



Ukrainian Drama TRANSLATIONS

ukrdrama.ui.org.ua

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Play Original name / translated	And I Don't Care How You're Doing Anymore І мене більше не колише, як ти там
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Cast

Lora
Andrei
Musya (baby) – Lora and Andrei's daughter
Lora's Mum
Sakhno

Girl1, Girl2 – sixteen year-old schoolgirls
Gypsy-girl and Boy – street beggars

Collector – works for a debt collection agency
Maria Ivanovna – Lora’s neighbour
Traffic Cop – young woman
Prospective buyer of the dacha
Bailiff
Policeman1, Policeman2
Activist, Woman1, Woman2 – members of the “Get Out Of My Flat” movement
Owner – owner of a flat, which the bank is taking away to pay off her debts
Owner’s Son
Journalist
Cameraman
An employee of the firm “Body Business”
Removal Man
Deaf-mute man in a wheelchair

The action takes place in present day Ukraine.

Winter. Lora is standing on the road in front of a cash-point, trying to take out her bankcard, which has got stuck in the machine. Girl1 sits on a bench nearby, drinking an alcoholic energy drink (“Jaguar”, or something like that) and filming Lora on her mobile phone.

LORA: Card, card, fucking card, come on, come back to me, please! Come on card, I’m asking you nicely, I just really need some money right now! I know I’m stupid, I’m really stupid and it’s all my own fault, but why, for fuck’s sake, did you have to choose precisely now to get stuck in precisely this fucking cash-point, with its fucking awful optimistic cuntin’ slogan “Your money in just a few seconds”? Please come out *(waits for a bit, in vain)* Fuck off then! *(Pause. Then, tenderly)* Darling cash-point, what did I ever do to you?! I always put my PIN code in correctly, I’ve never kicked you or broken your glass. So why the fuck, at the precise moment that I need money do you do things like this, you fucking son of a bitch? Eh?.. *(punches the cash-point and shouts)* Give me my money right now! Right now, give it to me! Give it to me! *(sneezes, blows her nose, then calmly)* Bastards, the lot of you... *(leaves)*

Girl1 watches the video she has just made. Girl2 walks up behind her and puts her hands over Girl1’s eyes.

GIRL1: Nata, bloody hell, I hate it when you do that.

Girl2 takes her hands away.

GIRL2: What’s up with you, depressed again?

GIRL1: No, I just hate it when you do that.

GIRL2: At least I’m bloody here though, aren’t I?

GIRL1: You missed quite a performance! Check it out. (*shows her the video on her phone*)

GIRL2: Bullshit. Yegor won't take it. Hundred views max, that'll get.

GIRL1: This is funny. He likes funny stuff.

GIRL2: He likes shocking and violent stuff, more like.

GIRL1: He's a normal guy!

GIRL2: He's sick in the head! He put this video of these two fat birds up on Facebook. One of them was stood on the edge of a tall building shouting: "Fuck life without love! Fuck life without love!" And then she jumps. Then the other one goes: "I'm coming with you" and jumps as well and smashes her head open on the pavement.

GIRL1: And that's it?

GIRL2: Yeah.

GIRL1: How many views?!

GIRL2: Nearly a million.

GIRL1: Pretty good!

GIRL2: For who?!

GIRL1: For the girl who filmed it!

Pause.

GIRL2: How d'you know it was a girl?

GIRL1: Coz he added some new girl as a friend.

GIRL2: How d'you know it was her?

GIRL1: Coz Yegor only usually adds guys as friends, he only adds girls if they do something really impressive.

GIRL2: So filming a suicide is impressive?!

GIRL1: Yeah.

GIRL2: If I just went and jumped off the roof would you film it for Yegor?

GIRL1: You wouldn't jump off the roof!

GIRL2: I might! If I jumped would you jump off after me?

GIRL1: You're fucked in the head.

GIRL2: It's you who's fucked in the head! I'd never even dream of filming someone chucking themselves off a roof, or like cutting their own throat, just so some hipster retard turns his stupidly quiffed head in my direction!

Pause.

GIRL1: You're such a prude! I'm sorry, but you are! Don't you think that maybe this girl's properly tricked Yegor, that like no one actually jumped off the roof at all?! Coz wasn't there that Chechen guy, remember, and he like filmed some Russian girl getting her throat cut but then it came out that it was actually just a doll!

GIRL2: (*vindictively*) A girl wouldn't do that. With girls it's always real!

Scene 1

Lora and Andrei's flat. The flat is a mess. An old radio is hanging on the wall: no one has used it for a long time. A baby sleeps in the cot in the corner. Andrei is at the desk counting money. Lora is pacing here and there about the room, trying to put some things away, occasionally blowing into a handkerchief. A cat screeches heartrendingly outside.

LORA: When's it gonna shut up?!

ANDREI: (*counting money*) When it gets down out of that tree.

LORA: It hasn't been able to do that for three days straight!

ANDREI: So it'll probably die up there.

LORA: I made you an omelette.

ANDREI: Thanks. It's a bit lumpy though.

LORA: (*ignoring the insult*) First off I thought that cat must be in love, but then I realise it wasn't. It would've jumped if it were in love.

Andrei stops counting the money.

ANDREI: This doesn't make any sense!

LORA: So the accountant must've made a mistake.

ANDREI: The accountant's got a machine to do the calculations.

LORA: So the machine's made a mistake.

ANDREI: Machines don't make mistakes!

He walks around the room agitatedly.

ANDREI: And you definitely haven't touched any of it?

LORA: I promise.

ANDREI: Shit, then I probably dropped some. That time down the chemist's when I was buying Musya her nappies.

He rifles through his trouser pockets. He slips on some kind of cloth that's lying on the floor.

ANDREI: For crying out loud when is this house finally going to get tidied!?

LORA: *(self-justifying)* I'm doing it now. It's just difficult when the place is such a state anyway. We need to redecorate.

ANDREI: That's the hundredth time you've said that! *(goes back to looking for the money)* This doesn't make any sense. Well yeah, I gave the chemist a note but she asked if I had anything smaller, there was some old guy there too, making a scene. I was rummaging in my bag. And I was knackered after handing over the project. I basically must've dropped some of it!

LORA: Andrei, calm down. Maybe it'll turn up? Later...

ANDREI: No I've counted it a hundred times, been through everything. It must've been that day, I was wrung out like a wet cloth.

LORA: Sakhno'll be here soon. Why don't you borrow some off him?

ANDREI: He's already bringing a huge wad of cash to lend me!

LORA: For crying out loud, then borrow an extra two hundred off him and pay him back tomorrow!

ANDREI: Pay him back with what?! It'll be three weeks before I get paid for the second project!

LORA: Andryushka, darling, the money'll turn up! I have a good feeling!

ANDREI: Lora, forgive me if I really don't want to go along with one of your good feelings right now. The last time you had a good feeling was when you convinced me to buy this flat on credit by saying we'd be able to pay it off really quickly!

LORA: Well you didn't want to live with my mum and you always moaned that renting's too expensive!

ANDREI: Fine, but that was when we were both working, right now I'm the only one of us shovelling shit to pay off our massive mortgage!

LORA: So it's my fault for getting pregnant? I'm going back to work soon, but our child isn't even three months old yet!

ANDREI: Why are you saying I'm blaming you? No one's to blame for any of this. It's just it's unbearable sometimes!

