

a play in two acts



WATER

Gundogdu Gencer



WATER
a play in two acts
by Gün GENCER

Can not be performed without the written permission of the playwright

Any requests for permission to stage the play must be directed to the
playwright

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CHARACTERS:

NACI, engineer, late 30s

HASAN, major, late 30s

MEHMET, private, 44

ZEYNO, Mehmet's daughter, 17

SIBEL, Naci's wife, early 30s

ELVAN, Naci's daughter, 6

SÜLO, a guerilla fighter, 19

HAMO, a guerilla fighter, 25

DERVISH, a story-teller, very old

ACT ONE**SCENE ONE**

(DERVISH AND ZEYNO ARE SITTING ON THE GROUND, LEANING ON A GARDEN WALL. THE DOOR TO ZEYNO'S HOUSE IN THE BACKGROUND.)

DERVISH: This was the Garden of Eden before.

ZEYNO: Before?

DERVISH: Even before my time.

ZEYNO: Long time ago.

DERVISH: Yes. Even I have never seen the trees. But it is said that it was so green, that the sky turned green too.

ZEYNO: Green?

DERVISH: Yes.

ZEYNO: Not blue?

DERVISH: Even before my time.

ZEYNO: This dry land, these rocky mountains?

DERVISH: Lush. But even I have never seen green.

ZEYNO: What happened to those trees?

DERVISH: En-Me-Kar, the cruel king had all the trees chopped down.

ZEYNO: Why?

DERVISH: He was a cruel king.

ZEYNO: Why was he so cruel?

DERVISH: He was cruel because he was afraid.

ZEYNO: Wasn't he king? Why was he afraid?

DERVISH: He was a cruel king and he was afraid.

ZEYNO: Of what?

DERVISH: He had so much, and his people had so little.

ZEYNO: They had the trees...

DERVISH: He thought that no-one would remember him once he died.

ZEYNO: Well, he was wrong, wasn't he?

DERVISH: Yes, we do remember him. But he couldn't know that then. And he was afraid.

ZEYNO: But the trees?

DERVISH: He liked trees like every one else. But he liked himself more.

ZEYNO: What do you mean?

DERVISH: He had all the trees chopped down to build himself a palace.

ZEYNO: Why did he need a palace?

DERVISH: No one needs a palace my dear Zeyno, no one needs a palace.

ZEYNO: Why then?

DERVISH: Because he was afraid, I told you.

ZEYNO: I don't understand.

DERVISH: He wanted a palace, so big, so strong, so beautiful, that people would see it after he died and say, that was En-Me-Kar's palace.

ZEYNO: But he still would die.

DERVISH: He was a mortal.

ZEYNO: So, he wouldn't know if people remembered him.

DERVISH: He was human.

ZEYNO: That is silly.

DERVISH: He was a king.

ZEYNO: So, he died?

DERVISH: He did. His daughter Nin-Sun was so beautiful that the Sun-God, Shamash fell in love with her, and they had a baby son.

ZEYNO: Gilgamesh?

DERVISH: Yes, Gilgamesh, En-Me-Kar's grandson.

ZEYNO: Gilgamesh was half God, then?

DERVISH: Yes. And he was so strong...

ZEYNO: Tell me about Gilgamesh.

DERVISH: I told you a hundred times.

ZEYNO: Doesn't matter.

DERVISH: I am tired.

ZEYNO: I'll bring you some ayran. **(GOES INSIDE THE HOUSE.)**

DERVISH: It was the Garden of Eden. Lush. Lush.

ZEYNO: (FROM INSIDE) Father's here. Dervish Dede, father's here.

DERVISH: Not hard and dry like now. Lush it was.

(MEHMET COMES IN WITH A SOUP BOWL, AND ZEYNO WITH A GLASS OF AYRAN.)

MEHMET: Here Dervish Dede, I had made some soup.

DERVISH: Thank you, son. Take care of this little girl of yours. She is special.

MEHMET: I know.

DERVISH: (STARTS DRINKING THE SOUP) Mmm, with butter.

SCENE TWO

(MONDAY. HASAN'S OFFICE. RATHER BARE. MEHMET'S AT THE DOOR. HASAN'S TALKING ON THE WIRELESS.)

HASAN: Lieutenant, I don't want any excuses. These are your orders. **(LISTENS)**
It's not your duty to question orders, lieutenant. Those villages...
(SIGNALS FOR MEHMET TO LEAVE THE ROOM. MEHMET LEAVES.) I know they control the hills around Lone Cypress, that's exactly why you were given the reinforcements. I want the village cleared by dark Wednesday. Is that understood? **(LISTENS)** Right!

(MEHMET KNOCKS ON THE DOOR, BUT HASAN DOESN'T HEAR IT.)

HASAN: ...with or without the people in it, that village has to go.

(MEHMET ENTERS, AND SALUTES)

HASAN: (COVERS THE MOUTHPIECE. TO MEHMET) Fuck off!

MEHMET: Yessuh!

HASAN: Yessuh what?

MEHMET: I shall fuck off Major, Sir, yessuh! **(SALUTES AGAIN AND EXITS.)**

HASAN: (CONTINUES ON THE WIRELESS) .. before night fall Wednesday. You've got three whole days. The dozers are moving in Thursday morning with dawn. Do your duty, lieutenant. You are not being paid combat allowance for nothing. Listen, this poor country has paid for your keep, for your training and now for your work, and we don't expect you to be ungrateful. Report to me immediately it's done.

NACI: (STICKS HIS HEAD IN) Hasan!...

(HASAN SIGNALS TO NACI TO COME IN.)

NACI: I don't want to...

HASAN: Come in Naci, come in. **(HANGS UP THE WIRELESS, GREETES NACI WARMLY.)** Whisky?

NACI: No, thanks.

HASAN: This is the water of life, my friend. And a good one, too. Irish.

NACI: I don't.

HASAN: Sorry, is it still...

NACI: Coffee will be fine.

HASAN: (CALLS OUT) Mehmet!

MEHMET: (COMES IN PROMPTLY) Yessuh!

HASAN: Were you listening to the door, you bastard?

MEHMET: Nosuh!

HASAN: Bring us two coffees. You know how Naci Bey...

MEHMET: Sweet, yessuh. And bitter for you. **(SALUTES AND EXITS.)**

HASAN: He's not so dumb, after all.

NACI: Mehmet?

HASAN: Rat cunning, those peasants.

NACI: He does his best. It must be hard for him, at his age.

HASAN: Too clever by half. He's, what, forty four? How do you think he's evaded conscription all this time...

NACI: You know his story.

HASAN: All of them have these heart-wrenching stories, if you listen.

NACI: He brought up Zeyno single-handedly, after Fato died, didn't he?

HASAN: So what? We all have other responsibilities.

NACI: And losing so many children to disease...

HASAN: It's the filth.

NACI: Anyway, it was decent, what you've done.

HASAN: I know what it's like.

NACI: All set for Thursday, then?

HASAN: Yes.

NACI: No last minute hitches?

HASAN: I don't expect it. You'll have the route clear. The lieutenant knows his head is on the block, not to speak of his allowance. He knows he can't survive on a regular lieutenant's salary back in Erzurum.

NACI: That village is on the critical path.

HASAN: It's in the way.

NACI: No. I mean, everything else depends on it.

HASAN: I know. You've told me.

NACI: If that is late everything else...

HASAN: You've told me. Relax. You're doing your job, just let me do mine.

NACI: Do you expect much resistance?

HASAN: Not openly. You know what they're like. They'll retreat to the hills, and then try to strike when we least expect it. Bloody Guevara!

NACI: It can't be easy having to leave your village like that. Where you've lived all your life.

HASAN: If you don't bend with the wind, you break. I had to leave home.

NACI: You didn't have to. Your grandfather...

HASAN: Come on!

NACI: Black Hüso Agha eh?... He owned, how many...

HASAN: A few..

NACI: Ten, twelve villages?

HASAN: He refused to see me even on his death-bed.

NACI: You were the class traitor.

HASAN: He said I'd come back and kill my own people.

NACI: He must have ruled the roost. Wouldn't want anything to change if you were him, would you?

HASAN: Crusty old bastard. You know he married a 14 year old just before he died. Smoked like a chimney too.

NACI: Contraband.

HASAN: The best tobacco. He was seventy-two when he finally carked it.

NACI: Disowned grandson of a feudal landlord brings civilisation to the serfs.

HASAN: Would you want anything to change if you were him?

NACI: I don't know.

(PAUSE)

HASAN: You know we're doing the right thing.

NACI: Why don't they think so?

HASAN: Because they're set in their ways, because they're ignorant, because they think they can stop progress.

NACI: I wish I could convince them somehow.

HASAN: There's nothing these people haven't heard before. The only way to convince them is by showing them.

NACI: We're demolishing their homes.

HASAN: So they can have a better life. With water, with power, with industries. Decent, civilised. If you asked them, nothing... Only what they've been used to. You can't build anything on a quagmire. This place has the accumulated stink of time immemorial. The water will sweep all that away. They need a firm hand, my friend. I know.

NACI: Like Black Hüso!

HASAN: He was...

NACI: Their owner...

HASAN: And their security. They're like children. All they want is a parent to take care of them, so they won't have to be responsible for anything, and that's...

(HASAN ABRUPTLY STOPS WHEN MEHMET WALKS IN WITH THE COFFEE. HE SERVES IN TOTAL SILENCE.)

NACI: Thank you, Mehmet.

MEHMET: It's all right, Sir.

NACI: How's everything going, then?

MEHMET: Everything's fine, Sir.

NACI: The Major's not been giving you a hard time?

MEHMET: No, Sir.

NACI: How's Zeyno?

MEHMET: She's fine, Sir, thank you.

NACI: She hasn't called in recently. Is she all right?

MEHMET: I'll tell her to call, Sir.

NACI: You know how much we all like her. Especially Elvan. She's been asking about Zeyno, non-stop.

MEHMET: I'll tell her to call, Sir.

NACI: Tomorrow, some time.

MEHMET: I'll tell her, Sir.

NACI: Only if she wants to.

MEHMET: I'll tell her you want her, Sir.

NACI: Thank you, Mehmet.

MEHMET: (TO HASAN) Will that be all, Sir?

HASAN: Dismissed!

(MEHMET SALUTES AND LEAVES)

HASAN: I wish you didn't...

NACI: How's the trout fishing going?

HASAN: Great. I'll show you this new fly I've made.

NACI: You've made?

HASAN: What did you think? That I only destroyed?

(NACI LOOKS AT HIM, THEY SIP THEIR COFFEES.)

SCENE THREE

(MONDAY. SÜLO AND ZEYNO ARE HIDING BEHIND A WALL, WHISPERING.)

SÜLO: We are going to win, believe me.

ZEYNO: I believe you.

SÜLO: They can't just wreck our homes and villages and get away with it.

ZEYNO: I can't sleep at night.

SÜLO: It will be over soon, believe me.

ZEYNO: We can come back when it's over.

SÜLO: I can't run away now.

ZEYNO: What did the college say?

SÜLO: Never mind the college, Zeyno. We have work to do here.

