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ATHENS-MOSCOW  
By Evdokimos Tsolakidis

**Characters:**

Olga  
Massa  
Irena

***Athens, Autumn of year 2002***

***The scenery is the same throughout the play.***

*Olga's living room. A sofa is in the center. On the left side of the stage (from the audience), is the entrance of the house. On the right side is the door to the bedroom, the kitchen and the bathroom. In front of the sofa there's a coffee table. On the left side, right next to the entrance, is a piece of furniture which serves as bar etc.. On the right side, in front of the door, is an armchair, and right next to it a small table with the telephone on. It's a rather sad living room. It gets worse since there is not even a single window or glazed door leading to a balcony. Therefore, artificial lighting is always necessary.*

**FIRST SCENE**

**THE COMMOTION**

8:00 am

*Nobody is on the stage.*

*The phone is ringing. Olga's answering machine is heard.*

*Hi, this is Olga. I'm not here at the moment. Leave a message and as soon as I come... I'll call you...*

*Boris' voice is heard:*

*Hi, Olga this is Boris... Olga... aren't you up yet...Olga... ok, I'm coming over.*

*Olga enters the stage wearing her nightgown. She's holding a cup of coffee and a packet of cigarettes. She's sitting at the couch and turns on her mobile phone, which was on the table. A sound of drums comes from the apartment next door. Olga is trying to react but she's still half asleep and doesn't even feel like it. She lights up a cigarette.*

*The phone is ringing again. She makes a move to pick it up but changes her mind. Her answering machine is heard.*

*Hi, this is Olga. I'm not here at the moment. Leave a message and as soon as I come... I'll call you...*

*Irena's voice is heard from far away*

*Olga...Olga...*

*Olga jumps up and picks up the phone*

*Olga: Yes...hello...*

*The line is dead. Her mobile phone is ringing, Olga picks it up at once.*

*Olga: Hello...Irena...I can't hear you very well...yes this is Olga... Irena... hello... now I can hear you...how are you doing sister dear? Yes...everything is fine...where have you been? Irena...I can't hear you again...hello... yes, this is better... who's gone? No, I said where have you been, not a letter, a telephone... nothing... I'm fine...everything is ok...I am at home, yes I heard it, as soon as I picked up you hung up... you know...work, home, maybe go out some time...well, yes... that's all... you know quiet (*a sound of drums is heard again from the apartment next door*) SHUT UP WE JUST WOKE UP... hello...Irena...how are you doing, what have you been up to? I've missed you very much... where? Moscow airport? ...are you coming to Athens? ...Oh my God, this is excellent... when? ...what? ...what time do you arrive? ...at one? I'll come to pick you up ...I'm no hearing this... no, I can hear you, what I meant was I'm definitely coming to pick you up ...what? a surprise? ...no way ...I'm coming... how else will you find your way to the house? Ok, ok... what do you mean a surprise? Ok... but promise me you'll show the cub driver my address...I'll be waiting... yes, Massa is fine too... I'll call her just now to ask her to come and wait here with me... come on let me come and pick you up... ok, I promise... be careful... show my address to the cub driver... my name is on the doorbell... yes...ok... bye, bye... have a safe trip... bye.*

*Olga hangs up, sits down for one moment and then gets right up and starts tidying up the apartment. She seems upset. All of a sudden she picks up the phone and dials.*

Olga: *(suddenly she starts to talk in a hoarse voice)* Hello, Igor, this is Olga. I'm Olga. What do you mean Olga who? I work there. Yes, it's me! I feel awful I can't come for work today ..... I don't know it must be a flu or something. Do you want me to call Nadia for you? ...ok...I'll leave it up to you then... I had two for today... yes... I haven't been sick so many times! Why are you shouting? ...I'm telling you I am not well... when? Thursday? ...yes, ok... I'm writing it down *(she pretends to write something down)* Thursday, twelve o'clock... ok. This is me Igor, if you don't like me find somebody else... ok... I'll try... ok...bye.

*Olga hangs up the phone and carries on tidying up. As she's about to carry a few empty bottles to the other room, the phone rings again. She picks it up, and she's rather upset.*

Olga: Hello..., hi Yiouri...what's up? Nothing much... yes...what is there to talk about Yiouri? ...we've been through this before... yes, I think so... for me it's over ...today? No way... yes... ok... ok... definitely...alright... what are you saying Yiouri, you are upset? You should see me, what state I'm in... yes... I have to go now, I'm busy...alright... yes...it's getting boring... I will call you...bye.

*Olga hangs up and takes the bottles to the other room. After a while she picks up the phone and dials a number. She changes her mind and hangs up fast. After a while she tries it again.*

Olga: *(On Massa's answering machine)* Hi Massa it's Olga... Massa are you there... it's important, call me as soon as you get the message... ok? I'm going to call you on your mobile.

*She hangs up and dials a new number.*

Olga: Massa it's Olga... don't hang... Shit! Damn it!

*She hangs up. Sound of drums from next door.*

Olga: Shut up! Stop it!

*Olga picks up the phone and dials the same number.*

Olga: Massa Irena is coming... yes, you heard me right... she must be on her way right now. She called me a few minutes ago from Moscow airport. She said she'd be here by one. I don't know...she's obviously coming to see us for a few days...yes...I thought I'd ask you to come over... no... we'll put on a show for a few days and that is all... no, no, you don't understand, I'm not apologizing, why should I apologize anyway? Massa what are you talking about? ...no, I didn't call you to explain or ask for

your explanations. This issue is over for me. I hope you are well and feeling alright, I don't want anything to do with you...yes I know it goes both ways... yes... alright... listen now... what I want from you is...

*Olga's mobile phone is ringing.*

One second... hold on one second my mobile phone is ringing and it might be Irena...

*Olga picks up her mobile phone.*

Hello?... yes, Yiouri... yes I'm on the phone... I don't have to tell you who I'm talking to... it's my sister Massa... yes, we are talking again, is there a problem? Make sure you ruin everything again... what?... don't you dare show your face around here...

*The buzzer rings.*

Hold on one moment...

*On her way to answer the buzzer, picks up the phone.*

Massa just a minute...

*Answers the buzzer.*

Who is it? Oh! Hello Boris... what brings you over?... you left me a message on the answering machine?... no, I didn't get it...yes, I was sleeping... I'm not feeling very well so I'll stay home... my sister Massa is here that's why I can't talk loud and I'm not asking you to come upstairs...! I don't know what she wants, she's just arrived... listen I'll drop by the bar this afternoon... yes, around three o'clock... ok two sharp, I'll be there... ok, see you soon, yes, me too, bye.

*She goes back to the phone.*

Massa?... damn it.

*She hangs up. She reaches for her mobile phone.*

Yiouri?... hi... no, don't you dare show up here..... please don't call me any more... no, I don't like it. If I change my mind, I will call you... ok? I can't explain it right now... I need time... let me think... yes... no, it was not your fault, yes, it was my fault... ok it was not my fault either, it was Massa's fault, yes for everything... yes, Yiouri, you're drunk... Yiouri I

have to go now, yes, ok... I will call you... ok? *(A little puzzled by his tone)*  
ok, bye.

*She hangs up her mobile phone and reaches the phone. She's calling Massa.*

Olga: Hi Massa, it's me. I'm sorry for before...well? Are you coming or not?... here... at my house... now... I don't want Irena to understand anything for as long as she stays here... she's our little sister you know how sensitive she is, after she's gone, you go your way and I'll go mine...ok? Exactly...yes ... ok... enough now... come on over, we have to talk a few things out, we can't go around saying different things... I'm not just nervous, I'm furious...yes, 22, Kallirois Avenue... ok, go ahead and write it down, so you won't forget... I'll wait for you... my name is on the doorbell... yes... ok, bye.

*She hangs up the phone and looks thoughtful. Drumming sounds are coming from the apartment next door. She smiles and picks up the phone again. She dials a number.*

Olga: Hello, Vladimir?...where are you?... ok, I'll be quick *(with one breath)* I'm kind of busy today my sister Irena is coming from Moscow so don't call me unless there's a party somewhere ok If I need something I will call you you are to call me only if there's a party I don't believe there will be any parties but anyway in any other case I will call you...Vladimir?...did you understand what I told you? ... Vladimir?

