

YoU

By Olga Mukhina

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Characters

STEPAN IVANOVICH – about 60 years old
YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA – his wife
ANYA – 20 years old, their daughter
SISTER – 35 years old, their daughter
SEVA – 40 years old, Sister's husband
ANDREI (Andryusha) – 40 years old
DMITRY – 20 years old
PIROGOVA (Natasha) – 20 years old
BARSUKOV – 50 years old
NIKOLAI (Kolya) – 20 years old, his son
TWO OLD WOMEN

PART ONE
SCENE ONE

*White Rolls Royces, trolleys
and flat-bed trucks race by
Mayakovsky, Pushkin and
Gogol. Early-morning
airplanes fly over the ponds.
Horses, bicyclists and people
out walking jostle with
singing Mexicans. Lilacs
bloom, it smells of rain,
bread and salt. A big sun
shines over the whole city.
Seva and Andrei are tipsy as
they walk in the direction of
the Kremlin.*

ANDREI

I got two letters today. One from grandmother, the other from my sister. My grandmother's letter was incredibly tender.

SEVA

Don't get emotional on me. Moscow does not believe in tears.

ANDREI

My whole life this city has stared me down as if it were a cold woman. A woman laughing at me. Who never once offered me a hand, no matter how I whimpered or begged her to, even just a little. I'm a stranger to her. I'm no one to her. She doesn't love me.

SEVA

All you have to do is throw money at her and she's yours all night long.

ANDREI

If only that were true.

SEVA

Your head spins, your ears ring, your sagging chest shakes with laughter. You bite your lips and swallow hard - and this place just begs for more!

ANDREI

I don't have any money.

SEVA

Moscow is not the world's belly button. Other countries have people in them, too, you know. You sound like a spoiled brat.

ANDREI

Every year it gets tougher and tougher. This place has stripped me bare. I hate it!

SEVA

Now, now.

ANDREI

I've got just one weary desire left in my head - to lie down here and die. To strip off these clothes, kick off my wet shoes, free myself of these rags and die naked - right here. Right here on this asphalt in the rain. I won't say a thing to her; I'll just think quietly to myself - How about that, sweetheart? I lose!

SEVA

Idiot.

ANDREI

I'm finished! Wasted!

Enter Pirogova. She runs and laughs and waves photographs in the air.

PIROGOVA

This is Vitya. He's a pilot. He took me for a ride in an airplane. Way up high! Way over Moscow! We even flew over your street.

SEVA

I thought I noticed something strange. It was like the weather went bad on our street alone. But it was just Pirogova taking a plane ride!

PIROGOVA

We flew way up over the clouds!

ANDREI

What kind of plane does he have?

PIROGOVA

I don't know. I don't know anything about them.

SEVA

You going to marry him?

PIROGOVA

What's that got to do with it? He did propose, though.

SEVA

Accept. Go ahead.

ANDREI

I wanted to be a pilot when I was a kid.

PIROGOVA

When I was a kid I swam straight as an arrow.

SEVA

I drew swallows when I was a kid.

PIROGOVA

A swallow flew in my window once.

ANDREI

I don't like it when birds get inside.

SEVA

They say a nightingale flew into my room once.

ANDREI

So many birds flew into my room, I don't even know what they were.

PIROGOVA

Maybe it was a sparrow?

SEVA

Or something else, maybe.

ANDREI

What are you doing tonight, Natasha?

PIROGOVA

Where do you want to go?

SEVA

Let's go Dutch.

*Pirogova laughs and runs out
on high heels.*

ANDREI

What did you say that for?

SEVA

You never know what's going on in her heart.

*They approach a small house
and open the door. Inside
music is playing. Anya,
Yelizaveta Sergeyevna and
Dmitry are sitting at a table
and laughing.*

DMITRY

I walk along the street and I can't do anything about it, I laugh! I love all those people who are walking past me, you know? It's like I physically love them! I want to kiss every one of them. I want to give them gifts, do something nice for them!

SEVA

Home at last.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Seva! Andryusha!

SEVA

Let's love each other physically!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Why so sad, Andryusha? You're probably hungry.

ANDREI

You think that's what I came here for?

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Of course not. I just always want you to have a full stomach.

ANDREI

Thank you. I got two letters today. One from grandma and one from my sister. I decided to read grandma's first. I figured she'd be criticizing and ridiculing me. Then I'd read my sister's letter, to save the best for last. But grandma wrote me such a tender letter I even cried.

ANYA

I think it's horrible when a man cries.

ANDREI

Yeah. I was walking down the street thinking I'd die if I didn't have a drink.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Did you?

ANDREI

I had to. So I wouldn't die.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

It's the other way around with me. I think if I die I'll never drink again. So I guess I'd better not die.

SEVA

That gives you some kind of goal in life anyway.

ANYA

I keep getting love letters from someone in violet ink.

SEVA

How romantic!

ANYA

Do you know anybody with handwriting as ugly as this?

ANDREI

No, I don't. What are you drinking? Wine?

ANYA

Yes. Dmitry is home.

SEVA

For long?

DMITRY

Yes, if there's no war and I'm not drafted.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Whenever I see those boys I feel so sorry for them. I want to do something for them. I want to help. I want to go up to them and say, "Everything is going to be all right."

ANYA

He's not one of them.

DMITRY

I'm lucky.

ANYA

He smiles in the bus at grown-up women he doesn't know.

DMITRY

I like life. I think I can do anything I want.

ANDREI

He looks like a hero.

ANYA

That's what they all say.

SEVA

Welcome home!

Everyone laughs and drinks.

DMITRY

Moscow has completely changed. I went into the post office and there was a beautiful girl eating grapes. She smiled at me, stamped my envelope and laughed. That didn't used to happen.

SEVA

Girls didn't used to smile at you?

DMITRY

No.

SEVA

(Laughs) There it is - the honest face of youth!

ANDREI

What else have you noticed here?

DMITRY

They are planting trees everywhere.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

They'll plant trees and paint the buildings and fix the roads. Then it will be just like before the war.

ANYA

I hope it happens soon!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

What a time that was! How we danced! I used to lose ten pounds after every dance! Ten, hell! Twenty!

ANDREI

What a nice past you have.

SEVA

Maybe we ought to dance?

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

I've probably forgotten how.

SEVA

I don't believe you! (*Grabs Yelizaveta Sergeyevna*)

ANYA

Careful, Seva! Careful!

ANDREI

Bravo!

Anya and Dmitry drink wine, dreamily looking out over Moscow, the streets and cars. Andrei re-reads his letters.

DMITRY

Everything is so beautiful! You are beautiful. Moscow is beautiful.

ANYA

I'm dying to be so incredibly beautiful that everyone will lose their head!

DMITRY

In that case you are just as beautiful as Moscow.

ANYA

No! Moscow is old!

DMITRY

But you are incredibly beautiful.

Anya laughs.

How was it here without me?

ANYA

I've already forgotten how old you are.

DMITRY

I'm twenty. I'm already a full-grown young man.

ANYA

(Looks at Andrei's letters) I'm twenty and I've never been to a foreign country.

DMITRY

There's no winter there.

ANYA

I don't like winter.

DMITRY

I didn't think of anything but you.

ANYA

When you left you looked like a plucked chicken.

DMITRY

What about now?

ANYA

Now, too.

DMITRY

Now I look like a hero. That's what they all say.

Anya laughs.

I wandered the streets last night. It was dark and quiet

and all of the couples were kissing - the air was swimming in love! And everywhere flowers were on sale.

ANYA

Wasn't it always like that?

DMITRY

I always want to buy bouquets and hand them out to all the girls.

SEVA

Pirogova says that's all men are good for.

DMITRY

I saw her yesterday.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Did you give her any flowers?

DMITRY

No. She disappeared too quickly.

SEVA

Maybe she got scared.

DMITRY

Yes. Because I shouted really loud and gave her a big, long kiss.

ANYA

I bet she hadn't kissed anyone in a hundred years.

DMITRY

What about you?

ANYA

What about you?

DMITRY

You cried when I left.

ANYA

I always cry when someone leaves.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Let's have some tea or coffee!

SEVA
Tea or coffee?

ANDREI
Tea.

ANYA
Or coffee?

*They laugh. We hear the
clinking of cups.*

DMITRY
I've been dreaming of this city for so long! Just to be able to stand somewhere and wait for a trolley - and nothing more. So my heart would feel joy and my soul would exult! To stand in a quiet city snow or bask in its rosy sky. To watch girls prancing to keep warm and newspapers swirling around. I really wish winter would come!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA
I don't want winter to come.

DMITRY
I really love this city.