ZEYNO: You have another two weeks to get in.

SÜLO: I couldn't sit down and study like a good boy when my comrades are fighting.
Dying.

ZEYNO: I don't want you to die.

SÜLO: I won't die. **(PAUSE)** Is that why you can't sleep?

(ZEYNO HANGS HER HEAD)

SÜLO: Oh, my dove.

ZEYNO: They are strong.

SÜLO: We have our convictions. We know we are right.

ZEYNO: They have bombs, they have helicopter gun-ships Sülo. Let's leave this place, at least until it's safe.

SÜLO: It won't be long now. There's more money coming from Germany soon.
Then we can buy whatever we want.

ZEYNO: More guns.

SÜLO: Victory only comes through the barrel of a gun, Zeyno.

ZEYNO: Father was telling me new reinforcements arrive every day.

SÜLO: Where are they sent?

ZEYNO: He won't tell me.

SÜLO: I know he's your father, but...

ZEYNO: He is not a spy. You know how long he avoided conscription. We could never afford to pay for exemption.

SÜLO: The rich get away with murder.

ZEYNO: He always wanted to be with me, raise me, see me go to school, before they caught up with him.

SÜLO: We just have to strike at the right time, at the right place. They know we are right. And we can't be beaten with right on our side. This is our land, and they won't even let us speak our language, give the names we want to our children.

ZEYNO: The dam's going to make the whole valley green, they're saying, and electricity in every home.

SÜLO: That's what they want to buy us off with. I've explained it all to you before.

ZEYNO: We could come back when the dam's finished. I could study, too.

SÜLO: Your place is with me.

ZEYNO: You, the teacher, and I...

SÜLO: This is a fight to the death.

ZEYNO: Sülo, I'm scared. I don't want to see Kalashnikovs and rocket launchers any more. I don't want to see uniforms...

SÜLO: Soon...

ZEYNO: Do you want me?

(SÜLO NODS, TRYING TO HIDE HIS EMOTIONS.)

ZEYNO: Let's go...

SÜLO: Do you know how many villages are going to be under water?

(ZEYNO DOESN'T ANSWER.)

SÜLO: Your village, my village, all in the Munzur valley. You can't just let them destroy our homes.

(ZEYNO KEEPS QUIET.)

SÜLO: It won't be long, believe me.

ZEYNO: I believe you.

SÜLO: Hamo...

ZEYNO: (SUDDENLY VERY ASSERTIVE) Don't talk to me about Hamo!

SÜLO: He had to ...

ZEYNO: What good is a man who leaves his baby starving and take to the hills?

SÜLO: If he doesn't, if I go to the college, if everyone just bows...

ZEYNO: He has no heart.

SÜLO: If we all expect it from the other person...

ZEYNO: His two month old baby girl...

(PAUSE)

SÜLO: You will tell me if you hear anything from your father.

ZEYNO: He won't tell me.

SÜLO: All the same. He's closest to the Major.

ZEYNO: He says the Major trusts him, and he won't betray him. And it was the Major who arranged for him to be stationed here, you know that. My father would never betray him.

SÜLO: But he would let down his own people.

ZEYNO: The Major trusts him...

SÜLO: ...and treats him like a dog.

(PAUSE)

ZEYNO: Father wants me to study.

SÜLO: Your place is with me, Zeyno.

ZEYNO: I know.

SÜLO: It will be over, soon.

ZEYNO: Yes.

SÜLO: I must go now.

ZEYNO: Must you?

SÜLO: You haven't seen me.

ZEYNO: No.

SÜLO: I'll send for you.

ZEYNO: Yes.

SÜLO: Soon.

ZEYNO: Go.

SÜLO: We'll be together. I want four boys.

ZEYNO: **(LOOKS AT HIM)** Go.

SÜLO: It's an important meeting. Otherwise... We have to figure out our strategies to stop them before the entire Munzur valley is flooded.

ZEYNO: With Hamo...

(SÜLO IS QUIET)

ZEYNO: Go.

SÜLO: Believe me.

ZEYNO: I believe you.

SCENE FOUR

(MONDAY NIGHT. NACI AND SIBEL ARE CLEARING THE DINNER TABLE)

NACI: Thanks, the rissoles were delicious.

SIBEL: Didn't you like my salad?

NACI: It was fine.

SIBEL: What was wrong with it?

NACI: Nothing. **(PAUSE)** You know what too much garlic does to me.

SIBEL: I didn't.

NACI: It's all right.

SIBEL: I only...

NACI: It was fine. Just don't put as much garlic the next time.

SIBEL: You've told me before, that's why I didn't...

NACI: (WITH FINALITY) It was fine.

(THEY CLEAR THE TABLE IN SILENCE.)

SIBEL: I know what it must be like for him.

NACI: Who? What do you mean?

SIBEL: Hasan. All alone, in the middle of nowhere.

NACI: This is his country. He is a Kurd, you know. Although he doesn't want to be reminded, his grandfather's village is virtually around the corner. It's us who're the outsiders here.

SIBEL: Fighting against his own people.

NACI: I thought you never believed in all that nationalistic stuff, as you used to call it.

SIBEL: I wish you'd stop thinking like an engineer sometimes. You can't be part of the human race by rejecting your own people.

NACI: I am an engineer, I'm sorry. Although I did take two terms of philosophy.

SIBEL: Yes. She was good, Sezgin.

NACI: You were her best student.

SIBEL: Feels like another lifetime.

(SILENCE)

NACI: I know you get bored here, but there'd be no way we could save for our own place if we stayed in Ankara.

SIBEL: I know.

(SILENCE)

SIBEL: I just wish you didn't have to be away so often.

NACI: Dams have a habit of being built on rivers, not in the city.

SIBEL: How many villages?

NACI: What?

SIBEL: How many villages will be inundated?

NACI: Forty seven.

SIBEL: Forty seven...

NACI: You know, I have tried to keep it to a minimum. And they are all to be re-located.

SIBEL: Forty seven communities, each with its people, friendships, familiar things, memories...

NACI: Miseries, latrines, dung stoves, the cold, the filth...

SIBEL: Is any of that going to change? They don't own any of the land. Aren't the old aghas going to turn into agriculturalists or industrialists?

NACI: I don't run the country Sibel, I can only do what I know. We are trying to wipe out years of neglect. It's like layers and layers of sediment after a flood. It needs a clean sweep.

SIBEL: I wish they saw it the same way.

NACI: Resistance to change. Add to that the distrust they've built for the State over those centuries...

SIBEL: That's how they've survived. How their culture survived.

NACI: I wish I could explain it all to them. They say yes, nod nicely, say you know better Sir, but you can see it doesn't even register. I might as well be a Martian.

SIBEL: Do we have a right to impose what we believe on anyone?

NACI: How can they make a choice if they've never seen an alternative?

SIBEL: We're killing them, destroying their villages. They see the alternative.

NACI: I wish there was another way. They're clearing The Lone Cypress in the next few days. There'll be deaths. How I hate it. I couldn't kill a fly. You know how it is with some people, they go in it dazzled by the uniform, by the parades, the glory. Then... Hasan was different. Even before we finished high school, he was determined to become an officer. I'd tell him it wasn't all parades and shiny boots, that he would be trained to kill. It never bothered him. I couldn't see how anyone...

SIBEL: I wish we could be like the old days.

NACI: I am sober.

SIBEL: I didn't mean that. I meant together. Feeling together. I feel like an appendage here. The engineer's wife.

NACI: We are.

(SIBEL LOOKS AT HIM. NACI HUGS HER. SIBEL'S RESPONSE IS NOT COLD, BUT RATHER PERFUNCTORY)

ELVAN: (COMES IN) Is Uncle Hasan coming tonight, Mum?

SIBEL: No, darling, you have to go to bed at eight.

ELVAN: Do I have to?

SIBEL: Yes.

ELVAN: Why?

SIBEL: Because you need your sleep.

ELVAN: Why?

SIBEL: Because you're only six, and you have to sleep to grow up.

ELVAN: Why?

NACI: I've asked Mehmet to send Zeyno around.

ELVAN: Is Zeyno coming? Goodie!

NACI: I don't know when sweetie. But she will. You know how much she likes you.

ELVAN: Zeyno's great. She tells me stories.

NACI: What stories?

ELVAN: All sorts. She told me about Kilkamish. And she's going to tell me about the flood, she promised.

SIBEL: Really?

ELVAN: Yes, and...

NACI: Time to go to bed now.

ELVAN: Please, Mum...

SIBEL: Bedtime.

ELVAN: Maybe Zeyno will come tonight. Why can't I wait for her?

SIBEL: She won't come at this hour. Now be a good girl and go to bed.

ELVAN: You don't love me.

SIBEL: Of course I love you. C'mon now.

ELVAN: Good night. **(SHE HUGS SIBEL. SIBEL'S RESPONSE IS NOT COLD, BUT RATHER PERFUNCTORY.)** Good night, Dad.

NACI: Good night, sweetie. **(HUGS AND KISSES ELVAN.)**

(ELVAN EXITS. NACI GOES TO THE DESK AND STARTS TAKING OUT SOME PAPERS.)

ELVAN: (RE-ENTERS) Will you tuck me in, Mum?

SIBEL: All right.

(SIBEL AND ELVAN EXIT. NACI STARTS WORKING ON HIS PAPERS. THE PHONE RINGS.)

NACI: Hello. Hasan! Hello. What's up.? **(LISTENS)** Yes, by Wednesday, I know, you told me. I thought... **(LISTENS)** But, I thought I should see it first hand... **(LISTENS)** No. No, I don't have a gun. I don't want a gun. I

can't stand the sight... **(LISTENS)** What? I know it can be dangerous. **(LISTENS)** What? You'll have me arrested? **(LISTENS)** All right, all right, you win. I'll just stay in the office and work. **(LISTENS AND LAUGHS)** I couldn't catch a fish if a fishmonger threw it at me. No, thanks. Yes, the trout was delicious. Sibel cooked it with almond sauce. Come around if you catch anything, we'll have dinner together. **(LISTENS)** Oh, Hasan... Thanks. **(HE HANGS UP AND STARTS WORKING ON HIS PAPERS.)**

SIBEL: (ENTERS IN A RATHER PROVOCATIVE NEGLIGEE) Coming to bed?

NACI: (WITHOUT LIFTING HIS HEAD) It's still early Sibel, and I have piles of work I need to...

(PAUSE)

SIBEL: (EDGY) Do you want a drink?

(THE QUESTION SURPRISES NACI, HE LOOKS UP AND SEES SIBEL. THEY ARE STILL FOR A BRIEF MOMENT, THEN SIBEL STORMS OUT.)

SCENE FIVE

(MONDAY NIGHT. IN FRONT OF A CAVE.)

HAMO: There's no way we can save The Lone Cypress. That's gone. Our next line of defence is The Lame Gazelle.

SÜLO: What about the people there? They're still relying on us.

HAMO: They have to learn to take care of themselves. We can't be everywhere at the same time. Besides, we haven't had much support from the villagers in The Lone Cypress. You know that.

SÜLO: They're too close to the troops. They're scared.

