



**Libretto - O Olmasin, Bu Olsun
(If Not That One, Then This One)
Musical Comedy (1911)
by Uzeyir Hajibeyov**

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Dramatis Personae:

*Rustam bey – 45, a landlord who has run into debt
Gulchohra – 15, Rustam bey’s daughter, who is in love with Sarvar
Sarvar – 25, a student who is in love with Gulnaz
Sanam – 30, servant, widow
Mashadi Ibad – 50, a rich merchant who wants to marry Gulnaz
Hasangulu bey – 40, a nationalist, Rustam bey’s friend
Reza bey – 40, a publisher, Rustam bey’s friend
Hasan bey – 40, a member of the intelligentsia, Rustam bey’s friend
Asgar – 30, a rogue
The porter
Mashadi Gazanfar – a bathhouse owner
Usta¹ Maharram – a barber
Karbalyay² Nasir – a guy who works in the market
The bathhouse employees
Rogues
People in the market and others*

Act I

*Inside Rustam bey’s house, a well-decorated room with a table, chairs and armchairs.
When the curtain rises, all of the actors are standing in a row singing.*

Music

Everybody:

What is this word that everybody is saying (2)

That Leyli became someone else's lover? (2)

Music

This legend is all in vain (2)

That everybody is speaking about. (2)

Majnun and Leyli must have

Given their souls to each other. (2)

Music

A true lover doesn't have (2)

Either a rival or a foe. (2)

Music

This legend is all in vain (2)

That everybody is speaking about. (2)

Majnun and Leyli must have

Given their souls to each other. (2)

The curtain falls. Everybody goes away, leaving just Sarvar and Gulnaz. Segah is played in tar, the curtain rises.

Sarvar: (sings)

Ask the value of the cure for joining from the one who is ill with separation,

Ask the purity of the wish from the one who is longing to meet.

Gulnaz:

Don't ask strangers about your secrets,

Ask this hidden point from the one who is aware of secrets.

Sarvar:

How can someone who is ignorant understand the case of those whose eyes are full of tears,

Ask the secret of the stars from those who are sleepless from night till morning.

Gulnaz:

I burnt like a candle because of my longing for you, don't ask about my case from the breeze,

Ask about this case of mine from the one who kept me company during the nights of separation.

Sarvar:

*An ignorant hermit is unaware of love's delight,
Fuzuli, ask the taste of love from the one who has a taste for love.*

(Taken from Fuzuli's gazal.)

Gulnaz: *Sarvar, I see you are very cheerless today, what happened?*

Sarvar: *You're right, I've been thoughtful since yesterday.*

Gulnaz: *What happened? Tell me.*

Sarvar: *Your father wants to marry you off to someone else.*

Gulnaz: *(with fear) Who says that?*

Sarvar: *I do, I have learned it from a reliable source.*

Gulnaz: *But my father hasn't told me anything yet.*

Sarvar: *Maybe he'll tell you today. Why should he tell you anything about it? Your duty is to listen to what he says.*

Gulnaz: *(angrily) No, no, I won't marry anyone else except for you. Let him kill me, I've loved you and I'll marry you.*

Sarvar: *But that husband is richer than I am.*

Gulnaz: *To hell with him!*

Sarvar: *He's more handsome than I am.*

Gulnaz: *I don't care!*

Sarvar: *He's younger than I am.*

Gulnaz: *Let him be even a child, I don't care.*

Sarvar: *(laughs) I'm lying, my beauty, Gulnaz! It's true that this man is a thousand times richer than I am, but he is old himself. He's at least 50. You'll get frightened if you see him.*

Gulnaz: *Look, I can't stand it anymore. Right away I'll tell my father that I love you and won't marry anybody else except for you.*

Sarvar: *No, Gulnaz. Don't do that. Listen to what I'm telling you, or else things won't turn out OK. I know that your father has run into debt and needs money badly. With this relationship, he wants to eat up some money from this man whose name is Mashadi Ibad. But that's OK, let him eat up some money from him. Don't say anything to your father, and if he tells you anything about this, just tell him that he knows better. Don't worry about the rest, I've thought of a way out to this matter.*

Gulnaz: *(sadly) How can I agree with him when he marries me off to someone else?*

Sarvar: *Don't worry about that. Nobody else can marry you except for me. You just listen to what I'm telling you.*

Sanam enters.

Sanam: *May that day come that I dance at your wedding party.*

Sarvar: *Inshallah, you'll dance very soon.*

Sanam: *(gets happy) What? Are you going to marry very soon?*

Sarvar: *No, I'm not. Rustam bey is marrying Gulnaz off to someone else.*

Sanam: *(sadly) What! What are you talking about? Who is that husband?*

Sarvar: *He's an old man.*

Sanam: *My God! To hell with him. How can a beautiful girl like her marry an old man?*

Sarvar: *That's OK, I'll straighten things out another way. Gulnaz, don't be sad. Don't worry. Who has the right to separate a lover from his beloved?*

Music

All three of them together:

What a legend this is (2)

That everybody is speaking about. (2)

Majnun and Leyli must have

Given their souls to each other. (2)

Something is heard from behind the door.

Sanam: *Whoops, looks like the master is coming. (Runs to the door and looks.) My God, the master is coming. Get up, and run away!*

Sarvar: *(hastily) Gulnaz, bye for now. Listen to what I told you, don't tell anything to your father.*

Gulnaz: *Bye.*

Sarvar leaves.

Music

Rustam bey: *(enters) My daughter, let me buy you a kerchief!*

Gulnaz: *Buy, Father, may I be a sacrifice to you!*

Rustam bey: *My daughter, let me buy you shoes!*

Gulnaz: *Buy, Father, may I be a sacrifice to you!*

Rustam bey: *My daughter, let me buy you socks!*

Gulnaz: *Buy, Father, may I be a sacrifice to you!*

Rustam bey: *My daughter... my daughter... let me marry you off!*

Gulnaz: *No, Father, may I be a sacrifice to you!*

No, Father, may I be a sacrifice to you!

Music

Rustam bey: *My daughter, are you saying no? I've found a husband for you who's very wealthy and is a very decent man himself. Even though he's a little older, he is such a nice person that you can hardly find someone else like him.*

Sanam: *No! He's not worth it if he's old! To hell with him and his wealth.*

Rustam bey: *Hey, shut up, don't talk! You can't understand such things, because you are an ignorant animal.*

Sanam: *No matter what kind of animal I am, I would have never married my young daughter off to an old man. Isn't that a pity! By God, now there are so many young guys dying for her that each of them is like Yusuf³.*

Rustam bey: *Don't marry when I give you to an old man! The daughter is mine and I know what to do. It's my decision to give her to a young guy or an old man. (To his daughter.) Do you agree, my daughter?*

Gulnaz: *What do I say? My duty is to listen to what my father is telling me, you know better.*

Rustam bey: *My clever daughter, my beautiful daughter! I knew from the beginning that you would listen to me. That's why I made a promise to that man who is coming here today to see you. And I'm allowing you to meet with him. Go and talk to him and don't be afraid!*

Sanam: *Are you saying that the damned man is so ugly that you can get frightened?*

Rustam bey: *You, don't talk!*

Sanam: *You're telling her not to get afraid and I am asking if...*

Rustam bey: *Shut up your mouth!*

Sanam: *What am I saying, I'm shutting up...*

Rustam bey: *You, animal, I'm telling you not to talk! (Raises his voice louder and louder as speaks.)*

Sanam: *Now what did I say that got you angry?*

Rustam bey: *You renegade's daughter, don't talk. You are a servant, so act like a servant!*

Sanam: *But what am I saying? Did I say anything bad?*

Rustam bey: *Shut up!*

Sanam: *But what am I saying? I'm shutting up...*

Rustam bey: *(very loudly) Let me do my business!*

Sanam: *What am I doing to you?*

Rustam bey: *(more loudly) Girl!*

There is a tap at the door.

Rustam bey: *Come here, that's apparently the man. (They all get up and go.)*

Music

Mashadi Ibad: *(enters, alone)*

No matter how old I am,

I am worth a thousand young guys.

I won't eat bread alone,

I won't call something that's bad good,

I'll sacrifice my wealth, money and soul

To my sweetheart.

Come, khanim, come to me,

Come, my soul, come to me,

Come, my sweetheart, come to me,

Come, please come, please come, please come. (2)

My lamb, come to me,

I'll give my soul to my sweetheart.

I'll sacrifice my wealth, money and soul

To my sweetheart.

Music

Rustam bey: *(enters)*

Mashadi Ibad, you are welcome to us, you made us happy!

Tell me what happened that you remembered us?

Mashadi Ibad:

*Man, I swear, I remember you more than anybody else,
You give your daughter to me and see how I'll make you happy.*

Music is played, both dance.

