

*Dear Reader!*

*I have not had an interpreter, so I translated the play myself using a robotic translator. We both mistaken, I corrected those who could see. It is therefore possible that in the text you'll meet with displeasure shortcomings translation. Please forgive me.*

*Alex*

# TWO WOMEN AND A PARROT

By Alexander Gerson

## **THE CHARACTERS:**

Pauline - a former teacher

Nelly – old woman

Parrot Tookie

The man in a working clothes

Voice of TV announcer

Room. In the middle - table. Next - three chairs. On the right - a sofa and two doors to the kitchen and the bathroom. Left - the front door. TV. Dresser. Lying on the couch - Nelly. She holds out the remote to the TV, lifts and lowers it. NELLY Again the TV died. . Or the remote control TV died.

The doorbell rings. Nellie did not respond. The new, long call. Nelly slowly gets up, stretches, wearing sneakers and slap the door.

NELLY. Who's there? Wait a little, now open.

Nelly opens the door. Pauline enters the room.

PAULINE (at the entrance). Shalom. Ani metapelet. (They stand for some time against each other, looking into the face). My name is Pauline, my second name is Schuster. Ani ... I ... Ani ... it ... I have come to you ... you called to

office ...

NELLY. They rang. Your Hebrew isn't good/. But no worries: my native language is Russian. Are you not told about it in the office? Well, yes, I've been in Israel for forty years, I speak Hebrew well. But this is not the main thing, of course. The main problem is, as you and me get along. I usually adapt easily. And you? How old are you?

PAULINE. Fifty-three.).

Nelly. You look a lot younger. Good for you! And I have eighty almost. Do you want tea, coffee?

TUKEY. Coffee, coffee!

PAULINE. Thanks, I just had breakfast. And anyway, I do not eat at work. A parrot that is Russian? That is Russian?

NELLY. He is a polyglot: he speaks Russian, Hebrew, English. Like his former boss, who gave it to me. His name is Tookie.

PAULINE. In Hebrew "Tookie" is a "parrot." Is there a proper name?

NELLY. Yes, his own name - Tookie. You do not like it?

PAULINE. I do not care. Tookie - so be it Tookie. Hey, Tukey, tell me something.

NELLY.. He will say, if he wants to, when you get used to. And by many of us, elders, was you already as a *metapelet* (metapelet that is a sitter, Hebrew. AG)?

Pauline. Up to you, I had four.

NELLY. And all you have successfully buried? (Laughs). Joke.

PAULINE. Imagine not one was buried, they moved into the poorhouse, I'm sorry - in Beit Avot (nursing home, Hebrew. AG).

NELLY. Good to hear. But I'm still in *Beit Avot* not going. For me is at the house well. Well, get to work (Nelly lit a cigarette and took a sip of brandy from the bottle lights, straight from the bottle). Do you want to take a sip of brandy? (Pauline waving). Start with my breakfast, I I have not eaten. I've looked the silly series, and TV could not resist this mediocrity, TV now ill and require a treatment.

PAULINE. How to cook breakfast for you? What would you like?

NELLY. Make an omelet of two eggs with sausage, a couple of curd and sour cream, and coffee. There are eggs, cheese, sausage and more In the fridge . Be able to prepare Turkish coffee in the Jews?

PAULINE. The science is simple. I can. I will clean the apartment after your breakfast. Your apartment is quite dirty, for once it is impossible to restore order.

NELLY. Do not invent. It isn't dirty. Simply there is here a romantic order. Who were you in that life? Do you work in the police?

PAULINE. I was a primary school teacher.

NELLY. I think, the children had walked on the same only a floor board, they were afraid of you and did not like you?

PAULINE. What does it matter now?

TUKEY. It's right, right!

PAULINE. I loved my school students. Although I was strict. I think they knew it. Well, I'm going to the kitchen.

She leaves. Nelly takes control, presses the button, first - crack, then a television announcer says: "Prelude" by Sergei Rachmaninoff. After a stormy applause we hear the announcer again.

VOICE. Immigrant from the Sov ... Pauline Schuster from Russia won the audience not only by brilliantly executed "Prelude" Rachmaninov. After the applause of the public was same brilliantly performed the Second Hungarian Rhapsody by Liszt, that was not a planned part of this concert .

Rushing sound from the TV, then Rhapsody. Nelly wants to change the channel, tinkering with remote control, but the TV suddenly silent.

NELLY. Well, again crappy telly dead. Tookie, do you hear? Our new metapelet, Pauline Schuster, is a good piano player, not just a teacher. I did not expect. And you? Surprised? Right?

TUKEY. Right, right, right!

Paulina comes with breakfast.