ANDREI
I love this city too.

DMITRY
I love my country.

ANYA
I love it too. So what?

SEVA
That's good.

DMITRY
I was afraid maybe you'd quit loving it. You ,... You're just like... You're like you were before... You're just like then...

ANYA
No. I'm happy my childhood has passed.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

I spent my whole childhood riding my bicycle.

ANDREI

I had an orange cat when I was a kid.

ANYA

I had a pink cat.

DMITRY

When I was a kid I lost a game of ping-pong to my girlfriend.

SEVA

My girlfriend taught me to light matches.

DMITRY

Back there everybody was asking me, "Where are you going?"

SEVA

To Moscow.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

And they said, "Oh..."

All laugh.

DMITRY

I'd say, "Moscow isn't as far as you think. You just have to want to be there."

ANDREI

But Moscow doesn't love everybody. It doesn't greet everybody with open arms. It doesn't forgive everybody.

DMITRY

It greeted me with open arms. And a big, happy smile.

ANDREI

You think so?

DMITRY

I know so. I can feel the sun shining up ahead.

SCENE TWO

Enter Sister.

SISTER

There's shooting in the street. You hear that?

SEVA

This is my wife.

DMITRY

Dmitry.

ANYA

Careful a gust of wind doesn't knock you over.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Is that the wind or is somebody knocking?

SEVA

I think someone's at the door.

Enter Pirogova.

PIROGOVA

No, that was just me catching my hand on a stray nail.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Oh, come in, Natasha.

SISTER

You hear that?

PIROGOVA

(Gaily) Shooting!

ANYA

It's right here.

PIROGOVA

It's Vitya. He's a pilot.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

He's shooting out of an airplane?

PIROGOVA

Yes, he's firing his rifle out of jealousy. Only - don't

tell him I'm here.

ANYA

What a life! Young pilots shooting off rifles in the streets, going out of their minds with jealousy!

*Gunfire and shouts of
"Natasha! Natasha!" are heard
outside the window.*

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Pirogova, sweetheart, what did you do to him?

SEVA

Another good man goes down.

ANDREI

What kind of a rifle does he have?

PIROGOVA

I don't know. I don't know anything about them.

SISTER

Is this pilot good-looking?

PIROGOVA

Oh, yes.

ANYA

He's a real heartbreaker!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Now, Anya.

SISTER

I saw a falling star today. I made a wish.

SEVA

What did you wish?

SISTER

Don't ask.

ANDREI

You always look up at the sky with hope in summer.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

The Big Dipper's over our street.

SISTER

It makes your head spin!

PIROGOVA

I killed a cockroach this morning and washed it down the drain.

ANYA

I'm in a silly mood today, too!

DMITRY

Moscow is completely different. On my way home I tiptoed through every street. I know every one. I lay down on a bench in the park, looked up at the sky and cried. Back there I didn't cry once. But here I burst into tears for everything put together, for everything.

SISTER

I don't ever cry.

All look at the sky. Dmitry and Sister look at each other.

IT'S LIKE A DREAM. JUST HIM AND ME.

DMITRY

IT'S JUST HER AND ME BY THE BLUE WINDOW. SHE SPEAKS WORDS AND THE FOG CARRIES THEM AWAY.

SISTER

The evening looks like my favorite color.

Barsukov appears in the doorway. He removes his hat and wipes tears from his face.

BARSUKOV

Is there any -

SEVA

No. We've only got wine, Barsukov. You don't drink that.

DMITRY

SHE HEARD THE WORD "WINE" AND TURNED HER HEAD.

PIROGOVA

He's probably hungry.

BARSUKOV

Is there an adult in here?

DMITRY

SEVA ALWAYS FORGOT HIS LIGHTED CIGARETTES AND LIT UP NEW ONES.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

What's happened this time?

BARSUKOV

Kolya's been arrested.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

What? What for?!

BARSUKOV

My poor boy.

*Two old women peek out from
behind his back.*

FIRST OLD WOMAN

Look - there's Kolya.

SECOND OLD WOMAN

And there's Kolya.

FIRST

And here's Kolya.

SECOND

Here and here and here.

FIRST

Look at all of them.

SECOND

Ich nicht.

FIRST

There's more and more and more.

SECOND

Ach, mein Gott.

FIRST

Kolya, Kolya, Kolya.

SECOND

Don't call him. Don't call him. (*Disappears into the hallway.*)

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

How did it happen?

BARSUKOV

I don't know.

SEVA

Let's go, Barsukov.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

How unpleasant!

ANYA

Poor Kolya.

ANDREI

I'll go with you.

PIROGOVA

I've never been to the police.

All leave except for Dmitry and Sister.

DMITRY

IT ALL HAPPENED VERY STRANGELY. I SIMPLY TOUCHED HER AND SHE TOUCHED ME.

SCENE THREE

Dancing Leads To No Good

DMITRY

I remember you. We played poker when I was a kid.

SISTER

I remember you, too.

DMITRY

So many years gone by and you're still just as pretty. I would have thought you'd be so old by now.

SISTER

And I would have thought you were still a little pipsqueak.

DMITRY

I'm not a pipsqueak.

SISTER

I'm not old.

DMITRY

Wanna dance?

SISTER

No.

DMITRY

Because I'm drunk, is that it? It's just a little. I don't ever overdo it.

SISTER

I don't care.

DMITRY

My whole life I've dreamed of growing up and dancing with Anya's sister.

SISTER

No.

DMITRY

Why?

SISTER

Because you'll start chasing after me. I'll get tired of you and you'll go whimpering.

DMITRY

No I won't.

SISTER

Yes you will.

AND THEN THEY DANCED.

DMITRY

Let's go for a walk! We can sit on a bench and hold hands!

SISTER

(Laughs) Only to keep from falling. This strange street always makes me feel drunk!

DMITRY

Or we can go shrieking at the seagulls and throw handfuls of bread to them! Then I'll rip my heart out of my chest and drown it in the gray Moscow waters.

SISTER

You make me laugh!

DMITRY

I do?

SISTER

You do.

DMITRY

Why?

SISTER

You put a bull's-eye on your chest - right where your heart is!

They leave.

SCENE FOUR

Stepan Ivanovich walks about the room lost in thought. He listens to the radio and drinks. Enter a young man in a white suit with a small dog on a leash.

NIKOLAI

Hello. Am I intruding?

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Of course not. Come in, Kolya.

NIKOLAI

Could you lend me some money?

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Wine? Women? Drugs?

NIKOLAI

Love.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

That one's sacred.

NIKOLAI

It's Anya. Whenever she swims the crawl or the breast-stroke her sun-tanned body sparkles like a gold fish. I've got love like love never happens! Endless! Magnificent!

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Hopeless. *(Gives Nikolai some money.)*

NIKOLAI

Why?

STEPAN IVANOVICH

You're too late. She's already got a friend. He looks like a hero. That's what they all say.

NIKOLAI

Bull. I'll have one of my friends kill him.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

You'll go to jail, Kolya.

NIKOLAI

He'll kill him, not me.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Oh, Kolya. *(Pours drinks and they drink)*

NIKOLAI

Thank you, Stepan Ivanovich! You're a dog's best friend!
(Leaves)

STEPAN IVANOVICH

(Thoughtfully)

Fuzzy Wuzzy sailed a boat
 Wrapped up in a sailor's coat.
 Now there's a reason straight and true
 To have myself a drink or two.

*Stepan Ivanovich pours a
 drink and downs it. In the
 hallway we hear the laughter
 and the voice of Barsukov.
 Stepan Ivanovich hides his
 radio.*

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

(Enters, kisses Stepan Ivanovich) We went for a walk and
 took a boat ride!

BARSUKOV

The water in the river is warm and clean this year.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

If you go out early in the morning and stand quietly by the
 bank you can see at least ten different species of fish!

BARSUKOV

You can see the underwater plants and grasses very clearly,
 too.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

If you stand there long enough and look very carefully you
 can even see little tiny animals.

BARSUKOV

Sea-horses, tadpoles and other little bugs like that.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

There used to be smoked sardines flying around down there.
 They would hang in the air just above your head and you
 could catch them and eat them.

BARSUKOV

It was a good time.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

You're telling me.

BARSUKOV

Any news on the radio?

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Oh! I don't want to hear about it! This summer we're living without calendars. We're going to focus ourselves on apples, cucumbers and blooming trees.

BARSUKOV

How's the economy this year?

STEPAN IVANOVICH

What economy? There is no economy.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

It's all lies!

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Where were you all night?

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

At the police station.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Was that the best you could do?

