

GOD OF TICKLING

Dramatic photosession in 2 acts

Participants of the photo session:

Elias, about 35 y.o.

Eve, about 30 y.o.

Young guest worker, later Tim, 21 y.o.

Elias' mother, about 50 y.o.

Little girl, about 5 y.o.

Act 1. NEGATIVES

1. Little Red Riding Hood

Elias room. Spacious like a studio. It has a professional lighting fixture, a mattress on which the puppy sleeps, pillows scattered on the floor instead of chairs, a basket, a pile of clothes in the corner, and large photographs on the walls with distorted and blurry faces.

Eva, dressed as Little Red Riding Hood, but without a hat, pulls on red tights. Elias in shorts and a jacket photographs Eva.

Eve. You are a creature. Bastard. *(Almost falls down.)* I drove through the whole city with this stupid hat ... where is it? ..

Elias. Yes! More anger! *(Photographs).*

Eve. With this hat... to hear that I have breasts like a squirrel. Where is it?

Elias. Get angry! Rage! *(Photographs).*

Eve. Do not use my grief for the sake of money ... Where is the hat? *(Tangled in tights).* He doesn't like my breasts!

Elias. And not only yours. All of you are blurry for me. *(Photographs).* I don't recognize anyone. All of you are like fish, blacks, snowflakes. *(Photographs).* I'm not interested in either your faces or breasts.

Eve. What do you understand about them?

Elias. Nothing.

Eve. And you take pictures! All men understand, but he does not understand. Have you ever seen Raphael's paintings? Leonardo? *(Finally pulls on tights.)*

Elias. It's vague. *(Photographs).*

Eve. Remember your mother's breast!

Elias. I am an artificial.

Eve. You are a scoundrel! *(Looks for a hat behind the mattress).* You've been nothing since birth...

Elias. Well done! *(Photographs).*

Eve. And I contacted him, what a fool I am...

Elias. Idiot!

Eve. Sick. *(Finds a hat, puts it on).*

Elias. Red Riding Hood! *(Photographs).* Now tell me something scary, with blood. *(Takes a lot of pictures).*

Eve. You know? Bad boys like you are punished by evil sorceresses already as children. *(Snapshot).* They come to their cradles and wish them a daring talent *(photo)*, unappreciated

beauty (*photo*), a traumatized soul (*photo*), powerful and brief love (*photo*), deprive them of their mother's milk (*photo*) and give them a long sleep (*photo*).

Elias. Fine. That's all for today. (*Falls on the mattress.*) All that's left now is sleep.

Eve. May Gray Wolf eat you.

Elias. Yes, take your wolf cub. (*Wakes up a puppy*). You are wonderful. I haven't photographed women in such for a long time. With such delight.

Eve. But you didn't shoot a woman. (*She adjusts her hat and costume.*) Rather a fabulous tormented girl. (*Takes the puppy*). You don't see me.

Elias. You are not alone. I don't see anyone. I wanna drink. Have you brought?

Eve. Pictures first.

Elias. Did I let you down? Give me a bottle.

Eve. Only if you fulfill one...

Elias. No!

Eve. ...my wish.

Elias. No-o-o.

Eve. Yes.

Elias. Let me take a sip. (*Pause*). What? What do you want?

Eve. I baked pies...

Elias. So silly.

Eve. You should take them...

Elias. Should not.

Eve. You haven't been there for a year. Do not interrupt. You can't live in a dark forest all the time. Go there. You may feel better or worse, but you should not be afraid to be ...

Elias. I'm not afraid of anything. I've already had all the scary things. I don't care now. And you know it very well. When one doesn't care...

Eve. Either you promise...

Elias. ... then one is completely fearless.

Eve. ..tomorrow you go to his cemetery, or I'm leaving with the bottle now. (*Picks up a basket.*)

Elias. Witch! Cruel witch! I hate you.

Eve turns and walks.

Elias. I will go to him.

Eve puts the basket on the floor.

Elias. You have the most disgusting breasts.

Eva leaves.

Elias. You will never have a son!

2. Sinbad the Sailor

Cemetery wall with niches for vessels with ashes. On the left side, Elias is holding the basket and eating pies. On the right side, a young migrant worker in a soiled overall is painting the forged fence of one of the niches.

Elias (*to dust*). Sorry. I really wanted to eat. (*With a full mouth*). There is no money yet. Eva will pay for the pictures soon. Tasty. (*chewing*). Total bullshit. I have to say you something, right? Instead I'm eating your pies. (*chewing*). Bullshit... Eve's baked them for you. Do you hear? But how can you hear without ears? You are cremated. (*Looks around*). Awful. Why do you need there pies? What will you do with them? You don't have any teeth either. Everything was burned. (*Chokes on pies.*) Only dust. (*Takes out a half-filled bottle of whiskey from the basket, drinks right from the bottle*). You know anyway how I am without you this year ... To you. (*Drinks from the bottle, takes out a pie and bites it*). So tasty. I haven't cooked anything in a year. Well you know. (*To a young guest worker*). Hey! Would you like a drink? (*The young guest worker does not respond*). Doesn't want to. And I don't want anything. This is probably the best

thing I can do for you. Want nothing after you. I live by chance, I earn by chance, I eat by chance... I drink by chance... I sleep by chance... Do you want me to beat that guy by chance? Or feed him? He is nobody, just like you. Only dust. (*To a guest worker*). Hey! Hey!
The guest worker does not respond. Elias comes up to him, abruptly turns his shoulders to him and freezes.

Guest worker. What?

Elias. What?

Guest worker. What happened to you?

Elias. What are you...

Guest worker. Which?

Elias. All in paint.

Guest worker. Yes? Got dirty?

Elias. All. I don't even understand your face.

Guest worker. Speak slower. I do not understand well.

Elias. Are you an immigrant?

Guest worker. What?

Elias. Newcomer?

Guest worker. Yes. You speak slowly and clearly. Then I will understand you.

Elias. Do you understand?

Guest worker. I understand.

Elias. Unlikely.

Guest worker. What do you want?

Elias. Me? .. Yes ... This ... Will you drink?

Guest worker. I used to drink before.

Elias. So what?

Guest worker. No more interesting.

Elias. It's always interesting.

Guest worker. It can't always be interesting. Only once. I already drank. Do not want anymore.

Elias. Do you always do everything once?

Guest worker. Please repeat.

Elias (*loudly and drawling*). You always...

Guest worker. Not always". I don't like this word.

Elias (*stretching the word*). Good.

Guest worker. You can speak faster. The main thing is to be clear.

Elias. You are deaf?

Guest worker. Hard of hearing.

Elias. Clear. Do you only do everything once?

Guest worker. Yes.

Elias. Why?

Guest worker. That's what my God wants.

Elias. Wow! (*Takes a big sip from the bottle.*) Shall we dance?

Guest worker. (*laughs*). No.

Elias. Why?

Guest worker. Are there girls here?

Elias. And this is not a white dance.

Guest worker. Which?

Elias. Then black. Still in the cemetery.

Guest worker. I haven't had this yet. Invite.

Elias places the basket on the ground, bows, and holds out his hands to the guest worker. He wraps his arms around Elias's waist.

Elias. Will you lead?

Guest worker. Yes. I don't hear your music.

Elias. What if I make it louder?
Guest worker. No need. This is not appropriate.
They dance.
Elias. I can't understand because of the paint: do you have a happy face or not?
Guest worker. I will not say.
Elias. What is your name?
Guest worker. I don't care.
Elias. Truth? I don't think you're afraid of anything.
Guest worker. Nothing.
Elias. Me too.
Guest worker. It's not the same.
Pause.
Elias. See you?
Guest worker. I've already seen you. The second time is not interesting.
Elias. You think?
Guest worker. Sure. I have to work. Thanks for the dance. Now I will know how to dance with a man. (*Wants to leave.*)
Elias. Wait. (*Holds him tightly.*) Stay like that for a minute.
The guest worker does not see his lips.
Guest worker. What are you saying?
Elias. Just hold on. Shut up.
Guest worker. I'm sorry, what...
Pause. The guest worker pulls away with force, approaches the niche and paints the fence again. Elias takes the basket and leaves.

3. Girl with matches

Elias room. On the walls are new large photographs of Eva as Little Red Riding Hood "breastfeeding" a puppy.
Elias places a light fixture in the center of the room.
Elias' mother brings a little girl into the room.
Mother. Hello. I only borrowed the girl for an hour.
Elias. This is bad. (*Turns on the light fixture, puts the pillows under the light.*)
Mother. Didn't find another one. Your friends may already have such children.
Elias. I do not have friends. Only barren Eve.
Mother. She has an infertile husband.
Elias. And you know everything...
Mother. Hurry up.
Elias. Put the girl on the pillow and take off her T-shirt.
Mother. Do you even have food? (*Seats the girl and undresses her.*)
Elias. As always.
Mother. Not like always, but only a year.
Elias. Stop it.
Mother notices new photos.
Mother. What is this beautiful horror?
Elias. This is Madonna.
Mother. This is?
Elias. Why not. New Christian Reading.
Mother. Have you become a believer again?
Elias. Trying.
Mother. And what does she represent?

