süleyman, a river always cries and laughs at the same time.

SÜLEYMAN

Goodbye, Yağmur. Till next time.

YAĞMUR

Till next time.

[SÜLEYMAN exits.]

## YAĞMUR

Yıldırım stop laughing. (Laughs.) Yes, Leyla, I will complete your letter. (Chuckles.) Ey, Yağmur ey, get some sleep, they say even God rested after the seventh day. (Pause.) What does all this mean? (Pause.) Now I am really alone with my poetry. But this must be life. (Starts to recite.)

Ey Nazim ey,  
 where are you to guide me  
 when I need you most  
 to show how to write words  
 that are what words should be —  
 simple and true.

Ey Nazim ey,  
 tell me how to breathe forth  
 my thoughts that I will  
 die defending  
 and at the same moment know that  
 dying is another institution  
 of the living,  
 and the living do not know how to die.

Ey Nazim ey,  
 am I supposed to sit on my chair  
 and be hopeful that the  
 world will change its ways,  
 instead of turning into lightning  
 and blaze through the minds  
 of the murderers and hypocrites,  
 razing their souls to the ground.

Ey Nazim ey,  
 I have not fallen in love  
 for long and have not  
 shared my heart,  
 my walnut desires  
 and bamboo taut body.  
 Is love that difficult to obtain  
 when I suffer with the burden  
 of love and suffering for everyone?

Ey Nazim ey,  
 what does country mean  
 when they rejected you as its son  
 and me as its future?

The cobblestones, the vendors,  
the prostitutes, the thin dogs,  
have been forced to become  
foreign to me,  
the landscapes of the green hills,  
and glass sea are just  
fantasies of a children's book now.

Ey, Nazim ey,  
I am dying in hope  
just like you,  
I am encaged in my dreams  
just like you,  
my freedom is for the angels  
just like you,  
my images make me drunk  
just like you,  
and I have no answers, just doubts  
just like you,  
and I am old  
just like you.

Ey Nazim ey,  
someone should avenge you and me  
and give us the right to be human.

Ey Nazim ey,  
there has to be revenge,  
there has to be revenge.

If it is otherwise,  
please tell me.

[YAĞMUR exits. Stage lights dim out.]

END ACT III, SCENE 2

TEA WITH SÜLEYMAN  
ACT III, SCENE 3

[Stage lights come on. HIKMET all the while has been sleeping on GRANDFATHER'S lap. GRANDFATHER seems to be sleeping too. The radio in its late, late night news announces the winner of the football match, which wakes up GRANDFATHER.]

GRANDFATHER

Wake up Hikmet, wake up. I have something important to tell you.

HIKMET

What Dede? C'mon, let me sleep.

GRANDFATHER

Get up, Hikmet, it is important. Do this favor for your Dede.

HIKMET

Okay Dede, anything you say.

GRANDFATHER

Fenerbahçe won the game, Yıldırım's team won.

HIKMET

You could have told me that in the morning. And anyway I dreamt right now that they had won, so it is old news. Now let me sleep.

GRANDFATHER

There is more Hikmet.

HIKMET

What?

GRANDFATHER

Yağmur won the second backgammon game. Süleyman is no longer around.

HIKMET

That's good. I didn't like that man anyway. (Starts to snifle.) And now I am awake and sad all over again. Why did it have to happen?

GRANDFATHER

Ah Hikmet, one day you will understand. By the morning you will understand.

HIKMET

Why morning?

GRANDFATHER

Because I am leaving.

HIKMET

What? You can't leave. You are my Dede, the only one.

GRANDFATHER

I know, I know. But I have to go. It is time.

HIKMET

Where are you going?

GRANDFATHER

With your grandmother, to a little hut in the middle of the Tarsus mountains. That way she can yell at me without worrying if anybody is going to hear her or not.

HIKMET

Tarsus mountains? That is far away.

GRANDFATHER

I have to go so that you won't follow me.

HIKMET

Why are you leaving? If you stay, I promise I won't follow you around. I promise, I really do.

GRANDFATHER

Hikmet, my son, have you ever seen the eagle stay after its children have learnt how to fly?

HIKMET

No.

GRANDFATHER

Well, just like the eagle, I have to fly away and you will take my place.

HIKMET

But I am a kid.

