



Husband and Wife
A Music Comedy in Three Acts
by Uzeyir Hajibeyov

From HAJIBEYOV.com, a website celebrating the legacy of Uzeyir Hajibeyov
© 2002 Azerbaijan International

Edited by Betty Blair, Editor of Azerbaijan International
Translated by Gulnar Aydamirova; proofread by Aynurra Huseynova
Prepared for HAJIBEYOV.com by Arzu Aghayeva in August 2002.

Characters

Karbalayi Gubad—40 years old

Karbalayi Gubad's old wife who lives in the village

Marjan bey—a young man

Minnat khanim—his wife

Gulpari—a servant

Safi—a servant

Other servants, tarzan (tar player), khanande (singer of mughams—traditional modal music),
Choir and others

First Act

Takes place in Marjan bey's room. The room is set up in European style with furniture. Music is playing.
Marjan bey is alone; the curtain goes up.

Marjan bey

I'm a man who has a tyrant for a wife
She always makes fun of me and doesn't let me be
What can I do to get rid of such misfortune;
And to save myself from such suffering and torture.

Music

Damn you, such wife, damn you!
Who entangled an old fox like you with poor me?
She has put her rope around my neck and choked me,

She has multiplied my troubles a thousand times over.

Music

I promised to give out money as alms if I had the chance to divorce my wife,
Because there's no other way. If I don't divorce her, I'm going to have a heart attack.
But I don't know how to fool her.
The bad thing is that the dowry is 5,000 manats.
So what can I do to both divorce my wife
And also keep the dowry for myself,
And marry a new woman who will obey me.

Minnat khanim (*enters hurriedly*)

Tell me right away: Did you win or did you lose?...Come on!

Marjan bey (*loses himself*)

I won! No... OK, I lost! First of all, I didn't gamble, that's why I couldn't have won or lost. Second of all, whether I won or lost, what does it have to do with you?

Minnat khanim (*angrily*)

With me? With me?

Marjan bey (*completely loses himself*)

I just said it as an example!

Minnat khanim

Give me all the money you have in your pocket right now!

Marjan bey

What an expropriator you are: "Hands up!"

Minnat khanim

Hurry up, I have something to do!

Marjan bey

If you have something to do, go and do it! But leave me alone. I have five or six five-kopecks in my pocket and I need them myself. I'll buy a Muslim newspaper [meaning Azeri, not published in the Russian language] to read. I've become a Nationalist already.

Minnat khanim

Give me the money! I'll have it bought for you to read.

Marjan bey

Minnat! This behavior of yours is really a bad habit. Do you know what they call this kind of behavior in Russian? They call it: "interference with internal affairs," meaning that you are interfering with my personal business. You don't let me do my own business. My dear, I married you so that you would be my wife, not my guardian! I don't need any guardian. Thank God, I'm quite mature, I have brains. And I'm a respected man among people; and so, what right do you have to pick my pocket?

Minnat khanim

So that's how it is, Marjan?! Like that? Very well! It's OK. Just wait till you ask for money from me! So long!

(Leaves quickly)

Marjan bey

Now you tell me, folks! She has just set her mind to rob my pockets. What kind of situation did I get myself into, folks! What kind of situation is this? You have your own money, your own property, but your wife never leaves you in peace?

Music

I promised to give out money as alms if I had the chance to divorce my wife, (2 times)
Because there's no other way. If I don't divorce her, I'm going to have a heart attack.
But I don't know how to fool her, (2 times)
The bad thing is that the dowry is 5000 manats.
So what can I do to both divorce my wife
And also keep the dowry for myself,
And marry a new woman who would obey me. (2 times)

Music: (*The mugham "Shur" is being played on tar. Karbalayi Gubad enters.*)

Karbalayi Gubad

Salamunaleykum (How do you do?).

Marjan bey

Aleykumassalam (How do you do?).

Marjan bey

How are you?

Marjan bey

Thank you, Karbalayi Gubad, I'm all right.

(Aside) I have an idea: let's see if I can get this man marry my wife?

Music**Marjan bey**

Kabla Gubad, come here!

Karbalayi Gubad

All right, all right.

Marjan bey

Now listen to me!

Karbalayi Gubad

All right, all right.

Marjan bey

I want to tell you something.

Karbalayi Gubad

Yes, go ahead.

Marjan bey looks at Karbalayi Gubad attentively.

Marjan bey

Now tell me, Karbalayi Gubad, how many wives do you have? Ha, how many? Tell me quick!

Karbalayi Gubad

One!

Marjan bey

Only one?

Karbalayi Gubad

Yes, one.

Marjan bey

But how are you, Kablayi,
How are you?
Do you want me to get you another wife, eh?
What's more, a rich wife!

Karbalayi Gubad

A rich wife?

Marjan bey

Yes, she has wealth, she is rich!

