

*Guelan Varela-Luarca, Ricardo G. Abad,
and M. C. M. Santamaria*

PURE LOVE

Abridged performance text
for seven actors and three musicians

The original performance text is an adaptation, by Ricardo Abad and Guelan Varela-Luarca, of G. D. Roke's metrical poem *Ang Sintang Dalisay ni Julieta at Romeo* (1901) and Rolando S. Tinio's Filipino translation of William Shakespeare's *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*. The original text has been abridged in Filipino (see this issue) and is here translated to English by Abad, Varela-Luarca, and Matthew Santamaria.

CHARACTERS

- RASHIDDIN
- JAMILA
- NARRATOR/IMAM/DATU PIAN-DAO
- CHORUS 1/ BADAWI/GHOST
- CHORUS 2/ MADAM KALIMUDDIN/DANCER
- CHORUS 3/ TAUPAN/MEDICINE MAN/GHOST
- CHORUS 4/LAKAMBINI/ KALIMUDDIN LADY/ROSMAWATTI
- MUSICIANS, sometimes playing the role of TOWNSPEOPLE, MESSENGER, and others

SETTINGS

The play is set in Semporna and Dapitan, depicting two imaginary Muslim communities in the Sulu archipelago. Time: a distant past.

I
ADDRESS TO THE
AUDIENCE

The NARRATOR enters with the CHORUS and MUSICIANS to start the play. A ritualistic scene; with lights and shadows; harsh sounds to suggest a brawl in the streets of Semporna.

NARRATOR

(Accompanied by music; chanting.)

Praises to the Almighty
And in the Lord's name
we shall begin.
Let us narrate
The story of Pure Love.

CHORUS AND MUSICIANS
(Chanting.)

Let us narrate the tale of
Rashiddin!
Jamila!

NARRATOR

Once there were two families.

RASHIDDIN AND CHORUS 1
Mustapha!

JAMILA AND CHORUS 2
Kalimuddin!

NARRATOR

That were unrelated by blood.
A close friendship, known to all.
Their children fell in

love with each other
Children reared in wealth
and opulence.

But then came the time,
as it often happens,
That the sweetness of
friendship turns sour.

RASHIDDIN

Steel!

JAMILA

And wrath!

CHORUS 1 (as BADAWI)

Prepare to draw your
sword so we can fight!

CHORUS 3 (as TAUPAN)

Let's see who among us is a fool!
Be ready, coward! (*They fight.*)

CHORUS AND MUSICIANS
(as TOWNSPEOPLE)

Down with the Kalimuddins!
Down with the Mustaphas!

The brawl escalates, and everyone gets involved. Suddenly, CHORUS 4 enters as the LAKAMBINI, or the female ruler.

BADAWI AND TAUPAN
The Lakambini of Semporna!

CHORUS 4 (as LAKAMBINI)
Mustapha! Kalimuddin!
Drop your weapons!

Your steel should have
rotted in their sheaths,
Instead you choose to
spill accursed blood.
This is the evil you
constantly desire:
To strike down your rival house.

Go home!
Those who disobey shall be killed!

*The LAKAMBINI exits. The
members of each family separate,
leaving RASHIDDIN and JAMILA
in close contact with each other.
The NARRATOR continues.*

NARRATOR (Repeating the passage.)
A close friendship, known to all.
Their children fell in
love with each other
Children reared in wealth
and opulence.

*RASHIDDIN and JAMILA execute
the dance of mutual suicide, after
which JAMILA exits or is carried
offstage by the CHORUS. The
NARRATOR faces the audience.*

The fearful passage of their death-
mark'd love,
And the continuance of their
parents' rage,
Which, but their children's end,
nought could remove,

Is now the two hours'
traffic of our stage!

The scene, the town of Semporna!
Praise be to Allah!

CHORUS AND MUSICIANS
Glory be to Allah!

II RASHIDDIN'S LAMENTATION

*The kulintangan music swells;
sounds of celebration fill the
stage. CHORUS 4 re-enters as
ROSMAWATTI, who sways her
hips flirtatiously. RASHIDDIN
chases her. They run around
the stage, ROSMAWATTI
warding off RASHIDDIN's
touch. CHORUS 1 then enters
as BADAWI, who, together with
the MUSICIANS, laughs at
RASHIDDIN's frustrated wooing.*

RASHIDDIN (Sad.)
Oh, Rosmawatti!

