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THE BLIND STAR

play in 3 acts

ACT 1

SCENE 1

Keen and Psychologist are sitting opposite each other, studying each other in silence. Silence burnt out.

Keen. I'm fretting. Sorry.

Psychologist nodded with understanding.

Keen. I'll have a smoke.

Psychologist. No smoking here.

Keen. But I can't do without.

Psychologist. Smoke a pencil. It brings relief sometimes.

Keen. It is hard.

Psychologist. So much the better. The main thing is the process. It substitutes desire. The satisfaction is hidden in desire. Act and you'll feel better.

Keen. Madness!

Psychologist. It's normal.

Keen is smoking the pencil.

Psychologist. Your...feet are shaking

Keen. A soft wind is swinging the walls, their roots are bleeding on the floor and it tickles tenderly the soles of my feet.

Psychologist. It's not the wind.

Keen. What?

Psychologist. Soft snow shudders down the roofs of the houses.

Keen. I'm scared. The moon is curling as the letter "D" and the stars show "E-A-T-H". I'm hiding in the rooms not to see the sunlight. It scares me. I look for the night with pain to lick off the salt from my lips.

Psychologist. Multiply two by two?

Keen. Four. Four corners in the room. Eyes are looking at me from every corner. The first eye is as white as the sand alive with worms. The second is as black as the autumn leaves with little holes. The third is as blue as the laugh of the child who died two days ago. The fourth eye is closed.

Psychologist. When it opens you will die.

Keen. Then an hour later it will be your turn.

Psychologist. My tomb is near yours. Fern and a rusty fence are between them. Some- body is buried there. Do you know him?

Keen. The letters are rubbed off.

Psychologist. How can one learn?

Keen. We can ask the night-watchman. He has lived long, he knows much.

Psychologist. Later. We'll ask when we dies. Look at my knee. What do you see there?

Keen comes to her. He explores her knee for a long time.

Keen. I see a dirty trunk. I can't breathe!!! I'm sick...

Psychologist. What else?

Keen. Else? It is decorated with rose petals.

Psychologist. Right.

Keen sits down near her.

Psychologist. Tell me your latest dream.

Keen. A pig. The pig killed by sorrow grovelling in mown grass in agony. There is a noose on its neck. It doesn't want to live anymore. The noose is double. On the other side there is a cat with its throat cut. It can live, wants to creep away but fails.

Psychologist. Enough. Sit down.

Keen sits down. Continues to smoke. The psychologist takes another pencil.

Psychologist. May I?

She lights a cigarette.

Psychologist. A little test. White-black. Heaven-earth. See? I name the words and you find the associations.

Keen. Yes.

Psychologist. A tree.

Keen. Snow.

Psychologist. Why snow?

Keen. It's warm when there is snow.

Psychologist. Green.

Keen. Azure.

Psychologist. Why?

Keen. It isn't red.

Psychologist. Red.

Keen. After red goes blue.

Psychologist. Blue?

Keen. Liar.

Psychologist. Who's that?

Keen. I love her.

Psychologist. Is it true?

Keen. I can't live without her. It hurts me to see her. She tortures me, but I love her. No Liar-no blue.

Psychologist and Keen put out the pencils.

Psychologist. Come again next time. It's interesting speaking to you.

Keen. Goodnight!

Psychologist. Good day!

Keen is leaving. Keen stops.

Keen. What happens if I kill it?

Psychologist. What?

Keen. The eye.

Psychologist. Which one?

Keen. The fourth. The closed one.

Psychologist. Could you wait a bit?

Keen. I don't know.

Psychologist. Then kill it.

Keen. Give me a knife.

Psychologist. No.

Keen comes to her from behind and kneels.

Keen. Give.

Psychologist. Wait.

The psychologist sharpens the pencil and gives it to Keen. Keen pierces his arm.

Keen. Good! (*leaves*).

Psychologist. Bad.

Psychologist puts a notice "closed" on the table and leaves.

SCENE II

Ana

Ana. Black walls. Black walls. Look right. You see a felicitous example of modern art. A simple block but how skilfully did the artist manage to express his sore thoughts with some black colour...Yes! One must be a real altruist, to love people so much to bring us pleasure without offence, delicately, so that we could admire excellence every day. Thank You (*cries*). Look left! It's not a simple wall. It's a flight of human thought. You experience a strange feeling of relief when looking at it. I understand it... as a mother who has borne two children. When I feel colics in my stomach or when cats are crying in the street I come here and stare at the crack for so long. Sweet metastasises tickle my neck, chill, child, will, wild, kind, light, night. Look up wards... space... All is rotating. I'm like a star.. ..Oh my God, I'm so smart.

The star's voice. It's illusion. You are not a star. You are a fragment of the moon. Very small and nice. As everything is really.

Ana. Who's that?

Star. A star.

Ana. And me?

Star. A dream.

Ana. Whose?

Star. Mine. Everybody is somebody's dream. Stars feel sad. They are nervous alone but our light doesn't twinkle in vain. You were born at midnight when I was shining brightly. You are my dream, my old dream of a friend. Now I'm not alone. I can speak with You. Don't forget.

Ana. Good. But may I ask? What is my dream?

Star. Your dream is still far but also close so far. Don't wait for it. It won't come from afar. It won't bring back wonderful times. Distance is always height. But the plain is well nigh, the sea is the wave and so the sand is the grave. The cup of happiness brims over but it cracks softly into holes. The river will flow and dry up on the whole. Clear away all the bits from the table where you sit. You'll go away, you won't see, you'll come back and call me. Don't be silent, don't grieve, better scream in the field. Don't see myself, don't see you, I'm a blind star for true. The dream is not complete.

Ana. I can't understand you.

Star. I'll come back very soon and I'll take You with me. You will not leave alone. I'm a blind star. I can't see. To prove it I'll take both children away before the seventh morning is over to help the sister stars. There will be a night, there will be life, there will be morning, there you will be in mourning, there will be dawn - you will have to roam...

Ana. I don't know anything, I can't cry anywhere...

Star. There is a door behind the walls and the door behind the door. Open quicker, love stronger, then you'll see love is not so strong, death is gravely cold. There is a golden horse behind the green hill but the hill is not a mountain but the remnants of a courtyard. The morning starts. Farewell!

Ana. *(taking bandage off her eyes)*. So funny. I don't care! Night, good-bye!

SCENE 3

Ana, Neeya, then Blind Girl.

Neeya. Good evening, mom!

Ana. It's morning, already. The first morning.

Neeya. Morning? Really? Why it is the first?

Ana. I feel that this is the first morning.

Neeya. I have something to say, mom.

Ana. Don't.

Neeya. But, listen, mom! I...I...

Ana. What?

Neeya. But you won't be scolding me, will you?

Ana. I will.

Neeya. But I haven't done anything yet!

Ana. So you'll do it in future... *(turns to the wall)*. A door is behind the black wall. *(Tries to open it)*.

Neeya. *(Hides the wall with her back)*. I won't do any harm, mom. I have found a girl in the street. Can she live with us?

Ana. OK.

Neeya. Thank you, I'm so glad!

Leads the blind Girl in.

Ana. She seems to be hungry. Pour some milk for her.

Neeya leaves.

Ana. Here it is the black wall. Come closer, (*leads the Blind Girl*). Look closer. What's there?

Blind Girl. A door. Then another door.

Ana. Yes...you are right.

Neeya brings a saucer with milk and puts it on the floor.

Neeya. Have a drink.

The Blind girl sits down and laps it as a kitten.

Neeya. Hungry. Eat up, eat up.

The Blind Girl licks her lips and continues to drink.

Ana. The door. Then another door (*knocks*).

Neeya. I'm sick. I don't feel well.

Ana. Have you seen Liar?

Neeya. I think, not.

Ana. This is strange. No Keen, no Liar. (*Pats the Blind Girl on her head*).

Neeya. I don't recognize them. Keen is oppressed by something. He is malicious and silent. And I can't feel comfortable.

Ana. We have six days. Only six days. The damn wall! How can we open it. If only I knew how to open it.

Neeya. Mom! What are you saying? What door?

Ana. Shut up, I am tired.

SCENE 4

The same and Liar.

Liar is sitting down at the table, silent. Pause.

Liar. Where is Keen?

Ana. No idea.

Liar. (*Looking at the Blind Girl*). What's that?

Ana. Neeya found her in the street. She will live with us.

Liar. Sure... Where is Keen?

Neeya. He hasn't been in all night.

Liar. Really?

Neeya. He must come.

Liar. Yes, he will come.

Neeya. Here he is!

Everybody looks into the emptiness.

Ana. Where have you been, sonny?

Neeya. Keen, look who I have brought. You'll certainly like her.

Liar. Keen, where have you been? I have been waiting for so long.

Rustling near the table. It becomes the centre of attention.

Ana. Keen, we have only six days. We should do something.

Neeya. Keen, do you feel OK?

Liar. He is sick.