LORA: I've got two hundred still left on my card.

ANDREI: And what were you planning to use to buy food?!

LORA: Well if you want I'll ask Sakhno for two hundred dollars then, shall I?

She goes to the hall, opens the door. The Collector stands in front of her, a short-haired, lively young man.

COLLECTOR: I'm from "Debt Review", the state debt collection company.

LORA: What's happened?

COLLECTOR: Is Andrei Vladimirovich Batura there?

LORA: He's at work.

Andrei comes in.

ANDREI: Who are you?

COLLECTOR: Andrei Vladimirovich?

ANDREI: Yes.

COLLECTOR: "Debt Review". Are we hiding?

ANDREI: There's no hiding from you.

COLLECTOR: I'll take that as a compliment. *(takes out some documents)* D'you know about this money you owe?

ANDREI: I do.

LORA: We already paid you!

COLLECTOR: Do you not feel ashamed when you lie?

LORA: His work stopped his pay for three months, and I'd only just had a baby!
We've explained a hundred times!

COLLECTOR: Do you know how much you owe? (*looks at the papers*)

ANDREI: I do.

COLLECTOR: Three months' worth: six thousand and twenty dollars!

LORA: Yesterday morning it was six thousand and ten!

COLLECTOR: It goes up by ten dollars a day.

ANDREI: Okay, we'll pay it today.

LORA: We're not paying that extra ten dollars though! (*to Andrei*) It's just ridiculous, how can they count today if you're just about to go and pay them?!

ANDREI: (*to the Collector*) Just ignore her.

LORA: No, let him answer, how can you take an extra ten dollars off us if we make the payment today?!

COLLECTOR: I'll say it again.

ANDREI: We got it! Have a nice day. (*makes to close the door*)

LORA: (*makes for the door and stops him from closing it*) I'll take you to court for fraud!

COLLECTOR: So you want to go to court do you?!

LORA: Yes! I'm not gonna give you bloodsuckers any more money than you're owed!

ANDREI: (*to no one in particular*) You're doing my head in. (*he doesn't have the strength to get in the way anymore, so he indifferently watches what follows.*)

COLLECTOR: Look, listen to me, you won't get this to court!

LORA: Why not?!

COLLECTOR: Coz I'll sort a sweet little life for you! You fancy that?!

LORA: Do your worst!

COLLECTOR: Two weeks in prison for starters!

LORA: What?!

COLLECTOR: Ha! Gone deaf all of sudden have we?

LORA: I don't owe you anything!

COLLECTOR: You don't owe me, no. You owe the bank!

LORA: I don't owe your bank anything either!

COLLECTOR: Alright, grab a pen and write down this number!

LORA: Take me to court then: I've had it with you! I've had it, d'you hear me!?

COLLECTOR: D'you even realise what you're saying?! I'll call uniform right this instant!

ANDREI: Right, that's enough! *(slams the door)*

COLLECTOR: *(from behind the door)* We'll come back for your belongings.

LORA: Just you try!

COLLECTOR: If you don't pay what you owe within the next few days, your flat will be taken to auction! *(his footsteps are heard moving away behind the door)*

LORA: Arsehole!

ANDREI: Why are you getting involved?! It's none of your business.

LORA: I wanted to protect you. *(sneezes and blows her nose)*

ANDREI: You're just making my life even more complicated!

Outside the window the sound of a fire engine's siren.

ANDREI: Fetch the engine, fetch the engine, fire fire.

He goes to the window, opens it, looks out into the courtyard.

ANDREI: I can't see any fire, though.

LORA: They'll have come for the cat.

ANDREI: What cat?

LORA: The cat up the tree.

ANDREI: Shut up.

LORA: I'm sure of it. Maria Ivanovna from the sixth floor will've called them.

ANDREI: The mental one who's always in a tracksuit?

LORA: She's not mental, she just loves animals. She's got twenty cats.

ANDREI: Like I said: mental! How'd she get the fire brigade to come out for a cat?

LORA: She'll have said somewhere's on fire.

ANDREI: Well she'll get a fine for starters. Your elderly friend'll be down a hundred bucks.

LORA: Animal Protection will have told her to do it. The cat'll be about nine floors up by now, the fire brigade are the only ones with a ladder that long.

ANDREI: Seems you're in the know about everything!

LORA: She tried to collect money from everyone in the building, fifty grivens each to give some mountaineer. Doing a sponsored climb for Animal Protection. It's just no one except me gave any money.

ANDREI: You gave our money to a cat?

LORA: He was crying like a baby!

ANDREI: For crying out loud!

LORA: It was four cartons of milk.

ANDREI: Are you insane?!

Lora walks around the room agitatedly, as if looking for something. She finally stops and plays a song on her mobile phone. It has a sentimental, heartfelt kind of melody, something in the vein of "Bomboleo".

LORA: Hm. Do you remember this song? How long has it been? Four years?

ANDREI: Lora, I'm wasting myself doing three jobs I hate! I'm forced to smile at bastards I despise! And all to give you and our baby a nice little corner in this fucking shithole of a world! This last couple of years I've turned into a complete nutcase, a worthless nobody, a loser! And the only thing that I really want is just to go to sleep.

Lora pretends to be listening attentively to the music.

LORA: I'd forgotten how good things were between us back then.

ANDREI: I'm endlessly borrowing and borrowing and borrowing! I'm constantly owing and owing and owing. I'm constantly saving and saving and saving. I can't even allow myself to buy a new pair of boxer shorts. And you go and spend fifty hrivens on a stupid bloody cat!

LORA: Calm down, I didn't spend that money. They didn't collect it in the end, the mountaineer was trying to climb Everest but he didn't make it to the top.

Pause.

ANDREI: There's no need to make me out to be some kind of miser.

LORA: I don't think you're a miser!

ANDREI: I just don't have the money! And I'm not a miser!

Lora goes over to Andrei and hugs him.

LORA: Andrei, please, just calm down. I really don't think you're a miser. Of course you're not a miser: we just don't have any money and that's all there is to it!

They stand in silence for a short while.

ANDREI: Lora, listen... I want to ask you something.

LORA: *(tenderly)* What?

ANDREI: Just turn off that music, please, it really is unbelievably annoying!

Lora stands and stares blankly at Andrei, then turns off the music on her phone. Andrei looks out of the window at what's going on outside.

ANDREI: *(looks out of the window at what's going on)* Look, Lorik, they're putting the ladder up! She's talked them into it! That crafty old witch!

LORA: *(also looking out of the window)* I just hope he doesn't fall!.. Please don't let him fall. I told myself that if they get him down then everything will be alright. *(shrieks)*

ANDREI: Down he comes! *(laughter from outside. Andrei laughs too)* He's fine, look, he's sprinted off from your Maria Ivanovna like he's been scalded with turpentine! Now she's trying to catch him in a blanket! Why's she got a blanket?

LORA: Because it's minus ten out there and the cat'll be freezing! (*moves away from the window*)

MARIA: (*from outside*) Loročka, did you see that? I'm coming up to see you.

LORA: (*shouting out of the window*) Leave it for now!

MARIA: (*from outside*) What?

LORA: Come round a bit later. Please!

MARIA: (*from outside*) I can't hear you! I'll just come up now and tell you all about it.

LORA: Oh this is the last thing we need. Well, it's time for you to go to the bank. Where's that Sakhno got himself to?!

