



*A play for  
4 people*

# It was almost there

Lakutin Nikolay

*Adult family  
comedy in 2 acts*

СОДЕРЖИТ  
НЕЦЕНЗУРНУЮ  
БРАНЬ

18+

**Nikolay Lakutin**  
**It was almost there. A**  
**play for 4 people. Comedy**

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**Аннотация**

More than ten years of marriage. To strangle or strangle, that's the question! Where do those attractive guys and girls go for whom we do wonderful stupid things? Those lovely, charming creatures that we marry, that we marry? What do they turn into? Or maybe we are turning? Caution! The household comedy "It almost was" will reveal the truth of every family!

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# **Nikolay Lakutin**

## **It was almost there. A play for 4 people. Comedy**

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Comedy for 4 people. A play in two acts. (Can be delivered as a one-act).

An explanatory note for the director is attached at the end of the play.

**THE CHARACTERS**

ARE Oleg.

Nina.

Daniel.

Irina.

# Action 1

## Scene 1. The perfect family!

Darkness.

Silence.

A loud voice (pleasant, endearing). What do we know about the family? Perhaps all the things that it would be better not to know about... at least on yourself. But since we are all "damn lucky" with the choice of our second halves, let's at least imagine for a moment what an ideal family relationship between husband and wife might look like.

Loud pleasant positive music sounds.

Residential apartment.

Disposing semi-darkness.

Oleg enters. A pleasant gentle, fresh smile. In the hands of a large bouquet of flowers. Dressed decently.

He takes a few steps, stops in tender anticipation.

Nina comes out to meet Oleg. Pretty, well-groomed, "delicious" from all sides. Sees Oleg, rejoices like a puppy. Runs towards him. Hugs, kisses. Love, tenderness. The candy – bouquet period in all its glory.

Oleg gives flowers to Nina, she accepts, admires. Tells Oleg emotionally about something (Words are not heard, everything

is drowned out by the background music). Both are laughing heartily. They are happy, fresh, young at Heart and ambitious.

Nina is all emotional, she literally clings to Oleg, beckons him, drags him along.

Oleg, of course, is not against, but rather categorically "FOR".

As a result, a bouquet of flowers falls out of Nina's hands, she is no longer up to flowers.

Oleg breaks away from the passionate embrace, tries to pick up the bouquet, but Nina literally drags him away in a direction understandable to an adult viewer. And yet Oleg manages to take the flowers with him.

Oleg and Nina are hiding.

The music continues to play.

A slight dimming and light again. (Preferably a different light, because we are going to beat another apartment now, however, this is not so important).

Danil enters.

A pleasant smile on his face, fresh, radiant and happy. In his hands is a gift that he hides behind his back. A relatively bulky box wrapped in a gift box.

Irina comes out to meet Danil. Beautiful, fresh, tender and ... just like from the picture.

Irina takes out a pie in her hands, smiles gently at Danilo, shows a glance at the pie, they say, here... for you.

Danil pulls out a gift from behind his back. It also shows with a glance, they say, but for you.

Irina is delighted. Sets aside the cooked pie. He runs up to Danil. Hugs him, kisses him. Timidly accepts the gift. Cautiously looks at Danil in anticipation. He nods approvingly.

Irina shudders emotionally, and even a little mentally, runs to open the gift as soon as possible.

Opens out of sight, we only see how the gift wrapping flies away.

Meanwhile, Danil approaches the pie, takes a piece, and begins to eat. Delicious. Savoring.

A joyful Irina jumps out, screams with delight and jumps on Danil, wrapping her arms and legs around him.

A piece of cake falls out of Danil's hand. I'm not up to pie anymore.

Hugs. Softness. Passion.

This is how Danil carries away Irina, delighted, bubbling with emotions.

Positive music is CHEWED up like on old cassette recorders, stops, subsides.

ZTM.



## Scene 2. The life of Oleg and Nina.

A loud voice (pleasant, endearing). Well, there! Sometimes at the beginning of a relationship, something like this can be observed between lovers... But if the marriage has been going on for many years..., then it often happens about... so...

Oleg and Nina's apartment.

The light turns on smoothly.

Oleg is sitting on the sofa, hastily wrapped in a blanket.

The look is angry, sleepy.

Her hair is tousled. There are earplugs in the ears (you can stuff more cotton wool so that it can be seen).

Nina's heroic snoring can be heard from the next room.

Snoring sounds, Oleg is angry. Wants to sleep, but can't, sits, waits for a lull.

The snoring subsides and stops.

Oleg looks hopefully in the direction of the calmed snoring.

Trying to settle down on the couch. Closes his eyes. A blissful smile has already flowed down his face. He's finally almost falling asleep.

But it wasn't there.

Nina's snoring covers the sound space with a new force.

Oleg jumps up on the couch. Angry as a dog.

Oleg (nervously, loudly). AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!

A sleepy Nina comes running to Oleg's cry. Nina is in

pajamas, her eyes are sleepy, her hair is haphazard.

Nina (indignantly). Oleg! Why are you shouting in the middle of the night? Are you completely crazy? I'm out, I just managed to cover my eyes, I haven't even fallen asleep yet, and you broke my whole dream. What a stupid habit, yelling at night? And if I do that?

Oleg (evil, very evil). Nina, my berry! How much I love you, you just can't imagine!!!

Nina thinks about it... Understands.

Nina (guessing, not immediately voicing guesses). Ya.... snoring again, huh?

Oleg exhales with an angry growl, shakes his head affirmatively, but remains silent.

Nina (a little guiltily). I'm sorry, you know I can't control it. And besides, you snore like a locomotive yourself, so don't blame me for everything.

Oleg (very angry). Yes, in order for me to snore like a locomotive, I need to fall asleep first! Can you really sleep with you? And he went into another room, and he already bought earplugs... (Oleg takes earplugs out of his ears, nervously throws them aside.) It doesn't help! I'm already thinking about not going to the next room for the night, but to the next apartment! It seems to be on sale right now, we need to ask the neighbors how much they want.

Nina (nervously, winding herself up). So that's what it's all about! I got it As you delicately put it – neighbors. Not neighbors,

I want to tell you, but a neighbor! And this neighbor has been looking at you with her greedy eyes for a long time. Or maybe you've already looked around? Maybe I don't know something, huh? Oleeeeg? Ah-well? Look into my eyes! What did you have with her, Ali how?

Oleg jumps off the sofa, looks viciously into his wife's eyes.

Oleg (very angry). You're completely out of your mind! Why the hell did I get this attractive, busty, young lady with a charming smile, heavenly eyes and three children? If only she had one child, somehow, somehow, the sheepskin would be worth the dressing. But three mouths, and her fourth, I will not take out on my salary. Think what you're saying!

Nina (calming down, sighing with relief, stepping aside). Here... What I've always appreciated you for is your honesty. Whatever is on your mind, you can mold everything. In general, this is not a very good quality for a person. Nowhere in life with such a nuance. But for me, as a wife, this flaw of yours is very in time. Of course, you're a parasite, to be honest, but a decent parasite! (In another sense, with a feigned emotion, and louder, reproaching.) You're a decent parasite with me, Oleja!

Oleg (discontentedly, rushing around the room, with sarcasm). I'm the parasite who argues. And you are the queen! Just a dream of any man! How fabulously lucky I was to meet such a gorgeous and beautiful person. Just manna from heaven has descended on me! Men are all goats, bastards, and parasites – this is an axiom. But the feminine gender – where not to spit

– is a princess! Missed – goddess!

Nina (nervously, interrupting her husband's speech). So! Stop clowning around! I may not be a goddess, but you know, I'm still quite myself, by the way.

Oleg (discontentedly, rushing around the room, with sarcasm). That's what I'm talking about... What to yourself-to yourself. Not to yourself – to you, but to yourself-to yourself! When did this moment of switching from caring to selfishness just happen?

Nina (glancing at her husband with displeasure, hitting him). That's interesting to me.

Oleg (dissatisfied, after a short pause). So you're saying that I'm not taking care of you?

Nina (displeased). And then, as if you are showing?

Oleg (angrily, loudly). Yes, if he hadn't, he would have strangled him long ago, would have served time and come out with a clear conscience! You see, the neighbor wouldn't have had time to fix two more. And everything in my life would be tip-top. Do you even understand the sacrifices I'm making for you, the hardships???