Elias. Little Red Riding Hood learned that after the tragic death at the hands of woodcutters, the Gray Wolf had a son. The puppy could starve to death. And then Riding Hood decides to feed him and save him...

Mother. For him to grow up and eat her grandmother?

Elias. And her too. Anything in life can happen.

Mother. We sometimes feed monsters.

Elias. You have never been a breastfeeding mother.

Mother. That's why you didn't become a monster.

Elias. Is it? What dolls did you take?

The mother takes a doll out of her purse. Elias chooses.

Elias. This one. Show the girl how she should properly breastfeed the doll.

Mother. Are you kidding?

Elias. Can't you even show?

Mother. What will it be?

Elias. Another madonna. A girl feeding a doll called "Little Madonna".

Mother. You are a pervert.

Elias. I've been hearing this from you since I was seventeen.

Mother. Do you enjoy it, son?

Elias. I have a name, Katya.

Mother. Call me mom. I'm not your girlfriend.

Elias. And so I wanted to.

They look at each other. The girl strokes the doll's head, sings something.

Mother. Good. *(To Girl)*. Baby, take the doll, put it like this ... well done ... and now to her nipple ... right ...

Girl. It does not hurt?

Mother. No. It's ticklish. She seems to be sleeping. And you sit quietly, do not move, so as not to wake her up. Like this. Sit.

Elias takes pictures.

Elias. Happened. Get ready.

Mother. You shoot so coldly and quickly, as if you were taking x-rays before an operation. *(Dresses the girl.)*

Elias. No more about the hospital.

Mother. Will they pay well?

Elias. Decently.

Mother. I am very glad for you. Although it's strange that you have ideas again. Did someone fertilize you?

Elias. You are very attentive.

Mother. I am your mother.

Elias. But you are careful when you need it.

Mother. Just like you.

Elias. Mum...

Mother. I'm in a hurry. We need to get the girl back to the hospital before lunch.

Elias. Could you do me a parental favor?

Mother. Yes.

Elias *(gives her a piece of paper)*. Give this ad in different newspapers.

Mother *(takes a sheet)*. Tomorrow.

Elias. Today. I'll give you money later.

Mother. No need.

Elias. Come.

Mother. Call.

The mother takes the girl away.

4. Thumbelina

Elias room.

On the walls are new large photographs of a girl who "breastfeeds" a doll.

Elias lies on a mattress, holding the passport in his hands like a catechism.

Eve in a black formal dress looks at the photographs hanging on the wall.

Eve. What is it called?

Elias. "Future Madonna".

Eve. This is good. I hope she has better luck than me.

Elias. Do not worry. Everything else will be...

Eve. It's so easy for men to talk about it, and if only one would impregnate me.

Elias. All claims to the husband.

Eve. It does not help. He doesn't care, just like you. How are you the same. What is straight, what is gay ... It's all the same to everyone. And my organs are gradually atrophying. Guests do not come to them at night, they do not pour white milk, they do not sing lullabies ... Are you my friend? Help. I want a child.

Elias. Found someone to contact.

Eve. Are you sorry? I need a little...

Elias. Why from me?

Eve. Suddenly only you are the one, the only one I need for happiness?

Elias. Eve...

Eve. No expenses, no obligations, just some liquid. A little. May something useful remain after you.

Elias. Not enough of my creepy and scandalous photos? Do you still want the same child?

Eve. Photos - your children?.. Well, yes ... amazing, beautiful, great children. But let there be one small, tiny, living child ... Let it not be beautiful, let it not be smart, let it be worse than others ...

Elias. Just not sick.

Eve. But your...

Elias. This is not for me.

Eve. And for me?

Elias. No.

Eve takes money out of her purse and throws it on the mattress.

Elias. And I won't do it for money either.

Eve. It's for the red hat. I think they will also pay well for a girl with a doll.

Elias. It would be nice. I need funds.

Eve. Really? I also brought a bottle.

Elias. And I don't want this anymore.

Eve. Here is the news. Although... Of course... Why didn't I think... You see, the visit to the cemetery turned out to be beneficial.

Elias. He turned out to be wonderful. Thank you.

Eve. Shove your "thank you" up your sinful ass.

Elias. But but but! If I succeed, maybe I will thank you in a special way.

Eve. What will happen?

Elias hands Eve the passport. She leafs through it.

Eve. Passport? Emigrant? 21 years old ... So beautiful in the photo.

Elias. You can't sleep with a photo.

Eve. Stop. Ltd! Got it...History repeats itself? He looks like Tim. Where did you get it?

Elias. Where could I get it? In the cemetery, of course.

Eve. AND...

Elias. We met.

Eve. AND?

Elias. Don't know. I'm waiting.

Eve. Good verb. You started to wait for something again. I like.

Elias. Me too.

Eve. His name is stupid.

Elias. So it will be different.

Eve. Does age bother you?

Elias. Wouldn't that be embarrassing after all I've had...

Eve. I'm sorry.

Elias. Make you tea? Coffee?

Eve. Do you have tea and coffee in the house again?

Elias. Just in case.

Eve. Then I won't refuse.

Elias. So what will you be?

Eve. Half a cup of tea and a cup of coffee.

Elias. And you are cheeky.

Elias holds out his hand. Eva gives him the passport. Elias leaves the room.

Eva again looks at the photographs of the future Madonna, kneels before them.

Eve. Rejoice, Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with you. Blessed are You among women, and blessed is the fruit of Your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. And give me a child! Amen.

Eve crosses herself, gets up and leaves the room.

5. Massacre of babies

Elias room. The situation is the same. The owner, in shorts and a tight T-shirt, lies on a mattress.

Elias. 49 hours 15 minutes 40 seconds... 49 hours 15 minutes 45 seconds... 49 hours 15 minutes 50 seconds... 49 hours 15 minutes 55 seconds... 49 hours 16 minutes... 49 hours 16 minutes five seconds...

Doorbell.

Elias. Enter boldly!

Pause. Doorbell.

Elias. Pull the rope!

Pause. Doorbell.

Elias. It is he.

Elias runs out into the corridor. Noise is heard. Elias returns to the room with a bruised face.

Elias. Take it easy!

A young guest worker runs after him, catches up with Elias and beats him. Elias falls onto the mattress and covers his face with his hands.

Elias. Take it easy! I'll explain everything!

Guest worker. Hands off! Hands off! I can't see your lips!

Elias removes his hands.

Elias. I didn't mean to... (*He gets hit in the face and covers his face with his hands again*).

Bastard! Fool!

Guest worker. Take your hands off your lips.

Elias. I won't take it until you...

Guest worker. Take it away, I can't hear.

Elias. I won't until you calm down!

Guest worker. Show your lips!

Elias. Fool! (*Opens only lips*). Stop. You don't let me say.

Guest worker. You're a thief!

Elias. Thieves don't advertise in the newspaper.

Guest worker. You did bad.

Elias (*reveals his full face*). You didn't give me a choice.

Guest worker. It's mean.

Elias. But I saw you for the second time.
The worker wants to punch Elias in the face. He defends himself and inadvertently tears the migrant worker's T-shirt.

Guest worker. Fool! Mike broke.

Elias. So what?

Guest worker. Do you know how much it costs?

Elias. Nonsense.

Guest worker. Beast!

Elias. Let's! Kill me for a shirt.

Guest worker. Because of the passport. I could be in trouble.

Elias. Everything ended well. Hit me again and calm down.

Guest worker. You have blood.

Elias. I guess.

Guest worker. Hurt?

Elias. I do not care.

Guest worker. Is there a first aid kit?

Elias. This is good enough. Look in the bathroom, in the closet.
The migrant worker leaves.

Elias. Blood. God! (*Examines his blood-red hands.*) How cool to live! Super!
The guest worker returns with packages.

Guest worker. Yes, you have a whole hospital warehouse there. Why so many?

Elias. It was business. And lazy to throw it away.
A guest worker treats the wounds on Elias' face.

Elias. You're doing great.

Guest worker. I used to do this often.

Elias. What happened?

Guest worker. There was a small war.

Elias. After that, you're bad... hearing problems?

Guest worker. Guessed.
Elias shook his head.

Guest worker. Hurt?

Elias. Well no. It's ticklish.

Guest worker. Do you know how to tickle?

Elias. Didn't understand.

Guest worker. Tickling is a big thing. The transcendent state of man in the world.

Elias. Never thought about it.

Guest worker. All gods after death are reborn as a tickle, and become one God.

Elias. Ticklish?

Guest worker. Yes.

Elias. What are you smoking boy?

Guest worker. You and I are different people.

Elias. Wait. Are you serious?

Guest worker. Certainly. But it's not for you. You are probably too old.

Elias. Not too old to understand you. Let's. Fill me with your ideas.

Guest worker. I do not want it any more.

Elias. And what do you want?