GRANDFATHER

In the morning you will be a grandfather just like me.

HIKMET

I don't know what you are saying, Dede.

GRANDFATHER

Hikmet, do you know that you have something other people do not have?

HIKMET

Sure, a great left kick in football. It is the best in the neighborhood.

GRANDFATHER

No, no, this is different.

HIKMET

I don't know. All I care about is football and girls, and what do gifts matter? If you are good, you are good. And I am good in football. Soon I will be good with the girls too. Right now they think I am too ugly.

GRANDFATHER

You know, Hikmet, you should not worry too much about girls. You have the gift to fly in your mind, think with your heart in your brain and love without asking.

HIKMET

That complicated?

GRANDFATHER

It is the simplest gift in the world and you have it.



HIKMET

Gift? Who gave the gift to me? Gifts are a waste of time. If you want to give something to someone, just give it, why does it have to be a gift? Stupid people.

GRANDFATHER

(Laughs.) You are right Hikmet. Here I am ten times as old as that radio and my grandson teaches me a lesson. I shouldn't be surprised. (Extends a clasped hand.) Here, I am giving it to you right now.

HIKMET

I think you are going crazy, Dede. Just like Crazy Ali on the corner of the street. Let us sleep, tommorrow you will be fine.

GRANDFATHER

No Hikmet, listen to me. Even if I am as crazy as Crazy Ali. This is the last time we will talk. Understand? Let's make it a good one.

HIKMET

I don't want you to leave.

GRANDFATHER

Here, Hikmet, what do I have in my hand?

HIKMET

Nothing. Air.

GRANDFATHER

Not even close. I have three things for you in here.

HIKMET

I don't see three things.

GRANDFATHER

(Opens hand). Do you see the wind, a donkey cart and a pen? Do you see them?

HIKMET

I don't see anything, Dede. Just your big hand.

GRANDFATHER

Can't you hear them or feel them? Try Hikmet try. Do you see anything apart from my big fat hand? Do you?

HIKMET

I don't see anything.

GRANDFATHER

Here put your hand in my hand.

HIKMET

Your hands are cold.

GRANDFATHER

But yours are warm and that's what matters. Do you feel the wind, the skin of the donkey and the prick of the pen nib?

HIKMET

No, all I feel is stupid.

GRANDFATHER

Good, good. Get used to it. Now try to see what I have told you.

HIKMET

Dede, tell me are you really going?

GRANDFATHER

You already know.

HIKMET

Are you going to die? (Pause.) I don't want to talk like that.

GRANDFATHER

But you know, Hikmet.

HIKMET

No I don't. (Pulls hand away.)

GRANDFATHER

Ah good, you have taken what is yours. What was yours is now yours.

HIKMET

(Confused.) Dede, I don't understand. But forget that, tell me that it is true that you are not going to die? I know that for sure.

GRANDFATHER

Don't lie to yourself, Hikmet. It is true, I will die and you will live. That is the way it is going to be, Hikmet.

HIKMET

I know I shouldn't lie. I am sorry. It doesn't make sense.

GRANDFATHER

Except to dying grandfathers.

HIKMET

I don't want to die or want to know.

GRANDFATHER

You won't have to die for a long time but you will know soon.

HIKMET

C'mon, Dede stay!

GRANDFATHER

No, I have to go.

HIKMET

Tell me a story. Got you there. You have to stay. You have to tell me a story. Otherwise I will throw away what you gave me.

GRANDFATHER

You won't throw them away. Good, try to bribe me. (Laughs.) I don't think so, and you with that smile of Satan on your face know it. Don't try to trick me.

HIKMET

C'mon, Dede, a story. One story. You said this is our last time to talk. So talk by telling me a story. And make it a good one.

GRANDFATHER

What kind of story?

HIKMET

Any kind. Your choice.

GRANDFATHER

No, your choice. You decide. I am an old man who has forgotten how to decide anymore and the feeling is very nice.

HIKMET

How about a story of a beautiful mountain girl, a lovely girl to whom one day I will sing love songs?

GRANDFATHER

Girls again. It must be the moon. Your mind is always on girls nowadays. It is good though. But remember to clean your mind daily, it helps you in living a long life.

HIKMET

The story, Dede, the story.