Karbalayi Gubad

So she has wealth, she is rich? Yes, do get me a wife like that, please. (2 times)

Marjan bey

Karbalayi Gubad! You know yourself that a man can't live a life with only one wife; that's why a man needs at least two wives. Is that so or not?

Karbalayi Gubad

You're quite right, I also think that two wives are better. Of course, a man needs to have two of each of his things. Who wouldn't agree with that?

Marjan bey

No, listen to my advice! Always keep duplicate wives. A man needs to have two wives. The "Molla Nasraddin" magazine doesn't talk about this in vain.

Karbalayi Gubad

As I see, bey, everything you say is quite right. For example, I myself, forgive me my boldness, have only one wife and she is in the village; so I'm all alone in town. Of course if I had another wife in town, it wouldn't affect my mood at all. However this situation affects my mood now. Bey, please, forgive me my words.

Marjan bey

It's O.K, everything you say is right. Now, I myself intend to marry two women, but first I want to divorce my own wife; because I don't want that woman at all.

Karbalayi Gubad

If you don't want her, then divorce her! Why are you so upset about it?

Marjan bey

I will. But the thing is that before I was a fool and designated 5,000 manats for the dowry.

Karbalayi Gubad

What are you talking about? Don't pay attention to her several times, then she'll get offended and tell you that she forgives you your marriage and becomes free [meaning that she lets you keep the dowry on the condition that you let her alone].

Marjan bey

By God, she herself has offended me so much that I almost told her that I forgave her our marriage and became free so that she leaves me alone...

(Some noise is coming from the door at this moment).

Let's go to another room, we're being spied on here.

They leave. Minnat khanim enters.

Minnat khanim

My name is Minnat.

My place here is paradise.

I'm as beautiful as the new moon (2 times)

Come, see me and fall head over heels in love with me!

My name is Minnat;

Come, see me and fall head over heels in love with me!

My place here is paradise.

Music

Let me tell you the truth,

My husband has no brains.

The fool has no sense at all,

He doesn't appreciate me. (2 times)

Come, see me and fall head over heels in love with me!

My name is Minnat.

Come see me and fall head over heels in love with me!
My place here is a paradise.

Music

He is thinking of divorcing me,
And marrying someone else.
The fool doesn't know that
This is a very difficult thing to do. (2 times)
Come, see me and fall head over heels in love with me!
My name is Minnat;
Come see me and fall head over heels in love with me!
My place here is a paradise.

Music

(*Marjan bey enters quickly*).

Marjan bey

What's this noise here?
I have a guest over there.
Your voice can be heard everywhere,
You are shouting, hey ... woman!

Minnat khanim (*moves to the other side*)

I do what I want,
If you don't like it, then leave.
Put some cotton in your ears,
And wrap yourself in a shroud. (2 times)
Come see me and fall head over heels in love with me!
My name is Minnat;
Come see me and fall head over heels in love with me!
My place here is a paradise.

(*Marjan bey snaps his fingers angrily*).

Minnat khanim

Now you can go ahead. You can go ahead! (*Leaving*).
Go ahead, go ahead, go ahead!

Marjan bey: Tfū!

Minnat khanim: Tfū!

Marjan bey: Tfū! (*Leaves*).

Minnat khanim: Tfū! (*Leaves*).

Safi (*enters*): Tfu! Let's sweep!

Marjan bey (*Enters with Karbalayi Gubad*)

Tut! Oh my, let's go to another room. (*They leave*).

Safi

I bet they have some secret; let me go and see what they're talking about.

(*He follows them. Minnat enters and quickly runs to hide behind the curtain.*)

Marjan bey

(*He enters first, then Karbalayi Gubad follows him just as before*)

OK, we couldn't talk there, let's talk here. Now, Karbalayi, I want to divorce my wife, that's why...

Safi (*enters*): Bey, shall I bring tea?

Marjan bey

Allahu Akbar! (*Calls out*).

Boy, get out! Don't enter this room again, I have something to say privately.

(The servant leaves). The bride money for my wife is 5,000 manats, if these 5,000 manats...

Safi (*enters*):

Master, do you want me to lock the doors from the outside?

Marjan bey

Oh no, go, boy, go! Hey boy, brave fellow, don't enter this room until I call you!

Safi: All right, master (*Leaves*).

Marjan bey (*checks if anybody is spying at the doors and then says*)

Now I don't know how to divorce my wife.

Karbalayi Gubad

What can I do? If it were my wife, I would show you how to divorce her.

Marjan bey:

You couldn't divorce a wife like that either.

Karbalayi Gubad: Yes, I could.

Marjan bey: OK, but how would you do it?

Karbalayi Gubad

I know how to do it but I wouldn't tell you that, besides I know both how to marry and divorce a woman, but you intelligent people don't know such things very well. You're not experienced in such matters.

Marjan bey

All right, have you ever done "ukhajivat" [Russian word meaning to court a woman] that you talk of it?

Karbalayi Gubad

Yes, I have. But I don't know what "ukhajivat" is because I have no knowledge of Russian.