BARSUKOV

Let me explain. My son was out walking his dog.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

On Red Square!

BARSUKOV

Such a nice dog and so many problems!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

It bit a policeman.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Bad?

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

As bad as it could.

Enter Seva and Andrei.

SEVA

Where's our dog's best friend?

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Seva, Andryusha. You look so sad again.

ANDREI

I can't help what my face looks like.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Have an apple.

SEVA

He already ate a peach.

BARSUKOV

You know what? I've noticed people in Moscow all chew with their front teeth.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Anybody specific you have in mind?

BARSUKOV

You're just used to it and you don't notice it. But I'm telling you - everybody in Moscow chews with their front teeth! I noticed that a long time ago.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

What a bunch of nonsense!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Only let's don't start raising serious questions.

SEVA

Why not?

ANDREI

Because your conversations unfurl like streamers before my eyes and this whole city is nothing but a terrible dream - meanwhile my own heart here is rocking me to and fro.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Are you all right?

ANDREI

Yes.

SEVA

He's dying here!

BARSUKOV

Dying?

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Have a drink. *(Pours)*

BARSUKOV

That make it better?

STEPAN IVANOVICH

That always makes it better.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

You probably don't eat much.

ANDREI

I can't breathe!

SEVA: You don't know how to breathe?

ANDREI: There's no air! No air! No air! *(Runs out, bumping into Anya over as she comes in the door)*

ANYA

What's he shouting about?

SEVA

He's got love on his mind.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

I warned you!

ANYA

Love?

SEVA

About how deceitful it is.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Why don't we have some tea?

BARSUKOV

Many years ago I drank tea in a cafe. There was a girl there, very pretty. Every morning I drank tea there and

talked with her about the weather. Then one day I went to another cafe and there she was sitting on some Chinaman's knee.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

So?

BARSUKOV

That's all I've got to say about love.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

My heart even skipped a beat.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

So are you going to have some tea or are you going to leave?

BARSUKOV

Come to think of it - it's high time. (*Leaves*)

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

What happened to all our cups?

Enter Pirogova.

PIROGOVA: What are those old women doing out there sleeping in the hallway?

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

They'll go away soon.

SEVA

What are they always doing here?

STEPAN IVANOVICH

They've become part of the scenery.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

You talk as if they bother somebody. They just sleep quietly in the hallway, that's all.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

And then things start disappearing.

PIROGOVA

What things?

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Those little red cups.

ANYA

Which are orange.

PIROGOVA

Maybe they broke?

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

That would be the end of me. *(Goes to look for the cups; Stepan Ivanovich goes with her)*

ANYA

I think I'll drink some wine. *(Lights a cigarette)*

PIROGOVA

Smoking will make you grow a moustache.

ANYA

And wine makes you grow a beard?

PIROGOVA

It's how the female body works.

ANYA

(Laughs) I have this feeling I was drunk throughout my whole childhood!

SEVA

Great childhood.

ANYA

Mom would send me to the store for kerosene and say, "Now don't talk to strangers." Then one day a guy on a motorcycle came up to me and offered me a ride. I got up there with him and I sped on after my kerosene staring into his black leather back. He asked, "What's your name," and I lied. I told him my name was Masha. Mom asked, "How'd you get back so fast?" I said nothing about going to the movies with the guy on the motorcycle. Otherwise she would have let me have it. That motorcycle guy was so handsome!

PIROGOVA

What's the good of remembering him now?

ANYA

I love young men, I love handsome men, I love real men.

PIROGOVA

The main thing is to love with your head, too. Not just with your heart.

SEVA

Right on, Pirogova!

ANYA

You don't understand anything, Pirogova!

PIROGOVA

Says who? I love horses, lakes, flowers and forests.

SEVA

What about that pilot?

PIROGOVA

What's it to you?

SEVA

Well ...

PIROGOVA

What is that blooming under your window, a lime-tree? I wonder, what do lime-trees smell like when they bloom? Lilac, maybe? (*Opens the window*)

ANYA

All those people walking down the street and not a single familiar face. Strange, isn't it?

SEVA

I'm used to it.

PIROGOVA

Look! She was kissing his hands!

ANYA

Who?

SEVA

What nonsense.

Dmitry and Sister appear in

the window.

SISTER

We went to the movies.

SEVA

I suspected you were capable of something like that.

SCENE FIVE

*The Old Women dance around
the room.*

FIRST OLD WOMAN

We were out and around buying flour.

SECOND OLD WOMAN

Spitting on our fingers and rolling it into balls.

FIRST

We tried it on the tips of our tongues.

SECOND

We blew it off our palms.

FIRST

White, white flour.

PIROGOVA

Just like snow.

SECOND

Good, good flour.

FIRST

Yeast batter.

SECOND

One to two or one to three if twice as much.

FIRST

On the tip of a knife.

SECOND

And half an eggshell of water.

Plus a little pinch. FIRST

Two parts to one. SECOND

A cup of milk. FIRST

We'll heat up the oven. SECOND

And make some meat pies. FIRST

We'll have a wedding. SECOND

Are we going to drink wine? ANYA

Only a little. SISTER

Dance some dances. FIRST

Dances lead to no good. PIROGOVA

We'll make meat pies out of white flour. FIRST

And some whole wheat bread. SECOND

Then let them rise. DMITRY

Then let them stand. SEVA

Okay. FIRST

SECOND

Soon soon soon soon.

FIRST

Look at all those pies!

ANYA

How unexpected, how surprising!

SECOND

Oowee, oowee.

FIRST

That's they way we bake meat pies

SECOND

Ooo-la-la.

FIRST

Oh, mein Gott.

They laugh. Gunfire and shouts of "Natasha! Natasha!" are heard outside the window. Barsukov appears in the doorway.

BARSUKOV

My poor boy!

SEVA

Arrested?

BARSUKOV

They were shooting at Kolya. *(Slumps in a chair)*

Pirogova faints. The Old Women run out.

SEVA

Where is he?

BARSUKOV

Lying in the hallway

ANYA

What you can't find in that hallway!

*They bring in the wounded
Kolya. Enter Yelizaveta
Sergeyevna from her room.*

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

You don't know what happened to our cups do you, Kolya? You know, the red ones which are orange. You didn't break them, did you?

NIKOLAI

I don't know.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Lenin gave them to us you know.

*Sister brings Nikolai a
medicine chest.*

SISTER: Bear with it, Nikolai.

SEVA

(To Dmitry) What are you standing there for? Do something. You afraid of blood?

DMITRY

No.

SEVA

You'll see worse than this at war. *(Bandages Nikolai)*

BARSUKOV

My poor boy.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

What happened this time?

BARSUKOV

Somebody shot him.

PIROGOVA

(Coming to her senses) It's Vitya. Only don't beat him up. He's got a bullet in his heart.

SEVA

Yeah, like Kolya does in his foot.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

(Looks out the window) Vitya! Vitya!

STEPAN IVANOVICH

(Enters) So, now they're using us for target practice, are they?

PIROGOVA

His father has a bullet in his heart, too.

BARSUKOV

Who, me? *(Looks over his body)*

STEPAN IVANOVICH

What, does it run in the family?

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

She doesn't mean you, she means the pilot's father.

BARSUKOV

For God's sake.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

That Vitya of yours is a strange one. Who does he think he is? You should have a talk with him, Natasha.

PIROGOVA

He's been like that ever since the hospital.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Concussion, huh?

PIROGOVA

Something like that.

SISTER

When is this war going to end? This is really getting annoying!

ANYA

They say soon.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

That's what they always say, and then all they do is turn off the electricity or the water.

SEVA

Well, that does that. *(Finishes putting on the bandage)*

ANYA

Does it hurt?

NIKOLAI

It's nothing. Just a scratch.

PIROGOVA

It's not life-threatening?

STEPAN IVANOVICH

He won't go far now.

BARSUKOV

My poor, poor boy.

SISTER

(Drinks wine, looks out the window.) These people don't know anything. They sit at work in their ties, walk around under the trees and stroll down the streets in their hats. They don't know anything. It's as if nothing had happened.

ANYA

Not everybody can cry.

SEVA

You mean something has happened already?

PIROGOVA

Look - those women are drinking coffee from cups and the coffee is going up in flames!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

What cups are they drinking out of?

*The Old Women peer out with
the cups and laugh.*

FIRST OLD WOMAN

I am a Woman.

SECOND OLD WOMAN

I am a Woman.

FIRST

I am a Woman.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Catch them! Catch them! (*Runs after the Old Women*)

BARSUKOV

Women are inaccessible beings.

The Old Women make an obscene gesture and run away.

