

TANYA TANYA

by
Olga Mukhina

Adapted by Kate Moira Ryan

Representation
Beth Blickers
Abrams Artists
275 Seventh Avenue 26th floor
NY, NY 10001
646-486-4600

PART ONE - WOMEN LOVE TO LAUGH AND DANCE

Summer in Bibirevo, a suburb outside of Moscow. Okhlobystin's house stands surrounded by a wooden gate. It was once the main house of an old estate, now is completely encroached upon by crumbling Soviet era housing. The house is wooden and some of the windows are broken or boarded up. Paint peels from the house's exterior. And yet, even though the house is suffering from neglect, it still maintains a hint of its former grandeur. The once vast orchard is comprised of chopped off tree stumps. However, one large apple tree still stands. On this estate, there is always good weather, birds singing and fish swimming. Okhlobystin is a man who loves women and he loves music. Tonight there is a party and the music plays.

ZINA, a provincial woman in her late twenties, dances with Okhlobystin, a man in his forties.

On the other side of the table IVANOV and the YOUNG WOMAN sit.

OKHLOBYSTIN

ZINA! ZINA! ZINA?
(Twirls her about.)
What do you love?

ZINA

I love to dance.

OKHLOBYSTIN

And?

ZINA

That's it.
(Okhlobystin slaps her ass.)
Hey!

OKHLOBYSTIN

I can't help myself. You have an amazing body. I just want to take a bite out of it.

ZINA

Sure, I'm an apple. Take a bite.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Okay.

He bends down to her neck and tries to bite her. She pushes him away and sits down at the table.

ZINA

Do you see that? He tried to bite me.

(Passes him a plate of chicken.)

Here there's still some left.

OKHLOBYSTIN

I don't want chicken I want you!

ZINA

You want the chicken trust me.

She pushes a plate towards him and he reaches out and grabs her hand.

OKHLOBYSTIN

You have the most exquisite hands.

ZINA

You're insane.

(He pulls her towards him embracing her.)

Now what? Why are you suffocating me?

OKHLOBYSTIN

It feels good.

ZINA

Not for me.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Of course it does, how could it not?

ZINA

Comrade Okhlobystin, you're impossible.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Where do you live Zina?

ZINA

Let's say I live on Lenin Street.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Let's say I'm going to kiss you now.

ZINA

I don't think so.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Why? Why would you say that?

ZINA

I'm not so easy, you know.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Oh, Zina! Zina! Take pity on me. I've had a hard life. I've suffered and now, I'M OLD! But you my love...

ZINA

Oh please, you're not old. You're just drunk.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Okay, so then let me kiss you.

ZINA

You have many years ahead of you. Many years to be happy.

OKHLOBYSTIN

With you. Only you can make me happy.

ZINA

Stop. Don't make fun.

OKHLOBYSTIN

I'm not laughing. Let me kiss you.

ZINA

No.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Oh, Zina! Zina! Give me a little hope. Kiss me.

ZINA

Let's have another drink.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Let's drink to you. To the beautiful Zina!
 (He pours them each a shot of
 vodka. They each knock back a
 shot of vodka.)

OKHLOBYSTIN

You know what Zina?

ZINA

What?

OKHLOBYSTIN

I'm still going to bite you!

Comrade Okhlobystin! ZINA
Enough!

The YOUNG WOMAN begins to laugh. From across the table Ivanov looks up and sees her laughing. He rolls an apple towards the young woman. She picks up her wineglass.

Hey, watch my wine! YOUNG WOMAN

What me? IVANOV

Yes, you. YOUNG WOMAN

You're so far away. We're separated by a sea of people and food! IVANOV

Let me roll you an apple. YOUNG WOMAN
(She rolls an apple towards him.)

Want to dance? IVANOV

Sure. YOUNG WOMAN

How about a smoke? IVANOV

I don't think so. YOUNG WOMAN

How about an orange? IVANOV

Sure, why not? YOUNG WOMAN

And chocolate? IVANOV

Of course. YOUNG WOMAN

Ivanov rolls apples, oranges and pears towards the Young Woman.

Here. Happy? IVANOV

Yes, thank you. YOUNG WOMAN

There's more. IVANOV

This is fine. YOUNG WOMAN

Tell me your name. IVANOV

Tell me yours. YOUNG WOMAN

She takes a bite out of an apple and
throws it out the window.

What's your favorite color? IVANOV

Hazel. What's your favorite sound? YOUNG WOMAN

The sound the violin makes. IVANOV

Is it winter? YOUNG WOMAN

Fall. Do you hear laughter? IVANOV

Yes, it sounds like a child's. YOUNG WOMAN

Something you know nothing about. IVANOV
(Commenting on her age.)

It's evening. I hear the wind and the rain. YOUNG WOMAN

It gets very dark. It starts to
thunder. It starts to rain, then it
pours.

ZINA

Listen. What a sad song. Do you know it?

OKHLOBYSTIN

Sad songs are all the same.

ZINA

Are they?

OKHLOBYSTIN

It's always about two lonely people, a man and a woman.

ZINA

(Sings.)

Two lonely souls who happen to meet.

OKHLOBYSTIN

They meet. They fuck...

ZINA

Comrade Okhlobystin!

IVANOV

They spend nights together without talking.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Why? Are they afraid of losing one another?

ZINA

Yes. Both of them.

OKHLOBYSTIN

They sit in a bathtub facing each other.

ZINA

Looking into each other's eyes.

YOUNG WOMAN

(joins in.)

Thinking about one another.

IVANOV

Maybe they're thinking about someone else?

YOUNG WOMAN

Perhaps.

They all laugh.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Then it's over.

IVANOV

Without even saying why.

YOUNG WOMAN

That was Adam and Eve right?

IVANOV

Eve didn't come from my rib.

YOUNG WOMAN

Eve wasn't me.

ZINA

She wasn't me either.

Okhlobystin begins dancing with the
Young Woman. Ivanov shouts.

IVANOV

I love my wife, Tanya. She's beautiful! How I miss her.

(Pause.)

You know she sleeps on a black velvet pillow as dark as
night. Her skin is white.

ZINA

My skin is white.

(She powders her face.)

IVANOV

Look Tanya is all around us! She's everywhere. Even when she
is not here. In the room, her eyes peer at me from the books
on the shelves. Her eyes are amazing.

ZINA

They're mesmerizing-those eyes.

IVANOV

Every smell I smell is Tanya. She is in my blood, my cells.
Every part of me has been kissed by Tanya. Every inch of
Tanya. I've kissed.

ZINA

Every inch? Well.

IVANOV

The warmth from her body envelops the distance between us.
I'm like a dog with a scent. I smell her and I break into a
run towards her. Every breath I take towards her, TANYA I
LOVE YOU!

ZINA

Every breath? Really.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Come now, really enough.

IVANOV

There's something special about Tanya's silliness, her laughter...

ZINA

She seems like a serious girl to me. Always quoting poetry.

IVANOV

She wants to know what I think about love.

ZINA

And I am sure that's not all she wants.

IVANOV

No. Within her slender body, I have found my happiness.

ZINA

That girl there with Okhlobystin. Her name is Tanya too!

IVANOV

Same as my wife. What a crazy coincidence.

ZINA

Give the girl, Tanya some flowers, these carnations.

IVANOV

What if she doesn't like carnations?

YOUNG WOMAN

(To the audience.)

I could have some tea and cake with Ivanov. Maybe then some wine and perhaps show him some photos that I've pasted in an album.

IVANOV

Here for you.

(He hands her some carnations
and bows slightly.)

YOUNG WOMAN

Thank you.

IVANOV

Do you like carnations?

YOUNG WOMAN

I love them.

Long pause.

ZINA

I don't care for them.

She throws the purple vase from the table and it smashes to the ground.

YOUNG WOMAN

That's awful!

IVANOV

Tanya

YOUNG WOMAN

Yes?

IVANOV

My wife is also named Tanya.

YOUNG WOMAN

I know.

IVANOV

How could you know that?

YOUNG WOMAN

I know everything about you, my dear sir.

IVANOV

Why are you calling me sir all of a sudden?