Marjan bey

Karbalayi Gubad, if you are such a skillful man, let's do something together.

Karbalayi Gubad: Like what?

Marjan bey

Look, if I divorce my wife, I have to give 5,000 manats dowry. But if you can do something to make my wife tell me she forgives me our marriage and becomes free, and if she leaves me alone, I'll give you 2,000 manats cash. Do you understand what I'm saying?

Karbalayi Gubad

Well, of course, am I a fool not to understand.

Marjan bey: So can you do it?

Karbalayi Gubad

I can, but 2,000 manats is very little.

Marjan bey

What? What are you talking about? 2,000 manats makes 20 100-manat bills.

Karbalayi Gubad

Bey, I'm afraid of doing anything wrong. My wife in the village is a very rogue woman. It's better if you add 500 more manats.

Marjan bey

OK, let it be 2,500 manats!

Karbalayi Gubad

May you live a long life, bey, but can we notarize this agreement?

Marjan bey

OK, that's possible, too. Let's go to the notary; but tell me, how are you going to do it?

Karbalayi Gubad

You organize for me to meet your wife in this room once and that's all. Don't worry about the rest.

Marjan bey: And that's it?

Karbalayi Gubad: Yes, that's it.

Marjan bey: Let's go then. (*They leave*).

Minnat khanim (*comes out from behind the curtain*)

So that's how it works, Marjan, that's how it works. So you want to sell me for 2,500 manats? Ha... ha... ha... So like that, Marjan! So you want to sell me for 2,500 manats? Now we'll see whose the real rogue around here; you or me?

(Calls out). Safi! Safi!

Safi (*enters*)

At your service, lady.

Minnat khanim:

Ask Gulpari to come here at once.

(*The servant leaves*).

Music.

Gulpari (*enters*)

What's troubling you, my lady? (2 times)

What's wrong with you, what's wrong?

What's wrong, you look sad? (2 times)

Music

Minnat khanim:

I have a grief, Gulpari!

Let me tell you my grief.

Help me with this (2 times)

The remedy to my grief

Is in fooling my husband.

Now do you know, do you know,

Do you know what is wrong with me? (2 times)

Gulpari, my husband wants to sell me for 2,500 manats.

Gulpari

Oh, may God hurl a stone at the head of that kind of husband!

Minnat khanim

Don't curse. It's not my husband's fault.

Gulpari: Whose fault is it then?

Minnat khanim

It's not my husband's fault, it's his head's fault; it doesn't have brains.

Gulpari:

That's why I said let God hurl a stone at his head, not at him.

Minnat khanim

Now look, Gulpari, a man will come here tomorrow. Then you cover your face very tightly and sit here; that man will begin enticing you and will make you a proposal to marry him. When he asks that, you

agree to what he says. But tell him you first have to divorce your own husband... Agree to anything that man says. Can you do it?

Gulpari

Of course I can. Where is that lucky man, let's see him come.

Minnat khanim

He'll come tomorrow. Now you bring me a piece of paper with pen and ink right away.

Gulpari:

Just a second (*She brings those things*).

Minnat khanim: Now I'll play such a trick on my husband's stupid head even he'll be surprised.

Gulpari: Here you are! (Offers pen and paper).

Minnat khanim

I'm writing this (*writing*).

Now, Gulpari, Go and tell all the servants to come here.

Gulpari: All right (*Goes away*).

Minnat khanim: Now let Marjan bey read this paper and his crazy head will go even crazier.

All the servants come in pushing each other. The fat cook comes in with a big spoon in his hand and with his sleeves rolled up; the stable man with his chaffed face comes in carrying a saddle in his hand; one of the servants come in with a broom in hand, another with a watering pot. Gulpari comes, too.

Minnat khanim

Hey, guys, do you know what has happened?

All: No, khanim, we don't.

Minnat khanim

My husband wants to sell me.

All:

No, it's not possible; what kind of action is it, it's disgrace.

Minnat khanim:

But... (*Everybody gets quiet*). I'll do something so that he won't be able to sell me.

All (happy): OK, that's good.

Minnat khanim:

But... (*Everybody gets quiet*). You have to pay attention to what I say and what I do (*They stand still*). And don't say a word to my husband (*They stand still*). If any of you do, I'll show him (*Everybody kneels down and gets up*). But if you do what I say, I'll give you each 10 manats (*Everybody gets up happily*).

All: Thank you, khanim, thank you!

Minnat khanim

Gulpari, don't forget what I just told you a few minutes ago. Safi! Come here, take this letter and when Marjan bey comes, give it to him telling him that a maid-servant brought it. Don't say anything else!

Safi: Nothing else!

Music

Minnat khanim

Have mercy, just look at me!
Marjan is making me very feeble!