Neeya. Keen, I'm also feeling bad.

Ana. Why do you keep silence? Where have you been?

Liar. He has nothing to say. Yes, Keen. You are afraid of me. I have known it for a long time. You are so afraid of me that you do not come in the night. You are afraid of my look, my walk, the rustle of my dress, you are afraid of the air hovering around my hands. You are a coward. I scorn you but stay with you. I decided to move in with you.

Ana. Liar, is it true? You will live here?

Liar. Do you object?

Ana. No, not at all. On the contrary, I've always wished you lived with us. I'm very happy. It is true. Both Neeya and Keen are also glad. Say that you are glad, Keen. Why are you silent? Keen, what's wrong with you? Say something.

Liar. He is not glad. Let it be!

Neeya. Keen, may I change your bouquet? The old one has already dried up. I'll pick a new one. The flowers will decorate your room. They will smell of the sea breeze. Do you remember the sea? The flowers will remind you of the childhood, our childhood. The sand, the wind, the sea... would you like that? I'll just go and be back in a moment.

Liar. Stay here. We don't need unnecessary fuss. And reminiscences either. They only deaden memory.

Neeya. No.

Liar. How should you know... You are still so young. So silly.

The Blind Girl having drunk up her milk comes cautiously to the table and pushes a chair. The chair falls.

Ana. What have you done? Keen, are you hurt? He's not getting up!

Blind Girl. I'm sorry. I didn't mean to.

Liar stands up and makes a brisque move in the face of the Blind Girl. She doesn't react. Liar repeats the gesture in the face of Neeya. She gets frightened.

Liar (to Blind Girl). Are you blind?

Blind Girl. Yes.

Liar. She is blind.

Ana. What? Have you already come? No, not now. Please not today, not now. There are still six days. You've said it yourself. Go away.

Blind Girl. What do you mean?

Liar. Yes, what do you mean?

Ana. She must know. I recognized your voice. You spoke with me tonight.

Blind Girl. I don't remember.

Liar. What's your name?

Blind Girl. I lived in a wolf pack before. They obviously liked me because they licked me all over every day. They whined tenderly feeling my approach. They waited. They waited for the day when they would eat me. This is why they called me a Dream. The Dream about the happy day when their children will be replete. The dream about the former better times when they would play with my bones in summertime.

Lia. So the Dream is your name?

Blind Girl. Yes, I believe so.

Ana. I was right. You are my dream. What did you tell me last night? You won't give the past back to me and won't bring the future. What else? The dream about the happiest day. The dream about the good times in the past. But where is the middle? What's is going to be now, today, tomorrow? What is going to become of me?

Blind Girl. No need to know. What for? It is so good when you just have a dream, that's all. It's unimportant whether it will come true or not, it's wonderful just to have it. The wolves were howling because of hunger spasms but they didn't want to eat me. They waited for the unknown. I was with them and they were happy. I left them but my smell remained in their wool. And now I'm going to live with you. Imagine- a dream has settled in your house. Meet it!

Liar. But what if you leave us later? What shall we do? Recollect your smell?

Blind Girl. I won't leave you. You'll follow me.

Liar. I also had a dream but dropped it in the well. And it lies in the dusty bottom. May be they will find it, what do you think?

Blind Girl. And why don't you want to get it out?

Liar. There's no water in the bottom. The sand only.

Blind Girl. If somebody finds it you'll lose it forever.

Liar. It is my gift to them.

Blind Girl. You are kind. You are kind because you've given a dream, not money, not a thing- a dream. It's wonderful. Come to me.

Liar comes to her. The blind Girl pats her hair, face, passes her hands over her arms.

Blind Girl. This is what you are like. Strange, mysterious. You can present a dream of a holiday but an old, forgotten and unnecessary one. Pity. Learn to present new dreams.

Liar. No way. This present is very valuable. But its value will be ignored.

Blind Girl. Just try!

Liar. Nonsense! It's like presenting my soul or selling it. I can't.

Blind Girl. Yes, you may be right. But only from your point of view. You've never felt love to be able to present yourself.

Liar. I have no intention to make presents. Stop it! Finish our conversation! Where is Keen? Where did he go?

Everybody looks back.

Ana. He's gone.

Neeya. He will come back.

Liar. I'll wait for him.

SCENE 5

Everybody and Keen.

Keen. Good evening.

Ana. What? Is it evening already?

Keen. Yes, it's evening.

Liar. Time flies quickly and we don't see how the sun fades away and how the moon is now shining in the night's malice. Evening.

Ana. Keen, where have you been?

Neeya. Keen, look who I have brought with me. You'll like her, won't you?

Liar. Keen, where have you been? I have been waiting for you so long.

Ana. Keen, we have only six days left. Even less. We should do something.

Neeya. Keen, do you feel OK?

Liar. He is sick.

Neeya. I don't feel well myself.

Ana. Why are you silent still? Where have you been?

Liar. He has nothing to say. Have you, Keen? You are afraid of me. I have known it for a long time. You are so afraid of me that you do not come home in the night, you...

Keen (*embracing Liar's shoulders*). I love you. I love you very much, but you're right- I'm afraid of you. I'm probably a coward but I'll be with you. I admire your eyes, your piercing look, but I'm afraid of your steps approaching me, the rustle of your dress when you leave me, the air hovering around your hands when you pat my hair...

Liar, (*patting Keen's hair*). You're nice. You love me and you are scared of me. You are a coward but I love you. Maybe it is funny but unconsciously I feel that I love you precisely for that. It's touching.

Keen, (*smiles*). Disgraceful. I'm so ugly. You love me for my meanness.

Liar. It's not meanness. It's your drawback but it is also your charm. Always remember it. Don't search for the bad in yourself, build up only the positive.

Keen. Yes, you're right again and I'm like a boy.

Liar. It's OK.

Ana. Keen, the Dream has settled here.

Keen. Where is she?

Neeya. Here she is. She's nice.

Keen. She is wonderful. A fragile dream.

Comes to the Blind woman. Blows into her hair. The blind girl shudders and gets up.

Keen. Look at me.

The Blind girl turned to Keen.

Keen. Yes, a light unreal dream. Thank you for coming here. We have been waiting for you for a long time. Tell us, what are we to expect from you?

Blind girl. I'll tell you nothing.

Liar, *(laughs)*. Keen, do you see that you do not deserve to talk to a dream. Even to the blind one.

Keen. Is she blind?

Ana. Yes.

Keen. I'm very sorry. *(Moves away)*. But it's also for the better. Super! I've understood everything.

Blind Girl. You've understood everything.

Ana. Come away from her. *(takes Keen's hand)*.

Keen. But why?

Ana. You should. I'll explain everything. Everybody, sit down.

Everybody sits down at the table.

Neeya. We are ready to listen to you, mom.

Ana. A star has come to me tonight. Every star has its dream. One of them came to us. In nearly five days she'll take us with her.

Liar. How?

Ana. She will make our dream come true and will leave taking us all.

Keen. Where?

Ana. Through that door.

All turned back to the black wall.

Neeya. But it's just a wall.

Keen. And the wall has eyes. Four eyes.

Blind Girl. What do you know about this?

Keen. I know that the first eye is as red as the sea bottom full of dead ships. The second is as green as the rheumatism of the dead father. The third is as yellow as lowland feather-grass broken by my foot.

Blind Girl. And the fourth?

Keen. The fourth? It is closed.

Blind Woman. You are right.

Keen. Did you know about it?

Blind Girl. I won't tell you.

Liar. See, she doesn't want to speak to you.

Ana. And how can we open this door?

Liar. Why open it ourselves? The Dream will open it for us. Won't you?

Blind Girl. Perhaps.

Keen. But when the fourth eye opens, I'll die.

Liar. Don't say so.

Ana. But why? We should do something. Do you hear- the hoofs hammer. This is a white horse rushing to the sun. It means the night gives us a messenger.

Liar. I had a childish dream to fly to the great open spaces on a white horse in a white dress in the white fire.

One can hear the hoofs' hammer nearby.

Blind Girl. Present me to your dream.

Liar. A dream to the dream. What for? Do you need it?

Blind Girl. Even if I don't need it. Do you grudge it?

Liar. It would be very sad to say good-bye to her.

Blind Girl. But it's not a new dream but an old forgotten wish.

Liar. A forgotten wish is stronger than a desired one.

Blind Girl. Keep it.

Neeya. The birds are singing. It's a flock flying to sad nests. Only silence is awaiting them. They have no idea that the nestlings are not there but they cry not knowing that.

Liar. Maybe they feel the sadness of the earth?

Neeya. That means the Moon is sending us messengers.

Ana. The birds singing moves me. I understood long ago that it's only a dream to be a bird. To sing, to dance in the clouds, to enjoy and pine for spring. This is my fate. Ah, I'm not a bird...

One can hear a loud cry of a bird.