Nina (sarcastically). Well, you just made me happy with your confession. Directly struck down. Right on the spot. Yes, how do you suffer so much for so many years, poor thing... You do so much for me, you hurt yourself so much for me. The sufferer. You're just my hero! Come quickly, I'll hug you, I'll caress you.

Oleg (dismissing him with displeasure).

Nina (calmly, a little playfully). Let's go together. Anyway, both you and I have a broken dream now. Maybe something will turn out, than the devil is not joking...

Oleg (pondering). But generally speaking, maybe and maybe. (Covering his mouth with his hand, softly, to the viewer, so that his wife does not hear.) While I remembered about the neighbor, it would be nice to put all this somewhere.

Nina (calmly, a little playfully). Okay, I'm going to the bathroom for a minute, then. Then I wait. Just don't forget to brush your teeth! Otherwise I won't give up!

Oleg (making a face). Oh, I scared you... Okay... I'll clean it. They leave with an internal sediment and a weak anticipation.  
ZTM.

## Scene 3. The life of Danil and Irina.

Apartment of Danil and Irina.

A lyrical musical composition sounds, softly.

Danil and Irina are sitting on different sofas. Everyone is busy with their smartphone. They read something diligently, correspond with someone, watch news feeds on their devices, etc.

Irina (completely without emotions and any interest, without looking up from her smartphone). Danil, have you come yet?

There is a slight pause, Danil does not answer immediately, because he is very keen on correspondence in a smartphone.

Danil (completely without emotion and any interest, without looking up from the smartphone). And? Irishka, yes, I'm home. I got free early today, I've even managed to roll up a couple of rolls. How are you?

Irina (with interest in the dialogue on the web, not to her husband, without looking up from her smartphone, actively typing some text and mechanically pronouncing it). Yes... It's okay, it's good to see you. Nothing, I live. Do you remember Danka? Well, he's kind of dumb. He kept hitting on me while we were making out in your room. So I married him. Although he is not strong in mind, but he was punchy, nimble. That's what I bet on. But, alas, zero fell out. In short, by zeros. And how are you? Is the redhead still pining for you, or is it already in the past?

Danil is just now looking up from the phone, he did not listen /

did not hear everything that was said before the words about the redhead.

Danil (cautiously, with interest, looking at Irina). Which redhead?

Irina shudders, wakes up, realizes that she answered the message out loud.

Danil (cautiously, with interest, looking at Irina). Is your friend Natasha pouring into your ears again about me? There was no such thing at all...

Irina feels like she's in a frying pan, trying to figure out what to do. Puts the smartphone aside, navigates the situation. She looks suspiciously at Danil, she doesn't understand what he's talking about, but it's for the best. She guesses that he missed most of her words, which is incredibly pleasing.

Danil (cautiously, with interest, looking at Irina). Why are you looking at me like that? Don't you believe it?

Irina looks with a penetrating look.

Danil changes tactics.

Danil (wriggling out). Ahhh, so you're probably talking about Masha. Masha, yes, red. I didn't even think about it right away. That's right, I met her at the market the other day. Well, Masha is Antokhin's sister.

Irina looks with suspicion and misunderstanding.

Danil (twisting out, convincingly explaining). Yes, my one-size-fits-all, Anton. Don't you remember him? He's so patchy... (He waves it off.) It doesn't matter. So this is his older sister. She

helped us sometimes at school. Anton and I didn't really drag, but she just fumbled. Well, we met, got to know each other, and exchanged a couple of phrases. That's it.

Irina (with suspicion). All?

Danil (convincingly). And what else?

Irina (with suspicion, knowing Danil and his habits, coming up on the go). How can I tell you... as far as I am informed, you were smiling so interestingly at each other that, as it were... The question arises, is there something hidden behind these smiles?

Danil (convincingly). Irka, what are you doing? I'm telling you, slap your informants in the ears so that they don't spread nonsense beyond their inflamed imagination.

Irina (with suspicion, knowing Danil and his habits). Watch me!

Irina sighs with relief and picks up her smartphone again.

Danil (changing the subject). I'm looking, but I wonder where you're looking all the time!

Irina is straining. Silent. Waiting for explanations.

Danil (attacking). I'm not coming home from work, so you're all right completely and completely in your smartphone. I understand that in recent years you have been living not with me, but with him.

Irina (startled, interrupting). With whom, with him???

Danil (calmly explaining). With a smartphone!

Irina (relieved). And... well... yes... Well, too, it's not that I live directly.



Danil (more emotionally). You're not getting out of it!

Irina (defiantly). Oh, and you're just climbing out!

Danil (excited). I'm working for a second! And at home I want to relax, I have the right to sit, play and chat. Who else should I talk to at home? Not with you, right?

Irina (defiantly). But at least!

Danil (putting aside the phone, which, though without attention, he still held in his hand all this time). Well, come on, let's try, let's talk.

Irina also puts her phone aside.

Both turn to each other. They look at each other. Even from time to time they take a breath in their chest, and as if they are going to start a conversation, but at the last moment they change their mind, turn their gazes to the side.

In general, they have nothing to talk about.

Several attempts on both sides to speak.

Silence.

Danil (nodding to the situation, philosophically). We had a great conversation.

Everyone is reaching for their smartphone again, and they continue to spend their time and attention on the virtual world.

ZTM.

## Scene 4. Conversation of Danil and Oleg.

Late evening. Street. Yard.

Darkness. Female moans, shouts and other echoes characteristic of intimate and satisfying active activity are heard. Male moans are less vivid, but also present in this idyll.

The light turns on smoothly, Oleg and Danil, leaning on some element of the playground (or some other yard piece of architecture) with bottles of something wrapped (supposed beer), talk casually, look enthusiastically at the window of a high-rise building, "spend time culturally."

Oleg (after listening to a good portion of gasps and sighs coming from the slightly open window). Look how they charge. Right candy-bouquet period they have there. It's very expensive to listen to.

Danil (with a calm face, after listening to a few more shouts). Yes, not ..., the candy-bouquet period has long ended for them. This is practically everyday life. But there is still a fuse, apparently. Eeeee, there's still gunpowder in the flasks!

Oleg (with some degree of condemnation). Danil, I've always been surprised by your ability to talk about what you don't know about. Well, what makes you think that the candy-bouquet period is over for them?

There is a bright splash of emotions from the window.

Oleg (pointing to the window). Oh! Have you heard how they

have everything there? I didn't have it with my Nina even at the very beginning, not like now. And do you see how it happens to people? No, brother, it smells like kerosene. And just about to be spilled between the hearts of these two figures, and set on fire by some skillful cherub who knows his business perfectly.

There is another batch of emotional shouts from the window.

Danil (with a calm face, after listening to a few more shouts). And I will answer! First of all, not a brother, but a friend!

Oleg (with interest). So I'm not literally. Of course, a friend. And what, secondly?

Danil (with a calm face). And secondly, I know this couple very well. They have been dating for a long time. In fits and starts, though, from time to time, but for a long time. I suspect that their anniversary is coming soon.

Oleg (with interest, and some disbelief). You're at it again... That's how? How can you know all this? Tell me honestly, are you making it up on the go?

Danil (with a calm face). I'm not making anything up.

Oleg (egging on). Yeah, you'll say that someone from this couple personally tells you all the details, right?

Danil (with a calm face). I can't really say anything about the peasant, I've only seen him a few times, briefly. Nothing such a man, quite suitable.

A new batch of groans and gasps is heard. Mostly female shouts.

Danil (with a calm face). And I know the lady who's been

soloing for an hour well.

Oleg (biased, incredulous). Oh, stop it! He knows everyone, he knows about everything.

Oleg starts drinking.

Danil (with a calm face). And how can I not know if it's my own wife.

Oleg drops the bottle, drenches himself in confusion, blowing everything out of his mouth with force that managed to get there.

Danil calmly takes a sip from his bottle, looks out the window with satisfaction.

Danil (approvingly). Everyone seems to have had enough. Today I will have a silk one. She is silk at home after these meetings. Just a human soul!

Oleg picks up his bottle, shakes it off, wipes the neck, to put it mildly, looks at Danil strangely.

Danil (looking questioningly at Oleg). What?

Oleg (cautiously). That is, there... (Pointing towards the window.) Irina? Your wife?