PIROGOVA

What's that supposed to mean?

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Women are naked
Under their shirts.
I need some vodka,
News like that hurts.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

(*Returning with the cups*) Here they are. Now let's have some tea.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

So, is it tea or something a little stronger?

PIROGOVA

Tea.

SEVA

Or a shot?

They laugh and pour the shots.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Only just a little.

They drink.

ALL

To your health!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Who cut the bread with scissors?

SEVA

Vitya.

ANYA

He glued a naked woman on his airplane!

NIKOLAI

It was him, all right.

PIROGOVA

That's not true! He wouldn't do a thing like that!

*A sound is heard. Everyone
listens attentively.*

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

You hear that?

*Everybody listens attentively
again.*

BARSUKOV

Think what you will.

ALL

To your health!

ANYA

I'm going to bed.

NIKOLAI

To sleep?

ANYA

I didn't sleep all night long.

SEVA

Sleep is the end!

BARSUKOV

Sleep is death!

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Sleep is health!

To your health!

ALL

Alcohol is poison.

PIROGOVA

Poison is love.

DMITRY

Poison is death.

BARSUKOV

I've got nothing to say.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

To your health!

ALL

Hey look! An elephant!

BARSUKOV

Where!

PIROGOVA

Over there.

NIKOLAI

Where's there an elephant? They scare me to death!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

SEVA

(Looking attentively) That's no elephant, Yelizaveta Sergeyevna.

Who is it then?

PIROGOVA

Looks like one to me.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

SEVA

(Looking carefully again) That's no elephant, Yelizaveta Sergeyevna. That's a pink elephant.

Oh my God!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

PIROGOVA

Aren't you afraid of them?

ANYA

Pink, blue - who cares?

NIKOLAI

This is their home, too.

SISTER

Poor animals.

ANYA

(Looks out the window) Not one familiar face.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Everything seems to have calmed down out there, now.

They all listen.

BARSUKOV

Just the squirrels chewing nuts.

They all listen.

PIROGOVA

That's the sound of cherries falling to the ground.

They all listen.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

The same ground the elephants stalk.

NIKOLAI

Getting mud on their paws.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Eating raspberries.

SEVA

Scaring off pilots.

DMITRY

There's a whole night ahead of us.

ANYA

As tender as love.

They sit quietly and sing a song.

SCENE SIX

On the Impossible

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Something is happening inside of me and I think it's going to burst out! I still believe I can do something for mankind! I dreamed about Mendelejev's table of elements last night. That's no coincidence. I'll figure out my mission in this life yet!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

I'm so proud of you!

BARSUKOV

It'll pass.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

My whole life I've been on the verge of reaching that moment. It's been right there in my grasp. I've been on the brink of freedom. And I know my freedom will allow me to do something wonderful. It will become something extraordinarily beautiful! I have this feeling I'm capable of something and that something is right here inside of me!

PIROGOVA

You must be a happy man.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Must be. What's your name?

PIROGOVA

Natasha.

STEPAN IVANOVICH:

"Natasha." What a wonderful name!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Whenever I'm happy I feel like singing.

SEVA

I feel like singing and dancing. Only I only want to do it with you - only with you! (*Catches Sister up and they dance*)

BARSUKOV

I've dreamed of playing the trumpet my whole life long. All of my feelings remind me of its soaring sound, the joy and happiness you can hear in it. I want to take a deep breath of air and shout something to the whole world! Confess everything and ask the impossible just once in life!

NIKOLAI

Why don't we abandon this place! Escape! We'll just whip on out of sleeping Moscow and leave it behind doing a hundred and fifty miles an hour on the wet asphalt!

PIROGOVA

Take me with you!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

We'll drink herbal tea!

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Moonshine.

BARSUKOV

We'll go fishing and sit by a fire!

ANYA

It will smell of smoke!

NIKOLAI

I'll kiss your rosy cheeks!

ANYA

Behave yourself, you're wounded.

SEVA

Let's go!

They gather their things.

SISTER

Maybe let's wait until tomorrow?

All are silent.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

I say we grab the goose by the legs and get the hell out of here!

PIROGOVA

Like in a fairy-tale!

SEVA

Pirogova, your knees are so smooth. My dad always used to say don't marry a girl with bony knees. Wives should have smooth knees.

PIROGOVA

Is that a proposal?

SEVA

No. I say that from the bottom of my heart.

Pirogova crawls under a cabinet and pulls out a kitten.

PIROGOVA

Come live with me, kitty. I'll feed you on fruits.

SEVA

Natasha, can you imagine a kitten that drinks and smokes?

PIROGOVA

I wasn't talking to you.

SEVA

Pity.

PIROGOVA

And you were all saying, "Elephant! Elephant!"

Seva opens the window. The sounds of the city and cries of "Natasha! Natasha!" are heard.

PIROGOVA

(Sticks her head out the window) Vitya! Vitya!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Natasha, be careful!

PIROGOVA

Vitya! Here I am Vitya!

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Now they'll make targets of us for sure.

PIROGOVA

Vitya! I'll be right there! *(Runs out)*

SEVA

Two nuts!

SISTER

He'll kill her!

STEPAN IVANOVICH

What is he shooting out there, a bazooka?

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

What are you just standing there for? Do something about that thug! Quick!

*Seva and Barsukov go out
after Pirogova.*

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Let him have it!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Only be careful!

ANYA

Bring him back here! I want to get a look at this guy!

*The Old Women peer in the
window.*

FIRST OLD WOMAN

Do you need any cranberries?

SECOND OLD WOMAN

Would you like any cranberries?

They show their basket.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

What cranberries? What are you talking about?

FIRST

Go on, have some.

SECOND

It'll only get worse.

They leave.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

You mean we haven't suffered through all the tortures yet?

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Are you kidding? This is just the beginning.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Oh my God.

DMITRY

These days there's war everywhere.

ANYA

What if the front reaches Moscow?

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Only if it's a cold front.

NIKOLAI

Is that what you heard on the radio?

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Maybe we ought to have some tea?

SISTER

Don't they ever play music on the radio?

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Let's go out on the balcony and have tea with some of Macintosh's Macintosh apples.

*All go out. Dmitry and Sister
go further than the rest.*

SCENE SEVEN

Dmitry and Sister.

DMITRY

She was wearing a blue dress, she held a flower in her hand.

SISTER

A blue dress of my favorite color.

DMITRY

I looked at her and some man was looking at us.

SISTER

Look out for me! Keep your eyes peeled!

DMITRY

Your eyes look like nothing in the world and I will never forget this for anything in the world!

SISTER

Even if I die?

DMITRY

Death is not for us.

SISTER

Why?

DMITRY

Alien philosophies are not for us.

SISTER

I have no words in my philosophy.

DMITRY

Because I kiss you again and again and again!

SISTER

My body is shaking and the earth really is coming out from under my feet!

DMITRY

That's just everything around you shouting - "I want you!"

SISTER

Here?

DMITRY

It's the first time in my life I have spoken these words.

SISTER

You shout them from the Kremlin towers.

DMITRY

It's the changing of the guards!

SISTER

Do you give me your honor?

DMITRY

Forever. For my whole life and this whole minute.

*They leave. Andrei watches
them go.*

ANDREI

I've got nowhere to go at night - this town only loves others. Hey you, Moscow! I wish I could scream in your face hanging on the step of a train leaving forever. I'll put on my white cape and get in my blue car and I'll drive your streets all night long throwing money at policemen on the way. Just to spite you! I'll ride you up one side and down the other. I'll hit all your romantic parks and all your famous bridges. You'll come begging to me yet!

*The sound of a plane flying
overhead is heard. Andrei
jerks his head up.*

That's probably Pirogova flying around up there in the clouds kissing her pilot in weightlessness. Hey, Moscow, here I am! Right here! Only you despise my love. You don't even want to know me. Okay, Moscow. Have it your way. Dance on my grave. *(Leaves. Falls)*

*The Old Women, chanting, drag
his body off.*

FIRST OLD WOMAN

Dead stop for a dead stop.

SECOND OLD WOMAN

Dead body for a dead body.

FIRST

Death for the dead.

SECOND

Life for the living.

FIRST

Black for the black.

SECOND

Past for the past.

FIRST

Oh, Andrei.

SECOND

Oh, my boy.

FIRST

All will pass.

SECOND

That's all.

PART TWO

SCENE ONE

*Yelizaveta Sergeyevna,
Barsukov and Seva in the
room.*

BARSUKOV

Here it is, morning.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

She didn't come home again.

BARSUKOV

What? Yesterday too?

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

What do you think today is - tomorrow?

BARSUKOV

What's the date today?