GRANDFATHER

What do you want me to say? I am not like a television set that when you turn on there is some story for you automatically. This is not magic. Let me think and hold the spices in your pants. Wait for a couple of minutes.

HIKMET

(Laughs.) You can't trick me, you already know the story. I know it because you are trying not to smile.

GRANDFATHER

I wonder if you will ever be fooled.

HIKMET

Only by the devil.

GRANDFATHER

Maybe, maybe not. Here is your story. It belongs to you anyway.

HIKMET

Well, then make it good.

GRANDFATHER

(Smiling.) Demanding kids, even old age is no longer a good excuse for you people anymore to leave old grandfathers alone. (Pause.) There was a girl in a small village near Diyarbakır and she did not have a name. Nobody knew where she came from; one day she was just there. She didn't speak, didn't eat, didn't play with anybody. She...

HIKMET

What did she do?

GRANDFATHER

Don't interrupt your dying grandfather's last story; it is the only thing that is going to live after he goes. So anyway, all she ever did was to sit at the edge of the field. The village people after trying very hard to care for her, to talk to her, simply gave up. The girl, one morning, went to the edge of the village where there was a hill. On top of the hill there was a huge badem tree. And she sat under the tree. All day she sat under the tree. She was very beautiful, of course. She had large eyes that were so deep that you could take a swim in them, dry yourself on the shore and she wouldn't even blink. She had hair as black as the Anatolian night that flew around in the wind, as if they were like many hands playing the ud. Her face was as glorious as the valley and her body as delicate as the flowers that she looked at all day. She was thinking about something, looking far, far away, into the distance. She was like that for many days, when one day, a boy who happened to be trying to catch a runaway goat, saw her on the hill.

HIKMET

(Pointing to himself.) Me, even though I am a teaboy.

GRANDFATHER

Sshh. When the boy saw her on the hill, he immediately fell in love. He went to her and sat by her side. Didn't say anything. Somehow he felt that he shouldn't

say anything. He thought her presence there was like the presence of the sky. So he just kept looking at her, trying to look at what she was looking at. He forgot about everything. Nights and days passed and he was still there. He kept on looking at her.

HIKMET

Stupid goatherd. Teaboys are much smarter.

GRANDFATHER

We know, thank you very much. Then one morning, when he was looking at her, for the first time she closed her eyes. Suddenly, the boy's head exploded with pain, he started shaking and in a minute from fear, fainted. (HIKMET laughs.) When he woke up, he couldn't move. He looked left and right and saw that he was high above the ground. He then realized he had become a branch on the tree and was right above the girl. He was a branch. He tried to say something but he couldn't.

HIKMET

Why? What happened to his tongue?

GRANDFATHER

Quiet. The girl then looked up at him and smiled. The boy felt calm, at peace. When he looked down again, the girl was no longer there. He was totally dejected and started to cry. One of his tears flowed down the branch and stopped at the base of the stem of a leaf, which he had not seen before. It wasn't there before. The leaf was right above his heart. When he saw the leaf, he stopped crying and started to think about the leaf. The leaf was the girl! He realized that when a gentle voice said to him, "We are now together in life and death." The villagers that morning saw the tree sway on its own and as the wind passed through it, they swore that they heard singing and talking. They say you can hear the singing and talking if you listen hard enough. They say that it doesn't sway as much as it used to since it is an old tree.

HIKMET

Strange ending. But I liked it. What is it supposed to mean?

GRANDFATHER

I just call it the legend of Hikmet. Figure the rest out yourself.

HIKMET

That is not fair.

GRANDFATHER

Love and wisdom never are. Now I have to go, I have told the story.

HIKMET

Let me make you some tea.

GRANDFATHER

Thank you Hikmet, but I don't feel like having tea. I am tired.

HIKMET

And you want to leave when you are tired?

GRANDFATHER

Hikmet, some say my heart is on fire, some say it is not. I say it is and it is. Therefore I have to go.

HIKMET

Let us recite poetry.

GRANDFATHER

My throat hurts.

HIKMET

Let us play backgammon.

GRANDFATHER

My head hurts.

HIKMET

Then, let us just talk.

GRANDFATHER

About what?

HIKMET

When you were like me. When you were young.

GRANDFATHER

I don't remember.

HIKMET

Try, I tried for you, now you try for me.