BADAWI AND MUSICIANS
(Mocking RASHIDDIN's actions.)
Oh, Rosmawatti! Ha, ha, ha!

BADAWI
What is it that makes
Rashiddin so sad?

MUSICIANS

Love!

BADAWI

Oh dear, no—

MUSICIANS AND BADAWI

One to love! Ha, ha, ha!

RASHIDDIN

No love from the one I love!

BADAWI AND MUSICIANS

(Making fun of RASHIDDIN's feelings.)

Oooh!

RASHIDDIN

Whenever I declare the
pain, the agony
In this heart of mine
wounded by love's arrows
I get no reply other than
Coldness and painful rejection!

BADAWI AND MUSICIANS

Oh, that huuuuurts so bad! Ha, ha!

BADAWI

Rashiddin, forget her!

RASHIDDIN

Oh, how does someone
forget how to think?

BADAWI

Allow your eyes to roam!

*BADAWI approaches the
MUSICIANS and seeks their
help to get RASHIDDIN
to go to the party.*

BADAWI

Friends! (Everyone listens.)

Didn't you know
that by sheer coincidence,
despite today's brawling,
a party will be held at the
Grand House of Kalimuddin?
a party to last all night! (The
CHORUS and MUSICIANS get excited.)

There will be dancing all night
With everyone wearing
all sorts of masks!
(To RASHIDDIN.) Rashiddin!
I beg you, come—
And gaze at other beautiful ladies!

BADAWI AND MUSICIANS

Go! Go!

RASHIDDIN (Thinks about the invite.)

That's the way to remember her
stunning beauty even more!

BADAWI

Rosmawatti will be there . . .

*Then BADAWI imitates
ROSMAWATTI's dancing.
RASHIDDIN at first ignores
him, but later relents and
laughs with the rest of them.*

RASHIDDIN

Fine, fine! I will go,
even if I surely find
No other beauty than my love
. . . Oh, Rosmawatti! (Exits.)

BADAWI (To the MUSICIANS.)
Rosmawati! Pffft!

III THE WOOING OF DATU PIAN-DAO

The NARRATOR enters.

NARRATOR
In the Grand House of the
Kalimuddin Family!

*The NARRATOR wears DATU
PIAN-DAO's costumes, while
CHORUS 1 wears a SERVANT's
costume. The SERVANT shields
the DATU from the sun with
an umbrella, and follows his
master wherever he goes. At the
moment, they stand waiting
on one side of the stage.*

CHORUS 2 (as MADAM
KALIMUDDIN. Walks around the stage,
looking for JAMILA.)
Jamilaaaa! Jamilaaa!

CHORUS 4 (as KALIMUDDIN LADY)
Jamilaaaa! Jamilaaaaa!

MADAM KALIMUDDIN
(To the CHORUS.)
Where is Jamila?

KALIMUDDIN LADY
Jamilaaaa! Jamilaaa! (Finds
JAMILA, along with the MUSICIANS.)
Oh my Lord, Jamila, your
mother calls you!

MADAM KALIMUDDIN
Jamilaaaa!

*JAMILA leaves her post
with the MUSICIANS and
approaches her mother.*

Listen, Jamila.
Has it ever crossed your young
mind to get married?

*JAMILA is taken aback, and so are
the CHORUS and MUSICIANS.*

JAMILA
Get married?

CHORUS AND MUSICIANS
Get married?

MADAM KALIMUDDIN
The most honorable
Datu Pian-dao
Seeks your hand in marriage.
You are his chosen one.

JAMILA
Datu Pian-dao?

CHORUS AND MUSICIANS
Datu Pian-dao?

*The NARRATOR enters as
DATU PIAN-DAO, who carries
a thick bunch of flowers.*

MADAM KALIMUDDIN

Datu Pian-dao! (She bows to the DATU.)

KALIMUDDIN LADY

(To JAMILA.)

A noble man, ma'am
He's like an orchid—a
precious orchid!