NELLY. You have just been shown on television. No idea! You could have concerts! (He eats with gusto.) Delicious. In fact, why do not you give concerts instead of the dirty work?

PAULLINE. Like me, there are many in Israel. And all of them, as opposed to me – are with the Conservatories. And this telecast - it's just about our club, we were at the club yesterday evening, and came two guests from the ninth channel - so I got on the TV screen. Of course, I am pleased.

TUKEY. Nice! Nice!

NELLY. Thanks, I already tightly eaten.

PAULINE. You left a half.

NELLY. Give it to cats. They're here in the yard. Beauties. I love animals. They are direct. Let pussycats will enjoy.

PAULINE. As you wish.

NELLY. And I go to the toilet. (She leaves. We hear her singing the melody of "Prelude", and then - couplets of the bullfighter from Georges Bizet's opera "Carmen." Pauline quickly and skillfully cleans the room. Nellie appears, sipping brandy from the bottle.) So. It is time just now to go to the bathroom. Pauline, come rub my back? I can myself in front, but back I can not. Do You not shocking that you're on this, I'm sorry, not respect work here in Israel?

PAULINE. Yes, this isn't a work I wanted. But at school, I have no place, because it is necessary be very familiar with Hebrew. Of course, I'll process your back. But on a full stomach to go to the bathroom is harmful. Don't you know? Give your stomach to work a little with your breakfast.

NELLYy. You're a doctor? It's incredible. And with such knowledge You need to rub back of the old woman!

PAULINE. All of works is honorable. So I said to my disciples.

Nelly. Honor? All work? Well, no, sorry!

PAULINE. How I loved my job!

TUKEY. You're well done!

PAULINE. Lord! He correctly says in Russian! He understands! Strange Bird ...

TUKEY. It's true! It's true! Strange! Oh, very strange!

PAULINE. How was I enjoy every meeting with my class! How I loved those eyes, not tired of life blows! How was I glad to hear from high school teachers that my children are perfectly prepared to start high school!

NELLY. Why the devil you do not learn Hebrew in advance to teach the children here, and not wash alien asses?

TUKEY. It's true! It's true!

Pauline is crying, still cleaning.

NELLY (out and then screams from the bathroom.) Pauline, my dear, rub my back!

PAULINE. I'm coming.

She leaves. Her cries and groaning are heard from the bathroom.

VOICE FROM TV. Pass ... (crackle, silence, again crackling) ... and three passengers of the car. Fortunately, there were no casualties. Police is looking for ... (again crack squish, snatches of words that can not be understood) ... and promised (crack) ... seventy-five hundredths.

TV silent. Nelly in a bathrobe and a towel turban and Pauline are appeared.

NELLY. Well, not a magician is this TV?

PAULINE. I just gasped, seeing your body: white, soft, without a single wart or pimple.

NELLY. Yes, it is. And my feet?

PAULINE. This is a miracle. They are slender, like of a young girl, no varicose, as women your age, slim figure. Amazing!

TUKEY. Surprising. Surprising.

NELLY (with a chuckle). Amazed? Yes, my body is still fine. Thanks to my dad. He was a doctor. And what kind of doctor! Now there are none. When I was a baby, I was fed on a schedule and with those products that are needed for good health and proper development.

PAULINE. Well have you eaten at school? I remember the school cafeteria and dining rooms. It was ... uh ... not quite what we need.

NELLY. Daddy came to the big break and fed me in his car right from thermoses: lunch and hot tea.

PAULINE. At that time, few people had cars, I think. It is strange that a simple doctor ...

NELLY. Nothing strange. Dad was the chief doctor of the sanatorium's Commissariat. My mother did not work, she was a housewife. Ah, but what do you know about those times! My mom cooked dinner at home, and Dad would take them to work in thermoses and brought to school at the right time.

PAULINE. And so all the school years? This is not the case, school children must be on equal terms. In my class, it ...

NELLY. Do not preach to me, please. I'm not a student of the fourth class. You are you just jealous of my life. Alas, dear teacher, so I was well short. My poor mother died when I was in sixth grade. After the damn injection she died.

PAULINE. How is it after the injection?

NELLY. My mom got sick with pneumonia. The nurse gave her penicillin, but asked not how mom reacts to it. And - shock! And - death! Instantly! Dad loved Mom crazy. She was beautiful, smart, with a golden character. He was so

worried that I was afraid for him!

PAULINE. Yes, it's awful - losing a loved one! Especially in those early years ....

NELLY. I will not let him take the maid – I myself began to clean the house, cook, do laundry. His grief, I think, by this was facilitated. And, as before, I was an excellent student in school.