Rustam bey:

*Tell me now,
Is your pocket full of money?
Come, let me give you my daughter,
What do you have to do with widows?*

Mashadi Ibad:

*Man, I swear, I'll give you
As much money as you want.
You give me your daughter
And see how I'll make you happy.*

Music is played, both dance.

Mashadi Ibad: *Should I give you money?*

Rustam bey: *Do!*

Mashadi Ibad: *Will you give your daughter to me?*

Rustam bey: *I will!*

Mashadi Ibad: *Should I give it soon?*

Rustam bey: *Do!*

Mashadi Ibad: *Will you give her soon?*

Rustam bey: *I will!*

Mashadi Ibad: *Then swear!*

Rustam bey: *I swear!*

Mashadi Ibad: *Then? (2)*

Rustam bey: *Give me your hand! (2)*

Music is played, both dance.

Mashadi Ibad: *Now give me your final word. Are you giving the girl to me? If not, then I'll go marry another girl and say that if not that one, then this one.*

Rustam bey: *I am a man who keeps his word. But you should also do some preparations in advance. (Makes a sign for money with his hand.)*

Mashadi Ibad: *Is 1,000 manats enough for you?*

Rustam bey: *Add another 1,000 to it.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Man, but there's going to be a lot of expenses for the wedding.*

Rustam bey: *You are right, but what can I do? If you were a little younger, this thing would have cost you less. But pity that you are old, you are to blame.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Man, by God, no matter how old I am, I am worth a thousand young guys. What are you talking about? Here's 1,500 manats, I'll give you the rest later. (Takes out money and gives it to him.)*

Rustam bey: *That's OK. (Takes the money.) No problem.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Now I want to see the girl, to talk to her. What do you say?*

Rustam bey: *I don't say anything. Take a seat, I'll send the girl right away. (Goes.)*

Mashadi Ibad: *(alone) It's not a joke, I'm giving out bunches of money. Now let me see how the material is. Is it worth the money that I'm giving out? I want her to be someone that I deserve. Or else, it makes no difference for me, if not that one, then this one.*

(Silence.) Man, I just could not understand the reason why people call me old. By God, apparently people have bad vision. Here is the mirror and here I am. (Looks at the mirror.) Thank God my teeth are all in their places, all in line and my beard is pitch black. (Looks attentively.) Looks like there is one gray hair here. I better take it out. (Pulls it.) Damned! Obviously, the animal's son barber has not dyed it carefully with henna. (Takes it out.) Puf! Be off, charlatan! Yes, the old man is the one who has no teeth and can neither see nor hear. Thank God, I'm like a bird. Let me say "mashallah" so I don't get evil eyes. And I am hardly 50. (Looks at the mirror and adjusts himself here and there.) Now how should I wear the hat so that the girl likes it? If I put it like this, (puts it aslant) then the girl will get afraid, she'll think that I am one of Baku's rogues. If I put it like this, (brings it down to his eyebrows) then the girl will get startled, she'll think that I'm one of Garabagh's cotton landlords. If I put it like this, (draws it down to the back of his head) then the girl will hate me, she'll think that I'm a Ganja gambler. If I put it like this, (puts it at the top of his head) then I'll look like a Shamakhi swindler. Then how should I wear it? The best thing is not to wear it at all, then the girl will like it, she'll think that I'm an educated man. Indeed, I'm a little educated, because Russians have had a lot of bargains with me, I've even learned Russian from them. For example, "ishto katu" (chto khochesh - what do you want), "bajaluska" (pojaluysta - please, you're welcome, here you are), "funt vosim gapik" (funt vosem kopeek - a pound for eight gapiks), "menshi nelza" (menshe nelzya - no less than this). (He hears something.) OK, looks like the girl is coming, I have to look serious now. (He sits on the armchair with his legs folded.)

Gulnaz and Sanam enter.

Gulnaz: *Oh, my God, I'm afraid of this man!*

Sanam: *God, what an ugly man!*

Mashadi Ibad: *(aside) It looks like they're afraid of me. That's OK, it's better if women are afraid of men. (To them.) Now tell me which of you is the khanim, which of you the servant.*

Sanam: *I am the servant, she's the khanim. (They sit down.)*

Mashadi Ibad: *Very nice, very good. (Aside.) The servant is not so bad either, but the words fail me about the khanim. She's worth the money that I gave out for her. (Silence. Nobody says a word. Suddenly Mashadi Ibad stares towards Gulnaz' hair and looks at it attentively.) Khanim, since your hair is so black, apparently you also dye it with henna like me.*

Gulnaz: *No, I don't dye it with henna.*

Mashadi Ibad: *You don't say! Since I dye my beard with henna, I thought you were doing the same with your hair. (Aside.) I shouldn't have talked about henna, now was not the right time for it.*

Gulnaz: *My hair hasn't turned gray yet, so I don't need henna.*

Sanam: *Thank God, she hasn't grown old.*

Mashadi Ibad: *(hastily)* No, khanim, my beard hasn't turned gray either. My beard is always pitch black whether I dye it with henna or not. But I've sort of gotten used to it, and the Persians also say that "quitting something that you are used to can bring you sickness". Let the souls of your deceased ones rest in peace, my late mother used to say that she'd have a headache when she didn't dye her hair in time.

Gulnaz: *Then your beard also hurts when you don't dye it in time.*

Mashadi Ibad: Yes, it does. It hurts so badly. And let me tell you, the grayness of one's hair or beard doesn't prove his being old. Look, I've seen a two-year-old Russian kid whose hair was as white as snow. Nevertheless, you can't call a two-year-old kid old. And pay attention to my head, do you see even a single gray hair there? *(Shows them his head.)*

Gulnaz: *There's not even a single black hair there.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Then it shows that men are different. I swear by both of your lives, now the world has changed so that today's old people are a thousand times better than the youth. For example, I've read half of the book "Nadir's History", that's why I have a good knowledge about the science of wisdom. The uglier one's outside, the more beautiful his inside. There's a saying that goes "if not that one, then this one". Of course, it doesn't hurt, if not youth, then money. Money is such a thing that makes an old man young, and being without money makes a young man old.*

Sanam: *It looks like you have a lot of money.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Thank God, I'm doing fine. (He takes an abbasi⁵ out of his pocket.) Here you go, keep this abbasi, you might need it, you might buy some gum with it to chew.*

Sanam: *No, thank you. If I need money, my master will give it to me.*

Mashadi Ibad: *OK, that's another matter. (He puts the money back into his pocket.) She's not a bad woman. (To her.) Tell me, do you have a husband?*

Sanam: *No, I don't.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Very good. (Aside.) If I knew this from the beginning, I would have married her first, then the khanim. (To her.) How are you? Are you living well?*

Sanam: *Thank God, I am fine.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Very nice. (To Gulnaz.) Khanim, why don't you talk?*

Gulnaz: *I am listening.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Very nice. Listening is a good thing too. (Aside.) What a nice place I am in, by God, one beauty on this side, another on another side. The poet has said very beautifully that... (Sings.)*

Music

*I wish I were walking in the garden of beauty,
And picking up flowers and spikes there.
I wish I saw a beauty like you
In that garden.*

Gulnaz and Sanam:

*You'll look at her flower-like cheek and become tipsy,
And say to yourself that you've never seen such a feast, I swear.*

Music

*You decrepit man, why would you need a 15-year-old girl?
Aren't you afraid that you'll get yourself into trouble in the end?
A 100-year-old widow would be a good match for you, you blockhead.
Even a dog won't lick your face if he sees you, I swear.*

Music

Mashadi Ibad:

*I see that you are looking at me too much,
I'm afraid that you'll lose your control at the end.*

Gulnaz and Sanam:

*If you want, let me tell you the truth,
An old man like you doesn't deserve a girl, I swear.*

Gulnaz: *(They get up.) Bye for now, we're leaving.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Thank you, let you be under God's protection! (They leave.) A crazy devil tells me to marry them both.*

Rustam bey: *(enters) How was it? Did you like the girl?*

Mashadi Ibad: *I liked the girl and even her servant.*

Rustam bey: *Take your hands off your 500 or 600 manats and I'll present her to you, also.*

Mashadi Ibad: *No, that's talk for later on. OK, I'm leaving for now.*

Rustam bey: *No, Mashadi, wait a little.*

Mashadi Ibad: *What is it?*

Rustam bey: *(with fake devotion) Mashadi Ibad, I don't say it to your face, but keep this in your mind that I am very proud of becoming relatives with you. That's why we should celebrate it. I've called some of my friends; they're coming right now, we'll sit and talk.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Rustam bey! A lot of people wanted to be relatives with me—even the governor's translator, Jafar bey's cousin Dashdamir bey, who owes me 2,000 manats, usury of which makes 836 manats and 14 shahis⁶, told me the other day that his daughter has been born and he'll give her to me after she grows up. But I don't want to be relatives with anybody that comes in front of me. Anyway, who are your guests?*

Rustam bey: *One of them is the nationalist Hasangulu bey, whom you know.*

Mashadi Ibad: *I know him very well, he owes me 200 manats.*

Rustam bey: *One is the publisher Reza, whom you know as well; another one is the rogue Asgar, you know him too. Then the next one is intelligent Hasan, whom I don't think you know. Because he's a little weird, he has studied a lot and that's why, I think, his head has gotten messed up. (There's a knock at the door.) OK, here they are. Come on in! Come on in!*

The door opens and Hasangulu bey, Reza, Asgar, Hasan and the chorus enter. They stand three by three in the middle of the stage and sing as though they're talking amongst themselves.