Guest worker. Get my passport.

Elias. I don't even know how to tell you...

Guest worker. What about him?

Elias. Like your shirt.

The guest worker slaps Elias' drugged face, then starts tearing at his shirt.

Guest worker. What did you do with it?

Elias. Let's! Rip to shreds! Ticklish.... *(Laughs)*.

Guest worker. Did you break it?

Elias. No-o-o.

Guest worker. So what's up with him?

Elias. Things are good.

Guest worker. Is he whole?

Elias. Yes.

Gastarbeiter *(stops)*. So why did you say...

Elias. I wanted to see you angry again. And you said that the second time you do nothing. Lost.

The guest worker rips open the remnants of Elias' jersey a couple more times.

Guest worker. It was my best shirt. Most expensive.

Elias. Mine too.

Guest worker. How can I go now?

Elias. And you don't leave.

Guest worker. Here's another.

Elias. You never slept with me. Can you do it once?

Guest worker. Enough tickling for today. Everything. You annoy me. I will go.

Elias gives the guest worker his passport. He carefully checks the pages of the passport and then puts it in his back pocket.

Elias. Do you want me to sew a T-shirt or give you mine?

Guest worker. The most unnecessary.

Elias. Wait.

Elias leaves the room. The guest worker takes off his T-shirt, neatly folds it in four. Then he turns his attention to large photographs. Examines them, scratching the navel area. Elias arrives with a stack of T-shirts.

Elias. Like?

The guest worker does not hear. Elias touches his bare back. The boy shudders and looks at Elias.

Elias. Like?

Guest worker. What?

Elias. Madonna.

Guest worker. I could say that you scared me, but I forgot how to be scared.

Pause.

Elias *(holding out T-shirts)*. Choose, my knight without fear and reproach. And without a second time!

The guest worker carefully sorts out each T-shirt.

Guest worker. Why so many? It's not your size.

Elias. A year ago was mine.

Guest worker. Why did you come to me?

Elias. I want to take a picture of you.

Guest worker. It is forbidden.

Elias. I will share with you the fee for the work.

Guest worker. Good money?

Elias. Anything happens. The work is not dirty. You don't get dirty.

Guest worker. What to do?

Elias. Pose. Try to get mad at me again. An evil emigrant attacks...

Guest worker. It happened before. Not interested.

Elias *(taking the camera)*. Then laugh.

Guest worker. I won't.

Elias. OK. Just choose a shirt. *(Photographs)*.

Guest worker. I want this one.

Elias. So be it. *(Snapshot)*. Put it on very slowly.

The guest worker puts on a T-shirt. The face is hidden in the fabric.

Elias. Freeze! *(Snapshot)*.

The migrant worker does not see or hear him, he continues to move.

Elias. Debbie is deaf!

The guest worker put on a full T-shirt.

Elias. Take it off again. And put it on very slowly. With pauses. And look at me all the time.

And take your time when your head is in a T-shirt.

Guest worker. Good. *(Takes off his shirt again and slowly begins to put it on.)*

Elias *(photographs)*. I missed your face in my life. *(Snapshot)*. I haven't had goose bumps in a

long time. *(Snapshot)*. You are exactly like a tickle. *(Snapshot)*. You inspire me. *(Snapshot)*.

The guest worker's face is hidden under a T-shirt.

Elias *(photographs)*. You are my nightmare from the past. *(Snapshot)*. Find, Elias, ten differences. *(Snapshot)*. No one. *(Snapshot)*. The same thin, swarthy body, the same pleasant ribs sticking out, sparse hair on the chest, a stupid, desired look, impudent moles in the same place.

You will beat me. *(Snapshot)*. But I'm not afraid. *(Snapshot)*. Beat me. *(Snapshot)*. Just don't die.

(Snapshot). Don't die! *(Snapshot)*.

The guest worker's face emerges from the cutout. He sees Elias' lips.

Elias. Don't die! *(Snapshot)*. Don't die! *(Snapshot)*. Don't die! *(Snapshot)*. Don't die! *(Snapshot)*.

The guest worker smiles shyly. Elias turns off the camera and looks sadly at the worker.

Elias. Do not move. Wait.

Guest worker. What do you want?

Elias. Look... Look... Suddenly I won't see it anymore.

Guest worker. You'll see. I need money.

The guest worker leaves. Elias watches his back.

6. A thousand and one nights

Hospital ward.

Eve lies in bed and uses the remote control to switch channels on the TV hanging from the ceiling.

Elias sits on the edge of the bed and watches the TV screen.

Elias. Maybe leave this one.

Eve. They show men.

Elias. Here! Animals. Leave.

Eve. They will begin to multiply in a couple of minutes.

Elias. Turn on the cartoon.

Eve. Children watch cartoons. And I have no children, no children, no. I'm already in the hospital because of that no. And my idiot husband brings me flowers. White roses! I need white sperm.

Elias *(looks around)*. Where are the flowers?

Eve. Under the window. He mocks my uterus. God! I'm not the fifty-second wife of the emir, to be touched only on New Year's Eve.

Elias. I get sick from switching channels.

Eve. Did you come to me or watch TV? *(Elias moves to face Eve)*. How terrible you are. Like... a battered eunuch. Do something. I found work for you, brought alcohol ...

Elias. You are tired! Everyone. Understand? Your whining is not exciting. You scare the men. You're like a kamikaze with a suicide bomber's belt! They see death in your... this... pussy. And they should be friends with her. With such a kind, mischievous, cheerful. And you are like a connecting rod from a den: "I want children! I want children! Rrr..."

Eve. Goat. And also a friend.

Elias. And who, if not a friend, will tell you the truth, criticize?

Eve. I don't want the truth, I want... participation.

Elias. This is how I participate. After Tim died, what did you do to me?

Eve. Well... It made you laugh... I didn't pay attention... I made you angry...

Elias. Here. Gather yourselves, my pale-faced sister. Bring makeup?

Eve. I have my own. I can lend you to cover up your terrible face.

Elias. Get it.

Eve takes out her makeup bag from the nightstand and takes out her blush. Elias pulls eye shadow out of her makeup bag. Eve paints Elias, and Elias paints Eve.

Elias. Now you will be a beautiful girl.

Eve. And you will be the most beautiful girl.

Elias. Thank you sister.

Eve. Now I will rise.

Elias. You will rise.

Eve. Everything! Every week! Every!

Elias. What's each?

Eve. Every week I will invite a new member into me, and then invite a pregnancy test, then another member, then another pregnancy test. And so dick, test, dick, test, dick, test, dick, test, until I become a mother.

Eve takes out powder from her purse and powders Elias, Elias grabs lipstick and paints Eve's lips.

Elias. Where will you take them?

Eve. I'll start with the local orderlies. I will, like a ghost, wander around the night hospital and press alternative warriors against the wall.

Elias. Poor boys.

Eve. I... When my husband is not at home, I will call an ambulance. I will forget money at home and give myself to taxi drivers.

Elias. Good thing I don't drive.

Eve. I will call plumbers naked, in the evenings in the park I will attack married men walking their dogs ...

Elias. I have always loved cats.

Eve. And in the morning in the park you can meet clowns with balloons.

Elias. Don't forget to include cops and soldiers on leave as well.

Eve. And old priests. (*Crying*). I'll fuck everyone in this city...

Elias. Yes Yes Yes...

Eve. ...until the damn test shows...

Elias. Yes Yes Yes...

Eve. I will be emir. And this whole worthless frigid city will be my harem.

Elias. Yes Yes. (*Hugging Eva*) You ruined all the makeup again. It's not even clear who is scarier: a crying woman or a beaten gay.

Eve (*looks at Elias*). How terrible you are! Go-and-and-and-and ... to your deaf.

Elias. Oh! Oh! Oh! How we are alike! We love disabled people.

Eve. What?

Elias. Your husband does not hear your moans, and mine does not hear ...

Eve. Gad! Have you been beaten in the face a little? (*Wants to hit Elias*).

Elias (*runs to the door*). Yours does not hear how you want it and curse it, and mine does not hear ...

Eve. Not yours yet! And never hear!

Elias. And I don't need to. Farewell baby! Greetings to the orderlies and the night watchman! (*Leaves*).

Eve. Cretin!

7. Cinderella

Elias room. On the wall are large photographs of different parts of the guest worker's body: separate hands putting on a T-shirt, separate shoulders, separate head diving into the neckline of the T-shirt, and a head emerging from the neckline, torso, haircut, clumsy legs in jeans. Elias enters the room in a torn T-shirt and shorts. Behind him is a guest worker with a backpack on his back.

Elias turns around to face the guest worker.

Elias. So. What do you owe?

Guest worker. You owe me money.

Elias. Wow! I? Should?

Guest worker. For a photo session.

Elias. For this? (*Pointing to the photo*).

Guest worker. Yes. Give me money.

Elias. Nobody was interested. Who needs an innocent, half-naked... uh-uh... visitor?

Guest worker. I do not trust you.

Elias. Well brother, I'm sorry.