*JAMILA flinches but does
not show it. She politely
acknowledges DATU PIAN-
DAO, who approaches and
offers her a bouquet. JAMILA
politely accepts it.*

MADAM KALIMUDDIN

(To DATU PIAN-DAO.)

Tonight, I shall ask people
to do a community dance.
Talk to her after. If she chooses
you over her many suitors
I shall consent to her marriage
without question.

*They ceremoniously bow to
each other, then the DATU
approaches JAMILA to kiss
her hand and say goodbye.*

MADAM KALIMUDDIN

(Continues.)

Let's go, Jamila!

IV THE DANCE CELESTIAL

*The CHORUS enters to get ready
for the party. They are wearing
masks. RASHIDDIN enters,
and BADAWI pushes him to the
center of the dance floor, where
he bumps into ROSMAWATTI.
ROSMAWATTI pushes him aside,
his mask falls off, and he lands
by JAMILA's feet. JAMILA and
RASHIDDIN look at each other,
intently, and it is love at first sight.
Their lips start to meet when the
MUSICIANS sound the gong.*

MADAM KALIMUDDIN

Let us begin the Dance Celestial!

*The dance begins. PIAN-DAO
takes JAMILA as partner, and
RASHIDDIN is forced to partner
with ROSMAWATTI. The music
signals a shift in the pairing of
the dancers. RASHIDDIN and
JAMILA rush to be partners.
They look at each other, savoring
the moment in bliss, forgetting
everyone and the fact that they are
in Semporna. The dance continues.
The dance ends. RASHIDDIN and
JAMILA together leave the crowd.*

JAMILA

Sir, fortune is with us,
We found a moment to be
close and hold hands.

RASHIDDIN

Oh, star of beauty,
The fates have decided
to pair me with you.

JAMILA

True, and in a short while
My left hand will warm
with your touch
As the cold of the night
envelops us all.

*RASHIDDIN moves closer,
about to kiss JAMILA. Enter
MADAME KALIMUDDIN and
TAUPAN, interrupting the kiss.*

MADAM KALIMUDDIN
Jamila!

*JAMILA nods to her mother
and follows her. CHORUS 3,
now TAUPAN, is about to leave
too when he stops and notices
RASHIDDIN. He approaches him.*

TAUPAN

Rashiddin Mustapha! (Silence.)
I recognize you.
Next time, I will not forgive you
for trespassing into our house.

*JAMILA stops before she completes
her exit. She faces the audience.*

JAMILA (Whispering.)
Mustapha?

*JAMILA starts to approach
RASHIDDIN but TAUPAN
stops her and motions for her
to leave the room. JAMILA
obeys. TAUPAN looks sharply
at RASHIDDIN and gives him
a threatening gesture before he
exits. RASHIDDIN is left alone.*

RASHIDDIN

Aaay!
Oh, Fate! My life now rests
on the hands of an enemy!

From this moment I promise
I shall worship the
ground you walk on,
Your wishes are laws I
shall obey and respect
And I shall be the secret of
your wondrous beauty.

Jamilaaa!

V
COURTSHIP BY
THE WINDOW

RASHIDDIN ventures to climb the walls of the Kalimuddin palace, which is indicated by mats on the stage. Time passes, however, before he can actually reunite with JAMILA on the balcony of her house. CHORUS 1, 2, 3, and 4 enter, sit, and announce the passage of time, and they are followed by RASHIDDIN, who demonstrates through dance his struggles to woo JAMILA.

CHORUS 1

Break of dawn!
From the end of the
night to the start
Of dawn, the lovers stood
by their windows,
Sacrificing sleep just to
see their beloved.

CHORUS 2

Morning!
Their houses are close
to each other,
So brief glances were their
only shows of love.
Such foolish things
cannot be stopped
This is what hearts in love must do.

CHORUS 3

Afternoon!
Time flew and he didn't care,
Hoping for the sight of her
Was enough to make
him persevere.

CHORUS 4

Twilight!
Rashiddin's still there,
moving about
In front of the house where
her beloved Jamila lives.

CHORUS 1

Night!
Under the silver moonlight,
weary of waiting,
Rashiddin dares to
enter the garden
Unaware of the danger his
trespass may bring.