Music

Hasangulu bey: *They say that there's going to be a wedding.*

Reza bey: *That Mashadi Ibad is going to marry a girl.*

Asgar: *Tell me when the wedding is going to be.*

Hasan bey: *Is there really going to be a wedding?*

Everybody: *Then when, when is the wedding going to be? (2)*

Rustam bey: *God willing, the wedding is going to be very soon.*

Reza bey: *Tell me when the wedding is going to be.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Inshallah, the wedding is going to be very soon.*

Hasan bey: *Is there really going to be a wedding?*

Everybody: *But when, when is the wedding going to be? (2)*

Hasangulu bey: *Obviously, in this wedding...*

Everybody: *In this wedding...*

Hasan bey: *In this, in this, in this wedding...*

Everybody:

The pockets will become full of money. (2)

But when, when is the wedding going to be? (2)

Music

Rustam bey: *Gentlemen! You know the whole story. I am marrying off my only daughter to this man.*

Reza bey: *(aside) Not to this man, but to this man's money.*

Rustam bey: *And I consider this relationship to be...*

Reza bey: *A rucksack of money for myself.*

Rustam bey: *A great honor for myself.*

Everybody: *Of course, of course. Let God give his blessings! Congratulations!*

The servants enter and set the table, putting bottles, glasses and snacks on it.

Rustam bey: *Gentlemen! Please come to the table, let's wet our throats a little.*

Everybody sits except for Mashadi Ibad.

Reza bey: *What about Mashadi Ibad?*

Mashadi Ibad: *No, excuse me, I'm on a diet. You go on, I'll sit right here. (He sits on an armchair in one corner.)*

Hasangulu bey: *Gentlemen! I ask you to fill your glasses and let me say some words.*

Everybody: *Please, go ahead!*

Hasangulu bey: *Gentlemen! You know that this world is getting worse and worse day by day. I want to say that this world is getting more and more corrupt day by day, that everybody's heart gets out of its way and is filled with different sorts of ruses. That's why I want to say that it's very difficult to find an honest and open-hearted person in this world.*

Mashadi Ibad: *(aside) Especially a idiot like me who gave you 250 manats and can't get it back even two years later.*

Hasangulu bey: *That's why I want to say that it's such a great happiness to see at least one frank and honest person among so many envious and distrustful people. Now I want to say that that very Mashadi Ibad who is sitting aloof is the greatest of those very open-hearted people, that's why let's raise this toast to him.*

Everybody: *Long live, long live, Mashadi Ibad!*

Asgar: *(gets up, speaking very loudly) One day at 9 o'clock in the evening I was going to the market. Then I saw that someone was coming after me. I went on a little more, I saw that the person was still coming after me. I thought that he might be my enemy and took a pistol out of my belt immediately. (Shows it.) I raised the pistol and told him to stop. Then I saw that the person who was coming after me darted away. I told him to stop, I told him to stop, he did not. Then I shot into the air and saw that he fell down. I said to myself: "Let me go and see who he is." Then I saw that it was this very Mashadi Ibad. I thought I had killed the man. But thank God the bullet had passed by. (Goes up to Mashadi Ibad.) Thank you, Mashadi Ibad! I drink this to you.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Thank you very much. (aside) Was it the right time to mention that thing?*

Reza bey: *(gets up, speaks in Ottoman Turkish) Gentlemen, I need your permission to say some words. (Nobody says a word as they don't understand what he's saying.) Gentlemen, you are keeping silent, aren't you allowing me to make a speech? (Again nobody says a word.) Gentlemen, if you don't answer me once again, I'll consider this silence of yours as a big insult for myself. I'm waiting, gentlemen. (Again nobody says a word.) Rustam bey, if you had an intention to insult me, why are you doing it in your home, wouldn't it be better to do it somewhere else?*

Rustam bey: *Thank you very much, I'm very pleased.*

Reza bey: *(angrily, in our own language) My dears, don't you understand what I'm saying? Or is this an insult? Or are you joking? Then I won't sit here. (Puts on his hat hastily.)*

Rustam bey: *Reza bey, where are you going?*

Reza bey: *My dear, I'm not one of those who accept jokes, I've been asking for your permission to say some words for ten minutes, but you don't even say a word. This is a big insult, I'll write this in my newspaper tomorrow.*

Hasangulu bey: *Say so, you've been asking for our permission? Man, by God, I thought that you were making a speech, I couldn't understand.*

Others: *By God, we didn't understand either.*

Mashadi Ibad: *After all, your speech is so complicated that no one can understand what you're saying. I myself have read half of the book "Nadir's History", but still I don't understand your language. What can these uneducated people do?*

Rustam bey gets up and asks Reza to sit.

Rustam bey: *Please, don't disappoint us, excuse us, we didn't understand, we are uneducated people.*

Hasan bey: *(gets up, saying half of his words in Russian) Gentlemen, let me also say some words about Rustam bey.*

Everybody: *Please, go ahead.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Let's see what this one will say?*

Hasan bey: *Gentlemen! Plato said that man is a social animal.*

Mashadi Ibad: *You are an animal!*

Hasan bey: *The well-known scientist Darwin proved this to everybody that man has developed from the ape. In order to agree with these words of Darwin, it's not necessary to go to Africa and look at "bushmens" and "kotnintots" there. But it's enough to look at Mashadi Ibad, who's sitting in our party. (Everybody bends his head down.) I don't mean to insult Mashadi Ibad with these words, and I look like an ape, but not so much. But Mashadi Ibad is the orangutan himself. I'm repeating again that my aim is not to insult Mashadi Ibad, I'm just wondering what Rustam bey likes about Mashadi Ibad that he's marrying his beautiful daughter, Mademoiselle Gulnaz, off to him. His beauty? No! I already mentioned that Mashadi Ibad is ugly.*

Mashadi Ibad: *You renegade's son. He should be knocked down and hit in the mouth.*

Hasan bey: *His being young? No! Mashadi Ibad is old. Then what is it? Is it Mashadi Ibad's money and wealth? No, no, Rustam bey is not craving for money. Then what is it at last? Let me tell you right now. Look, we're sitting here and drinking wine, but Mashadi Ibad doesn't. That means Mashadi Ibad is what? It means that Mashadi Ibad is a true Moslem, so I think that Rustam bey is marrying his daughter off to Mashadi Ibad for his being a true Moslem, that's why long live Rustam bey.*

Everybody: *(in a low voice) Long live, long live!*

Reza bey: *Good for you for such a speech.*

Hasangulu bey: *There's no need for more speeches. Let's get up.*

Everybody: *Let's get up. (They get up.)*

Asgar: *Isn't it time to slowly go away?*

Everybody: *Yes, it's time.*

Hasangulu bey: *Rustam bey, bye. (Shakes his hand.) Mashadi Ibad, bye. (Shakes his hand, too.)*

Asgar: *Rustam bey, bye. Mashadi Ibad, bye.*

Hasan bey: *Rustam bey, bye. Mashadi Ibad, bye. (Wants to shake his hand.)*

Mashadi Ibad: *(angrily) Go to hell, you renegade! You call me an ape and then want to shake hands with me?*

Rustam bey: *What happened? What happened?*

Hasan bey: *Let me at him, let me at him. I'll show this scoundrel.*

Everybody comes together trying to set them apart saying: "What happened? What happened?" A scandal is raised.

Music

Hasan bey:

I'm not a peer to you, I'll blow your head (2)

So that it'll ruin into pieces, be off from here! (2)

Hasangulu bey:

Hey man, Hasan, isn't that enough? Shame on you, (2)

That you are fighting, being an intelligent person. (2)

Mashadi Ibad:

Let me beat this renegade black and blue, (2)

Being an ape himself, he calls me an ape. (2)

Everybody:

Hey man, this behavior is shameful for you. (2)

It's bad to fight in someone else's home,

It's bad to fight in someone else's home.

It doesn't become you, it doesn't become you,

Doesn't become you, become you, become you...

Act II

Rustam bey's yard and in the street. Rustam bey's yard is surrounded by walls. Sarvar and Gulnaz are seen in the yard when the curtain rises. Music is played before the curtain rises.