Guest worker. I'm not your brother.

Elias. It's not my fault that you are not interested, except for me. If your arm was amputated or your leg was torn off from a mine explosion. Otherwise, you do not arouse in them a desire other than the desire to ask you and your brothers: "Why are you all rushing here?"

Guest worker. To clean up your shit and please your asses. And also, to substitute for you, because you no longer excite yourself. You are so tired of each other that you just want dark-haired southern teenagers. Take a picture once and flush it down the toilet.

Elias. Well said. I will pass on your answer to their question. Personally, I can give you photos.

Guest worker. I need money.

Elias. I have no money. I can feed you.

Guest worker. I am not hungry.

Elias. What else then?

Guest worker. I need money.

Elias. Me too.

Guest worker. I have nowhere to sleep tonight.

Elias. I could offer my apartment, but I don't think you'd agree to that.

Guest worker. I do not agree. But I have nowhere to sleep. Can I stay with you for the night?

Elias. Don't know.

Guest worker. But you know that the second time I will not ask.

Elias. Why?

Guest worker. The second time doesn't make any sense.

Elias. Our whole life is meaningless.

Guest worker. It makes sense if it is filled with infinite meanings. But they only happen once. That is, they should not be repeated.

Elias. Why?

Guest worker. Repetitions turn the happiness of being into monotonous senseless boredom.

Elias. Repetitions bring us valuable experience.

Guest worker. What was, was. Past experiences don't bother me. Only novelty pleases. She brings a pleasant tickle. When ticklish, you want to live. Tickle is God. Goosebumps are angels. The past is from the devil.

Elias. I can not believe it. You are not bored...

Guest worker. I'm not bored. I live. And you, with your petty thefts, photo shoots, hints and refusals, violate my schedule.

Elias. Am I making it meaningless?

Guest worker. That's it. You can only give me lodging for the night. Nothing else.

Elias. I will think.

Pause. Elias walks around the room. From time to time, he examines the guest worker, then glances at the photographs. The guest worker turns after Elias so that he can see his lips all the time.

Elias. One night only?

Guest worker. Maybe two.

Elias. But the second night will repeat the first.

Guest worker. I'll figure out how to update it.

Elias. Is this a trick?

Guest worker. This is a new tickle.

Elias. Wait.

Elias leaves the room. The guest worker is waiting. Elias brings slippers, goes to the guest worker, sits down beside him and unties his shoelaces.

Elias. Raise your right leg. *(Takes off shoes).* Pick up the second one.

The guest worker raises his other leg, staggers. Elias takes off his sneakers.

Elias. If these shoes fit you, then you'll stay.

Elias tries slippers on the guest worker's feet.

Elias. Doesn't press?

Guest worker. No.

Elias. Right?

Guest worker. Yes.

Elias. It is important.

Guest worker. I can cut off one finger so I don't sleep on the street.

Elias. They suit you.

Guest worker. I'll stay?

Elias. For one night.

Guest worker. And if the second one has to? Should I do something?

Elias. I don't like your name.

Guest worker. Forget him.

Elias. And what should I call you?

Guest worker. As you wish. Once I will survive another name.

Elias. Tim. Now you will be Tim. I agree?

Guest worker. Yes. Today I am Tim.

Elias. And tomorrow too. Tomorrow hasn't been with you yet, has it?

Tim. Did not have. But tomorrow only happens once.

Elias. In this case, there is the day after tomorrow. By the way, we see each other for the third time, and we are not bored.

Tim. Only you.

Elias. Get used to it. Suddenly you need a third night here.

Tim. What then should I do?

Elias. Then I'll have to give you the keys to the apartment.

Tim. Let's. I don't think I'll find the money until the day after tomorrow.

Elias. Wait.

Elias exits. Tim takes off his backpack and puts it at the head of the mattress. Elias returns and holds out a bunch of keys.

Elias. You can live here as long as you want until you find a place to live, a job, money. Now this is your problem. Invent any tickling you like, make sacrifices to your God, but remember one thing. These are your keys, Tim. *(Throws the link.)* This key is from the entrance, this one is from the apartment, the upper lock, this one is from the lower one. And here is the key to the second room. You should never, ever go there. Never. Understood me?

Tim. Yes.

Elias. Good. The second time I will not speak. You love the first meaning very much.

Tim. Where will I sleep? (*Takes a bunch of keys, puts them in the pocket of his jeans*).

Elias. In the same place where I am.

Tim. The conditions are not very good.

Elias. We are equal.

Tim. I hope you know about human rights.

Elias. Certainly.

Tim. Do not try to violate the neutrality of my body at night.

Elias. What if it's involuntary?

Tim. Do you want to pick up broken teeth from the floor with broken hands? (*Turns his back to Elias, pushes his sneakers against the mattress with his foot.*) I will sleep on this side. Can you cook dinner?

Elias (*to Tim's back*). Deaf little rascal! I could say thank you for the first time.

Elias goes to the kitchen. Tim starts to undress.

8. Thumb boy

Elias room. The same photos on the wall.

Tim is sleeping on the mattress. He lies on his back in Elias's shorts. Right hand under the head, left on the stomach.

Elias enters the room in trousers and the same T-shirt torn by Tim and his mother with two servings of ice cream. They cautiously approach the mattress and examine Tim.

Mother (*quietly*). And how long have you had it?

Elias (*loudly*). Two days already.

Mother. Quiet. Wake up.

Elias. He is hard of hearing. Can't see our lips now, so you can scream.

Mother. Let's quickly eat ice cream while he sleeps. (*Gives Elias his portion.*) As you loved as a child, on a stick.

Mother and son unwrap the wrapper and start licking the ice cream.

Elias. Does he remind you of anyone?

Mother. All these visitors look the same.

Elias. Doesn't he look like Tim?

Mother. Exactly... And in his shorts... The return of the living dead.

Elias. Mum!

Mother. What mom? (*Looks at his son's face.*) Well, show yourself...

Elias. Finally noticed.

Mother. Yes, you are covered in bruises and bruises ...

Elias. They got into a fight.

Mother. Already? In two days?

Elias. What's wrong with that?

Mother. I do not know.

Elias. Ai. You should rejoice. I have already forgotten what a relationship is, I have not had sex for a year, I no longer remember what it is.

Mother. We will all be there.

Elias. No tragedy needed.

Mother. At least you're bleeding. And your mom hasn't bled in three months.

Elias. Mom, what are you...

Mother. What about me?

Elias. I don't want to hear it.

Mother. Why should I only listen to your problems? He didn't have sex for a year. And I have four. Four. And there is no blood. Understand? If only one miserable drop, a small glass, a vulgar cork ...

Elias. Please mom.

The ice cream begins to melt and drip onto the mother's hands. She licks the sweetness off her hands.

Mother. Do you know how beautiful red is?

Elias. I know.

Mother. Women love red, Elias. Add more to your photos. Feel free to add. Let it be pale, but red... You're a photo artist. You must understand that a black and white photo does not please women. How I long for some of that miserably scarlet color... Even if... a delicate shade of pink... Just a shade of... pink...

Elias. Mum. (*His ice cream is also melting, he licks the wrapper and stick so as not to get his hands dirty*).

Mother. When Tim decided to die, I understood your grief. But when your mother is in trouble, my only son can do nothing to help her. Why Elias?

Elias. I'm ashamed, mom.

Mother. Because you don't care. What sticky hands ... And I might not care. And then what? (*Elias is silent*). So disgusting ... when dirty hands. (*He digs in his pocket.*)

Elias. Sorry mom.

Mother. I'll go already. (*Finds money in his pocket.*) Take the money.

Elias. No need, mom.

Mother. Take it. You need them more than my kisses.

Elias. I will not take.

Mother. Well, what are you. It's like spending money in childhood.

Elias. What are you saying?

Mother. You asked me for money for breakfast, but you didn't eat anything and ran to the movies. (*Putting bills into Elias' pants pockets.*) Buy your boy chocolates. And he will kiss you for them.

Elias. Will not.

Mother. He will spoil you, Elias.

Elias. Men are not girls. They can be damaged many times.

Mother. He will eat you. Like a grown up wolf cub fed by Little Red Riding Hood.

Tim wakes up, rubs his eyes, notices Elias's mother. His mouth drops open in surprise. Tim gets up and slowly tiptoes over to Elias's mother, gently touching her with his finger to check if she's real. He falls on his knees in front of her and hugs her legs.

Mother (to Elias). What is it? What is it?

Elias shrugs.

Mother (to Tim). What's wrong with you boy?

Tim. You look like my mom. I haven't seen her for many years. She died. You have the same smile as she had before she died. May I sniff you?

Mother (after a pause). Yes.

Tim slowly gets up and sniffs, like a wolf cub, at her hands, then at her cloak, then at her hair.

Tim. Sweet ... Warm ... Milk ... I cried recently ... No need ... You have a mother's smell. I could even love you, but I can't.

Mother. Do not need. I don't want.

Tim. Everybody wants. You are a liar.