*Vladimir hung up a couple of minutes ago. Olga hangs up smiling and the lights go slowly down.*

## SECOND SCENE

### MAKE UP

*It's eleven o'clock. Olga is on the stage, she's dressed and she's on the phone.*

Olga: Yiouri, I'm telling you for the last time, I need more time... do me a favour and don't call me again, I will call you... I don't know... whenever... I don't know... maybe today, maybe tomorrow, maybe never... I don't know!... don't bring Massa into this, she's been through enough because of you, ...because of me too, ok...

*The buzzer is heard.*

I have to go now, I'm busy... who do you think it is? It must be the janitor... dear God, what's wrong with you?... yes... alright...ok, yes...bye, now, bye.

*She quickly hangs up and runs to the doorbell.*

Who is it?... fifth floor.

*She takes a look around the room, fixes a couple of things, looks herself in the mirror, fixes her hair... The sound of the doorbell. Olga runs to the door and opens it. Massa enters the room.*

Olga: Come in.

Massa: Thank you.

Olga: Here. Have a sit.

Massa: Thank you. *(She's sitting down)*

Olga: Would you like some coffee?

Massa: No, thank you.

Olga: Are you hungry? Would you like something to eat?

Massa: I have eaten, thank you.

Olga: You're welcome. *(She's sitting)*

*They look at each other.*

Massa: I'm listening.

Olga: Ok, I asked you to come here so that... Massa, please, I can't talk to you when you have that look on your face.

Massa: You can't tell me anything about the look on my face.

Olga: Oh, yes I can. Everything that happened between me and Yiouri was two months after you and he had broken up. For as long as you two were together it didn't even cross my mind... I swear to you, on our father's grave...

Massa: *(she gets up)* Don't touch me! Even seeing you makes me sick.

Olga: *(she gets up)* For our Irena who's flying to see us as we speak...

Massa: Shame on you! I should not have come in the first place.*(she's headed for the door).*

Olga: *(Outruns her, locks the door and takes away the keys)* You are not going anywhere.

Massa: *(Hysterical)* Open this door at once. *(Olga remains calm)* Give me the keys. I said, give me the keys! *(Olga still remains calm)* GIVE ME THE KEYS! *(She runs up on her sister, they run around the couch. Drumming noises are coming from the apartment next door in a quick rhythm)*

Olga: Now...we've done it! *(They go on chasing each other until Massa exhausted slumps on the couch and starts crying. The drumming noise stops, the phone is ringing.)* This is all we need now. *(She's headed for the phone, trying to catch her breath. In the meanwhile Massa takes a pill)* Hello...why are you doing that? I think I asked you not to call me any more...Really? Are you serious?... no, I'm alone... *(Massa takes another pill)* I was doing the janitor, what's your problem?... listen to me I can't do this any more, you're getting on my nerves, it's over, can't you get it? Over... yes, exactly like this. Don't ever call me again, ok? No, Yiouri, stop that... are we clear about this?... Don't call me any more, are you listening to me when I talk?... it is over. *(Olga hangs up the phone far too upset)*

*Pause.*

*Olga unlocks the door.*

Here, you can leave if you want.

Massa: You lied to me that Irena is coming.

Olga: I didn't lie to you about anything, and you will soon see it yourself. I didn't feel like seeing you again after everything that's happened but when Irena called me this morning and said she was coming I thought it'd be best if she didn't know any of this. That is why I called you. Now, I don't care anymore if we tell her everything. For all I know you might have already told her yourself.

Massa: The last time I spoke to Irena on the phone was when we called her up together on her name day.

*Olga's mobile phone is ringing.*

Olga: Hello... oh! *(she has a sudden mood shift)* hi Boris... ok...yes, she's still here...I don't know... I can't right now... I told you why... I'll see you at two at the bar *(Massa keeps on taking pills)*... ok?... me too... very much... bye. *(She hangs up and says to Massa in an awkward tone)* that was Boris...

Massa: I'm going to the airport.

Olga: She said that under no circumstances we are to go and pick her up

Massa: But why?

Olga: I don't know. She said she has a surprise for us.

Massa: What kind of a surprise?

Olga: I don't know she wouldn't say. I insisted on going to the airport myself, but she made me promise that nobody would go.

Massa: But how will she find your house?

Olga: When I moved here, I sent her a card. She'll show the address to the cub driver.

*The phone is ringing.*

Olga: Hello?... hey, Vladimir, what's up?... so what? Is that why you called me? Come on Vladimir, big deal! *(In a low voice)* I specifically told you, only if there's a party, didn't I? Well, is this a party? *(Massa keeps on taking pills)*...oh, give me a break Vladimir, I'm busy today. No, don't call me, I will call you... ok, bye. *(She hangs up)* that was Vladimir...

Massa: I don't want to know who Vladimir is.

Olga: I will explain to both of you as soon as Irena is here.

Massa: You don't need to explain anything.

Olga: You don't understand...

Massa: I understand perfectly well, and I am not interested in your dirty work.

Olga: Hey, watch what you're saying... *Her mobile phone is ringing*

Olga: Hello...*(in a hoarse voice)* hello, Igor... yes I was on the phone with the doctor... more or less the same...did you call Nadia?... ok, good...I'll see you on Thursday *(Massa takes another pill)*...ahhh... what?... are you serious? ...just because I got sick once?... what do you mean it's not up to you? I wasn't born yesterday you know... you can take the money you owe me and put it up your ass... that's right asshole. *(She hangs up)*

*Olga starts crying.*

Massa: *(In a while)* Come on, stop it... stop... you'll make me start too...

*They hug one another and start crying together.*

Massa: You let your nails grow.

Olga: What's wrong with your hands?

Massa: Oh, the weather's changing.

Olga: I have a very nice cream for the hands.

Massa: Leave my hands and tell me what happened.

Olga: They gave me the sack.

Massa: Just like that?

Olga: Just like that. Do you want a cigarette?

Massa: No, I don't smoke, I quit smoking.

Olga: Really? Way to go!

Massa: Who was that Igor person?

Olga: He's an impostor.

Massa: And what kind of business do you have with an impostor?

Olga: Work. I needed to work. *(Olga gets up and fixes herself a drink)* Would you like something to drink?

Massa: Just water. Thank you.

Olga: You're welcome.

*They look at each other and smile meaningfully. Throughout the whole scene Olga refills her glass whilst Massa swallows one pill after the other.*

Massa: Well?

Olga: Where was I? Oh, yes... let me take it from the start because a lot has happened. When you kicked me out of the house...

Massa: I did not! You decided to leave.

Olga: Whatever. When I left the house I stayed with Nadia for a while, until I could figure out what to do. There I met Igor, he has a travel agency and since my Greek is very good he hired me as a tourist guide for Russian tourists coming to Athens. The money was good, but he wanted something else from me, I didn't play along and now... *(Drumming sounds are coming from the apartment next door)* I thought he went for a walk or something... but no....

Massa: What is that sound anyway?

Olga: My neighbour. I don't know what's going on with him today. As for Yiouri, you may believe what you want, but what I have to tell you is that the night you saw us in the living room talking... that's all we were doing, nothing else. Then there was this huge mess, you broke up, I left the house and ever since I moved into this apartment he's been flirting me head on. I resisted him once, twice, thrice... but then I gave in. I think that deep inside me all I wanted was to get back at you for the way you treated me. That's probably the price I'm paying now.

Massa: Does he beat you?

Olga: *(Just to please her sister)* Sometimes...

Massa: *(Greedily)* Does he come home wasted and beat you up?

Olga: *(She starts not to like what she's witnessing)* After that though...Hmm...

Massa: *(Massa takes a cigarette from Olga and lights it up)* Hmmm ...

Olga: If you feel like that, don't quit smoking.

Massa: No, no, just a couple of puffs and I'll put it out. Go on.

Olga: This is it though. We're through. He made an unbelievable scene the other day, and I don't ever want to see him again. In the meantime I have met someone else. He works at the agency as a driver. It's Boris, the one who called earlier, but something is just not right with him too. I don't know what, but there's something I don't like about him. Anyway, enough about me. Tell me how you are doing.

Massa: Who, me? Nothing. After I got rid of Yiouri and you took him in, I started working at a musical academy. That's where I was when you called earlier. *(She's going through her purse)* This can't be true; I left my mobile at the musical academy. Thank God it's close by, I'll drop in later and pick it up. That's all. Other than that, I enjoy being single again.

Olga: Don't you worry about anything; I'll fix you up with somebody.