Sarvar:

I wonder if there is a remedy for the sorrow of love in the world,

This is that same love that made a loafer out of Majnun.

Gulnaz:

This is that same love that made Farhad drill the mountain,

But his pickax brought misfortune to that poor guy.

Music

Both together:

Flowers bloomed everywhere,

As the spring reached.

Music

Flowers bloomed everywhere,

As the spring reached.

Nightingale moaned and growled,

And sang wailing. (2)

Music

*As the nightingale saw the thorn,
He told him: "You are merciless!"*

Music

*As the nightingale saw the thorn,
He told him: "You are merciless!
"There's no fire of love in you,
"Steer clear of my wailing." (2)*

Music

The lover is the one who has given his soul to his beloved.

Music

*The lover is the one who has given his soul to his beloved.
If he hasn't given his soul to his beloved, he can't be a lover for her. (2)*

Mashadi Ibad crosses the street and stops by the wall with a kerchief in his hand that has apples and pears in it.

Mashadi Ibad: *I'm afraid that I'll have to come to see my fiancée secretly at night. But even at daytime it's difficult to cross over this wall. Ya Allah! (He wants to cross over the wall, but can't.) No, it looks like it won't be possible. Let me call a porter so that he can lie under my feet and I can climb this wall. (Calls.) Hey, porter!*

Porter: *(runs up to him) What, Mashadi? What's your load? (He takes out his rope.)*

Mashadi Ibad: *(Takes one abbasi out of his pocket.) Take this abbasi, lie under my feet.*

Porter: *Mashadi, are you going to a burglary?*

Mashadi Ibad: *Shut up, stupid! I'm going to see my fiancée.*

Porter: *Mashadi, let God give you strength, but be careful so you don't make me a cripple by breaking my back. (He lies down. Mashadi Ibad gets on his back and looks over the wall.)*

Mashadi Ibad: *Hey, porter, give that kerchief to me.*

Porter: *Mashadi, you'll fall down if I stir.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Wait a second! (Gets off his back and picks up the kerchief. When he gets on the porter's back again, the kerchief opens and the apples and pears scatter onto the ground.)*

Mashadi Ibad: *(looks over the wall.) The girl is there. And there's a guy with her. I wonder who he is.*

Gulnaz: *(seeing him) Oh my God! Who is he? I'm running away. (She runs away.)*

Mashadi Ibad: *(to Sarvar) Hey, boy, who are you?*

Sarvar: *And who are you?*

Mashadi Ibad: *I'm Mashadi Ibad!*

Sarvar: *And I'm Sarvar!*

Mashadi Ibad: *Then what are you doing over there?*

Sarvar: *Then what are you doing over there?*

Mashadi Ibad: *I've come to see my fiancée.*

Sarvar: *And I've come to see my fiancée.*

Porter: *Mashadi, you've crippled my back.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Wait a second, let me see what he's saying. Brave boy, whose fiancé are you?*

Sarvar: *Brave boy, and whose fiancé are you?*

Mashadi Ibad: *I'm Rustam bey's daughter Gulnaz khanim's fiancé.*

Sarvar: *And I'm Rustam bey's daughter Gulnaz khanim's fiancé.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Shut up, stupid! What right do you have to mention my fiancée's name?*

Sarvar: *You are stupid for climbing the wall.*

Porter: *Mashadi, you broke my back, get down.*

Mashadi Ibad: *May you be sacrificed to this porter under my feet, otherwise I'd show you. (He gets down.)*

Sarvar: *That wasn't bad, let's see what its end is going to be?*

Porter: *Mashadi, you've broken my back, you'll have to give me one more abbasi.*

Mashadi Ibad: *(to the porter) I don't understand what this is.*

Porter: *Mashadi, it looks like the girl has two candidates.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Man, being a true fiancé of the girl, I remain on this side of the wall and some rogue remains there? You, unfaithful woman! (He is drowned in his thoughts.)*

Music

Mashadi Ibad: *(sings Rast⁷ in Persian)*

*I didn't know from the beginning that you were unfaithful,
It's better not to promise at all than to promise at first and then break it.
(From Sa'di.)*

Music

No, I'm not one of those Majnuns, I'll go and gather the rogues here right now. (He leaves.)

Gulnaz and Sarvar come out and sing.

Sarvar: *(sings Shikastayi Fars⁷)*

*You angel-face, everybody except for you adores you,
God knows that whoever is a human won't call you a human being.
Whoever doesn't give his soul to you won't find eternal life,
The eternal man is called the one who is a sacrifice to you.
(Taken from Fuzuli's gazal.)*

Gulnaz and Sarvar: *(sing Tasnif⁷)*

My beauty, you are my

Music

Sweet one and bosom friend.

Music

*I am not sorrowful anymore,
Thank you very much, God!
We didn't become sacrifices to the enemy. (2)*

Music

You are mine and I'm yours.

Music

We can't belong to others.

Music

*One soul belongs to one body only,
Thank you very much, God!
We didn't become sacrifices to the enemy. (2)*

Music

*I found a remedy for my sorrow,
There are no more pangs left. (2)
At last we've reached our delight,
Thank you very much, God!
We didn't become sacrifices to the enemy. (2)
Sacrifices to the enemy, sacrifices to the enemy.*

The rogue Asgar and other people come and stand behind the wall with Mashadi Ibad and look.

Mashadi Ibad: *Do you hear? He's singing bayati⁸.
They look through the holes of the wall.*

Asgar: *Wow! The girl is singing too!*

Mashadi Ibad: *Now do you see how things have turned out to be?*

Asgar: *Mashadi Ibad, come here please. (He brings him forward and tells him something.) You'll just have to give me 2,000 manats, 1,000 will be mine and 1,000 my friends'.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Poor me, how can I give you that much money?*

Asgar: *You know better. If you want, we can leave and you'll be disgraced among the people. Nobody will make any bargains with you. We won't let an honorless man like you even be among us. Hey, let's go!*

Mashadi Ibad: *Look here. OK, I'll give you the money. Come and take it tomorrow, but first kill this guy, otherwise I will go mad when I hear his voice.*

Music

Rogues:

*Hey, who are you there? Open the door!
Open the door, let us come and kill you.*

Music

*The pistols are charged, we've got them ready.
Open the door, let us come and kill you.
Hey, who are you there? Open the door!
Open the door, let us come and see who it is.
Hey, who are you? Hey, open the door!
Open the door, let us come and kill you.*

Gulnaz:

*Ah, Sarvar, I'm afraid these guys might kill you.
Let's quickly run away from here, come on, be quick, let's go to another city.
Ah, Sarvar, I'm afraid,
Please don't open the door
Or else the rogue's bullet will kill you,
Come here, Sarvar, come!*

Rogues:

Open the door!

Sarvar:

*You tell me first
What do you want from me?
What do you need from this house,
From someone else's property?
I'm not afraid of you,
Do whatever you can!
You'd better go and
Mind your own business.*

Rogues:

*You are the one
Who's taking Mashadi Ibad's bride from him,
You are the one
Who's making people unhappy.
You are to blame for a lot of things,
We have to kill you
So that Mashadi will be pleased.
We get money from him,
And go have fun after it!*

Asgar: *(to rogues) Take out the pistols, be ready! Shoot when I say one, two, three!
Ready! One, two...*

Sarvar blows his whistle and calls the police. The rogues dart away immediately. Mashadi Ibad and the porter run away as well. Sarvar laughs.

Gulnaz: *Ah, my heart is ready to fall with fear.*

Sarvar: *Don't be afraid at all, come, let's go into the room. (They go.)*

Rustam bey appears in the street and is about to enter the yard.

Rustam bey: *Even though I took some money from Mashadi Ibad, I feel pity for Gulnaz. The poor girl will be unhappy. My daughter is not Mashadi Ibad's peer, but what can I do? Being without money is so bad. (He goes to enter the yard just as Sarvar comes out of it. Seeing each other, they exchange surprised looks.)*

Rustam bey: *Who are you? And what were you doing in my house?*

Sarvar: *I am a mere student and was not doing anything in your house.*

Gulnaz and Sanam come out.