YOUNG WOMAN

Because I know what you're about.

IVANOV

Then lock me up and throw away the key.

YOUNG WOMAN

Why?

IVANOV

I'll seduce you. I'll ruin you.

Long pause.

YOUNG WOMAN

Well then, go ahead. Seduce me. Ruin me.

Zina and Okhlobystin pick up the shards of the vase. He pinches Zina as she bends down.

ZINA

Comrade Okhlobystin! You're impossible.

SCENE TWO

Okhlobystin dances with Zina. The Young Woman sits with Ivanov's wife Tanya.

YOUNG WOMAN

I love champagne. When I drink it, I think of nothing. I remember nothing. It makes me want to skip down the street and yell. It makes me want to kiss someone.

OKHLOBYSTIN

ZINA! Come here and I will ply you with kisses.

ZINA

Comrade Okhlobystin. Really! Enough.

YOUNG WOMAN

I was skipping down the street peeling an orange, throwing the peels in puddles I found-littering. No one saw me. No one caught me. And I was thrilled. The orange tasted soooo good. My hands smelled of oranges. Between the smell and the peels, I needed nothing more.

TANYA

You know what I call fun? Drinking champagne while riding around Moscow in a black car on a black road with white lines. That's what I call fun!

OKHLOBYSTIN

(To Zina.)

My best friend, Guidon once told me that he said to his fiance, Klava, "Klava, you're an elephant. And I love elephants. I see an elephant and I want to climb on top of one."

ZINA

And did she marry this lover of pachyderms?

OKHLOBYSTIN

She didn't bat an eyelash.

ZINA

Then she's as strange as he is.

OKHLOBYSTIN

And what do you think of me?

ZINA

You're an ass Comrade Okhlobystin.

OKHLOBYSTIN

And you're an elephant. I want to stroke your trunk. I want to climb up top of you and ride you.

ZINA

Eh. Enough Comrade Okhlobystin.

YOUNG WOMAN

(singing.)

La, la, la, la....

TANYA

I like dropping pebbles in a tea cup while blowing a cheerful tune on a flute.

YOUNG WOMAN

Strangers windows make me want to peer out my own.

The Young Woman and Tanya move closer to each other. They stroke each other's faces almost as if they were staring in a mirror.

YOUNG WOMAN

You're pretty.

TANYA

So are you.

YOUNG WOMAN

I like you.

TANYA

I like you as well.

YOUNG WOMAN

This morning, I was on the subway and I saw him, Ivanov. I smiled. He didn't notice me. He was looking at something in the distance. I felt stupid. I was devastated that he didn't see me. I got off the train before him. I hated him as I stepped off.

TANYA

Where did you meet Ivanov?

YOUNG WOMAN

At a party.

TANYA

Here? Did you meet here?

YOUNG WOMAN

Yes. The same place I met you. He couldn't take his eyes off me.

TANYA

And you?

YOUNG WOMAN

When I smile at him. He doesn't smile back.

TANYA

Why?

YOUNG WOMAN

I guess because I'm special. I'm not like the others.

TANYA

Do you love my husband?

YOUNG WOMAN

Yes. I can't live without him.

TANYA

He sits in his chair, muttering. I look over and I think, who is this man I married?

(Pause.)

So your name is Tanya too?

YOUNG WOMAN

Yes.

TANYA

Such a coincidence.

(Pause.)

Tanya, I love my husband very much.

(Pause.)

We met on the beach both us dodging big dragonflies.

YOUNG WOMAN

You met him by the sea?

TANYA

I was at the house, we were dancing. The bell rang, no one answered it. He let himself in.

YOUNG WOMAN

Was it at the party you met?

TANYA

He ran in looking for me. When he found me, he grabbed me, nearly knocking me over in the street. He spun me around and around. He shouted to the band, "I want a song! I want you to play a song for the most beautiful woman in the world!"

YOUNG WOMAN

Oh, you met in a restaurant.

TANYA

I needed to give him papers for work. We made a date and met at the movies.

YOUNG WOMAN

So you met him at work?

TANYA

Our eyes caught on the subway. It was instant. That's how we met.

YOUNG WOMAN

How fascinating...

There is silence. They both speak to the audience.

YOUNG WOMAN

She pours me tea and speaks so kindly.

TANYA

Her blue eyes are so trusting. I know the way he looks at her.

YOUNG WOMAN

If only I could become her. Smell what she smells, laugh how she laughs.

TANYA

I KNOW..

(Pause.)

ONLY TOO WELL!

YOUNG WOMAN

Forget the future and just become her.

TANYA

What about me? Where do I go? So what do I do now to her?

YOUNG WOMAN

I'm enveloped by the smell of her perfume.

TANYA

I COULD POISON HER WITH THIS TEA!

YOUNG WOMAN

Tanya?

TANYA

Tanya?

You are so beautiful. YOUNG WOMAN & TANYA
 I like you. YOUNG WOMAN
 Very much. TANYA
 I like you. YOUNG WOMAN
 (The young woman reaches out to
 touch Tanya on the lips.)
 This..this is my face.
 It's mine. My hand. TANYA
 My lips, my breast.. YOUNG WOMAN
 Touches her on the breast.
 Mine. TANYA
 How do I.. YOUNG WOMAN
 Do you? TANYA
 Become YOUNG WOMAN
 Become what? TANYA
 You. How do I become you? YOUNG WOMAN
 They kiss.

SCENE THREE

Okholbystin and Zina dancing. A boy sits at the table drinking. The Young Woman looks out the window.

ZINA

Okholbystin, I love you.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Me? I'm the last thing you need.

ZINA

Are you listening? I love you Okholbystin.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Zina, I'll be the end of you.

ZINA

I want you.

OKHLOBYSTIN

You know what you need in a husband? You need someone rich. Look at me. I'm broke. I have nothing. And my last name is Okholbystin.

ZINA

It's a sweet name. It's a like a name I'd give a kitten.

He dips her. She kicks in the air.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Look at your legs. Zina, you should be dancing on carpets made of gold not on these threadbare rugs.

ZINA

Pity me. Marry me. I want to be your wife.

OKHLOBYSTIN

I can't. I'm broke darling. Open your eyes and look around. I am absolutely destitute.

ZINA

I can see with my eyes closed.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Zina. Let's talk of something else.

ZINA

Vasya please, can't we just...

OKHLOBYSTIN

Look the kids are bored. Come let's have a drink with them.

They sit down. He pours wine into glasses. Long pause.

ZINA

Do you ever wonder why people can't fly?

OKHLOBYSTIN

I never know what's going to come out of your mouth next. You really are astonishing.

ZINA

If I could fly, I'd fly away from you.

BOY

There are some things you can't fly away from, like love for instance.

ZINA

There's a song about that.

The Boy places a record on the phonograph player. Everyone dances.

BOY

What are you looking at?

YOUNG WOMAN

A smokestack puffing black smoke into the air. And in the midst of the black sky, there is a single star burning through.

BOY

Like you.

YOUNG WOMAN

Me?

BOY

You're the star.

ZINA

So Vasya, why don't you have money?

OKHLOBYSTIN

A bird took it.

ZINA

I wish I was that bird.

OKHLOBYSTIN

It took it and flew away.

ZINA

I wish I could fly away.

OKHLOBYSTIN

You could fly away and come back to me in the spring. Like all the birds of Bibirevo.

ZINA

I wouldn't come back to you!

OKHLOBYSTIN

And perhaps my money would return as well with one of those birds.

Sound of a train.

YOUNG WOMAN

When you were a boy did you wave to the trains?

BOY

No, never.

YOUNG WOMAN

I thought all boys waved to trains.

BOY

I threw rocks at them.

YOUNG WOMAN

Rocks? Why would you do such a horrid thing?

BOY

I was bad I guess.

YOUNG WOMAN

I always waved goodbye to them. Sometimes, one of them would whistle acknowledging me.

BOY

You waved. I threw rocks. More wine?

YOUNG WOMAN

Sure.

BOY

Tea was served. She knocked over her cup, tea spread slowly and hot soaking the newspapers, matches and books. We watched it spill, we did nothing. We said nothing.