Massa: You mind your own business and let me take care of mine.

Olga: Ok, I didn't mean to upset you, relax. Vladimir would be good for you though he's just as unsociable as you are.

Massa: *(She gets up)* I'm going to leave.

Olga: Sit down, I'm only teasing you... Hey, are you hungry?

Massa: I haven't eaten anything all day.

Olga: You told me you ate.

*She gets up and heads for the table where the phone is on. There she has a pile of pizza catalogues. Suddenly she starts laughing.*

Massa: What's wrong with you?

Olga: *(She cannot stop laughing)* How would you like cannelloni?

*Massa remembers the incident immediately and starts laughing too. Olga sits back on the couch. Until the end of the scene the two sisters talk and move as if they are a mirror of each other. This has to go on at least for two minutes.*

Olga-Massa: I think I'll have a...ha, ha...ok, you say.. no, no you go first... I don't believe this... I'll have a... carbonara... ooh!...come on stop it...oh! what is going on now?... oooooh!... stop it... ooh! ...help... stop... ooh!... I can't take it any more... I can't... knock it off...(*They say both at the same time*)

Olga: I am Olga.

Massa: I am Massa.

*It's dark.*

## THIRD SCENE

### IRENA'S ARRIVAL

*It's two thirty. Olga and Massa have finished eating. When the curtain is pulled Massa takes what's left of the food in the kitchen and Olga enters the scene holding coffee.*

Olga: Here's yours, I didn't put any sugar in, I put Canderel.

Massa: Right, I ate a plate with spaghetti, Canderel is going to make the difference.

Olga: Maybe we should have ordered something for Irena too...

Massa: I don't know. If she's hungry when she gets here we'll order then. She's late though? Where is she? What's the time?

Olga: Two thirty. Do you think she's lost?

Massa: We should have gone to the airport. Who knows how much is the cab driver going to charge her.

Olga: She won't even have the proper currency.

Massa: "Surprise"... what does she mean "surprise"?

Olga: You are right about that, what kind of surprise might it be? Do you think she has done something to her hair?

Massa: Some surprise that is. Irena is not like that. It has to be something serious.

Olga: I know what it is. Dear me, and I haven't prepared anything...

Massa: What happened now?

Olga: It's a man! She's coming here with a man. This is so embarrassing.

Massa: Do you think it's a man?

Olga: I heard her. She was excited. I've never heard her like that before.

Massa: Really! She had to be excited. Do you think she's in love?

Olga: Excited, I'm telling you, excited.

*Olga's mobile phone is ringing.*

Olga: Hello?...hi Boris... I know, but I'm waiting for my sister from Russia, she still hasn't arrived... yes... I'll see her for a while and then I'll come straight over... yes... I know... me too... yes, she's here, we're waiting for her together, yes... you... me... you... me... you... me... you... me... you... me... you... that's why... talk to you soon... yes...bye, bye.

*Pause. Massa is looking at her.*

What are you looking at?

Massa: What am I looking?

Olga: What are you looking?

Massa: Why shouldn't I be looking?

Olga: Did I say you shouldn't look?

Massa: Then why are you asking me what am I looking at, I'm looking at anything I want to.

Olga: Ok, look.

Massa: Ok, I'm looking.

*Pause.*

Olga: Will you quit looking at me like that?

Massa: Why? What is wrong with the way I'm looking?

Olga: You know perfectly well what is wrong with the way you're looking.

Massa: I think you are asking for it.

Olga: I'm asking for it?

Massa: Yes you are asking for it!

Olga: I'm not asking for it, you are!

Massa: I'm asking for it? Where do you go off saying I'm asking for it?

Olga: You know damn well where from!

Massa: No I don't! But you know why you are asking for it!

Olga: Me?

Massa: You.

Olga: Me?

Massa: You.

Olga: Me?

Massa: You.

Olga: *(She gets the hint)* Very funny!.. I stood him up... and I was trying to explain to him...

*The buzzer rings, they both jump up as if struck by lightning.*

Olga: It's her.

Massa: What if it's Yiouri?

Olga: *(She hesitates for one moment)* If it's Yiouri... it's a good chance now that you're here to teach him the lesson of his life. *(She answers the buzzer)* Who is it?...Irena! Fifth floor.

*Panic follows.*

Massa: I'm going to help her with her luggage.

*She exits the stage.*

Olga: Massa. *(Massa re-enters the stage)* Be careful, don't tell her anything.

Massa: You, be careful, you who always...

*Olga looks at the door and remains speechless. Massa turns around and remains speechless too.*

Olga-Massa: Irena!

*Right at that moment there's a power-failure and all the lights go out. A few moments of panic follow during which they start looking for candles; they stumble*

*on furniture and on one another. Then the lights go back on and we see Irena right in the middle of the stage dressed up as a nun. Massa and Olga stand each one on each side.*

*Pause.*

Irena: Massa.

Massa: Irena.

*They hug.*

Irena: Olga.

Olga: Irena.

*They hug.*

*Pause.*

Massa: Here, have a sit. How was your trip?

Irena: Very good.

*Pause.*

Massa: How much money did the cub take you to bring you here?

Irena: Ten dollars.

Massa: That's it? You must have met the most honest cub driver in the city.

Irena: He was a very religious man; his car was covered in icons. He carried my suitcase to the entrance and even kissed my hand before leaving.

*Pause.*

Massa: Are you hungry? Would you like something to eat?

Irena: No, thank you. I ate on the plane. Besides...

Olga: *(During all this time she was silent and now she has a sudden outburst)* Why did you do that Irena? Why did you do this to me? You ruined your life little sister, you ruined it. You still have your whole life to live. Didn't you think about that? Didn't you?

Irena: Olga, please...

Massa: No, she's right. And what about us? Did you think of us at all? I'm asking you...

Irena: Massa.

Olga: It's my fault, I should have insisted more that you come with us to Greece. Had you come with us, we wouldn't have been so humiliated.

Irena: Olga, what are you saying?

Massa: She's right Irena. How could you make a decision like that without consulting with us first?

Irena: Please, stop! Enough is enough. I didn't travel all this way so that you will welcome me like this. I had better stayed where I was.

*She starts crying. Olga and Massa look at each other, feeling embarrassed.*

Olga: I'm sorry I didn't mean to...

Massa: Come on, we didn't mean it like that.

Olga: Besides, it's just a phase you're going through, you'll be over it soon.

Massa: *(To Olga)* Stop it. *(To Irena)* Come on tell us all about how you made up your mind about this.

Irena: First of all, I'm not yet a regular nun, I'm a trainee.

Olga: That's good.

Irena: However, I plan on becoming one real soon.

Massa: *(To Olga)* Don't say a word. *(To Irena)* Go on.

Irena: What else is there to talk about Massa? You have me confess like I committed a crime.

Olga: What crime, dear, what crime. Do you call this a crime? You did very well. You wanted to see how it goes. You wanted to try it out. Ok, you tried it, you didn't like it, it's over, why are we still talking about it? Would you like a cup of coffee?

Irena: No, thank you. I don't drink coffee.

Olga: She doesn't drink coffee. Ok, go take a shower, take off these clothes... in the meantime I have an errand to run, and I'll be back.

Irena: What kind of an errand?

Olga: (*Looking at Massa*) I have a business appointment, it won't take long. As soon as I'm back we'll go out and you'll see Athens, then you will tell us all your news and we'll tell you ours...so Massa is going to show you around... it's not a big house, but you'll be fine... oh, right I'll give you your own keys...what else?...Now that you've come to Greece forget all about convents.

Irena: It is not exactly like that but go run your errand and we'll talk about it later.

Olga: My sweet, sensitive darling.

Irena: Yes, sensitive.

Olga: So, I'll see you soon. I won't be long. Should you need anything, call me at my mobile.

*Olga is leaving.*

Massa: Don't take it the wrong way. She's a little harsh but you know how much she loves you. They let her off work today.

Irena: What work?

Massa: She used to work as a tourist guide for a travel agency and...

Irena: Massa stop. I know everything, that's why I'm here.

Massa: What everything?

Irena: That Olga is a whore. Forgive me Lord.

Massa: What?

Irena: Come on now, don't play dumb with me.

Massa: What on earth are you talking about?

Irena: Come on Massa, our brother's wife came to the convent to see me...

Massa: Natassa?

Irena: Yes, that's her, and she told me everything.