Rustam bey: *(angrily) Tell me right now, how dare you come to my house?*

Gulnaz: *He will kill, he will kill all of us.*

Sanam: *God, have mercy on poor us!*

Sarvar: *I would have never come to your house if I weren't in love with your daughter and if she were not in love with me, too.*

Rustam bey: *(angrily) What are you talking about? How dare you? I'll smash your brain right now with a bullet.*

Sarvar: *I'll shoot that bullet.*

Rustam bey: *At whom?*

Sarvar: *At myself!*

Rustam bey: *What are you talking about?*

Sarvar: *I'll do it, because I won't live anymore after I kill Gulnaz.*

Rustam bey: *(angrily) You can't kill my daughter!*

Sarvar: *You won't be aware of that.*

Rustam bey: *Why?*

Sarvar: *Because first I'll kill you.*

Rustam bey: *(confused) What is this guy talking about, man? Is he crazy or something?*

Sarvar: *Look, you want to make this girl unhappy. But I—Sarvar—tell you—Rustam bey—that if you don't give the girl to me, then I'll shoot one bullet at you, one at the girl and one at myself. That's it. (He leaves.)*

Rustam bey: *Hey, son, look here! (Sarvar comes back.) But I've promised someone else, it's already too late.*

Sarvar: *If you agree to what I tell you, then I'll straighten things out.*

Rustam bey: *How will you straighten things out?*

Sarvar: *First, tell me if your anger has passed or not.*

Rustam bey: *It has.*

Sarvar bends and whispers something into his ear.

Rustam bey: *Man, come on, how can one do that?*
Sarvar: *I swear by your life. I am serious. do you agree?*
Rustam bey: *OK, I do. But what if it doesn't work?*
Sarvar: *Then give your daughter to whomever you please.*
Rustam bey: *Very good!*
Sarvar: *But don't say anything to Mashadi Ibad. Rush him to marry.*

Music

Rustam bey: *Very nice, sounds reasonable. We'll see.*
Sarvar: *Look, if it works, then everything will be OK, but if it doesn't...*

Music

Everybody: *Then Sarvar will be to blame. (2)*
Sarvar: *If I don't do things right,*
Rustam bey: *If you don't do things right,*
Sarvar: *If I can't do it,*
Rustam bey: *If you can't do it,*
Everybody: *Then Sarvar will be to blame. (2)*

Music is played, they dance and then go. Mashadi Ibad appears in the street looking very sad and downcast. Porter follows him.

Music

Mashadi Ibad: *(sings bayati)*
I became separated from my beloved,
I've taken my hands off my soul.
I've lost my head so that
I have even forgotten my own name.

Porter:
That village,
That village and this village.
The father who begot this son,
What a son you've left after yourself!
All the people in the street gather around them.

Mashadi Ibad:
Everything went upside down,
I was looking for a horse, but I even lost my saddle.
I believed a young girl,
And wasted 5,000 manats.

Music

People:

You were a friend before, why did you become a stranger now? (2)

Did that slender figure leave you and run away?

No, it can't be so, man,

It cannot be so.

Aman, aman, aman, aman,

No, it can't be so, man,

It cannot be so!

Mashadi Ibad:

If I had found this out earlier, I wouldn't have given away the money, (2)

I wouldn't have filled other people's pockets.

My dear Gulnaz, my dear Gulnaz!

Aman, aman, aman,

My dear Gulnaz, my dear Gulnaz!

People:

You thought you'd marry a young girl in your old age, (2)

You thought you'd bring a young girl to your home.

No, it can't be so.

Porter: *Mashadi, you've broken my back, give me one more abbasi.*

Mashadi Ibad: *(like a sick person) Boy, get away from here! I'm worried about something else and I see what your problem is. I wish I had the same problem as yours, thinking about one abbasi.*

Hasangulu bey comes.

Hasangulu bey: *Mashadi Ibad, salamun aleykum, what are people talking about, man? I heard that the girl has two fiancés.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Hasangulu bey, let's be fair now. Didn't Rustam bey, in your presence, say that he's giving his daughter to me?*

Hasangulu bey: *He did.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Didn't he invite me to his house later?*

Hasangulu bey: *He did.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Didn't you—guests—come there, too?*

Hasangulu bey: *We did.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Didn't you congratulate me in that party?*

Hasangulu bey: *We did.*

Mashadi Ibad: *And didn't someone call me an ape there?*

Hasangulu bey: *He did.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Didn't I fight with him?*

Hasangulu bey: *You did.*

Mashadi Ibad: *And didn't you calm us down?*

Hasangulu bey: *We did.*

Mashadi Ibad: *(loudly) Then what is this trick that Rustam bey is playing on me, having eaten up my 5,000 manats?*

Hasangulu bey: *Don't worry, it's easy to work this out. If you want, I can do it.*

Mashadi Ibad: *May God rest your father's soul in peace. Work it out, work it out, otherwise I'll be so mournful.*

Hasangulu bey: *Very nice, then be quick, give me 500 manats, because I need some money for this.*

Mashadi Ibad: *What? You want me to give you 500 manats?*

Hasangulu bey: *Of course, it won't be possible without money.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Man, by God, I've been ruined, I've been robbed, how can I give you this much money?*

Hasangulu bey: *You know better, but I suppose that the man who gave out 5,000 manats could give out 500, too. Five hundred is not more than what you gave out.*

Mashadi Ibad: *(taking out some money out of his armpit) When you became a miller, then call for wheat, Koroghlu!⁹ Here is 100, here is 200 and here's 300! You owe me 200, so it makes 500.*

Hasangulu bey: *OK! I'll do it now, but you should see publisher Reza, too, because Rustam bey is very afraid of newspapers. (Looks.) Oh, here he comes!*

Reza appears, greets Hasangulu bey by bending his head and goes up to Mashadi Ibad.

Reza bey: *Salamun aleykum, Mashadi. Man, what are people talking about? They say that the girl has two fiancés.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Reza bey, I have a request for you. Write this in your newspaper please—disgrace Rustam bey. I ask you very much.*

Reza bey: *I'm sorry, Mashadi, I can't do that.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Why?*

Reza bey: *Because that kind of thing is opposite to my ideas. This is your own business, what concern of people is this that I'll write it in the newspaper?*

Mashadi Ibad: *Man, by God, this is an event that should be written in the newspaper.*

Reza bey: *No, Mashadi, I can't do that and I can never do anything that contradicts my idea.*

Mashadi Ibad: *(takes 100 manats out of his pocket and shows it as though it's a piece of paper) Man, after all is it so difficult to write something on this piece of paper?*

Reza bey: *(sees the money) OK! This is another issue, now I understood what you were saying. I'll write it. I'll write it very well.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Look, write it so that after people read it they...watch me call it... How do you call that?*

Reza bey: *Express their hatred.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Right, right! Express their hatred, express their hatred!*

Hasan appears.

Hasan bey: *You insulted me the other day, that's why I've sued you.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Man, please, leave me in peace. Isn't it enough that you called me an ape, now you've sued me?*

Hasan bey: *No, I won't leave you in peace, you'll have to answer for your actions in court.*

Mashadi Ibad: *People, I don't know what to do about my problems here, now here he comes saying he's suing me.*

Hasangulu bey: *(comes up to Mashadi) Mashadi, give him something so that he is off from here!*

Mashadi Ibad: *You mean, I should give money to him, too?*

Hasangulu bey: *Give him 50 manats, he'll leave you in peace.*

Mashadi Ibad: *You mean, I should give money to him, too? (Takes out some money.) Take this, be off from here!*

Hasan bey: *This is another issue. I'll take my request back.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Another issue or not another issue, anyway.*

Porter: *Mashadi, you're giving out this much money to people, give me one abbasi too, you've broken my back.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Man, be off, I don't need you to rob me. (Runs towards the porter, the porter runs away, but then comes back again.)*

Hasangulu bey: *Gentlemen! Let's discuss this issue. After all, Rustam bey can't do it to this poor man. This poor guy wastes his money and then gets disgraced. Let's call Rustam bey here right now and talk to him seriously.*

Everybody: *Of course, of course.*

They knock at the door. Rustam bey comes out.