Blind Girl. Sing the songs, wave your arms and the voice will fly- you'll hear it. It's not easy to be a bird. It understands all. That is why its feelings are grave.

Liar. To be a bird? So funny. Frost in winter, rains in autumn- no desire to sing .

Ana. And I would sing in the rain. In spite of the wind and clouds. Let it be a sad song, let it be the last time, but I would pull myself together and I would sing.

Keen. Yes, it's good

Neeya. You can hear the wheels, they vibrate. The last train left the station and will never come again. Nobody will catch it. Dim light twinkles among the poles frightening the fools who have lost themselves in the rainy wood. This morning gives us a sign that night has left and there's no return...

Keen. It will jump off the first step...

Neeya. Keen, do you remember our childhood? Southern wormwood at the sea shore. I picked it for you and you laughed. I was at the seaside only once and always wanted to return and live there.

Liar. Why?

Neeya. That's the question. To give the last farewell to the sun. Why didn't I jump off at the station but left with you?

One can hear the boom of the passing train.

Blind Girl. Catch it. Run, quicker.

Neeya. I will not make it. No.

Blind Girl. But try!

Neeya. Just once. Just one attempt...

Neeya runs away.

Liar. Lucky.

Keen. Maybe she will catch her dream.

Blind Girl. This train is not going to the seaside.

Keen. Did you deceive her?

Blind Girl. Yes. It's better for her.

Liar. Rustle. Somebody is scratching.

Blind Girl. Oh, it's the hungry morning that is scratching in anger with long nails. Wants to get us.

Liar. Morning...

Ana. The second morning. Only five days left.

Blind Girl *(to Keen)*. You see, you do not deserve it. *(laughs)*.

Liar. You will tell us.

Keen. Sure, I'll tell you.

Liar. Let's open the window.

Ana. Are you mad? The morning is walking there.

Blind Girl. Yes, we shouldn't risk it. I'd better go to bed. *(Leaves)*.

Keen. Me too.

Liar. I'll go with you.

Keen. Better stay here.

Liar. Are you leaving without me?

Keen. Yes, I'm afraid of you.

One can hear Keen's cry: "I love you"

Liar. And you?

Ana. I'll wait for Neeya. I'm still her mother.

Liar. I'll sit with you.

CURTAIN

ACT 2

SCENE 1

Liar, Keen.

Liar. Keen, Keen, how could I think at that time that your homeless look will find response in my cold house. A gust of wind has blown away the last wish in peppermint flowers and I looked back to detect your gentle silence. In timid haze the unfledged feelings of meek languor have frozen and odd melancholy has faded giving way to the secret unexplicable burning attraction. I couldn't find the words, my proud step did not want to enter an unfamiliar doorway where the dim reflection of lamps was fading along with the doorscream. I struggled as strong as I could, though seeing awkwardly a white flag on the destroyed walls. It was becoming weightless every day to stir up our clouds in one of the august dawns. A long resistance crashed under the gravity of your smooth steps. I surrendered with the hope to conquer your favourite enemy. I was bursting to go into action losing blood because of your foolish kisses. I was dying from wounds in your shy embraces. Can there be such love? Unreasoning, as dead as the waterfall streams. I was freezing in summer, burning in the fire of the snow-storm winter because of your love. Tell me, why I'm ready to kill you when I love you more and more? Is this ugly monster-love?

Keen. Love is our most fierce enemy. It is a seven-headed monster impossible to beat: when we cut down one head the second grows, the third... No one can burn the bridges leading us across the red river. The wave will carry our bodies in despair to the singing island where the poisonous eye is flowing into blood with every shot and brings ashes of the all-consuming love passion and its heyday makes us hate each other more and more. This is love. Glorious, bitter, wonderful and blue.

Liar. Do you remember a crooked fragile willow at the winding of the overgrown river where the foam of the yellow banks sang vaguely that our time had come?

Keen. Your smiling eyes plunged me into depression. I felt inconsolable at the thought, that you could go where you lived but I needed your air, I wanted to see you, feel you, touch you, see you near me. I didn't know what to do. Clenching my body into a fist and stopping my poor heart I cried inside "call on me", again and again. You didn't hear these words because I didn't dare to say them aloud. A soul cry remained in me and my elusive phantom approached you whispering "Call on me, call on me, call on me". It either touched your hair or sat down on my knees or clutched your nervous arm in mine. And you couldn't hear those words. "Call on me". They didn't reach you. But I believed that you were gathering your shadow fading in the grass into my pocket. Why didn't you call on me?

Liar. I won't answer you. It's too difficult for me. But sometimes I believed that I heard your mute cry. You kept silence but I believed that you managed to say much inside. It never occurred to us, the coastal reeds could hear it. They were nodding to us but we failed to notice them. I wanted to call you but I didn't know you. It's good that we are together now.

Keen. But it could have happened earlier if only you had heard me.

Liar. I mentioned that I seemed to scent your whisper. You were silent.

Keen. One shouldn't have ears to hear and eyes to see.

Pause.

Liar. Tell this to the Blind Girl.

Keen. Unlike us she is not blind. She can see and notice things which we are unable to see. And don't call her the Blind girl. The Dream is her name in this house.

Liar. Why didn't you tell her about your dream?

Keen. Honestly I don't know.

Liar. You have no dream?

Keen. Yes. I mean I have. But it is difficult to describe it. I don't know what a dream is. A wish which makes something depend on it or the final point of my life? A dream is a fairy-tale, an abstraction, an illusion. And it's not necessary to make it true. So what's then? And if the illusion hardens in the sun and becomes real, then it's not a dream.

Liar. Does this mean that I will never race at full speed on a white horse?

Keen. Why not? All depends on you. It may become true.

Liar. If I understood you correctly I don't need it.

Keen. One does.

Liar. But for you this doesn't make a priority.

Keen. No.

Liar. So what do we live for?

Keen. Well. To be catching a dream but not to catch it.

Liar. Is this life?

Keen. This is happiness.

SCENE 2

Keen, Ana, Liar.

Ana. Neeya hasn't come yet.

Keen. Probably it would be better for her not to.

Liar. Has she caught the train, what do you think?

Ana. Let's hope for the best.

Keen. But if she hasn't?

Liar. She must return.

Keen. But if not?

Ana. We'll lose her.

Keen. But if not?

Liar. Don't keep saying "not, not". The girl managed to get her wish and let her be happy, since everyone else fails to do this. She was ordered to.

Keen comes off.

Keen. So what's up? Night. It's dark, probably.

Ana. No. The fourth morning. There are simply blinds on the window.

Liar. Let's get more light.

Keen stops her.

Keen. We shouldn't do that.

Liar. OK.

Ana. The Blind Girl left.

Keen. The Dream left.

Ana. Very good. I have an excellent idea. I know how to deceive the morning. Look.

(Leaves).

Liar. Is she OK?

Ana enters with a package of paper.

Ana. Here, look. This is colored paper. It's written here: "Dear children. You hold a set of colored paper which can help you to find yourself in the interesting world of art. With the help of one sheet your phantasy will create many funny animals of striking colors. For this purpose you'll need only scissors, glue and cardboard and the colored paper is already available. We wish you success in your work!"

Liar. Why do we need this?

Ana takes out glue, scissors and cardboard from the package.

Ana. I have found a simple way out. We will make masks from the colored paper and put them on. Perhaps the Blind Girl won't recognize us. Understand? It's the fourth morning already. We will deceive the Dream. She will leave us alone. We'll stay and live like we used to.

Keen. And if I don't like to live like we used to?

Liar. Indeed.

Ana. Think about me. Even if you reject the past which is passing as the present, it is familiar to you. This is your brother. And future is your child. You want to have them as everybody does, but you don't know what'll become of them when they grow up. Do you understand this at least! It's you who needs that.

Keen. You make sense.

Ana. Listen to me. I don't want unhappiness. One shouldn't wait for anything. Why hope? There's nothing more stable than constancy. It shrouds you with warmth.

Liar. When it's always hot the dreams about snow appear at night. You dream of plunging into the winter cry.

Keen. I'm amazed. I like you.

Liar. Don't let go. Don't forget. Don't reflect.

Keen. I'll try.

Ana. So what did you decide?

Keen. Come what may.

Liar. I'll create a mask of a sea storm, a green battle when night fights with morning, when the approach of the second arm burns up the first. Everybody will experience it.

Ana. Let's start.

They sit down and work, ashamed to look at each other. The initial unity of the family structure is destroyed under the power of individual thoughts and body machinery crashes with tyres screeching and the singing of the lips.

SCENES 3

The same and the Blind Girl.

The Dream enters unheard and feels the brainstorm. She approaches the table by stealth but not confidently because she is unfamiliar with the house. She catches the air of the tenants. Then moves away from Ana and Liar. Approaches Keen.

Blind Girl. It's me. Hello!

Keen. What do you want?

Blind Girl. To speak to you.

Keen. So start.

Blind Girl. What are you doing?

Keen. Me? The sad eyes of lilac fields.