Danil (calmly). Yeah.

Oleg (cautiously). And she's there with someone... yeah?

Danil (calmly). Yeah.

Oleg (cautiously, confused). So a... Well, as it were... Well, that's it... Well, I don't know... Is everything okay?

Danil (calmly). Everything is fine.

Oleg (cautiously, confused). Hmm...

Oleg thinks, takes a sip.

Oleg (skeptically). High relations.

Danil (cheerfully, proudly). And then! This is not a fuck-up for you, this is twenty years of marriage! Or so.

Danil takes another sip.

Oleg (with interest). No, it's understandable, it's just that you're so calm about it... I'm with mine, too, already ... (Trying to remember how much... it doesn't work.) About the same. But I couldn't do that.

Danil (somewhat detached, philosophically). You couldn't, but she could...

Oleg (warily). What do you mean?

Danil (leaving the subject). Yes, no.., just blurted it out, didn't think.

Oleg (warily). Uh, no, wait. What are you? Do you know something I don't?

Danil (calming, defusing the situation). Olegych, calm down. All I know is that women... girls... of course they are angels, there are no questions, but they are angels until you get to know them properly. That's it... you look from afar, at a distance... Ah, pretty. Ah, krasava. Goes – as if writing. And the figure, and the posture. Sponges, shoulders, and what kind of eyes – you can go crazy. Divine creatures, don't go to Grandma.

Oleg (warily). So, and?

Danil (busily). What and? You've been married for so many years, and you're asking me about "and". What, is your Nina still an angel to you? Flutters on the wings of love, gives you magical

looks, delights and encourages you to creative deeds? Was there ever such a thing?

Oleg (evasively). Well... it was... something like that. But for a long time everything has been completely different. Everyday life – you understand. He has not served any family in my memory yet.

Danil (matter-of-factly, approvingly). Wooooo!

Oleg (with interest and a dig). Well, what about your Irinka, is she? Does it move you to creative deeds?

Danil (with a sneer). Irka? Me? (Emotionally.) Yes, I want to strangle someone after talking to her at all! It's a snake, which is not enough! She's fucked up my whole life. Step to the right, step to the left, I will do everything! Kayak! Debriefing begins. If you didn't notice someone's lipstick on your neck and didn't erase it, then it's a scandal if you pinned someone's hair on yourself – half a hole! Smells like women's perfume – even if you climb into the loop. And once I came home without panties. In trousers, but without underpants, he left it at the scene of the "crime" in the parking lot. So they almost got torn up there! Fortunately, I was drunk in zyuzu. After a couple of hooks in the door jamb, he passed out himself. But nothing, a week later we were already talking ...

Oleg (surprised). Hah! No, how would you like to? So that you can go to other people's women, and you are cordially welcomed at home after that? Yes, Irka is really an angel! You're the shitty husband!

Danil (judiciously). I'm a man! A normal healthy, mature man. Moderately goat-like, wise with everyday experience, who understood the hopelessness of the situation of the post-wedding period, a man!!! It is naive to believe that someone lives differently.

Oleg (indignantly). I live differently!

Danil (surprised). What do you mean?

Oleg (convincingly). I don't cheat on my wife and I never have. A small pause. The men look at each other with a strange look.

Danil (confused). What, are you a fool?

Oleg (convincingly). No. Just a decent family man.

Danil (incredulously). Yes, do not treat... He didn't cheat.

There are no men who don't cheat.

Oleg (convincingly). There are. And that's exactly what I am.

Danil (incredulously). Seriously, did you cheat?

Oleg (convincingly). Not once!

Danil curls his lips, is surprised, looks at Oleg as if he were an alien.

Danil (trying to believe). Well, you give. So what? Never even wanted to? Not drawn to the side?

Oleg (calmly). Well... you never know what I wanted. You can't! The bonds of marriage, all that!

Danil (sadly). No, Oleja, you're still a fool.

Oleg (on edge). I'm a fool, and you're smart! You're slinging yourself on other people's women, your wife is out... (Pointing to the window.) And you're smart for all that!

Danil (calmly). Buddy, don't get excited, I'm not angry. Fine, well done. You don't cheat on each other – and that's great. Everything suits you – God grant. And everything suits us like this. In fact, in family life it does not matter at all whether you are a fool or smart. It's important that you're happy. At least sometimes. So I'm happy. Irishka (Pointing to the window.) As you can see – too. So in our family we can say – a complete idyll. Everyone gets tired of everything, and we are happy from time to time. Sometimes we are even happy, you won't believe it, together!

Oleg (calming down). Okay, it's the master's business. I'm not climbing. Listen, tell me... And Irina, does she know that you know?

Danil (calmly). About a lover?

Oleg (with interest). Yes.

Danil (calmly). I don't know, we haven't discussed it with her. But, for sure, he guesses. She's not a fool. A snake, a bitch, but not a fool. (Proudly.) I chose it myself!!!

Oleg (with sarcasm and approval). Krasava!

The men shake hands approvingly and supportingly.

Suddenly Danil screams in panic, accidentally glancing out the window.

Danil (frightened). AHHH!

Oleg jerks back. He also looks out the window, then at Danil. Can't figure out what happened.

Oleg (confused, excited). What? What happened?



Danil (nervously, rubbing his eyes and looking out the window again). Do you see that?

Oleg (trying to see what's going on outside the window). I don't see anything like that. They are sitting, drinking something!

Danil (roaring). Something?!?!? They're drinking my collectible cognac!!! I was saving it for a special occasion, but not for this one! Well, Irka, well, bitch, hold on!!!

Danil breaks off and runs furiously to the traitors.

Oleg looks surprised at Danil's reaction. She follows him with her eyes. It seems like he's going to leave, but it's interesting what will happen.

Peeping through the window.

There is a knock on the door, or rather even its removal (door). Screams, screeching, dishes, fighting ...

all this is hidden by the music that has appeared and completes the scene.

Blackout. Silence.

ZTM.

## Scene 5. Ladies.

The scene is conventionally divided into two parts. With musical accompaniment, Irina and Nina are each doing business in their apartment. The viewer sees both ladies at the same time. Cleaning, cooking, washing. Everything is like everyone else's.

Irina picks up the phone, calls Nina.

The musical accompaniment subsides and ends.

Nina's phone rings, she looks at the screen, sees who is calling, picks up the phone.

Nina (into the phone, positively, encouraging conversation).  
Irishe, hello.

Irina (into the phone, positively). Hi, Ninul. How's life – swing?

Nina (into the phone, positively, shaking off a dust rag). Oh, Irishka, Masha – just hold on.

Irina (into the phone, positively). Well done, that's the way it should be. What are you doing there? Do you want to do the housework?

Nina (into the phone, positive, exhaling). I'm busy where to go. Who will do everything? Although, I admit, sometimes I harness Oleg. It happens that he scrubs the floors and washes the dishes. We have equality on all fronts. And while he's at work, I've been busy.

Irina (into the phone, positively). Oh, how great everything

is with you! It's not like that with me! On Danila, you know, where you sit, you get off there. The household is all on me. So that he scrubbed the floors, or washed the dishes... This is him, even if he soooooo much messed up, he still won't do it. It's the same thing every day. The morning begins with the fact that Danil starts swearing the alarm clock. Moreover, he swears the same way every time! No variety. Then breakfast, work. I came home from work and put my ass on the sofa. And then either beer and TV, or a smartphone in your hands, or all together, which is most often. This is everyday life.

On weekends, everything is about the same, except for the first two items, the alarm clock and work. So there is no question of any help in the household, even-even.

Nina (into the phone, positive, exhaling). Mm...

Irina (into the phone, with interest). Listen? So, do you have your Olezhek who also cooks?

Nina (into the phone, calmly). Things happen. It is not necessary to expect much culinary delights from him, but to cook porridge, soup, scrambled eggs in a hurry – it's easy.

Irina (into the phone, surprised). Wow...

Nina (into the phone, calmly). On weekends, he likes to bake cookies, or waffles. By the way, I was just going to tomorrow. I've already bought margarine. I put flour in reserve, sugar. In general, it takes aim.

Irina (into the phone, with intrigue). Sluuuushaaay...

Nina (into the phone, with interest). Mm...???

Irina (into the phone, with intrigue). A..m.... well, I want to try. You're really intrigued.