Massa: It's a lie, a lie. That bitch has the nerve to show up in a convent.

Irena: Is it a lie? And the fact that you weren't talking to each other for almost a year, is it a lie too?

*Pause. Massa sits.*

You had no idea, right? I was shocked too when I found out.

Massa: That's why the phones were ringing like crazy ever since I arrived. And all she talked about was parties, and things in a secret code...

Irena: What secret code?

Massa: Well, something like you... me... and then again you... and again me... and then she changed her voice.

Irena: She changed her voice?

Massa: Yes, she spoke like with a sore throat.

Irena: A sore throat?

Massa: I'm searching the house.

Irena: Maybe it's a sin.

Massa: A sin? Now, you will see a sin.

Irena: Massa what are you doing there, stop. I'll help you search.

*They are searching.*

*Massa enters carrying a few bottles.*

Irena: What are these?

Massa: Bottles. They are empty.

Irena: Bottles? Empty bottles?

*Irena takes them out again*

Massa: Empty bottles. Natassa was right. Our poor sister. (*Irena reenters*) It's Yiouri's fault, he's the one who led her there. (*Massa exits*)

Irena: Yiouri... Yiouri... Massa, who is Yiouri?

*Massa reenters with the bottles.*

Massa: My ex boyfriend, I left him and then Olga took him in. That's why we weren't speaking to each other.

*Irena takes out the bottles once again.*

Massa: Oh, Yiouri, Yiouri....

*Irena reenters.*

Irena: Oh, Yiouri, Yiouri....

*Massa exits.*

Our poor sister... Oh, Yiouri

*Massa reenters holding the bottles.*

Irena: Why do you keep on bringing these bottles here? Stop doing that.

*Irena takes out the bottles once more.*

Massa: Our poor sister...

*Irena reenters.*

*Massa exits.*

Irena: (*she takes Olga's address book from the table*) All men's names...

*Massa walks in holding a bankbook.*

Massa: Irena come here quick.

Irena: What's up? What is this?

Massa: Sixty thousand.

Irena: Sixty thousand what?

Massa: Bankbook. Sixty thousand Euro.

Irena: How much is sixty thousand Euro?

Massa: More or less sixty thousand dollars.

Irena: Holy Mother of Jesus!

*The buzzer is ringing.*

Who can it be? Hurry, put it back.

*Massa answers the buzzer.*

Massa: Hello? ... no, Olga is not here... yes, it's me Yiouri... I'm fine, we're both fine... *(In the meantime Irena is going through Massa's purse believing it to be Olga's)* yes... you are not going to be well in a while... unless you leave immediately I will call the police... You know very well what I have to tell to the police... hold on *(To Irena)* put it back in, this is my purse, leave it alone... don't dare come and bother us again, or you'll see exactly what I mean.

*Massa walks away from the door.*

Irena: Was it him?

Massa: Yes, him.

Irena: What are we going to do?

Massa: We have to be very careful about the way we'll handle it.

Irena: I don't think we should tell her anything. Not for the time being anyway, we have to be sure first.

Massa: Be sure how Irena? I think it's very obvious.

Irena: Anyway, I think we have to wait for the right moment to tell her.

Massa: You're right. Oh, mine, it's three thirty, the musical academy will close.

Irena: What musical academy?

Massa: I work in a musical academy. I left my mobile phone there and I need to go pick it up.

Irena: And you're going to leave me alone?

Massa: I'll be back in a second. I won't be long. It's a good chance for you to get some rest.

Irena: I need some rest. Oh, God, what a mess.

Massa: We didn't even have the chance to talk.

Irena: We'll get the time.

Massa: Don't worry, everything is going to be alright. Now that all three of us are together, we'll fix it. I'm positive.

Irena: I hope so.

Massa: So, I'll see you in a while. I'm going, you stay.

*Massa leaves. Irena is alone for a couple of minutes and then the drumming sound is heard from the apartment next door. Irena without knowing what to do, waves her hands and the drums suddenly stop. After a while she takes a mobile phone from her pocket and dials a number. The drumming sound starts over. Irena hangs up the phone and starts running around in panic. In the end she repeats the same gesture with her hands and the drums stop again.*

Irena: Good evening, it's Irena...yes, I'm here... very good... yes, I have it with me... of course... yes.. I have the address... ok... yes ... six o'clock... ok, good... six o'clock sharp, I'll be there... yes...(Drumming sounds again.) Bless me! *(Irena suddenly hangs up. She tries the same gesture with the hands and the drumming sound stops again. Irena looks at her hands in a strange way, as the lights slowly go down.)*

## FOURTH SCENE

### *THE DRUMMER ...*

*It's five o'clock. The stage is empty. Olga enters.*

Olga: Massa, Irena....

*Irena enters.*

Are you still wearing these?

Irena: What happened? What's the matter with you?

Olga: Nothing.

Irena: What do you mean nothing? You're a mess.

Olga: I'll explain later. Where's Massa?

Irena: She said she would go to the musical academy to get her mobile phone.  
She said she won't be late.

Olga: Ok, let's wait for her...I say.

Irena: Olga I know everything.

Olga: What do you mean everything?

Irena: That Massa is a drug addict.

Olga: What?

Irena: Come on don't play dumb with me. I also think she's selling drugs.

Olga: Do you belong to a cult of some kind?

Irena: Dear Olga, that's the reason I came all this way. Our brother's wife came  
to the convent to see me the other day...

Olga: Natassa...

Irena: Yes, that's her, and she told me everything.

Olga: And what did she say exactly?

Irena: That ever since our brother died she has been very miserable, and that she's really sorry that things turned out that way and she got to keep the house but she had children to raise, and bottom line she loves us all dearly and she cares for us...

Olga: ...and as soon as she heard about Massa she came to tell you so that you wouldn't find out from somebody else.

Irena: Something like that.

Olga: That bitch!

Irena: Let her be. What do we do with Massa?

Olga: It's a lie, she lied to you.

Irena: And the fact that you weren't talking to each other for almost a year, is it a lie too?

*Pause.*

Irena: You had no idea, right? I was shocked too when I found out.

Olga: That's why she's taking all these pills. And her hands...did you see her hands how dry they were?

Irena: And she seemed a little irritable. Irritable and absent-minded.

Olga: She was like that in the past too. Don't you remember? She used to have her chaplet and she whistled. This is what they do. They take their dose, they fix their eyes somewhere and they get high. So, Massa whistles too.

Irena: Get high where?

Olga: How should I know, I've never used drugs.

Irena: We shouldn't tell her anything. We have to be very careful about the way we'll handle it.

Olga: It's my entire fault. Hadn't I got involved with Yiouri we wouldn't be here today... Oh, Yiouri, Yiouri...

Irena: Oh, Yiouri, Yiouri...

*The buzzer rings.*

Irena: It's her. Careful she mustn't understand we know anything.

Olga: Hello? *(In a dramatic tone)* Of course Massa dear, it's open come right in.

Irena: We have to behave as if everything is ok.

Olga: She'll be different, you'll see. How was she when she left?

Irena: Kind of sad maybe.

Olga: Now she'll be happy, you'll see. She will even want to eat something sweet.

Irena: Something sweet?

Olga: That's what they do. They take their dose, and then they crave something sweet.

*The doorbell is ringing. Olga gets the door. Massa enters the room, she's extremely happy and she's holding a parcel. She hugs and kisses Olga, then Irena.*

Massa: Dear Olga I'm so very happy. Dear Irena, we are all together again, loved and strong. Why are you looking at me like that? I seem silly right? That's what I was thinking on my way here though. We're together. We're healthy so we can do anything. United and loved. These are my pentagrams. I'll leave them here. Just remind me to get them before I leave, will you?

Olga: Here, have a sit Massa dear. Would you like something to drink?

Massa: Have we got anything sweet to celebrate the occasion?

Olga: I'm going to take a look. *(She exits from the right side)*

Massa: You didn't say anything, did you?

Irena: Nothing.

Massa: How was she when she came back?

Irena: She looked troubled; she said she'd explain later.

*Olga enters.*

Olga: Nothing. Should I go out and get us a cake?

Massa: No, it's ok. I'm going to make coffee. Does anybody care for a cup of coffee?

Irena: I don't.

Massa: Me neither. *(To Olga)* how about you?

Olga: No, I don't think so.

Massa: Ok, I'll only make some for me.