*After some time, RASHIDDIN
sees JAMILA by the window.
JAMILA recognizes him from
the evening shadows.*

JAMILA

Rashiddin! Wherefore,
Come, you alone on this
tranquil night?

RASHIDDIN

Because I was sent over
by the wings of love.

JAMILA

Rashiddin! Rashiddin!
Why do you not beware
the dangers facing you
If you really wish to win my love?

RASHIDDIN

Do not fret
About our parents' hatred
for each other.
If danger's like fire, my
love's like water
Enough to overcome the
oncoming flames.

MADAM KALIMUDDIN

(From inside the house.)

Jamila!

JAMILA

Goodbye. Until we meet again.

RASHIDDIN

Oh, Jamila! Have you no pity
For a lover here shivering
in distress?
You may not know it.
But there's a remedy
for my distress.

JAMILA

Oh, Rashiddin!
My love for you is the
love of an angel.
It is beyond compare.
I am joyous seeing you
come to my window,

As you are very dear to me.
But I treasure my purity
And I'd rather die
than abandon it.

And because your overhaste
has darkened my mood,
And eclipsed the light that
our love used to bear,
From now on, languish
in your desperation,
Begone! I no longer
allow you to see me.

*JAMILA closes the window, but
RASHIDDIN grasps her hand
as if to keep her from leaving.*

RASHIDDIN

Oh, Jamila, my love!
Your parting from me will
hurt like a wound.
If I have mired your purity,
I await your punishment
or forgiveness.

Your sorrow is my greater sorrow
For you are my lifeline.
Your joy is my joy, how
can I neglect
To care for what may sadden
you, however minute?

Oh, how painful that you insist
That I wish to dishonor you.
It has never crossed my mind!
What use is living in this

world if you're not mine?
I am mere excess, of no
use to this world.

JAMILA

Oh, Rashiddin!
My heart is yours, and no
one can take it away,
Even by him who calls
me his beloved.
For true love only goes
to one person.

And if it's not with you,
I'd rather perish.
But if you are impatient,
I now offer what my heart desires,
Let us hold each other's
hands in marriage. (Pause.)

RASHIDDIN

In that case, let us get
married tomorrow.

MADAM KALIMUDDIN

(From inside the house.)

Jamila!

JAMILA

If a marriage is what you intend,
I will offer all my wealth
And follow you like a god
anywhere in the world.
Tomorrow, let's do it tomorrow.

MADAM KALIMUDDIN

Jamila!

*JAMILA goes back inside the
house, and RASHIDDIN is
climbing down from the window
when she suddenly returns.*

JAMILA

Rashiddin!

RASHIDDIN

My love?

JAMILA

I forgot why I did call you back.

RASHIDDIN

Then let me stay here while
you try to remember.

JAMILA

The more I shall forget. (Pause.)
So goodbye, goodbye.

She closes the window.

RASHIDDIN

"The more I shall forget . . ."
Ahaaay!!!

*RASHIDDIN dances with joy,
while two CHORUS members
set up the next scene. One
of the CHORUS members,
the NARRATOR, assumes
the role of the IMAM.*

VI
THE MARRIAGE
OF RASHIDDIN
AND JAMILA

Early morning, the IMAM is reciting his morning prayers. RASHIDDIN enters, disturbing the IMAM's ritual.

RASHIDDIN

Good morning, Imam!

IMAM

A pleasant voice greets me so early in the morning! (Sees RASHIDDIN.)
It looks like our Rashiddin
Has not been in bed tonight.

RASHIDDIN

You are right! The sweeter
rest was mine.

IMAM (Surprised.)

May the Lord forgive you!
Were you with Rosmawatti?

RASHIDDIN

Rosmawatti!? Pffft!
I have forgotten her name.
Let me say that my love is set
On the fair daughter of
the rich Kalimuddin!

IMAM

Kalimuddin! My Lord!

RASHIDDIN

What I feel for her,
she feels for me.
So I ask a special request
That you agree to
marry us today—

IMAM

What change is this?
A lot of brine flowed down
your cheeks for Rosmawatti!
Your groans then still
ring in my ears.
Have you now changed?

RASHIDDIN

Please don't get mad at
me. The one I love now
Cares for me and with her
love returns my love.
Not like the first
—Rosmawatti—pffsh! (The
IMAM turns silent.) Imam?