Nina (into the phone, positively). What's the problem? Come on! I'll tell you that you and Danil will come, let him bake his cookies for two portions!

Irina (into the phone, happily). Super! Then we'll be with you tomorrow!

Nina (into the phone, positively). Swept away!

They put down the tubes.

The musical theme continues.

Irina is happy. The insidious plan is read in her eyes.

Nina continues to do household chores at ease, completely without any ulterior motive.

The music stops.

ZTM.

## Scene 6. Dialogues in the dark.

Late evening. It's almost night.

It's dark in Irina and Danil's apartment, the lights are already off, the couple is trying to fall asleep.

Yawns and sighs of Irina and Danil are heard. Both turn over, the creaking of the sofa (bed) is heard.

Irina's voice (dissatisfied). Yes, it's good to put your legs on me, and it's so hot, there's also you with your hairline. Consider that you are covering with the second blanket.

Danil's voice (dissatisfied). And you take your head off my side. These thin hairs of yours are crawling into my mouth and nose, they don't let me sleep. I'll cut it, by God I'll cut it. Under Kotovsky! When you get to the handle, I'll get tired of spitting your hair and perform a sacred ritual while you sleep.

Irina's voice (dissatisfied). If you cut my hair off, I'll grab something else for you. They're hanging around anyway.

Danil's voice (after a pause, thinking it over, smoothing out the corners). That's why I love my wife, so it's for the ability to resolve conflicts. You see how cleverly you manage to come to a consensus. And come in such a way that in the end both sides were dissatisfied. As it was bad, so it remains bad, nothing changes. But the consensus!

Irina's voice (dissatisfied). You... this... Come on, don't speak out, otherwise I will determine the eunuchs without any

consensus.

Danil's voice (calm, yawning). Okay, okay, let's go to bed already. We still have to buy something in time tomorrow, not to go empty-handed. And what is it, by the way, that we were invited to visit? They didn't call, they didn't call, and then on you ...

Irina's voice (deliberately surprised). Yes, I don't even know myself, somehow it turned out that way. We talked to Nina on the phone, word for word – invited her. I think, and what is not there?

Danil's voice (calm). In principle, yes.

Irina's voice (agreeing). Well.

Danil's voice (calm, yawning). Okay, we'll go tomorrow. Let's chat, have a drink... But that's tomorrow, and now let's go to sleep.

Irina's voice (agreeing). Come on.

Danil's voice (after a short pause). Did you set the alarm?

Irina's voice (calmly). Yes, I have it.

Danil's voice (calmly). And I don't have it.

Irina's voice (sarcastically).

Danil's voice (indignantly). Alarm clock, I mean!

Irina's voice (with understanding). Oh, that's what you mean. God be with him, don't bet. I think we'll get up.

Danil's voice (calmly). Okay, good night.

Irina's voice (calmly). And you.

The music changing the scene begins to play softly.

Irina's voice (outraged cry). Where are you going with your feet again, well!!!

Danil's voice (nervously, shouting). And you shut your head!

The nervous altercation of Danil and Irina is hidden by the background of the growing music.

The music grows and subsides, ends.

...

The same late evening, almost night, but now in Nina and Oleg's apartment.

The lights are also turned off, a married couple is trying to fall asleep.

Nina and Oleg yawn and sigh. Both turn over, the creaking of the sofa (bed) is heard.

Nina's voice (calm, cautious). I see you can't sleep either, right?

Oleg's voice (calm, cheerful, not smelling of sleep). Yes, something is not in one eye at all. And you need to sleep. Tomorrow this fuss, guests... Why did you decide to call them? They're like a cat and a dog. We will sit and listen to their complaints about each other.

Nina's voice (calm, cautious). They seem to have got used a little, maybe it will do?

Oleg's voice (skeptically). Got used to it? I'm begging you. One is a badass, the other is not a badass. It might be so nice when your whole life is like on a volcano, but when this volcano is in your apartment, then there is hardly anything worth waiting for.

Nina's voice (calm, coaxing). Oleg, they very rarely come to us, as we do to them. Besides, I've already called. Do not refuse now.

Oleg's voice (humbly). No, no, of course not.

Nina's voice (delicately). Treat them with your cookies, let them be jealous of what a handy husband I have ...

Oleg's voice (kindly). Okay, okay .., let them envy. Ah ..., patience and strength to us. Good night, dear.

Nina's voice (kindly). Good night, darling.

The musical theme begins to sound smoothly.

Nina's heroic snoring is heard.

Oleg's voice (dissatisfied). Come on, eeeeeeeee....

The musical background increases, leaving the scene disappearing into the darkness with a slight anticipation.

The music stops.

ZTM.



## Scene 7. Guests.

Positive loud music!

Nina and Oleg's apartment.

Nina and Oleg joyfully greet the guests who have just entered (Irina and Danila).

Oleg in a kitchen apron, hands in flour. Nina in a beautiful party dress. Danil is dressed in a strict style, dark suit. Irina in a provocative dress, heels. The face is painted, it looks very impressive.

Danil (fervently). Hello, Aborigines! What do they give you to devour? In the sense of being treated?

Irina (making excuses for her husband). Don't pay attention to your husband's stupid jokes. (He talks enthusiastically.) He's on a roll today. We enter the elevator in the shopping center. There are about six more people with us. The doors close, Danil turns to everyone, busily so, in a boorish, burnt voice (Parodies the conductor of public transport.) So, let's go in, we'll pay for the fare!

Danil, Oleg, Nina are smiling.

Irina (indignantly). Yes, the main thing is, convincingly so! A couple of people even reached for their wallets.

Danil (positively, to his wife). Yes, you yourself reached into your pocket so-and-so.

Irina shoves her husband in the side. Indignantly whispers

something to him. But their incipient altercation is interrupted by Nina and Oleg, who quickly change the situation. They approach the guests, warmly welcome them.

Everyone is hugging, rejoicing.

Oleg happily pats Danil on the back, leaving quite impressive white flour stains and handprints on his jacket (on the back).

But no one pays attention to this (except the audience). Irina delicately kisses Oleg on the cheek, serves the cake she brought. Danil takes out wine and sweets, which he also prepared for the event.

Irina (to Oleg, happily). Well, cook, it's from our table to yours. And you go brag about cookies! I feel it smells like cooking, but... (Looks around.) I don't see it yet. Stashed cookies, huh? Come on, drag it here, we'll taste it!

Oleg accepts the gifts, puts everything on the table, goes to the kitchen for cookies.

Nina seats the guests, arranges everything on the table, on which everything is already cooked, except cookies.

From the kitchen comes the rumble of iron sheets, basins, dishes...

Oleg (shouts from the kitchen). Nina! Why did you put the sheets like that? At least she would have told me! Go help me soon. I grounded the cookies!

Nina rushes into the kitchen, Irina runs away with her to help. Upset, dumbfounded screams of wives are heard.

Oleg returns from the kitchen, annoyed, wipes his hands with

a rag, nervously throws off his apron, throws it aside along with the rag.

Danil (with a trick). What are you raging about?

Oleg (nervously). Yes, something went wrong with this cookie in the morning. Immediately you need a certain mood and condition. And Nina and I had a bit of a fight, well... here is the result, in general.

Danil (with interest). And what did they say?

Oleg (nervously). Stupid reason. They quarreled over flour. I like to make cookies from second-grade flour, cereals are still preserved in it.

Danil looks from under his brows, does not understand.

Oleg (explaining, seeing the misunderstanding). Well, useful trace elements. And Nina insisted that I make from the first grade. The flour is whiter, they say, and the quality is better and the look and everything else... You can't "lose face" in front of the guests.

Danil (with interest). So, what's the end result?

Oleg (displeased). And in the end, out, all the cookies on the floor. (He waves it off, changes the subject.) Ay, God be with him.

Oleg notices his friend's white back, approaches, shakes off his jacket.

Danil (surprised). What's there?

Oleg (with a smile, shaking off traces of flour). Yes, I have soiled you... somebody... Everything is almost fine. How are

you?

Danil (positively). Yes, yesterday...

Danil looks cautiously towards the kitchen, continues the story a little quieter.

Danil (with a hitch, taking Oleg aside). I went to the store yesterday, bought one big cake, so I wanted something. He brought it home, then (withstands a very short pause – intrigue), and devoured it! In one haryu! While mine was not at home.