GRANDFATHER

Bribing is not allowed. (Pause.) When I was a kid I used to run a lot. I just used to run. I remember once I ran into a tree because I was running with my eyes closed, since I thought if I think hard enough, I will start to fly. After hitting the tree, I never forget the look on my brother's face, it was like a drowned man, mouth open, totally white, a complete idiot. (Laughs.)

HIKMET

I like it when you laugh.

GRANDFATHER

I used to laugh a lot because of my brother. He was crazy. crazier than Crazy Ali. Used to ride a running donkey standing up and then jumping on trees like Tarzan. We used to talk a lot. He was my best friend. Once we talked about getting old and he said to me that when he became old he wanted to sit by the fire, eat börek and white cheese and think about the bygone days, to forgive all those who sinned, to drink tea all the time and dream. Ey, he was a crazy guy.

HIKMET

What happened to him?

GRANDFATHER

He died sitting on a chair one day, just like that. Only twenty. Nobody knows how. I think he just dreamt his way to death. He was crazy.

HIKMET

Why do crazy people die young, Dede?

GRANDFATHER

Because if they don't, everybody will go crazy. (Laughs.) No, I am joking. Crazy people die young because they are like a blaze that lives only for the time it is red and hot, not for the time when it would lie, gasping for air. God is closest to crazy people, just as he is with wolves. My brother was exactly like that. He once told



me, when he was hanging upside down from the tree trying to hit the crow on the neighbors' roof with his huge rubber slingshot, "Life is complete when one can shout as loud as the voice of God." I have not done it yet but I know I will, as soon as I stop smoking nargile.

#### HIKMET

O, I shout a lot. I remember my father told me to shut up because people in the cafe were complaining. (Pause.) I remember so many things nowadays, Dede, I wish in my mind there was a movie reel on which I could put pictures of what I remember. Then in the nights I could play it back. One day after I finish school I will sit down and invent this machine.

#### GRANDFATHER

I am sure you will. Make sure the film is in color. (Laughs.) I am sure you will because the past is on your side. Tell me, what else do you remember?

#### HIKMET

O, I remember the first day I started to work here. I remember when Yildirim and Yağmur abi came here, I think when they had just finished school. Yildirim abi was wearing his blue shirt and black pants and Yağmur abi was wearing... (pause) I don't remember. Those days he used to read his poetry out loud everyday after he came back teaching at the school down the road, and people used to sit around him; some used to read the things he had sent to the papers. I remember when his picture was in the paper. I remember Yildirim teaching me how to play football and how I used to try so hard to get the ball from him. Also I remember when we pissed on the wall of Veli Bey's huge house and then he took me to my first movie, a kung-fu movie (Chuckles.) Then a couple of days ago I remembered Leyla abla telling me that lokum was the food of the angels and then she told me some dirty jokes. (Laughs.) I won't tell you those, Dede. (Both laugh.) I remembered when my father slapped me for not telling him that I was going to be late from school. I remember how with my best friend Murat, we made faces and had chalk fights behind Yusuf Bey's back last year. I remember many other things everyday. I don't know why Dede. I don't mind it, except that it makes me sad.

#### GRANDFATHER

It is in the past that all our desires will dissolve and become myths for the mists of the present and future. (Pause.) The past is like love, Hikmet, you have to be honest with it. When I remember, the things that happened a long time ago, I surrender myself like a fish does to the large waves. And I hope that I will be able to take back my surrender like an eagle. The past should be your friend Hikmet, not too close, not too distant.

## HIKMET

Now I probably will have to remember all of this too. Being old must be tough and complicated.

## GRANDFATHER

Being old with your grandmother it is never tough and complicated; it is full of advice. (Laughs heartily.) No don't drink raki, no don't sit on your butt all the time, go and get me this, come and kiss me because it is good for you, advice, advice all the time. (Both laugh heartily.) One of these days I am going to plug my ears and pretend I am deaf, then I want to see her give me advice. (Both chuckle.) But tell me, what is it like to be young?

## HIKMET

I don't know. I am still a kid. Look at me.

## GRANDFATHER

Being old is the same thing. Look at me. One never knows what being old is until you die and look down from heaven. But it is not tough or complicated, that I know, because everything becomes more simple. (Laughs.) You don't need to read books, you don't need to exercise and you don't need to think a lot. All you need to do is talk, which is very easy but only if you have enough teeth in your mouth. The only setback of being old is that you can get tickled very easily.