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

I don't understand.

BARSUKOV

Time has lost count.

SEVA

What's the difference? Look, it's light out.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

(Looks out the window) Headless horsemen keep racing on, racing on on their iron steeds, waving their sabers and shooting off their pistols.

SEVA

I'm going to kill that guy.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Now don't, Seva.

SEVA

Why not? Is he too good for death? I'll squeeze the pistol in both hands, close my eyes and fire!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Call him an ambulance, will you, Barsukov?

BARSUKOV

How about the police?

SEVA

Better off the Red Cross.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Let's give him a shot of some kind.

SEVA

Go on, put me to sleep. Like a sick dog.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Barsukov, do something with him.

Barsukov tries to do

something.

SEVA

Leave me alone! Get your hands off me! Let go of me!

BARSUKOV

Yelizaveta Sergeyevna, help me!

SEVA

Yelizaveta Sergeyevna, do something for me!

BARSUKOV

Help me!

SEVA

No, help me. Help me!

*They seat Seva in an easy
chair and put a towel to his
forehead.*

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Now, now. Calm down now. You'll grow up soon.

SEVA

I don't know. Somehow that moment never comes.

BARSUKOV

Every time I go to sleep at night I think I'll wake up in the morning a grown-up, too. Only it obviously doesn't work like that.

SEVA

How old are you?

BARSUKOV

Fifty.

SEVA

You're getting up there.

BARSUKOV

Yeah life's passing me by.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Lately everything seems wrong.

SEVA

But it's still better than nothing. (*Walks around the room collecting flowers*) The whole apartment smells of roses!
(*Goes to throw them out*)

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Do you remember how you and I used to go for walks in the Kremlin? It was so clean everywhere. There were flowers and fir-trees and fruit trees on the lawns!

BARSUKOV

And four beehives full of bees for pollination.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Four? There were eight!

They laugh.

BARSUKOV

You remember how you used to come see me? Things were so fine then.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

You had something Gypsy-like in your eyes.

BARSUKOV: Everything was so easy and simple. And then it all disappeared. Where did it go?

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

I don't know.

BARSUKOV

In that little hole by the light of the bats I used to write you batty letters.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

You're so nice when you don't drink.

BARSUKOV

I'm nice because I drink.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Only don't go trying to look better than you really are!

BARSUKOV

But I really am much better!

They laugh.

Stepan Ivanovich drinks, too.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA
You're different.

BARSUKOV
He's the one that's different!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA
When he drinks he sees God.

*They are silent. Enter
Pirogova.*

PIROGOVA
May I?

BARSUKOV
No. We're naked.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA
Come in, Natasha.

PIROGOVA
Good morning. You drinking tea?

BARSUKOV
What of it?

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA
Something happen?

PIROGOVA
Naturally.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA
Seva! Seva!

Enter Seva.

SEVA
Hello, Pirogova. How's things?

PIROGOVA

Andrei drank some trimethyl butane. They took him away in an ambulance!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Oh, my God.

SEVA

Tri-what bu-what?

PIROGOVA

It's a gasoline of some sort. But the doctor says his life's not in danger anymore.

SEVA

For Christ's sake! (*Puts on his coat*)

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Ask them to give you some medical attention there, while you're at it.

SEVA

I'm all right now.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

That's what worries me.

PIROGOVA

I just saw Dmitry and Sister. They had me worried, too. They said, "Come on, let's go for a ride in a tram."

SEVA

So what?

PIROGOVA

So what?! There aren't any trams in Moscow anymore!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

What happened to them all?

PIROGOVA

I don't know. I never see them, anyway.

BARSUKOV

Okay.

PIROGOVA

Why is your whole kitchen splattered in blood?

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Seva slit his wrists yesterday.

PIROGOVA

Seva! Who slits their wrists in a kitchen?!

SEVA

I do. (*Leaves*)

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Why not? It's a very cozy kitchen.

PIROGOVA

What's that out your window? Out there in the distance. Is that rye or wheat?

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Where?

PIROGOVA

Out there beyond the parachute tower.

BARSUKOV

Let's go take a walk and see.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Maybe you'll have some more tea?

BARSUKOV

No, I'm going. I'm going outside. I'm going to go play soccer with the boys.

PIROGOVA

I'm with you!

*They leave. The Old Women
peer into the room.*

FIRST OLD WOMAN

I feel like eating something.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Have an apple.

FIRST

I already ate a peach.

SECOND

Yesterday I had a banana and I don't want anything more.

FIRST

I feel like eating something.

SECOND

A boy or a girl.

FIRST

A rooster or a rabbit.

SECOND

The rabbit has big, round eyes.

FIRST

Big, round and brown.

SECOND

And sad as they can be.

FIRST

A tear in every one.

*Stepan Ivanovich comes out of
the next room.*

SECOND

(Sighs) Oh, mein Gott!

FIRST

All of you, you all of you will be dead.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Begone. We'll live a lot longer than you.

*The Old Women laugh. They
leave.*

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Damn fools!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Ignorant idiots!

SCENE TWO

*Yelizaveta Sergeyevna and
Stepan Ivanovich stare at
each other attentively. They
don't recognize each other.*

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Some woman is walking around the room smiling.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Some man is looking at me.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Look at her looking me over.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

He's got a radio just like my husband's.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

I take a good look.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

I think - I'm in trouble now.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Wait a minute - that's my wife!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Stepan?

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Liza?

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

How about that?!

STEPAN IVANOVICH

The wife doesn't recognize her husband, nor the husband his wife.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

You haven't seen my glasses, have you?

STEPAN IVANOVICH

No. I don't have my glasses.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Maybe they're in the other room? (*Leaves*)

Stepan Ivanovich pours himself a shot. Enter Barsukov.

BARSUKOV

I came back for some reason and can't remember why.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Maybe you forgot something?

BARSUKOV

I don't remember. Where is Yelizaveta Sergeyevna?

STEPAN IVANOVICH

She lost her glasses. (*Pours a drink for Barsukov*)

BARSUKOV

You've got a fine wife. Mine was just the opposite - She always had it in for me. Always digging up evidence against me. A ticket to the attractions at the park or a ticket on that - what do you call it? - excursion boat. Now I can't remember anything about it. The memory's gone. I don't remember a thing. Except how I used to go fishing when I was a kid. That I remember - every little detail.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

I didn't even know you have a wife.

BARSUKOV

I don't. She died.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

I'm sorry.

BARSUKOV

Are you kidding! Thank God! What would she think if she saw what is going on these days?! If she were still alive, she'd turn over in her grave!

STEPAN IVANOVICH

May she rest in peace.

They drink. Barsukov looks

*attentively at Stepan
Ivanovich.*

BARSUKOV

So it's good she can't see any of this.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Mine doesn't see anything either.

BARSUKOV

Women are incurable.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

What about you? Do you see anything?!

BARSUKOV

Unfortunately, I do, but -

STEPAN IVANOVICH

I don't see very well either, of course. But at least I listen to the radio every day!

BARSUKOV

You see what I mean?!

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Did you hear about the situation in -

Enter Sister. Anya peeks in.

ANYA

Shhhh.

SISTER

Are you crazy?

ANYA

Mom will hear!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

(Enters) Have you seen my glasses?

ANYA

We haven't seen anything.

SISTER

Maybe they're in the other room?

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Maybe. But they're not there.

BARSUKOV

Maybe you can use mine?

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

(Puts on Barsukov's glasses) Maybe. But I can't see anything with them.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

What is it you want to see? The radio will tell you everything you need to know!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Turn that nasty thing off! This is impossible!

SISTER

Dad!

ANYA

Have you already been drinking this morning?

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Yes!

BARSUKOV

Here we go.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

What do you expect me to do? Live sober? Don't you realize what is going on?!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

I don't want to hear about it!

STEPAN IVANOVICH

No, you listen! You listen!

Yelizaveta Sergeyevna goes out. Stepan Ivanovich follows.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Quiet! The children will hear!

STEPAN IVANOVICH

But they don't see anything!

*From the far room we hear the
laughter of Yelizaveta
Sergeyevna and Stepan
Ivanovich.*

BARSUKOV

(Sadly) Did you hear that? Do I hear kissing?

ANYA

(Stands on tiptoes) I can't see anything.

SISTER

It was the same thing on Friday.

BARSUKOV

Friday? I don't remember Friday.

SISTER

(Laughs) You never remember anything!

BARSUKOV

Yes. You know, I don't even remember my mother's face when she was young. How I used to go fishing when I was seven - that I remember. I'd catch myself a pound or two of trout and bring them home. I remember the trout, its smell and every single vein. But my mother's young face has not been retained in my memory. I've lost her youthful gaze.