Oleg (with a friendly smile). What, right into one? How's the duck?

Danil (positively, proudly). Just like a duck! Like the last schmuck! In one helmet! Let him know who is the boss in the house!

Men shake hands with pride and solidarity.

Danil (casually). Then, of course, he immediately covered up all traces. I threw away the packaging, collected all the crumbs so as not to burn.

Oleg (with a friendly smile and sarcasm). Yeah, man! Man!

Danil (hot-tempered). Yes, he will come, after all, he will go broke! And I've been putting up with her nasty voice for so many years. (Skeptically, with mockery.) I found myself, a princess, a Christmas tree. And you can't take your eyes off, and the speech flows like a little river murmuring... However, however, if this river Ganges, then it is quite appropriate.

Oleg (with a friendly smile). Look, come on, it's not that bad! Although the Ganges is the dirtiest river in the world, it is

considered clean in a Spiritual sense.

Danil (skeptically, loudly). I'm begging you! I found a pure Soul...

the ladies are returning. Nina carries cookies on a plate, puts it on the table.

Nina (positively). Well, part of the cooking still managed to be saved!

Irina begins to show a keen interest in the last phrase she heard.

Irina (with interest). And what's there, what's there? At the expense of clean Souls?

Danil (to his wife, everything is as in spirit, indignantly). Yes, there, Oleja says that you are a pure Soul. And I'm trying to explain to him that you're a fiend from hell!

Irina (indignantly, to her husband). Tyyyyy! Lupen! What kind of numbers are these! You should protect and praise your wife, not humiliate her, and in public. Here's Oleja – well done, and you're not a husband, but outright shit!

Danil (positively, philosophically, walking around). So... heh... Did I have a chance to be different, next to you. With whom you will lead, you will gain from that.

Irina (indignantly). What an asshole!

Danil (making faces and mimicking his wife). Oh, oh, oh. I'm all such a foo what, and she's a pure queen. Yes, if I tell you about you, Oleg and Nina's hair will stand on end, including in the most indecent places!

Oleg (with a friendly smile, Danilo). Don't worry about the latter. They're not there!

Nina (embarrassed, to Oleg). Oleeeg, well, why are you really...

Irina (looking reproachfully at her husband, pointing admiringly at Oleg). Here! Man! He does everything according to his mind! (Continuing to vilify her husband, addressing him directly, fiercely.) And if you want to know, hygiene is an elementary respect for a partner! And it's elementary to ask you to wash your feet – it's to shoot yourself! (To Oleg and Nina.) We only brush our teeth for the New Year, and about everything else... Uuuu... That the monkey is in the jungle, that my Danil – there is no special difference.

Danil is clowning around, portraying a macaque (a macaque's waddling gait, one hand up, the other down, the hands dangle freely).

Danil (pretending to be a macaque). U-a-u-a-a.

Irina (looking at her husband). Vo-vo!

Danil (boldly, confidently). Yes, if you say it, then say it to the end, and don't take it out of context. (To Oleg and Nina.) Do you know why she's so worried about hygiene? Do you think she's so exalted and refined? High society? Nifiga! The reason is banal and transparent. The same as the courtesans in the recent past. All this is just so that you don't get any animals during your festivities.

Irina (boldly, to her husband). Shut your mouth!

Nina (surprised, to Irina, pointing to Danil). Irishe, I don't understand what he's talking about, huh?

Irina (leaving the subject). Oh, nothing. He talks about anything, idiot.

Danil (to Nina, with a sly face). Ninulchik? Don't you know? Oleg didn't tell you? So I'll enlighten you. Zhinka is mine, she is...

Irina (to her husband, audaciously). I told you to shut your mouth! I'll help you now!

Oleg (smoothing the corners). Let's change the subject, or I'll leave now. I don't want to listen to these squabbles of yours.

Danil (to Oleg, calming down). Yes, please! Let's talk about cars. Irka won, she went to study for her driver's license. And she's a hell of a rider. She has learned to hum, and everything else is difficult for her! So, guys, when he gets his license, you call me first before you go outside. If she's not on the road, then you're more or less safe.

Oleg (waving his hand in resignation and leaving). Uh, no, guys, that's not what we agreed. Sort things out without me!

Oleg leaves.

Irina (to Nina, with a sly face). Ninul, dear, please give me a cake.

Nina (not understanding Irina's insidious plan yet). Yes, yes, I'm just going to cut it into pieces. Wait, I'll go get the knife.

Nina takes a couple of steps towards the kitchen.

Irina (to Nina, with a sly face). No, no, you can't do with a

piece here (Glaring at her husband.) You need a whole cake for such a mess. Come on as it is, now I'll treat my own, up to the tonsils.

Danil (with attacks on Irina). Who are you going to treat here? Come here, traitor. (To Nina.) Ninochka, where is the toilet here? My wife urgently needs to wash her head thoroughly, otherwise I see that the brain is completely clogged, she does not see the shores.

Danil steps on Irina. It's bad.

Irina gets scared. The situation is starting to take a serious turn.

Nina, seeing this, pounces on Danil, tries to hold him back.

There is an awkward struggle between Danil and Nina. Danil, of course, gradually breaks out and is about to overtake his wife.

Nina (trying to restrain Danila, shouts to Irina). Irka, run!!!

Intriguing music sounds.

Irina runs away after Oleg.

Danil and Nina find themselves in a strange position. They are very close, in fact, hugging each other.

And after Irina runs away, Nina and Danil catch themselves thinking that they are no longer fighting, but hugging. Their glances exude a cunning dangerous light of mutual sympathy, not God knows where it came from.

The light highlights an embracing couple with playful dangerously sly looks.

The music ends with the blackout.



End of the first action.

## Action 2

### Scene 1. Ah, what are you, what are you...

Oleg and Nina's apartment.

The same scene, Nina is still paired with Danil. It's as if she wakes up from a momentary turbidity, pushes Danil away, more afraid for her feelings, and not for him, which is certainly reflected in her behavior and facial expressions.

Nina (excitedly, stammering, confused in words and thoughts). I am.... you... Well, you... Well, what are you, you... scared... you... Such a whole rush. I'm right even... somehow... Well, you know.

Danil (with a cautious grin). Hmm... It seems that I understand something...

Nina is embarrassed, behind careful glances and smiles she tries to hide her embarrassments and moods incomprehensible to herself.

Nina (excitedly, stammering, confused in words and thoughts). No... no. No, no, I'm not talking about that at all.

Danil (with a cautious grin). Then what about?

Nina (thoughtfully). About what? A.... m.... And I myself

forgot what I was talking about...

Danil smiles. Does not press. Passes, sits down at the table.

Danil (calmly). Ning, let's eat something? Here you have cookies, I heard, the vaunted are served on weekends.

Nina (recovering from her inner turmoil). Oh, yeah. Sure.

Nina runs up to the table, starts fussing, caring.

Nina (fussily on the ground of excitement and confusion). Here, here you try...

Nina serves cookies, tries to take care of the guest.

Nina (fussily). Now I'm going to get a knife, I need to cut the cake.

Nina seems to run away, but Danil stops her with a remark.

Danil (calmly). Nina! Don't fuss. I don't want any cake or sweets. And I can't say that I really want cookies.

Nina (thinking). M...

a little pause. Everyone is thinking about what happened.

Danil (calmly). Better get a couple of glasses. I shouldn't have bought wine...

Nina goes for glasses.

Danil opens the wine.

Nina is coming back. Puts down the glasses. Danil pours. Nina sits down opposite, takes her filled glass.

Nina (in a calm, slightly guilty voice). What shall we drink to?

Danil (deeply, deeply). For loneliness!

Nina does not drink, she sees that Danil has not yet expressed the whole idea. Gives him the opportunity to do it.

Danil (deeply, deeply). Come on, Nina, let's drink to loneliness in a couple. It doesn't matter if people live in an official marriage, or in a civil one... Someone is just dating... But, nevertheless, there is some kind of a couple. And in these couples, for some reason, sooner or later loneliness grows from somewhere. To be honest, I don't want to raise a glass for him, but it seems to me that God himself ordered me to drink to this!

Nina (philosophically, trying the toast on herself). You can't argue with that. Then don't clink glasses!

Danil (sadly). Without clinking glasses!

They drink. They eat cookies.