PAULINE. Wow! I thought you are kid-glove.

NELLY. Offend. And then came a new trouble. I was, like mommy, beautiful, and had the bad-flirty. No idea that it is dangerous.

PAULINE. Why? Men like this.

NELLY. That's it. Like. And pushing for meanness. I was raped by a classmate. He invited me to listen to music, fashion, said that his mother would be home. Mom, of course, was not at home. She was on duty somewhere, after every music we drank wine, and he easily raped me.

PAULINE. You did not cry, did not resist, did You?

NELLY. I was drunk because I drank for the first time in my life. In addition, I liked this classmate. And when he raped me, I suddenly realized that this is nice. (He laughs.) And then ... Then I went crazy with fear get pregnant. Daddy knew that there was some wrong with me, and got what I told him everything. He shot my rapist. Straight in the classroom. Prior to that he called my aunt of Astrakhan by telegram, and when she arrived, he hanged himself in prison. (Crying). It broke my daddy. I became an orphan.

Silence. Nelly sobs. Pauline sits down, stroking her back.

PAULINE. Poor thing. I imagine how terribly You worried. But you are not to blame. It's not because of your coquetry. The point of meanness is the boy. In the same time I sorry for him also. He have not lived - and died already ...

TUKEY. Sorry for all! Sorry for all!

NELLY. Aunt took me to her. There I graduated ten classes. Somehow I graduated. Because spree. I liked play boys off each other, then I walked around with one, then – with another. So it was up until one of them stabbed the other to death. It was in my presence! It was so awful!

TURKEY. Awful! Awful!

NELLY. I got into a mental hospital. Aunt took me not soon. According to her advice I went to the School of Music, where her husband taught sol-fa, harmony, polyphony and other music theory. He got me in the vocal faculty.

POLINA (still cleaning). So You showed a voice? It's a blessing! In my class somehow was found out the boy had an amazing voice. Like Robertino Loretto. But the teacher of singing spoiled the voice. He tore his voice at the lessons. I was so worried!

NELLY. No, as to me, there was found nothing. Just in the vocal faculty it was easier to pass examinations. But the teacher was very good, he was able to put my voice. And fell in love with me, like a madman. He wanted to marry me, but why should I? He was over fifty, and I - eighteen. Our romance was condemned by all of my teachers, my lover was banished, and I went to the East, sang in an operetta, in the choir.

POLINE. You only sang in the choir? Or solo, too?

NELLY. No, I have no voice to sing a heroine, but I fell in love in these people!

PAULINE. Did You continue to flirt, fornicate and play off men?

NELLY. You are an insufferable hypocrite! I have told you how I worried because of the murder! No, I never did that. I felt sorry for all those who loved me passionately. And my bed did not have time to cool off from the warm love of my choices.

PAULINE. You are honest. But were You not sick of all this?

TUKEY. Not sick! Not sick!

NILLY. You are right. And you're right, Tookie, my friend, I eventually got bored. And I got married to a division commander. Oh, my dear teacher, what it was a man! Hero! Beautiful! Tall, strong. Brunette with blue eyes and thick black eyebrows and black mighty mustache! And how he loved me! And I - him! (Sipping from the bottle). But he was terribly jealous. As the Moor Othello.

TUKEY. Othello! Othello! The Moor has done his job!

PAULINE. What a parrot? I'm scared. But Your husband clearly not strangled you, since you have lived up to those years and I have to lather your back!

NELLY. He would have strangled, but did not: the war began, and he went to the front. (Pauline continues cleaning). You have not bothered to listen to me? Somehow, I open up to you like to no one before. Inspire some confidence. Though you are a prude. So do not you tired of listening to the old woman?

PAULINE. No, really, I do not get bored! I was even interested. With me there was not something like this. And I'm not a prude. I'm just different. Do you understand?

NELLY. My husband was killed in July of the forty-first. Killed-in-battle notice came at once. And then I went to medical school, so that after the first course to go to the front. As a tactical medic. To the front line.

PAULINE. Oh-oh-oh! You are brave. You was never hurt?

Nelly. I did not get to the front. Because these bastards expelled me from the institute.

PAULINE. For what?

NILLY. I had an attack of appendicitis. The surgeon saw my body - and flamed passion. (He laughs.) He wanted to leave her family. His wife complained - staged Komsomol court ruled me out of the Komsomol and expelled from the institute. The bastards.

PAULINE. You should not have contact with a married man. It is not good. On someone else's misfortune You can not build your happiness.

NELLY. I did not want someone else's misfortune to build my happiness. I temporarily became his girlfriend in return for jewelry work on my tummy. Scar - like thread. You saw.