ANDREI: Sakhno's got himself to work! He's doing an operation today, some old man and his heart! He said he wouldn't be able to make it till half four!

The doorbell. Andrei answers the door. Maria Ivanovna enters holding a dirty blanket.

MARIA: You have a wonderful wife. So kind. She loves animals.

ANDREI: Well I've always said a love of animals is hugely important for keeping up the family morale.

MARIA: Of course. My husband loved cattiees too. Our forty years together felt like it passed in a day.

ANDREI: How did you manage to convince the firemen?

MARIA: Well, if it wasn't for –

LORA: (*interrupting*) Maria Ivanovna do you want to see Musya?

ANDREI: She's asleep.

LORA: So what?! (*Andrei waves his hand as if to say "What's the matter with you?" Then goes and sits down at the desk and looks through his documents*)

MARIA: The firemen were so lovely they just took your –

LORA: (*grabs Maria Ivanovna by the hand and drags her to the cot*) Isn't she beautiful!

MARIA: So don't worry, your efforts –

LORA: You know, Maria Ivanovna, Musya actually has a little abnormality, it's called Distichia!

MARIA: Oh my Lord!

LORA: She got it from my grandfather! He had pale blue eyes and long dark eyelashes which grew in two rows like Elizabeth Taylor. The women were very jealous of him.

MARIA: That's alright then. Lorochnka, you should've seen that fireman's face when I told him I'd called him out under false pretences but then offered him –

LORA: *(starts to gabble)* And that's not all! My grandfather was a moron and an alcoholic! He survived the whole war, sat there in his tank, he got to Berlin. Before the war he had half the women in the town where he lived. He had the other half when he got back. My grandma knew all about it! When he came back from Germany he brought some young girl along with him as his lover. My grandma took her into the family! When he died everyone at his funeral was absolutely inconsolable, my grandma, the German girl, their children – my future father and my aunts – and quite a large number of women who, I strongly suspect, also had children by my grandfather. And you know what, Maria Ivanovna, I don't judge my grandfather. I think if I'd lived in those times and I'd've met him, I'd've given him one as well!

MARIA: Thank God you didn't live in those times! I was a little girl back during the war and all I remember is that we had a German army helmet as a chamber pot. *(stands there as if reminiscing about something)* Ooh Lora, your story's made my head spin. Time for me to feed my cattles. *(she forgets the blanket, which is hanging on the side of the cot)*

LORA: *(calmer)* I'll walk you out.

Lora takes Maria Ivanovna by the hand and practically drags her towards the door. At that moment a cat's miaow is heard outside. Maria Ivanovna turns around and addresses Andrei.

MARIA: Andrei, your wife really is a saviour, such a generous soul.

ANDREI: What d'you mean?

LORA: Maria Ivanovna, I really think it's time for you to go.

ANDREI: Lora, I don't understand, what generosity?

MARIA: Surely she's told you?! If it weren't for her two hundred dollars my catty would've died. The firemen were very pleased to receive it. Well, have a lovely evening. *(she leaves)*

Andrei silently grabs his bag and puts the money and documents into it. Lora runs to him and grabs him by the hand.

LORA: Andrei, wait!

ANDREI: *(pulls away his hand, calmly)* Go away.

LORA: *(to Andrei)* I can explain.

The baby cries. Andrei puts his coat on.

LORA: Andrei!

ANDREI: The baby's crying. *(He leaves.)*

Lora runs to the door, then turns back to the crying baby, then turns again to the door, again to the baby, then she picks up the baby, quickly wraps it up in the blanket Maria left behind, and runs, wearing nothing but a t-shirt and slippers on her bare feet, out into the courtyard after Andrei.

LORA: Please!

ANDREI: What do you want from me?

LORA: I want you to understand!

ANDREI: I understand. Is that everything?!

LORA: I'll pay the money back tomorrow. The cash point ate my card.

ANDREI: *(laughing)* Do you think that changes anything?!

LORA: I wanted to tell you, ask your permission. But your phone was off.

ANDREI: Because I was sick of the debt collectors calling me.

LORA: I was calling you.

ANDREI: Yes, you were calling me thirty times a day, they were calling me twenty!

LORA: You could've called me back.

ANDREI: I wouldn't've let you waste two hundred dollars on some stupid cat!

LORA: *(blows her nose)* If I was a prostitute and got nicked by the cops, would you pay my bail?

ANDREI: Lora, Sakhno's waiting for me... And can you stop blowing your nose!
It's just unbearable!

Andrei leaves. Lora stands and stands in the street holding the crying baby, not noticing that it has started to snow.

Scene 2

Andrei and Sakhno are in a car driving around town.

SAKHNO: Calm down, we'll easily get there in half an hour. Just keep going down Opanki then bam, straight down Sokolyan!

ANDREI: I told you to go down Markovskii Prospekt!

SAKHNO: Nah I've been there already today, total standstill. Some pipe's burst or something.

ANDREI: Fuck's sake! As if the rest of my life wasn't shit enough there's bloody traffic jams everywhere!

SAKHNO: We'll get to the bank, what you getting so worked up about?!

ANDREI: The only thing I don't get is how you managed to get all this money. Your official pay's how much?

SAKHNO: Doesn't matter. Four thousand a month.

ANDREI: So where, where did you get the money for all this?

SAKHNO: *(shouts to another driver)* Bloody hell you wankshaft, what d'you cut me up for?! I'm skidding a bit.

ANDREI: San mate hurry up! The bank's gonna crucify me.

SAKHNO: Stop thinking the worst all the time. Concentrate on the positive things in life. Lora was telling me that they closed half the firm but you got to keep your job, so why aren't you happy?!

ANDREI: Yeah of course I'm happy that from nine till six every day for as long as I live I get to edit adverts for ketchup and sanitary towels, I'm as happy as fucking Larry! The only thing I feel fucking grateful about is that I even have a job at all, unlike thousands of other arseholes in this country!

SAKHNO: You've got someone to live for, though.

ANDREI: You say that but you don't bloody well live with her.

SAKHNO: What's wrong?

ANDREI: She tells me a hundred times a day that she can't live without me, then I find she's put a load of my socks in the fridge, do you think that's normal?!

SAKHNO: *(laughing)* She's always been like that. It's even kind of cool. When we met the first thing I ever did was wash the dishes in her kitchen.

ANDREI: Well it might look cool to you but it's bloody impossible to live with. We don't have any money at all right now, but she went and spent two hundred hrivens on some mega-fancy cream for children's backsides just because Musya has some barely noticeable pimple on her arse!

SAKHNO: *(laughing)* They always go a bit mental just after they've given birth.

ANDREI: She constantly asks me why I look "SO MISERABLE"?! And yet not once during our marriage have I ever got home to find hot food on the table!

SAKHNO: *(shouting to another driver)* What you doing mate, a bloody kamikaze?!

ANDREI: That's how she was brought up, her mother spent her whole life doing social work and off on marches, she can't even fry an egg!

SAKHNO: I'll try and nip straight across where Arie and Kvinikadze meet, it's really tight up there this time of day.

ANDREI: And this "Young Families" political programme instigated by her mother is just a load of fucking bullshit. We were promised a subsidy of ten percent, what the hell happened to it?

SAKHNO: *(beeping)* Where'd you learn to drive, moron? Go!