Danil (having tasted). M ... and the cookies are not bad!

Nina (appreciating the wine, not yet moving away from its aftertaste). Yes, wine, by the way, too!

Danil (approvingly). Yes! I know how to choose wine, that's a fact. Unfortunately, there are no women.

Nina (after a short pause, with cautious interest). Is it that bad?

Danil (frankly, with warmth). Can't you see for yourself?

Nina (after a short pause, with cautious interest)... I just... I think you are... It's not always like that.

Danil (frankly, with warmth). Not always. Usually things are much worse.

Nina (surprised). Oh...

Danil (with interest). Uh-huh... Well, what about you? Happy with Oleg?

Nina tries to answer "yes" seemingly mechanically, but

something stops her. She tries to formulate a thought, but time is passing and it is not on her side.

Danil (seeing difficulties with the answer). Clearly, in general.

Nina (as if justifying herself). No, Oleg is very good, don't think about it...

Danil (warmly, with understanding, calmly, interrupts). I know that Oleg is very good. But I asked you about something else... and... it seems to me... You answered quite clearly.

Nina falls silent. Does not argue, does not defend himself.

Nina (holding out an empty glass). Splash some more.

Danil pours.

Nina immediately sips, takes a candy, has a snack.

Nina (sadly). Mode of life... It's a scary thing. Such experienced family ships are stranded, which is amazing. Are you asking about happiness? What happiness there is. We live by the knurled... As everyone. You know, it seems to me that if I, or Oleg, had some more or less option, plus the slightest infatuation, then our marriage would have immediately broken up.

Love and respect? Don't know... Sometimes, we find out about his presence to each other too late. Now the relationship that we have, I would not call love and happiness, I would call it tolerance. Yes, perhaps. We tolerate each other, and that's how we live. A long time ago, we no longer burn for each other with some feelings worthy of voicing.

Danil (calmly, judiciously). Wow, how great everything is with you. We ran out of patience a long time ago. Irka is tired

of putting up with my quirks, I'm sick of her antics. And you know... At some point... It seems to me that we have become indifferent to each other. We didn't care who had what was going on in their lives. Something's going on, and that's fine. That's how we live... For some reason, we are not getting divorced. Probably – laziness.

Nina (surprised). Listen, no, wait! Judging by what I've just seen between you two, you're far from being indifferent! You've got sparks flying in different directions!

Danil (with mockery and emotion). Do you think it's because we love each other so passionately?

Nina (cautiously). No?

Danil (calming down). I'm begging you... This is so that it is not boring to live. I'll tell her nasty things, she'll tell me... So slowly, you see, you'll pass the day. Well, there's another day, again everything is in a circle. Our family life is about in this direction and flows. Nothing interesting, kind, bright.

Nina sets her glass aside. He approaches Danil, takes him under his arm, lifts him up.

Nina (cautiously, unaccustomed to herself). Let's go for a walk. Something is somehow sick at Heart from all this... I don't want to sit in this den and howl about a hard life. I want to get some air. Shall we go?

Danil (getting up from the table, exhaling). Let's go!

Music!

Danil takes Nina by the arm and takes her away.

ZTM.

The music keeps playing.

The light turns on smoothly.

Irina and Oleg enter the same apartment.

The music stops and ends.

Irina (continuing the conversation she started with Oleg long ago). Oh, don't tell me. What have we not had with him over the years. Okay. What was, was. (Loudly, positively, addressing Nina and Danil). So what? Are we continuing the sabantuy?

Irina looks around the apartment, Oleg also does not observe his friend and wife.

Irina (thoughtfully). Sooooo! Interesting. (Loudly.) Guys! Where are you???

Irina goes to look for the kitchen, Oleg goes to another room. Both return with nothing.

Oleg (thoughtfully). Interestingly...

Oleg takes out his mobile phone, calls his wife.

Nina's cell phone rings right here in the room. Oleg finds this phone by the sound, picks it up. Throws off the call.

Oleg (disappointed). I see. I left my phone at home.

Oleg looks at the table, sees open wine, two glasses... He understands what's what, and these considerations do not please him.

Oleg (dissatisfied, about the situation). Soooo...

Irina is taking out her mobile phone at this time. Danila dials, the phone to his ear.

Beeps are heard.

They don't pick up the phone.

Irina throws off, calls again.

Beeps again.

They don't pick up the phone.

Irina throws off.

Irina (relatively calmly). My goat doesn't pick up the phone either. I didn't miss you, then.

Oleg (still in his thoughts, "slowing down"). Neeee somewhere safe... I mean, didn't you miss me? And, in the plan – for you?

Irina (positively). Yeah.

Oleg (relatively calmly). M..., clearly. And you're on it?

Irina (positively, mysteriously). And I...

Irina mysteriously approaches Oleg, mysteriously smiles at him, hugs him.

Irina (gently). And I've missed you.

Oleg is in shock. He hesitates a little, but then breaks out of Irina's embrace, runs away to a safe distance.

Oleg (nervously, excitedly, at a loss). You... what are you doing?

Irina (playfully). Why? Others are over there, and that's nothing, but we are what... Is it worse than the others?

Oleg (nervously, excitedly, at a loss). Yes, what others? What others?

Irina (calmly, feeling comfortable and confident). Oleg! Wake



up. Well, look around you. What are you? Really, you don't understand anything? My hubby and your wife sat here, had a drink, well? Then everything is clear.

Oleg (nervously, excitedly, at a loss). What is clear?

Irina (calmly, feeling comfortable and confident). Let's go to a quiet place, what else. We would have caught them here with you. And who needs it.

Oleg (nervously, excitedly, at a loss). What are you? You think they're there...

Oleg gestures the process of copulation.

Irina (skeptically). No, damn it! They walk around the park there, eat ice cream, and have a conversation about the cultural and philosophical trends of modernity, while maintaining a two-meter distance between themselves.

Oleg is straining. His gaze becomes angry.

Irina (reassuring, seeing the anger growing in Oleg). Calm down, Lord. Just like the first time, by God.

Oleg (nervously, excitedly, at a loss). What do you mean?

Irina (calmly). Oleg! How many years have you been living with Nina...

Oleg begins to remember.

Irina (convincingly). Remember the last time you had a passion with her! So that everything plays and boils! To over the edge! Well? Remember?

Oleg tries to remember such moments. He keeps quiet. But it's all clear.

Irina (convincingly). That's the point. Do you think that Nina's attitude towards you is different? Of course, she's cheering herself up somewhere on the side. And this is normal! Any other person would have done the same in her place.

Oleg (gruffly). Not everyone! Yes, my wife and I may not be as wonderful as we would like, but she is a very good person inside. In a spiritual, higher sense, she is a treasure! I found this treasure at the time. And I really appreciate it and protect it!

Irina (with a sneer). A treasure, you say... Well, don't be surprised that you are entitled to only 25% of it. Actually, that was what needed to be proved.

Oleg (gruffly). No, it's different with us. Don't judge everyone by yourself.

Irina looks away.

Oleg understands what he has said. He's embarrassed.

Oleg (apologetically). Sorry, I... I didn't mean to offend you. So, blurted out on emotions. It's just really kind of weird.

Irina (surprisingly calm). Everything is fine. You're right, I'm not the most loyal wife. But I don't really hide my true nature behind all kinds of masks. What there is, there is. But it's me. And most people hide it. So you'll see, everyone seems to be diligent family men. Husbands are great, wives are smart. Families as families. Everyone is a chin chinarem! And dig deeper – everyone is cheating on each other. Everything. Hiding, deceiving. They go to different tricks, but they change. (Philosophically.) And they do it right!

Oleg (indignantly). I mean, right? I, for example, do not cheat.  
So what am I, then, a fool?

Irina smiles, walks with the gait of a panther towards Oleg.

Irina (slyly). Don't worry, I'll talk some sense into you now.

An increasing background music sounds.

In a smooth blackout, there remains a determined Irina, rapidly reducing the distance to Oleg, and Oleg, who is either at a loss, or in some kind of broken determination.

The music stops.

ZTM.

## Scene 2. Shhh...

night.

Very poor lighting.

Alarming soft music!

Irina comes home.

He steals cautiously, settles down on the sofa. Quickly throws on a housecoat, lies down, falls asleep.