Music

*It can't be so that you're cheating us,
You are letting your daughter
Marry someone else. (2)
Then what is this poor man supposed to do? (2)*

Mashadi Ibad:

*By God, I'm telling you now,
You have to give your daughter to me.
If you don't, I'll disgrace you,
Because I don't care who's a landlord and who is not.*

Everybody: *You can't do this.*

Rustam bey: *To tell you the truth, I don't understand what you're talking about.*

Mashadi Ibad: *What do you mean you don't understand? You eat up my money and then lie to me saying that you'll give your daughter to me, but then you marry her off to someone else.*

Rustam bey: *Who says that?*

Mashadi Ibad: *I saw it with my own eyes that your daughter was standing there with a young guy with her. I asked him who he was; he told me that he's the girl's fiancé.*

Porter: *He's right. And I saw that.*

Rustam bey: *Ha, ha, ha! Man, he must have been joking with you. Do you know who he is? He's the girl's uncle. He must have been joking with you. You believed him and (to others) Hasangulu bey, Reza bey, shame on you that you believed in such a stupid thing and came to my house. I'm very offended.*

Hasangulu bey: *Rustam bey, please excuse us. Mashadi Ibad convinced us.*

Reza bey: *Please, don't get offended; as the Russians say, there was a misunderstanding here.*

Mashadi Ibad: *(goes up to Rustam bey and takes his hands) Excuse me, bey, let God be pleased with you that you saved us from doubts. By God, I was very disappointed. Man, I was telling myself that Rustam bey is a real man, he can't do such a thing. Anyway, deuce take it! (Laughing.) Rustam bey, I want to start the wedding very soon, what do you say?*

Rustam bey: *That'd be very good. The sooner, the better.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Then I'll go to a fortune teller today and we'll start our wedding on one of these nice days.*

Everybody: *May God give his blessings! Mashadi Ibad, before the wedding, we'll all go the bathhouse together.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Inshallah, we'll do it together. (Aside.) Provided you will pay the bathhouse.*

Everybody:

*Mashadi Ibad, congratulations,
Congratulations to you on your wedding! (2)*

Mashadi Ibad:

*Thank you very much, I'm very pleased,
You took the trouble and worked this out for me.*

Everybody:

*Mashadi Ibad, congratulations!
Congratulations to you on your wedding!
Congratulations, congratulations,
Congratulations, congratulations!*

Curtain

Act III

The dressing room of a bathhouse. There is a door and stairs on the left (when looking from the hall) and in the corner on the right there's a door that opens into the bathing room of the bathhouse. There's a pool and a fountain in the center, with a chandelier hanging above the pool. Bathhouse owner Mashadi Gazanfar is sitting in his place on the left of the outer door wrapping a yellow sheepskin coat around himself. There's a brazier in front of him with an earthenware pot and a casket on it. He's smoking a pipe. A little further to the right from him, barber Usta Maharram is cutting Karbalayi Nasir's hair. Zurna players are sitting on one side. On another side, some bathhouse attendants are standing with red aprons in their hands. They have stripped their trousers up to their knees.

Music

Everybody: *(singing)*

Inside the bathhouse, inside and outside the bathhouse, (2)

*In summer, spring, winter and autumn
There's always heat and coolness there.
Come, both the poor and the rich, come,
You all have your places here.
Come quick, both the poor and the rich,
Come quick, you all have your places here, come!*

Music

The barber is cutting hair, the bathhouse owner is smoking a pipe.

Mashadi Gazanfar: *Indeed, I think about everything, and then again come this conclusion that the only thing in the world that is more pleasant than a bathhouse is again the bathhouse itself. Don't you be thinking that I say these words because I'm a bathhouse owner, no! Man, let's be fair. Where can you warm up in the cold of winter?*

Everybody: *In the bathhouse.*

Mashadi Gazanfar: *Where can you cool down in the heat of summer?*

Everybody: *In the bathhouse.*

Mashadi Gazanfar: *Then who can say that the bathhouse is something bad?*

Everybody: *Nobody, man.*

Mashadi Gazanfar: *Then say so.*

Usta Maharram: *I'm a barber. I've spent most of my life in the bathhouse, and I have never regretted it. Because I look and see that I enjoy myself nowhere else except for the bathhouse. People go to that, watch me call it, club. My club is the bathhouse. People go to the theater, my theater is the bathhouse. Man, where can you rest after you work and get tired?*

Everybody: *In the bathhouse.*

Usta Maharram: *Where can you see a little pleasure?*

Everybody: *In the bathhouse.*

Usta Maharram: *Then who can say that the bathhouse is something bad?*

Everybody: *Nobody, man.*

Usta Maharram: *Then say that.*

Music

Everybody:

Inside the bathhouse, inside and outside the bathhouse, (2)

In summer, spring, winter and autumn

There's always heat and coolness there.

Come, both the poor and the rich, come,

You all have your places here.

Come quick, both the poor and the rich,

Come quick, you all have your places here, come!

A voice is heard from the bathhouse. "Hey, come!" They take in a cigarette in a cigarette holder.

Everybody:

*In summer, spring, winter and autumn
There's always heat and coolness there.
Come, both the poor and the rich, come,
You all have your places here.
Come quick, both the poor and the rich,
Come quick, you all have your places here, come!*

Music

Karbalayi Nasir: *(while the barber is sharpening the razor) I am an uneducated man myself. But I have heard this from those who read it in books, that when Moslem kings were building a city, they would first build the bathhouse, after that they'd build caravansaries, and then mosques. Man, let's be fair. You work in the dust, get soiled with mud and dirt and where do you become clean then?*

Everybody: *In the bathhouse.*

Karbalayi Nasir: *Where do you become clean?*

Everybody: *In the bathhouse.*

Karbalayi Nasir: *Then who can say that the bathhouse is something bad?*

Everybody: *Nobody, man.*

Karbalayi Nasir: *Then say so.*

Mashadi Gazanfar: *You mentioned kings and I remembered. Man, the bathhouse is not being respected anymore. In olden times, the bathhouse was very well respected. All the poets, tale tellers, dervishes—all of them would gather in the bathhouse and delight the people in the bathhouse with their nice and interesting talk. Man, where do you have pleasant talks?*

Everybody: *In the bathhouse.*

Mashadi Gazanfar: *Where do you forget the problems of the world?*

Everybody: *In the bathhouse.*

Mashadi Gazanfar: *Then who can say that the bathhouse is something bad?*

Everybody: *Nobody, man.*

Mashadi Gazanfar: *Then say that.*

Music**Everybody:**

*Inside the bathhouse, inside and outside the bathhouse, (2)
In summer, spring, winter and autumn
There's always heat and coolness there.
Come, both the poor and the rich, come,
You all have your places here.
Come quick, both the poor and the rich,
Come quick, you all have your places here, come!*

A voice is heard from the bathhouse. "Hey, come. Bring me drinking water with a reed pipe in it." (They take it in.)

Everybody:

*There's always heat and coolness there.
Come, both the poor and the rich, come,
You all have your places here.
Come quick, both the poor and the rich,
Come quick, you all have your places here, come!*

Music

Usta Maharram: *I swear by your lives that there are some diseases for which doctors can't find remedies. But the moment you bring an ill person to the bathhouse, he gets better and recovers. Besides that, the bathhouse is such a thing that it gives you a face, it beautifies you. Tell me, where can you have your blood taken well?*

Everybody: *In the bathhouse.*

Usta Maharram: *Where can you have your hair cut well?*

Everybody: *In the bathhouse.*

Usta Maharram: *Where can you have your hair or beard dyed well with henna?*

Everybody: *Man, in the bathhouse.*

Usta Maharram: *Then say so.*

Mashadi Gazanfar: *You said henna, I remembered a poem by Sa'di Alyaalrahman. Once when he having a bath in the bathhouse, he took henna from his friend, was stupefied by its scent and said this poem:*

*Once in the bathhouse a piece of mud with nice scent
Reached my hands from my friend's.
I asked it: "Are you musk or ambergris
That I am stupefied by your lovely scent?"
It said to me: "I was a good-for-nothing piece of mud,
But then I was with a flower for a while.
My companion's wit affected me and I became so.
Otherwise, I would have stayed as that very piece of mud."
(From Sa'di)*

I tell you that if Sa'di Alyaalrahman didn't come to the bathhouse, he would have never been able to write this poem. Man, after this, who can say that the bathhouse is something bad?

Everybody: *Nobody.*

Mashadi Gazanfar: *Then say that.*

Music**Everybody:**

*Inside the bathhouse, inside and outside the bathhouse, (2)
In summer, spring, winter and autumn
There's always heat and coolness there.
Come, both the poor and the rich, come,
You all have your places here.*

*Come quick, both the poor and the rich,
Come quick, you all have your places here, come!*

A voice is heard from the bathhouse. "Hey, come! Come and bring the towel." The bathhouse attendants go with towels.

Everybody:

*In summer, spring, winter and autumn
There's always heat and coolness there.
Come, both the poor and the rich, come,
You all have your places here.
Come quick, both the poor and the rich,
Come quick, you all have your places here, come!*

People come out of the bathhouse. The groom comes out, too. The zurna players start playing. The curtain falls, but still the sound of the zurna is heard. The curtain rises after two minutes. The sound of the zurna stops. Those on the stage finish putting on their clothes. Mashadi Ibad buttons himself, then takes a mirror and looks at his beard. Hasangulu bey wears his frock coat. Reza puts on his neckband. Hasan bey combs his hair. Asgar puts on his boots. The porter wraps his onoocha around his foot. Some of the rest dry their hair, some button themselves and so on.