IMAM (Almost to himself.)

In this secret scheming of love,
Lies the promise
Of softening the hard hearts
Of their feuding parents.
Let us do it, Rashiddin!

JAMILA enters. RASHIDDIN runs toward her, wanting to kiss JAMILA, who moves away. They chase each other. The IMAM separates them and brings the two to the altar. There,

*the IMAM chants, officiating
the wedding ceremony.*

IMAM (Chanting, while RASHIDDIN
and JAMILA perform the wedding ritual.)

His clothes are hers
And hers, his.
Your husband is a clothing for you,
And you are a clothing for him . . .

*After the wedding ritual,
RASHIDDIN and JAMILA exit.
The IMAM adjusts his costume
and becomes the NARRATOR,
who addresses the audience.*

NARRATOR

What happened to the lovers
happens to everyone:
The moment when bliss has
taken root in the heart,
Then comes misfortune
and its poison,
A canker that grows until it
smothers, and kills. (*Exits.*)

INTERLUDE

*At this point, BADAWI enters
with the MUSICIANS, making
noise and singing a song that
denigrates the Kalimuddins.
Laughter. In the song are insults
directed at the Kalimuddin family,
particularly at TAUPAN. Enter
TAUPAN. He hears the taunts
directed at him. He is furious.*

**VII
RASHIDDIN'S
BANISHMENT**

*TAUPAN enters and unsheaths
his sword. The MUSICIANS
are silent, tense. BADAWI
also draws his sword.*

TAUPAN

Badawi!
Now I see that you love
to draw your sword
To duel only with people
of lower birth.
Prepare to draw your
sword so we can fight
Let's see who among us is a fool.

BADAWI (*Calmly.*)

If that is what you perceive,
Sheath your sword
And help me make peace
Before the darkness of
battle devours us.

TAUPAN

You draw your sword
and ask for peace?
I hate those words as I hate hell,
The Mustapha family, and
you—En garde, coward!

*They fight. RASHIDDIN enters
and sees the swordfight.*

RASHIDDIN

Stop, you two! The Lakambini
forbids fights like this!

*The fight continues. RASHIDDIN
tries to separate the two and gets
caught between them. BADAWI
pushes RASHIDDIN away and is
caught off guard. TAUPAN stabs
BADAWI. Silence. BADAWI sways
downstage but manages to remain
standing to say his last words.
He approaches RASHIDDIN.*

BADAWI

What kind of peace-
making is this?
You have made me
food for worms!

*BADAWI dies. RASHIDDIN
wails, picks up a sword, and
charges toward TAUPAN.*

RASHIDDIN

Villaaain!

*RASHIDDIN and TAUPAN
fight. RASHIDDIN kills
TAUPAN. When RASHIDDIN
is about to escape, the
LAKAMBINI enters, along with
MADAM KALIMUDDIN.*

LAKAMBINI

Who started this fight?

RASHIDDIN

Honorable Lakambini, there
lies the man I killed
Because he murdered
my dearest cousin.

MADAM KALIMUDDIN

We ask for justice,
dear Lakambini.
Rashiddin killed my nephew.
Take his life in exchange!

RASHIDDIN

I only took a life that the law
would have taken anyway!

(Uproar from both sides.)

LAKAMBINI

SILEEEENCE!

Rashiddin, because of
what you have done,
We shall immediately exile you
to Dapitan. (RASHIDDIN kneels.)
Do not beg for mercy! Flee
Semporna, Rashiddin.
If you tarry any longer, I shall
sentence you to death.

*Everyone exits except
RASHIDDIN. From another space
on stage, JAMILA enters. She
and RASHIDDIN do not see each
other. They move close as if they
are on each other's thoughts.*

JAMILA (Chanting.)

Rashiddin's hands murdered . . .

CHORUS AND MUSICIANS

(Chanting.)

Punishment!

RASHIDDIN (Chanting.)

Exile!

JAMILA (Chanting.)

Exile!

CHORUS AND MUSICIANS

(Chanting.)

Exile!

RASHIDDIN and JAMILA exit.

VIII

RASHIDDIN'S RAGE

At the Imam's house. The IMAM enters, followed by RASHIDDIN.