YOUNG WOMAN

I know the boy has a secret. He's put it in a box and hidden it in an oak tree.

I'll shoot the tree with an arrow, and shatter it to pieces.
His secret will be gone. Just like that.

BOY

Her eyes are blue. She doesn't speak. She likes that I don't
ask questions. She likes that. She likes it to be
uncomplicated.

YOUNG WOMAN

He doesn't like it uncomplicated.

BOY

After the tea has done its damage, I take a towel and mop up
the mess. She peels an orange watching me. She holds the
whole orange out to me. She cries and her tears are like...

YOUNG WOMAN

My tears were as big as these oranges.

BOY

I squeezed the orange and juice squirted in her eyes. She
cried even more tears.

YOUNG WOMAN

Then came morning. I awoke. The room was dark, like it is in
the early morning. Slowly the light crept up the wall from
the sun. The boy slept dreaming. With my finger I traced his
cheek and told him, "I'm going."

BOY

Her fingers touched my lips and she said, "I must go."

YOUNG WOMAN

I bent down and kissed him.

BOY

With her tongue, she traces my body.

YOUNG WOMAN

His body clenches underneath the blanket when I...

BOY

Afterwards, she smokes in the darkness. I go back to sleep
and she kisses me one last time and then she goes.

YOUNG WOMAN

Then he is alone.

BOY

With her. She stays.

YOUNG WOMAN

After that it's only us
 (Pause.)
 Together. And after that, we fall asleep.

BOY

Only then do we fall asleep.

They chase each other.

BOY

How insane is Spring! You are insane!
 (He takes flowers off the
 table.)
 Here! Here!
 (He hands her the flowers.)
 Spring has arrived! KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED!

YOUNG WOMAN

For Spring!

BOY

Can you feel the sun? It's stronger than yesterday! Look
 outside the snow is melting! Even the wind feels warmer.
 Leaves will appear on the trees. The birds will come back to
 Biribevo. Soon it will be March 8th and I will give you a
 tulip or maybe a mimosa for woman's day!

YOUNG WOMAN

I want a tulip.

BOY

I'll give you a mimosa.

YOUNG WOMAN

A tulip.

BOY

A mimosa.

YOUNG WOMAN

A tulip!

BOY

A big unruly yellow mimosa. You'll put it on your dresser it
 will stand like a Christmas tree and it will last forever!

YOUNG WOMAN

It's so wonderful that it's Spring!

BOY

I'll give my sweetheart a Christmas tree.

YOUNG WOMAN

But, it's Spring!

BOY

I'll go and rake leaves and earn a wheel barrel full of money.

YOUNG WOMAN

But, the leaves fall in autumn. Autumn is far away.

BOY

By autumn, you'll have broken up with me a hundred times.

YOUNG WOMAN

After spring, there's summer and the poplar trees drop tiny balls of fluffy fuzz

BOY

I shall be a gardener and I'll take care of your garden.

YOUNG WOMAN

Oh, you and your tall tales!

BOY

I'll take care of your garden and then you'll let me kiss you.

YOUNG WOMAN

You'll get up at five in the morning and sweep those tiny balls of fluff.

BOY

No, I'll get up at five and kiss you. And kiss you. And kiss you.

YOUNG WOMAN

Kiss me.

BOY

See that's love.

YOUNG WOMAN

And it's spring!

SCENE FOUR

It is night at Okhlobystin's house. The Young Woman sits in a chair with Ivanov who is sleeping. She is undressed. She begins to wake him.

YOUNG WOMAN

(wakes him.)

I've been thinking about what you said.

IVANOV

I'm exhausted.

YOUNG WOMAN

About what you said, about love.

IVANOV

Today was insane.

YOUNG WOMAN

And I think...

IVANOV

This place is an insane asylum.

YOUNG WOMAN

I think love is the most important thing.

IVANOV

Sleep, I just want to sleep.

YOUNG WOMAN

Answer me.

IVANOV

Oh come here. Come sit next to me.

YOUNG WOMAN

First you answer me.

IVANOV

What? What? What's the question?

YOUNG WOMAN

Tell me more about you.

IVANOV

What do you want to know?

YOUNG WOMAN

Look, I don't want anything from you.

IVANOV

Okay.

YOUNG WOMAN

I just want you to talk to me.

IVANOV

I am.

YOUNG WOMAN

Inside I hurt...

IVANOV

I'm tired, very tired.

YOUNG WOMAN

I feel like crying.

IVANOV

Please don't.

YOUNG WOMAN

I want you to feel sorry for me.

IVANOV

Go to sleep. You need to sleep.

YOUNG WOMAN

All day long, I thought about love.

IVANOV

All day long I did errands. I'm tired.

YOUNG WOMAN

And I thought about you.

IVANOV

Did you?

YOUNG WOMAN

All day long I had a smile on my face.

IVANOV

All day long I did errands in the city.

YOUNG WOMAN

Tonight is the worst night of my life.

IVANOV

Look, I've got to get an early start tomorrow.

YOUNG WOMAN

Now I want to die.

She starts getting dressed.

IVANOV

Come back to bed and let's go to sleep.

YOUNG WOMAN

No.

IVANOV

It's late where are you going to go?

YOUNG WOMAN

I feel like I am going to die.

IVANOV

You need to calm down.

YOUNG WOMAN

Inside - I hurt.

SCENE FIVE

Okhlobystin changes his shirt. Tanya comes in.

OKHLOBYSTIN

I'm going North to Omsk. I don't know when I'll be back or if you'll see me again. What's so funny?

TANYA

Nothing.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Are you laughing at me?

TANYA

No, honestly, I'm not.

OKHLOBYSTIN

I'm going today. I am.

TANYA

I was walking past the cafe. I saw the boy. He was sitting with the young girl. They were sitting outside for some insane reason. She was shivering. He put his jacket on her.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Come. Sit down. Get comfortable.

TANYA

He was in his soccer jersey, the blue one with the number 62 on it.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Have some wine.

TANYA

He also had that hat on, the one with the blue pom pom on top. He looks so stupid in that hat. I've begged him not to wear it.

OKHLOBYSTIN

The wine is good.

TANYA

I sat down at a table next to them. They didn't see me. I felt invisible. He pulled off his headphones, leaned close to her and put one in her ear. I could see them laugh and kiss. I felt invisible. They smoke, they eat ice cream, they share headphones and listen to music, they whisper, they drink hot tea warming their hands with the cup. They kiss and laugh some more. I felt invisible.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Are you talking about Ivanov or the boy she's seeing?

TANYA

The boy. She's so pretty. Those eyes, they're mesmerizing.

OKHLOBYSTIN

He's a nice boy.

TANYA

The soccer jersey that he was wearing has the number 62 on its back and front.

OKHLOBYSTIN

They're young.

TANYA

So young. When are you leaving? Not today I hope.

OKHLOBYSTIN

I wanted to leave today, but it's getting late, I'll go tomorrow. I'm going by plane.

TANYA

Not the train?

OKHLOBYSTIN

No. Plane.

TANYA

The wind picked up billowing the table cloth upwards, napkins flew by. They just sat there drinking hot tea and I felt invisible.

(Pause.)

I never noticed young people before. Now I see them everywhere holding hands. Where did my youth go? Old age is creeping up on me. I get on the subway and I stare at the old women. I fear I look like them, all wrinkled. I see young people holding hands and I feel old.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Tanya, if I tell you something, you have to promise not to laugh.

TANYA

What?

OKHLOBYSTIN

You have to promise you won't laugh.

TANYA

Okay, what is it?

OKHLOBYSTIN

I love you.

(Tanya laughs.)

Hey, you promised.

(Pause.)

Well, at least I made you laugh.

TANYA

How about some music? It's too quiet.

OKHLOBYSTIN

(Hands her a plate.)

Here have something to eat.

TANYA

Did you make this yourself?

OKHLOBYSTIN

Yes.

TANYA

It's an awful lot of food.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Let's have a party.

TANYA

Are you really leaving?

OKHLOBYSTIN

Tomorrow. I am probably leaving.

TANYA

Could you rent me a room? If Zina wouldn't mind, I'd love to stay in this house.