Choir

Ey, khanim, khanim don't be sad,
Your Marjan will regret it.
An idiot like Karbalayi Gubad
With a mouth like a large sack and a neck like a candle's fat,
With a huge head and a nose as big as a cucumber;
Wants to play a trick on khanim.
Ey, khanim, khanim, don't be sad
Your Marjan will be sorry.

Music

Curtain

Act Two

Takes place in the same room. Music is being played before the curtain goes up; after that the curtain goes up. Safi is alone.

Music

Safi

You have been disgraced, Marjan, little by little,
Among people.

Ha, ha! Ha, ha! Ha, ha!
You have become disgraced, Marjan, little by little,
Among people.

Choir:

Ha, ha! Ha, ha! Ha, ha!
You have became disgraced, Marjan, little by little,
Among people.

Safi:

Your passion led to a revolt,
You quarreled with your wife.
The devil made a net
And you trapped yourself it it.
Ha, ha! Ha, ha! Ha, ha!
You became disgraced, Marjan,
Among people.

(*Somebody knocks on the door. Everybody leaves quickly, only Safi stays, he opens the door holding a broom in his hand. Marjan bey enters followed by Karbalayi Gubad.*)

Marjan bey

Karbalayi, you wait at the door until I call you.

Safi: Sir, there's a letter for you, here you are!

Marjan bey: What's this letter? Who gave it to you?

Safi: Some maid-servant brought it yesterday.

Marjan bey: Whose servant was she?

Safi: I don't know (*Leaves*).

Marjan bey (*reads the note*)

"Oh, my dear soul, Marjan bey. When I saw you for the first time, I fell in love with you. When I saw you the second time, I became crazy. When I saw you the third time, I could no longer bare it; so I have written you this letter. If you don't favor me by marrying me and making me your wife, I'll lose my mind and go crazy. My moaning will harm you... I'm a young lady of 23 years old. There are many men who are in love with me; but I myself am madly in love with you. If you marry me, I'll sacrifice my 200 thousands manats worth wealth for you. If you want to see me, I'll come to your door at six o'clock tomorrow... A wondrous beauty who's in love with you." (*Wandering*). Is it a dream or reality? No, no, this is a dream... Safi! Safi! (*Calls*).

Safi (*enters*): Yes, master?

Marjan bey: Safi! Am I dreaming, or am I awake?

Safi: Thank God, you're awake.

Marjan bey: Great, Safi! Who gave you this letter?

Safi: A servant.

Marjan bey: Whose servant was she?

Safi: I don't know.

Marjan bey: What did she say?

Safi: She asked to give this letter to Marjan bey.

Marjan bey

All right, now go (*Safi leaves. Marjan takes the letter gently and kisses it*).

Oh! Ah, the hands that wrote this letter, ah, the person those hands belong to. If you are madly in love with me, I'll go crazy for you, too (*Sheds a few tears*). Oh, I'm in love, I'm madly in love. No, this love will kill me. I can't tolerate the trouble of love. It's true: love is such a trouble that a person who doesn't love wouldn't understand. Ey, young lady of 23 years old! If you sacrifice 200 thousand manats for me, I would sacrifice 50 thousand manats for you, and give you my soul as well (*Out loud*).
No, may Minnat be far from me! I have to divorce her today, I'm in love, in love!

I've lost my mind since I discovered what trouble love is.

Wise man, don't laugh at me, seeing me dishonored.

Karbalayi Gubad! Karbalayi Gubad! (*Karbalayi Gubad enters*).

My dear, I have fallen in love. Please, finish this thing up today. Save me from Minnat for Heaven's sake. It's OK, I'll give you 3,000 manats instead of 2,500. I'm in love... I am also... I'm also being loved... I'm mad with love. Oh, my heart... How sweet love is... Oh, I'm becoming weak (*Faints on to the sofa as if losing consciousness*).

Karbalayi Gubad

Master, master Marjan bey! Master Marjan bey, master!

Marjan bey (*opens his eyes*): Yes!

Karbalayi Gubad

Master! Can you give that 500 manats to me right away! Because that hasn't been written in the notary. If I can persuade your wife today, then it's great. If not, I'll return your 500 manats to you.

Marjan bey

OK, I'll give it to you in a little while. My heart is aching, I'm in love. Ey, a 23-year-old beautiful lady! (*Looses consciousness. Then suddenly getting up, he takes the letter out of his pocket*). Oh man, it says in the letter that she'll come at 6 PM tomorrow... The letter was written yesterday, so she'll come today. Hurrah!. She'll come today. What time is it now? (*Looks at his watch*). It's two, so I still have four hours left. OK, Karbalayi, do your work quickly.

Karbalayi Gubad: I'm ready, as soon as your wife comes, we can start.

Marjan bey

Aha, very good. Go and wait at the door, I'll call you later (*Gubad leaves*). Safi! Safi! (*Safi enters*). Go and ask Minnat khanim to come here (*Safi leaves*). No, this letter gave me courage. I'll tell her clearly that I'm divorcing her as I can't live with her anymore.