RASHIDDIN

Punishment, not mercy.
Heaven is here in Semporna
Cradled in Jamila's arms.
And every dog and cat,
Even little mice and all
kinds of creatures,
Live in this heaven and see Jamila.
While Rashiddin, banished
to a faraway place.
Oh, Imam, the curse of
hell condemns me!

Rashiddin attempts to kill himself.

IMAM

Stop this nonsense!
What's this? You want
to kill yourself?
And kill at the same time the
woman who lives only for you?
Wake up, young man! Jamila,
The woman you wish
to die for lives.
You are fortunate. The law
that demands your death
Became your ally and
only sent you to exile.
But you are such a boorish
and arrogant man
Wasting your fortune
and your love.
Kill yourself? Then take this knife.
And die for Jamila.

*RASHIDDIN realizes his
mistake and asks for the
priest's forgiveness.*

RASHIDDIN

Imam, forgive me.

IMAM

Go to your love.
Climb to her bedroom
and comfort her.
But don't stay beyond
the appointed hour.

*The IMAM shows RASHIDDIN
the way out, as if leading*

*him to JAMILA's home. The
IMAM adjusts his costume and
becomes the NARRATOR.*

NARRATOR

He climbed up the window,
embraced his love
With tears flowing from his eyes,
His chest about to burst
As both hearts clung to
a sorrow shared.

IX

RASHIDDIN AND JAMILA'S WEDDING NIGHT

*RASHIDDIN and JAMILA
dance their love-making,
the light is focused on them,
while the MUSICIANS play
and chant a plaintive song.
The lovers recite the following
passages as the music plays.*

JAMILA

Punishment.

RASHIDDIN

Not mercy.

JAMILA

Heaven.

RASHIDDIN

In Jamila's arms.

JAMILA

Will we see each other again?

RASHIDDIN

Never doubt.

JAMILA AND RASHIDDIN

First night and final
kiss, before I go.

*They continue their love-
dance. The lights dim on
their last night together.*

X

JAMILA SLEEPS

*Dawn comes. RASHIDDIN
awakens, puts his clothes on, and
kisses the sleeping JAMILA. He
leaves in haste. JAMILA awakens
and finds RASHIDDIN gone.*

JAMILA

Oh, fortune, fortune!
If you are fickle, return
Rashiddin to me at once.

*JAMILA weeps. MADAM
KALIMUDDIN enters with
the KALIMUDDIN LADY.*

MADAM KALIMUDDIN

We will take revenge, don't
you worry. (After a short pause.)
My daughter, next Thursday,
The honorable and handsome

bachelor, Datu Pian-dao,
Will take you as his bride
before the Imam.

Jamila is shocked.

JAMILA

My dear mother!
Am I getting married to a
gentleman who is not yet a suitor?
If I am to get married,
better with Rashiddin
Whom you hate so much,
but not with Pian-dao!

MADAM KALIMUDDIN

(Slaps JAMILA.)

Hang yourself, you
rebellious harlot!
This is what I have to say:
Better be there at the Imam's
house on Thursday,
Or never face me again.
Do not test me! (Exits.)

JAMILA (Weeping.)

To betray my true husband
Is loathed by heaven and earth.
I need a kind of poison
so powerful
That will bring death with
the mere thought of it.

All around me people will see
No joy, only sorrow
Because, I believe, of the
sin I will commit.
I shall ask the Imam for advice.

*The scene quickly changes into
the Imam's house. Enter IMAM.
She addresses the IMAM.*

JAMILA

Help me in my great distress . . .
Give me the most potent poison.

IMAM

Your request is difficult to meet,
Like adding a curse to
one already damned.
Even then I shall give you
a worthy solution
So that you and Rashiddin may be
spared from committing a sin.

For I shall give you not poison,
As you ask, but a sleeping
potion. (The IMAM shows the
bottle of sleeping potion.)
Even the best physician can attest
That this cannot kill you.