OKHLOBYSTIN

You can take any room you want.

TANYA

Thank you.

After a pause.

TANYA

What day is it?

OKHLOBYSTIN

Monday. This wine is giving me a headache.

(Pause.)

Tanya, I can't believe that you're here.

TANYA

I know what you're up to Comrade Okhlobystin.

(Pause.)

I've known about it all for a long time.

Scene six

Ivanov runs down the street with the
Young Woman running after him.

IVANOV

This is where the accident happened.

YOUNG WOMAN

What accident?

IVANOV

I was dancing in the middle of the road with a girl. It was
dark I saw only her eyes.

YOUNG WOMAN

Who was it?

IVANOV

We were drinking champagne dancing.

YOUNG WOMAN

Who? Who were you dancing with?

IVANOV

How I love to dance. We were looking at the stars. It was
warm. She was so beautiful.

YOUNG WOMAN

Who?

IVANOV

The night was beautiful. And I heard a scream.

YOUNG WOMAN

Whose scream?

IVANOV

And then she left me.

YOUNG WOMAN

Who left you?

IVANOV

Tanya, my wife Tanya left me.

YOUNG WOMAN

Why?

(Ivanov takes a rock and heaves it through the window of Okholbystin's house. Zina runs out.)

ZINA

What in God's name...

IVANOV

Where is Okholbystin? I'm going to kill him.

ZINA

Comrade Ivanov, have you gone mad? You've smashed the window.

IVANOV

Where is Okholbystin?
(He hurls another rock.)

ZINA

He's gone.

IVANOV

Where?

ZINA

North
(Pause.)

To Siberia.

IVANOV

Tell my wife I want to see her.

ZINA

Why are you breaking windows? And who's that with you?

YOUNG WOMAN

Hello, Zina, it's me, Tanya.

Okhlobystin comes down in his pajamas.

ZINA

What are you doing here? I thought you were gone.

OKHLOBYSTIN

My flight was cancelled. The fog. I heard shouting and then glass shattering.

ZINA

Be careful where you step.

ZINA

Vasya, Comrade Ivanov broke two of our windows. Careful. I need to call someone to fix it.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Yes. Please do.

ZINA

Comrade Ivanov, you're going to have to pay for this.

IVANOV

Okay, whatever. I'll pay.

ZINA

Vasya, do you remember the last name of the worker we had out last time? You called him Uncle Vanya.

OKHLOBYSTIN

They never have last names.

ZINA

I'll go and see if I can find his number.

She goes into the house.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Okay, the excitement's over. Let's go into the house. Come on now. All of you in now.

They go inside. The boy appears in the garden and follows.

SCENE SEVEN

It is evening.

TANYA

It's going to rain. Look at the sun set. It's so red.

IVANOV

Are you sure that means rain?

TANYA

It doesn't matter. It's beautiful.

ZINA

When it's red, it means it's going to be windy.

YOUNG WOMAN

When the dog rose blooms..

BOY

It means the perch are biting.

ZINA

I've been chopping onions. I washed my hands with strawberry soap. They still smell of onion.

TANYA

Not a cloud in the sky.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Its been a hot summer.

ZINA

Smell my hands. They smell of onion and I washed them with strawberry soap.

IVANOV

We could use the rain.

ZINA

I used really fine French milled soap. So aromatic, I wonder how they made it.

(Smells her hands.)

OKHLOBYSTIN

Have some more wine.

TANYA

I like this wine.

ZINA

Apples smell like apple soap and strawberries like strawberry soap. Nothing smells real anymore.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Here Zina, give me your glass.

YOUNG WOMAN

I've decided that I like white wine.

BOY

How about some music?

ZINA

I wash them over and over again, and they still smell like onion.

BOY

I got a new CD. I'll put it on.

IVANOV

That kind of music brings rain. The air is so still.

BOY

Oh, you don't get it.

(Pause.)

None of you get my music.

YOUNG WOMAN

I like it.

TANYA

Your music makes me sad.

BOY

Oh, don't be like that.

TANYA

I don't want to listen to anything sad.

ZINA

This smell is unbearable. Let me try your perfume.

(Takes a perfume bottle and sprays.)

OKHLOBYSTIN

It won't help my sad eyed girl.

ZINA

Smell that. So sweet. This perfume. If only the air smelled like that.

TANYA

The sun has almost set.

IVANOV

It's very dramatic.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Strikingly red.

IVANOV

With a dark blue line running through it.

OKHLOBYSTIN

But, no clouds.

IVANOV

The air is so still. I'm suffocating.

YOUNG WOMAN

When the dog rose blooms.

BOY

It means the perch are biting.

YOUNG WOMAN

Look for the sparrows flying low. When they do, it will rain. Mark my words.

IVANOV

It's too dark to see the birds.

ZINA

The sparrows are tucked in for the night in their nests.

IVANOV

Wine anyone?

ZINA

Me.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Oh, Zina, Zina, Zina.

ZINA

What? What's with the, 'Oh, Zina?'

OKHLOBYSTIN

The peasants used to say, "You don't drink wine when the sparrows sleep."

ZINA

I've never heard that before.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Don't argue with me. It's true.

BOY

(Pours her a glass.)

Here. Drink Zina. Look, the swallows are still awake.

ZINA

I don't know...

OKHLOBYSTIN

(Goes to the balcony.)

Well, will you look at that! HA! Drink Zina! The swallows are flying. And they're low to the ground! The rain is coming! MY GOD, LOOK AT ALL THE SWALLOWS FLY! GODDAMMIT! FLY YOU FUCKERS! FLY!

PART TWO - AN UNDERHANDED TRICK

TANYA
The sun is coming up.

IVANOV
Did you hear that bird singing all night?

OKHLOBYSTIN
The nightingale?

TANYA
No, it had a shrieking sound.

OKHLOBYSTIN
A goatsucker then.

ZINA
I hope not.

IVANOV
Why?

YOUNG WOMAN
Maybe it's a sign it's going to rain.

ZINA
Or something bad is going to happen.

IVANOV
Champagne? Anyone?

TANYA
Me. Please. I love drinking champagne at dawn.

YOUNG WOMAN
Listen. He put another CD on.

ZINA
I haven't heard it before. Is it new?

IVANOV
That music is worse than a goatsucker. Right Zina?

BOY
You can't appreciate anything new.

TANYA
Are you trying to make me angry?

BOY
No. I'm just...

TANYA

Don't upset me.

ZINA

The old people say goatsuckers are a sign of death.

IVANOV

Rain. Let's say they're a sign of rain.

TANYA

Zina, your perfume smells so sweet.

YOUNG WOMAN

The dog rose is blooming.

BOY

A sign that the perch are biting.

ZINA

What a sunrise. So beautiful. The air is bliss, heavenly.

IVANOV

Look the fog is coming in. It's going to be a scorcher of a day.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Thank God that goatsucker stopped.

ZINA

Here comes the sun. Another day.
(The boy takes the girl and
dances with her.)

IVANOV

More champagne.

ZINA

Let's dance!

Zina and Ivanov joins them.

TANYA

What time are you leaving?

OKHLOBYSTIN

I'm not going.

TANYA

What do you mean you're not going? You said you were leaving today.

OKHLOBYSTIN

I lied.

TANYA

But, I believed you.

OKHLOBYSTIN

I know. I thought you would.

(Pause.)

How could I leave with you here?

In the upcoming sequence Tanya and Ivanov address the audience.

TANYA

On my way to work, I walk towards his house. I want him to look out the window for me. I hear the radio through his open window, the smoke from his cigarette spills out into the air. I'm running towards work.

IVANOV

I watch her reflection in my window. She steps onto the trolley. I catch the fabric of her coat, the white of her hand, the pale image of her face. Then, she pulls away swiftly.

TANYA

After I see him, my day seems so...

IVANOV

So hollow.

TANYA

Futile.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Zina, someone rang for you. Five times the phone rang.

Tanya and Ivanov continue to address the audience.

TANYA

On my way to work, I walk past his house and I want him to look out the window for me..

IVANOV

She runs past my window doesn't even look up.

ZINA

Who called me this morning Vasya?