*She exits to the right.*

Olga: Did you see her? A whole new person. You didn't say anything did you?

Irena: Tell her what? Are you crazy? In the condition she's in...

Olga: And this parcel? Pentagrams... right. If only pentagrams were like that. Thank God we don't have a police dog anywhere around here.

Irena: Dear God, what are we going to do?

Olga : What do you mean what are we going to do? We'll take her to a detoxification center. That's what we'll do.

Irena: We have to bring it to her gently.

*Massa enters.*

Olga: Ok?

Massa: Everything is all right. I put three spoons with sugar, as of tomorrow we all go on diet. All three of us.

Irena: Of course, all of us.

Olga: Diet, diet.

Irena: Good, now that we had some time all together, I'm leaving.

Massa: Leaving?

Olga: Leaving? Where to?

Irena: I'm already late. I have to deliver a confidential letter from the Reverend Mother to the priest of the Russian church in Athens. I'll be back in half an hour.

Olga: We'll go with you. How are you going to find the church?

Irena: The same way I found your house Olga. I'll show the cub driver the address. Please I have to go alone. I'll be back in half an hour.

*Irena's mobile phone is ringing. Olga and Massa start looking for their mobile phones.*

Olga: It's your phone.

Massa: No, not mine, it's yours.

Irena: Hello... yes, I was just leaving, I shall be there shortly... yes I have your address, don't worry, I'll be there in ten minutes... yes, good bye.

*To her sisters.*

Good bye, see you in thirty minutes.

Olga: Wait, let me give you some money.

Irena: I have dollars.

Massa: It should not be more than three dollars.

Irena: Alright, alright.

*She exits.*

*Pause.*

Olga: What was that now?

Massa: What kind of a letter is that?

Olga: Have you ever seen a nun with a mobile phone?

Massa: You're right.

Olga: I think that our Irena is in trouble.

Massa: It must be that bitch Natassa.

*Pause. They look at each other.*

Olga: Did she tell you too that Natassa went to see her in the convent?

Massa: Yes, she told you too?

Olga: Yes.

*Long pause. They look at each other.*

Olga: Russian mafia. She's in trouble with the Russian mafia. I'm going through her suitcase.

Massa: No, don't, it isn't right.

Olga: It's locked. Why has she locked her suitcase?

Massa: Because she's aware that old habits die hard, and you always used to go through our things.

Olga: I used to go through your things?

Massa: But you always used to go through our things.

Olga: That's why you were both doing fine as long as we lived together. Don't let me open my mouth...

Massa: Don't let me open my mouth.

*While going through Irena's suitcase.*

Jesus, what has she put in here?

Olga: Guns. She's got guns. I read it in a magazine. They dress up as nuns so they can cross the borders unnoticed and they sell guns. That's it, our poor Irena. Oh, how I wish she was really a nun. Oh, how I wish, she was a nun.

Massa: What are we going to do now?

Olga: Do what?

Massa: We have to handle it really gently. We shouldn't tell her anything.

Olga: Nothing, absolutely nothing. These people are ruthless. We may end up struggled at the bottom of the sea.

*The doorbell rings. Both sisters jump up.*

Massa: Mary, mother of Jesus. Don't open the door.

Olga: Hush... it might be Irena. Let me take a look through the door viewer.

*Olga looks through the door viewer. She turns to Massa puzzled. It's the guy from next door! The drummer boy!*

*She opens the door and the lights go down.*

## FIFTH SCENE

### *THE POLICE...*

*It's seven o'clock. Massa walks away from the door, she has just shown off the drummer from next door. Olga is standing in front of the couch.*

Olga: I don't believe him.

Massa: Very kind! He must be the kindest Greek man I have ever met.

Olga: The moment you see a weird guy you get all excited.

Massa: I'm not excited (*She lights up a cigarette*) He is cute though ...

Olga: Next time you quit smoking you make sure you tell me to buy an extra packet...

Massa: I'm only going to have two puffs. I didn't think he was weird. On the contrary, he's kind. Has any other Greek man treated you like that before? And he plays the drums well too... !

Olga: That's all we were missing.

Massa: You should have asked him to stay for dinner.

Olga: Didn't you see him? He was lost in space.

Massa: Everyone you see seems lost in space. He apologised six times. Six. I was counting. "I am sorry to have bothered you" and "I am sorry", "Really sorry", "It won't happen again" and again "I am sorry"... You should go and invite him over for dinner right now. He should come and meet Irena.

Olga: I think you've lost your mind! You're still under the influence.

Massa: Under what influence?

Olga: His influence.

Massa: Nonsense.

Olga: Massa we have more important things to do now. What are we going to do about the guns?

Massa: Guns? What guns?

Olga: The guns in her suitcase, Massa wake up!

Massa: Oh, right, the guns in the suitcase. Dear God, I forgot. Olga what are we going to do with the guns?

Olga: That's what I'm asking. We have to figure out what to do before Irena comes back.

Massa: Maybe we should ask what he thinks; what if he's got any good ideas?

Olga: Massa, I will hit you.

Massa: Come on! We can't even tease you anymore. And then you call me unsociable.

*The buzzer rings, Olga answers.*

Massa: Who is it?

Olga: It's Irena.

Massa: But Irena has keys.

Olga: Maybe she doesn't want to draw the attention on her.

Massa: Help me put the suitcase back. Draw the attention on her how do you mean?

Olga: Make people believe she's turned the place into a hideout, and that she's going back and forth carrying guns.

Massa: And how is it any different if she rings the bell?

Olga: It's not the same. When you have your own key, then you have a greater power...

*The door slams wide open and Irena gets in holding her keys in her hands. She's furious, she goes straight to the chair and sits down.*

Massa: Irena!

Olga; Irena, what happened?

Irena: I don't want any questions, I'll explain later. I'm leaving the convent.

Olga: That's not bad, dear, not bad at all.

Massa: And why are you so upset?

Irena: I want to think some things through first and then I will tell you everything.

Olga: Later, tomorrow, in a month, whenever you feel like it sweetie. Go on now, go and take a nice, warm bath and relax. Then we'll get you some real clothes and we'll all go out for dinner. Then we can talk.

Massa: Shouldn't we ask that guy too?

Irena: Which guy?

Olga: The test tube guy from next door. He came earlier and apologised for making all this noise and Massa here fell in love with him.

Massa: Noise! On the contrary he gives life to our everyday routine.

Olga: So far my day has been like 'My usual everyday routine'.

Irena: I'm going to take a bath.

*The buzzer rings.*

Massa: Are we expecting company?

Olga: No, not me.

*She answers.*

Who is it?...

*She remains speechless as she opens the door.*

Massa: Who is it?

Olga: The police.

*For a few seconds all three remain frozen. Then simultaneously and really fast Olga hides Massa's packet behind the bar, Irena hides Olga's address book under the pillow on the couch and Massa hides Irena's suitcase behind the couch. They look at each other really surprised and the lights go down.*

***End of first part***

## SIXTH SCENE

### *THE REVELATIONS...*

*It's eight in the evening. The three sisters sit together on the couch and they watch TV.*

Olga: Here, here it is.

Irena: What is he saying?

Massa: Hush....!!

Olga: They showed the neighbour from across the street before me, I don't believe this...

Irena: What is he saying?

Massa: That he saw him standing on the edge of the balcony and he called the police.

Olga: Shhh...look there. It's me... on the corner.

Irena: Oh, you look really beautiful...

Olga: I'm photogenic.

Massa: Hush... I can't hear...

Irena: Your Greek is really good!

Massa: You were right telling him that.

Irena: What did you tell him? What did you say?

Olga: That he was a very quiet boy, and he'd never bothered me...

Massa: Was that all?

Olga: But I said a lot more...

Massa: They didn't show me at all.

Olga: It's my fault, I shouldn't have helped rescuing him. *(She turns off the TV)*

Irena: Where are they taking him now?

Olga: To the police station probably. They'll have a doctor examine him, maybe give him a pill or something and by morning time they will have let him go.

Irena: Did you know him well?

Olga: We only said hello.

Irena: Did he ever mention that he was thinking of committing suicide?

Olga: I told you we only said hello.

Massa: He did it because of me.

Olga-Irena:.....

Massa: I was really bleak when he came over.

Olga: Thank God you were not bleak to the police officer before because someone else might have committed suicide too.

Massa: Was I the one to be nice to him? You took him to the bedroom instead of the balcony.