PAULINE. But you also have broken your biography because of... uh ... of your thanks.

NELLY. Not at all!

TUKEY. Not at all! Not at all!

NELLY. I have lived an interesting life. I had six husbands. And far more than a few dozens lovers. I worked in the theater, and it is too a happiness. (Laughs). Thank to Komsomol. I was even happy when parted with the Young Communist League, and with the surgeon. Again I came to the theater, went to the front with concert brigades. And in the end won the award.

PAULINE. An order?

NELLY. It was better, much better! Appeared in my life Monya. Moses Davidovich. He was a security officer, fought in Spain, was in Iran as a spy. That is, a person of the mysterious and romantic. He was great in bed, very strong. Such strength in a man I did not know either before him or after him. But our happiness was short ...

PAULINE. You leave him? Or is it - he?

NELLY. Nonsense. I would not have left. And he did not have traded for another. No, my poor Monia! With his radio operator he was sent to the rear of fascists, and they both did not come back from there. Suspected that they were captured, even - that they had sold to the Nazis. I was arrested and interrogated, but I did not know anything. I myself asked my tormentors, where my husband is.

PAULINE. You were sent to the camp?

NELLY. No, thankfully, they did not have time to post. It turned out that Monya and radio operator were killed when a mission. Died as heroes. I was immediately released.



PAULINE. Did not apologize to you?

NELLY. What are you? You know, I can not forget this terrible Lubyanka, but I was there for only three months. They used foul language, abused and beat! Yes, the beat me! For days they not allowed me to sleep. I'm surprised that not raped. As a woman I was attractive to tormentors. I'm not flirting, I really was surprised.

PAULINE. Maybe they were not allowed by some kind of instruction.

NELLY. What are you talking about? Which of instructions? They mocked the people they wanted. I guess they were impotent. Ha-ha-ha! Butchers impotent!

TUKEY. Ha-ha-ha, impotent! Impotent!

PAULINE. He understands. He understands. I am really afraid of this parrot. Go on, Nellie. You already named the three men out of six. Not tired?

Nelly. And you really interested?

PAULINE. Yes, the first time I hear such a frank narrative. Frankly, I had no idea that it happens in life, not in the movies or in books. I used to know only one man, and it was my husband. So brought my parents. I am even afraid of the first proximity, when I got married! Three days later he tried to persuade me. Naive fool was I.

TUKEY. Fool! Naive fool!

NELLY. My fourth husband was a long, skinny and weak, but he played the accordion amazing. Laureate. I heard it at the concert and was delighted. And he noticed me from the scene. But as a man he did not suit me.

PAULINE. You kicked him out?

NELLY (choking with laughter. Swallows of brandy bottles, still laughing.) Exactly. Kicked. We, however, dispersed peacefully. But first, it is from this weakling man I became pregnant and gave birth to my only daughter, the beautiful Svetlana. There's a photo, look. (Hands to Pauline the picture. Pauline carefully examines it.) Well, what do you think?

PAULINE (peering). Intelligent eyes. Beauty. And the figure is ... yours.

NELLY. She is the chair at the university. In the States. Her husband is also a scientist. Native American. They are happy.

PAULINE. Happy for you - and for your daughter. But go on. Your fifth husband? You are not tired to talk?

NELLY. (Laughs drinking of brandy bottle, lights). The fifth was a teacher. Geographer.

PAULINE. Look, Nelly. Why are you not in the registry office refused to register? As you manage to register, convergent-divergent and divorce? ...

NELLY. We were not registered. With anyone. What's the difference? Pathetic stamp in the passport. Yes. So. There were a couple of months living with geographer - boring and tedious. Such nerds like this nudnik, I have not met.

How his disciples suffered? I threw him out, and he went to a village. The more I have not met him. Yes, do finish up cleaning! Here is clean already! No one else I have for this money did not clean so the entire apartment. You are a Prince Myshkin.

PAULINE. This is a censure? Or praise?

TUKEY. Praise, praise.

PAULINE. Thank you. And you, Nelly, and you, Tookie.

TUKEY. Tookie is good. And you are good also.

NELLY. Three years ago, a letter arrived from Marik. We have had intercourse once. Not for long, however, two or three times. I do not remember exactly. I've forgotten it, and he remembered all his life, so I did delight - and he found me. Sveta went to the United States with her husband, an American. I was bored one. I wanted something permanent in my old age. So when I read his romantic letter, I was happy and invited Marik to Israel.

PAULINE. He immediately came?

NELLY. Yes, he flew on the wings of love. Rather, on the wings of El Al. And it was found that he is impotent. (Nellie laughed - long, to tears.) I bought him Viagra. He read the instructions, took Viagra, we had formed. (Again, laughing to tears.) In general, "ER" was late. The poor fellow died. He died like a man: in bed with a woman.