HAMO: You know how much they gave us the last time? One sack of bulgur. One lousy sack of bulgur. I think they've sold out.

SÜLO: They're poor.

HAMO: Anyway, that's the decision. If they want to resist, good luck to them. We have to be rational. It's no use fighting a losing battle.

SÜLO: At least let me try to tell them, so they won't put up a fight expecting our support.

HAMO: You're not going into The Lone Cypress. It's swarming with troops.

SÜLO: I can easily get in and out.

HAMO: Too risky.

SÜLO: But they will think...

HAMO: That is the collective decision. You don't want to break collective discipline, do you? We all have to do things sometimes we don't agree with.

SÜLO: Hamo...

HAMO: We can only see so far, so wide. We're like the wolves on the ground. The HQ is like the falcon, they can see the whole picture. We must have trust. You must learn to trust.

(SÜLO IS SILENT)

HAMO: You'll learn.

SÜLO: The Lone Cypress people trust us.

HAMO: We'll explain it to them later. **(PAUSE)** How are things with Zeyno?

SÜLO: All right.

HAMO: It's good she's friendly with the Major and his family. That can be useful later.

SÜLO: They trust her.

HAMO: So much the better. She's still not going on about the college, I hope.

SÜLO: No. Not much.

HAMO: I know you have doubts sometimes. We all do. When I first took to the mountains, it was a bit of an adventure, and I would squat by the Munzur sometimes and wonder what I was doing away from...

SÜLO: It couldn't have been easy.

HAMO: But I said to myself, I don't want my child to live like I did. I don't want my people to be treated as if they were a herd. And if I didn't do what I had to do, if everyone...

SÜLO: You're a hero.

HAMO: Look, I don't really care about that. I am 25 now, and I have been lucky so far. But there comes a time when your luck runs out. I know that. I probably won't reach 30. But I don't want what the Major has. I don't want to be fed and educated, then come and kill my own people.

SÜLO: How long?

HAMO: What?

SÜLO: How long do you think we'll have to keep fighting?

HAMO: Fighting never stops Sülo. If you ever stop fighting, you're dead.

SÜLO: The money from Germany...

HAMO: Still hasn't arrived, I don't think.

SÜLO: So, no canned meat yet.

(HAMO LAUGHS.)

SÜLO: We manage without it.

HAMO: You know what the bloody Government is trying to do, don't you?

(SÜLO LOOKS AT HIM, QUESTIONING)

HAMO: They have been organising the fascists to take over the trade completely.

SÜLO: In Germany?

HAMO: And the rest of Europe.

SÜLO: You said Germany was all right.

HAMO: Yes. The German Government doesn't really care whether it's us or them.

SÜLO: Do you think they can? I mean, the Government, with the fascists...

HAMO: They're all the same people, anyway.

SÜLO: What, then?

HAMO: If they do, we're in big shit, Sülo. No money, no guns, no ammunition, we're finished. Then you might as well go to college.

SÜLO: You know I've always wanted to be a teacher.

HAMO: And teach little Kurdish children they don't exist?

SÜLO: No...

HAMO: We'll find other ways, I'm sure. With young people like you joining in all the time, we can't lose.

SÜLO: We can't lose.

HAMO: You just try to get some information from your Zeyno. She believes in you?

SÜLO: Yes.

HAMO: A woman must trust her man.

SÜLO: Yes.

HAMO: Hungry?

SÜLO: Yes.

HAMO: So am I.

(SÜLO LOOKS SULLEN.)

HAMO: Come on, I've got a nice little carp I've caught. Collect some kindling, and light a fire.

SÜLO: Sure.

HAMO: Inside the cave.

SÜLO: Sure.

HAMO: Cheer up, Sülo, we're doing the honourable thing. Smiles keep death away.

SÜLO: I'll go get the fire going. **(EXITS)**

(HAMO WATCHES HIM WALK AWAY FOR A LITTLE WHILE, THEN TAKES OUT A CAN WRAPPED IN CLOTH, TAKES SOMETHING OUT OF IT AND QUICKLY EATS IT.)

SCENE SIX

DERVISH: Everyone admired him.

ZEYNO: Gilgamesh?

DERVISH: Yes.

ZEYNO: He was from around here?

DERVISH: Yes.

ZEYNO: Maybe even from Stoney Creek?

DERVISH: It wasn't stoney then, it was all green, lush.

ZEYNO: Garden of Eden?

DERVISH: Yes.

ZEYNO: Tell me what happened with Ishtar.

DERVISH: She fell in love with Gilgamesh.

ZEYNO: Was she very beautiful?

DERVISH: She was the Goddess of Beauty.

ZEYNO: She was very beautiful.

DERVISH: Like you.

ZEYNO: You're mocking me.

DERVISH: You have a kinder heart.

ZEYNO: Gilgamesh didn't want her.

DERVISH: Because Gilgamesh wanted to go to the sacred Cedar Forest and cut down the trees.

ZEYNO: Like the cruel king En-Me-Kar?

DERVISH: No, he wanted the trees so that people could build themselves houses.

ZEYNO: Because En-Me-Kar had burnt down their homes?

DERVISH: Yes.

ZEYNO: Gilgamesh was so kind.

DERVISH: He wanted to cut down the cedar trees.

ZEYNO: So people could build themselves houses.

DERVISH: So people would remember him, after he died.

ZEYNO: Like En-Me-Kar.

DERVISH: He was only half God.

ZEYNO: Why didn't Ishtar help him, if she loved him so much?

DERVISH: Because the cedar trees belonged to the gods, and Ishtar was one of them.

ZEYNO: But she loved Gilgamesh.

DERVISH: She wanted Gilgamesh.

ZEYNO: She loved him.

DERVISH: She promised him everything.

ZEYNO: Even the cedar trees?

DERVISH: Not the cedar trees. They belonged to the gods.

ZEYNO: And Ishtar was one of them.

DERVISH: So Gilgamesh said, out of my way, you silly woman, I want to go and chop down the cedar trees, so people can build themselves houses.

ZEYNO: Ishtar was very angry.

DERVISH: Yes.

ZEYNO: Because she loved him.

DERVISH: She wanted him.

ZEYNO: She didn't stop him.

DERVISH: No. She wanted him to get what he wanted.

ZEYNO: Because she loved him.

DERVISH: Because she wanted him to see what he wanted had a price.

ZEYNO: A price?

DERVISH: Once he chopped down the trees, that wasn't enough for him.

ZEYNO: The price?

DERVISH: That was the price.

ZEYNO: Engidu?

DERVISH: They were together.

ZEYNO: Engidu was strong too.

DERVISH: Just like Gilgamesh.

ZEYNO: But he wasn't a god.

DERVISH: Gilgamesh was half-god, Engidu wasn't.

ZEYNO: Why did Ishtar kill Engidu?

DERVISH: Because he was Gilgamesh's friend. They had chopped down the cedar trees together.

ZEYNO: Ishtar could have stopped it.

DERVISH: She didn't. Because they fought together, killed Humbaba, the guardian of the trees, and the bull of the skies together, they became very close friends.

ZEYNO: And Ishtar let them?

DERVISH: Yes.

ZEYNO: Because she loved him?

DERVISH: Because she wanted him.

ZEYNO: Then she killed Engidu.

DERVISH: Yes.

ZEYNO: She hated Engidu, because Gilgamesh loved him.

DERVISH: She wanted Gilgamesh to see her power.

ZEYNO: But Engidu hadn't done anything wrong.

DERVISH: Engidu had helped Gilgamesh.

ZEYNO: Tell me how she killed Engidu.

DERVISH: She charmed him. And when Engidu went to embrace Ishtar, he was burnt to cinder.

ZEYNO: Gilgamesh must have hated Ishtar.

DERVISH: He hated that Engidu could die. He hated that one day he too, would die.

ZEYNO: Then he wanted to find a way so he wouldn't die.

DERVISH: He was silly.

ZEYNO: He was strong.

DERVISH: He was very silly.

ZEYNO: So he set out to find the water of life?

DERVISH: Yes.

ZEYNO: Does that exist?

DERVISH: It exists as much as everything else we want. Some even say it was the Munzur.

ZEYNO: (LIKE AN INCREDULOUS CHILD) It's not.

DERVISH: Maybe that's why I've lived so long. I drink from the Munzur all the time.

ZEYNO: Really?

DERVISH: No, of course not. I would stop drinking if I knew it was.

ZEYNO: So he sets out to find the water of life?

DERVISH: Some say Engidu didn't really die, but Gilgamesh saw that he could.

ZEYNO: Didn't he know that already?

DERVISH: Not in his heart. You only know something with your heart. The head learns, but never knows.

ZEYNO: What happened to Engidu if he didn't die?

DERVISH: We don't know. Maybe he died, maybe he didn't. You know, every time a story is told, it's a bit different. I re-invent the story every time I tell it.

ZEYNO: That's why I can't get enough of it.

DERVISH: And you make up your own story as you go.

ZEYNO: But some things never change.

DERVISH: Only that we all die. Everything else is what we invent. Stories change.

ZEYNO: Tell me about Noah.

DERVISH: They used to call me Utnapishtim.

ZEYNO: Tell me about Utnapishtim, then.

DERVISH: Some other time. I am tired.

SCENE SEVEN

(TUESDAY EVENING. ZEYNO IS WITH ELVAN, SIBEL'S READING WITH A DRINK IN HER HAND. SHE KEEPS CHECKING THE TIME.)

ELVAN: Tell me.

ZEYNO: I should take you there. We'll ask mum if I can take you there one day.

ELVAN: Mum!

SIBEL: What?

ELVAN: Zeyno wants to take me to the river. Can I go Mum? Please Mum!

ZEYNO: You know what your father said. It's too dangerous.

ELVAN: I'll be with Zeyno.

SIBEL: (TO ZEYNO) You know how dangerous it is, Zeyno.

ZEYNO: No-one would hurt us.

SIBEL: All the same. **(TO ELVAN)** The answer is no. Now, let me finish my reading.

ELVAN: Why is it dangerous?

ZEYNO: There's a lot of fighting.

ELVAN: Why?

ZEYNO: Because people don't agree. C'mon, don't sulk. I'll tell you all about it.

ELVAN: But I want to see those places. I want to see the Munzur.

ZEYNO: Mum said no.

ELVAN: Mum!

SIBEL: I said no.

ELVAN: Zeyno can go there. Why can't I?

SIBEL: That's enough now. Don't interrupt me any more.

ELVAN: Please Mum.

SIBEL: Why don't you go and play with Zeyno in your room. We'll ask Dad when he comes home.

ELVAN: Goodie.

(AS ELVAN AND ZEYNO START GOING INSIDE)

SIBEL: Oh, Zeyno, are you staying over tonight?

ZEYNO: I wasn't thinking. But...

SIBEL: It's all right. You know you can if you want to...

ZEYNO: Sure. It's just that my father wasn't feeling all that well...

SIBEL: What's wrong?

ZEYNO: Nothing. Just a cold. I thought I'd cook him some soup.

ELVAN: Please Zeyno. Stay. Stay please.

SIBEL: Elvan, no insisting, remember. She has to look after her father.

ZEYNO: **(TO ELVAN)** Come on.