Pause.

Elias. Do you want me to take a picture of you?

Mother. What for?

Elias. For memory. I am now. (*Elias leaves the room*).

Mother. What is your name?

Tim. Tim.

Mother. But for real?

Tim. Tim.

Mother. As you wish. And you are from birth...

Tim. Deaf? No. Skinheads beat me up badly.

Mother. Terrible.

Elias arrives with a camera.

Elias. I have an idea. I want to take a photo of the European Madonna. Mother Europa breastfeeds a starving immigrant.

The mother abruptly covers her chest with her hand, as if she was caught naked when she came out of the bathroom.

Mother. I disagree. No.

Elias. Why?

Mother. I don't want to breastfeed anyone.

Elias. It's not actually. This is an image.

Mother. I won't be madonna.

Tim. What if I get offended?

Mother. Find another mother for your photo shoot.

Tim. As you wish, mommy. *(Leaves the room).*

Mother. It's better if I leave.

Elias. I overdid it, didn't I?

Mother. Don't know.

Elias. Imagine how he settled in, my ideas disappeared. And suddenly such a cool find, and you refused.

Mother. I cant. If you want, go to the zoo. Some kind of monkey gave birth there. Take it off. *(Goes to the exit).*

Elias *(follows her).* How is he to you?

Mother. This is the angel of death.

Elias. No. It's a tickling angel.

They leave. Pause. Tim enters the room. He is dressed in jeans, sneakers, a new T-shirt. He goes to his backpack and shifts things in it. Elias returns.

Elias. Tim... *(Goes up to him and sits next to him so that Tim can see his face).* Are you leaving, Tim?

Tim. Yes.

Elias. For good?

Tim. Don't know.

Elias. And where to?

Tim. I found a job.

Elias. Truth? Night?

Tim. Something like that.

Elias. I'm happy for you.

Tim. Can you have my backpack?

Elias. Certainly. *(Pulls money out of mother's pocket.)* Take it. This is for breakfast.

Tim. Good. *(Takes money).* I went?

Elias is silent. Then he removes a chain with jewelry from his neck.

Elias. Take this too. Tear off one at a time like this *(tear off one decoration)* and throw it along the way to find your way back.

Elias tosses the torn piece of jewelry to the floor. Tim takes the chain and hangs it around his neck.

Tim. Now can we go?

Elias. Do not rush. I want to look at you.

Tim. I have to go.

Elias. Count slowly, very slowly, to twenty and go.

Pause. Tim gets up and leaves.

9. Abraham and Sarah

Elias room. On the walls are new large photographs of the "Monkey Madonna": a chimpanzee is breastfeeding a cub.

Elias lies on the mattress in shorts and hugs Tim's backpack.

Doorbell. Elias runs swiftly into the corridor. Pause.

Elias returns to the room, collapses onto the mattress and hugs the backpack again.

Eva enters. Bright makeup, red dress.

Eve. Would you like some tea or coffee?.. If you want, I can make it myself. (*Looks at photographs*).

Elias. Herself. I don't care how I feel. (*Looks at backpack*).

Eve. I have to do everything myself.

Elias. I don't care... Herself.

Eve. Okay, my husband doesn't love me. But why don't I love myself?

Elias. Why can't he come back?

Eve. Why can not I get pregnant?

Elias. I have a backpack. Fortunately.

Eve. Alas. So no one.

Elias. He's gone for two weeks and nothing.

Eve. There were five men and no one.

Elias. Two weeks.

Eve. Five men.

Elias. Only a backpack.

Eve. Okay, husband. But why can't the others?

Elias. I invent dreams.

Eve. I forget the tickle.

Elias. I'm tired of hugging my backpack.

Eve. I'm tired of giving myself to men.

Elias. I want to wake up at night and listen to him go to the toilet, flush the toilet.

Eve. My husband rarely writes. Shit.

Elias. Bare feet slap - slap - slap to me ... not to me.

Eve. He is so greedy that he even feels sorry for parting with his urine. And I still wanted something from him.

Elias. What did you want from him? He will beat you.

Eve. The rest are just as greedy. They cannot give a woman a child.

Elias. My body screams hosanna to him.

Eve. I want to swing like a girl on the tongue of a bell.

Elias. Sing.

Eve. Sound.

Elias. Exhibition in two weeks. I do not want.

Eve. Two weeks later, menstruation. I can not.

Elias. I can't sleep alone.

Eve. I don't want to go home.

Elias. Stay with me today, otherwise I'll go crazy.

Eve. Don't kick me out today or I'll do something stupid.

Elias. I am now. I will rise.

Eve. I'm in no hurry.

Elias. Lie down. I'll put the kettle on.

Eve. Yes.

Elias goes to the kitchen.

Eve kneels before the "monkey Madonna" and prays.

Blackout.

Act 2. POSITIVES

10 Good News

Elias photo exhibition. On the walls are photographs from the Madonna series. Empty bottles of champagne lie on the floor, there are whole bottles and several glasses. Sounds modern ethnic music.

Elias drinks champagne from his throat. Then he kicks the empty bottle on the floor with his foot. Eva arrives in the same red dress.

Eve. Where are the people?

Elias. What other people?

Eve. Visitors.

Elias. Ah, these... They enjoyed the Madonnas and went to repent.

Eve. As everybody...

Elias. Everything? Amazing. Money thrown...

Eve. Congratulations.

Elias. And what is there to congratulate?

Eve. This is luck, success ...

Elias. Shit!

Eve. What?

Elias. Are you deaf too?

Eve. No.

Elias. So I won't say "shit" a second time. The second time is not interesting. Understandably?

Eve. Yes. All were?

Elias. But not all of them were. Not all! (*Kicks the bottle.*)

Eve. I... I... I was in such a hurry...

Elias. I see. You were in a hurry. But not everyone came.

Eve. In the morning I prepared a gift ...

Elias. Success! Luck!

Eve. You don't like flowers...

Elias. I would give up all my work so that only he was mine. (*Kicks the bottle.*) Champagne?

Eve. Of course... I decided to make a gift with my own hands...

Elias. Brilliant. With my female hands. (*Pours champagne, hands it to Eve.*)

Eve. Instead of flowers, I decided to prepare some delicious treats for you...

Elias. Female.

Eve (*raises her glass*). For your success ... for you ...

Elias (*raises the bottle*). Come for our bodies! (*silly laughs*). Do you know Eva? If all the bodies in the world lay on top of each other...in blissful rapture...there would not be room for one body. (*Kicks the empty bottle with his foot.*) If all souls were to merge... in a single impulse, one soul would remain... rejected.

Eve. Carefully.

Elias. If ... all the eyes of people met with the hope of reciprocity, one eye ... would wander in despair. As I said? (*Laughs softly*). Someone always lacks happiness. Because people don't share equally. There is always someone in the shadow. Light up on film! I want to drink to the shadows that come out of the light. For the positives! (*Drinks from the throat, staggers*).

Eve (*drinks her glass in one gulp*). More! (*Holds the glass to Elias.*)

Elias. More. (*Pours Eve.*)

Eve. But that's not all.

Elias. Not all?

Eve. So. I decided to make you a wonderful cake...

Elias. You are my sorceress.

Eve. I kneaded the dough, I wanted to go to the toilet ...

Elias. To hell with the details. (*Kicks the empty bottle.*)

Eve. I took a test... and... and it came back positive. Why are you silent?

Elias. What does it mean? Positive?

Eve. The Madonnas heard me.

Elias. Yah? Do they still hear?

Eve. Yes, I'm pregnant.

Elias. And from whom in the end? (*Kicks the bottle.*)

Eve. You were the last one.

Elias (*stops*). I'm sorry. I accidentally.

Eve. Nothing. Everything is fine.

Elias. So I did not understand: I'm a father?

Eve. It turned out that you.

Elias. No no! No no no. This cannot be! It's... like in a fairy tale!

Eve. Yes, like in a fairy tale.

Elias. But is this bullshit?

Eve. That's fine!

Elias. Madhouse. I'm now ... drunk. (*Drinks the rest of the champagne from her throat.*) O! (*Joyfully*). So it should be noted!

Eve. So open a new one! Or am I not allowed to drink now?

Elias. Now don't. Not! You deserve it! I kneaded the dough for so long ... and now I molded it ... (*Opens a bottle.*) And at first I ... Well, this is necessary. Once... Just once, and it worked. So stupid ... and so terribly ticklish ... like God ...

Eve. What does God have?

Elias (*disappointed*). Let's not talk about this. (*Drinks one from the throat.*)

Eve. I won't tell my husband, will I?

Elias. Yes... (*Pours champagne to Eve*). Yes. What for? No need to say ... (*Kicks the bottle with his foot*). Don't say it's from me... Let him think he's... such a fine fellow.

Eve. Correctly. (*drinks champagne*). What if I can't stand it? In a month, a year, three, I will be angry with him and say that this is not his child?

Elias. The main thing is that yours.

Eve. Yes. I will be silent. This is our secret. You will visit us...