Olga: From the bedroom he could access the neighbour's balcony easier.

Massa: He could access something else easier but anyway...

Irena: I can't stand you anymore. I'm going to take a bath. Where's my suitcase?

*She takes her suitcase from behind the couch. At the same time Olga takes her address book from under the couch and Massa takes out her packet from behind the bar.*

*(To Massa) Why did you hide my suitcase behind the couch?*

Massa: So it wouldn't be in our way. *(To Olga) Why did you put my pentagrams behind the bar?*

Olga; Come on! First time they came at my house, I didn't want them to see it in a mess. *(To Irena) And you? Why did you put my address book under the couch?*

Irena: I didn't put it there, it fell. *(She opens her suitcase)*

*Olga and Massa petrified.*

Olga: If you're looking for shampoo and things like that, I have all you need, in the bathroom.

Irena: Massa, close your eyes.

Massa: *(She closes her eyes)* Should I sing the national anthem, too?

*Irena takes an easel out of her suitcase.*

Irena: Open them.

*Massa opens her eyes.*

Massa: My easel!

Irena: Olga your turn.

*Olga closes her eyes and Irena takes out of her suitcase a kaleidoscope.*

Irena: Open them.

Olga: My kaleidoscope!

*They hug and kiss.*

Massa: How did it happen? Where did you get them?

Irena: When I was at the convent...

Olga and Massa: our brother's wife!!!

*Irena takes out of her suitcase a beauty case*

I'm going to take a bath after all.

*Irena exits.*

*Pause.*

*Irena re-enters.*

Irena: Olga, have you got anything I can wear? Something I might even like maybe? I refuse to put on the monastery clothes again.

Olga: I'm not sure I can find anything you'll like but in order to keep you from wearing these again, I'll find something. Go ahead, take a bath and I will find something.

*Irena exits again.*

*Pause.*

Massa: Guns! You read it in a magazine.

Olga: But I have read it. You started it though... I never would have thought anything like that for our sister...

Massa: Russian Mafia! Thank God you didn't mention anything to her.

Olga: You started it!

Massa: I started it? Let me keep my mouth shut, cause if I open it...

Olga: Let me keep my mouth shut, cause she might be carrying an easel in her suitcase but... others...

*Massa's mobile phone is ringing.*

Massa: Hello?... Sergei, hi... what happened?... yes, I called and let them know... well they told me it was ok... Sergei I didn't... the other time I thought I explained... tomorrow morning at the office?... alright... ok, yes ... bye.

*Massa falls on the couch.*

Olga: Massa what happened?... Massa who is Sergei?... Talk to me, Massa, what happened?

Massa: *(Massa is sobbing)* Olga, I lied to you ...I'm not teaching at a musical academy... I clean houses... you see now?... that's why I didn't want to say anything... I was embarrassed.... and Sergei gives me work, he owns an agency... I was supposed to go clean up a house this afternoon but since you told me Irena was on her way I called them up and said I was sick... and they told me it was ok, and I should only worry about getting better... and then they called him and complained and said I was lazy.... and now he called me to tell me off, he said he'll think about it, maybe I shouldn't work for them again... that's why my hands are so dry, and all the pills I am taking are for my stomach... I'm allergic to chemicals... do you think I enjoy having all these 'ladies' telling me what to do? You didn't clean this, it's not well polished... do it again... but I couldn't find anything else to do... and on the other hand there are a few nice ladies who give me...

*She gets up and picks up her packet.*

Olga: What do they give you?

Massa: *(While opening the packet)* I don't want to take them, but they insist, and I don't want to offend them so...

Olga: You take them.

Massa: I take them, what else I can do?... here, they give me clothes...

*She takes out a dress.*

Olga: Oh, God....

Massa: Don't do that Olga, please, you make me feel awful...

*Olga goes through the rest of the packet but doesn't find anything else inside. They both cry, each one for her own reasons.*

Massa: Maybe it will fit Irena.

Olga: Definitely, it'll fit her.

Massa: Don't tell her anything, I don't want her to know I work at other people's houses. Maybe I'll tell her myself, but later.

Olga: Ok, I won't say anything.

Massa: Put all these away, I don't want her to see, she might understand something.

Olga: Don't worry, I'll put them in the garbage.

*Olga exits for a short moment and re-enters.*

Olga: You will never work cleaning houses anymore.

Massa: And what am I supposed to do?

*She doesn't have the time to explain because Irena enters wearing a bathrobe.*

Irena: What happened to you two? Why are you crying?

Olga: We saw your presents that's why.

Massa: You reminded us of the past.

Irena: Did you find me anything to wear?

Olga: I found this lovely dress. If it fits you, it's yours, I don't want it anymore.

Irena: Looks nice. I'll go try it on. And you two stop whining, you don't want me to start crying too...

*She exits. Olga and Massa look at each other happy. At that moment the phone is ringing.*

Olga: Hello?... hi, Vladimir... what?... you're not joking are you?... Vladimir, I adore you... I'll drop by first thing in the morning... you owe me... if it weren't for me you wouldn't have bought stocks either... yes, yes, all right... I'll see you tomorrow... ok, bye, now, good bye.

*To Massa...*

You will never work cleaning houses again.

Massa: Why?

Olga: You will never work cleaning houses again!

Massa: What happened, tell me...

Olga: Well, I wanted to keep it a secret and tell you tomorrow, but I can't any more, I'm going to say it now. When you kicked me out of the house...

Massa: I didn't, you left.

Olga: Whatever, when I left the house I had some money put aside, well I was desperate at the moment and I put it in the stoke market. I thought I didn't have anything to lose. Vladimir taught me a few things, I used my instinct full on, and of course it was when the stock market was going really well.... so, to make the long story short... wait...

*She exits and re-enters holding her bank book.*

What does it say here?

Massa: Sixty thousand Euro.

Olga: You don't think it's much? By tomorrow morning it'll be at least sixty five thousand. I didn't want to say anything. I wanted to go to the bank, first

thing in the morning, and open an account of ten thousand Euro for each one of you. Ten thousand for you, ten for Irena. But I couldn't keep it a secret and now you know. Let's not tell Irena yet, let's surprise her tomorrow. Let me put it here under the address book, so she won't see it. Now, is it clear why you're not going to work cleaning houses any more?

*They hug and kiss. That's when Irena comes in.*

Irena: What's going on with you two? I come you cry, a second later I come in again and you laugh...

Massa: We remembered the past and...

Irena: You remembered the past, right? Now, let me bring you to the present.

*She goes out on the right and comes back in holding what's left of Massa's packet.*

What is this?

Olga: I'll tell you...(To Massa) Go on, tell her.

Massa: That's...that's... you're wearing it.

Irena: I'm wearing it eh?

Olga: And you look really nice too.

Irena: Oh, I look nice too. Do you think I am stupid? You're in this together; I come in to see you cry and then a minute later I come in to see you laugh like that, who knows what are you on. If you think that I'm going to sit and see you destroy us all you're wrong. You'll see now. I'm calling the police.

Olga: The police? Are you crazy?

Irena: What do you mean crazy? Didn't you tell me Massa is an addict and that her packet contained drugs of some sort? What happened now? Are they gone? So you must be in it too.

Massa: You said I was a what?

Olga: Massa let me explain... I didn't...

Massa: I work day and night cleaning houses and you go around saying...

Irena: Mother Teresa! Working day and night cleaning houses. Who do you think you're talking to? You go around telling me Olga is a whore and you turn the house around to find her bank-book to prove it. Her bank-book with sixty thousand Euro, and now you go around pretending...

Olga: What did you say?

Massa: Olga I...

Olga: What did you say you silly cow, I am a whore?

*Olga and Massa start fighting.*

Irena: I'm calling the police.

*Olga and Massa stop fighting.*

Massa: In what language do you plan on talking to them?

Irena: I speak a little ...

Massa: And what exactly are you planning to tell them?

Irena: That you two are involved in illegal activities. Drug trafficking and prostitution.

Olga: We are involved in illegal activities? What about you and Natassa?

Massa: You came here and mixed everything up. Telling me all these things about Olga.

Olga: And about Massa too, you started it.

Massa: Ever since we were kids, you were the one to cause us trouble.

Olga: We always got into fights because of you.

Massa: That's why you took shelter in the convent. Remorse.

Olga: But your filthy little soul didn't take it and you left. Or they kicked you out for all we know.