ELVAN: All right. You were telling me about Nimrod.

ZEYNO: Yes, see, this king...

SIBEL: **(TO ZEYNO)** I'll ask Hasan to give your father a few days' rest if you like.

ZEYNO: Thanks but father doesn't like favours.

ELVAN: Tell me about the Munzur, Zeyno, why the water gets so angry...

SIBEL: It's no trouble, really.

ZEYNO: You know what father's like...

ELVAN: C'mon Zeyno...

ZEYNO: Thanks anyway.

(ELVAN DRAGS ZEYNO OUT OF THE ROOM. SIBEL WANDERS AROUND A LITTLE, PUTS SOME MUSIC ON. SITS DOWN TO READ, CHECKS THE TIME, POURS HERSELF ANOTHER DRINK. SITS DOWN AGAIN. GETS UP, CHANGES THE MUSIC. THERE'S A KNOCK ON THE DOOR. SHE GOES TO THE DOOR, OPENS IT. IT'S HASAN CARRYING A LARGE PLASTIC BAG.)

SIBEL: What a surprise!

HASAN: Isn't Naci home yet?

SIBEL: No. Another field trip.

HASAN: I won't stay, then. I had promised Naci...

SIBEL: Come in. It's been raining. You must be cold. **(TAKES THE PLASTIC BAG. POURS A WHISKY FOR HASAN.)**

HASAN: I shouldn't, really. I thought Naci would be home. **(POINTING TO THE BAG)** It's trout. I've been lucky today.

SIBEL: So have I. **(RAISES HER GLASS)** Cheers!

HASAN: **(RELUCTANTLY)** Cheers! Where's Elvan?

SIBEL: Inside. With Zeyno.

HASAN: **(IS QUITE UNEASY. GIVES SIBEL THE BAG)** Big one, this time.

SIBEL: What's the matter Hasan? Am I just your friend's wife? I thought we were friends, too.

HASAN: Of course, but you know what it's like here. People are always looking for things to gossip about. We can't afford to...

SIBEL: People? **(TAKES HASAN'S COAT OFF.)** You are wet.

HASAN: You know Naci should not be out at this hour unarmed.

SIBEL: I'll bring you a towel. **(GOES OUT.)**

HASAN: **(AFTER HER)** I've offered him a gun so many times, but he doesn't listen to me. We have this operation on the week-end. It's all very hush hush, of course. A surprise raid on Red Rock Village where they've all been hiding. We've just found out. Naci wants to come with us. I told him no, but he insists. Maybe you could...

SIBEL: **(FROM INSIDE)** I'll only be a minute!

HASAN: Maybe you should talk to him. Better still...

(HE TAKES OUT A PISTOL JUST AS SIBEL ENTERS. SHE HAS LET HER HAIR DOWN AND LOOKS FRESHER. SHE'S WEARING ANOTHER DRESS, ONE THAT IS QUITE TASTEFUL AND COMPLIMENTS HER NICE FIGURE.)

SIBEL: **(SEES THE PISTOL)** What's that for, self-defence?

HASAN: Yes, just in case. I'll leave it here. Maybe you could convince Naci...

SIBEL: Look, if he doesn't...

HASAN: He insists that he'll never use a gun, even in self defence.

SIBEL: It's his funeral.

HASAN: I'll leave it here anyway. **(HE HAS NOTICED THE CHANGE IN SIBEL AND HE TRIES TO AVERT HIS EYES. HE QUICKLY FINISHES HIS DRINK.)** I'd better be going. Thanks Sibel. **(PAUSE)** For the drink.

SIBEL: You're going home, to your cold bed.

HASAN: I thought I might just drop into the Officers' Club and have a few drinks.

SIBEL: I've got plenty of whisky.

HASAN: I thought Naci would be home.

SIBEL: So did I. Funny. Keep thinking that.

HASAN: (GOES FOR HIS COAT) Try to give him the gun.

(SIBEL TAKES THE COAT OFF HIM AND STARTS DRYING HIM WITH THE TOWEL.)

HASAN: Tell him, just in case...

SIBEL: (KEEPS DRYING HASAN WITH THE TOWEL.) Do you have any idea what it's like to live with an alcoholic?

HASAN: I thought he'd stopped.

SIBEL: Drinking, yes. Now he is a workaholic. If it's not one, it's the other.

HASAN: It is a demanding job. If he manages to stay off the drink with all this stress...

SIBEL: (THE DRYING BECOMES A BIT MORE SENSUAL) You seem to handle the stress fine.

HASAN: Please Sibel, I really must go.

SIBEL: Why don't you take your shirt off? You're soaking wet.

HASAN: Sibel, please!

SIBEL: (TAKES HALF A STEP BACK.) You don't find me attractive?

HASAN: (TRYING TO KEEP HER AWAY) I find you very...

SIBEL: Well?

HASAN: You are my friend's wife Sibel, for God's sake! Please!

SIBEL: Oh, our Major's still traditional, is he, after all that brainwashing we have so skillfully administered on the poor bastard?

HASAN: You've had a bit too much to drink, I think.

SIBEL: Come on Hasan, don't give me that. Just tell me to my face. I can take it. Tell me I'm past it. Tell me I'm just a frustrated frumpy house-wife. Asexual.

HASAN: No...

SIBEL: That I couldn't even excite a pubescent boy...

HASAN: No...

SIBEL: What is it, then? D'you think your dear friend would give a fuck? Aren't you a man, you bloody ignorant Kurd? Or are you fucking...

(HASAN SLAPS HER ACROSS THE FACE, GRABS HIS COAT AND GOES OUT. SIBEL SLUMPS ON THE SOFA SOBBING, AND STARTS TEARING OFF HER DRESS.)

SCENE EIGHT

(WEDNESDAY NIGHT. SÜLO AND ZEYNO ARE HIDING BEHIND A WALL IN SEMI DARKNESS, WHISPERING.)

SÜLO: The Lone Cypress is gone. 6 dead.

ZEYNO: I know.

SÜLO: The Lamé Gazelle is next.

ZEYNO: I know.

SÜLO: I did want to warn them Zeyno.

ZEYNO: Why didn't you?

SÜLO: We can't be everywhere. The Lone Cypress was a lost cause.

ZEYNO: The villagers didn't think so. They fought to the end.

SÜLO: It was a losing battle. We can't afford to waste our men. This is a strategic retreat.

ZEYNO: Tell that to the villagers.

SÜLO: We're expecting new supplies soon.

ZEYNO: Where does it all come from Sülo, how do you get all those guns and everything?

SÜLO: All over the world.

ZEYNO: Sending you guns?

SÜLO: No, money. If you have the money, you can buy anything.

ZEYNO: Where does the money come from?

SÜLO: (EVASIVE) I told you.

ZEYNO: Drugs?

SÜLO: Who told you that?

ZEYNO: I heard it.

SÜLO: It's all propaganda. They want to make us out to be drug dealers.

ZEYNO: Is it true?

SÜLO: It can't be true.

ZEYNO: All that money coming from Germany?

SÜLO: Government propaganda.

ZEYNO: Don't you ever ask?

SÜLO: Don't you believe in the cause?

ZEYNO: Let's go, Sülo, this is dirty.

SÜLO: They are fighting dirty. Not us. We have right on our side.

ZEYNO: Let's go. You'll get a scholarship. I'll work. We'll manage.

SÜLO: I can't be a deserter.

ZEYNO: What about me?

SÜLO: I love you Zeyno.

SCENE NINE

(THURSDAY MORNING. HASAN'S OFFICE. MEHMET AT THE DOOR.)

HASAN: **(ON THE WIRELESS)** Yes, Lieutenant. **(LISTENS)** Well, you didn't have much resistance, did you? **(LISTENS)** One casualty is one too many, Lieutenant. Think of that poor soldier's mother and father. **(LISTENS)** The dozers are there? Good. Naci Bey? **(LISTENS)** Of course. Anyway, well done Lieutenant. The next... **(HE SIGNALS TO MEHMET TO CLEAR OUT. MEHMET SALUTES AND GOES OUT.)** Yes, start the preparations for the Lame Gazelle. Oh, I am ordering a house to house search here. There are reports that some of them are right here, in town. You need not concern yourself with that. You just do your duty... **(JUST WHEN HE IS ABOUT TO SWITCH OFF)** Oh... Look after Naci Bey, will you? He might not even be armed. What? Put him on. **(LISTENS)** Naci? Yes. Have you got the gun I've left for you? **(LISTENS)** Tonight? **(LISTENS)** Wasn't it a big one? **(LISTENS)** It's too much trouble. **(LISTENS)** I know. I love it with almond sauce, but she shouldn't bother, really... You'll be tired, and... **(LISTENS)** All right, all right, I'll bring some wine. Sorry, just force of habit. See you tonight, then. Take care.

SCENE TEN

(MEHMET AND ZEYNO'S HOUSE. POOR BUT CLEAN.)

MEHMET: Tell your boy to be careful.

ZEYNO: Boy, father?

MEHMET: I know you don't want him hurt.

ZEYNO: Father...

MEHMET: You know what happened in The Lone Cypress.

ZEYNO: Yes father.

MEHMET: This is war, Zeyno. And you know who gets killed in wars? People like us. The poor.

ZEYNO: Don't we have the right...

MEHMET: I've seen you grow up, thank God, and I have a right to see you get married and settle down.

ZEYNO: We're not thinking of marrying just yet, father.

MEHMET: All right. I have two more months left. If you want to go to Ankara and want me with you, just tell me. Remember, you were only six when we moved from the village. I'm still not too old to work. I'll look after you if you want to go to College.

(ZEYNO HUGS MEHMET WITH LOVE.)

MEHMET: Just be careful. They know he is with them.

ZEYNO: He is careful.

MEHMET: It's your life Zeyno. I've lost all my other children. You're the only one left who matters to me.

ZEYNO: Yes, father.

MEHMET: Where's that damned soup, then?

SCENE ELEVEN

(THURSDAY NIGHT. OCCASIONAL GUN-SHOTS ARE HERD FROM OUTSIDE. SIBEL, HASAN AND NACI ARE JUST FINISHING DINNER. ZEYNO IS PLAYING WITH ELVAN IN ELVAN'S ROOM.)

NACI:...all on schedule...

HASAN: Your concrete path...

NACI: Critical path.

HASAN: Whatever.

SIBEL: Coffee?

HASAN: Yes please. **(SIBEL GOES OUT.)** That was delicious, thank you.

NACI: It's Sibel's forte.

HASAN: Sometimes I miss it, you know.

NACI: What?

HASAN: Home, family...

NACI: When did you bring the gun?

HASAN: When I came over to bring the trout. You were still in the field.

NACI: Tuesday evening.

HASAN: Must be.

NACI: Elvan was asking why you didn't stop by.

HASAN: Elvan didn't see me. She was inside, with Zeyno.

NACI: I see.

HASAN: Naci, what is this?

NACI: I called you at home about nine o'clock. You weren't home.

HASAN: I went to the Officers' Club. Naci, what are you saying?

NACI: You knew I would be coming home late.

HASAN: Naci!