ANDREI: And I've got myself into so much debt that now I won't be able to take holidays or any time off for the next thirty years... That last public holiday seemed to be over even before it started, and Lora's spent two hundred dollars on saving some stupid bloody cat, two hundred dollars I was supposed to give to you!

SAKHNO: Go on, go then you cow, bloody yokels never let anyone go! I don't need that money right away.

ANDREI: I'll get it to you, I'll get it to you.

SAKHNO: Some other time, it's fine.

ANDREI: Don't worry though, if I said I'll get it to you I'll get it to you.

SAKHNO: Ah roads are clear up ahead, we'll only be ten minutes from here. Your problem is that you're always pissed off! Smile and the world opens up to you, and it shows you its face not its arse. *(cars start to beep, police sirens sound)* Fuck! What's this, a fucking cortege or something?!

MALE VOICE OVER A MEGAPHONE: All cars to the right please... Will licence plate 96 77 move to the right please.

SAKHNO: *(shouting)* How am I supposed to move to the right?!

ANDREI: Who is it?

SAKHNO: Can't you see all the sirens?

MALE VOICE OVER A MEGAPHONE: Will the driver of the fucking Toyota, licence plate 96 77 pull over to the right!

SAKHNO: I'm pulling over, I'm pulling over, but how the hell am I supposed to get between a truck and a bus in two bloody seconds, who d'you think I am, Thumbelina?! *(to Andrei)* We'll get there, we'll be out of here in under an hour, the Vice President's going to work so they have to close the road.

ANDREI: They can all fuck off!

SAKHNO: Are you properly screwed with the bank then?

ANDREI: They're threatening to take me to court.

SAKHNO: That's the way they do things. *(tries to park the car and mounts the pavement)*

A police whistle sounds and a traffic cop runs over, a plain-looking young woman.

COP: How dare you break the law in broad daylight? Why did you mount the pavement?!

SAKHNO: Young lady.

COP: I am not a young lady to you, I am a traffic policewoman.

SAKHNO: Maybe we can come to some sort of arrangement? *(takes out his wallet)* Believe you me, I really think we should go somewhere a bit quieter.

COP: I'll put you somewhere a bit quieter: prison.

SAKHNO: Okay, I get it Miss Traffic Policewoman, I'm sorry.

COP: Right, you're going to prison!

ANDREI: What right have you got, what've we done wrong?

COP: You got a problem?

ANDREI: Yeah, I do! How've we broken the law and not them? Barging through here like tanks!

SAKHNO: Andrei, stop it! *(to the cop)* We'll move out of the pedestrian zone.

ANDREI: *(shouting at the cop)* All we get out of the fucking idiot box is how hard the government's working to solve all our problems! And yet I'm being kicked out onto the streets and I have a three month old child, what the fuck do you think of that?! Isn't that breaking the fucking law?!

The traffic cop takes out her radio.

SAKHNO: *(to Andrei)* Shut up! *(to the cop)* Excuse us. Young lady, I mean, young traffic policewoman, couldn't we go somewhere and sort all this out after work in some sort of non-official capacity?

COP: *(contemptibly)* You? And me? Give it a rest, you silly little boy. *(she leaves)*

SAKHNO: *(shouting after her)* Shame, I think I'd practically fallen in love with you. *(laughing)* Women! No matter what they look like they act like they're bloody royalty.

A gypsy-girl and a boy run up to Sakhno and Andrei, both carrying skateboards.

BOY: Spare some change lads.

SAKHNO: Mate I gave you ten hrivens yesterday.

GYPSY-GIRL: *(to Andrei)* Uncle, who d'you reckon would win in a fight: Superman or Spiderman?

ANDREI: Dunno.

GYPSY-GIRL: Superman of course! Superman or Supergirl?

SAKHNO: *(giving the children money)* Kids, just get out of here. *(the children run off)* They're always coming up to you in this spot. *(takes some weed out of the glove compartment and starts rolling a joint)* Want some?

ANDREI: There's cops over there!

SAKHNO: Yeah like they're gonna come for us. How they gonna get to us when the traffic's at a standstill?

ANDREI: Where d'you get the weed from?

SAKHNO: Kolyan brought it from the village. His wife was nagging him: "You're thirty years old, go and work." So he kicked back and planted a load of cannabis in with the potatoes. While it was "maturing" his wife thought it was food for the pigs. She harvested it all, then tried to sell it to the local peasants, cops nicked her straight away. She's currently awaiting trial.

ANDREI: Kolyan's probably happy. She was always pissing him off.

SAKHNO: He brought the rest of the crop in and came to Kiev to sell it to pay for her bail. He, like, loves her.

ANDREI: *(laughing)* What a lowlife. You sure it's not just tea?

SAKHNO: Nah he's an honest bloke now. He's a Buddhist, he doesn't eat meat, he meditates. *(hands Andrei the spliff)*

ANDREI: The last time I smoked was third year at university. I was out of it for three days afterwards.

SAKHNO: Don't worry, this is a clean, organic, ecological spliff!

ANDREI: Nah. I won't.

SAKHNO: It really does help me to relax. Especially after an operation. Gimme your lighter.

Andrei takes a lighter out of his pocket.

ANDREI: Fine, go on then. Life couldn't really get any shitter! *(he takes the spliff from Sakhno, takes a drag)*

SAKHNO: How is it?

ANDREI: I'll never understand it. *(takes another drag)* Pure, clean weed: I never expected it from Kolyan. *(gives the spliff to Sakhno)* When was the last time you were happy?

SAKHNO: *(tries to take a drag, it doesn't work)* Shit, it's gone out... When I was thirteen and we used to skateboard in The Cellars.

ANDREI: That place was a dump, classic.

SAKHNO: And you, when were you last happy?

ANDREI: *(thinks)* I can't remember.

SAKHNO: We need to start feeling like we're thirteen again mate, so we don't choke on all the shit in our lives!

The gypsy-girl and the boy run up to the car.

GYPSY-GIRL: Uncle, gimme a cig.

SAKHNO: You're too young to smoke.

ANDREI: Wait. *(he hands her the packet)* Take the packet.

GYPSY-GIRL: *(takes the cigarettes. Then, uncertainly)* And could we have some money for a little bit of bread?

SAKHNO: We already gave you some.

GYPSY-GIRL: *(nods to the boy standing nearby)* Not for me, for him.

Andrei takes the fifteen thousand dollars he owes in credit out of his pocket and gives it to the girl. Sakhno, stunned, stares at Andrei.

SAKHNO: Andrei d'you realise what you've just done?

ANDREI: San, take the lighter. I'm going, I'm sorry. *(he gets out of the car)*

Sakhno looks at the spliff, then, horrified, throws it away. Andrei walks off with the children.

ANDREI: At that moment I felt like I was skateboarding through my stagnant and dour city, past high fences and factory smoke stacks, past its grey-faced inhabitants who are always angry and sad, through my city, where even the tramps smoke Lucky Strike. Lucky Strike, real America, d'you remember how happy we were?! And you stood in your shorts, so young and carefree, and I flew along past you at the speed of light, and past us, and I flew on my skateboard right into the mouth of the bright burning sun.

Scene 3

A dacha. The pram is there, and Musya is asleep in it. Lora, her mum and a prospective buyer, a sleek, plump woman of around forty-five, are viewing Lora's dacha.

BUYER: Where now?

MUM: To the left, please.

BUYER: It's all been dug up.

MUM: It's a vegetable garden. Vegetables grow really well out here. And do you see the cactus by the fence?