Blind Girl. Lovely.

Keen. Important.

Blind Girl. What for?

Keen. For completing the mystery.

Blind Girl. What mystery?

Keen. Neon.

Blind Girl. And prickly.

Keen. No tears from a quiet prick.

Blind Girl. But there will be blood, loss of life, a lantern of stormy attraction and unnecessary chill. Hypocrisy. Going away into nothing and change of moods, a wild desire of the end. The boundless asphalt unwashed by the rain of the times of shark with helmet and a sword with a long hilt twice bound and split in two by three heroes as tired as myself.

Keen. What are you talking about?

Blind Girl. All about one and the same. When will you reveal your wish to me?

Keen. Never.

Blind Girl. You'll have to.

Keen. And if the lies take the stalls and start playing the drums?

Blind Girl. Try it. I'll see immediately. Do you think that I can't distinguish between an actor and a spectator?

Keen. Well. I would be immeasurably happy like my sister to lay on the sand near the sea and cool down with happiness.

Blind Girl. Is your luggage ready?

Keen. Mostly.

Blind Girl. Bon voyage!

Keen brings a suitcase. The landscape changes. Seagulls are crying, there are the sounds of the waves, a dolphin and shells singing.

Keen. Super! How happy am I!

Blind Girl. You recovered your childhood.

Keen. I'm grateful to you for this.

Blind Girl. Let's be friends.

Keen, (*laughs*). How absurd your words sound. As if we were three years old. Can you imagine this scene?

Blind Girl. Let it be!

Keen. Let's be jolly! Play the fool!

Blind Girl. Ha-ha.

Keen and the Blind Girl roll about on the sand, play "the jumping frog", Keen cries to the red sun: "Heigh-ho"!!! Blind Girl tries to understand what he sees.

Keen. I see you. Ah-ah! Don't look at me. Don't blush as a bride, as an apple. Don't run away from me. Hey!

Keen listened to the waves splash. He became numb with horror and shouted.

Keen. The echo is silent.

Blind Girl. It is asleep.

Keen. It's still early. The sun didn't go to sleep.

Blind Girl. The echo decided to have a nap. Everybody needs a rest. So the echo got tired during the day. Lied down and fell asleep.

Keen. No. The echo doesn't sleep. The echo cries incessantly. It has no right to rest. It doesn't live here and has never lived here before. You deceived me.

Blind Girl. Really! Who started the game? You wanted neither the sea nor the childhood. You were kidding me, I was kidding you. That's it.

Keen. Let's start again.

Blind Woman. So let's start. But we have to return from the railway station.

The sea and the beach disappear in the lights.

Blind Girl. What do you want to discover?

Keen, *(looking back).* You see, my wish makes me scared. For twenty years I have wanted to touch the corner of the table with an eyebrow but I'm afraid that the corner will knock my eye out and I will be walking in the street like a cyclops.

Blind Girl. How strong is your wish?

Keen. It is so strong that I'm torn by doubts: must I? I stare for hours at the corner and tremble with fear. So many times my eye came closer but an automatic brake was activated.

Blind Girl. At it again? Are you kidding? No way. I won't believe you, hide it or not.

Keen puts on his mask. There is the fire crackle, the night silence, the wind in the feather-grass.

Blind Girl. Hallo!

Keen. I'm here! *(Runs aside).*

Blind Woman. *(Fumbling for him).* Where are you?

Keen. Try to find me. Ha-ha-ha.

Laughing, the Blind Girl has forgotten everything and falls at the table. The glue spills and drops to the floor.

Ana. Ready.

Liar. Me too.

Ana and Liar put on their masks. Seeing the Blind Girl they start laughing and running on the grass. Blind Girl still continues to laugh together with everybody but little by little her laugh turns into cry. The game goes on.

Blind Girl. Hallo!

Ana. We are here!

Liar. We are here!

Blind Girl wants to catch them but fails. They push her off, she stumbles, cries, the others laugh. The laugh spreads into a clownish round dance.

Blind Girl. Please, pity me.

Ana. No. Ha-ha-ha.

Liar. Catch us! Find us!

Keen becomes bored by the game and catches the Blind Girl, she leans down on him. An abrupt knock to the door.

Liar. Who's there?

Ana. It's the fifth morning.

Fear infuses blood in their veins and they toss like birds. They want to take off the masks but fail. They are painted all over with their paints. The Blind Girl helps Keen to take off his mask.

Blind Girl. You'll feel better.
Keen. Thanks. Are you OK?
Blind Girl. Seem to be.
Keen. What was it?
Blind Girl. I'll tell you this fairy-tale later.
Keen. It has a happy end.
Blind Girl. Depends on a person's perception.
Keen. That's good.
Blind Girl. And now go to sleep! (*Leaves*).
Keen. Go!

SCENE 4

Ana and Liar run in.

They sit down on the floor and wipe off the paint from their faces but do not succeed.

Keen. What's happened?

Ana. The masks melted because of awkward looks.

Liar. Help us.

Keen. How can I help you?

Ana. Bring some water.

Keen leaves.

Ana. Nothing! Failure!

Liar. But the beginning was so good.

Ana. Yes. They won.

Liar. But we are not losers. Not in anything!

Ana. She is scared.

Liar. Wonderful.

Ana. Only...

Liar. Only.. .What's the point?

Ana. (*Scared*). Yes.

Keen comes and brings the water. Ana and Liar sit closer to the table and enjoy the dozing tidiness.

Keen. A! Did you see a suitcase? Somewhere here.

Liar. We didn't see it.

Ana. No.

Keen. But why! Mom, do you remember that long long ago it was with me at the seaside? Neither big nor small. Do you remember?

Ana. Seem to. So what?

Keen. I'm looking for it. It was somewhere here.

Liar. I repeat, we didn't see it.

Ana. I say so too.

Keen. It can't be! It was here! I took it from the room when I was at the seaside.

Ana. Ask the Blind Girl.

Keen searches under the table.

Keen. There's only a beetle here crawling to its hole.

Ana. Where?

Liar. Show us.

Ana and Liar crawl under the table. They watch the crawling beetle. Forgetting about everything and intently looking at it they bump into each other, play carefully with it until Liar crushes it. Keen cries with pain. Ana cringes and covers herself with arms like an old woman. Liar stands still.

Keen. Why did you kill it? How could you? I hate you! Only because of this, only. You are a murderer.

Liar. *(Coming round)*. So what? It's only a pest.

Keen. It was a good beetle. You don't know.

Liar. Let's cry, sob, beat our heads the wall. It's stupid.

Keen. Did it disturb you?

Liar. If you want to know the answer- yes. Very, very much. I couldn't sit and wait while something was gripping your attention. Because of this nasty thing you want to kill me now.

Keen. It will be buried in your hair. It will be warm and high. And I will remember it looking at you. I'll love your hair deeply, love your forehead, your hill with the small tomb.

Liar, *(after a pause)*. I agree.

Keen takes a piece of paper and quickly folds it into a coffin. Takes the beetle and puts it there.

Keen. Good-bye, friend. We'll remember you and don't forget us either. Smile, mom. All is not as bad as it would seem.

Ana smiles. Keen comes to Liar and makes her kneel. Then ties up the coffin into hair. When everything is done there is silence for a while.

SCENE 5

Keen, Liar, Ana, Neeya, later the Psychologist.

Enters Neeya. She comes to the tomb mound and lays down dried flowers. Kneels on one knee.

Neeya. Don't suffer, don't be happy, live, die.

Keen pats Neeya on her head. She is pleased but tired.

Neeya. It's cold.

Liar. Poor you, where have you been?

Neeya. I was waiting for you but didn't know whether you'd come.

Keen. Did you catch the train?

Neeya. No, I didn't. I ran for two days and fell down on the third day.

Ana. Oh! You're upset.

Neeya. Not at all. I'm very glad that it turned out like this. It's far better than to sit near the window and not to see the glass. I didn't want to return home. I was just wandering in the forest and meadows. It was nice.

Liar. So why did you return then?

Neeya. I received a telegram that somebody here died.

Keen. Yes, you've arrived just in time. We buried a friend.

Neeya. I'm sorry.

Ana. Did you know him?

Neeya. Just by hearsay. I mean by his sounds.

Liar. Were they sad?

Neeya. I don't think so. More likely they were somewhat happy and a bit sad. He sang one and a same song not noticing anybody around and I listened to his song for a long time and wished to know who was disturbing me and giving no peace in the severe times of dim stars. It was the beetle.

Liar tidies up the tomb on her head.

Neeya. I hope he'll be happy there. What were his songs about, what do you think?

Liar. Perhaps about love.

Keen. Perhaps about happiness.

Ana. Perhaps about life.

Neeya. Suppose this song was about everything? About everything good in the world. Ah?

Ana. Perhaps. Take a rest, daughter. You are tired.

Neeya. Water. I want to wash.

Liar. We'll help you.