OKHLOBYSTIN

He wouldn't leave his name. Tell me who it was.

ZINA

My God, how jealous you are.

TANYA

When I run, I catch my reflection in the store windows and I think about him.

YOUNG WOMAN

The music. It's beautiful.

BOY

The trolley is coming.

YOUNG WOMAN

The clanging of the trolley, the beat of the music.

Ivanov and Tanya address the audience.

IVANOV

She runs past my window doesn't even look up.

TANYA

He hides behind his cards like a man who has no poker face.

ZINA

I wonder who called. The sailor perhaps.

OKHLOBYSTIN

What about the doctor?

IVANOV

She doesn't look up because she doesn't want to fall. The sidewalk gets slippery with the early morning dew.

ZINA

Vasya, he's a doctor in the navy stationed in the North Pole.

OKHLOBYSTIN

He didn't leave his name.

Tanya and Ivanov address the audience.

TANYA

Why am I always the fool?

IVANOV

I'm a failure at love.

ZINA

Vasya, I bet I know who called-my father!

OKHLOBYSTIN

You expect me to believe that? You're lying your ass off.

TANYA

Okhlobystin, I suck at love. Positively suck at it.

OKHLOBYSTIN

So do I.

BOY

Not me! I'm a genius at love.

The Young Woman laughs so loudly that she startles the birds who fly away.

IVANOV

You're always looking at your watch.

YOUNG WOMAN

Every day I pass your window I see the smoke waft, hear the radio..

IVANOV

You jump on the trolley and it leaves.

YOUNG WOMAN

One day I'll vary my route. I'll take a different one.

IVANOV

Always looking at your watch. Always.

ZINA

Comrade Ivanov, you really do remind me of someone.

IVANOV

Let's go home.

TANYA

What now?

IVANOV

Yes, now.

TANYA

I don't want to.

IVANOV

Well, what do you want to do?

TANYA

I want you to leave.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Wine? Who needs a refill?

IVANOV

Not me.

ZINA
No? You don't want anymore?

IVANOV
I don't want anything.

ZINA
Nothing? Are you sure?

IVANOV
Ah, I'm getting old. Listen the birds are singing again. CAW!
CAW!They're awake now. HELLO MORNING HELLO!

ZINA
Breathe. This air. Smell it.

SCENE TWO

BOY

When it grows dark, the grass by the road turns into grey dust...

YOUNG WOMAN

When the house is far off in the horizon...

BOY

When the window is open and sounds of music and bits of conversation waft...

YOUNG WOMAN

When inside the house, men tell their jokes and women laugh...

BOY

After dancing, they whisper so soft to be understood. So mysterious, I'd like to hide behind the curtains and listen.

YOUNG WOMAN

Like watching a movie from far, far away.

BOY

So good!

YOUNG WOMAN

So easy!

(Pause.)

Maybe they're kissing

Maybe not

Maybe they're fighting

As Puccini blasts

Maybe they're silent.

If we were in a movie, I'd have snuck up on you.

BOY

From the corner of my eye, I'd catch the red silk of your dress flashing by...

YOUNG WOMAN

I'd whisper in your ear, sticking my nose your hair, hiding...

BOY

You'd fly away like one of Chagall's woman.

YOUNG WOMAN

Clasping a rose to my breast, flying above, singing like a flute playing.

BOY
Am I insane?

YOUNG WOMAN
Looking up towards me.

BOY
Or just amazed?

YOUNG WOMAN
Veering this way and that.

From inside the house music plays.
There is the sound of dishes crashing
from inside. Then screaming.

BOY
I'll be back in a minute.
(He runs into the house.)

YOUNG WOMAN
If this were a movie, I could love you.

ZINA
Put that down! Give me the vase. careful!
(The sound of the vase
shattering.)

IVANOV
Okhlobystin, you son of a bitch. You knew what was going on.

ZINA
Comrade Ivanov, stop it. Vasya didn't know anything. Don't
get him into it.

IVANOV
So help me God, I'll kill him.

ZINA
Comrade Ivanov, that's enough!

TANYA
Stop it. Both of you now.

OKHLOBYSTIN
I want to get to bottom of this. I want the truth.

TANYA
Zina, calm down.

IVANOV
Go ahead, I'm listening. Tell him the truth. So he knows.

ZINA

Get out!

IVANOV

(To Tanya.)

You first and then him-go on-let's have it.

ZINA

Look what you've done, everything is smashed to bits.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Zina, enough of the hysterics. Go.

IVANOV

(To Okhlobystin.)

And you should go as well.

TANYA

Oh, God! Everyone stop!

ZINA

Comrade Ivanov, you're going to have to pay for everything

(Pause.)

again. Ugh...

IVANOV

Oh, God, just calm down Zina. Enough of the hysterics.

TANYA

Get Ivanov out of here.

ZINA

Vasya, grab the table cloth from him!

TANYA

This is insane!

ZINA

This tablecloth is lace and you're tearing it apart! Vasya, stop him!

OKHLOBYSTIN

Out you go! Out Ivanov! Enough!

ZINA

Look at what you did Comrade Ivanov..

(shows him the tablecloth.)

OKHLOBYSTIN

All right, all right, off you go. Out!

ZINA

Not so rough. There's no need to hurt him.

Sounds of a ruckus; people being pushed, plates being smashed and then finally all the ruckus is drowned out by the sound of a train. Ivanov runs out of the house and smack into the Young Woman

YOUNG WOMAN

What's going on in there?

IVANOV

I'm an ass.

YOUNG WOMAN

Yes, you are.

IVANOV

I've been a bit of a cad.

YOUNG WOMAN

Oh, boy, what did you do this time?

IVANOV

You don't want to know.

(Shouts are heard from the house.)

I'm so tired. I don't want anything. Not even you.

YOUNG WOMAN

Whatever.

IVANOV

Look...

(Stands on his head and falls over.)

I don't even want to stand on my head.

YOUNG WOMAN

I get it.

IVANOV

No, you don't.

YOUNG WOMAN

Listen, I love you.

IVANOV

Thanks.

YOUNG WOMAN

My mother says...

IVANOV

Your mother says what?
(Laughs loudly.)

YOUNG WOMAN

What's happening to you?

IVANOV

Mama, I am wonderfully sick. Mama, my heart is on fire! Tell my sisters, Lydua and Olga!

YOUNG WOMAN

Tell who? What?

IVANOV

Tell them that I have no place to go. HE CAN'T HIDE ANYWHERE!

YOUNG WOMAN

I don't understand.

IVANOV

My dear child, don't take this the wrong way. But, please get lost. We're done. It's over. I don't want to see you anymore.

YOUNG WOMAN

You're serious?

IVANOV

Yes. Go!

(The Young Woman runs off.

Ivanov laughs.)

GIVE ME A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG WOMAN, I WILL WASTE HER SOUL! I WILL RAPE HER!

YOUNG WOMAN

Why are you quoting Mayakovsky?

IVANOV

(Waves a piece of paper.)

Read it and envy me! I am a citizen of the Soviet Union. And My wife, Tanya does not love me anymore! Dear Mama, your son is a moron. He does not understand the most important thing in life, that the most important woman does not love him!

(He runs into the house.)

IVANOV

Tell me it isn't true!

ZINA

Comrade Ivanov! GET OUT!

IVANOV

I was giving away bouquets. You act as though I was stealing your silver spoons from your kitchen.

ZINA

The silver spoons? What silver spoons?

IVANOV

I didn't steal any silver forks, or cups or plates or hands or legs....Why darling, why?

ZINA

What spoons?

TANYA

Oh, cut it out.

IVANOV

Alexander Sergeivich Pushkin, allow me introduce myself, I am the poet, Mayakovsky.

ZINA

Mayakovsky? What in God's name is the matter with him?

OKHLOBYSTIN

My dear Mayakovsky, thank you for the poetry!

IVANOV

(To Okhlobystin.)

Let me tell you a secret. She doesn't love me or you. I mean it's one thing her not loving me, but she really, really doesn't love you.

TANYA

I only love Pushkin.

IVANOV

Who is this woman?

ZINA

Comrade Ivanov, you've had too much to drink.