PAULINE. How can you laugh? This is not funny, Nellie.

NELLY. I know, but I can not help it. Well, enough about me. You saw me, clearly. It is right? Despise me? Hate? Feel disgusted? Admit it! Confess!

TUKEY. Own up, otherwise it will be worse!

Nellie and Pauline laugh Tookie laughs loudly.

NELLY. On my Tookie, influence severe telefilms. Of thriller sorts. So tell me honestly, Pauline, how do you react to me as well?

PAULINE. Surprisingly, I like you, even though at first I was dumbfounded. You know, you're good. Yes, you're good. Although to live, like you, I never could.

NELLY. You are also not a prude, as I thought at first. But let's not get distracted. I have laid out. Let's find out about you.

PAULINE. I was born in Kiev in a large family. My father worked as a mechanic, a boilermaker at the factory, his mother, like yours, was a housewife. Father's cousin, Aunt Leah, taught at the conservatory. Children she hadn't, and that's taught me music. Though I loved the piano, I at sixteen has already started work.

TUKEY. To work! To work! To work is healthy! It is necessary to work good!

NELLY. You worked as a pianist, of course?

PAULINE. Where is there? Nurse - in hospital. Aunt Leah continued to teach me to go to the conservatory, but I got married very early.

NELLY. What a mistake! For love, I hope?

PAULINE. Yes. He was a physician in the department where I worked. Of course, not the main doctor, like your father. Private medical doctor. He was ten years older. My parents thought that it was good because he would treat me gently, as I just younger, and I would respect him, since he is older. They liked him.

NELLY. Does it matter?

PAULINE. It is very important. If parents do not agree, then ...

TUKEY. Oh-oh-oh! (Laughs). Parents, parents!

PAULINE. My husband insisted that I went to school, had to trade.

NELLY. It could help you to become a doctor. Or at least a paramedic.

PAULINE. Yes. He wanted to, but my childhood dream was to teach children, so, even though in absentia, but graduated from the teacher training college. Already in the second year I had left the hospital, took the class - and worked all my life in elementary school. I taught the children from the first to the fourth grade. Get used to it, as to my family. Then - a new class. And another four years. As if you have a new baby.

NELLY. But there were also bullies, stupid? Did You love them too, they were sorry you too?

PAULINE. You are not a teacher, you do not understand what is the child a student. We must find a way to him, the way to find his heart right. The children understand all not worse than we adults. They just do not see the future as adults. They live in the present. If they are interested in the school, they love it. If they believe the teacher, they are not bullies.

NELLY. And the collective plays a role, of course. Yes? So taught us the Soviet regime?

PAULINE. This is true. For the teacher it is important to create a team in the classroom. Team is a power. You know, even the most desperate bully considered the collective opinion, don't You know?

NELLY. I do not believe in the team. I believe in the crowd, it can be sent in either direction. But let us leave the team. And with You became dumbasses smarter?

PAULINE. I have only once had a student-nerd. Here I was powerless. Here doctors intervened. A stupid, stupid at all I have not met. Of course, there are more capable and less capable in every subject. There are very quick learners. There is wunderkind. Yes. And is necessary to work so that everyone would interested in the lesson. This is not easy. But I was able to do. However, a lecture on pedagogy I should not start. You'll have to excuse me.

NELLY. No, no, this is very interesting - what you preach. I hope in the future we will talk about it many times. When I

was in the first grade and in the second one I had a teacher just that, like you, most intelligent. Her eyes were like yours. And personally, your life is also stored properly?

PAULINE. Yes. We lived together. I respected my man, and he respected me. I gave birth to three children and brought them with my husband. That's it.

NELLY. You have been faithful to Your husband all Your life? So, was it? Or not? Confess.

PAULINE. All my life I have been faithful to him. Even in my thoughts did not change. He was eager to Israel. And we came. But before it we had suffered! You know what is it to sit in denial? To get to the camp for nothing and again - in denial ... All we endured. Husband knew Hebrew, he immediately went to work in the specialty. We took in the bank "Hapoalim" mashkanta, bought an apartment in installments. To pay, my husband in addition to the main work, worked, where and how he could. I also worked a lot. I washed madregot (steps, Hebrew. AG) and swept yards, worked as metapelet. Of course, I was longing and yearning for the teaching job. There is nothing more beautiful than my profession!

NELLY. You are just great! Your husband - and especially yourself.

TUKEY. Well done! Fact!