## HIKMET

When I grow old I would like to have my feet tickled, so that I can laugh. Shall I tickle yours? (Tries to tickle GRANDFATHER'S feet but he pulls his feet away. They playfully wrestle while laughing.) You are ticklish, you are ticklish.

## GRANDFATHER

If I can tickle myself, I would have some fun in my grave.

## HIKMET

I wouldn't mind just sitting in the rain, trying to hit the mosquitoes. It would be fun.

## GRANDFATHER

You will never be old.

HIKMET

Dede, I don't feel scared anymore.

GRANDFATHER

You are a brave boy. Also it is nearly morning.

HIKMET

I can't wait to play in the street, because there is no school.

GRANDFATHER

I have to go now, Hikmet.

HIKMET

Really?

GRANDFATHER

Really.

HIKMET

One last poem.

GRANDFATHER

One last poem.

HIKMET

(Starts to recite.)

Will my funeral start out from the courtyard.  
How will you get me down from the third floor.  
The coffin won't fit in the elevator,  
and the stairs are awfully narrow.

[GRANDFATHER joins in.]

Maybe there'll be sun knee-deep in the yard, and pigeons,  
maybe snow filled with the cries of children,  
maybe rain with its wet asphalt.  
And the trash cans will stand in the courtyard as always.  
If, as is custom here, I'm put in the truck face open,

a pigeon might drop something on my forehead:  
                   it's good luck.

Band or no band, the children will come up to me —  
 they're curious about the dead.

Our kitchen window will watch me leave.  
 Our balcony will see me off with the wash on the line.  
 In this yard I was happier than you will ever know.  
 Neighbors, I wish you all long lives.

GRANDFATHER

You recite... recite so beautifully. (Covers face with his hands.)

HIKMET

Don't be sad.

GRANDFATHER

You are right. Let us recite a happier poem. When I go out of that door, I want to  
 be laughing.

HIKMET

I will make you laugh all the way to Tarsus, Dede. (Starts to recite.)

What a strange life this,  
 so strange that even it doesn't know  
 what it is doing to us.

In front of me my hands and feet  
 have died and my heart and head  
 are washing dishes in the kitchen.

In that kitchen is my life,  
 it has always been my life,  
 but from today onwards I know for sure,  
 what a strange life this is  
 now that I am happy for no reason.

[GRANDFATHER joins in.]

My loved one has deserted me for a prince  
 and my flute no longer sings  
 because my old lips have forgotten to kiss.  
 But there is the wind, and the velvet night skies,  
 there is a future because of my past and lost lies.  
 And there is my heart parceled in my soul,  
 I know I am young, I will always be young and whole.

[They both laugh.]

GRANDFATHER

I feel much better.

HIKMET

Dede, I feel strange.

GRANDFATHER

Why?

HIKMET

I have this something in my head and in my arms, as if something was moving in them.

GRANDFATHER

Get used to it, Hikmet; donkeys and winds don't like to sit in one place. (Smiles.)

HIKMET

I love you very much, Dede, and I know why you are leaving.

GRANDFATHER

Why Hikmet? Tell me so I know.

HIKMET

So that I may live.

GRANDFATHER

Use the pen I gave you so that from the devil's lap I can see what you are doing.

HIKMET

The devil's lap? Dede, you will go to heaven.

GRANDFATHER

It is the same place, Hikmet, except that one side of the street the houses are painted blue and on the other side they are painted red; and people visit their neighbors across the street. It is no different from here.

HIKMET

I will always remember you.

GRANDFATHER

I will remember you too.

HIKMET

For a long time?

GRANDFATHER

For a long time. Goodbye, Hikmet, don't tell Yağmur or anybody else anything.

HIKMET

I won't.

GRANDFATHER

May God protect you. (Exits. Stage lights dim out.)

END OF ACT III, SCENE 3

TEA WITH SÜLEYMAN  
ACT III, SCENE 4

[A few moments later. Right outside the cafe, it is just about morning. GRANDFATHER comes across his old friend, SECOND GRANDFATHER. SECOND GRANDFATHER is wearing light brown trousers with a cream colored shirt and has white flowing hair with a clean shaven face. Walks very upright.]