Elias (*briskly*). You'd better come to visit me. Why guests? Not to visit, but to me ... home. We will play in our apartment.

Eve. And no one will know but us.

Elias. I'll just tell my mom. Let the old lady be happy.

Eve. Yes. She is her own person.

Elias. And the surname? Whose last name will it be?

Eve. Husband.

Elias. I don't want your husband.

Eve. But how else? What did you want? You will not support me, pay expenses ...

Elias. Yes. No way. (*Drinks from the throat*).

Eve. No, I don't care. You are welcome! I can and with you ... Divorce? Marry you? You need?

Elias. To me? No need.

Eve. Like this. Amazing. You will be a very good biological father.

Elias (*laughs nervously*). Everything is fine. The main thing is that there will be a child. And we know it. And then, if anything, and he will know when he grows up ...

Eve. Good too.

Elias. Just let's call the boy Tim.

Eve. I would not want.

Elias. I do not like?

Eve. No.

Elias. You are welcome. *(Pause)*. I do not like it either. Nasty, disgusting name... And you're just as disgusting, dirty... female. *(Drinks from the throat)*. Went from here. I'm tired of seeing your stupid happy face. Why do fairy tales come true only with you? Why?

Eve *(retreats towards the exit)*. That's what God wants.

Elias. What God?

Eve. Doesn't matter.

Elias. What is he? Deaf?

Eve. Don't blaspheme. We will have a child.

Elias. By you! You will!.. What am I? Yes ... I have a child ... And I also ... a child ... *(Drinks from the throat)*. One meaning disappears, a new one appears. What will I do with it?

Eve. Fool, you'll be happy.

Elias. Truth? And I was already happy. The second time, Eva, is impossible.

Eve. What you? Rejoice... We... it's... kind of living...

Elias. Live? Kind of yes. We live. But that has already been...

Tim enters with a badly bruised face. Drunk Elias faints.

11. Pinocchio

Elias room. Bare walls. Elias and Tim sit opposite each other on the mattress. Elias medicates Tim's face.

Elias. Are you sure you don't say anything?

Tim. Nothing.

Elias. You won't say anything even once?

Tim. Who are you to tell you?

Elias. Almost no one, but this is not the first time I've been with you.

Tim. Found something to brag about. Ay! Hurt.

Elias *(blowing on the wound)*. Will live until the wedding.

Tim. Get married faster.

Elias. Yes... Do you know why I love you? You remind me of my native weather: you appear suddenly, like rain, you call, perhaps, like a thunderstorm, you disappear for a long time, like the sun.

Tim. You're wrong. I will never call like a thunderstorm. I am deaf. Ay! It hurts, I say.

Elias. It does not hurt. It hurts all these nights to hug your backpack, to wake up with a face scratched by lightning, with lips rubbed against rough skin, as if I sucked drunk with an unshaven man ...

Tim. You have your own pillow. Ahhhh... *(grimaces in pain)*.

Elias. Just don't cry, baby.

Tim. The kid cried his own during ... puberty. *(groans)*.

Elias. Be a man.

Tim *(spitting)*. You could be a good dad.

Elias *(hitting him lightly on the lips)*. Why could?

Tim. You can't be a dad every time. *(looks around)*. It stinks so much in here. Weird. Alien smell.

Elias. Can not be. I've finished. *(He puts the medicine in a bag)*.

Tim. Someone has been sleeping here.

Elias. No.

Tim. Do you want to sleep with me?

Pause. Elias puts the medicine in a bag.

Tim. So that?

Elias. I do not want.

Tim. Do not want? *(Pause)*. Don't you want to, I ask?

Elias. Why use all the orgasms in one lifetime?

Tim. The second will not.

Elias. Maybe one, the most important orgasm, I want to take to the next world.

Tim. What for?

Elias. Will he come in handy in heaven?

Tim. Do you dream of heaven?

Tim shows Elias a fig. Elias wants to hit him on the arm, but stops. Then Tim sniffs the mattress, looks at Elias.

Tim. Someone has been sleeping here. Smells like a woman's spirit.

Elias. Do not say stupid things.

Tim. I can hear. Who is it?

Elias. None.

Tim. You are lying.

Elias. No.

Tim. Yes. When you lie, your dick grows.

Elias covers his fly with the medicine bag.

Elias. I lied. Once. Once I got curious.

Tim. I do not believe.

Elias. There won't be a second time. I will try.

Tim. You also took up theft again. This time you're stealing my words. You are a ridiculous idea thief.

Elias. So the two thieves met.

Tim. I have never tried it yet.

Elias. Consider it already.

Tim. When?

Elias. During these weeks, you stole two thousand of my kisses that I prepared for you.

Tim. It was an attack of kleptomania. It doesn't count. Actually, I don't need them. So... take it. *(He casually kisses Elias once on the lips.)*

Elias. And the rest?

Tim. Maybe... tomorrow.

Elias. I hate this word. It removes you for... a thousand... four hundred... forty minutes, which I will spend without you.

Tim. Then I'll give them to you in your dream, but in real life it's not ticklish.

Elias. What are you doing here?

Tim. Survive.

Elias. Can you live somewhere else?

Tim. I feel bad. *(Falls on the mattress.)* I want to sleep. Give me painkillers... or sleeping pills...

Elias. I have nothing.

Tim. In vain. Will come in handy soon. How bad I feel. Mmmm... Even peeing hurts. *(Tries to get up, but falls down).*

Elias. What happened to you?

Tim. Don't know. *(groans)*. I'm in pain. Everywhere... Mmmm...

Elias *(taking his hand)*. What? What? Where does it hurt?

Tim. Inside... Weakness and pain... Dad, I want to pee.

Elias. What?

Tim. I want to pee... dad...

Elias. Don't call me...

Tim. Daddy Geppetto ... *(Tries to get up, does not work).*

Elias. I asked you not to call me that.

Tim. I can't go... I really want to...

Elias. Now. I'll help.

Elias picks up Tim and carries him to the bathroom.

12. Samson and Delilah

Elias room. On the walls are large illuminated photographs.

Runs in, laughing, Tim. Elias runs after him with a camera and tries to take a picture of Tim. They run around the room laughing.

Tim. Do not want anymore! I do not want!

Elias. No you will!

Tim. I took it off for the second time.

Elias. Let's.

Tim. Don't hit me!

Elias. This is my best madonna. The best!

Tim. That's enough!

Elias. No one will see this Madonna. Except us.

Tim. Is she ours?

Elias. Yes! This is a Madonna for us alone, a Madonna for two men.

Tim (*slips but doesn't fall*). Super!

Elias corners Tim, takes pictures, but Tim covers himself with his arms.

Tim. Not! Not! For help! Police! I'm being filmed! Horror! Ah-ah-ah!

Elias (*bursting with laughter*). Jerk! I love you, moron!

Tim. Moms! Oh, they're filming.

Tim breaks free and runs out of the room. Elias is behind him. Pause. Tim and Elias run into the room again, followed by Eve.

Eve. The door was open.

The guys do not pay attention to her and run around the room with a wild laugh.

Eve. Hi all.

Elias. Hi Hi. Long time no hear!

Tim. Who is this woman?

Elias. My friend Eva.

Tim. I can not hear! I can not hear!

Elias. Eva, this is Tim.

Eve. Elias, we need to talk.

Elias. Speak.

Eve. Alone.

Elias. I can not.

Eve. It is very serious.

Elias. Tim! Tim! Silly fool, stop. OK. (*Stops, approaches Eve.*) What happened?

Tim runs up and jumps on Elias' back.

Eve. He looks at me.

Elias. I can't do anything about it.

Eve. Take him away!

Tim. Evil.

Elias (*turns to face Tim*). Leave us, please.

Tim. Never. She smells bad.

Elias. Eva, tell him.

Eve. I'll only tell you.

Elias. He will not leave us. I will turn him away from you. And you talk to me in the back.

Elias turns his back on Eve, but Tim tries to look at Eve.

Eve. He sees everything.

Elias. What secrets can I have?

Eve. I have a secret. Take it away.

Tim. Bad.

Elias. Good. Turn away from him and speak.

Eve (*turns away*). I went through all the tests in the hospital. Everything was confirmed: I ... we will have a child ...

Elias. So it's good.
Tim runs up to Eve and looks her in the face. Eve turns away, Tim constantly runs up to her.

Eve. But other tests...

Tim (to Eve). I can not hear!

Eve. But others... (*Turns away from Tim*). It's horrible...

Tim (to Eve). I can't hear you, I had meningitis ...

Eve (to Elias). Take him away!

Elias. Tim! (to Eve). Does not hear...

Eve. Take him away!!!

Elias. Tim! Tim!
Elias grabs Tim by the arms, he resists. Eve turns away.

Eve. That first man, or second, or fifth infected me...

Elias. How?
Tim resists, Eva is silent.

Elias. What, your mother?
Tim breaks free, runs up to Eve, Eve turns away, Elias grabs Tim again.

Elias. With what?