BUYER: Reminds me of a penis in the snow.

Lora laughs nervously.

MUM: *(reproachfully)* Lora's father planted this garden.

BUYER: Has it flowered?

MUM: What?

MUM: No.

LORA: Let's carry on with the tour.

BUYER: Strange.

MUM: Why?

BUYER: They flower in times of stress. Moving house, changing the soil, that's stressful.

MUM: My husband treated his plants with great care.

LORA: D'you want to have a look at the house?

BUYER: Of course. But to be honest on the whole I think this is the place for me. Shall we sign over the documents?

MUM: Wait, I haven't shown her everything.

LORA: Mum! *(points at her watch)*

MUM: *(to the buyer)* Have you seen this tree? It's an oak.

BUYER: Don't worry, we'll cut it down.

MUM: My mother's first husband planted it here. On the day he married my mother. It gives some lovely shade.

BUYER: I love the sun!

MUM: A week later he went off to the front. Died in the first few days of the war.

BUYER: I'm sorry you lost your father.

MUM: No, I was born ten years later. My mum married his brother. At the end of her life she used to talk to this tree as if it were her first husband. "I only ever loved you," she said to it. Then she died, right here beneath it.

BUYER: Well we'll need to cut the trees down to make room for the tennis court.

MUM: I love this old oak.

The buyer stumbles over something.

BUYER: It's like a minefield out here.

MUM: It's a frozen rake. Lora's was raking leaves out here in autumn when –

LORA: Mum don't you have some food on the stove you should check?

MUM: – He died. No, I don't. He died right where you're standing now.

BUYER: Oh my goodness. *(the buyer crosses herself and moves away)*

MUM: His tongue rolled right out. Just goes to show, no one's insured against death.

LORA: Mum!

MUM: What?! No one except your father ever cleaned this place up! *(to the buyer)* Forgive us, we need for weather to warm up before we pick up the rake and all that.

Sakhno arrives with a bottle of champagne.

SAKHNO: *(to the buyer)* With my compliments, Ninel Leonidovna.

BUYER: What took you so long?

SAKHNO: I was looking for your favourite champagne. *(to Lora, quietly)* So how's it going darling, you sold it?

Lora nods.

BUYER: To be honest on the whole, Aleksandr, I'm just itching to buy it!

LORA: *(to Sakhno, quietly)* We just need to get out of here quickly, it'll be starting soon.

SAKHNO: Shall we celebrate your purchase in a restaurant?!

MUM: It's not been sold yet! This house doesn't have a new mistress yet!

SAKHNO: It's but moments away! Ninel Leonidovna, I know everything about this place.

BUYER: (*nodding to Lora*) Old friends, are you?

SAKHNO: We had the place next door.

BUYER: So you sold up too did you?

SAKHNO: Family crisis. (*drags her towards the house*) Believe you me, you'll be happy here. The air's so wonderful here you could drink it.

MUM: In the morning maybe!

LORA: (*not holding back*) It makes you feel epically strong! (*walks to the pram, pushes it around the garden*)

BUYER: (*notices something*) Oh, how charming!

SAKHNO: What is it, Ninel Leonidovna?

BUYER: There, on the fence, where Lora – have I got your name right? – just walked past with the pram! (*drags him to the fence*) Aleksandr, as a man who knows the value of modern art and as a frequent client of my gallery, you ought to understand the beauty of this.

SAKHNO: Where?

BUYER: Right there. (*shows him*)

SAKHNO: It looks like a pile of golf balls.

BUYER: (*presses herself against Sakhno*) Look closer, it reminds me of the Damien Hirst skull! Only crafted out of nature itself!

SAKHNO: Ninel your eye for detail never ceases to amaze me!

MUM: It's manure.

BUYER: What?

MUM: It's horse shit, frozen, Lora's dad used it to feed the cactus!

BUYER: Your husband was a very, very... interesting man.

LORA: Sash as far as I understand it Ninel Leonidovna is on the whole to be honest just itching to buy the place.

BUYER: *(leaning intimately into Sakhno)* Aleksandr, show me the house, would you? Let's drink some champagne.

SAKHNO: Anything for you! *(They move towards the house)*

BUYER: Well what are we going to drink it out of? They probably don't have any glasses, do they?

SAKHNO: We'll drink it from the bottle. *(leads the woman into the house)*

MUM: *(shouting after them)* Well, yes, the wiring's all burnt out in there and watch out for the mice running about your feet.

LORA: *(looking at her watch)* Are you deliberately trying to extend the viewing? Do you want her to smell how bad it gets when the rubbish recycling plant next door starts up?

MUM: What's so bad about the smell?

LORA: If that woman stays here another twenty-five minutes she won't buy the house!

MUM: I put up with it for twenty-five years!

BUYER: You gave me your word! You agreed to the sale!

MUM: Your father died here!

The sound of the buyer's laughter from the house.

LORA: My father was a wanker!

MUM: Not all the time!

LORA: He used to get drunk and beat you up!

MUM: He never laid a finger on me when he was sober! He even brought me breakfast in bed.

LORA: But he was pissed the whole time!

MUM: At least he loved me, and didn't just moan at me the whole time, unlike some people's husbands.

LORA: What are you implying?!

MUM: I'm implying that Andrei never smiles and never seems happy about anything!

LORA: He's having a hard time.

MUM: He's always having a hard time and he's always unhappy with you.

LORA: Do you want Andrei and me to lose our flat?!

MUM: Where is he when you need him by your side?! Off somewhere flushing money down the toilet!

LORA: Mum, mummy, I'm asking you nicely! For fuck's sake I'm going to explode in a minute!

MUM: Why haven't you registered your marriage?!

LORA: I've never asked you for anything before.

MUM: You'll give him the money then he'll come back with some other woman and kick you out into the street.

Sakhno and the buyer come back out.

LORA: *(to the buyer)* Do you like it?

BUYER: Of course it's not modern, but –

LORA: It's yours for whatever you offer.

BUYER: Then we have a deal.

Lora holds out the contract. The baby cries. The buyer goes over to the pram.

Silly little sausage. Smells like she's done a poo.

LORA: We should get going.

BUYER: You ought to change your little sausage's nappy.

LORA: It's too cold. She'll have to wait a bit.

BUYER: But that'll irritate her little botty. You can do it in my car, I left the heater on.

LORA: That's very kind of you, but we wouldn't want to dirty up your seats.

BUYER: Wow your little sausage really has done quite the smelly poo! Do you smell how bad that is? I didn't think baby's poo could smell so bad. *(sniffing)* Or maybe that isn't from the baby.

LORA: You can take five thousand off your offer.

BUYER: Wait. Where's that God-awful smell coming from?

LORA: Don't worry, in a couple of hours you'll be (*looks at Sakhno*) able to drink the air again.

BUYER: What are you talking about?

LORA: Oh, nothing!

MUM: There's a waste recycling plant on the other side of the river.

BUYER: Aleksandr!

SAKHNO: I can explain.

BUYER: I see what's going on here. Well I at least like to get kissed before I get fucked!

The buyer turns and leaves. Sakhno runs after her.

SAKHNO: It wasn't there when I was a child.

Lora sits on the ground next to the pram and stares blankly into the distance.

MUM: Loročka, you'll catch cold.

LORA: All you ever cared about is dad.

MUM: That's not true.

LORA: I'm not even a person to you!