Minnat khanim (*enters*)

Yes! What do you want to tell me! (*Smiles*).

Marjan bey: Minnat... (*Aside*). I don't have the guts to say it, she has scared me a lot (To her).
Minnat... Ey!
(*Aside*). I've become as weak as a woman.
(*To her*). Ey, Minnat! Have you had something to eat?

Minnat khanim: Yes, I have. Why?

Marjan bey: To tell you the truth, from now on I won't have...will have...meals with you
(*Aside*). Shame on me; folks, just look what I said!

Minnat khanim: Why are you angry then?

Marjan bey: Because (*looks at the letter*). You make me angry, you! It's all your fault. That's why I can't live with you anymore, I need to divorce you.
(*Aside*) Thank God I finally told her!

Minnat khanim: Aha! So meals were just an excuse! You want to divorce me. Very well! And I am a daughter of a traitor if I stay at your house for a single minute more. Divorce me!

Marjan bey (*Aside*): So good - that she agreed.
(*To her*): Of course I will, please leave my house today.

(*Marjan bey leaves. Minnat khanim goes and asks Gulpari to come and sit at home. Then she herself hides behind the curtain.*)

Minnat khanim

Gulpari, don't forget what I told you yesterday and do just as I said. (*She hides*).

Gulpari

Be sure I will! (*She sits covering her face*).

Karbalayi Gubad (*enters*)

Oho! Oho! (*Coughs, silence*). It's very hot today. (*Silence*). I wonder if all of these houses are Marjan bey's? (*Snaps his fingers for awhile*).

Music

Ey, khanim, khanim, let all your troubles come to me
What would you do to me? Why do you need mascara?

Music

Your eyes and eyebrows are already black,
So why do you need mascara?

Gulpari: Hey, man, are you mad? You are too excited.

Karbalayi Gubad

Khanim, just tell me, is it possible not to get excited by seeing you? By God, I'm like a camel in heat because of you right now, don't you realize it. Lok, lok, lok, lok (*He flaps his hands like a rooster when he passes the woman*).

Gulpari

Hey, man, are you a rooster to flap your hands at me!

Karbalayi Gubad

By God, right now I've become like a rooster because of you, don't you realize it: quqqulu qu...

Gulpari

I have a husband, if he finds out he might kill you.

Karbalayi Gubad (Aside)

Poor thing, she doesn't know that her husband is giving me 53 thousand manats.

Gulpari: What are you saying?

Karbalayi Gubad

Karbalayi beseech you! I'm asking you to divorce your husband and marry me. I will take a very good care of you. You will be my flower and nightingale.

Gulpari

What if my husband doesn't agree?!

Karbalayi Gubad

Why wouldn't he? Tell him you give him all the dowry on the condition that he leaves you alone. Any husband would agree to that.

Gulpari

To tell you the truth, I myself have been offended with him, too.

Karbalayi Gubad

Your husband isn't man enough to know the value of you. I—this black obedient servant of yours would appreciate your value! By God I wouldn't offend you at all! Do you agree? I beg you! (*Silence*). Do you agree? My soul for you! (*Silence*). Aha! The Persians say: "Silence is the sign of agreement." That means that you agree. Is that so? You, the apple of my eye, I beseech you!

Gulpari: I agree.

Karbalayi Gubad

That's it. Now you go and divorce your husband today; then wait for three months till you can get married again; then we'll go to our home.

Gulpari: OK, you go and I'll get my divorce paper today. So long. (*Gulpari leaves*).

Karbalayi Gubad

So long, I beseech you! So long (*Takes off his hat*). Uff! I got so hot and sweaty. But, really, I did a good job. To tell the truth, I can be a very good mediator in bargaining with women. I didn't know I was so good.

Marjan bey (*enters*): How did it go?

Karbalayi Gubad: A long time ago!

Marjan bey: What a long time ago?

Karbalayi Gubad: A long time ago!

Marjan bey: Man, tell me what happened?

Karbalayi Gubad

What did you think would happen? She agreed and that's it.

Marjan bey: Man, what do you say? Did she really agree?

Karbalayi Gubad: Of course, she did, she was very happy to.

Marjan bey: Man, what are you talking about? Did she really agree?

Karbalayi Gubad

Good man, I roared like a camel, I crowed like a rooster, I bleated like a sheep, I didn't do all that for nothing!

Marjan bey: So she said she would marry you and divorce her husband?

Karbalayi Gubad: Yes, she will ask the divorce paper from you today.

Marjan bey

Ah, disloyal wife! But anyway, may God be pleased with you, because I'm pleased with you.

Karbalayi Gubad: When are you going to give my money?

Marjan bey: As soon as she goes to your house, come and take your money.

Karbalayi Gubad: Very well.

Marjan bey: So she really agreed to it?

Karbalayi Gubad

I'm not lying to you. You'll see for yourself when your wife will ask for divorce papers in a little while. Now I'm going. We'll clarify everything tomorrow. I'm in a hurry now.