Ana. Keen, bring a sheet.

Keen leaves, Ana and Liar wash Neeya's hair. Keen brings the sheet and sits down near them.

Ana. Well. Well...

Liar. Your hair is excellent.

Neeya. What mild water! I want to swim.

Liar. I'll push you now.

Neeya swims to the anchor-buoy glimpsed among the waves. Ana looks anxiously at the silent horizon and Liar peers at the melting sea foam shadowing the eyes from the light with her hand. Keen pours sand and plays ducks and drakes. A sound of drops. Psychologist comes to the shore.

Psychologist. Learn to swim. Swimming strengthens your body, develops agility and endurance. Always observe safety rules in water. Don't dive in the

places where the depth and relief of the bottom are not explored. Don't swim far out from the shore beyond the paddling enclosure.

Keen pricks up his ears. Ana jumps up. Liar smiles. Water gets in Neeya's mouth.

Psychologist. Don't swim close to ships and barges during their movement on the rivers and lakes.

A loud noise of a moving ship. Neeya starts swimming quickly. Everybody holds out the hands.. Liar hangs her head in order to hide her laugh.

Psychologist. Don't swim alone during the storm and at night. Don't play tricks in the water. It may lead to tragic accidents. Remember the safety rules.

Neeya sank. They pull her out by her hair and give the first aid. Neeya comes round. They wrap her up in a short sheet.

Psychologist. Remember the safety rules and now put your signature here.

Psychologist gives a paper and a pen to Keen. He signs. Then gives it to Liar.

Liar. Later. She's not well, you see.

Psychologist. Yes, I see. How are you? (*Looks at Keen*). I haven't seen you for ages. Why didn't you come?

Keen. It's the holiday season.

Psychologist. Are you resting?

Keen. I work hard, think, reflect.

Psychologist. Your nose got burnt.

Keen puts a piece of paper on his nose.

Psychologist. This is better. It's hot today. Do you feel it?

Keen. No, I think not. Even the eyes are not watching me anymore.

Psychologist. The four eyes? Strange.

Keen. But the most interesting point is that my suitcase has been stolen.

Psychologist. Are you sure? That very suitcase which you had in childhood?

Keen. Yes. This one. I lost it at the seaside. It floated away during the ebb.

Psychologist. A very interesting story.

Keen. Do you know where it can be now?

Psychologist. I think that it is behind these doors.

Keen. Let's sit down.

Psychologist. A good idea.

Neeya fell asleep at her mother's knees. Liar blows on her eyebrows.

Keen. Misfortune. A friend died.

Psychologist. You must be happy when friends die. Your secrets are shut in. A real misfortune happens when an enemy dies.

Keen. How's that?

Psychologist. Just because your emotions fade. Feel joy- your friend is dead.

Keen. It's a beetle.

Psychologist. The more so. He could tell others about your past. Now you don't have to worry.

Keen. I don't believe it is you who is saying that.

The face of the psychologist asks the question.

Keen. You are angry.

Psychologist. (*Smiles*). Ah! This. I can't recognize you either.

Keen. What?

Psychologist. You are cool and self-confident.

Keen. I've learned and understood much.

Psychologist. You did yourself harm. Only psychologists know the psychology of the patients. What could you learn? Give it up. All is in vain. The future depresses you as the shade depresses a daisy. Take care. Your self-confidence will suffer from your whims. Here is the sign!

They looked back on the wall.

Keen. The eye!!!

Psychologist laughs.

Keen, (*runs away and falls*). The eye! The eye!

Psychologist. Don't be so self-confident in future. Always remember that there are four corners in the room. Eyes look at you from every corner. The first is as wooden as a bird, it's like a swan on the death-bed. The second is glassy, it's like the dim honey of extinguishing candles flowing on the fingers. The third is as golden as a marsh stream full of anxious sounds. The fourth eye is closed.

Keen. Forgive me! I'll remember! Oh, don't look at me, the monster of rocky walls! Don't try the anxiety of my body. I'm sick. Don't look and avoid finding out what is gnawing at the moments of fuzzy outlines at dawn. What do you want to express by your oppressing look full of perfidy and beautiful faces. You want to tear out my heart and mind but you'll fail. Go away. I entreat you! Disappear. Who are you: my friend or my enemy? Answer, you, coward! Ah, you wouldn't! He is gone! The eye is closed!

Keen breaks down unnerved.

Psychologist. Now he is sleeping. He'll have an odd dream. You'll ask him to tell it and you will be able to understand a bit but you may waste your time. Search for benefits in conjectures and don't call relatives to dance and sing on the streets. Suffer alone and count blocks on the fences until the dawn ends. Appeal. And farewell!

Psychologist leaves.

SCENE 6

Ana, Liar, and the sleeping Keen and Neeya.

Ana. It's fun to watch sleeping animals.

Lia lays Keen's head on her knees and they are sitting as two madonnas smiling sometimes at each other and studying the sleepy faces of their children.

Liar. Grey hair. Just think.

Ana. Tear it out. There shouldn't be any weed in the hothouse, should there? There needn't be!

Liar. And a wrinkle.

Ana. Smooth it out. There shouldn't be pits on the road. Should there?

Liar. He smiles a bit seriously as though he thinks about something or it depresses him. I wish he stayed asleep.

Ana. Yes, he was seriously frightened. It's no joke.

Liar. The mad door is to blame. When it opens there will be none of us. Don't be sad, wait for changes.

Ana. Sure, but I feel anxious alone.

Liar. Me too. I feel hurt.

Ana. Be happy. Everything does you good. The southern wind doesn't blow the seeds away. It brings sunshine and rain.

Liar. And autumn.

Ana. And morning. Guard and save it as your child. It's a custom.

Liar. I'll try. I promise.

Ana. Good. I believe you.

Neeya roused herself.

Ana. She's started. She is anxious too. But how shall I know why?

Liar. Put your ear to her breast and you'll hear.

Ana does so. She listens.

Ana. A beat and a beat. Silence. Another unclear sound.

Liar. Is that all?

Ana. That's all. Nothing more to hear.

Liar. And the speech? And the talk? Words? What are the words?

Ana. I repeat- she keeps silence. Tries to keep a secret from her mother.

Liar tries to listen to Keen's dream.

Liar. And he doesn't want to tell anything either. Everybody keeps a secret.

Ana. Who needs it? They might tell it when they wake up.

Liar. But will they? I don't believe it!

Ana. We'll see.

Keen is tossing and turning. Fear surrounds him and Keen retreats. The defense is broken.

Liar. Cries mutely.

Ana. As a river reed.

Liar. Do you remember the words of that woman about dreams. They have sense hidden from our eyes and thoughts. Keen must tell us what he saw.

Ana. Please, not so loud or he will wake up and won't see the end.

Liar. OK. Silence.

They sit in strained silence. Only a wave of Neeya's hand and agitation of Keen's lips.

Liar, (*whispering*). Awakening, I think.

Ana. I see!

SCENE 7

Ana, Liar, Keen and sleeping Neeya.

Liar. Wake up, dear.

Keen, (*imploring*). Leave me.

Liar. What's wrong with you? Are you still asleep?

Keen, (*moves his hand*). Yes, I'm here.

Ana. What did you see?

Keen. I don't know, don't remember, don't want to see.

Liar. You must tell us.

Keen. OK. I'll do it tonight.

Ana. The evening is breaking into a smile. The moon's lipstick has painted roofs.

Keen. I didn't notice.

Liar. You were sleeping and didn't see the dusk.

Ana... ..and twilight...

Keen.... you...

Neeya stretches her arms and wakes up.

Neeya. I'm all drenched.

Ana. It's alright. The wind will dry your shoulders.

All wait in silence for the wind. Neeya gets up, then Ana, Keen, Liar and they sit down at the table.

Ana. Tell me your dream.

Liar. Please.

Keen. I'm shy.

Neeya. We will turn away and close our eyes.

Keen. No, it's better to switch off the light. (*The light is switched off*).

SCENE 8

Disturbing music, complete darkness.

Keen's voice. I don't know where I've been. I glimpsed the shadows, I heard the cries of riders. Thunder. I was walking across the hall in a woman's dress. It was late. Then you entered ...

CURTAIN

ACT 3

SCENE 1

Disturbing music, complete darkness.

Keen's voice. I don't know where I've been. I glimpsed the shadows, I heard the cries of riders. Thunder. I was walking across the hall in a woman's dress. It was late. Then you entered.

Lights. Keen enters in a woman's dress and studies the room uncertainly. Liar enters in a man's suit and a hat. A whip in her hand. Liar hits Keen. He falls down and she kicks him.

Liar. Stand up! Stand up!

Keen. What do you want?

Liar. A dirty desire.

Keen. Come to sense.

Liar, *(whips him).* Dance. Get up, sing and dance.