IVANOV

That's completely true! Have a drink with me! And you Alexander Sergeivich Pushkin? You know I love you...

(Kisses him.)

And I love you Tanya! But that's it. Nobody else.

The Young woman enters.

TANYA

What about her?

Long pause.

ZINA

The sun was so hot today.

OKHLOBYSTIN

It's a brutal summer. Hotter than usual.

ZINA

Look at the moon. So bright.

OKHLOBYSTIN

A bright white moon against a jet black sky.

ZINA

Did you see that flash just now? Something flashed up over the roof and then it disappeared.

OKHLOBYSTIN

I heard thunder, perhaps it was lightening. Maybe there's a storm coming.

ZINA

Maybe it was a UFO.

TANYA

If only it would rain.

ZINA

Did you see that flash? It must be some sort of electrical charge in the atmosphere.

TANYA

It's growing light.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Another bird has been singing all night. You think it was that goatsucker Zina?

ZINA

How would I know? Whatever it is, it's screeching.

IVANOV

More wine? Anyone?

ZINA

Did you see that? Just now in the sky? Did you see it?

OKHLOBYSTIN

What? There's not even a cloud in the sky.

ZINA

It was beautiful whatever it was. It made me happy whatever it was.

YOUNG WOMAN

Look the dog roses are blooming.

TANYA

Where's the boy? Where did he go?

ZINA

Let's dance. Someone put a record on.

YOUNG WOMAN

Your hands still smell unbearably of onion ugh...

(A record is placed on. The Young Woman goes outside and cries. She drinks from a faucet outside.)

I don't care if I get typhus and die. On second thought, if I go to the hospital, Ivanov will have to visit me. He'll have to feel sorry for me. He'll cry for me.

(Okholbystin comes out.)

Will you save me?

OKHLOBYSTIN

(Hugs the Young Woman.)

Now, now. Stop all this.

YOUNG WOMAN

I love him.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Tomorrow everything will be okay. It will be all right.

YOUNG WOMAN

And what if it's not? What if it's not?

OKHLOBYSTIN

Tomorrow it won't hurt so much.

YOUNG WOMAN

I wish I didn't love him. Make me not love him anymore.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Look, you're young. Tanya is not for him. Calm down. Stop crying. I love you. You know that, don't you?

The boy enters and laughs.

BOY

You love her too?

(Zina comes out.)

ZINA
What's going on?

BOY
Ah nothing!

ZINA
Then why all this shouting? I don't understand why you're shouting.

YOUNG WOMAN
(To the Boy.)
You're mean.

BOY
Yeah, I'm mean, so mean.

YOUNG WOMAN
And stupid.

BOY
And stupid, my darling girl.

He leaves. The girl runs off.

ZINA
Why is everyone shouting today? Tell me Vasya, what is everyone shouting about?

OKHLOBYSTIN
The two varieties of love-requited and unrequited.

ZINA
What a giant cloud. It looks as though it's going to rain.

They exit.

SCENE THREE

Tanya's room in Okholbystin's home.
Ivanov is there. TANYA is reading her
horoscope from the paper.

TANYA

It says that I will fall in love in June.

There's a knock at the door.

IVANOV

It must be her.

TANYA

I bet it's Okholbystin.

IVANOV

He's coming to get you.

TANYA

It's only May. My horoscope says June.

IVANOV

It's July you know. Hasn't been May for two months.

TANYA

I'm not getting the door.

IVANOV

You'll be sorry if you don't.

TANYA

Stay out of my business.

IVANOV

I want you.

TANYA

You're in love with everyone.

IVANOV

I want you. Only you.

TANYA

Really? When men are really in love with a woman, they do
whatever the woman wants.

IVANOV

Like what? Stand outside a door?

On tiptoes.

TANYA

Really?

IVANOV

All the men in love with me always stood on their tip toes.

TANYA

That's why you love me and not them.

IVANOV

Not true.

TANYA

All the men in love with you will lose their minds.

IVANOV

I hope he's not still standing outside the door.
(Goes to the door.)

TANYA

Who?

IVANOV

(Tanya opens the door.
Okholbystin stands there with
flowers.)

Vasily!

OKHLOBYSTIN

Well, fancy meeting you here!

TANYA

Flowers! You brought me flowers.

IVANOV

You're unbelievable! Both of you!
(He leaves. Long pause.
Okhlobystin sits down.)

OKHLOBYSTIN

It's so quiet.
(Tanya puts the flowers in a
vase.)

It's like I'm not here. Did you see me as I walked by the
window?

TANYA

I saw a glimpse of you.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Maybe it wasn't me.

TANYA

This morning, I was walking down the street. My head turned, I saw someone. Then I looked back and saw my own head turn looking at someone behind me.

OKHLOBYSTIN

A dream perhaps.

TANYA

In my dream, I was laying on the sand sunbathing. I came up to myself and looked at my body on the sand. I took my finger and ran it along my leg. I saw myself opening my eyes. Who am I?

OKHLOBYSTIN

Your soul.

(Tanya laughs.)

Once I had a dream where I smelled warm milk. A distant smell from long ago. I awoke and found a small child by my bed. He was looking at me smiling and when I smiled back, he ran away.

TANYA

I bet it was me as a child.

OKHLOBYSTIN

And now?

TANYA

Now what?

OKHLOBYSTIN

Now what do you smell of?

(Flowers fall unexpectedly, one on top of another. Some from the vase that Ivanov broke. Some of the flowers fall from a hand. Some fall softly, some fall violently, but they fall.)

When I think of the life we could have together, I make myself stop. I can't breathe. It's too wonderful to contemplate. You are love. You are my fate. You and me are everything.

(Pause.)

Don't look at me like that. Let's get out of here, right here, right now, let's leave. The seconds, minutes, hours are passing us by. Our lives are evaporating...when are you going to realize that you belong to me?

TANYA

But, what about Zina?

OKHLOBYSTIN

You are the exception. Can't you see, it's destiny that you and me wind up together.

TANYA

I love Ivanov.

OKHLOBYSTIN

You love Ivanov? How can you love Ivanov? What are you ill? Delirious? If I smacked you across the face would you snap out of it and realize that you belong to me?

TANYA

I love Ivanov.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Please that means nothing.

TANYA

Did you bring that girl, Tanya, here on purpose? So Ivanov would fall in love with her?

OKHLOBYSTIN

Perhaps.

TANYA

You realize if it wasn't for that young girl, Ivanov and I would still be together?

OKHLOBYSTIN

That's not really true.

TANYA

Yes, in fact it is.

OKHLOBYSTIN

No, it's not.

TANYA

Ah, yes it is.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Tanyka, darling, I love you and only you. I'll never love anyone as much as I love you. No one else in the world.

(Long pause.)

I was walking down Sretenka Street, the snow was falling and there were you were.

TANYA

I remember walking down the street and the snow falling.

OKHLOBYSTIN

You hid your face with your hands.

TANYA

I heard you shout- I LOVE MOSCOW WHEN IT SNOWS!

OKHLOBYSTIN

At that moment, I wanted to spend my life walking up and down Srentenka Street, so I could live in that moment. That moment of you, the snow, cognac, films, books and the dark alleys of Srentenka Street.

TANYA

That moment is past.

OKHLOBYSTIN

I could shout.

TANYA

I need to go home.

OKHLOBYSTIN

You need to stay.

TANYA

I'm leaving.

OKHLOBYSTIN

No, I won't let you go. I'll hide your clothes. I'll lock you in your room. Listen to me, I won't let you go-ever. Tanya, I love you!

We see Zina by the window.

ZINA

I've been betrayed.

She knocks into the boy.

BOY

Zina!

(Pause.)

Will you marry me?

ZINA

What?

BOY

Marry me.

ZINA

Why is everyone so cruel?

BOY

Don't cry.

ZINA

Then don't make jokes at my expense.

BOY

I'm serious.

(Pause.)

I've offended you.

ZINA

No. It's just...

BOY

Let's go out to dinner. I have money.

ZINA

To dinner?

BOY

We could go dancing. C'mon, let's go and have some fun.