SECOND GRANDFATHER

Are you leaving today, dostum.

GRANDFATHER

Yes.

SECOND GRANDFATHER

And Hikmet, did you talk to him?

GRANDFATHER

Yes.

SECOND GRANDFATHER

Does he know everything about himself?

GRANDFATHER

Not everything. But one day he will.

SECOND GRANDFATHER

One day. Have a safe trip, dostum.

GRANDFATHER

You should come with me, my friend.

SECOND GRANDFATHER

Some other time. (Pause.) Some other time.

GRANDFATHER

(Smiles.) Some other time. (They part in opposite directions.)



[HIKMET comes out of the cafe, with a broom in his hand and starts to sweep the sidewalk in front of the cafe, while reciting.]

HIKMET

I am getting used to growing old,  
the hardest art in the world-  
knocking on doors for the last time,  
endless separation.  
The hours run and run and run...  
I want to understand at the cost of losing faith.  
I tried to tell you something and I couldn't.  
The world tastes like an early morning cigarette:  
death has sent me its loneliness first.  
I envy those who don't even know they're getting old,  
they are so buried in their work.

[Pause, and then HIKMET shouts at the top of his lungs.]

THE END

## GLOSSARY

1. Abi: An affectionate and respectful way of addressing a male elder or male peer.
2. Abla: Same as abi, but for females.
3. Ablacığım: A term for “dear sister.”
4. Amca: A respectful term used for “uncle.”
5. Antep: Short abbreviation for Gaziantep, a city in south-eastern Turkey.
6. Atatürk: Father of modern Turkey; also mentioned in the play as Kemal Paşha.
7. Badem: Walnut.
8. Bey: A respectful way of addressing a male stranger or acquaintance.
9. Börek: An indigenous Turkish dish, very common in rural areas and cafes; has crushed beef rolled up in thin cooked flour sheets.
10. Cumhuriyet: The most conservative paper in Turkey.
11. Davul: A big drum that is used at celebrations.
12. Dede: Grandfather.
13. Dedeciğim: Means “dear Grandfather.”
14. Diyarbakır: A city in eastern Turkey.
15. Dostum: Means “my friend.”
16. Ey: The Turkish way of saying “hey.”
17. Fenerbahçe: One of the most popular football teams in Turkey and the traditional rival of Galatasaray; also the name of an area (mostly suburb) in Istanbul.
18. Galatasaray: Extremely popular football team and also the name of a suburb areğin Istanbul.
19. Hikmet: Trustworthy.
20. Istanbul: Turkey’s major city that joins Asia and Europe.
21. Izmir: A major city on the eastern coast (Mediterranean Sea) in Turkey.
22. Kismet: Destiny.
23. Lefter: A famous former football player in Turkey.

24. Leyla: Name of a flower.
25. Limonata: Sweet lemonade.
26. Lokum: A turkish delight made with nuts and flour.
27. Mahmut: A derivative of "Mohammed", the Holy Prophet's name.
28. Mecnun: The lover of Leyla in one of the most well known and popular folk tale of the Middle East.
29. Milliyet: The largest daily in Turkey.
30. Mosque: The major gathering place for prayers for the Muslims.
31. Nasruddin Hoca: A very popular figure in Turkish folklore.
32. Nazim: Nazim Hikmet, Turkey's first modern poet.
33. Ney flute: A Turkish musical instrument similar to the familiar flute.
34. Padşâ: Sultan or king.
35. Party: In the play it simply refers to the Anavatan (Motherland) Party.
36. Quran: The Holy Book of the Muslims.
37. Rakı: An extremely potent and popular alcoholic drink in Turkey.
38. Süleyman: The name of the Ottoman Empire's most dynamic and influential ruler at the time of the Empire's zenith. The name is a Muslim derivative of Solomon.
39. Tarsus mountains: A chain of mountains that runs through eastern and central Turkey.
40. Ud: The Turkish mandolin.
41. Veli: Governor or mayor.
42. Yağmur: Rain.
43. Yarapbiğim: Oh, Lord.
44. Yıldırım: Lightning.
45. Zurna: A wind instrument that produces a very shrill note and used mainly in weddings and celebrations.