PAULINE. We were happy to live in our historic homeland. Children grew up, they could easily fit into the life of Israel. But last year, my husband suffered a flu on his feet, and after that - stroke, and he was gone. And I was alone ...

NELLY. Please accept my condolences. Sincerely. I know for myself, what it is to be loneliness.

PAULINE. Thank you. My children and grandchildren live in Haifa, Rehovot and Rishon Lezion. They call every day. If necessary, immediately one of them arrives. Special events in my life was not, as you see. It was boring to listen to?

TUKEY. Boring! Boring!

NELLY. Tookie, you're wrong. Let's suppose you was faithful to your husband. But there were also at least some thought or desire, because sometimes you liked any man othe? A? Say! Honestly!

TUKEY. Honestly! Honestly! Honestly!

PAULINE. I have quite honestly said you and your parrot that I was faithful to my husband even in my thoughts. Although some men I liked: for the mind, talent, honesty, courage.

TUKEY. Honestly! Honestly!

PAULINE. Honestly? It was ... one day ... In our school got a new head teacher. Estonian by nationality. Blonde, blue eyes, broad shoulders, growth - basketball. Clever. He came to my lesson, then Andrei Petrovich gave an analysis of this lesson ...

NELLY. Strange name and patronymic for Estonians.

PAULINE. I heard a friend of his called him Andres or Andreas. Probably sounded different and patronymic in Estonian. But all the teachers called him Andrei Petrovich. So, the analysis of my lesson he did just brilliant. Meanwhile he praised my system of development the children. Then there were the lessons and analysis. I was full of admiration for the director of studies.

NELLY. At last!

TUKEY. At last! At last!

PAULINE. Not at all! Andrei Petrovich was married. His wife worked in any institution. I've never seen her before. And he ... He became increasingly come to my classes. He said he wanted to write about my experience in the magazine. But I knew, I felt not only for that he came. And I noticed that I have become more closely monitor my appearance. I was scared. I already told you that I was brought home ...

NELLY. Well, well, interesting!

TUKEY. Interesting! Interesting!

PAULINE. At that time in our school classes were in two shifts. At tye second shift studied my fourth class. Once I was on duty teacher, I was awaiting for end of the shift, and in the meantime checking notebooks. He came in, asked something. I got up, and he did not say a word, he kissed me.

NELLY. A real man!

PAULINE. I was confused at first, and then pushed him away, crying, and said that nothing between us can not be, since he's married, I'm married, and our children should not suffer because of us.

NELLY. In fact, you confessed Your love for him.

PAULINE. No, I did not love him, but admired. I told Andrei Petrovich, that I loved my husband and will never betray my husband. He paused, hesitated - and left without saying a word. Never again did he try to kiss me, and I ... when I remembered that kiss, I could not look to my husband eyes. Although I had not responded to the kiss.

NELLY. You amaze me, you like cave woman! You go through life without knowing the other man! This is a sin! I had not one man, whom I did not even once betray. And I believe in one hundred percent, that neither of my husband was faithful. Such is the life!

TUKEY. Such is the life! Such is the life!

PAULINE. What a horror! This Tookie is an intelligent bird, I'm afraid of him. He will divulge our conversation!

NELLY. You're right, he's smart, and that's why he did not become loose. I did a lot of talking with him. And he betrayed me any time. He even knows the names of all my lovers, though I myself am confused already. Do you want to make sure? Tukey, tell your mother how much she had a lover named Anatoly? Tell me, my good!

TUKEY. With strangers must not! Tookie is clever!

Nelly laughs Pauline wrings her hands. The doorbell rings. Pauline admits a man in working clothes.

MAN IN WORK CLOTHES. Hi, Nellie. Have You guests? I will not interfere. I then.

NELLY. Wait, my television has gone haywire. Fix it. And this woman is not a guest. This is my new metapelet, a pleasant woman. She also wants to watch TV with me.

MAN IN WORK CLOTHES. Would you buy yourself a new one. I am tired to fix this antiquity.

NELLY. (to Pauline) Every day he comes to me to fix the TV. Money did not takes. He is a "Timurovets" (a member of "Timur team" – a group of Soviet pioneer-children – A.G.)

MAN IN WORK CLOTHES. It is not hard on the way to my apartment to look for you. And your remote spoils often than TV (works with the remote and the TV). It is clear, now I establish.

VOICE OF TV ANNOUNCER. ... And such examples are many. Even in the small towns of Israel ...

NELLY. Thank you, dear neighbor. Off, please. We're conducting an interesting conversation.

MAN IN WORK CLOTHES. Nothing more is needed? All works?

NELLY. Thank you. All right. (The man in working clothes is marking time for a while, waving his hand - and out). How did You like the man?