ZINA

It's been so long since anyone's asked me out. Sure, let's go and have some fun.

Tanya and the young woman leap around the garden like two giant birds-their skirts flutter like wings. Okhlobystin, alone lets out a pathetic cry.

Scene Four

It is morning and Oklybystin is alone.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Women stalk me. I see them peering out from behind bushes or hiding in blades of grass ready to lunge. Like a doe, they squint their hazel eyes and glance at me and then gallop through the grass sounding like a violin string plucked. Pluck, pluck, pluck, the sound tortures me. I fall into the grass clutching my ears, confused by love and feeling suffocated. LEAVE ME ALONE, YOU WITCHES! My life is over, my youth is gone. My HEART HAS BEEN RIPPED TO PIECES AND FALLEN INTO THE GROUND, WHERE IT BLOSSOMS LIKE A ROSE. I just want to live in peace, walk in the park and smoke my pipe. With each year, the women get younger and pass me by.

(Yells.)

Zina!

(Pause.)

Where are you? Oh, bairn of my existence, I am at last ready to be what you want!

ZINA

(Come in.)

What are you yelling about?

OKHLOBYSTIN

Do you still want to marry me?

ZINA

Vasya?

(Pause.)

What's going on?

OKHLOBYSTIN

I'm asking you to marry me. And don't you try and get out of it you little imbecile.

ZINA

And what changed your mind? It's all so unexpected.

OKHLOBYSTIN

I'll stop drinking and chasing women

ZINA

Oh dearest Vasya, I don't know how to say this...

OKHLOBYSTIN

It will finally be the way it's supposed to be...

ZINA

Vasya...

OKHLOBYSTIN

We'll have a daughter. I've always wanted a little girl.

ZINA

The truth, is I've, we've...

OKHLOBYSTIN

Why are you crying monkey? Don't cry...

ZINA

Vasya, I can't marry you.

OKHLOBYSTIN

What do you mean silly fool? Why you can't marry me? I haven't been able to stop thinking of the two of us together. You and me together.

ZINA

The boy and I, we went to city hall.

OKHLOBYSTIN

The boy?

ZINA

The boy and I have, now have...

OKHLOBYSTIN

Now have what?

ZINA

Just now, have gotten married.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Ah, I'm such an idiot.

ZINA

Vasya, I can't tell if you're crying or laughing. He needed a wedding certificate for a passport. Look, you didn't want to, so I...

OKHLOBYSTIN

I feel like killing you!

ZINA

Vasya!

OKHLOBYSTIN

Get your hands off me.
(He exits.)

ZINA

(She sits in a chair.)

Today I dreamt that I grabbed the boy's hand and then I felt my feet float up from the floor.

A light breeze carried us up to the ceiling as if we were helium balloons. He looked at me amazed. I love to amaze him. I said to him, "I have this ability." I could see that he didn't believe me. He's so young and cocky. He loves to make jokes. He jumps and spins weightless dancing to his vulgar music all night long. He laughs. I feel like a lump next to him. His smile is like a little boys. And his eyes whisper, "Do you know how clever I am? Then his eyes shout, "I AM INSANELY CLEVER! I AM INCREDIBLY CLEVER! I AM THE CLEVEREST OF THEM ALL!"

(Pause.)

Now I'm sad.

(She puts on a raincoat. She takes out a photograph of Okhlobystin from behind a mirror and puts it in her pocket. She leaves without looking back. The boy runs through the rooms.)

BOY

ZINA, ZINA, ZINA!

Okhlobystin comes in distraught. He wanders through the rooms.

OKHLOBYSTIN

My life is lost, it's over. I've lost my Zina, stupid, stupid Zina, I've lost her. I've lost the one who loves to dance until she drops. She's gone.

(He sees the boy.)

BOY

TADA!

(Pause.)

Yes, I'm drunk. Drunk. Drunk. Drunk.

OKHLOBYSTIN

And?

BOY

Very drunk. Very, very.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Show me your passport

BOY

Why do you want to see my passport Comrade Okhlobystin?

OKHLOBYSTIN

I'd like to see it. Let's have it.

BOY

I don't have one. Yet.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Yet?

BOY

I'm not old enough to have a passport Comrade Okhlobystin.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Are you joking?

BOY

No siree Comrade.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Why are you so drunk?

BOY

I'm drowning out my sorrows.

Okhlobystin laughs.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Zina lied to me. SHE LIED TO ME! Zina tricked me.

(The music is tuned up full
volume.)

Everyone, we're dancing until we drop!

BOY

You're out of your mind!

OKHLOBYSTIN

I don't care!

(He dances with the boy. They
begin to punch each other,
then they laugh, and run about
the room. Uncle Vanya walks
into the house. He starts to
repair the windows.

UNCLE VANYA

A woman went to the dump to throw out the garbage. When she got there she saw a man picking through the garbage. He looked at her and said, "I've just gotten out of prison. I can't find work. I've got nowhere to live and I need something to eat." He finds bottles and returns them for deposit. It's not much, but the nickels add up. The woman took a shine to him and now they're a couple. I smile when I see them. What do you think of that?

OKHLOBYSTIN

That's true love. C'mon dance.

BOY

Uncle Vanya, have you been fishing? Are the perch biting?

OKHLOBYSTIN

They must be biting now! And Zina says, "He needs a passport.

They all laugh

UNCLE VANYA

A woman was walking home happily from a party and she sees a young man lying in a puddle. He's drunk. It's late. It's dark, but she wasn't scared. She felt sorry for him. She helped him up and took him home. Now they're a couple. Does your heart good to see them. They're like two peas in a pod. Isn't that an incredible story?

OKHLOBYSTIN

Have you gone fishing Uncle Vanya? Are the perch biting?

BOY

Hey! There's Comrade Ivanov!

Ivanov stands by the door looking at them. He has loaf of bread and a bottle of vodka.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Ivanov, what are you staring at? What are you doing walking around with a loaf of bread tucked under your arm? Where'd you get that bread? Give it to me.

IVANOV

I'm exhausted.

OKHLOBYSTIN

(Referring to the boy's soccer jersey.)

Pour me some, number 62.

They all drink.

IVANOV

I saw a bunch of mice today.

BOY

You never saw mice before?

IVANOV

A whole bunch of them.

BOY

And?

IVANOV

They were fake.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Why are you staring at me like that? Why are you squeezing that bread like that? If you want to eat it, then eat it. Stop touching that loaf of bread like that. Your hands are all over it.

(Pushes a plate over.)

Here's some mushrooms. Zina pickled them. Eat everyone! They're for the salad. Have some.

IVANOV

There's so many things to choose from.

BOY

I think dreams are a bunch of crock--like the one I had about buying a cat. There's a girl. She is walking down the street. She turns around. I am also walking down a street and I turn around. She laughs. The cat laughs and leaves. She leaves and I never see her again. I forget her. Then we start talking about something else.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Have you gone mushroom hunting in the woods, Uncle Vanya?

BOY

(He grabs Uncle Vanya.)

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE? HAVE YOU POISONED THE MILK?

OKHLOBYSTIN

So Uncle Vanya, have you gone mushrooming in the woods? Have you? I AM ASKING YOU IF YOU'VE BEEN MUSHROOM HUNTING IN THE WOODS, HAVE YOU?

IVANOV

Why did he poison the milk?

OKHLOBYSTIN

Who?

IVANOV

Uncle Vanya.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Uncle Vanya? I know Uncle Vanya, he wouldn't have...

BOY

INSANE VIOLINS FALL DOWN ON ME FROM THE HEIGHT OF THE FIR TREES IN THE PARK.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Uncle Vanya, did you poison the milk?

UNCLE VANYA

I didn't poison the milk. I don't know what you're talking about.

IVANOV

So then how do you know there's poison in the milk? Who told you there was poison in the milk?

OKHLOBYSTIN

Zina, said to me, "The boy and I just got married."

He laughs.

IVANOV

You snuck in here like a mouse and poisoned the milk!

OKHLOBYSTIN

She wept, she sobbed.

IVANOV

Why, why would you do such a thing?

Sound of a whistle.

BOY

Hey, the kettle's ready..