Eve. I have been diagnosed with HIV.
Elias releases Tim. He stands between Eve and Elias, looking back at her, then at him. Pause.

Eve. Like this.

Elias. And now what?

EVE (*turns away*). Check it out urgently.

Elias (*turns away*). What is a child?

EVE (*turns away again*). Later. We'll find out everything later.
Elias goes to the mattress.

Elias. What a fucking scary story!
Tim runs after Elias.

Elias. Only not this! Yes, what is it!
Elias collapses onto the mattress, Tim lies down next to him and looks at Elias. Eve doesn't look at them.

Eve (*shouting*). Maybe you're fine. Sorry. Forgive me.

Tim (to Elias). What happened?

Eve (*shouting*). Forgive me. I so wanted. I so wanted a child. It's not a sin to want. Not a sin. Mum! (*Crying*).

Elias. God, God, God...

Tim (to Elias). What?
Elias wants to turn away from Tim, who holds his head tightly with his hands and looks at his lips. Elias punches Tim in the face and manages to speak to Eve when Tim closes his eyes in pain.

Elias. It's not your fault... No... I...

Tim (to Elias). What's happening?

Elias (to Eve). I ... I gave you a child, and you gave me death ... ticklish, blood ...

EVE (*turning away, loudly*). Forgive me! I'd rather die! Only you live! Baby and you! Sorry!

Elias. I don't want to... I live like this...

Tim (to Elias). What happened to you?

Elias. Everything is the same... every year... a year later again...

Tim. What happened to you?!

Elias hits Tim again. Tim can't stand the pain anymore and cries.

Elias (to Tim). Forgive me baby I'm sorry, I'm sorry, my boy, son. Sorry. (*strokes Tim's hair*).

Eve (*turning away, loudly*). I wanted to die, but...! I am a monster! Monster! But I really want to be a mother...

Elias (to Tim, *quietly*). I won't do it again. Only once.

EVE (*turning away, loudly*). Now many live long! Good medicine now!
Elias (*to Tim, quietly*). No longer. (*Wipes his tears with her hand.*)
EVE (*turning away, loudly*). If the child is healthy! If you are healthy! Help! Do you hear! Help him!
Elias. I'll do everything.
Tim. Are you me?
EVE (*turning away, loudly*). Are you me?
Elias. You.
Tim. To me?
EVE (*turning away, loudly*). To me?
Elias. You! You! (*Crying*).
EVE (*turning away, loudly*). Forgive me, Elias. Sorry! (*Leaves*).

13. Garden of Gethsemane

Oriental cafe.

Elias blankly eats a local dish. Mother indifferently drinks water.

Mother. How can you eat it?

Elias. I wanted to.

Mother. It's even disgusting to drink here.

Elias. Quiet. People around.

Mother. So gross today. The wind pretty much ruffled my nerves and the sky at night. He also brought along the occasional silly snow. You've seen? In the morning it's snowy outside. I was sick.

Elias. Quiet.

Mother. You can't even talk properly here.

Elias. Can. Only quietly. (*Quiet*). Were you sick while you were carrying me?

Mother. Never.

Elias. It's a pity.

Mother. And what? It was necessary to?

Elias. You know better.

Mother (*louder*). I left the entrance, I was sick. Something bright.

Elias (*quietly*). Mom, I asked.

Mother (*quietly*). The snow has long since melted. And I stood and looked at this mess. Or maybe a miracle of nature. I've been wondering what to call it? "Attack of Summer Winter"?

Elias. Mom, what will you do if I suddenly die?

Mother (*quietly, looking around*). How gross it is in here. Eatery for visitors.

Elias. Mom, I'm sick. Seriously sick.

Mother. Yes, children often get sick. What do you think of "The Agony of Winter Summer"?

Elias. I'm terminally ill, mom. I will die.

Mother. I've come to terms with it.

Elias. Resigned?

Mother. Yes.

Elias. You say it so calmly.

Mother. Calmly. So what?

Elias. I would cry.

Mother. No. I won't cry. I've gotten used to this idea for a long time. Even when you gave up my breasts, I thought you wouldn't survive. And then all these mumps, pneumonia, bruises, fractures, appendicitis ... I always thought about the worst and worried, imagined ... (*Inhales the air*). She imagined a small coffin, then a larger coffin, then a meter, a meter and a half in length ... A meter eighty-two ...

Elias. Eighty five.

Mother. Eighty five. And I'm next to you in a black scarf. And so she sobbed, sobbed, then cried a lot, and over the years less and less. I loved you so much that I cried everything. I've been through so much that... I'm ready for the worst.

Elias. How? You can't prepare for this.

Mother (*shrugs*). I live longer. Buried more people.

Elias. But I am your son...

Mother. Yes. (*Louder*). Give me a piece to try.

Elias treats his mother to food. She eats greedily with a grimace of disgust.

Mother. And I always knew that my son would have a wife ... a husband ...

Elias. Quiet.

Mother (quietly). Love will appear. And you will love me less. I won't need you as much as before. So why can I love you more than you love me? It's not fair.

Elias. It should come naturally...

Mother. Must. Or maybe it shouldn't. I want to have equal rights to love. (*Very quiet*). As gays, immigrants, refugees, so I want to have the same rights to love. But you didn't love me as much as I love you.

Elias. I love you.

Mother. And I love you exactly as much as you love me. I can not anymore.

Elias. Would you at least lower your eyes when this ...

Mother (*louder*). Yes, I love you less than you wanted, but I respect you.

Elias (*loudly*). What?

Mother. I respect. And I think it's more important. Not every mother can boast that she respects her son, but I can.

Elias (*very quietly*). But I don't need respect right now, I want love, compassion, sympathy.

Mother. Why now? Why not yesterday? Why not a month ago?

Elias. Then I felt good.

Mother. And I felt bad.

Elias. Did you feel bad?

Mother. Is it only bad for you?

Elias. But now it's different. Death awaits me.

Mother. And what awaits me? What?

Elias lies face down on the table. Pause.

Mother (*quietly*). Don't torment me. What do you want? my tears? I can't cry. I can not. (*Looks around*). Why do you need my tears? They won't save you. And will it really make you feel better when you see how your old mother is heartbroken? (*Takes the leftover food from his son and eats*). Be stronger. I could. I was able to survive your dislike, and you will survive. And in general. I do not like these snot - screams. Be more cynical. So what do you have there?

Elias (*raises his head*). I have nothing, mom.

Mother. How not?

Elias. So. I just wanted to check how much you love me.

Mother (*loudly*). Little sinful bastard... Fuck you...

Elias. Mum! How can you?

Mother. This is cruel, son. Cruel. (*Quiet*). I'm not your lover to test my feelings.

Elias. And if my lover loves me more than you, and will empathize with me more than you?

Mother. This is his own business. If it does, I'm all for it!

Elias. And you?

Mother. I'm not his competitor to prove my feelings. And you are not ready for feats to perform them for me.

Elias. Yes?

Mother. Yes! And you know what? When Tim died...

Elias. Don't talk about that Tim.

Mother. When that Tim died...

Elias. You were there. I needed you so...

Mother. But then I didn't need you.

Elias. Here! Here!

Mother. Here! I saw you sobbing. I was very scared for you, but I realized that you won't cry for me like that.

Elias. What?

Mother. Yes, I say monstrous things. And it's not monstrous for me to hear from you that you needed me either then, a year ago, or now, when you seem to be in a skiff? And all this time, what did I mean to you? You had love, passion, sex, and I'm somewhere out there, by the way, in your life. It's a pity that I don't know now how I would get sick and die with such a son. *(Pause)*. And I will also tell you that I was there for you in your darkest days to see how it is worse for someone else than me. Not! Not to someone! And the person dearest to me!

Elias abruptly rises from the table and leaves.

Mother *(following)*. So go! Love yours... but me so... out of habit... Come on! Well, please! Everything.

Pause.

Mother. Fool, fool. Stupid! Stupid! *(Looks around)*. Why did I say this? What for? You can't ... *(Quietly)*. It was impossible to do so... Love is good... Love is loss. A man in love disappears. Disappears from everyone. And from me too ... There is nothing wrong with that. It's such a love. I would regret it ... I would regret it ... You waited so long for him to become weak again ... small, so that he buried himself in you, hugged him with his arms ... *(Crying)*. He would snuggle up to... And I would stroke him like... a baby... Grown-up boys are so... ashamed of their feelings... And I can't ask... kiss me... kiss, my son... Fool... Fool, old fool...

Mother wipes her tears. Elias quietly returns. He approaches his mother from behind, wants to hug her by the shoulders, but cannot.

Elias. Mum?

Mother *(turns)*. Elias! Returned. How good. You do not pay attention to my words. This is all untrue.

Elias. True, it's all true. But I love you the best I can.

Mother. And I love you the best I can.

Elias. And I don't need any more.

Mother. So I don't need any more. Are you all right, son... Elias?

Elias. Good.

Mother. Are you sure you're healthy?