Danil enters. Quietly, quietly on tiptoe sneaks, looks around. Quietly changing clothes in a hurry. He goes to bed somewhere else. He doesn't notice Irina.

...

You can beat the change of scenes of Nina and Irina's apartments with light. Danila and Irina need to be removed at this moment.

...

The same night in the apartment of the second married couple. Oleg walks back and forth in a very, very weak light, he does not find a place for himself. He attaches himself to some corner, sits down. He falls asleep just like that. Nina enters. Oleg passes by very quietly. Notices him, thinks about it. He covers his mouth with his hand. She doesn't know what to do or how to be. Rushing around in thoughts, whether to wake up, or leave everything as it is. He does not dare to wake up. Quietly goes into another room.

The music stops.

## Scene 3. Misunderstandings.

Morning.

The light turns on.

Oleg wakes up on the floor. I managed to slide out of a sitting sleepy position during the night. Wakes up, stretches, gets up. He looks at his watch.

Nina's traditional snoring comes from the next room.

Oleg turns around at this snoring.

Oleg (partly relieved). Yeah..., so – at home. When she just brushed past me.

Oleg stretches once more. Shouts to his wife in a dissatisfied voice, with a hit-and-run.

Oleg (sternly, loudly). EEEEE! Night bird! Let's stop snoring there already. Come on, we need to talk.

Nina, who has not slept well, comes out, yawns.

Nina (yawning). What are you making noise about?

Oleg (sternly, quietly, looking away). We need to talk.

Nina is wary. Sleep flies off her in one fell swoop. She is nervous, she also looks away.

Oleg (cautiously, moderately severely). You... is there anything you want to tell me?

Nina (cautiously, also with a hit-and-run). And you to me?

Oleg (cautiously, moderately severely). Willingly. So I came home yesterday, but I didn't find you. You sat down, drank...

Then you disappear, and then you come from nowhere at night. What should I think? So, I repeat the question. Is there anything you want to tell me? Explain?

Nina (cautiously, also with a hit-and-run). I want to remind you that we had visitors yesterday. You behaved very "manly". He left me here alone with them and took off. And I'm still to blame for you now!

Oleg (cautiously, moderately severely). Let's clarify a bit. You spent time here yesterday not with guests, but with a guest. Irina jumped out almost after me. I met her not far from home. You stayed here with Danil. You sat, drank, then left, then you came at night. And I really don't like what you're doing. I've been loyal to you all my life and I deserve to know the truth. Did you have something with Danil last night?

Nina (cautiously, also with a hit-and-run). What about you and Irina? Where were you hanging around with her and what were you doing?

Oleg (nodding, disappointed). Everything is clear... Okay, you can go back to sleep. I don't want to talk to you right now. I don't know how and what will happen next. But now I want to be alone.

Sad music is playing.

Oleg leaves.

Nina waves her hands excitedly, goes back to the bedroom in her thoughts.

The music subsides along with the blackout.

ZTM.

## Scene 4. Misunderstandings 2.

Morning.

The light turns on.

Danil and Irina are sitting in different places, this time without phones in their hands. They look at each other sideways. They keep quiet.

Danil is the first to break the silence.

Danil (on a heavy exhalation). Tell me.

Irina looks at her husband in surprise.

Irina (indignantly). That is, I also tell you?

Danil looks at his wife with an onslaught.

Irina (giving up, throwing up her hands indignantly). Okay, I'm telling you. You jumped on me. I ran away. Aired, paused. I came back – and you're gone. And Nina, by the way, too. So now, my dear, the story begins with you. Where did you and my friend go, I wonder?

Danil (indignantly). Where have we gone? We went to look for you! Where did you go with my friend? You jumped out after him right away. Oh, how I doubt that your paths have diverged.

Irina (excusing herself). Yes, I really met Oleg. We sat at the house on the playground, talked. We made a circle around it and returned. And there's no one at home.

Danil (indignantly). That's right – no one! We went looking for you!



Irina (with a smile). And where were you looking? In a rented apartment?

Danil (indignantly). What are you talking about? In which apartment?

Irina (pressing). I do not know which one. But we've been waiting for you for quite a long time. By the way, I called. Why didn't you pick up the phone, huh? Tell me, did you accidentally put it on silent mode?

Danil takes out his phone, looks at him in surprise.

Danil (surprised). Oh, really, missed. Yes, exactly on silent. Strange.

Irina (not believing). Yes, yes... Strange. There's not one missing. I called several times. And since you say you went looking for me, why didn't you call? I didn't turn off my phone and didn't translate it to silent. What do you say, seeker?

Danil is lost for a while, but quickly comes into offensive form.

Danil (with attacks). I didn't call on purpose. In order not to tell you too much in a hurry. And there was something to say, believe me!

Irina (not believing). Oh, oh, what a noble... I do not believe.

Irina defiantly turns away from her husband.

Danil gets up from the sofa.

Danil (exhaling, offended). Okay, everything is clear with you. I walked up – I came. I'm happy for you. I've never forbidden you anything like that. If you walk, walk to your health, but with my friend, why? (He waves it away nervously.) Ah...

sad music sounds.

Danil leaves.

Irina looks after him doubtfully.

The music subsides along with the blackout.

ZTM.

## Scene 5. Male conversation.

A playground near the house, where men have already had the good fortune to watch an entertaining scene through the window.

Sounds intriguing, decisive music.

Men (Oleg and Danil) come out from different sides. They are resolutely heading towards each other.

The music stops.

Danil (brusquely, defiantly). Olegych, hello, dear! That's what I wanted to tell you!

Danil makes a right hook (you can do it from the left), but Oleg dodges. A fist sweeps past his jaw.

Danil, by the inertia of the swing, flies a little to the side. He gathers his thoughts. So far, it does not attack anymore, because it is somewhat complicated.

Oleg looks at the whole situation with a surprisingly condescending eye, and it even seems to please him.

Oleg (sternly, but at the same time with warmth). You know, but I wanted to talk to you about the same thing. And in about the same form.

Danil (looking away sternly, somewhat embarrassed). It was so accepted in my village, where I come from. In all questionable situations, fists were used first, and then they talked. Sorry, it worked... What's his name... instinct, genes, or habit... Damn him.

Oleg (with understanding). Yes, we had about the same thing. As you can see, even the reaction has been preserved. So what? Shall we talk?

Danil (exhaling heavily, thinking about the upcoming conversation). Let's be honest. Oleg, you know that I am quite calm about my wife's frivolity. We have been doing this for a long time, everything is fine. But this frivolity should not have affected our friendship in any way. The fact that I know about Irka's lover, and I'm not doing anything, does not mean at all that I won't hit him sometime somewhere. You know, someone else's family is dark. Why did you get into this situation? I trusted you, didn't I?

Oleg nods.

His nods are vague.

Danil does not understand what he means by this.

Oleg (calming down). So you're saying that you didn't have anything with my Nina?

Danil (surprised). What kind of questions? Of course not! I had no idea. We sat with her for a while, and then went outside. Your wife clearly needed to talk, breathe, and put her thoughts in order. You got her, buddy, over the years of living together – specifically! So you're still owed for a session of psychotherapy. I was steamed up to listen to her, but where to go – a friend's wife.

Oleg listens attentively, nods with understanding, calms down.

Danil (cautiously). Well, did you have something with my Irka, or not?

Oleg looks at Danil very seriously.

Oleg (seriously). Should I tell you honestly?

Danil (tensely). If you're a man, then tell it like it is. I'll find out the truth sooner or later anyway.

Oleg (seriously). I say it as it is. Your Irina and I could really have had everything. But thanks to the fact that your friend, as you rightly put it, is a fool, the danger has passed.

Danil (still not too believing what he heard). Wait, wait. I mean, what are you... You mean you didn't have anything there?

Oleg (smiling cautiously). I'm sorry, but I didn't let her near me.

Danil (on nerves, on emotions, with relief). Oh, you damn blasphemer!

Bright loud music sounds with pleasantly dramatic overtones.

Danil approaches Oleg, the men hug each other tightly, like a man, with sincerity, strength and countless respect.

The music sounds for a while longer, and stops along with the blackout.

ZTM.

## Scene 6. To the world.

Nina and Oleg's house.

A lyrical musical composition sounds. Softly. Background.

Nina walks around in frustration and confusion.

The music becomes barely audible.