IVANOV

I know you weren't the only one here. There were a bunch of you in here.

UNCLE VANYA

I didn't poison your milk!

BOY

You know, I don't feel so well.

IVANOV

I thought those workers were mice. Turns out they're his workers!

BOY

(Grabs Uncle Vanya.)

WHY DID YOU DO THIS TO US?

OKHLOBYSTIN

Look, this is Uncle Vanya! I know him. Uncle Vanya did you go mushroom hunting with your wife in the woods? Found some chanterelles? Did you get a lot?

IVANOV

I thought at first, Uncle Vanya, that it was the mice...I thought that and then...

OKHLOBYSTIN

Ivanov, what are you doing with that loaf of bread?

IVANOV

Uncle Vanya, I want you to admit that you did it! Admit it!

UNCLE VANYA

I didn't poison the milk!

IVANOV

All right already. You didn't poison the milk. But you poisoned something. Tell us, why did you poison us?

OKHLOBYSTIN

Let's tie him up.

They tie Uncle Vanya up.

IVANOV

What did you poison? Huh, out with it.

OKHLOBYSTIN

We're tying you up so you don't go waving your arms.

IVANOV

Good Lord, look at him, he works here all the time, walks by all the time and then he poisons us.

IVANOV

We should make him tell us why he did it.

OKHLOBYSTIN

And I liked you. I trusted you.

IVANOV

Scum of the earth.

IVANOV

That guy snuck in here like a mouse.

BOY

Vasily, how did all these women get into our house?

OKHLOBYSTIN

To hell with women!

BOY

The women are peeking out from the plates and saucers on the table. Look.

IVANOV

I'm putting him in the next room. Push him down on the floor.

OKHLOBYSTIN

I used the rope so you don't go waving your arms.

UNCLE VANYA

I didn't put anything anywhere.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Why did you poison the milk? But, really, why the milk?

(Ivanov pushes Uncle Vanya into
the next room.)

When will this end? Do I even want it to end? And if it
ends, what am I going to do? WILL I BE HAPPY?

BOY

(falls to the floor.)

Papa, Papa, I feel sick, really sick...
(He begins to cry.)

IVANOV

(To Okholbystin.)

I love Tanya.

BOY

And I love Tanya.

OKHLOBYSTIN

TANYA IS BEAUTIFUL!

BOY

Beautiful.

IVANOV

I just wanted everyone to know that.

OKHLOBYSTIN

I KNOW.

BOY

I know everything there is to know.

IVANOV

So listen this is the end of it.

BOY

The end.

OKHLOBYSTIN

THE ABSOLUTE END!

(He raises his arms.)

IVANOV

I don't want to hear anymore about it. Understand?

BOY

I want nothing.

(Ivanov picks up the Boy.)

I hear her speaking--I can see you think I'm crazy. I hear her amongst the night sounds of hums and squeaks. I surf the sounds like a wave as I sail and hear her laugh. Her voice falls and roll away from me hiding before a door. I tried to catch it, but missed by a second. I hear the shadow of her laughter.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Let's drink to your health!

BOY

Her laughter, laughed at me!

IVANOV

We're going to go and see her and we'll make her forgive us. She'll forgive me. It's not your fault. We're going to see her right now.

BOY

I heard her voice in my mind.

IVANOV

We're going right now.

They start to leave.

OKHLOBYSTIN

SHE LEFT! AND SHE'S NEVER COMING BACK!

IVANOV

(Turns around.)

Who?

BOY

Who are you talking about?

They're both quiet.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Zina.

(They both leave.)

Nothing makes sense. Well, sometimes nonsense makes sense. At least, I know how to wait. I've got time on my hands to go insane.

(He gathers his things and puts them into a suitcase and walks out.)

Time! Time waits for no man! Forward!

SCENE FIVE

It is morning. Uncle Vanya wanders through the house lost. Everything is closed. Everything is locked up. Uncle Vanya holds an old rope and whips it up around breaking a window and then climbs out.

UNCLE VANYA

I'll fucking poison them all! Everyone of those sons of bitches!

SCENE SIX - ON THE RIVER CHERMEANKA EVERYONE LOVES TO HAVE FUN

Okhlobystin's house. There is music. It is a holiday. We see Zina everywhere humming and clapping. Okhlobystin is in his easy chair reading the paper and smoking. The boy runs from room to room whistling. Everything is white and sunny. Everyone is dressed in white. The large table has a snow white table cloth and white flowers. Tanya and Ivanov come in from the garden. Everyone is happy.

TANYA

It's so great here. I love it! All my life I've waited for a place like this.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Well, will you look here a physicist discovered a new gauge of interim bosons!

ZINA

Is that in today's paper?

OKHLOBYSTIN

Who wants some champagne to celebrate?

ZINA

Here!

YOUNG WOMAN

How I love champagne!

ZINA

(They all sit.)

I had the most awful dream last night. I was at this reception standing next to a table. I had the most enormous purse. While everyone was dancing, I was shoving food into the purse. Then someone yelled, "She's shoving food into her purse." I felt everyone's eyes on me. I felt terrible. Just then I see Georgy Zhzhynov, the famous actor standing next to me. I saw him and say, "There's nothing in my purse." He takes my elbow, leads me out and gives me a ride home. Before he drops me off I say, "Thanks a million Comrade Zhzhynov. You saved my life."

BOY

He said what?

ZINA

It's not what he really said, but what do you think my dream means?

IVANOV

I can't remember the last time I dreamt. I fall instantly asleep and fall into darkness.

BOY

Has anyone gone fishing this year? Are the perch biting?

ZINA

Which is the perch? The one with the red fins?

OKHLOBYSTIN

They're biting now.

ZINA

Vasily and I are going to the Crimea in August. He's writing a report there, a scientific one

TANYA

Sounds interesting.

ZINA

Yes, he's writing about the correlating dependence of the form and structure of sea urchin beds and their lifestyle.

TANYA

I've always wanted to see a sea urchin.

ZINA

And I've never seen the sea.

BOY

Me neither.

ZINA

My poor boy...

BOY

(whispers.)

Zina, you've got great looking legs.

ZINA

When I was your age, the only thing that interested me was physics and geometry. I gave my youth to geometry. And for what? I could have been listening to music and dancing. All I need is a record player. That's all I need. We'll dance today, won't we?

The Boy and Zina dance.

BOY
You know what? I don't think there are any sea urchins in the Black Sea.

ZINA
Of course there are.

BOY
Nope.

ZINA
Yes, there are.

BOY
Nope, not a one.

ZINA
You're just jealous.

BOY
You think?

TANYA
Zina, your perfume smells so nice.

ZINA
It smells like flowers, doesn't it?

OKHLOBYSTIN
Wine? Champagne?

ZINA
Oh, how I love champagne! I love dancing! I love music.

BOY
What else?

ZINA
I want everyone to be happy. No more fighting. I want everyone to live in peace. God, how I love music!

BOY
It's not that easy.

ZINA
I love people and sea urchins.

TANYA
I bet it's wonderful in the Crimea now.

IVANOV
It's always wonderful there.

ZINA

I can't wait. I want to go sooner. I keep imaging what the sea will be like.

IVANOV

I'm going to America!

ZINA

America? That's so far away.

TANYA

I love the summer. It's so nice and warm. I hate the snow. Summer in Bibirveo is so pleasant!

BOY

Winter, summer, Biribevo is always good..

ZINA

So is the Crimea.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Isn't life nice!

IVANOV

It is nice.

OKHLOBYSTIN

No one's fighting.

IVANOV

It's nice.

OKHLOBYSTIN

It's nice to sit here.

IVANOV

Everything is nice.

OKHLOBYSTIN

We live nicely.

TANYA

I love when everything is nice.

ZINA

They say it's not so nice in America.

OKHLOBYSTIN

Oh, I imagine it's nice there too.

TANYA

It's going to be a nice summer in Bibirevo

ZINA

In the Crimea, they say it's also nice.

Scene SEVEN

Young woman stands in the doorway.
Tanya turns around, she flings her
glass. Wine spills on the Boy's suit.

BOY

HEY!

ZINA

It's like blood. Look.

End of play.