(SIBEL COMES IN WITH THE COFFEE. THERE'S AN AWKWARD SILENCE.)

SIBEL: So, your critical path is on schedule, eh?

HASAN: (TRYING TO MAKE LIGHT OF IT) Seems to be...

NACI: You can make fun of it all you like, but someone has to keep things on track.
Someone needs to be trusted to keep things on track. Whom can you trust these days?

SIBEL: Is the coffee all right?

HASAN: Yes, thanks.

NACI: You know he has his bitter.

(SILENCE.)

SIBEL: So...

(ELVAN'S ROOM. DISHES FROM ELVAN AND ZEYNO'S DINNER ON A SIDE TABLE. ELVAN'S RIDING ON ZEYNO'S BACK. ALL GIGGLES.)

ZEYNO: Shush! Mum's going to hear us.

ELVAN: I don't care.

ZEYNO: It is past your bedtime.

ELVAN: Zeyno, please.

ZEYNO: All right, one last ride.

ELVAN: Can you be a camel, this time?

(ALL IN GOOD FUN, ZEYNO BECOMES A CAMEL AND ELVAN RIDES.)

ELVAN: Giddyup!

(THE DINING ROOM.)

SIBEL: So, how does it feel to kill six innocent people?

NACI: Sibel!

SIBEL: No, I just want to know. In an academic sense. Purely out of philosophical interest.

HASAN: It was regrettable...

SIBEL: Collateral damage?...

NACI: Sibel!

HASAN: It's all right Naci.

SIBEL: It's all right, Naci, your good friend happens to be a killer, but it's all right. All in the name of progress.

NACI: You're drunk.

SIBEL: Maybe you should get drunk, too, so I can talk with you.

HASAN: Well, I have a busy day tomorrow.

SÝBEL: Is it sixteen tomorrow, or sixty six? My, we are busy.

NACI: (TO SIBEL) Why don't you go and check Elvan?

SIBEL: Yessuh! **(SALUTES NACI.)** Oops, sorry. Wrong guy. Why do all these guys look the same? I must be drunk. How can I possibly miss the uniform? **(TURNS AND SALUTES HASAN. HASAN SMILES RATHER STUPIDLY. SIBEL LEAVES.)**

(ELVAN'S ROOM. ZEYNO IS SINGING A LULLABY FOR ELVAN. ELVAN'S ALREADY ASLEEP. SIBEL ENTERS.)

ZEYNO: Shush! She's just gone to sleep.

(ELVAN MOANS AND TURNS IN BED.)

SIBEL: (DOESN'T ACT LIKE SHE IS DRUNK.) Shall I make your bed for you?

ZEYNO: Oh, no, I can do it. Thanks. And thanks for the meal. It was delicious.

SIBEL: It's all right. Look, if you're worried about your father, I can always ask the Major to give you a lift.

ZEYNO: No, he's fine.

SIBEL: Good. It's freezing outside, anyway. **(GOES AND MAKES SURE ELVAN IS WARM.)**

(THERE'S A SLIGHT TAP ON THE WINDOW. BOTH ARE STARTLED. SIBEL LOOKS UP TO ZEYNO. ZEYNO SHRUGS. SIBEL SIGNALS TO ZEYNO. ZEYNO CAUTIOUSLY DRAWS THE CURTAINS AND OPENS THE WINDOW. IT'S SÜLO.)

SÜLO: Zeyno!

ZEYNO: Shush!

SIBEL: It's all right Zeyno. **(GOES TO THE WINDOW)** Sülo, come in.

(THE DINING ROOM.)

NACI: (CALLS OUT) Sibel, Hasan's leaving! **(GETS UP.)** I'll go and have a look.

(AS NACI IS ABOUT TO GO OUT, SIBEL COMES IN.)

SIBEL: Oh, I can see the uniform fading away.

NACI: Is Elvan all right?

SIBEL: All right. Are the gentlemen here all right? Everything to your satisfaction?

HASAN: Thank you Sibel, for all the trouble.

SIBEL: Don't let me interrupt your important talk. I'll go and do the trivial female things with the women.

HASAN: I really must...

SIBEL: ...run away? Come on, that's not what a macho officer of the army does. He faces challenges, doesn't run away. Or does he?

NACI: Sibel!

SIBEL: Don't mind me. **(EXITS)**

(ELVAN'S ROOM)

ZEYNO: I didn't know you were in town.

SÜLO: Just came to see you.

ZEYNO: They're...

SIBEL: **(COMES IN)** You can stay here, Sülo. I know there's a search on.

SÜLO: I just wanted to...

SIBEL: It's all right. Just leave before daybreak.

SÜLO: Thank you.

SIBEL: **(MISCHIEVOUSLY)** Don't make too much noise. Elvan's a sound sleeper, but...

ZEYNO: **(EMBARRASSED)** Thank you.

SIBEL: Anything for young lovers...

(SIBEL HUGS ZEYNO AND JUST BEFORE SHE GOES OUT)

SIBEL: Oh, Sülo, tell your friends to move from Red Rock. There's going to be a raid next week.

(SÜLO IS TAKEN ABACK. SIBEL GOES OUT.)

(THE DINING ROOM. HASAN IS JUST ABOUT TO LEAVE.)

NACI: This is much bigger than any personal differences Hasan. We both have invested so much...

HASAN: I know. But I also want you to know...

NACI: It doesn't matter.

SIBEL: **(ENTERS)** Good night.

HASAN: Good night. Thanks again.

SIBEL: You've caught it. You're the one with the bait.

NACI: The fly.

SIBEL: Whatever.

NACI: You catch trout with a fly.

SIBEL: Is that so? What sort?

HASAN: You must match the hatch.

NACI: What's that mean?

SIBEL: You can't fool the trout with a fly that it doesn't know. Isn't that right, Major?

HASAN: Yes. You must match what's hatching around where it lives.

SIBEL: Completely xenophobic.

HASAN: It must think the fly's real, one of the local breed...

NACI: The trout?

SIBEL: Some fish are smart.

ACT TWO

SCENE TWELVE

(DERVISH AND ZEYNO ARE SITTING ON THE GROUND, LEANING ON A GARDEN WALL. THE DOOR TO ZEYNO'S HOUSE IN THE BACKGROUND.)

ZEYNO: When was the Flood?

DERVISH: A long, long time ago. I was still quite young.

ZEYNO: Where were you?

DERVISH: A stone's throw from here.

ZEYNO: A long way from Ararat?

DERVISH: It rained for forty days. And the waters prevailed upon the earth one hundred and fifty days. Then on the seventeenth day of the seventh month, we were on Mount Ararat.

ZEYNO: Here?

DERVISH: It was all covered with water. It had rained for forty days.

ZEYNO: Then?

DERVISH: The my dove came back, in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off..

ZEYNO: Everyone died, except you.

DERVISH: And my wife, and my sons, and my sons' wives. Everyone else had died by God.

ZEYNO: My grandparents, my great grandparents?

DERVISH: All my children.

ZEYNO: Why did Gilgamesh go to see Utnapishtim?

DERVISH: He came to see me after Engidu died.

ZEYNO: Why?

DERVISH: Because a blind man had told him that I was immortal.

ZEYNO: Immortal?

DERVISH: Lived forever. When Gilgamesh saw Engidu die, he realised that he too, would one day, die.

ZEYNO: Why was Utnapishtim immortal? Was he a god?

DERVISH: Gods wanted to punish me.

ZEYNO: They saved Utnapishtim from the flood. They warned him about it. They must have loved him.

DERVISH: They wanted someone to start all over again.

ZEYNO: They chose Utnapishtim.

DERVISH: I saw my children die. I saw rivers run dry, I saw mountains turn to dust. Then my wife died, when she could no longer bear children. I saw my grandchildren die.

ZEYNO: But Utnapishtim was lucky. Gods had chosen him.

DERVISH: I was immortal. I saw everything I love die, everyone I loved.

ZEYNO: So, Gilgamesh found Utnapishtim.

DERVISH: Yes, he was very brave. He'd crossed the river of fire. The Munzur was a river of fire then. It was red in flames. He was so tired, he slept for six days.

ZEYNO: He didn't want to die.

DERVISH: He was human.

ZEYNO: He was brave.

DERVISH: He thought there was some water of life. He thought that's how I stayed alive. My wife was still alive then.

ZEYNO: Was there a water of life?

DERVISH: There was only one kind of water.

ZEYNO: Wasn't there a special one?

DERVISH: It was special when it was the flood.

ZEYNO: One that Utnapishtim drank?

DERVISH: Every drop that keeps a tree alive is special.

ZEYNO: Water of life?

DERVISH: I gave him water. It was special after he'd crossed the river of fire.

ZEYNO: Why didn't Utnapishtim help Gilgamesh?

DERVISH: Because I felt sorry for him. He didn't know what he wanted.

ZEYNO: He wanted not to die.

DERVISH: He didn't know what it was like not to die.

ZEYNO: He didn't want to die.

DERVISH: I liked him. But he was so stupid.

ZEYNO: He didn't want to die.

DERVISH: He was human.

ZEYNO: So he didn't find the water of life.

DERVISH: The blind man had told him lies. There was no water of life.

ZEYNO: So he died?

DERVISH: Later on. He died a modest man.

ZEYNO: And we still tell his story. So he hasn't died.

DERVISH: He doesn't know that.

ZEYNO: Will you take me to Mount Ararat?

DERVISH: That's the last place I want to see. It has such memories.

ZEYNO: I would like to, one day.

DERVISH: It's like any other mountain.

ZEYNO: I would still like to see it.

DERVISH: That will make it special.

ZEYNO: How come?

DERVISH: Because you are very special. Like all my daughters.

SCENE THIRTEEN

(HASAN'S OFFICE. HASAN AND NACI. OCCASIONAL GUN-SHOTS ARE HEARD FROM OUTSIDE.)

NACI: This is only the second village on the list, Hasan. If each one is going to be such a struggle...

HASAN: What did you think, my friend, that they would just say, thank you for demolishing our villages, when would you like us to leave?

NACI: No, but...

HASAN: It's a matter of who blinks first. We have to press on without a compromise.

NACI: It's not like before, Hasan, and you know it. Anything you do now is on TV the next day all over Europe.

HASAN: So?

NACI: Let me talk to them.

HASAN: You're the enemy, don't you understand? You're the Government person from Ankara who's here to make them homeless.

NACI: If I could explain...

(THERE'S A KNOCK ON THE DOOR. MEHMET ENTERS WITH THE COFFEES. HASAN AND NACI ABRUPTLY STOP TALKING.)

NACI: Thank you Mehmet.

MEHMET: It's all right, Suh! **(TO HASAN)** Will that be all Suh?

HASAN: Yes. Dismissed.

(MEHMET SALUTES AND EXITS.)

HASAN: Look, Naci, I know you mean well, you've always meant well. But this is not your world. This is not high school where you could bamboozle the

teachers with your cleverness. This is reality, my friend, this is life and death. We fire live bullets here, people die, people bleed...

NACI: When will people learn violence never solves anything?