*JAMILA accepts the bottle. The
IMAM exits. JAMILA drinks the
potion and falls into deep sleep.
The scene changes. We return to
JAMILA's room. The light changes
to show the passage of time. The
KALIMUDDIN LADY comes
to awaken JAMILA, thinks she
is dead, and screams for help.
MADAM KALIMUDDIN and
PIAN-DAO enter. They approach
JAMILA, believe she is dead, and
cry in grief. A funeral procession*

begins, while the CHORUS and MUSICIANS chant a wailing song. JAMILA is carried away.

KALIMUDDIN LADY

Ah, Jamilaaa!
 So much grief for us all
 So much pain for the
 death of a daughter
 So much pain this
 wound has brought.
 Ah, Jamilaaa!

The CHORUS and MUSICIANS exit, as the DANCER enters to address the audience.

XI THE IMAM'S PLANS GO AWRY

DANCER (As NARRATOR)

In life we experience misfortune
 Just like what happened to
 the Imam's messenger.
 The Imam's letter never
 reached Rashiddin
 For the messenger was
 beaten up on the road!

A dumb show: The IMAM enters with a letter, asks a SERVANT to deliver it to RASHIDDIN, and exits the stage. En route, the SERVANT gets attracted to

a DANCER, throws away the letter, and proceeds to dance with her to the music of the MUSICIANS. While dancing, the DANCER trips, dragging the SERVANT, whose body falls on top of the DANCER lying on the floor. The DANCER tries to set herself free from the SERVANT. Meanwhile, a MUSICIAN sees the two and, thinking that the man is hurting the woman, pulls the MESSENGER away and chases him out. The MUSICIAN lifts the DANCER from the ground and together dance away to exit. The scene shifts to Dapitan. RASHIDDIN enters.

RASHIDDIN

I dreamt that my love
 Found me cold and dead
 And so showered me with
 kisses on my lips
 And I lived again like
 a risen king—

The messenger, who is slightly deaf, enters.

Messenger!

MESSENGER

Rashiddin!

RASHIDDIN

My friend! How is my dearest
love? How is Jamila?

MESSENGER

(Mishears the name.)

Cinderella?

RASHIDDIN

Jamila! (Silence)

MESSENGER

Oh, Jamila! She lies in rest at
the crypt of the Kalimuddins
Her soul has joined the
angels of heaven.

*RASHIDDIN runs around the
stage, shocked and angered.*

RASHIDDIN

I defy you, starrrrrr!

(To the MESSENGER.) I shall leave
tonight. Get me a sailboat!

MESSENGER

What, sir? A small bird?

RASHIDDIN (Annoyed.)

Follow my orders! (The MESSENGER
leaves, but RASHIDDIN stops him.)

Do you have a letter
from the Imam?

MESSENGER (Mishears.)

From whose mom?

RASHIDDIN

A letter! A letter! From the Imam!

MESSENGER

Ah, letter from the Imam? None.

RASHIDDIN

Go! Get me that sailboat!

*RASHIDDIN runs around the
stage as the scene changes. A river.
RASHIDDIN paddles a small
boat. The MAMBABARANG, or
medicine man, is also on the same
river, paddling another small boat.*

RASHIDDIN

Medicine man! Medicine man!

MAMBABARANG

Who makes all that noise?

RASHIDDIN

Clearly, you are impoverished.
Here are forty coins. Give me
A dram of poison—

CHORUS AND MUSICIANS

Poison!

RASHIDDIN

One that will quickly
flow in my veins.

MAMBABARANG

I have such a drug, but
death comes to
Punish those who dare to sell it.

RASHIDDIN

In such a poor, hopeless
state as yours
Can one still fear death?

MAMBABARANG

My poverty approves,
But not my conscience.

The MAMBABARANG takes out a bottle of poison and hands it over to RASHIDDIN in exchange for a bag of coins. The MAMBABARANG paddles away to exit.

RASHIDDIN

Come, poison—

CHORUS AND MUSICIANS

Poison!

RASHIDDIN

Accompany me to Jamila's grave.
And there prove how
strong you are. (Exits.)

XII

PURE LOVE'S END

Scene changes: The crypt of the Kalimuddin family. The ghosts of BADAWI and TAUPAN enter with JAMILA.)

BADAWI AND TAUPAN

(As GHOSTS)

After claiming the
bottle of poison,
Rashiddin sets forth for Semporna
Dressed as a peasant, an
effective disguise
To avoid being caught and
bring his mission to ruin.