ANYA

You know what I remember? How Andrei braided my hair. He'd get down on his knees and hold the ribbon in his teeth and he would braid my hair with his enormous hands. He'd look me right in the eyes.

SISTER

You were always so small.

ANYA

The past is dead and gone.

BARSUKOV

Did you know that he's in a really bad way?

ANYA

But what's age got to do with it? I love his wrinkled face and his strong hands. I never fear anything with him.

SISTER

I would be so happy just to forget it all! Everything that used to be! (*Laughs*) I will always be a "Lover of Absinthe," a lover of cognac, of young boys and their disheveled little heads. They have different eyes, different bodies. They regret nothing. They have nothing to remember. They have everything you need. Men lead a different life!

Enter Pirogova.

PIROGOVA

Did you completely forget about me? I'm out there waiting for you!

BARSUKOV

Oh, my God, Natasha! I'm sorry!

PIROGOVA

You ruined my whole morning!

BARSUKOV

Why don't we go somewhere this evening?

PIROGOVA

No, I can't this evening.

BARSUKOV

On the other hand - you're right. Best not to.

PIROGOVA

Why?

BARSUKOV

I'll fall in love, get married and it'll start all over again.

PIROGOVA

What's that got to do with anything?

They laugh.

If you have something to tell me, tell it to me straight. I

never hide a single thought, you know!

Enter Seva and Andrei.

SEVA

Here we are!

PIROGOVA

How are you feeling, Andrei?

BARSUKOV

What's the suitcase for?

ANDREI

I'm leaving today. I came to say goodbye.

SISTER

You're leaving us?

ANYA

Where are you going?

ANDREI

Home.

PIROGOVA

Is that very far?

ANDREI

Very.

ANYA

Shall we have some tea or coffee?

BARSUKOV

Something stronger is in order for an occasion like this.
Not everything is trimethyl butane.

ANYA

Trimethyl what?

SEVA

I think that's what they poison mice with.

PIROGOVA

I've got to give you something to remember us by. Will you write to us? You have to write. Your shirt here has a

little stain on it - right here on the sleeve - some ink or something. Is there anybody there to take care of you where you're going?

ANDREI

I have a grandmother and sister there.

BARSUKOV

They'll be happy to see you!

SEVA

Well, come on. Let's go.

SISTER

Let's go put the food on the table in the other room!

They leave.

SCENE THREE

The Old Women enter the room.

FIRST OLD WOMAN

I'm pregnant.

SECOND OLD WOMAN

How long?

FIRST

One day.

SECOND

Then there will be a child.

FIRST

If it's a boy the stomach is round.

SECOND

If it's a girl it is square.

FIRST

What am I going to do?

SECOND

Oh, meine Liebe.

FIRST

Look, here come more guests!

Enter Dmitry.

DMITRY

Hello.

SECOND

Hi.

FIRST

Oh, mein Gott!

They laugh and leave. Dmitry sits on a chair. Music and laughter are heard from the other room. Enter Nikolai.

NIKOLAI

Be a friend - lend me some money. Thanks. You really do look like a hero. It's not for nothing they say so. Have you seen Anya?

DMITRY

No. I just got here.

NIKOLAI

She's a sorceress, that girl. Let her out of your sight and she'll slip your grasp. If I could, I would follow her, upside down on the ceiling! *(He goes into the next room)*

Dmitry sits on a chair. A moment later Yelizaveta Sergeevna enters.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Dmitry! What are you sitting here for? Everybody's in there having tea. Today we have mint, rosemary and hibiscus petals! *(Leaves)*

We continue to hear music and laughter from the next room. A while later Stepan Ivanovich enters.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

You see that? They've been dancing all morning! Have you heard the radio yet today?

DMITRY

No.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Your loss. You look like a serious young man. Not like these others. Utterly apolitical. Utterly! *(Pours drinks for himself and Dmitry. They both drink)*

DMITRY

Thank you.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

You really ought to listen to the radio. Otherwise you go on living and never know a thing. *(Goes out after Yelizaveta Sergeevna)*

Laughter is still heard from the next room. Enter Seva.

SEVA

Hi, Dmitry. I'm glad you came to see us. There's something I've been wanting to give you. Wait here a second. *(Brings in a huge geographical atlas and gives it to Dmitry)*

DMITRY

Thank you, Seva.

SEVA

There. Take a look at this map of our country.

They turn the pages of the atlas.

The northermost point is the Fligel Peninsula in the Franz-Josef Land. It lies one thousand kilometers from the North Pole. The southernmost point is further south than Tunis, Gibraltar or the Azores in the Atlantic Ocean. When the sun rises on Ratmanov Island, Moscow is still ushering out the previous day. And when the Kremlin chimes ring midday, it is already evening in Kamchatka.

DMITRY

Great is this Land.

SEVA

And look here -- the town of Amursk! That almost sounds French. People even live way out there.

They are silent.

Aren't you going to say anything? Although, what could you say? What could I possibly hear from you besides those silly words, love, love, love. (*Laughs*) What do you care about Moscow? Moscow isn't the center of geography.

DMITRY

I love Moscow.

SEVA

There you go, again! Love. Okay, I'll wait until that word loses its meaning, until your lips tire of it, until you can't pronounce it anymore, until it only makes you laugh! Love. Love. Love. Ha. Ha. Ha. Don't listen to what this town tells you. Don't look in its eyes, you'll believe what you see there - that's what it's like! Listen to me. I'll tell you the truth. You won't last long here.

DMITRY

Yes I will. But you'd better watch out you don't die laughing. (*Leaves*)

SEVA

(*Shouts*) When I was twenty I used to beat heroes like that to a pulp!

*Yelizaveta Sergeyevna and
Stepan Ivanovich peer into
the room.*

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Well?

SEVA

He left.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

(*Gaily*) Did you beat him up?

SEVA

Ah, no big deal. I got a couple of jabs in.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

(Ecstatically) How horrible!

STEPAN IVANOVICH

You did right. It's a family affair.

*Yelizaveta Sergeyevna and
Seva leave.*

How hearts do break. Even without wine. *(Pours a glass of
wine and drinks)*

Enter Anya.

ANYA

Dad, explain it to me. Why are we always waiting for something? When will all the hours and years pass? When does it all end? When does it come to a conclusion? Why is he leaving? Why?

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Let him leave if he wants to. There's no point in crying.

ANYA

I always cry when someone leaves.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

It isn't worth it.

ANYA

What else can I do?

Enter Andrei.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Leaving already? Let's have one for the road.

*They pour drinks and down
them.*

ANYA

Yesterday I was out and around and I bought some new shoes.

All are silent. They look at

her shoes.

And then I sat in a cafe, the one over there across the street. I watched people going by. It was so strange - not one familiar face.

ANDREI

You were there too early. The jazz band goes on at ten. Everybody comes to drink and listen to jazz at ten.

ANYA

I was there at seven.

ANDREI

You see what I mean?

ANYA

The waiter there has a bowtie. And a moustache. Do you know him?

ANDREI

Yeah.

They are silent.

Well, it's time. *(He embraces Stepan Ivanovich)*

ANYA

I'll see you out.

They leave.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

I've been a bad father all my life. Whenever my children cry I'm ready to do anything for them. Only to this day I don't know what.

I hop like a rabbit
In sadness and woe.
Maybe I should drink
Some vodka real slow?

(Drinks) Anya, forgive your foolish father.

Noise and explosions are heard on the street. Everyone comes back in from the next

room.

SEVA

You hear that?

NIKOLAI

Again.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

A ringing of some sort.

PIROGOVA

Where? Where is it ringing?

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Are they out there blowing something up again?

PIROGOVA

Maybe it's fireworks.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Fireworks? What fireworks? What are you talking about?

SISTER

Maybe something happened?

BARSUKOV

This is great! I like it.

They go out on the street.

SISTER

How beautiful!

NIKOLAI

Seven winds blowing at once!

SEVA

Holy Moses!

PIROGOVA

Maybe today's a holiday?

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

What holiday? What are you talking about?

NIKOLAI

Stepan Ivanovich, have you heard any news on the radio?

STEPAN IVANOVICH

I'll go give it a listen. *(Leaves)*

SISTER

Look at that red star!

SEVA

It's probably Mars.

The Old Women come out on the street.

FIRST OLD WOMAN

Hello.

PIROGOVA

My cat sleeps with open eyes!

SECOND OLD WOMAN

Maybe she's sick?

PIROGOVA

Maybe. She got her tail pinched yesterday.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

I don't understand anything. What is going on?