HASAN: We won't be heavy-handed. You're right, everything's on TV these days. The Government doesn't want us to look like bullies. We are in fact fighting with one hand tied behind our backs. You know I have the fire power to flatten all those villages in a couple of days? But we won't. The whole thing has to look reasonable on TV. I know that. **(PAUSE)** You want the 47 villages cleared? **(PAUSE)** It was you, my friend, our bright engineer, who's decided on the fate of these people.

NACI: This was the best I could...

HASAN: I know. So, stop having pangs of conscience. You know this is the best solution, and I know it's the best solution.

NACI: We're still on track, I guess...

HASAN: You'll see, with every village gone, the next one will be easier. They may be ignorant, but they're not complete fools. They must be made to see that resistance is futile. And you don't do that by being weak-kneed. So, by being firm now, we are actually minimising future casualties.

NACI: Casualties?

HASAN: There are casualties no matter what you do my friend. You enjoyed the trout, didn't you? **(NACI NODS)** So did I. Do you think the trout did? You coming here, leaving your comfortable life in Ankara... Don't you think there are any casualties there?

NACI: I always discuss such things with Sibel.

HASAN: Discuss, do you? Could she say no to you?

NACI: She believes in my work.

HASAN: You're even more naïve than I thought.

NACI: What do you mean?

HASAN: You know she couldn't say no. You know she knows how important this dam is for you. You'll put your stamp on the most important dam in the country. Your grandchildren will come here one day and say, my grandfather built this. It's your claim to immortality.

NACI: It's water.

HASAN: It could have been shit.

NACI: It's concrete, it's tangible.

HASAN: Not like philosophers' intellectual babble.

NACI: I didn't say that.

HASAN: You don't have much respect for your wife, do you?

NACI: I respect what she does...

HASAN: But she hasn't been doing anything since...

NACI: ...and she respects what I do, and this is my work.

HASAN: Well, let me do my work, then.

(SILENCE)

NACI: Did Sibel say these thing to you?

(SILENCE)

HASAN: We didn't talk.

NACI: Hasan!

HASAN: I was only at your place for ten, maybe fifteen minutes, and for the umpteenth time, nothing happened, nothing I or you should be ashamed of.

NACI: I regard you as my friend.

HASAN: I am, Naci.

NACI: Sibel...

HASAN: A word of advice, my friend. Don't be fooled by what women say they want. It's really changed very little since we used to drag them by the hair into our caves.

SCENE FOURTEEN

(DUSK. SÜLO AND ZEYNO ARE HIDING BEHIND A WALL, WHISPERING. OCCASIONAL GUN-SHOTS ARE HEARD.)

ZEYNO: I missed you Sülo. I've been watching the road for a whole week now.

SÜLO: I know. I am sorry, but you know...

ZEYNO: Everyone's talking about it.

SÜLO: This is the line in the sand.

ZEYNO: What does that mean?

SÜLO: The Lame Gazelle is it. This is where we stop them. *No pasaran.*

ZEYNO: I am proud of you Sülo, but...

SÜLO: The Lame Gazelle will be written about as a turning point in Kurdish history.

ZEYNO: Do you think they will just give up and go away?

SÜLO: Even if they don't, we have shown everyone that they can be stopped. You know Zeyno, the most difficult thing we have to overcome is the feeling our people have that they have never won in the past, so they never will.

ZEYNO: You have shown them that they can.

SÜLO: Not me Zeyno, the peasants in The Lane Gazelle. I am just there in solidarity.

ZEYNO: You give them hope. Everyone's talking about. Even in town. By just being there, you tell them they are not alone any more. That the whole Kurdish movement is behind them. **(PAUSE)** I thought Hamo didn't want you to go there.

SÜLO: At first he didn't.

ZEYNO: He does now?

SÜLO: He is desperately trying to get some money for supplies. But there must be a hitch somewhere. For two months now, there's been no money coming in, he tells me.

ZEYNO: What if it never does?

SÜLO: What?

ZEYNO: If there's no more money?

SÜLO: That's why I think The Lane Gazelle is the way to go. I think we have to change tactics. Instead of us doing the fighting, we must be getting the peasants to fight for themselves. And I think that is the only way to victory.

ZEYNO: Is that what Hamo thinks?

SÜLO: No. Hamo thinks this is a professional job. Our job.

ZEYNO: Are you going against Hamo's orders?

SÜLO: The only way it can work is if the peasants own up to the struggle.

ZEYNO: I don't understand.

SÜLO: They must see it as their own struggle. That's the only way we can start building after...

ZEYNO: After what?

SÜLO: After the final victory.

ZEYNO: You have no doubts?

SÜLO: We don't want to keep living as second-class people on our own land...

ZEYNO: What if we don't win?

SÜLO: We have a right...

ZEYNO: So many people...

SÜLO: Believing...

ZEYNO: Sülo...

SÜLO: What?

ZEYNO: **(PAUSE)** I am pregnant.

SÜLO: We... You?

ZEYNO: Yes.

SÜLO: That night...

ZEYNO: Our child...

SÜLO: (WITH GREAT JOY) Oh, Zeyno!

ZEYNO: No one knows.

SÜLO: My dove!

ZEYNO: My father...

SÜLO: We'll get married...

ZEYNO: I don't want to be left like Hamo's wife...

SÜLO: I'm not Hamo. **(HUGS HER)** I love you.

ZEYNO: Father said he would move to Ankara if I wanted to go to college.

SÜLO: He doesn't know?

ZEYNO: I can't tell him.

SÜLO: After the Lame Gazelle...

ZEYNO: It might go on for months...

SÜLO: I can't abandon them now.

(ZEYNO MOVES AWAY.)

SÜLO: Promise.

ZEYNO: They all know you are in The Lame Gazelle. You are wanted.

SÜLO: I am tough. Believe me. Soon.

ZEYNO: I want my child to know you.

SÜLO: He will.

ZEYNO: Oh, Sülo!

SÜLO: My dove. Promise. I'll come back alive. We can move to Ankara, if that's what you want. Your father can come with us, too.

ZEYNO: When Sülo?

SÜLO: Soon. I promise.

ZEYNO: Sülo, I am scared.

SÜLO: I'm like a fish in water at the Lame Gazelle.

(SHOTS ARE HEARD.)

ZEYNO: Go, Sülo.

SÜLO: Take care.

ZEYNO: I will. Go.

SÜLO: Take care of my little boy. **(LEAVES)**

SCENE FIFTEEN

(SIBEL AND HASAN AT SIBEL'S LIVING ROOM. HASAN'S BEEN DRINKING.)

SIBEL: How dare you?

HASAN: I am a man, Sibel

SIBEL: What happened to all the bull-shit about your friendship, and your friend's wife, and honour?

HASAN: I didn't know...

SIBEL: You didn't know your good friend Naci didn't care? You thought I was just a bitch on heat?

HASAN: Sibel, please!

SIBEL: You have the gall to come here.

HASAN: I had to see you.

SIBEL: You knew Naci wouldn't be home.

HASAN: Look, we are in the middle of a war. None of us knows whether we'll survive the day.

SIBEL: And you want to make sure your days are not wasted. You want to screw your best friend's wife.

SIBEL: It's not like that, Sibel. Please don't make it sound so vulgar.

SIBEL: I understand you better than you think, Major. Your adolescent rebellion, your fake honour...

HASAN: What's a man without honour?

SIBEL: It is honourable to come and slaughter your own people?

HASAN: They've worshipped Black Hüso Agha. The man who screwed them at every turn, the man who only had to point to any adolescent girl, and the girl would be brought to him by her parents that night. These are my people. I have no romantic notions about race and all that rubbish. If I love my people, I can't turn a blind eye to their faults, their shortcomings, their stupidity, their obsequiousness. For me true love is not blind, Sibel. If you can see all the faults and still love...

SIBEL: Do you apply the same standards to me, too? Or am I just a loose bourgeois woman asking for it?

HASAN: I have always admired you, Sibel. But you were always out of bounds for me...

SIBEL: You make me sound like your neighbour's goat.

HASAN: I can understand your anger. But you must also understand why I reacted that way that night.

SIBEL: What has changed?

HASAN: I have seen that Naci doesn't really know you, nor appreciate you.

SIBEL: And in the best Marxist tradition, I should belong to the one who does. Like land to those who till it?

HASAN: You deserve better.

SIBEL: And that's you? You know what you remind me of? Those concentration camp officers who go home to their lovely homes and listen to Beethoven. Who love and pamper their pets after gassing thousands during business hours.

HASAN: You are angry, Sibel, and I understand that. I thought you wanted me. Otherwise...

SIBEL: Perhaps I did. Perhaps I was out of my mind. Perhaps I wanted to prove to myself I was still attractive...

HASAN: You are...

SIBEL: We have one more year here. Then, we're back to Ankara. We're back to our friends, away from all the blood and gore. Where I can play bridge and have discussions about Kierkegaard. That's my milieu, Major, that's who I am. I am not some macho Army Officer's whore.

HASAN: You're being unfair to yourself.

SIBEL: Like your Kurds not knowing what's best for them. You want to kill me to show what's good for me, like you kill them? Forget it, Major. I am too much for you. I am a wimp. I can't stand the sight of blood. Just like my wimpish engineer husband. I'd rather save the country between courses with a good wine over dinner, and leave the gory bits to the likes of you.

HASAN: My feelings for you have never changed...

SIBEL: Your feelings! I'd be your death. You don't know yourself. I'm just another challenge to be conquered. If you can't get me with a fly, you'd try blasting me out of water, and kill yourself in the process. I know your kind. And I know how to deal with your kind.

HASAN: I won't let my pride get in the way, Sibel. You are too important for that. If you ever change your mind...

SIBEL: Cast the line and wait.

HASAN: I will.

SIBEL: Get out, now. Don't ever call me again. I don't want my husband to think...

HASAN: He already might have.

SIBEL: What have you told him, you little shit?

HASAN: Nothing.

SIBEL: If you ever...

HASAN: Of course not.

SIBEL: You bastard!

HASAN: You know, now.

SIBEL: You just watch it.

SCENE SIXTEEN

(ZEYNO AND ELVAN IN ELVAN'S BEDROOM.)

ZEYNO: Maybe we'll start school, together.

ELVAN: In Ankara?

ZEYNO: Maybe.

ELVAN: Goodie.

ZEYNO: Don't tell anyone. That's our little secret.

ELVAN: Not even Mum?

ZEYNO: Not even Mum.

ELVAN: You'll tuck me in and tell me stories?

ZEYNO: You might have to take turns with my little girl.

ELVAN: Your little girl?

ZEYNO: I might have a baby.

ELVAN: You'll love the baby more than me.

ZEYNO: Don't be silly. You'll always be my special Elvan.

ELVAN: Why do you want another baby, then? I thought you loved me.

ZEYNO: I'll ask you a riddle.

ELVAN: You don't love me any more.

ZEYNO: Listen to the riddle.

ELVAN: All right.

ZEYNO: The more you give, the more you have. Do you know what that is?

ELVAN: That's silly.

ZEYNO: No, it's not.

ELVAN: Is it a magic thing?

ZEYNO: So magic.

ELVAN: Is it the goose with the golden eggs?

ZEYNO: No.