Mashadi Gazanfar: *Mashadi Ibad, how are you? May God give his blessings to you. May you have kids!*

Mashadi Ibad: *Thank you, may troubles and sorrows be away from you.*

Everybody: *May God give his blessings. May God give his blessings to you!*

Mashadi Ibad: *(answers to their congratulations. After a little while, with a mirror in his hand.) Looks like this time the barber has dyed my beard with henna well. I don't see gray hair in it anymore.*

Asgar: *Touch the wood, you have become young, ha?*

Mashadi Ibad: *Of course I'm young.*

Mashadi Gazanfar: *(to beys) Beys, brothers, did you like the bathhouse? Because you don't usually come to our bathhouses, that's why I'm asking.*

Hasangulu bey: *I had promised myself long ago that I would never go to a Moslem bathhouse as long as I lived. But I respect Mashadi Ibad so much that I broke my promise just for his sake and came to this bathhouse. Well, I came, that's OK, it's late now.*

Mashadi Gazanfar: *You don't say!*

Reza bey: *If I had bought a cap for 536 manats, and then someone took that cap off my head and threw it into a Moslem bathhouse, I'd have given up that cap, but I'd have never entered the bathhouse. But just because I'd promised Mashadi Ibad, I came here. I couldn't break my promise.*

Mashadi Gazanfar: *(gets offended) Bey, brother, is my bathhouse foul? Does a Russian or an Armenian or a Jew bathe there?*

Reza bey: *You, deceased man's son, I enter the pool but I don't know if the thing that I'm bathing in is water, oil, broth or bozbash. Gentlemen, by God, I'll write this in my newspaper tomorrow, don't do that.*

Hasangulu bey: *Man, is it fair that I enter the same pool together with this porter? (Shows the porter.)*

Porter: *Bey, can't a porter bathe in the bathhouse, too? Isn't a porter a man too?*

Hasan bey: *Reza bey is right. And in fact when I entered the pool, I didn't know if it was water in it or some other liquid. (To Hasangulu bey) But you, you judge like a bourgeoisie. What do you mean is it fair that the porter bathes in the same pool with me? Isn't the porter a man just like you?*

Porter: *Of course, I am.*

Hasan bey: *He has two ears as well as you.*

Porter: *Of course, I have two ears, what did you think?*

Hasan bey: *He has one nose as well as you.*

Porter: *Of course, I have one nose, what did you think?*

Hasan bey: *The only difference is that...*

Hasangulu bey: *(interrupts him) You know what, Hasan bey? The other day you fought with Mashadi Ibad, but as it was in a house, nobody knew about it. But this is a bathhouse, you know that this is a public place, I ask you not to start fighting here.*

Hasan bey: *No, I, as a true nationalist, protest against this.*

These two—and Reza with them—drop hints to one another with their hands and pretend that they are arguing.

Mashadi Ibad: *(counts the people glancing at them) I wonder if I'll have to pay the bathhouse bill for all these, ha? Do you know how much this kind of a bathhouse expense will make? Let me see if I can somehow play a trick on the bathhouse owner.*

Hasangulu bey: *(continues arguing) Just leave me in peace!*

Hasan bey: *No, I have to protest.*

Reza bey: *Man, it's a shame in the bathhouse.*

Hasangulu bey: *Just protest as much as you want.*

Hasan bey: *(loudly) I won't allow that...*

Asgar and Reza get up quickly and try to calm them down.

Mashadi Gazanfar: *Looks like all this is because of my pool's water.*

Mashadi Ibad: *(to them) Look here! Why create a scandal? You've been bathing in this man's bathhouse for two hours for free, and then you come out and create this scandal? It's a shame. (Addressing himself to the silent bathhouse owner.) Mashadi Gazanfar, I don't think you remember, as you were very little then. When I got married the first time, to the late Karbalayi Murtuza's daughter, the late Sona, my wedding was in this very bathhouse. At the time, your late father, Mashadi Samandar, was sitting in that place where you're sitting now. When I was leaving, I took out money to give to him, but he wouldn't take it. I tried a lot, I begged, but he wouldn't take the money. Anyway, he was a very nice person.*

Everybody looks at one another and drops hints.

Mashadi Gazanfar: *Listen to this, last week my very good friend Mashadi Mukhtar was having his wedding party. They came to the bathhouse, when leaving, he wanted to give me money, but I wouldn't take it. He said he'd be offended and I told him that I'd be offended, too. So, I didn't take the money from him. There was a man with him just like this Hasangulu bey. He took 200 manats out of his pocket and threw it to me. I didn't*

want to take it, but he gave it anyway. Then he gave 50 manats to the barber, 10 manats for tea to each of the bathhouse attendants. The following day, Mashadi Mukhtar himself sent me a nice suit, two handbags of henna, a big loaf of sugar and a tray with sweets. And at night we were in the wedding party. Anyway, we had real fun.

The beys drop hints to one another.

Hasangulu bey: (to Hasan bey) Whether it's appropriate or not, you are always looking for a quarrel.

Reza bey: Come on, they started again.

Hasan bey: I can't, I have to protest. I am a man of persuasion.

Hasangulu bey: You are all liars, that's it.

Hasan bey: (loudly) What? You are insulting me?

Hasangulu bey: (loudly too) Yes, I am!

They raise a scandal again. Reza, Asgar and the other rogues get up quickly and try to calm them down.

Hasan bey: In such case, I'm leaving and demanding you to answer for insulting me. (He leaves.)

Reza bey: (after him) Hasan bey, Hasan bey, where are you going? Wait a moment. (And he leaves after him.)

Hasangulu bey: (cheerlessly) Gentlemen, excuse me. My head has started aching with anger, I can't sit here anymore, bye. (Leaves.)

Asgar: (after him) Man, wait a second, we're all leaving right now. (He leaves and his people follow him. There remains only Mashadi Ibad, the porter and the bathhouse people.)

Mashadi Ibad: (aside) They heard the talk about money and all ran away. No, my trick didn't work.

Mashadi Gazanfar: Mashadi, what angry people your friends are, ha?

Mashadi Ibad: It's because of the weather. (to him) Son, how much did our expenses make?

Mashadi Gazanfar: You don't ask that. That was for the wedding, so give as much as you want. If you want, I can also take nothing from you, just like my father.

Mashadi Ibad: No, thank you. (Aside.) That'll be expensive. (Takes out the money and gives to him.) Is this enough for you?

Mashadi Gazanfar: That'll do, may God bestow abundance upon you.

Mashadi Ibad: (to the bathhouse attendants) Here and this is yours. And give this to those who are inside.

Bathhouse attendants: Thank you very much, Mashadi! May God bestow abundance upon you.

Porter: Mashadi, you haven't given me my abbasi yet, remember?

Mashadi Ibad: Boy, go see where these guys went. Tell them not to be afraid, the bathhouse bill has been paid, tell them to come and take the groom out of the bathhouse. (To the zurna players.) And you play something so that people will gather in the bathhouse and then let's go.

The zurna players start playing. A little while later those who had left all come back.

Mashadi Ibad: *(gets up) Ya Allah!*

The porter helps him get down. The zurna players lead them playing and they go away. The bathhouse owner, barber Maharram, Karbalayi Nasir and the bathhouse attendants all remain in their places and sit the way that they were sitting before.

Mashadi Gazanfar: *These Russian-like flippant guys don't go to the bathhouse even once in a year, they don't know what gusl-taharat¹⁰ means, now they come and say nasty things about my bathhouse. Man, let's be fair. Where can you wash yourself and become clean?*

Everybody: *In the bathhouse.*

Usta Maharram: *Where can you dip into the water and then come up?*

Everybody: *In the pool of the bathhouse.*

Karbalayi Nasir: *Then who can say that the bathhouse is something bad?*

Everybody: *Nobody, man.*

Mashadi Gazanfar: *Then say that!*

Music

Everybody:

Inside the bathhouse, inside and outside the bathhouse, (2)

In summer, spring, winter and autumn

There's always heat and coolness there.

Come, both the poor and the rich, come,

You all have your places here.

Come quick, both the poor and the rich,

Come quick, you all have your places here, come!

Music

Usta Maharram and Mashadi Gazanfar, dropping his sheepskin coat, start dancing, while the bathhouse attendants snap their fingers.

Curtain

Act IV *In Mashadi Ibad's house. A wedding party is taking place. The rogue Asgar has become "the king"¹¹ and is sitting at the top of the table. Hasangulu bey, Reza bey, Asgar and the guests are sitting. The curtain rises. The dancing girl dances the lazginka and then leaves.*

Asgar: *I'm ordering the tar player to play the melody "rose" and Hasangulu bey to stand up and dance.*

Hasangulu bey: *(gets up) Let the king live long, by God, I can't dance. Excuse me.*

Asgar: *Pull him to the center and give him one or two whips!*

The servants pull Hasangulu bey to the center and make him dance. Then Reza bey dances the same way.

Asgar: *Pull Mashadi Ibad here! The groom has to dance at his wedding so that there's welfare.*

They bring Mashadi Ibad from another room. Mashadi Ibad dances to the melody "mirzayi".