Massa: Who knows what trouble you brought them?

Olga: So, leave my house at once!

Massa: At once!

Olga: You get up and leave now.

Massa: Now.

Irena: Where should I go?

Olga: Go to hell, for all I care. Anywhere but here is fine.

Irena: Where can I go?

Olga: Beat it. Now.

*Irena goes out on the right for one moment and returns holding her suitcases. She takes out a photo album and leaves it on the table.*

Olga: What is this?

*Irena leaves.*

*Massa and Olga go through it quickly.*

Massa: Our old photos.

Olga: Dear God, Anfissa!

Massa: It's Adrei.

Olga: Look! The General.

Massa: It's Irena's birthday.

Olga: Irena come....

Massa: Irena?

Olga: Irena?

*They realize what's happened and run out screaming Irena, Irena... the lights go down.*

## SEVENTH SCENE

### ATHENS BY NIGHT...

*It's ten o'clock. The stage is empty. Suddenly the door opens and Irena enters holding her suitcase.*

Irena: Olga... Massa...

*Irena leaves her suitcase by the bar and is headed for the bedroom.*

Olga...

*She exits to the right. After a while the phone rings. Olga's recorded message is heard and then Yiouri's voice.*

*Yiouri: Olga... Olga it's Yiouri... Olga pick up the phone, I know you're there...*

*That moment Irena shows up, she hurries to the phone and picks it up.*

Irena: Hello?... No, I am not Olga, I'm her sister Irena... yes, she's probably talked to you about me... Olga is not here she's out... please, I need to ask you a favour, I don't speak any Greek ... and ..... You speak Greek don't you?... good! Well, listen. I have a ticket for Moscow for next Thursday, it's with Olympic Airways. Could you be so kind as to call Olympic Airways and ask them if they have any available tickets for tomorrow's flight at twelve thirty?... yes, if there are any seats available, book one for me please and call me back here to tell me what happened... yes, here at Olga's... I'll wait here... no, nothing is wrong, something came up with my work... yes, they just called me and I don't know what time Olga will be back, you understand I'm a little anxious now... I can't wait for her that's why I asked this favour from you... yes I will be back first chance I get and I will be really glad to meet you in person... I just hope there will be available seats for tomorrow... yes, of course we have the same last name... please call me back at once to tell me what happened... yes, I'll wait *(Voices are heard from the corridor)* well, bye for now, and thanks. Bye.

*Irena hangs up the phone and exits on the right again. The front door opens and Olga and Massa enter.*

Olga: How did I do that to my Irena? I'm asking you, how did I do it?

Massa: Come on relax, we'll find her...

Olga: I must have lost my mind. I must be crazy. Believe that Irena brings in guns, and that you sell drugs. I've definitely lost my mind.

Massa: Why are you saying that? I believed you became a whore.

Olga: Well, I knew that you have lost your mind. It's me we're talking about. Dear God, I kicked Irena out of the house. She's my own flesh and blood, and I kicked out of the house...

Massa: We don't even have her mobile phone.

*The phone rings and Olga snaps it at once.*

Olga: Hello?... Yiouri, don't call me again, or else... Irena? And what business do you have with Irena?

*Irena shows up from the right. Massa hugs her and starts crying.*

What?... yes, all right... I'll tell her.

*She hangs up the phone, turns to Irena.*

He booked you a seat for tomorrow at twelve thirty.

Irena: Oh, nice!

Olga: No, you're not doing this to me. I'll jump off the balcony like the drummer boy.

Irena: Olga calm down.

Olga: You won't have the time to rescue me though. I'll jump.

Irena: Olga sit, please and come down. That's why I came back, so that we'll talk. At first I thought I'd go and find me a hotel, but I decided to come back and apologise for upsetting you so much.

Massa: We are the ones, we should apologise, and Olga most of all.

Olga: How did we become like this? We used to tell everything to each other, good or bad, we talked about everything. No back thoughts. How did we become like this?

Massa: It's that bitch Natassa, she's behind all this!

Irena: It's not her fault. It's us. She was always like that. Did she manage to influence us back then?

Olga: Don't leave Irena, please, don't leave.

Irena: I have to go. I gave a lot of thought to what I'm going to do. I thought it through. I have to go. I'll start a new life in Moscow. I'll find myself a job, I'll find a house. I have some money away for a rainy day. Imagine I made it all the way to Athens and I've never been to Moscow. I only saw the airport and the city from the plane.

Massa: We dream about that too, but from where I see it, it will remain a dream.

Olga: We're coming too.

Irena: How do you mean, you're coming too?

Olga: We're coming too. All we have to see is if there are available seats for tomorrow. I know what I'll do, I'll call Nadia, she knows someone at Olympic Airways.

Massa: Are you crazy? I'm not going anywhere.

Olga: Why aren't you leaving Massa? Have you got anything to keep you in Athens? Really, I want to know.

Massa: How can I just get up and leave? Just like that, I get on a plane and fly away? These things take time.

Olga: You're wrong. These are exactly the things that shouldn't take time. If you stay here and start thinking about it, you will back off and you will never leave. We have the money, we are in the right mood, what else do we need? We're well...

*Massa takes a pill.*

So, what are we waiting for. It's done. I'm calling Nadia, have you got a valid passport?

Massa: Hold on one second, my passport is valid, what are we going to do in Moscow?

Olga: We're not going to clean houses that's for sure. I don't know, we'll start our own business.

Irena: A restaurant.

Olga: A Greek Tavern. Massa makes a moussaka you won't believe! It's great.

Massa: Forget it. I'm not going anywhere.

Irena: Come on Massa, don't be so tight up.

Olga: Irena, who is more conservative than you are, is about to fly to Moscow, without money, without anything.

Irena: I didn't even become a nun and I already quit.

Olga: That's right and you didn't even tell us why you quit the convent.

Irena: It's not for now.

Olga: Do you understand now Massa, life needs risk, fantasy. So I'm calling Nadia.

*Olga dials Nadia's number.*

Massa: *(To Irena)* Have you tried my nutcake?

Irena: That's my girl! Way to go Massa!

Olga: Hello? Nadia, this is Olga... yes, I know all about the mess, that's why I'm leaving... to Moscow... with Irena and Massa... yes, we're talking again... let me ask you something, is that friend of yours still working at Olympic Airways?... good! Can you book me two seats for tomorrow at twelve thirty? Yes, just two, Irena already has one... my name and Massa's... yes, ok, call me and let me know... I'll wait... all right, bye.

Massa: What about you-me, you-me?

Olga: Who is you-me? Boris? He's married. His wife saw us today and there was a whole scene and everything. Didn't I tell you something was wrong?

Irena: I'm hungry.

Olga: Wait until Nadia calls us and we'll order something to eat.

Massa: I'm starting to panic. I can't be all ready to go until tomorrow.

Olga: I'm only going to take one suitcase with me. Everything else stays behind. You do the same.

*The phone is ringing. Olga picks it up.*

Olga: Hello?... hi Nadia... you're awesome... I don't know what I'll do without you in Moscow. Why aren't you coming along?... oh, yes, Igor... at least you have someone in your life to keep you busy... nooo, he's long gone. I'll send you a letter as soon as I get to Moscow and I'll explain everything, that way you'll have my address and you can come and find me as soon as you break up with him... come on I'm only joking... so, thank you once again... take care... I'll send you a letter... yes, I'll tell them... kiss you too... take care... bye, bye.

Irena: What happened?

Olga: Everything ok. Tomorrow, eleven o'clock the latest we have to be at the airport.

Massa: God, I can't believe we're going to Moscow.

*They hug for a long time.*

Irena: Can we order a pizza now?

Olga: Consider it done.

*She's going to get the pizza catalogues.*

I have a better idea. This is our last night in Athens...

Irena: This is my first and last night at the same time!

Olga: So, I'm thinking we should stay up all night, let's go out and have some fun, eat, drink, dance until dawn...

Massa: And when am I supposed to get my things ready to go?

Olga: In the morning. You will go and get your suitcase and passport, I'll get mine ready, then we'll all go to Vladimir's, take care of our business there, then we'll go to the bank, and then we're off.

Irena: Who is Vladimir?

Olga: He is... don't worry, we'll talk about it over dinner. It will give us something to talk about.

Massa: We have a whole lot to talk about tonight. All day long one was coming, one was going; we didn't get any time all together.