MUM: I hate your father.

LORA: Well that's a turnout for the books!

MUM: When you were only a month old he disappeared for a few days.

LORA: Like Andrei?

MUM: Yes. There's not much difference between the two of them. You were asleep, you were so small and helpless in your cot and I left the house and went to look for him in the streets, shouting "Andrei where are you? Andrei where are you?" I looked for him and looked for him. And looked for him. I kept looking for him until I was raped. I didn't even see their faces, they hit me from behind with something heavy and all I heard in my head while all this was going on was "Andrei where are you?"

LORA: Fuck.

MUM: Don't swear.

LORA: And where was he?

MUM: He was here, at the dacha.

LORA: With a woman?

MUM: Alone.

LORA: Did you tell him?

MUM: He got really upset then shouted: "This could only happen to you." As if he wanted to do the abortion himself. And at that moment I understood: I don't need this man anymore. *(the sound of a car pulling away)* It's more painful than unrequited love, when you realise that someone you used to need has become just an ordinary person.

LORA: Why didn't you leave him?

MUM: I wanted you to have a father...

Sakhno returns.

SAKHNO: She wouldn't even go to half price.

Musya cries in her pram. Lora doesn't react to this, but continues staring off into space, rocking the pram.

MUM: Get up, it's time to feed Musya.

Lora shakes her head.

MUM: Lora, get up! Pull yourself together and feed your child!

LORA: Mum there's a bottle with some powdered milk in it in her pram, give that to her, please.

MUM: You're gonna stuff your kid with that poison, are you?! Get up and give her your breast!

LORA: I can't.

MUM: Are you or are you not her mother?! Sitting there sulking on the floor like a fifteen year-old.

LORA: *(calmly)* Mum I can't feed Musya myself because my milk's run out. I haven't been able to for two days now.

Pause.

MUM: My poor little baby (*it's not clear to whom this is addressed: Lora or the baby. Lora's mum picks up Musya and feeds her from the bottle with the powdered milk in it. To Musya*) Who can't get to sleep? Who has such lovely little eyes? Come on, granny'll show you her dacha, she'll give you some milk and change your nappy my lovely little piglet. Okay? (*takes Musya towards the house. To Sakhno*) San make her get up or she'll get frostbite on her arse!

Sakhno goes to Lora and offers her his hand. No response from Lora.

SAKHNO: Come on, get up.

Lora shakes her head.

SAKHNO: You'll catch a cold sitting down there.

Lora rocks the pram by its handle, then suddenly something dawns on her, and she stops.

LORA: Believe me Sakno: if someone wants to kill themselves they're hardly gonna be worried about catching a cold.

Pause.

SAKHNO: He's been spotted.

LORA: (*jumping up*) Where?

SAKHNO: Oh look how quickly your legs are working again! And before you were all like "I can't, I can't."

LORA: Where's he been spotted?

SAKHNO: In a café, in the centre of town. A cop I know just called and told me.

LORA: I'm going...

SAKHNO: (*grabs her hand*) Wait, I'll drive you.

LORA: (*moved*) Thanks, thank you Sasha.

SAKHNO: What for?

LORA: For what you've just done for me, you can't imagine how good it feels!

SAKHNO: Your hands are cold.

LORA: Coz there's ice on the ground.

SAKHNO: Coz you aren't loved enough.

MUM: *(shouts from offstage)* Darling, Musya's been fed, she's smiling, I changed her nappy.

LORA: Good.

MUM: Lora!

LORA: What?!

MUM: Everything'll be fine!

LORA: How'd you work that one out?

MUM: I had a dream about you last night!

LORA: I dreamt about you too!

MUM: I dreamt you were bald... That's good luck.

Scene 4

Lora is throwing up in the toilet of a cheap bar. From the other side of the toilet door we hear the sounds of people having fun, life-affirming pop music. Lora finishes throwing up and goes to the washbasin, splashes her face with cold water, looks at herself in the mirror. She can't find any paper towels next to the sink, instead of towels there is a pile of carefully torn up newspaper sheets. Lora takes a piece of newspaper and dries her face. She is about to throw the piece away, but one of the articles catches her eye. She reads the article, then starts to cry drunkenly.

Lora comes out of the toilet and walks, staggering, over to her table, where Sakhno is waiting for her. Sakhno is carefully studying something on his mobile phone. A deaf-mute man in a wheelchair is going around the bar, going up to people's tables and putting little figures of animals on them and signalling that people buy them. Lora sits down at the table.

SAKHNO: *(not paying attention to Lora, texting someone)* Better?

LORA: Worse.

SAKHNO: You shouldn't've had that tequila.

LORA: But I love tequila. Want another drink?

SAKHNO: You've had enough!

LORA: That's good to know.

SAKHNO: *(looks at Lora)* What happened in the toilet? You look shaken up.

LORA: I found some newspaper clippings *(she waves them)* Look what they say *(she is not speaking to anyone specific. Sakhno goes back to looking at his phone)* If someone's in debt, they always manage to find clippings from the morning paper. Maybe someone'll have wiped their arse on another part of it, but you'll always manage to find the part that's relevant to you: "Thirty-two year-old Diana Nochivnaya, a mother of five from the Rostov region of Russia borrowed ten thousand roubles, the equivalent of about three hundred and forty dollars, from the bank, but failed to pay it back on time and committed suicide. The woman went to a high bridge above a railway line and threw herself off. Her body fell onto the high-voltage wiring beneath. In the course of the investigation into her death, it emerged that she was the mother of five children, the eldest of whom is sixteen, the youngest is two. She was forced to take a loan because her wages were too low. The woman had planned on paying back the loan after her husband had brought back some earnings from abroad, but he returned without any money. The debt still stands."
Yes, bankers, the debt still stands. A woman by the name of Diana Nochivnaya no longer exists. And maybe, just maybe, oh respectable wonderful owners of the banks, when you're at home fucking your freshly manicured wives oh so quietly, without even a sound, not even the creaking of the bed, maybe at the exact moment that you're just about to come you'll think that maybe your wife is worth more than the meagre ten thousand roubles, the equivalent of three hundred and forty dollars, that Diana Nochivnaya lost her life for? Yes... Maybe you will... Maybe at that moment your bastard conscience will give just a little twinge because that woman lost her life. Because she really did lose her life... And here in my hands I have a little piece of newspaper which sums up the entire worth of her life and her death: a total of nine lines. And in reality, in real reality, stepping out from this play for just a little moment, that woman left five children behind. The youngest is two years old. But of course you have no idea where this village in Rostov province even is, and you couldn't care less what little toy that two year-old girl is holding in her hands right now –

SAKHNO: Lora, there's no need for pathos!

LORA: Sakhno, there's no need for pathos!

SAKHNO: I've wasted half an hour here.

LORA: Don't you feel sorry for these people?

SAKHNO: Pay your loan back on time or don't get one at all.

LORA: I know. And if you want to live the high life you need to shit on your fellow man and not listen to your conscience!

SAKHNO: What d'you want me to do, burst into tears just like you?

LORA: I want Andrei to come back and I want you to give us some money.

SAKHNO: I don't have any money right now. If I get some, I'll give it to you. I've got a tough operation tomorrow.

LORA: D'you feel sorry for the people you cut up?

SAKHNO: I operate on them, I don't cut them up. I save their lives. We're going.

LORA: Why didn't you stop him then? Why didn't you save his life?