FIRST

White on white.

SECOND

Sunset on sunset.

They all stand there watching what is going on.

SCENE FOUR

Anya and Andrei stand on a bridge.

ANYA

What do you see in this city?

ANDREI

I don't know.

ANYA

Do you really think it's so beautiful?

ANDREI

Yes.

ANYA

I don't understand. I just don't understand.

ANDREI

Sometimes even I think I dreamed it up.

ANYA

Maybe I've been looking at it from the wrong angle?

ANDREI

That's not it.

ANYA

Then what is it? Tell me.

ANDREI

You see that street? If you drop an apple here, you'll never catch it again. It'll go rolling down so fast it'll go the whole world 'round.

ANYA

So what?

ANDREI

I can't get a grasp on this town. I can't make contact. It's like the arsonist of Rome - I want my name embellished in this town's history for eternity, I want it to know who I am. I want this place to know I'd do anything for it!

ANYA

Is it really such a big deal?

ANDREI

Not anymore. Even the stars have grown cold for me in this town.

ANYA

(Laughs) Take me with you! Let's get out of here! The sooner the better! Let's go! We'll sail above the red brick walls, skimming over the towers and all the trees and then we'll be far, far away! You'll be better off there, you'll never shed a single tear! Look!

ANDREI

All my dreams are slipping away! *(Laughs)* There it goes - the life I was never even able to taste. It's chipped my teeth! Look!

ANYA

Happiness is waiting for us where Moscow's streets come to an end!

They are carried off by the wind and we don't see them anymore. All we see are the roofs of the houses and the tops of swings peering through the trees. The Old Women, looking up, watch them go. Nikolai sits on a balcony and watches everything from above.

FIRST OLD WOMAN

Take a look at those angels, why don't you!

SECOND OLD WOMAN

That's enough of your insolence!

FIRST

What's the day today?

SECOND

Today is _____ [today's day].

FIRST

What's the date today?

SECOND

Today is _____ [today's date].

FIRST

What time is it?

NIKOLAI

(Looks at his watch) _____ [the current time].

SECOND

Poppycock!

FIRST

(Sighs) Oh, Liebe meine.

They leave. Enter Seva.

SEVA

What are you moping around here for?

NIKOLAI

Love.

SEVA

Nonsense. Give your friend a call and have her snuffed out.

NIKOLAI

What?!

SEVA

You got other thoughts on the subject?

NIKOLAI

Yes. I'm going to the front.

SEVA

They'll kill you.

NIKOLAI

I'm better off dying for my country than having it happen here for no good reason.

SEVA

Don't be silly. You can die from love anywhere you want. Although you'll look good in a military uniform. And you'll learn to shoot.

NIKOLAI

I already know how. *(Pulls out a pistol and shoots)*

SEVA

(Takes the pistol) For a soldier every a song is a weapon.

NIKOLAI

Aren't you ashamed to be sitting it out here in Moscow?

SEVA

I've already done my time. Want a drink?

NIKOLAI

No.

SEVA

Then I'll finish it. Take a lesson from me - I do everything all the way. I smoke cigarettes down to the filter and I watch movies to the end even when they're sad and I don't like them.

NIKOLAI

I don't smoke.

SEVA

Then have a cigarette and let's go. I'll show you some real women. Want to?

NICHOLAS

Yeah. I do.

SEVA

Great! We'll go see Lucy!

NIKOLAI

Who's that?

SEVA

Lucy?

Barsukov walks down the street with his arms around the two Old Women.

BARSUKOV

What? You mean you don't know her yet?

The Old Women howl with laughter.

SEVA

She lives on the sunny side of a cherry tree branch.

BARSUKOV

Number eight, Cozy Street.

SEVA

She has a golden heart.

BARSUKOV

And golden hands!

SEVA

And a gold tooth.

BARSUKOV

She makes great coffee!

SEVA

She's not married.

BARSUKOV

She leads a hedonistic life.

SEVA

But she looks great.

BARSUKOV

She used to sing in the opera!

SEVA

She's a sophisticate in music.

BARSUKOV

She's all in silk. Every inch!

NIKOLAI

Let's go.

BARSUKOV

Hurrah! It's off to Lucy we shall go.

They laugh.

NIKOLAI

Lucy - I think she's a goddess! She laughs when she makes coffee and diamonds sparkle on her fingers!

SEVA

You can forget everything when you're in her hands!

NIKOLAI

Let's go knock on her door!

BARSUKOV

Let's hurry!

NIKOLAI

Let's go get burned!

*Seva and Nikolai leave. The
Old Women won't let Barsukov
go.*

FIRST

Don't go!

SECOND

You promised!

*Yelizaveta Sergeyevna comes
out of the house.*

BARSUKOV

Liza! Liza!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

What?

FIRST

Don't think badly of him.

SECOND

He knows his limit.

FIRST

It's not as if he's not in a holiday mood when he drinks.

SECOND

He only drinks on holidays.

FIRST

But look how many holidays there are!

SECOND

Just a couple here and there.

FIRST

But he knows his limit.

SECOND

And he recites poetry.

FIRST

You wouldn't believe it!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

You're drunk again.

BARSUKOV

I can be drunk for walking the streets. I can be drunk for making love. But I can't be drunk for making art!

FIRST

A poet!

SECOND

A real poet!

They clap their hands.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Let's go home. You need to get some sleep.

BARSUKOV

What for? And cross another day out of my life? No way!

FIRST

Let's go!

SECOND

Let's go!

FIRST

You promised!

BARSUKOV

Liza! Liza!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Oh, mein Gott! *(She leads Barsukov out)*

SCENE FIVE

Dmitry's room. Dmitry and Sister.

DMITRY

You and I are racing head-on into catastrophe. We've forgotten the rules of the road, the brakes, the stop signals, the street signs, and all the other detours and U-turns that run along your body. Right in the middle of the highway all the wires got tangled up in the sheets. Trolleys ride up and down the ceiling and thunder through the tunnels. Subway trains are rocking our room.

SISTER

At this dark time of day the store signs make your face look multi-colored.

DMITRY

They change the world.

SISTER

Make fun of my eyes.

DMITRY

Turn your face into someone else's.

SISTER

Break reality into layers.

DMITRY

Bind us in one single knot.

SISTER

Tighter and tighter.

DMITRY

For all life long!

The door opens. Someone's steps are heard.

SISTER

You hear that?

DMITRY

Your heart is beating beneath my shoulder-blade.

Enter Seva.

SEVA

Are you sleeping? No? I was just walking by and I thought to myself, I thought, why don't I stop in for a little visit? Go ahead and sleep. Sleep. *(Sits on a chair)* I'm like a beast in autumn today - I keep wandering through the woods, looking under the fir branches. I want to eat someone, drink some blood, rip someone to shreds. Or no. *(To Sister)* Drag you into my lair, embrace you and fall asleep for the whole winter. I want to get snowed in, covered over with snow-drifts. I want to skip over December, January and February until all the snow melts, until some love-crazy pilot comes along shooting off his gun.

DMITRY

You want something to drink?

SEVA

Easy now. You think I came looking for a fight?

DMITRY

I don't know.

SEVA

You're right. I came here to kill you.

They are silent.

I bought a Colt from Kolya. Like it? *(Puts the pistol on the table)*

DMITRY

No.

They are silent as they look at the pistol.

SEVA

I do. Well? How come you aren't asking any questions? Huh?

DMITRY

I did.

SEVA
Wrong question.

DMITRY
Why?

SEVA
You ask - I'll answer.

DMITRY
I asked.

SEVA
How come you aren't asking any questions? Ask me something!
I mean, you don't know anything about me! I'm a wild-man.
I'm a lunatic.

SISTER
Now listen here...

SEVA
I've got the perfect alibi. At this very moment I'm not
here, I'm at number eight Cozy Street. And I've got
witnesses. How do you like that?

DMITRY
You're smart.

SEVA
That's very bad. Very bad.

SISTER
All right. You've been with that.., that.., woman?!

SEVA
Yes!

SISTER
You promised!

Seva laughs.

I'll strangle you!

SEVA
Strangle me!

SISTER

You... *(Throws everything she can get her hands on at Seva. He laughs and fends off the flying objects)*

SEVA

You'd strangle me easier!

*Sister grabs the pistol.
Dmitry and Seva race at her.
They struggle, shout, grab at
each others' arms, hit each
other and choke each other.*

What a day! Everybody is out to strangle me!

*They race around the room,
knocking over the furniture
and shouting,
"You. you, you. Boom, boom,
boom. Bang, bang, bang."
Seva shoots at Dmitry. Dmitry
shoots at Seva.*

SISTER

That thing's no toy!