Elias. Yes, healthy. Everything is good. I was also in a bad mood. This ridiculous summer snow...

Mother. Not enough sleep?

Elias. Yes. Therefore, stupid thoughts ... I told you nonsense ...

Mother. And I'm because of this weather... I'm so upset... It's good that you're back!

Elias. Yes. I was offended, and then I think, why am I offended. That's my mom. She can tell me everything.

Mother. Not everything, not everything. No. Think - yes, but there is no need to say bad things. Are you sure you're not sick?

Elias. No no. What you!

Mother. Yes, you'll be fine.

Elias *(with a smile)*. Good.

Mother. Elias...

Elias. Yes mom?

Mother. May I ask you?

Elias. Yes...

Mother. Please... I so want... I so want you to...

Elias. What mom?

Mother. I want ... My back itches so much ... Scratch gently, please, otherwise I can't get it.

Elias. Certainly. (*Stands behind and scratches mom's back*). Here?

Mother. Yes... Gentle... A little higher... Higher... Good... So ticklish, nice...

Mother closes her eyes in pleasure. Elias keeps scratching his mother's back and whispers a prayer. Pause.

Mother. What are you whispering there?

Elias. So... I remember...

Mother. What?

Elias. I remembered our first sea. There were waves, you did not allow me to enter the water.

Mother. I don't remember.

Elias. And I went for a swim. You ran to me with such a fierce face, I was so scared of you, I ran along the shore and did not believe that my mother could have such a face ... You did not catch up with me, but I was afraid to return ... Then he came. You didn't scold me, didn't beat me, just wiped me with a warm towel ...

Mother. I was afraid of the impending wave and ran to you ...

Elias. I just now understood it. It's good that you saved me. (*Cuddles up to mother.*) How I fear these waves. I do not understand them. And they are moving towards us. wave of youth. Wave from the east. Two terrible waves, two floods. Who will save our souls?.. Mom, mom, why don't you smell like you did when you were a child?

Mother. What do I smell like?

Elias. Some kind of ... old age ... Such a stale smell, mother ...

Mother. Yes... And you don't smell like flowers anymore, Elias.

Elias. That's for sure. (*Pause*). I'm sorry. I have a very important job right now.

Mother. For work?

Elias. Yes, yes, at work ... (*Choke*). A business meeting.

Mother. Okay, run.

Elias. Goodbye, mom. (*He kisses her on the cheek and quickly leaves.*)

Mother. See you. What were you whispering behind? I didn't understand anything... I'll go too. God bless you. (*Leaves*).

14. Bluebeard

The second room in Elias' apartment. There are big pictures of a guy who looks like Tim on the wall. Tim looks at the photos. Elias enters.

Elias. Still, once wasn't enough. Why are you stuck here?

Tim. You can only break a promise once.

Elias. You are a bastard.

Tim. Yes, I am like this. But you didn't ask if I was a bastard or not. You allowed me to live with you, and I allowed myself to open this door.

Elias. I've run out of money.

Tim. Truth? Why's that?

Elias. I need to pay for treatment.

Tim. Which?

Elias. I have... a serious illness.

Tim. When is the funeral?

Pause.

Elias. So. I can't feed you. I can't share a bed with you. I can't give you time. Leave. And don't leave anything here - it's a bad omen.

Tim. Yes, I have nothing to leave. Who is this guy in the photo?

Elias. His name was Tim.

Tim. How old is he?

Elias. It was twenty eight.

Tim. I want to feed you. I left the entrance, I see a store, I wanted to ... I bought a bottle, took a sip from my throat ... I remembered you. (*Takes out a bottle from his backpack.*) Drink for us.

Elias. I can't drink now. Tomorrow to the doctor.

Tim. It's a pity. (*Hides the bottle back.*) Can you make one of my wishes come true?

Elias. Which?

Tim. Dance with me again, like then.

Elias. It already happened.

Tim. Now I invite, and you will lead.

Elias. Invite.

Tim walks up to Elias, puts his arm around his shoulders. They dance.

Tim. Why didn't you want me to do something new? Why?

Elias. I don't want anything new.

Tim. It does not get boring, it will always remain, because it happens only once.

Elias. Maybe the meaning is revealed only the second time?

Tim. But will it also be cool and ticklish?

Elias. Oh ho ho. How can I explain to you? Okay, let's take a sip.

Tim dances out the bottle. Elias drinks from his throat, hands it to Tim.

Tim. Later. Let it be with you.

Elias. Every time you look for a new meaning, so that it is not boring, so that they do not repeat. And you didn't think that the coolest meaning would be the tenth in a row or a maximum of the twentieth. And the rest of the meanings can be much worse than the first ones. (*Drinks more from the bottle.*) Understand? This is a dead end.

Tim. Maybe there is no god of tickling at all. But I will find out about this when I start to become quite an adult. In the meantime, I'm young, I know for sure that he is, but it's ticklish for me to live.

Elias. Maybe so. (*Takes a sip.*) But I know that when you become quite an adult, everything that you will do the second time will be much better than the first, although not as ticklish.

Elias wants to take a sip from the bottle, but his hands cannot bring the bottle to his mouth. They sink, then Elias strangely sinks to the floor. He looks at Tim, wants to speak to him, but his mouth opens heavily and does not want to utter intelligible words.

Tim. You have to wait until the second time. Do not worry. You have a normal reaction. I dissolved the strong pills. We need to drink more.

Elias. Ti... And... S... tsi... ss...

Tim takes a T-shirt out of his backpack, wipes the bottle with it, inserts it into Elias's hand, and forcefully pours the rest into Elias' mouth.

Tim. Now everyone will think that you found the only way out in the room where you hid your main meaning. Probably.

Elias. Si... Pfi... Py... pi... ssss...

Tim. Where's the wallet?

Tim checks Elias' back pocket, pulls out his wallet, removes money from it, puts it in his back pocket. Then he wipes his wallet with a T-shirt and leaves it beside Elias.

Tim. I'll take some. (*Exits with shirt.*)

Elias. M-we... kh... kh... kh-kh-kh-kh...

Tim returns with a T-shirt, valuables, a camera and a tripod. Packs things and a T-shirt in a backpack.

Tim. What I do is terrible. But this is impromptu. Believe me. I myself do not yet understand what I will feel in an hour, but so far I am not ashamed. The heart is beating normally. Hands don't tremble. (*Puts down the tripod.*) Once it is worth trying and killing a person, and stealing. And then repent and suffer once. Probably. (*Throws his backpack over his shoulders.*) The main thing is not to do it all a second time. (*Picks up camera.*) May I take it? I did try. And you yourself said that the last Madonna is only for the two of us. (*Hangs a camera around his neck.*) And you will probably go to heaven. Just like you wanted. All those killed by grief end up there.

(Picks up a tripod.) The second time to apologize already ... No, I will! I'll check if it's better. Forgive me, Elias. You are so good, and I'm a bastard, scum. Although you... Your thoughts are cold... not really. Please forgive me.

Elias. N-n-we-s ... S-s-s ...

Tim. Yes, the second time is better, easier. That's it. Reported. Thank you for your attention. Bye Bye.

Elias stares at one point and tries to make another sound. Does not work. Tim goes to the door, stops, sets up his tripod, removes the camera from his neck.

Tim *(to Elias)*. Smile!

Tim takes a picture with a bright flash, grabs his tripod, turns off the lights, and leaves the room.

Elias voice. You-s... S... S...

Elias' eyes are painfully hit by flashes that have penetrated from somewhere. Through them, he sees his mother, Eve, and Tim suddenly appear in the room. They turn the spindles.

Tim. Smile to the grave! Smile to the grave!

Elias covers his face with his hands.

Tim. I can't see your soul! I can't see your soul! Hands off.

Elias. Good! *(Reveals face)*. Mom, give me the spindle.

Mother. Why do you need it?

Elias. I so want. *(Goes to the spindle.)*

Tim. Smile at the grave.

Elias is about to touch the spindle with his finger.

Elias. Mom, does it hurt?

Mother. I don't know.

Elias. Mum! You know mom.

Mother. I don't know son.

Elias. How do you, mom, do not know?! When I was little, you knew everything! You knew the answers to all my questions.

Mother. Now I don't know, son.

Elias. Mum! It does not hurt?

Mother. Elias! I don't... no, it doesn't hurt.

Elias. How's that, mom?

Mother. It is so sweet? You will sleep sweetly for a hundred years until they wake you up with a kiss.

Elias. A hundred years? So long.

Mother. A hundred years is so fast. Wait a hundred years.

Eve. This is where your epic ends.

Elias. How scary. I have so many questions. And I don't know anything.

Mother. You will know. You'll know everything in a hundred years.

Elias touches the spindle with his finger.

Elias *(with a smile)*. So ticklish.

Elias falls asleep. Mother, Eve and Tim are spinning the spindles.

The image of a large blurred photograph on the wall begins to appear. A "Male Madonna" appears: a half-naked guest worker "breastfeeds" the weary Elias.

Lights are turned off for non-payment.