Marjan bey: Why are you in such a hurry?

Karbalayi Gubad

I'm going to Sijimgulu bey's place. I think he's not satisfied with his wife either, he wants to divorce her.

Marjan bey

Very well (*Sees Karbalayi Gubad off!*)

Minnat khanim (*comes out from behind the curtain*):

Brave Gulpari played her role, now I have to play mine.

(*Marjan enters. Walks back and forth angrily*). Give me the divorce paper right now!

Marjan bey (*Aside*): The man was right!

(*To her*): What! You want to marry someone else?

Minnat khanim

It's none of your business, I want the divorce paper right away!

Marjan bey

All right, let me get ready and we'll go to get divorced (*Leaves*).

Gulpari enters.

Minnat khanim

Gulpari, well done, you did a great job. Now the work left is mine to do. I'll go to my father's house right now. But I'll come here in a little while and then go again. Tomorrow wear my chador and wait at the door, I'll take my divorce paper from my husband and give it to you. Keep it with yourself, I'll tell you later on what to do next.

Gulpari: Yes, khanim.

Minnat khanim: Now go so that my husband doesn't see you here.

(*Gulpari leaves*)

Marjan bey (*enters*): Let's go to get divorced.

Minnat khanim: Just a second (*She goes*).

Marjan bey (*thinking*):

Ah, you disloyal wife. Just look at this, she prefers Karbalayi Gubad to me. She's leaving me, me who a 23 year old beautiful lady is in love with.

(*Hurriedly*). Oh, what time is it, there's still an hour. It's OK, I got rid of Minnat, got rid of her! In an hour a beautiful lady will come. She is in love with me and I'm in love with her. Of course a man first has to fall in love with a lady and then marry her. Because we marry them without seeing and then become sorry for doing it (*He calls out*). Safi! Safi! (*Safi comes*). Is khanim ready?

Safi: Yes, she is!

Marjan bey

Very good. Now, sweep the floor of this room very well and finish up within an hour. Then when anyone knocks on the door, come and let me know. I'm coming in a little while (*Leaves*).

Safi: All right!

Music

If a husband is stupid
He deserves beating.
A mill is working,
But the noise it makes causes headache.
Oh Marjan, uff Marjan, let's see what comes of you?!

Music

It's the same thing
Being a Nationalist
And destroying people's houses.
They are both stupid things.
Oh Marjan, uff Marjan, let's see what comes of you?!

(*Marjan bey goes to his own room. Somebody knocks on the door, Safi opens it. Minnat khanim enters in a very good dress.*)

Safi: Oops, khanim, I didn't recognize you!

Minnat khanim

Hush! (*Opens her face*). Safi! Go and tell Marjan bey that a lady has come and wants to see him. But don't tell him that it's me! Do you understand me?

Safi

Of course, khanim, don't worry, I know what you're talking about (*She goes*).

Minnat khanim

He won't recognize me in these clothes. I need to be a little careful.

(*Safi comes. Minnat khanim hides herself*).

Marjan bey (*enters trembling*)

Oh... ah... Beautiful lady! Are you the one who wrote me a letter?

Minnat khanim: Yes, that's me!

Marjan bey (*on the verge of tears*)

I'm in love with you, I'm crazy about you, either kill me or take me alive!

Minnat khanim

No, I was the first to fall in love with you! When I saw you for the first time, a bit of love entered my heart, then that bit grew so much that it began burning my heart and so I opened my heart to you.

Marjan bey

You, beautiful lady. I'm in love with you without seeing you, but, as the Russians say, "I wonder where I've seen you before?"

Minnat khanim

Once you were passing by on a horse, and I was sitting in a balcony, eating cherries. I threw a cherry on your head as you were passing by and you looked up and saw me.

Marjan bey (*He is beside himself with joy*)

Oh, my dear God! So that was you? So I've become so lucky! No, no! I can't overcome this much happiness! No, no! I'll go mad, I'm losing myself! Where's my head? Where am I? What is this place? (*He runs here and there and takes something from the wall*). I thought it was a bug. See, your love has made me go crazy! Hey, beautiful lady! Show me your face a little bit.

Minnat khanim

No, look at my hand for now! You won't see my face until we get married. I'll open my face among all the guests when I come here so that everybody will be jealous of your luck!

Marjan bey (aside): Dear God!

(To her). You beautiful lady! When shall we register our marriage?

Minnat khanim: In three months.

Marjan bey

Oh, dear! In three months! No, such happiness will drive me crazy!

Minnat khanim

In three months register our marriage. You can authorize anybody you want from my side, my name is Badiguljamal. In three months bring your guests together, I will come with my people. For now, goodbye! (*Leaves quickly*).

Marjan bey: No, don't leave, if you leave, I'll die. In three months, three months, three months! Oh God! Why did I do to deserve so much happiness? Or maybe you're playing with me? No, no! Don't play with me! Yes, she left, she left... (*He sings*).