The whip shakes on flagstones. Keen gets up indecisively, shuddering inside. Taking little singing notes he strikes up a melting song and starts dancing. Liar snaps the whip on the ground happily. She gasps in her happy power. The whip gasps in its powerful happiness. Keen starts singing more confidently. The dance gradually feels cold.

Keen. Enough!

Liar. More! More!

Keen. Enough!

Liar. Stop!

The last snap. A strong light. Ana and Neeya sit at the table. They watched the dream. When the dance comes to an end they applaud and cry "Bravo!". Keen and Liar bow to the audience.

Ana. Successful! Well done!

Neeya. I can't express my feelings of approval after such a performance!

Liar. Thank you! *(To Keen).* Well done. You did your best this time.

Keen. I always turn myself inside out for you. Understand it.

Liar. You needn't remind me.

Enters the Blind Girl. All of them are glad. Neeya runs to her and puts her arms round her shoulders.

Neeya. The Dream, we are enjoying ourselves so much here!

Ana. As never before!

Liar. Stay with us.

Blind Girl. Stop merry-making! You have awakened me by your noisy merriment.

The Blind Girl comes close to Keen. Her cold breath burns his eyes. He turns aside.

Blind Girl. Keen, I didn't understand your dream. Dreams can't be like that. They flow from the beginning to the end not falling steeply from the paper hills. It's unreal. They don't happen so.

Keen. They do.

Blind Girl. No.

Keen. Yes.

Ana. Explain.

Keen. My dream is not a paperback play. My dream is a shaded river. It grows strong in quiet undergrowth and runs meandering everywhere. Running ahead, turning suddenly back, the river disappears for a moment to open soon again and with the utmost restrained despair to drive all into turbulent fear and to fall with an obedient scream into the ocean which is tired of receiving.

The Blind Girl gives a loud and unclear sound making our reason fade.

Keen. ...and I'm tired of receiving, *(leaves)*.

SCENE 2

The same without Keen.

Blind Girl. Did he leave?

Neeya. He will come back.

Blind Girl. And even earlier than you might think.

Neeya looks at her shadow lying at her feet.

Neeya. A lush picture. Who is the artist?

Liar looks at the shadow interestedly and compares it with hers. Neeya treads on it carefully and runs after it.

Ana. Don't play tricks!

Neeya. Wait...

Neeya stops and falls to thinking. Her face twists and crumples into hate and she starts resignedly stamping out her reflection on the floor. The surprised Liar helps her. The struggle turns into the dance of three women.

Neeya. Appealing to the powers, asking for mercy, I cry to my and your shadows: deliver the fate, go deeper under the earth, under the sun...free me, open my blood vessels to breathe easier, to sing happier. Tell me the truth, what is more honest in the world: the law of the smile or the bitter porridge? Why don't you answer? You are worrying the tresses of my misadventures'. Forward, force the locks and they will open. Then you may feel yourselves that there's no wish stronger than heaven. It hardens, it laughs stingily, it flows along the tree veins. It calms down when the precipice is torn behind you and drops down taking you....

Neeya falls on the shadow to suffocate it. The shadow wheezes of the loss of strength. Then it becomes still grasping the last gulp of the wind by hand.

Ana. *(indecisively).* Neeya... Nee-e-ya! Nee-e-ya! Nee-ee-e-ya!

Liar, *(not mentioning the shadow).* Nee-e-ya! Nee-e-ya!

Their voices unite in the hoarse beat. The heaven froze. The eyes searched aloof for the darkness.

Blind Girl. The smooth is gliding across the wall *(Pause).* The night is gliding across the moon. *(Pause).* I'm gliding on you. *(Pause).*

Ana. A strange smell of bonfires. A wild smell of fire. They crush the ashes. The fire looking for somebody.

Liar. A terrible image of love is growing over there. I will gather it by fragments in the grass frozen inside me.

Blind Girl. A crooked day is coming softly, softly. It is afraid of people.

Ana has lost gravity, she is sliding on the black rays changing the body shape. Coming to the finish she bumped into the beginning of the end.

Ana. Nonsense! Smooth, fire, love... I deny it by the wave of hands! I draw the torn circle with all my spittle.

Liar. Morbid!

Ana. *(To Liar).* I beg you for one thing only. Try to laugh.

Liar. What? Why?

Ana. A bit of laughing, please.

Liar tries to laugh but fails.

Ana. Try again. I'll help you...

Ana laugh is too trembling as that of a child sitting in the cold bathroom.

Liar. I can't.

Ana. You can. Just do it.

Ana tickles Liar.

Ana. So? Will you laugh?

Liar. Yes. Yes. I'll be able.

An insincere laugh twists the nervous lips.

Liar. I can! I can!

Ana. You'll feel funny. You are bursting out laughing and it's easy.

Liar. Very, very funny. I want some more.

The burst of laugh shaked the city blocks and the number of victims doubled.

Ana. I'm going mad with laugh. Laugh, everybody!

Liar. People! I can laugh! Do you see!

Ana. More, more! At least force a smile as a bull at the butchery.

Liar. Yes. Ha-ha-ha!

The laugh flows on the floor squares. It burns Neeya, she winces of the laughing blow to her side and gets up with a scowling grin. Ana and Liar

fall upon her in order to provoke the miserable happiness. But the only thing they get is grave despair.

Neeya. Take your hands off me! Give way to the fallen angel!

Ana. The passageway is here, please.

Neeya proudly disappeared in a hole.

Liar. How funny she is in the evenings!

The women are overwhelmed by stormy feelings.

Liar. Let's tickle her to death!

Ana. A charming idea! But what if she escapes us.

Liar. Then we we'll laugh at her back!

Ana. Yes! Yes! Yes! Let her laugh with us!

Liar. Sad idols stand in our path! I won't stand gloomy faces!

They move away in a spasmodic guffaw leaving the numb Dream frightened.

SCENE 3

Blind Woman and Keen later.

Blind Girl. *(with the book open in her hands).* Mad people! Where are you running? Nobody could ever escape themselves, and still less could anybody ever escape me. The man who can run from his dream isn't born yet. To search for him is a vain idea. They laughed, they were lost in happiness not knowing that their laugh got into their ears and gave a cold to their brain. In the morning they will be racked by the mad smile in terrible lassitude. I command it'll be forever!

Blind Girl lost her ability to speak. Only the movement of her lips reminded the walls that she was alive. The Blind Girl continued to beg, mastering the ache in her temples.

Blind Girl. So what is to become of me? Nothing. I'm the blind star. It is hard to see the spring and look inside people if you are blind. Although I'm strong with the light of distant stars, but I'm as afraid of stars shooting as everybody is. I fear myself.

The voice breaks as the door creaks. Keen appears.

Keen. Are you alone here?

Blind Girl. Oh, yes.

Keen. I haven't seen you for a long time and need to talk to you.

Blind Girl. I've just been talking to you.

Keen. Was it your words that caught up with me round the corner?

Blind Girl. No it was you who came closer to them when walking slowly on the outskirts.

Keen. I need you.

Blind Girl. Oh, yes, you do. Oh, how long I have been waiting for this admission from you and here it is...

Keen. Everything happened suddenly and disappeared for a moment.

Blind Girl. Yes, yes. As usual. What do you want to know?

Keen. What is my dream?

Blind Girl. Not a simple dream which has a simple line- without crossing the line you will not weave your dream.

Keen. Do you want me to do this?

Blind Girl. How can I know? I'm blind.

Keen. If you do not believe me, ask the stars. They will tell you the truth. And you will know that Keen has crossed the line.

Blind Girl. Don't do this.

Keen. We'll have to anyway.

Keen approaches the table in a fevered dream. He kneels, raises his hands and says three words to himself, looks askance at the window comes decisively to the table and brings his eye near its corner.

Keen. I did it! I did it!

Blind Girl., (*cries*). Stop it!

Keen. Aren't you happy?

Blind Girl. How could you think that your anticipation would wash away the sorrow from the fallow of the tipsy vines. I won't ever forget your action. You didn't listen to me. Just found the key under the streams, and they flowed into the full pool, the dark pool.... Do you need me?

Keen. I need you as never before. Please listen to my confession and help me by the word.

Blind Girl. Get ready!

Pause.

Keen. Do you remember my dream? It's terrible: to scratch the eye at the corner of the table. And my filthy behaviour? It's as shabby as mushroom spawn. Sinful thoughts give rise to sinful deeds. I'm sinful. What am I to do?

Blind Girl. It's a grave sin, my Keen. It is hard to atone for it. The major point is that you did realize all the gravity of the things you had done. The sacrificial tears will be not pouring in vain on the dried soil; they will be so silent, they will bring the holy relief with a pleasant sour taste from behind the painted rainbow.

Keen. I'm ashamed. I can't see anymore not only myself but also the looks of relatives and strangers. I'll have to hang as a bat in emptiness and hide as a mole in evil.

Blind Girl. "Ashamed", what are you saying, man! Stop blaspheming. Stand before the judge and answer for it.

Keen. How shall I cool down now?