SAKHNO: Because he didn't want me to!

LORA: If he came here already it means he might come here again. I've got a good feeling about this.

SAKHNO: When you're pissed you remind me of my mother.

LORA: A person can't just walk off like that and vanish.

SAKHNO: When I was a kid all she did was drink and read, drink and read.

LORA: You know I've just realised I really will die without him.

SAKHNO: And then one day she said to me that she was drinking because she wanted to drink herself to death.

LORA: Fine, let's go!

Lora and Sakhno stand. The deaf-mute man comes up to them and puts a clay figurine of a cat down on their table. Lora moves away from the cat, as if it's an omen. The deaf-mute man goes to another table, leaving the clay figurine behind. Lora picks up the figurine and examines it, then sits down.

SAKHNO: What now?

LORA: I'm not going anywhere.

SAKNO: Lora sometimes I think you really are mental.

LORA: Look, it's a cat, it's a sign he's here somewhere! If it wasn't for that cat that got stuck up the tree...

SAKHNO: It wouldn't have made any difference!

LORA: How do you know?! He disappeared once before, just for one day. If was during our first year together. We'd gone on holiday to Yevpatoria, to some shithole resort I'd been taken to as a child.

SAKHNO: No one's ever taken me anywhere on holiday.

LORA: I had this really bad cough so my mum took me there to get better. And in our first year together he got a bad cough too, so I decided to take him there. Back then he was so... nervous and skinny, he was some sort of ghost.

SAKHNO: And he was pissed off with everything, as usual.

LORA: Morning till night we wandered round the city, it was covered in dust, he never liked the beach. And everywhere we went there was this one song playing, it was stupid, but happy: he got so annoyed, but I really liked it. I was so happy in that shitty little town by the sea.

SAKHNO: My mum used to take me fishing in the summer. We caught fish and sold them on the bazaar. She used the money to buy new shirts for me and vodka for herself.

LORA: There were always loads of children with cerebral palsy on holiday in that town. Can you imagine, I spent my whole childhood going to that resort staring at those poor kids with their twisted, crumpled faces and bodies. One time Andrei and I decided to go the beach anyway. There was this disabled girl there, blonde hair, a little fringe and a bob cut. She was digging a hole in the sand, and one of her aunts or something asked her: "Are you digging a grave?" I don't know what that did to Andrei, but he turned and said to me that inside he was just the same as that little girl, that he was sick just like her, and the best feeling he could ever have would be digging his own grave. And then he walked off... And he didn't turn up for twenty-four hours. When he came back he didn't even say sorry. I wasn't upset. I was happy, because when I'm with him something happens to me and I feel alive.

SAKHNO: So when you're with me nothing happens?

LORA: What?

SAKHNO: You're just constantly asking me for money to get Andrei out of various pathetic situations. And you give me nothing in return, Lora.

LORA: What d'you want in return, you want me to fuck you?

SAKHNO: There's no need to be so vulgar about it!

LORA: Four years ago was an accident.

SAKHNO: You said you didn't remember any of it because you were drunk!

LORA: You know what really makes me angry? Everyone just thinks about their own arses! The times they've been fucked over, their own fucking pain. They can all fuck off!

SAKHNO: If I had the money I'd give it to you right now, but I don't have it!.. I fucked Ninel Leonidovna so she'd come and buy your stupid fucking dacha!

LORA: *(Pause)* So what? She didn't buy it.

SAKHNO: Stop wasting time, he's not coming here! I made up all that stuff about him being spotted.

LORA: Why?!

SAKHNO: So you'd get up off the ground and not catch a bloody cold!

LORA: I hate you!

A man who looks like Andrei walks past.

LORA: Andrei!

The man, not paying attention to Lora's shouts, goes towards the exit, moving around the man in the wheelchair, who is trying unsuccessfully to leave the café, he can't get over the raised threshold of the doorway. Lora also rushes towards the exit, moves around the deaf-mute man, and runs out onto the street.

SAKHNO: Lora, Lora.

He quickly goes after her. Sakhno stops in front of the deaf-mute man, helps to get his wheelchair out of the door, and runs out into the street after Lora.

Scene 5

Girl1 sits on a bench, drinking an alcoholic energy drink. Girl2 comes up behind her and puts her hands over Girl1's eyes.

GIRL1: Give it a rest!

GIRL2: Where've you been? You missed some classic shit.

GIRL1: Don't care. I'm happy.

GIRL2: You gave it to Yegor?

GIRL1: Even better!

GIRL2: What could you possibly think is better than that?

GIRL1: I got to film something that was really worth it.

GIRL2: Worth a million views?

GIRL1: Fuck off with your sarcasm.

GIRL2: Show me.

GIRL1: So this morning I went for a piss.

GIRL2: Spare me the gory details.

GIRL1: Dad left his Playboy next to the loo.

GIRL2: Lame. My parents gave me their computer and forgot to wipe their porn off it: boring.

GIRL1: When I saw that magazine lying there on the tiled floor with the naked girl on the cover I knew that something was going to happen today. That today is my day! And it fucking well is!

Girl1 takes out her mobile phone and shows the video to her friend. Everything that happens on the phone now happens on stage. The girls watch the action on the phone and don't look at the stage.

Three middle-aged women, activists for the organisation "Get Out Of My Flat" are standing in front of a multi-storey block of flats, blocking the entranceway. They are holding homemade placards, on which are written: "Say no to eviction." Also present are a bailiff and two policemen.

ACTIVISTS: *(chanting)* No to eviction! Not to eviction! We won't sell out to investors!

An activist throws a flaming piece of material at the feet of the bailiff.

BAILIFF: Oh wow, big fire!

ACTIVIST: Just you try to enter this building, I'll set myself on fire and I'll burn just like that cloth!

BAILIFF: What d'you mean?

ACTIVIST: I'm their neighbour, they're good people.

BAILIFF: Their flat's up for confiscation.

ACTIVIST: They've got three children.

BAILIFF: I'm just a bailiff.

ACTIVIST: They've got nowhere to go.

BAILIFF: Can't you take them in?

ACTIVIST: I've got a disabled mother to look after.

BAILIFF: Just let me past.

ACTIVIST: No.

BAILIFF: Then we'll have to use force.

ACTIVIST: You're gonna regret that!

The bailiff signals to the policemen.

The activist signals to her colleagues.

The "ranks" close up on both sides. The activist raises a flaming cloth and throws it in the bailiff's face.

BAILIFF: *(to the activist)* D'you fancy three days in the can?

ACTIVIST: Don't even try to get in there!

BAILIFF: *(to the policemen)* Move her out of the way.

The policemen grab the activist, drag her away, she puts up a firm resistance.

ACTIVIST: Don't touch me! Bastards, don't you have a conscience?

WOMAN1: Sveta, don't fight back! Sveta calm down!

ACTIVIST: Snakes!

POLICEMAN1: *(to the activist)* How dare you behave like this? You're a woman, aren't you?

BAILIFF: *(to the activist's colleagues)* Stand down, or we'll take down your names, addresses and places of work.

After a bit of hesitation the women move over to the side.

ACTIVIST: Traitors!

The bailiff and the policemen try to enter the debtors' flat.

BAILIFF: Open up!

OWNER: *(shouting from behind the door)* Leave us alone!

BAILIFF: I have a court order!

OWNER: And I have nowhere to live!

BAILIFF: You owe the bank thirty thousand!