JAMILA lies in her grave, with the help of the GHOSTS. RASHIDDIN enters. He approaches JAMILA and embraces her.

RASHIDDIN

O Jamila, you are the life of life!
Meaningless is breath
if you should die
What good would
living still do me
In this world now that
you're gone?

But—lo!—your beauty
lies in utter peace,
Still as to life is its
countenance and hue,
Untarnished, untouched
by the vicious blot
Of death to which all
flesh is heir to.

While speaking, he takes the bottle of poison from his pocket.

Poison, your unforgiving violence,
Pour all on me that I may die at
once. (RASHIDDIN drinks the poison,
and then embraces and kisses JAMILA.)
O beauteous fate
It is to die, Jamila, by your side!

*RASHIDDIN tightens his
embrace as JAMILA awakens.*

She flinches away from

*RASHIDDIN, who falls on the
ground. She recognizes him and
is shocked. RASHIDDIN is also
astounded to see JAMILA alive.*

JAMILA

Rashiddin!

*She embraces RASHIDDIN, who
feels faint but manages to look
at his wife with fond affection.*

Did you not receive
the letter I sent,
Where I wrote to let
you know full well
About this, my
counterfeited death?

*RASHIDDIN shakes his
head while wincing in pain.
JAMILA embraces him.*

O dear Rashiddin, you
who fly away from me,
Lie still in the arms of one
who loved you most.
If you should go before,
no time will pass
And I will follow, still
in your embrace.

RASHIDDIN

(Struggling to speak.)

There is no turning back,
therefore, farewell;
I journey now to everlasting peace,
But I shall bring with me
your promised love
And hope that now and then
you'll think of me . . .

I leave thee now, my love!

*RASHIDDIN dies. JAMILA
slowly lets go of his body. She
looks for the bottle of poison.
Finding it, she drinks, but not
a single drop remains. She
throws the bottle away.*

JAMILA

Tell me, Rashiddin,
Why did you not leave a
single drop for me?
You kept for your own
self the pain of death
When I desire to share your agony.

*Voices are heard from outside.
JAMILA quickly decides to join
RASHIDDIN in the afterlife.
She searches for a weapon, then
finds and takes RASHIDDIN's
dagger. She speaks to the dagger.*

Dagger, my final friend,
defend me now,
I see the sweet succor you offer me
And easy it is to let
you end my life.

*JAMILA raises the dagger and
stabs herself. She pulls out the
dagger, falls next to RASHIDDIN,
and pulls his arms around her.*

Embrace me, Rashiddin,
My soul is on its way
to tranquil shores!

*She is about to kiss RASHIDDIN,
but before their lips touch, she
dies. Silence. Sound of running
feet. From the entrance of the
crypt, the CHORUS enters, kith
and kin of the MUSTAPHAS and
KALIMUDDINS. The tragedy
takes them aback, and then
their shock turns into grief.*

I M A M
Great Lord Almighty!
God, have mercy on us!

*They all kneel before the dead
lovers and chant in Arabic, with
the Imam leading them, seeking
forgiveness from each other.*

I M A M (Continues. Chanting.)
In the name of Allah
the most merciful!

I recite to you with the
angels as witnesses
Wrapped in tears,
pouring out despair
My desire for you, I cannot bear
You, oh beautiful one with
the sweetest smile
In love . . . I fell, the first
time I saw you
Oh beloved, the most beautiful . . .
Give way for us to pass
For we are here, most
honorable lords and ladies
Open the portals!
He will caress her eyebrows,
most thick and well-formed
My beloved, my heart
is already with you
Take care of your husband
who is here right now
Your husband is here . . .
My very self, I offer to you
Decide if you must, to let
me live or to let me die
Birds that fly and rest on
the *sambulayang* [banner]
They too are disheartened for
the lady has been taken.

I end here, and peace be to all!

The lights dim, and in the faint light, the GHOSTS of BADAWI and TAUPAN enter. They leave pieces of cloth for each lover. The GHOSTS exit. Silence. Then at a beat, the two lovers rise and put on the pieces of white cloth as if they were wings. They are in another world, joyous, moving around the mourning mortals, chasing each other like butterflies. The lights fade out.

END