Blind Girl. Never! Never wonder. Don't you feel the smell of the ashes? Don't you hear how the earth quakes under your feet?

Keen. Yes, I do.

Blind Girl. You don't know that this is the fire raging inside you, a volcano which is erupting, plasma which is incinerating everything in its way. The eruption brings death, nothing extracts life from the air. While the fiery element is raging, you can lie under wet heaven. But be afraid of complete silence! It doesn't bode the warm downpour.

Keen. Do you remember our meeting in the house? I entered and didn't notice anybody until I run up against the white obstacle of your uncomprehending eyes. I was brought up to you and I realized that you could lead me. I called you fragile and wonderful. However, the lack of belief caused me to throw myself down from the bridge. So I did that. The ripples on the water disappeared in different places moving away from the sinking lily and approaching your dangerous shore. The high lighthouse went out on the shore and ships wrecked on the reefs during the storm... I made you suffer but I promise that I will never betray you. As of now the unity of souls grew into the celebration dumb from colorful fireworks. Wherever you call me I'll follow hard on your heels imitating your indifferent look.

Blind Girl. You have strong faith in it. The struggle came to an end. Love awakened from the bright light in her eyes. Yes, it's so. However, it's all lies. A wrinkle betrays you. It twists in a deceitful smile. Your love for me is as hypocritical as you are yourself.

Keen. It's not true. I...

Blind Girl. You won't wait till the seventh morning comes as everybody does. I have foresight, even the ocean mysteries are open to me. Remember my words. They'll help you in your life only if you want to live. Believe in reason and don't make the patchwork quilt from feelings; give the feelings to the hungry dogs, don't think aloud and to yourself when there's dawn and the moon, look forward to the day, love the sight of the night, don't change dry flowers, don't feel sad, don't call, don't sit, don't catch, don't recall the past and don't beckon the future.

Keen. Cinders cover the earth like snow and the snow fills up the heaven as cinders. What will the stars be singing then?

Blind Girl. They will be singing from below that your time has come.

Keen. How can we know the time?

Blind Girl. One should feel the time. The renunciation will take place at midnight.

Keen. I won't do this.

Blind Girl. Before this I'll tell you how to open the door. When you say the tender word aloud you'll enter it. If you forgive yourself you'll be able to return.

Keen kisses the Blind Girl and kneels before her.

Keen. Forgive me!
The Blind Girl leaves.

SCENE 4

Keen, Ana, Liar.

Keen is still kneeling. Ana and Liar carry the ritual attributes.

Ana. Keen, you must perform an ablution. Everybody has done it already, only you remain.

Keen. Just now?

Liar. Everything is ready.

Liar is holding Keen's hair. A sharpened blade stretches the string at the thin throat. The Adam's apple starts trembling.

Liar (*To Keen*). Are you hurt?

Ana. It's OK.

Liar. And now?

The blade trembles mournfully. Keen's nerve broke out in perspiration.

Keen. This way is better.

Ana stands in order to tidy Liar's long hair with a golden comb. A hazy silence hid in soundless words.

Ana. He must be feeling bad.

Liar. He must endure it. We did and he has to as well.

Ana. It's painful to see.

Liar. Distract his light thoughts by a funny story about the former life.

Ana. I'll try. What shall I tell? No idea.

Liar. Tell the story about a sad lemon.

Liar. O.K. Once a funny story happened. There was a sad lemon lying on the table. It was sad for the simple reason: it had red stripes while all lemons were yellow. I studied it for a long time to understand why it was so funny. If you saw lemons you should know that their smell is great, especially after frost. A sweet, barely perceptible smell of pink cheeks. And when you slice the fragrant peel off and eat one slim slice you feel the tangy taste of juicy pulp that you wished for so long. Imagine? It is tangy, pleasant, abundant; it makes you mouth water. Then one day the sad lemon felt that it's not sad anymore. It smiled and became a happy lemon. And I understood that it is happy because it tastes like any other lemon. I ate it.

The ablution is coming to an end. Keen sighs with relief.

Keen. Why did you tell this story?

Ana. To warn you. The long hardships are over and we shall find the at-last-it-happened-feeling.

Keen. What do you mean? We'll get rid off the Dream soon.

Keen. How?

Ana. Liar knows already. We'll just have to tell the Blind Girl what is awaiting her. She can make her little choice.

Keen. What choice?

Ana. She must go where she came from.

Keen. But supposing she doesn't want to?

Ana. Oh, then she'll have to blame herself. Liar, call her.

Liar leaves.

Keen. What does all this mean?

Ana. I must save you.

SCENE 5

The same and the Blind Girl

Blind Girl. Did you call me?

Ana. Yes, Dream. I suggest you clear off.

Blind Girl. Never!

Ana. Is this your final decision?

Blind Girl. *(to Keen).* Yes.

Ana. OK then. They came for you. Get ready.

Keen. Where?

Ana. There. I sold the Dream to the zoo manager. You'll live in the cage with wolves. I hope you'll meet your friends there.

Liar. If you want to take something as a keepsake you can take anything you like.

Pause.

Blind Girl. I'll take this.

Liar. Take it.

Blind Girl. That's it, Keen. Let's say good-bye to each other.

Ana. No unnecessary fuss. I'll not allow you to touch us.

Blind Girl. That's it, Keen, *(cries quietly).*

Keen. No, no, I'll not allow to take you.

Ana. It's too late!

Blind Girl. Keen, do something if you can.

Liar. Don't you dare!

Keen, *(in despair).* What can I do?!

Ana. The time has come!

Blind Girl. Ana, come to your sense. You are my dream. I wished to have a friend. Don't sell me. People, what harm have I done you? Nothing. Nothing. So why is everything wrong? Why? Tell me?! Ah? You don't know? Where are you running? What are you listening to? Everything was wonderful when I came to you. A helpless blind star knocked at your door to make you open your hearts to her. But you got frightened of the small venture!

Ana. It's time!

Blind Girl. No, wait. I've run away from the wolves only because they were tired of waiting. The hopes fell to the ground and that was it. They decided to eat me but I escaped. So why are you worse than the wolves? Why?

Liar. Thank you for the best you tried! Be off! Shoo!

Blind Girl. Keen, why are you silent? Rescue me from these clutching hands for the sake of love. Free me and we'll run away to the singing island as you wished where nobody would worry us at the seaside! Keen, save me! I beg you!

Ana (*shielding Keen*). Give Keen up! Go away! I hate you! I curse the night when I was born under your star. I wish you had vanished in the others' brightness. And you'll vanish! I will not yield.

Blind Girl. People, don't be silent. I appeal to your hearts. Have mercy on the poor dream. I'm so unhappy. You can't do that even if I'm worse than others! It's mean, killing! Ana, I'm also your dream. Isn't it terrible when the light is extinguished in heaven... It will never attract the lovers looking up. It's awful crucifying the weak by the whole pack.

Ana. Stop! Enough! I can't see this miserable sobbing anymore. It infuriates me! You are guilty because you call us. You are to blame for bringing death. I don't want you! Out!

Blind Girl. Keen, mercy! I love you. I won't leave you!

Keen. No!

Ana runs to Blind Girl and throws her out of the door.

Blind Girl. Keen, Keen! I'll always remember you!

The Blind Girl falls to the ground. Liar helps Ana to get rid of the Dream.

Blind Girl. No! No! I'll die in the cage. I'll die! I'll die!

Liar. I'll shout you down so that nobody could hear your beastly roar.

The shouts fuse together into the stormy flow crashing the mountain icecaps.

Blind Girl. I'll die! You'll kill me!

A noisy struggle follows.

Keen. Forgive me!

Blind Girl. I'll always love you! I'll die and go out but my light will flow to you in the cold darkness! Don't forget me! I forgive you! I...

Keen stands alone staring strickenly at the emptiness. There is fierror in his eyes and he is miserable in his fear.

Keen, (*miserably*). That's all... My wish... The Dream has vanished as the last harsh bit of sleep. The gleams disappeared, what is hiding behind them ... Nothing. Now everything is open with three keys and nothing seems to have happened. But a landmine has exploded in the soul and its fragments are sticking in the tissues, smashing tiny cells to smithereens. I'll never reconstruct the

previous mosaic from them. But I should try though. Should I? It's a complete dead end. I have only to enter this door quicker and then perhaps I'll forgive myself. I'd return afterwards but will I be able to?

Keen comes to the wall and tenderly pats it as if saying the last farewell.

SCENE 6

Keen, Ana, Liar.

Ana. What are you looking for, sonny?

Keen, *(exploded).* Why are you watching me? Leave me alone. What do you need from me? You are the worthless beings teeming in the jar looking for some quiet. Why do you need it? Be happy! Your time has come! Laugh! Enjoy yourself, dance, blow the horns! Everything is so good and wonderful. Ha-ha-ha! What rubbish!

Liar. Calm down! Didn't you understand that we wished you well. Now the peace of mind will reign. All is over. You have found yourself again.