PAULINE. In no way.

NELLY. Did You not look at him?

PAULINE. I did not look at him in general.

NELLY. Vain. This is my current lover.

PAULINE. Wha-at? He? This repairman?

NELLY. What You have heard. There, in Russia, he was the chief engineer, and here he is an electrician. I'm with him for two years. Yes, yes. Of course, it is a mystery for his wife. He does me a TV repairs. And - for free. And from time to time he has sex with me. He gets a pleasure. And I also enjoy him. He is a strong man.

PAULINE. But he's half your age!

NELLY. Yet have You looked at him? This is what is valuable that he is younger. Why do I need an old man? He can?

TUKEY. With strangers - not!

NELLOY. She is a teacher, she did not hurt.

TUKEY. With strangers - not!

NELLY. Tell me, you did not spare even once that you had not known at least one man, but your respected husband? (Pauline is silent.) I ask, have you ever regretted that there were only one man? (Pauline fiercely silent). Sorry, I understand.

PAULINE. What do you mean? (Sits down). Yes, I am, right now, listening to you, for the first time almost did regret that I knew only one man. But my time is gone. As I lived as I could. Now, I only think of the happiness of my three children and my two young grandchildren.

NELLY. But you are not just from me, but heard from other women about their sex life, I'm sure! And their adultery. And you have compared! And ...

PAULINE. Yes, I've heard many revelations from other women. And their stories gave me to understand that my beloved husband was not one of the best in this area. But he was so smart, so caring, so gentle! He was so genuinely interested in my work, and gave me such a friendly advices! He helped me through the house! I therefore loved and respected him.

NELLY. An ideal, an ideal. An ideal husband, an ideal wife. An ideal marriage.

TUKEY. Ideal! Ha-ha-ha, ideal! Ha-ha-ha!

PAULINE. Fool!

TUKEY. You yourself fool, ha, ha, ha.

PAULINE. Sorry, Tukey, broke accidentally.

TUKEY. That's right.

PAULINE. It's horrible, Nelly. Your unnaturally clever parrot scares me.

NELLY. No wonder that in Russia came up with the word "parrot". That is "scare, more than once scare anyone." Probably not all laughed, someone was frightened. But we digress from your husband. Were both of You not tired of each other over the years?

PAULINE. That you, our intimacy was perfect for me and for him, we could always catch the mood of each other, but ... but ...

NELLY. Go ahead, my friend!

PAULINE. You see, when I wanted to ... well, after the first time again ... I'm embarrassed to say ... Sometimes the whole week we did not, and I really wanted to close! After all, I loved him! But I always looked forward to his initiatives.

NELLY. A week with nothing? So, he had another woman! Or other women. Have you ever noticed any signs of his infidelity?

PAULINE. What?

Nelly. Are you not watch TV? Many detective films are shown. It is possible to become a magistrate yourself. Well, the woman's hair on the shirt, the smell of strange perfume, lipstick on his cheek or something.

PAULINE. Yes, I understand. I had no such noticed. However, once a nurse of his hospital told me that the wife of this man should be careful. That I was blind. What ...

NELLY. And specifically - of whom she said?

PAULINE. Specifically - about anybody. But she so was looking at me ... As for the disabled ... I got angry and told her that she climbs into other people's domestic proceedings.

TUKEY. Bravo, bravo!

PAULINE. He understands!

NELLY. Calm down, he has the reflexes to certain expressions. When they say "not in the your business" – that is a sign of anger. And Tookie accustomed to the angry tone in certain expressions to react with "Bravo" to get something good to eat.

TUKEY. Right, Nelly. Tookie likes tasty.

PAULINE. Have you heard? Do not comfort me, your Tukey is a sorcerer. It is a very strange bird.

TUKEY. Not at all!

PAULINE. That's it! Again! Have you heard?

NELLY. He simply reacted to the tone. But I assure you, he does not understand the meaning of our conversation. Although, of course, Tukey is a smart bird.

TUKEY. Tookie - smart bird, smart bird!

NELLY. Well, convinced? He repeated my words. Please go on, I'm listening to you.

PAULINE. Slander of the nurse still hold of me, and I was wrong to trust my husband, as before. And once I found a condom in his pocket.

NELLY. Wow! At home, he did not use it?

PAULINE. The fact of the matter is that not. But he said that someone, apparently, decided to play a trick on us, and put this stuff in his pocket. I believe, because he seemed sincere.

NELLY. This was the only case?

Pauline. No. I do not want to list all the cases, but each time it turned out that my husband was not to blame.

NELLY. And he was very jealous of you, he used to trust you?