SEVA

I missed! I missed!

SISTER

You wounded him.

DMITRY

I hit him?

SEVA

You hit me.

*Sister gets out a medicine
box and bandages Seva.*

SISTER

You...

SEVA

You...

You...

DMITRY

You idiot. Idiot. Idiot.

SISTER

I'm sorry.

DMITRY

Only don't die. Don't die. *(Cries)*

SISTER

(Wipes her tears) Crocodile tears.

SEVA

You monkey.

SISTER

They embrace and weep. Dmitry laughs.

Knock that off right now. This is no time for hysterics.

SISTER

Oh is that so?!

DMITRY

That's right!

SISTER

What is going on here?

DMITRY

It's a nightmare.

SISTER

Life is very strange.

SEVA

It's beyond me.

DMITRY

Shut up.

SISTER

They are silent.

DMITRY

Here's my life - take it! Take it if you have no heart, if you never weep. Take it! Drink my young blood! I'm twenty years old and I don't love you! I wouldn't say anything more about myself even if you begged me! So there! You have no heart! You only live through me! Go ahead and try it now without me! You and all your schemes! I'm air! I'm out of here! *(Runs out, slams the door. He bumps into an Old Woman)*

FIRST OLD WOMAN

Hey!

SECOND OLD WOMAN

Ho!

FIRST

O-ho-ho-ho.

SECOND

Oa-ha-ha-ha.

FIRST

Ah-yai-yai-yai.

SECOND

Oh-oh-oh-oh.

Sister rubs iodine on the Old Woman's scratch.

SISTER

Quick as a jiffy.

FIRST

And just as iffy.

SECOND

Will she live to the wedding?

SEVA

I don't think she'll make it.

FIRST

Oh, mein Gott!

SECOND

Oh, meine Liebe!

Sister leads out the wounded Seva. Seva supports the wounded Old Woman. Doors slam throughout the house. Cars and trucks are still humming out on the street and street lamps are swaying. Only there's nobody here to see it. All have left.

SCENE SIX

Yelizaveta Sergeyevna, Stepan Ivanovich, Pirogova and Barsukov in the house.

PIROGOVA

Look! Look! It's snowing!

BARSUKOV

Oh yeah.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Now we'll have several months of cold.

BARSUKOV

The cold is intolerable. So is the heat.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

It will be New Years soon!

BARSUKOV

One time we planned to meet the New Year in a restaurant. We waited and waited. The whole restaurant waited. But it came an hour late!

PIROGOVA

You think that's something? I once heard how one family planned to greet the New Year. They cooked a duck, put a spread on the table and popped the cork on the champagne. And they waited and waited, and it never did come!

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Maybe they just did a bad job of seeing the old year out?

BARSUKOV

Probably.

PIROGOVA

You think it will come to us?

STEPAN IVANOVICH

I think at least it'll stop in for a peek.

BARSUKOV

Granted, it's not as if this is a whole city in here.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Every home is its own private Moscow.

PIROGOVA

I love New Years!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Kids love it when every year brings something new. For old people every one takes something away.

PIROGOVA

I keep thinking, what if it doesn't come?

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

It will. It definitely will come.

BARSUKOV

It's got nowhere else to go.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

A prickly Christmas tree
Grows calmly on the lee.
Now there's a reason straight and true
To have myself a drink or two.

They pour and drink.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Listen. Footsteps.

Steps are heard.

PIROGOVA

Isn't today a little early?

BARSUKOV

You never can tell.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Anything can happen.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Maybe someone's come to visit?

Enter Seva and Sister.

Oh, look who's here!

SEVA

Here we are!

BARSUKOV

We were all ready to usher in the New Year.

SEVA

What? Without us?

PIROGOVA

You gave us a good scare!

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Sit down here at the table! Today we've got tea and milk!

SEVA

Sounds great!

PIROGOVA

What happened to your hand?

SEVA

A brigand's bullet.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Bullets again? They're shooting again?

STEPAN IVANOVICH

The pilot?

SEVA

No. Just a stray.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Isn't that something? Does it hurt?

SEVA

No, no. It's okay.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Fine thing to call okay.

SEVA

Hey, Pirogova, when are you going to introduce us to the pilot?

BARSUKOV

I haven't heard anything of him for ages.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Thank God!

PIROGOVA

It turns out he's got a wife.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

What?

PIROGOVA

And eight kids.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

You're kidding!

PIROGOVA

But it's not his fault.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Poor girl.

PIROGOVA

His wife is a really great cook. *(Wipes her tears)*

BARSUKOV

That's bad.

PIROGOVA

Maybe I should write him a letter?

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Letters are no good. They don't understand letters.

BARSUKOV

There you have it.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Why don't we have some tea.

SISTER

Tea or coffee?

PIROGOVA

Tea.

BARSUKOV

Or coffee?

They laugh as glasses clink.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

We used to ride downtown for milk. We'd get on the bus, each of us with a milk-can. We'd ride way up on the hill, looking out from side to side. The houses down there are beautiful and the trees are big. We'd just look out the windows at them. We'd get there, buy our milk and come home again. It has changed, of course. And anyway you can buy milk anywhere now. It used to be you could only get it in downtown. That was the only place.

BARSUKOV

The blackberries down there were good, too. You'd scratch your hands all up before plucking any off the vine.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

So you used to go pinching from other people's gardens, did you?

BARSUKOV

That was a long time ago. You probably don't even remember it.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

My dear man, I still remember when there was nothing but

horses on the streets. Not a car in sight!

They laugh.

SISTER

Natasha, don't cry!

SEVA

You want me to put some music on?

PIROGOVA

What music?

SEVA

Real Moscow music.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

What's to cry about? Come on, let's dance.

PIROGOVA

(Cries) You see out there, way off in the distance, that little grave in the middle of the wheat stacks? See that little mound there? Over there! Over there! That's where I buried my kitten. She abandoned me, too.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Poor thing.

PIROGOVA

Now she'll get covered with snow.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Have a shot, sweetheart.

Pirogova drinks.

SISTER

Now how do you feel?

PIROGOVA

Bad.

SISTER

(Doesn't hear) Thank God.

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

What are you so mean about?

SISTER

I'll be good tomorrow. And I'll have a different dress.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

Are you crying, too?

SISTER

No. I'm laughing.

STEPAN IVANOVICH

I love it when you laugh.

*All laugh, drink tea and
dance.*

YELIZAVETA SERGEYEVNA

Seva, turn the music up louder! Louder! Louder!

STEPAN IVANOVICH

We'll still make mankind happy yet!

BARSUKOV

Why don't I play something on the trumpet? (*Plays the
trumpet*)

SCENE SEVEN

*Dmitry stands by the house.
He holds a pistol in his hand
and looks in the window.*

DMITRY

God is my witness, I held off as long as I could. (*Loads
the pistol*)

*Nikolai passes by in a
military uniform with a
backpack on his back.*

NIKOLAI

You out for a walk? You look horrible. Come on, out with
it. What happened?

DMITRY

I've got nothing more to say.

NIKOLAI

I'm going off to war.

DMITRY

When?

NIKOLAI

Right now. Two days on the train and I'll be there. My dream came true.

DMITRY

You come to say goodbye?

NIKOLAI

No. I'll write my dad later from the front. I wouldn't be able to take it right now. So I guess I'll be a real heel. Maybe I'll get killed in the war for that.

DMITRY

You won't get killed.

NIKOLAI

Why do you think that?

DMITRY

I don't know.

NIKOLAI

Here - have a smoke.

They light up. The smoke floats in big clouds for a long time.

DMITRY

You know, I didn't want to tell anybody, but I'm going away, too.

NIKOLAI

When are you going?

DMITRY

I'm going right now, too. I've even got my weapon with me.
(Shows his pistol)

NIKOLAI

I had one just like that.

DMITRY

I know how to parachute.

NIKOLAI

That doesn't scare you?

DMITRY

No.

NIKOLAI

They're dancing.

DMITRY

Mankind has danced since time immemorial.

NIKOLAI

Everything in Moscow has changed.

DMITRY

Yeah, but there are still girls out there in the streets.
With their scarfs fluttering up over their shoulders.

NICHOLAS and DMITRY

(Shouting) Hey girls! Over here! Here we come! We're coming
to kiss you!

*They laugh and leave, singing
a song. The two Old Women
wave goodbye with their
handkerchiefs.*

FIRST OLD WOMAN

They look like heroes.

SECOND OLD WOMAN

I don't know.

FIRST

That's what they all say.

END OF PLAY