ELVAN: The goose keeps laying golden eggs...

ZEYNO: Good guess, but no, it's not that.

ELVAN: I give up.

ZEYNO: No, not so easily. Keep trying.

ELVAN: It is magic?

ZEYNO: Yes, I've told you.

ELVAN: Water?

ZEYNO: How come?

ELVAN: The more water you give to your plant, the more flowers you have.

(ZEYNO SMILES AND SHAKES HER HEAD.)

ELVAN: It does. My pot plant does.

ZEYNO: But it's not your pot plant.

ELVAN: All right, I give up.

ZEYNO: You said if I loved my baby girl, I wouldn't love you as much.

ELVAN: You wouldn't want a baby if you loved me.

ZEYNO: The more I love you, the more love I'll have to give to my baby girl.

ELVAN: You will?

ZEYNO: The more I love her, the more I'll love you.

ELVAN: That's not the riddle.

ZEYNO: It's the hardest riddle, Elvan. But it's also the easiest. The more love you give, the more love you have.

ELVAN: Don't go tonight, Zeyno. Tuck me in.

ZEYNO: All right.

ELVAN: **(GIVES ZEYNO A BIG HUG)** I love you Zeyno.

SCENE SEVENTEEN

(IN FRONT OF A CAVE. OCCASIONAL GUN-SHOTS ARE HEARD.)

HAMO: You know how much I care for you.

SÜLO: I know.

HAMO: You're my closest comrade.

SÜLO: I know.

HAMO: I've tried my best, believe me. Even if I don't believe in your tactics.

SÜLO: Yes.

HAMO: Their point was...

(SÜLO LOOKS AT HAMO)

HAMO: Look, we can't have everyone doing what they think is right. This is war, Sülo. We must have discipline.

SÜLO: Is that what they've said?

HAMO: (NODS) And I agree.

SÜLO: The Lame Gazelle's a flag, now. We can't just drop it.

HAMO: There's no place for romantic attachments, Sülo. They're watching for our every weakness.

SÜLO: What if we still don't get the money for supplies?

HAMO: The HQ is working on that. Three of the top people are in Germany now.

SÜLO: Is it true Hamo?

HAMO: What?

SÜLO: Drugs? Is that where the money's coming from?

HAMO: There are questions Sülo, that are better not asked.

SÜLO: You don't know?

HAMO: We are foot soldiers Sülo. We must trust the HQ as we trust each other.

SÜLO: What if there's no money coming?

HAMO: Don't you think they know what that means? We are a part of the whole Sülo. There's no room for individual heroics. If we don't get the money, there are ways...

SÜLO: Is that what they think I am doing?

HAMO: I have always been on your side.

(SÜLO HANGS HIS HEAD.)

HAMO: They want you out of The Lame Gazelle by Saturday.

SÜLO: Saturday?

(HAMO NODS.)

SÜLO: You know it's always Saturdays or Sundays they raid the villages. They get overtime.

HAMO: That is the final order.

SÜLO: A few more days...

HAMO: I have put your case, believe me.

SÜLO: This is throwing a whole village into the fire.

(HAMO IS NOT MOVED.)

SÜLO: Then what?

HAMO: You'll be here, with me, like before. We have had good times, haven't we?

(SÜLO LOOKS DEJECTED.)

HAMO: They've asked me not to let you out of my sight for three months.

(SÜLO SHAKES HIS HEAD.)

HAMO: That's the only way I could have them waive disciplinary action.

SÜLO: Against me?

HAMO: We need you Sülo.

(SÜLO SHAKES HIS HEAD.)

HAMO: Go, now. Into The Lame Gazelle for one last time.

SÜLO: What do I tell them? That they are dispensable? That they...

HAMO: Tell them everything will be all right.

SCENE EIGHTEEN

(NACI'S LIVING ROOM. NACI IS WORKING ON SOME PAPERS. SIBEL IN A COMFORTABLE, TIDY, BUT HOMELY OUTFIT. OCCASIONAL GUN-SHOTS ARE HEARD FROM A DISTANCE, OUTSIDE.)

NACI: Sorry Sibel, maybe another hour. I have to...

SIBEL: (COMES AND KISSES NACI ON THE CHEEK.) Good night.

NACI: You don't mind?

SIBEL: It's all right. It's work.

NACI: Sibel...

SÝBEL: Shush!

NACI: I really...

SIBEL: It's all right.

SCENE NINETEEN

(ZEYNO IS BEHIND THE WALL WHERE SHE USUALLY MEETS SÜLO. SHE IS ALONE. SHE CHECKS THE ROAD, WAITING FOR SÜLO. OCCASIONAL GUN-SHOTS ARE HEARD FROM A DISTANCE. SHE SEES SOMEONE COMING IN THE DARK.)

ZEYNO: (WHISPERS) Sülo!

(THE FIGURE COMES INTO SIGHT. IT IS HAMO.)

ZEYNO: Hamo!

(HAMO SITS BESIDE HER.)

ZEYNO: (JUMPS UP) Where's Sülo?

HAMO: Shush, he's all right.

ZEYNO: What have you done to him?

HAMO: He's all right.

ZEYNO: He would never send you.

HAMO: He's still in The Lane Gazelle.

(ZEYNO LOOKS INTO HAMO'S EYES WITH SUSPICION.)

HAMO: You've never liked me, have you Zeyno?

ZEYNO: You are my Sülo's friend.

HAMO: You're a smart girl, Zeyno. Sülo's so lucky to have you.

ZEYNO: Why are you here?

HAMO: You know how dangerous it is for me to be here.

ZEYNO: Why are you here?

HAMO: Sülo did not follow orders.

ZEYNO: What orders?

HAMO: He was to get out of the Lane Gazelle. He hasn't.

ZEYNO: The Lane Gazelle's still fighting.

HAMO: Look, Zeyno, we all have to make sacrifices. Sülo was ordered to get out of
The Lane Gazelle.

ZEYNO: And sacrifice the whole village?

HAMO: No. Sacrifice what he thought was right. For the cause.

ZEYNO: I thought he fought for the cause.

HAMO: Zeyno, listen, I don't have much time. Sülo must have told you. We're very
short on supplies. Money's running out.

ZEYNO: Aren't German kids using heroin any more?

HAMO: **(TRIES HARD TO IGNORE ZEYNO'S REMARK)** I have been ordered
to take disciplinary action against Sülo.

ZEYNO: I would expect it of you.

HAMO: I don't want to, Zeyno. He is my friend, my comrade.

ZEYNO: **(PAUSE)** Do you want me to warn him?

HAMO: You can't go into The Lane Gazelle, the fighting's still going on, it's too
dangerous.

ZEYNO: What do you want?

HAMO: The Lane Gazelle's going to fall soon. We can't give them any support.
The village is surrounded.

ZEYNO: My Sülo will stay alive.

HAMO: Even if he survives the enemy attack, I still have to follow orders.

ZEYNO: What are your orders?

HAMO: We can't have loose cannons like him endangering the whole struggle.

ZEYNO: You are to kill him. You want to kill my Sülo. And you want my permission to do it. You murderer!

HAMO: Shush! You may not like me Zeyno, but Sülo is my friend. I've trusted him with my life, and I know I still can...

ZEYNO: Friend! You want to kill my Sülo.

HAMO: Listen. I'd do anything to save him. I've talked it over with the HQ. There's going to be a big explosion tomorrow.

ZEYNO: That happens all the time.

HAMO: Not like this. There are troop movements. For the final assault on The Lame Gazelle. But we don't know exactly which direction. You can find out.

ZEYNO: And?...

HAMO: If we can disrupt that, Sülo... and the other men from the village can get out.

ZEYNO: Then you'll kill him.

HAMO: The HQ has agreed to give Sülo another chance if we can pull that off.

ZEYNO: I don't trust you.

HAMO: That's our only chance... and Sülo's. Will you find out?

(PAUSE)

ZEYNO: I'll try. **(PAUSE)** If I do...

HAMO: You have my word Sülo will be safe.

(ZEYNO NODS.)

HAMO: You're a smart girl, Zeyno, I knew you would understand.

(HAMO STARTS UNWRAPPING A BUNDLE.)

ZEYNO: What's that?

HAMO: Shush!

(HAMO KEEPS UNWRAPPING THE BUNDLE WITH GREAT CARE. ZEYNO WATCHES INTENTLY.)

HAMO: **(HAS TAKEN OUT SOME PLASTIC EXPLOSIVES OUT OF THE BUNDLE)** It is safe until you press this button. **(SHOWS ZEYNO)** You wrap this around your waist. It's best if you pretend to be pregnant to get close.

SCENE TWENTY

(DUSK. DERVISH IS SITTING ON THE GROUND, LEANING ON A GARDEN WALL. THE DOOR TO ZEYNO'S HOUSE IN THE BACKGROUND.)

MEHMET:(COMES OUT) It's getting cold, Dervish Dede, I have some soup, come in.

DERVISH: Thank you son.

MEHMET: Zeyno's staying over at the engineer's place tonight. You can sleep here if you like.

DERVISH: Thank you, son.

MEHMET: They are good people.

DERVISH: Your Zeyno's very special.

MEHMET: I know. I'll take her to Ankara once my service is finished. She'll study.

DERVISH: Take good care of her.

MEHMET: I will, Dervish Dede, I will.

(THEY GO IN.)

SCENE TWENTYONE

(SIBEL'S LIVING ROOM)

SIBEL: You want me to find out where they're going to attack?

ZEYNO: On The Lame Gazelle, yes.

SIBEL: It has to be tonight?

(ZEYNO NODS.)

SIBEL: Sülo's still there.

(ZEYNO NODS.)

SIBEL: You are worried for him.

(ZEYNO NODS.)

SIBEL: I will Zeyno. But you must promise me something.

(ZEYNO LOOKS AT SIBEL, QUESTIONING.)

SIBEL: Once Sülo's out safely, go to Ankara.

(ZEYNO NODS.)

SIBEL: I know he can still enroll in College, and if you've figured out what to do, you should, too. Next year we'll be back, we can still see you in Ankara.

(ZEYNO NODS AND QUIETLY STARTS WEEPING.)

SIBEL: All right, Zeyno, it's all right. You love him, don't you? That's the most important thing. Don't ever forget that. Don't ever risk it. You are a very beautiful person Zeyno. You are like my little sister.

(ZEYNO'S SOBBING GETS LOUDER.)

SIBEL: You know I mean it. About Ankara, too.

(ZEYNO EMBRACES SIBEL.)

SIBEL: Oh, Zeyno!

(ZEYNO KEEPS SOBBING.)

SIBEL: I'll tell you what we'll do. I know your father watches Hasan's office like a hawk. But he must be home by now. We'll go together. Everyone in the garrison knows me. I'll get in saying I've got to see Hasan, and you wait at the gates. I'll send for him, saying I've got something important to tell the Major. Then I'll search the office. I have a good idea where Hasan would keep the information. If he turns up, I'll make something up. I'll get out as soon as I can and give you the information.

ZEYNO: Thank you.

SIBEL: Will you be coming back here?

(ZEYNO SHAKES HER HEAD)

SIBEL: You want to get the information to Sülo straight away... Tonight...