Hasangulu bey: *People, it's time, let's go and bring the bride.*

Everybody: *Yes, it's time. (They go.)*

Mashadi Ibad: *(enters) Turks have such a saying that goes: "Every beauty has her own fault." While the guests were in this room, I have been thinking in another room what my fault is. Now I found out that my only fault is my being faultless. Even though this is a very subtle issue, still it's the main point. That's it... Even though the girl is very beautiful, she was expensive: 5,000 manats went to Rustam bey and wedding expenses, 500 manats went to Hasangulu bey as a bribe, a bunch of bathhouse expenses, an abbasi to the porter, 400 manats... I'd rather not count. The more I count, the worse I feel. But I haven't dressed badly, ha? (Looks around himself. Turns around to see his back and then sits down.) Yeah, let the girl come and let's see what happens. (Hums.)*

It's night, dear friend, there's candle, wine and sweets.

Seeing a friend's face even for a night counts for something.

(From Hafiz.)

Let the girl come, but I'm afraid of one thing: that she won't have the patience to sit in this house. Because a girl who has grown up in such a house must be a little impatient. (Angrily.) How dare she? By God, when going to the store, I'll lock the door and take the key with myself. Let her stay at home until I come back in the evening. Let her get used to it. And I'll have the windows locked with pieces of wood from the outside. If she doesn't like it, I'll beat her. Because when you don't beat women, they get spoiled. The more hits the husband gives to his wife, the more she'll love him. I've experienced this a lot before. Once I gave such a blow to the late Sona that she couldn't draw her breath for two hours. That's why she'd start laughing at my face the moment she saw me. Once I slapped the late Parizad so that one of her teeth broke. That's why she never refused me outright again. Just once I slapped renegade's daughter Gulkhanim with a stick so that she ran away forever. And if this one does something that I don't like, I'll blow her with this. (Shows his fists. This moment the words "Allah, Allah" are heard from behind, the zurna is played.) Wow, the bride came, let me run.

Runs to another room, they bring in the bride. And Sanam enters with the bride.

Someone: *Hey, come out now. Sanam, you too come to this room.*

Everybody leaves, there remains only the bride.

Music

Mashadi Ibad: *(enters)*

No matter how old I am,

I am worth a thousand young guys... (Sings.)

Khanim, khanim, please take the veil off your head. Let me be a sacrifice to you!

Sarvar comes out of the veil instead of the bride and points the cigar in his hand as a gun towards Mashadi Ibad.

Mashadi Ibad: *Oh, my God! (Says and sits down.)*

Sarvar: *If you make any noise, I'll shoot you in the head with a bullet. Be quick, take out a pen and a piece of paper.*

Mashadi Ibad: *(with fear) OK, then let me find them. (Takes a pen and a piece of paper from the table.) What should I do now?*

Sarvar: *Sit down and write whatever I dictate to you. Or else here comes the bullet!*

Mashadi Ibad: *I will write, by God, I will.*

Sarvar: *Write! (Says loudly.) "I—Mashadi Ibad, Karbalayi Khojaverdikhan's son..."*

Mashadi Ibad: *My God! He knows my father's name, too.*

Sarvar: *Don't talk, write, otherwise I'll shoot you!*

Mashadi Ibad: *By God, I'm not talking, I'm writing. What then?*

Sarvar: *"Don't want to marry Rustam bey's daughter Gulnaz khanim."*

Mashadi Ibad: *I do want.*

Sarvar: *(angrily) I don't want!*

Mashadi Ibad: *OK, I don't want, I don't want.*

Sarvar: *"And I ask for the annulment of the marriage."*

Mashadi Ibad: *Who is asking this?*

Sarvar: *Write what I'm telling you, or else I'll turn your brain into dust.*

Mashadi Ibad: *I'm writing, I am. What else?*

Sarvar: *"And am marrying his servant Sanam." Did you write?*

Mashadi Ibad: *Yes, I did.*

Sarvar: *Now sign it.*

Mashadi Ibad: *My God! What about my money?*

Sarvar: *Sign, otherwise I'll blow you up. (Makes him sign the paper.) Now, don't move!*

Mashadi Ibad: *I am not.*

Sarvar: *Don't talk.*

Mashadi Ibad: *I am not.*

Sarvar goes backwards and brings Sanam in.

Sarvar: *Here, she is your wife. (Walks backwards.) Now, don't stir!*

Mashadi Ibad: *I am not.*

Sarvar: *Don't talk.*

Mashadi Ibad: *I am not.*

Sarvar suddenly turns and quickly runs away.

Mashadi Ibad: *(screams) Hey, stop him, hey, don't let him go, hey, be quick, he ran away! My God, what is this that has happened to me? Hey, stop him, hey, don't let him go.*

Everybody comes in, a scandal arises.

Hasangulu bey: *Hey, stop for a minute. Let's see what happened. Mashadi Ibad, what happened? Tell us.*

Mashadi Ibad: *Man, when bringing this bride, didn't you look to see if it was a man or a woman?*

Everybody: *What are you talking about? Of course, the bride will be a woman.*

Mashadi Ibad: *But this bride turned out to be a man. Rustam bey made me unhappy. He sent me a man instead of a girl and he ran away.*

Everybody: *Wow! What is this that he's done to you? How can one cheat someone so?*

Someone: *Then how should this be? What should we do?*

Hasangulu bey: *Mashadi, give me 50 manats and I'll go and bring the governor here right now. Do you agree?*

Mashadi Ibad: *(like a sick person) No.*

Reza bey: *Mashadi, give me 20 manats and I'll go and disgrace Rustam bey. Do you agree?*

Mashadi Ibad: *No.*

Asgar: *Mashadi, give me 30 manats and I'll go and shoot Rustam bey in the brain with one bullet. Do you agree?*

Everybody: *Then what should we do?*

Mashadi Ibad: *Go ask the confessor to come and marry this woman to me.*

Everybody: *OK! This is another issue. What can you do? If not that one, then this one. It's not bad at all.*

Music

Everybody:

Go, go ask the confessor

To come and make the marriage. (2)

(To Sanam.)

Let's make you a wife to Mashadi,

Do you agree?

Sanam: *Yes, yes!*

Everybody: *(to Mashadi Ibad) Do you agree?*

Mashadi Ibad: *Yes, yes!*

Everybody: *Do you agree?*

Mashadi Ibad and Sanam: *Yes, yes!*

Everybody: *Then should we go?*

Mashadi Ibad:

Go, go ask the confessor

To come and make the marriage. (2)

(To Sanam.)

Let him come and make you a wife to me,

Do you agree?

Sanam: *Yes, yes!*

Mashadi Ibad: *(to the chorus) Do you agree?*

The chorus: *Yes, yes! We agree. Yes, yes. What should we do now?*

The back curtain of the stage rises. Sarvar and Gulnaz are seen standing up above. The tar is played.

Sarvar: *(sings Bayati-Gajar)*

*I took the sweetheart's trouble and reached her at last,
Whoever is a lover will, of course, give his soul on the way to reaching his beloved.*

Gulnaz:

*As the curtain rose, it became obvious to everybody,
The beloved will, of course, send her soul to the lover.*

Everybody: *(to Mashadi Ibad)*

*You are old, the girl is young,
You don't have the fire of love.
She loves Sarvar,
She won't be attracted to you. (2)*

Mashadi Ibad:

*Wife, come to me, wife, (2)
Come to me and make me happy!*

Everybody:

*Mashadi Ibad, you gave out your money,
And ended up with a widow.
But don't you be sad,
If not that one, then this one!*

CURTAIN

¹ Usta - literally means "master".

² Karbalayi - Moslem people who visit Karbala (one of the sacred cities according to Islam, situated in Iraq) are called Karbalayis.

³ Yusif - There's a saga among Eastern people called "Yusif and Zuleykha". According to this saga Yusif was very handsome.

⁴ to say "mashallah" - to touch wood

⁵ abbasi - a monetary unit used in Azerbaijan during olden times, equal to Soviet 20 kopecks.

⁶ shahi - a monetary unit used in Azerbaijan during olden times, equal to Soviet 5 kopecks.

⁷ Rast, Shikastayi Fars and Tasnif are types of mugham.

⁸ bayati - a kind of Azerbaijani folk poem.

⁹ This saying is from the saga "Koroghlu" and is still very widely used in Azerbaijan. When Koroghlu's favorite horse Girat is taken away from him by bold Hamza, he takes his another horse named Durat and goes to bring Girat back. But he gets cheated again in the mill, and Durat is also taken away from him. Koroghlu says these words to criticize himself.

¹⁰ It's a tradition for some people in Azerbaijan to have a "king" for the wedding party; that "king" rules the party.

¹¹ A way of taking a shower in Islam after doing something evil or dirty. After taking shower in this particular way, you can consider your body and soul clean. It's believed in

Islam that this way of taking a shower (saying prayers and so on) washes away the sin that you have committed.

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