If you go, I can cry so much that the world might become an ocean,
And you might drown in that ocean, be careful!

(*Calls out*). Safi! Safi!

Safi (*enters*): Bey, did you call me? I'm at your service.

Marjan bey

Go and call everybody here (*Safi leaves*). My luck has become impudent, I'm afraid something bad might come of it. No, what bad thing could happen?! I've met a beautiful woman and I'm marrying her (*The servants enter*). Hey guys, have you ever seen a happy person in this world?

All: No, master!

Marjan bey: Then take a look! I am that happy person!

All: May you always be happy!

Marjan bey

After some time I'm going to have a wedding. I'm marrying a new wife, so I'll give you each an abbasi (one abbasi is 20 kopecks).

All: Thank you very much!

(One of them can't help laughing and starts giggling.).

Marjan bey

Hey! What's that? Why are you laughing? Are you laughing at me?

The servant

No, master, I'm happy seeing how happy you are and that's why I'm laughing.

Marjan bey: You brave boy, I'll give you two abbasis!

(Everybody starts laughing). Why are you laughing?

All: Of course those whose master is happy will laugh.

Marjan bey

Brave men, I'll give you each two abbasi. Now each of you sing what you can and I'll listen. (The servants begin singing, each his own song). No! You aren't animals, so why do you howl like animals? Sing separately.

One of the servants: Master, would you like me to sing you a Turkish song?

Marjan bey: Go ahead!

Music

The servant: I'm Turkish, my religion, my ancestry is ancient (He finishes singing).

Another servant: Master, do you want me to sing you a Persian song?

Marjan bey: Go ahead!

Music

The servant: Your love is squeezing me... (Finishes singing).

Another servant: Master, do you want me to sing you an Armenian song?

Marjan bey: Go ahead!

Music

The servant (*sings*)...

Safi: Master, would you like me to sing you a Russian song?

Marjan bey: Let's hear you sing!

Music

Safi (*sings*): Sing, swallow, sing! (*Finishes singing*).

Another servant: Master, do you want me to sing a Georgian song?

Marjan bey: Sing! Sing!

Music

The servant (*sings*):

I beseech the mother who gave you birth,
She gave you birth, and got me in trouble...

Marjan bey:

All of these songs are fine, but now sing something of our own Caucasian songs!

Music

Choir:

We hear you have let khanim go,
And that you were left alone when khanim went away.
Oh Marjan bey, oh Marjan bey, oh Marjan bey!

Curtain

Act Three

(The same room. This time the room is decorated. There are many guests. A tar player and a singer are sitting on one side; music is being played. As the curtain goes up, Marjan bey enters, wearing splendid clothes. The guests start singing when they see him.)

Music

The guests

Tell us, Marjan,
What's this wedding all about?
Didn't you have A wife before?
Ey... What did you do with Minnat khanim?
Now you're again
Getting married Marjan?!

Music

Marjan bey

God's creatures,
I divorced Minnat.

I gave her the divorce papers
She married someone else.
Ey...Karbalayi Gubad married Minnat.
And now I'm marrying another woman.

One of the guests

Well, of course it's easy for you, you're rich. You can marry and divorce three women a day.

Marjan bey

No man, believe me, it's not about money. It's about my heart.

The guests: That's right. That's right.

Marjan bey

Now, my dear friends, the day has come when (*he is on the verge of tears*) when I found the one my heart desired, I have reached my dream. May you reach your dreams, too (*Wipes his eyes*). My new wife hasn't shown her face to me yet. She said she will show her face to me among guests. So I ask you not to move anywhere until the bride comes. Just sit here, eat, drink and enjoy yourselves; today is a happy day, so you all have to be happy.

The guests: Long live Marjan bey!

Music. (They sing)

We don't have anything else to do but enjoy ourselves,
Thank God, we have no sorrow anymore.
Marjan has been successful, marrying a new woman,
His enemies couldn't defeat him,
We don't have anything else to do but enjoy ourselves,
Thank God, we have no sorrow anymore.

Marjan bey

Thank you, brothers, thank you! Now I'm going to prepare myself a little bit and you just enjoy yourselves.

The guests: Of course! Of course! (*Marjan leaves*).

One of the guests

Where's the singer? Where's the tar player? Boy, play us the mugham "Bayati-kurd" and let the singer sing.

The tar player plays "Bayati-kurd", the singer sings, they say "meykhana" (like rap music) and play cards.

Music

Choir:

My wise brother, it's enough, wake up from your dream.
Don't sleep, wake up and see what's separating you from all,
Oh, God, dear God, oh God, dear God,
Take a lesson, show honor and see what times these are.

Music

Open up your wise eye and look at this world!
Look at all these educated people, there are so many of them in our time!
Oh God, dear God, oh God, dear God,
Take a lesson, show honor and see what period it is.