(ZEYNO HANGS HER HEAD.)

SIBEL: All right. What are we waiting for? Let's go. **(PUTS HER COAT ON.)** I haven't had such excitement since the demonstrations in my university days. This is fun.

ELVAN: (COMES IN) Why can't I have fun with you, Mum?

(ZEYNO TURNS AWAY NOT TO SHOW HER TEARS.)

SIBEL: Be a good girl now and go to bed.

ELVAN: When are you coming back?

SIBEL: We won't be long, darling. If Dad comes before me, tell him not to worry. Into bed now!

ELVAN: (GRUMPY) All right. Good night Zeyno.

(ELVAN GOES INTO HER ROOM. SIBEL AND ZEYNO GO OUT.)

SCENE TWENTYTWO

(NACI'S LIVING ROOM. NACI IS WORKING. HE CHECKS THE TIME. DIALS A NUMBER ON THE PHONE. THE PHONE RINGS, BUT THERE'S NO ANSWER. HE TRIES WORKING A BIT MORE. HE IS FIDGETY. TRIES THE PHONE AGAIN. AGAIN, NO ANSWER. HE GETS UP.)

NACI: Elvan! Elvan! **(STARTS PUTTING HIS COAT ON)** Elvan! **(REACHES INTO HIS DRAWER AND TAKES OUT THE PISTOL HASAN HAD LEFT FOR HIM.)**

ELVAN: (ENTERS) What's wrong, Dad?

NACI: Nothing, sweetie. I just have to go out for a little while. I am worried about Mum.

ELVAN: Mum's all right.

NACI: Do you know where she is?

ELVAN: She went out with Zeyno. She said she was going to have fun.

(PAUSE)

NACI: I won't be long. I'll lock up. I'll leave the lights on. You won't be frightened?

ELVAN: No.

NACI: If Mum comes back before I do, tell her to wait for me, will you sweetie?

ELVAN: Sure.

NACI: Good night darling.

ELVAN: Good night.

(ELVAN GOES INTO HER ROOM, NACI PUTS HIS COAT ON, GOES OUT. A LAMENT IN KURDISH IS HEARD VERY FAINTLY. IT GRADUALLY BUILDS UP ALL THROUGH TO THE END OF THE PLAY. DERVISH IS SEEN IN HIS USUAL SPOT SWAYING BACK AND FORTH, BARELY VISIBLE IN THE DARK. NACI IS SEEN CROSSING THE STAGE, WALKING QUICKLY. ELVAN'S TOSSING AND TURNING IN HER BED. A WHILE LATER, SIBEL IS SEEN WALKING BACK IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION. HAMO IS SEEN WITH BINOCULARS IN HIS HAND WATCHING THE STAGE AS IF FROM A LONG DISTANCE. THERE'S A HUGE EXPLOSION.)

ELVAN: (A HEART-WRENCHING CRY IN HER NIGHTMARE) Zeynooo!

SCENE TWENTYTHREE

(HASAN'S OFFICE)

HASAN: (ON THE PHONE) They've done it. Suicide attack. Just before the Burnt Log intersection. The bastards. Apparently it was a young girl, pretending to be pregnant. Couldn't be identified. 19 soldiers killed and Captain Hamdi. **(LISTENS)** Yes, I'm in my office. After the raid on Red Rock... Someone's leaking. Someone's fucking leaking!... **(LISTENS)** Sibel was here, I think to warn me, but I missed her. **(LISTENS)** I have a fair idea. Right, Naci, I can't leave the office now. The Colonel's bound to call any minute, now. I'll tell you later. **(HANGS UP. TURNS ON THE WIRELESS)** I want The Lame Gazelle razed to the ground. Burn it, bomb it, gas it. **(LISTENS)** Most of the men have escaped? I don't care. Aksakmaral will be wiped off the face of the earth. I want that done now. **(LISTENS)** Captain Hamdi is dead. Listen Captain, if the Lame Gazelle doesn't disappear from the map today, I will

personally come and shoot you. Is that understood? **(SWITCHES OFF)**
Women and children! Bloody bleeding hearts... Someone's been leaking.
Someone's been fucking leaking. **(CALLS OUT)** Memo! Memo!

MEHMET: (ENTERS AND SALUTES) Yessuh!

HASAN: (GOES AND CIRCLES AROUND MEHMET WHO IS STANDING AT ATTENTION) So... After all I've done huh? I am a Kurd, too, you know, Black Hüso's grandson. Why do you think I'm doing all this? You want your Kurdistan, huh? With the same misery, the same poverty. So you'll have your flag and a national anthem and you'll feel better about your miserable lives. So those Black Hüsos will keep screwing you, saluting the Kurdish flag and singing the Kurdish national anthem? We are trying to bring you to the twentieth century, you beasts! To cut your tails, bring you down from the trees, you animals! And you attack us. You, you kow-tow to Black Hüso and you bloody attack us, you fucking blow us up. D'you have any idea what this bloody dam is costing the State? Answer me!

MEHMET: Nosuh!

HASAN: No Sir what?

MEHMET: I don't know its cost, Suh!

HASAN: You don't, do you? **(CIRCLES AROUND MEHMET AGAIN)** When did you tell them? You told them about the raid on Red Rock too, didn't you, you fucking spy, you bastard! Answer me!

MEHMET: I tell nobody nothing, Suh!

HASAN: You two-faced mountain snake, you! I'll make you pay for this. I'll bloody well make you pay, you ignorant prick! I'll have you court-marshalled and shot, you bastard.

MEHMET: You'll have me shot, Suh! Yessuh!

HASAN: (CIRCLES AROUND MEHMET AGAIN) I want the toilet clean!

MEHMET: It is clean, Suh!

HASAN: I used it five minutes ago. It must be your rotten trout. Even your bloody trout conspire against me. Did you poison me? Answer me!

MEHMET: Nosuh!

HASAN: No Sir what?

MEHMET: I never poison anybody, Suh!

HASAN: (CIRCLES AROUND MEHMET AGAIN) Go clean the toilet!

MEHMET: I cleaned it after you, Suh!

HASAN: Clean the fucking bog. Lick it!

MEHMET: Suh?

HASAN: Lick the bloody thing!

(MEHMET TURNS AND LOOKS AT HASAN)

HASAN: Don't you eye me, boy! Lick the fucking toilet!

(MEHMET TURNS AND FIXES HIS GAZE ON HASAN.)

HASAN: Lick the fucking toilet!

(MEHMET STRAIGHTENS AND MAKES A SMALL MOVE TOWARDS HASAN.)

HASAN: I did not say at ease. **(PULLS OUT HIS PISTOL.)** Tenshun!

(MEHMET DOES NOT RESPOND, BUT SLOWLY WALKS TOWARDS HASAN, HITS HASAN'S HAND. HASAN DROPS THE GUN. MEHMET GOES AFTER HASAN AND WITH A PAINED AND HOARSE CRY, GRABS HIM AND LIFTS HIM BY THE COLLAR TO HIS EYE LEVEL. HE LOOKS AT HIM AND THROWS HIM ON THE FLOOR LIKE A SACK. HASAN HAS FALLEN CLOSE TO THE PISTOL. HE GRABS THE PISTOL AND EMPTIES IT ON MEHMET. MEHMET STUMBLES AND COLLAPSES ON HASAN'S DESK. HASAN GOES TO MEHMET, PUTS THE GUN AT THE BACK OF HIS NECK AND PULLS THE TRIGGER AGAIN. THE GUN IS EMPTY.)

NACI: (RUNS IN) Hasan!

HASAN: Sorry about the mess!

NACI: (RUSHES TO MEHMET AND CHECK IF HE'S STILL ALIVE. HE ISN'T.) What have you done?

HASAN: Just getting rid of some of the vermin.

NACI: He... he...

HASAN: He was the one spying. He was leaking all the information. Then he refused to obey my orders. This is the army, my friend, and we're in war. Disobeying orders? A-ah! It's not on.

NACI: He had only...

HASAN: The Lame Gazelle will be no more tomorrow morning. They've bloody blown up Captain Hamdi and nineteen of my soldiers. The Lame Gazelle's going to pay for this. The gunships are having a demolition derby at dawn.

NACI: You're enjoying this.

HASAN: You'll have your concrete path clear. You, mister non-violence. Your hands are still clean. Look at mine.

NACI: Who was the girl?

HASAN: Oh, some dumb peasant girl, I guess. Too stupid to live and too fragmented to identify.

NACI: And you're sitting there, calmly... You... You murderer...

HASAN: Don't you bloody judge me, you wimp! I do your dirty work, so don't you ever bloody judge me!

NACI: You... You have no...

HASAN: Oh, yes I do. I make my own rights you nerd, I don't wait for hand-outs.

(NACI TAKES THE PISTOL OUT.)

HASAN: (STARTS LAUGHING) Watch out boy, it might just explode in your hand.

NACI: I'll shoot.

HASAN: (KEEPS LAUGHING) Yes, shoot everything you've lived for all your life. Everything you've advocated. It won't be me, boy. It will be you.

NACI: You're the vermin.

HASAN: (MOCKING) And you decide that.

NACI: Mehmet was always loyal to you.

HASAN: You wouldn't know the first thing...

NACI: Shut up!

HASAN: Shut me up with a gun in your hand, and I am the fascist...

NACI: You're infectious...

HASAN: And you're the health worker...

NACI: I can't stand you, you prick...

HASAN: The democrat, eh, the tolerant democrat?

NACI: I hate you, everything you stand for.

HASAN: And you'll kill me for that. C'mon, boy, c'mon. Let's see what you're made of.

(NACI DOESN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO, WAVERS.)

HASAN: You're drooping. **(LAUGHS)** Is it the alcohol, or have you...

(NACI POINTS THE GUN AT HASAN)

HASAN: (PATRONISING) Give me the gun. There's a good boy. **(TAKES A STEP TOWARDS NACI)**

(HASAN MOVES TO NACI TO TAKE THE GUN. NACI SHOOTS HASAN DEAD WITH A SINGLE SHOT.)

SCENE TWENTYFOUR

(THE LAMENT GETS LOUDER. DERVISH IS STILL SWAYING IN SEMI DARKNESS. ELVAN WALKS TO HIM AS IF IN A DREAM. DAWN IS BREAKING.)

DERVISH: You're a very special girl... **(CAN'T FIND THE NAME)**

ELVAN: Elvan.

DERVISH: Elvan. Very special, like all my sons and daughters.

ELVAN: Zeyno was going to tell me the Flood story.

DERVISH: I'll tell you the Flood story. You see, things were bad, really bad, in those olden days...

(NACI'S LIVING ROOM. A BOTTLE OF WHISKY ON THE TABLE. NACI TAKES OUT HIS PISTOL AND SHOOTS HIMSELF.)

DERVISH: I had to see my sons die and my daughters and my grandchildren, everything I love die. I was immortal, I was cursed.

(THE LAMENT REACHES A HIGH PITCH AND MIXES WITH SIBEL CRYING, LOOKING AT NACI SLUMPED ON HIS DESK.)

CURTAIN

Gundogdu Gencer

WATER



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