PAULINE. He trusted me. I once asked him why he believed me, because I could be unfaithful to him when he was in a business trip or when I was without him at the resort. I treated my sciatica in the south. Sometimes I went with my husband, and sometimes I was alone. And he replied: "If it would happen, I should seen this in your eyes."



NELLY. What a nonsense. How he was able to see?

PAULINE. I do not know. But I believed him, because I knew that after the betrayal I would not have to face the one who had done so much for me.

NELLY. Okay, that's enough. Calm down, dear! Your conscience is clear!

PAULINE. I wish! Nellie, I have finished my business. Maybe you let me go earlier? I'm worked as it should. And I still have time (looks at watch) - forty minutes.

NELLY. I agree. But first let us prepare a fresh soup. You only will clean vegetables and put them in a pot, and I'll make it myself.

PAULINE. All right. Now.

She goes to the kitchen.

NELLY. Tookie, do you like her?

TUKEY. Of course, of course, of course!

NELLY. I - too.

The man in work clothes comes.

MAN IN WORK CLOTHES. Well, we can talk to? Gone already?

NELLY. No, she's in the kitchen. Be patient, she is now gone. Bready brandy.

She hands the guest the bottle.

MAN IN WORK CLOTHES. Thank you, I do not. I'll go to the kitchen, I'll try to help her. Do you mind?

NELLY. She is a pretty women and younger than me. But you was going to talk to me. But not with her. Carried away by her, it's right? At first sight?

MAN IN WORK CLOTHES. No, I got not carried away. But suddenly she need help.

NELLY. It will not help you anything, profligate, she is strictly. Very much so.

MAN IN WORK CLOTHES. I still try, if you let.

NELLY. Come on. An assistant! You will get a slap. I warned.

MAN IN WORK CLOTHES. You are beauty, Nellie. You're a woman of women.

He goes to the kitchen. Silence. Nellie turns on the TV. Rushes out loud pop music.

NELLY. (To Tookie) Do you think he will succeed there, in the kitchen with this unfortunate touchy? (Appears the man in working clothes, rubbing his cheek.) It did not work, my friend? Got in the face? I warned you.

MAN IN WORK CLOTHES. Strange she is, first let me put my hand on her shoulder, to the waist. When touched her chest, she suddenly slapped me across the face. And then she apologized for it. She almost started to cry even. Strange.

TUKEY. Strange! Strange! Very strange!

Pauline goes out of the kitchen.

PAULINE. (To Nelly). Soup is cooked. Do not forget to watch. (To the man in working clothes). Excuse me, please. I did not mean that. So it has happened. Conditioned reflex.

MAN IN WORK CLOTHES. Oh well, I have got what deserved. I'll go to the supersol (shufersal - grocery chain in Israel. AG). I'm going for dairy products.

NELLY. No, wait, my friend, do not go. There is something to talk about. Pauline, he sincerely wanted to help you, a single woman. Not to boil soup, but to help as the man. And I advise you to think about.

PAULINE. Thank you, (after a pause) I ... I ... I will think.

NELLY. Have You heard, my friend? She thinks. So do not lose the hope.

MAN IN WORK CLOTHES. No, it's pretty rude to refuse - and I knew it.

PAULINE. Do not be mad at me, I did not want to, so just work out. And I really have to think. A lot. My day is some bizarre discoveries and mysteries. I am quite confused, really.

MAN IN WORK CLOTHES. I'd better go. I also have a lot to think about.

He leaves. Nelly laughed.

PAULINE. You know, now that I upset? I remembered how my husband before he died he asked me if I betrayed him. And as I said to him meanly (crying) that did not ... but I regret it ... because ... my time has been lost ... and ... I do not know how I would have another ... Is not that hastened his departure from life? It is such a fault!

Nelly. Do not continue. I am not priest- and you're not on the confession. And all is not lost.

TUKEY. Ah-ah-ah! Missed! Ah-ah-ah!

Pauline. How I regret those my words. (Pause). Nelly! Are you really able to share this ... your friend ... with another woman?

NELLY. Do You not believe? Want You still to have sex with this guy?

PAULINE. I'm asking for a reason, I do not need him. I already do not need anyone. I want to understand you. You surprised me today. And Tookie - too. I'm sorry.

NELLY (gets up from his chair, goes to Pauline, puts his hands on her shoulders). Dear Pauline, I ... I ... Which gave me ... Oh you! (Walks away a couple of steps and then apply). Never in my life have I wanted to share a man with anyone other than his lawful wife. But today I found the woman I would have given, not only now but in the days of my youth, any man - and without regret, even with joy. This woman are you.

TUKEY. Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes!

The drop-curtain drops to these "YES".