(*Music is being played. A dancer performs. When the dance is over, the light from the torches is seen at the door and the sound of zurna, a national wind instrument.*)

The guests: The bride is coming! (*They all go to the door*).

Marjan bey (*enters quickly, he is very well dressed*):

Oh! (*waves his hands near his face as if he is hot*). No, I think I won't be able to go on tonight. By God, I'm too much influenced by the woman's karma. Puff! It's so hot!

(*The doors fling open and they bring the bride in with much fanfare. Minnat khanim comes and sits in the middle with her face veiled. Marjan bey moves around her.*)

Minnat khanim

I promised to show my face among the guests, so now I'll keep my promise.

(*The guests gather around khanim and watch attentively. Everybody looks at Minnat quietly. First Minnat khanim takes off her chador. Then the scarf on her head. Each time Marjan bey shows his impatience. He often changes the position. Finally, Minnat khanim takes off her veil and looks at Marjan bey.*)

Marjan bey: Minnat!

Minnat khanim: Yes!

Marjan bey: Is that you?

Minnat khanim: Yes, that's me... Marjan!

Marjan bey: Yes!

Minnat khanim: Is that you?

Marjan bey

Yes, that's me! Oh my God! This is my very own first wife. People, this is Minnat! No, no, it can't be! A trick has been played on me (*Everybody stands up in surprise*). No, you can't do this to me! You can't deceive a person like me! Who is it, tell me right away, who is playing with me?

(*Karbalayi Gubad enters separating the people.*)

Karbalayi Gubad

Marjan bey, give me the 3,000 manats and I'll take my wife home. But please, be quick, I want to buy some land for a store today.

Marjan bey (*loud*)

You cruel! You're the one who deceived me. You destroyed my home and now you want money from me?! Folks, don't hold me back, I'll kill this man. Let me go, don't hold me, I'll shed his blood right now, this action of his brings me dishonor. Don't hold me, where is my "aferski" ["gun" in Russian] Where is it? Where?

Karbalayi Gubad

What is he talking about? Are you mad or what? You want to use trickery on me...Give me the money right away or I'll bring a notary now and take away your house. I've married your wife!

Marjan bey: You stupid, man, here's my wife, she is here, here!

Karbalayi Gubad: Oh Dear! Then who is the woman I married?

Marjan bey: How do I know who she is!

Karbalayi Gubad: Let me bring that woman here.

(*He goes. The people laugh, holding their stomachs.*)

Marjan bey

Why are you laughing? Are you laughing at me? Are you teasing me? You traitors, you all are old foxes! (*laughter*). You are all cheaters and swindlers! [*spoken in Russian*]. No, no, this grief will kill me (*collapses onto the table*).

Karbalayi Gubad (*enters with Gulpari next to him*)

Who is this then, isn't she your wife?

Marjan bey

This is Gulpari, damn you! You have confused the women.

Karbalayi Gubad

Oh no, my home is destroyed! May yours be destroyed, too, Marjan bey! What kind of trick was it you played on me! People, I ran away to the city, leaving my own wife in the village. Now I am bound with another woman here. And I have put 200 manats for dowry. I was going to buy a land for a store.

Marjan bey

May your home be destroyed, Karbalayi Gubad!

Man, but you were going to marry my wife?

(*A woman enters from behind the curtain, shouting and holding a stick in her hand.*)

The woman: Where is that stupid Karbalayi Gubad? Man, you're marrying another woman while being married to me? May your beard fallout! (*Hits Karbalayi Gubad with a stick and several times she accidentally hits Marjan bey. The woman leaving*).

Karbalayi Gubad, I won't be a woman if I leave even a hair on your beard (*The guests hold her back and don't let her hit him. They see her off*). I'm going now, I'll see you later, if God wills.

(*The woman leaves. Karbalayi Gubad and Marjan bey start crying, each seating on one side.*)

Minnat khanim

Marjan! How are you? Are you well? You traitor, you wanted to sell me! Me! Now get what you deserve. (*To Gubad*). Aren't you ashamed of your manliness that you wanted to buy another person's wife? Didn't you find some other business?! Now get what you deserve!

Music

The guests

Congratulations on your wedding
Your wedding, Marjan, hey, Marjan!
Man, aren't you ashamed?
You're disgraced like this!

Marjan bey

How could I know who...

Karbalayi Gubad

How could I know who...

Marjan bey

Who was under the chador.

Karbalayi Gubad

Who was under the chador.

Choir

How could I know
Who was under the chador.
Marjan, Marjan,
Kabla Gubad, hey!

Music

Choir

Congratulations on your wedding
Your wedding, Marjan, hey, Marjan!
Man, aren't you ashamed?
That you've been disgraced like this!

Marjan bey

How could I know who...

Karbalayi Gubad

How could I know who...

Marjan bey

Who was under the chador.

Karbalayi Gubad

Who was under the chador.

Choir

How could I know

Who was under the chador.

Marjan, Marjan,

Kabla Gubad, hey!

Curtain - END