*Massa takes out her beauty case and starts putting on make up. Irena does the same using Massa's cosmetics.*

Olga: As of tomorrow, we'll be in Moscow, all three of us for good. So what do you think? Should we go out separately tonight?... come on I'm joking. I'm going to freshen up a little bit myself. *(She exits to the right).*

Irena: What can we do at night in Athens?

Massa: Athens is really beautiful at night.

Irena: I think it's the ugliest city I have ever seen. Cement blocks of flats everywhere, nothing else.

*Olga enters.*

Massa: *(To Olga)* She says Athens is the ugliest city she's ever seen.

Olga: We thought so too in the beginning, but then we got used to it.

Massa: What else could we do?

Olga: Athens must have been a really beautiful city in the past.

Massa: Right...!

Olga: I have seen pictures. Nice buildings, parks... If we have the time we could always visit the acropolis in the morning.

Irena: I'd really love that.

Massa: I'm definitely out of this, I won't have the time.

Olga: There are some statues near the Parthenon, called the Caryatides.

Irena: I know the Caryatides, we talked about them in Geography class.

Olga: Well, one of them, the first in the line cries from time to time.

Irena: She cries?

Olga: Tourists line up to see that, so we need to be there very early in the morning.

Massa: I'll never make it.

Olga: They say that once you see the Caryatide cry, you never cry again in your life.

Irena: We definitely have to go and see.

Olga: I say we go and eat now, and then we'll see. Massa are you ready?

Massa: Ready.

Olga: Let's make a toast before leaving.

*Olga serves three shots.*

Let's go out now and have some fun, but we have to remember our goal. I want to drink to Moscow!

Massa: To Moscow then.

All three together: To Moscow.

*Dark*

## EIGHTH SCENE

### *THE CRYING CARYATIDE...*

*It's seven in the morning. Nobody's on the stage. Suddenly voices are heard from the elevator, approaching the door. The door opens and the three sisters enter the room completely drunk.*

Olga: *(To Irena)* And she turns to him and says: look dude, tomorrow I'll be in Moscow, so all we have is tonight.

Massa: I didn't say it that crudely.

Irena: And what did he answer?

Olga: *(She can hardly stop laughing)* Is by any chance any of your sisters going to stay in Athens?

Massa: I can't believe his nerve, he wanted to go steady!

Olga: We should have taken him with us to Moscow. We'd dress him up as an evzone and have him stand outside our restaurant.

Irena: What is an evzone?

Olga: I cannot believe you Irena. You travel all the way to Greece and you don't know the basics. What is this and what is that.

Irena: *(In a rather threatening tone)* I'm going back to the convent.

Massa: They will never take you back.

Olga: How does the Reverend Mother describe it in her letter? You're too much in...

Massa: The mundane.

*Laughter.*

Olga: Give me the letter.

Irena: Stop it.

Massa: Bring the letter, I want to laugh a little bit.

Irena: Stop it, I went to confession this afternoon.

Olga: The Reverend Mother should have seen you dancing on tables tonight.

Massa: The priest who confessed you should have seen you.

Olga: You were like the definition of 'mundane'.

*Laughter.*

Massa: What did he say when he gave you his blessing?

Irena: Stop it.

Massa: Take care of your fellow people and...

Irena: This is the last time I'm saying anything to you two.

Massa: Olga, how did it go?

Olga: *(Who is starting not to like the jokes made on Irena)* Athens by night!

Massa: What do you mean Athens by night?

Olga: I think it's a nice name for our restaurant. "Athens by night".

Massa: No, way! It's going to be a Tavern not some cheap, night club. I think we should call it «Fair Athens».

Irena: Right,... fair...!

Massa: Didn't you have a nice time?

Irena: I had a really nice time, but this doesn't make Athens beautiful. Nobody will set foot in it if we name it like that. I think we should call it "the crying Caryatide", it's more poetic.

Olga: No, way. We'll call it "Athens by night" and that's that. End of conversation.

Massa: But Olga...

Olga: I won't hear a word. "Athens by night".

Massa: I don't agree.

Olga: Then don't. We'll paint its walls white and the windows blue, like the houses on Greek islands, Massa, who's a wonderful cook, will be in the

kitchen and you will serve the customers, I will be at the cashiers and public relations.

Massa: Are you going to pay for our insurance too?

Olga: Why should I pay for your insurance? The restaurant will belong to all of us.

Massa: The restaurant will belong to all of us, but you will make all the decisions.

Olga: I will make all the decisions Massa dear, since all the money is mine. Who should make the decisions, you maybe?

Massa: I'm not saying that. We should all decide together.

Olga: We shall all decide together and when there's a disagreement, I shall decide on my own. It's over. It's going to be a success, we won't be able to serve them all, they'll have to make reservations in advance. I have a really good feeling about this. Oh, no, it's already seven thirty. So, go home get your things ready and talk to your land-lady. You get ready to go to the Acropolis –call the restaurant "Crying Caryatide"... I'm going to take a bath, and then go over at Vladimir's place, then to the bank... so I'll meet you back here at ten. *(To Massa)* Don't forget to get your passport.

Massa: I'm not going.

Olga: What are you talking about? What do you mean you're not going?

Massa: So, have a safe trip, good luck with your business and send me a card with your address...

Olga: Massa what is wrong with you?

Massa: Nothing. I reconsidered. I'd rather stay here.

Olga: Stay here and do what? Answer me? What will you do? Clean houses all your life?

Massa: If every breath I take will depend on your bloody money, then yes, I'd rather stay here and clean houses all my life.

Olga: You have a problem girl. You have a problem, and a huge one I must say.

Massa: You, who don't have a problem, take this fathead and go to Moscow to have her run all your errands.

Irena: Did she call me a fathead?

Massa: Yes, Irena, you. Don't even think of saying no to your Mrs., she won't take it. And you know why? She puts all the money, and since she puts all the money, you have to shut up. So, if I am the one with the problem then you go along, and good luck.

Olga: You are a coward. Miserable and coward. Don't come, never. You would only be in our way anyway. You pathetic cleaning lady. Go and get someone else's dress to wear.

Massa: Irena. *(She kisses her)* Take care.

Olga: Go and rub someone's floor.

Massa: *(To Irena)* Tomorrow, you'll be in Moscow.

Olga: Let's see where you'll be tomorrow.

Irena: Today.

Massa: Today.

Olga: Coward. Miserable.

*Massa leaves. Olga collapses.*

*Long pause.*

Irena: What are we to do now?

*Pause.*

Olga: I'm not going either.

*Pause.*

We're all grown up now. Each of us should go their own way. Maybe next time we meet we'll all be better. More mature, maybe even a little happier as well. Happier... Maybe by then we will have figured out what's wrong with us and we'll be calmer. I'll go to the bank and get you some money...

Irena: Olga don't give me any money, please...

Olga: Don't do that, I can't take it. Not you too. Each time one of my shares was going up I was thinking of you two...

Irena: Olga, please try and understand me. I need to make it on my own. I have some money aside, I'll get a job, a home... and I promise if I need anything I'll call you to send me some money but please let me try first. I need to try and make it, I need to feel good about myself. Please...

Olga: Do you promise if you need anything you'll call me?

Irena: I promise.

Olga: Good. You can take a nap now for an hour or so, or we can go and visit the Acropolis.

Irena: No, I don't want to go to the Acropolis. I'm afraid if I see the Caryatide cry, I may never cry again in my entire life. I want to be alone now and... *(She starts crying)*

Olga: Do you want me to go to the other room?

Irena: No, I'd rather go to the airport now.

Olga: Now? It's still early.

Irena: I think it's better this way.

Olga: Irena...

*They hug.*

Irena: Take care of yourself.

Olga: Send me your address as soon as you find a house.

Irena: You make sure you come and visit first chance you get.

Olga: We didn't even have the time, didn't have the time to....

*Irena leaves.*

I promise.

*Olga stays alone. She cries.*

*A few minutes later the phone rings. Olga's recorded message is heard and then Vladimir's voice.*

*Vladimir: Hello Olga... this is Vladimir... Olga wake up, it's Vladimir...well call me back as soon as you get the message... ok?... as soon as you get the message call me, I have a few good tips about shares in Moscow...*

*Olga smiles.*

*The drummer boy from next door is heard again. Olga bursts in laughter while the drumming sound grows louder...*

*The lights go down.*

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