Nina (a little nervous). Yees... Situation. From scratch, practically, the relationship can be said to have been undermined. Although... Although they haven't really held on for a long time. He doesn't want to talk to me. Yes, please. Do I want to?

Nina comes to the forefront, thoughtfully communicates with the audience.

Nina (to the audience, thoughtfully, sadly). But I was actually one step away from cheating on Oleg. I saw how Danil's eyes sparkled. I was confused myself, and I saw this confusion in his eyes, and in general non-resistance to the possible development of events.

Damn, how is that? We have been wearing the mask of decent, light-minded people for so many years, but here is the situation, and I am already afraid of my thoughts. How is it? Is everything really so shaky in a relationship?

And I admit, I'm not even so much interested in whether Oleg and Irina had something... Now I'm more worried about how to look into Danilo's eyes after all this! No, of course there was nothing like that, but we both experienced something that we

hadn't experienced for a long time... I know it for sure, it was a mutual feeling, it doesn't resonate so much alone... My God, am I really such a person in my essence?

Nina and the psycho leave the stage.

Nina (emotionally). I don't even want to think about it... No, no, no... Some kind of episodic turbidity. For sure, it's all wine. I love Oleg. I've never cheated on him and I'm not going to... It would be necessary to quickly throw all these thoughts out of my head and forget like a terrible dream.

Oleg enters.

Oleg and Nina meet eyes.

They stop. They look at each other. They are silent.

The background music stops playing.

Silence.

Oleg (seriously, every now and then, lowering his gaze). I had nothing with Irina... You wanted to know. If I had stumbled for some reason, I would have found the courage to say it, and you know it perfectly well. But I also know that you and Danil didn't have anything either. By the will of fate, we found ourselves in a strange situation, which, needless to say, gave rise to certain questions and doubts.

Oleg sighs, lowers his head.

Oleg (a little quieter). I want to apologize for doubting you. I'm sorry, Nina.

Nina approaches her husband.

Nina (warmly, a little guiltily). Forgive me, too, for my stupid

words. I've never allowed myself to do anything like that, and now I blurted it out. Let's forgive each other and live as before. Ok?

Oleg (cautiously). Let's try to live at least a little better than before. I don't know how, but I suspect that it makes sense to think about it, and perhaps take some measures so that you and I never have such questions to each other again.

Nina (warmly, sincerely). I love you, Oleg.

Oleg (warmly, sincerely). I have always loved and love only you. Come quickly, let's hug.

A pleasant lyrical composition sounds.

Nina and Oleg approach each other, warmly, warmly embrace.

The light goes out smoothly.

The music increases in sound.

The music keeps playing.

The music stops and ends. The light turns on smoothly.

Somewhere... It doesn't matter where exactly.

The dark background hides the interior of the apartment.

Irina comes to the forefront. Not too much, but still looks around a little interested. Looking out for her husband. Doesn't find it. He addresses the audience as neighbors in the entrance.

Irina (relatively calmly, to the audience). Hello. Have you seen mine? He probably went to beat Oleg's face, I know him.

Biting his lip, thinking. Eyes are running. Irina puts her hand to her mouth.



Irina (in her own way, to the audience). He doesn't touch my lovers... but this time he definitely won't tolerate it.

Another very short pause between the lines.

Irina (in her own way, to the audience). In fact, I've never had lovers before. It's just me, I wanted to resurrect Danil's feelings. To be jealous, to be overwhelmed by passion again... everything like that. And he's not jealous. I provoke, and he is calm. I'm still and still – zero reaction. As a result, I changed it. And you know – not poisoned, as they say. I even liked it. I was surprised myself. I didn't plan it, I'm talking like a spirit, I just played too much. But I liked it. Yes, my husband's feelings did not soar, but I blossomed with renewed vigor. I understand that there is nothing good in this, of course. I'm not agitating anyone, but Danil is to blame himself. If he stopped paying attention to me, what could I do? I tried to resuscitate him... As I could. It didn't work out. As a result, the novel is on the side... Then the second, the third... But these are matters of bygone days. I've settled down now. Nonsense in the past. I've had one man for a long time... And the husband, of course.

Irina takes a short pause. He sighs languidly.

Irina (warmly, sincerely, to the audience, as to herself). I don't want to change anything. I don't want to divorce Danil, just as I don't want to leave someone who sees a woman in me, who admires me, spoils me and gives gifts.

Irina guiltily, at times lowering her gaze, looks into the auditorium.

Irina (a little guiltily, sincerely, to the audience, as to herself).  
Judging me, right?

...

I judge myself. I was being prepared for another life. To the fact that there will be a strong reliable family, a stable cell of society. That we will hold on to each other, support each other. That our hearts, having merged together, will go through one joint, single path from the beginning to the end, from the moment when we say "Yes" to each other in the registry office.

To say – they said, but then everything went not according to the script, not according to textbooks. Everything went very differently... It seems like we both tried to adhere to the canons and family values known to everyone... But, what to hide... Neither Danil nor I are role models. We tried, really... It didn't work out. And how many of you did it? Well, how is it? To be honest? Everyone is their own here.

You... You will forgive me for this question. I have no right to meddle in my own business, and I'm not going to hide behind someone's failures, if there are any, either. I'll speak for myself. I do not know how to live properly. Don't know. The only thing I know is that Danil and I are relatively honest. We play the games that we both understand. We don't always live together, it's true, but we don't hate each other either, which I think is an achievement. He and I are often fine. And, despite the fact that it seems that outwardly we are like a cat with a dog – we still haven't divorced. Not because they didn't dare, no. There is

plenty of determination. I just don't want to.

Perhaps... I may be wrong, of course, but perhaps the secret of the integrity of marriage is precisely that the spouses play those games that are understandable to both of them. Only them. And let the whole world twist at the temple, looking at certain pairs.

Abnormal?

Yes!

Wonderful?

For God's sake.

Let them say and think what they want. But the most important thing is that other people's opinions, other people's advice, under no circumstances penetrate into a particular family. Even if this family is wrong a thousand times... This is their way... This is their life... And it should only be their decisions...

Irina returns to the center of the stage together with the inclusion of lighting in the apartment.

We emit Irina's arrival into the house from somewhere on the street.

Danil enters. Irina turns to him. She looks him seriously in the eyes.

Irina (to her husband, carefully, seriously). What have you decided?

Danil looks at his wife sternly, seriously.

Irina literally shudders at this look.

Irina (to her husband, cautiously, being afraid). What's going

on?

Danil begins to unbutton his shirt, loosens the belt on his pants.

Irina, in general, understands what is going on, but still she did not expect.

Irina (to her husband, cautiously, being afraid). Oh-pa-pa-pa-paaa...

A bright musical theme sounds.

Danil tears off the rest of the buttons and rushes at his wife.

Rapid darkening. The viewer should not see any nudes and depravity, but they should be very clearly imagined by the inertia of developing events.

Dark.

The music is booming, probably along with the applause.

We "pickle" a little bit of the viewer with longing, loud music, imagination and darkness.

And now the music begins to fade.

Hush, hush.

Danila and Irina's attempts to catch their breath are already becoming audible. They're doing well.

The music subsides almost completely, it sounds barely audible.

Irina's voice (outraged cry). Yes, where are you going with your legs again, well!!!

Danila's voice (nervously, shouting). And you shut your head!

The nervous altercation of Danil and Irina is hidden by the

background of the rapidly growing music again.

A curtain

Novosibirsk, March 2023

Explanatory note for the director:

1. In act 1, there are 3 scenes, the life of Danil and Irina, the moment of automatic voicing of the text that Irina is typing on her smartphone needs to be shown as plausible as possible, you can stumble somewhere, "dictate" some word somewhere so that the viewer understands what is happening and to whom Irina actually answers.

2. In Act 1, 6 scenes, dialogues in the dark can be played on stage, not only with voices. It would be more interesting if double beds (or one bed) appeared on the stage in dim light, where couples would discuss the upcoming sabantuy in dim light. But this will require a lot of money, not only in terms of scenography, but also time. If the director organizes everything correctly and can implement this option, it will be great.

. Good

luck to all of us!!!

These explanations and suggestions are optional for the production, all at the discretion of the director.

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The conditions for staging the play are negotiated individually.

All the plays of Nikolai Lakutin are presented for review in open access on the official website of the author <http://lakutin-n.ru> the "Plays" section

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