Keen. Yes! Yes! Yes! I found myself long ago. I'm grateful to you only for urging me on the act I couldn't bring myself to... Now I'll leave by this door which you were afraid to peep into. Yes, I'm a coward. But you're worse than me. I despise you. Ah, here is the eye. I laugh into your pupil! *(Keen takes out a sharpened pencil).* See that! Farewell! Let your hateful juice pour out! *(Kills the eye).* The second! Wonderful! Die, die, die! I abjure! Burn in the fire and perish! *(Kills the second eye).* One more? Where is it? I'll find you! Find at the bottom! Look, here I am! The unhappy Keen who hates himself! A fragment of a man. A demigod! Oh, here it is! Such an ugly one! Say good-buy to your life! *(Kills the third eye).* The fourth! It is closed. It doesn't watch me. It's blind. My life and love- forgive me!

Liar. He's gone mad!

Ana. Like everybody else.

Keen looked at them.

Keen. Now, are you satisfied? You killed me by your deaf love! Blind people! You'll also die! Murderers! Ha-ha-ha! No! No! No! No! *(Indistinct roar).*

Liar. Everything is OK, my dear! Everything is all right!

Keen abruptly grabbed Ana and glued a kiss to her lips. Ana is struck dumb and tears herself away from Keen's embrace. He squeezes Liar with a deadly knot but she jumps aside and slaps him. Keen hangs his head.

Keen, *(after pause).* Mom... Mom... Mommy...

Keen backs to the door and disappears. The last "Farewell" vanished in the dim flicker.

Ana. We'll always wait for you. Perhaps you'll return?

Liar. He'll forgive us and come back.

Ana. Nobody knows. Maybe I'll see him in my dream before I die.

SCENE 7

Without heroes.

Buzzing sounds were flying in a musical cover. Sand was pouring hissing as a snake on the misted stone. Sleepy shouts from the night streets were running alongside the ordinary carriage. Dogs were howling, daffodils, tulips and common grasses appealed for happiness. People were cutting reed on the marshes which was crying none knew for what. And at night somebody painted the fence and the smell of fresh paint was hovering over the house disturbing the mistress, the daughter and their guest as well.

SCENE 8

With heroes.

Ana and Liar sit opposite each other.

Ana. So what?

Liar. Nothing.

Ana. Nothing good?

Liar. Nothing bad.

Ana. The golden mean...

Liar. Guilded.

Ana. A cheap one.

Liar. Maybe.

Pause.

Ana. We're alone.

Liar. Alone. And each by oneself.

Ana. Let it be.

Enters Neeya.

Ana. Where have you been?

Neeya. There.

Ana. There. Where is there?

Neeya. There- it's there.

Liar. What's the news?

Neeya. The Dream died, you know.

Vacuum gripped the hearts.

Neeya. I was at the zoo. Our Dream is dead.

Ana. How did it happened?

Neeya. The manager told me that she was crying and the wolves were whining understanding her grief. The tears dried and only stony indifference towards everything remained. Blind Sadness settled in the cage. She died of the indifferent melancholy. There's no mean. Everybody tries to escape it. But she failed. The cage is locked with a rusty lock.

Ana. Continue.

Neeya. Now the animals are dying at the zoo one by one, birds are flying away one by one.
A strange sound.

Neeya. What have you done?

Liar. Nothing. It was a dream. Forget it and when you wake up everything will be going on as before.

Ana. Better than ever.

Neeya. Deceiving your selves? Look behind the drawn blinds. The star is extinguished. Its light is flowing to us, pouring into us. When we understand it, the light will flow further on the beautiful ship in the white fire.

Everybody comes to the window.

Ana. But there's nothing behind it!

Liar. Not a single star...

Neeya. Today is a night of mourning. All stars are shining black.

Liar. It cannot happen so. The sky is covered with clouds.

Neeya. The clouds have flown to the North to cry over their friend. And the Moon turned back not to let anybody see her tears.

Ana. My poor one, what did you knock into your little head.

Neeya. Three nails driven in by the new hammer to make life harder.

Ana examined her head.

Ana. Darling, why? Please stop it, stop.

Neeya. Mom, may I'll stand a little farther from you.

Ana. Are you rejecting me?

Neeya moves aside.

Neeya. Can I really? I'll be standing far away from you.

Liar. You don't want to see us?

Neeya. Please, may I live without you.

Ana. Daughter, what's happened to you?

Neeya. Mom, don't be afraid. I am not leaving. Just going to stay away.

Ana and Liar exchanged their glances.

Liar. She's right. We'll be sitting here forever. It was to be. It is said so. It is written in the book. We'll be sitting here, the three of us. We were bound and left here not to allow us to be there. We'll sit out our term in ignorance. And will be repenting till the seventh spring.

Ana. Everything is repeating itself.

Liar. So we have to wait for the seventh spring.

Neeya. And what about Keen: is he coming back?

Ana. Nobody knows. But we should hope for the best and avoid the worst.

Liar. Do you hear- somebody is scratching indecisively. Soundlessly knocked the gate. The flowers are making noise. A hand has run over the window glass.

Neeya. This is the morning.

Ana. How did it find us? How did the seventh morning manage to find us?

Liar. Very simply- a week has passed.

Ana. What shall we do?

Liar. Meet it with hospitality. Lay the table and bake pies. We'll celebrate the holiday until the seventh spring comes.

Ana. Shall we clean the house? Dust, mop the floor, whitewash the ceiling?

Liar. We'll have time for that later.

Neeya. All hopes come along with the morning. We should think of a wish!

Liar. We've got only one...

Pause.

Then all looked at the black wall behind which there's a door.

Ana. Maybe it was he who entered the gate?

Liar. Maybe it was he who knocked at the window?

Neeya. Maybe he didn't leave?

Ana. (*clenching the wish into fist*). Maybe the morning will come with him?

Liar. Will he forgive us?

Ana. Maybe. I wish greatly he forgave us.

Liar. Let's draw back the blinds, open the windows.

Neeya. Watch the dawn.

Ana. Greet it...

Ana is looking imploringly forward asking for permission.

Neeya (*to somebody*). Forgive us!

Ana. Forgive us! We hurt.

Liar. Forgive us for everything!

Ana draws back the blinds

Long expectation.

The door slowly opens, behind it...

CURTAIN

REVIEW OF THE DRAMA "A BLIND STAR" BY N. RUDKOVSKY

"A Blind Star" is a debut of N. Rudkovsky in drama- a quite significant debut. The drama is characterized by an original development of the drama collision. Meanwhile, the novelty of the work building is marked by a noticeable level of artistry.

N. Rudkovsky makes a special point of the most relevant idea of modern creative process-realization of universal spiritual values and revealing of a person. The drama presents an original pattern of the world, where the coordinates of space and time acquire a rather relative meaning. They are measured depending on the spiritual state of the characters and on their collisions- either real or, even more often, imaginable.

The playwright avoids on principle rendering life-like concrete expression of the action; however the drama does not lose its sense of reality. On the contrary, the soaring over the earth full of metaphors only serves as the contrasting backdrop to the dramatism of our social existence.

The images are also expressed in the appropriate way. The dramatic personae in the work do not bear the marks of a certain social; their social functions stay far beyond the main collisions. At the same time, the action precisely shows the feelings, experiences, changes in the mentality of every persona. These qualities reveal each individual and his or her character. At the same time, while embodying a world in oneself, every persona reflects a special outlook on the general meaning of existence. For example, Liar believes the love is the meaning, for Keen it is happiness, for Ana- life, etc.

The paradox of the situation and its perception is the key element in the artistic pattern of the drama by N. Rudkovsky. According to the author's interpretation, "A Blind Star" is " a spring madness in three acts". Its content can be revealed through the precise system of emotional and imagery associations. This rather extravagant definition, which is not consistent with scientific terminology, in fact, is the expressive evidence of the genre of the work.

The language of the drama is a real distinguishing artistic feature and a rare case in modern Belarusian drama. It is rich in epithets, similes, metonymic reiterations. Rhythmic, at crucial points even rhymed, the language sounds as a lyrical and unique melody even in ordinary reading of the work.

Noting the affectation of some turns of meaning and some random abruptness of the style manner of N. Rudkovsky, we should admit, that they do not decrease the possible impression of the drama. They rather stem from the eagerness of the author to express his artistic position in general which is quite understandable with the first work of an author. In this case, "A Blind Star" is, to a certain extent, an artistic manifesto of the young playwright.

Staging of "A Blind Star" requires from the director searching for special, in many cases, non-traditional means. Originality and novelty of its artistic language demand that the actors should develop the techniques of more penetrating and finer emotional observation of nuances. The play also requires from the spectators significant mental concentration for the interpretation of the symbolic "ego". Realization of the above mentioned modes can be regarded as a prospective way for the development of theatrical arts in Belarus, that is why the drama is recommended for the participation in the competition, organized by the Onassis foundation.

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