OWNER: My brother owes the bank thirty thousand.

BAILIFF: He's mortgaged your flat against that!

OWNER: Leave us alone. We'll get you the money –

BAILIFF: You made that same promise six months ago.

OWNER: Have pity on us.

BAILIFF: This flat has a new owner now. I'm just the bailiff.

OWNER: We're not coming out.

BAILIFF: Miss Pavelenko, this is your final warning. We'll break down the door!

A journalist and a cameraman come over.

JOURNALIST: Sir, erm, mister bailiff, we're from channel "Twenty Twelve". Give us just a few minutes.

BAILIFF: *(takes out a mirror from his side pocket, checks his hair)* I'm ready.

JOURNALIST: I understand that a family with several children is currently being evicted from their flat, is that right?

BAILIFF: This isn't there flat anymore. We've warned the Pavelenko family several times about their impending eviction. They were presented with a discounted payment plan for paying back their credit, replete with documentation of all the necessary terms and conditions. However these payments were not made and contact with the lender and his representatives was lost. As a result, the flat was put up for auction. They lost their property. In summary, credit should be paid back on time, and contact must be sustained with one's creditors.

JOURNALIST: Are you going to break the door down?

BAILIFF: The Pavelenko family has given us no other choice.

CAMERAMAN: Oh, could you just wait a second?! There's something up with my camera.

JOURNALIST: What, didn't you get it?

CAMERAMAN: Sorry.

JOURNALIST: *(quietly, to the cameraman)* You bloody fucked up again.
(ingratiatingly) Mister Bailiff, could we just try that one more time for the camera? There's been a minor snafu.

BAILIFF: I really respect your profession, you know.

OWNER: *(from behind the door)* Fuck you, you fucking walrus!

JOURNALIST: *(quietly, to the cameraman)* Screw up one more time and you're fired.

BAILIFF: *(takes out a mirror from his side pocket, checks his hair)* I'm ready.

JOURNALIST: I understand that a family with several children is currently being evicted from their flat, is that right?

BAILIFF: This isn't there flat anymore. We've warned the Pavelenko family several times about their impending eviction. They were presented with a discounted payment plan for paying back their credit, replete with documentation of all the necessary terms and conditions. However these payments were not made and contact with the lender and its representatives was lost. As a result, the flat was put up for auction. They lost their property. In summary, credit should be paid back on time, and contact must be sustained with one's creditors.

JOURNALIST: Are you going to break the door down?

BAILIFF: The Pavelenko family has given us no other choice. Did you get that?
(to the journalist) My hair doesn't look that good today. *(to the policemen)* Stand by.

The policemen break down the door. The owner of the flat stands in the doorway. She is an older woman who looks thoroughly screwed over by life.

OWNER: What are you doing you animals?

The bailiff and the policemen try to barge into the flat.

OWNER: *(trying not to let the policemen in)* Look what you're doing!

JOURNALIST: You're a mother of three, and now you're out on the streets! How do you feel right now?

OWNER: Murderers, murderers!

BAILIFF: *(laughing)* It's a right old circus in here!

JOURNALIST: *(talking to camera)* The eviction of the Pavelenko family began on the twentieth of November. Resistance by activists from the “Get Out Of My Flat” movement was quickly crushed by the policemen and the bailiff. *(she touches up her lipstick. Then, to the cameraman)* Film the crying children – where are they by the way? – then let’s go have lunch! Just don’t forget the close-ups, we need emotion, emotion!

A removal man takes the furniture out of the house and puts it down in front of the sobbing owner. The activist takes out her lighter and tries to set fire to her dress, the policeman grab her.

ACTIVIST: Why aren’t you protecting the people?

POLICEMAN1: Stop kicking me! *(to Policeman2)* Grab her legs.

The policemen carry the activist off. Her colleagues also retreat. Lora appears, panting, she looks all around.

LORA: Andrei. Andrei.

VOICE FROM ABOVE: Look up! I’m here.

LORA: Andrei!

OWNER: *(looks up, shouts in horror)* Don’t do that! Stop it.

A body falls from above. The owner, terrified, cries out. Lora, terrified, cries out. Tableau. Lora stands there frozen. Sakno runs over to Lora.

SAKHNO: What hap... *(he notices the body Lora is staring at. Lora screams. The owner runs over to the body and wails.)*

JOURNALIST: How terrible. *(to the cameraman)* Did you get that?

CAMERAMAN: *(dumbfounded)* Nope.

JOURNALIST: *(after a pause)* You fucking moron!

GIRL1: I was the only one who got the boy falling, the TV people fucked it up and didn’t film it.

GIRL2: Cool.

GIRL1: Yeah. Yegor’ll love that.

JOURNALIST: *(to camera)* The body of a ten year-old boy lies on the ground, his mother and relatives shout and weep. Bogdan Pavelenko was wrong

when he thought that his death would save his family's only place to live.

GIRL1: Only thing is it wasn't some ten year-old kid who died, it was his older brother, who was pretty much a grown man. But I decided to leave it as it is: the death of a child's way more impressive.

JOURNALIST: The eviction took a long time, their belongings were loaded into a van and taken to family friends. The Pavelenkos went with them. The Pavelenko family took out their credit in September 2009, at the request of a family member. He paid off the first three months' worth, but then stopped paying his creditor. In December this year their flat was sold at auction by the bank.

The stage is plunged into darkness. Lora stands on the forestage, looking around nervously.

Scene 6

Night. Lora and Andrei's flat. The baby is asleep in her cot. Lora is frantically pacing the room from corner to corner, repeating a single phrase as a mantra: slowly at first, and then quicker and quicker until she reaches her limit.

LORA: Andrei, Andrei, where are you?.. Andrei, Andrei, where are you?!
Andrei, Andrei, where are you?!! Andrei, Andrei, where are you?!!
Andrei Andrei where are you? Andrei-Andrei-where-are-you?
AndreiAndreiwhereareyou?
AndreiAndreiwhereareyouAndreiAndreiwhereareyouAndreiAndreiwh
ereareyou...

Scene 7

Lora is walking down a dark corridor at the offices of the company "Body Work", with an employee of the firm. He is holding hand and she is wearing a blindfold.

LORA: So this is where it happens?

EMPLOYEE: Yes.

LORA: (*shivering*) It's so damp in here. It's like a grave.

EMPLOYEE: We're in a basement.

LORA: Why've you covered my eyes?

EMPLOYEE: We have to be careful.

LORA: D'you think I'll turn you over to the cops?

EMPLOYEE: You're very pale.

LORA: My haemoglobin levels are normal.

EMPLOYEE: We examined someone yesterday, twenty-five years old, ruddy complexion, wore a Rolex, but we examined their insides and found they had early-stage cirrhosis. We had to let them go.

LORA: My tests results were all normal. Negative for HIV, hepatitis, syphilis.

Lora stumbles and nearly falls.

EMPLOYEE: Oops, there's a little step just there! Everyone stumbles on it, some people even fall.

The employee takes out a bottle of water, hands it to Lora.

Drink?

LORA: I'm not thirsty.

EMPLOYEE: Then our transaction won't work.

Lora takes several gulps.

All of it.

LORA: *(drinks a bit more, then gasps)* I can't drink anymore.

EMPLOYEE: There's a lot of competition for this place.

Lora drinks the water, gasps again, coughs. The employee turns the bottle upside down, shakes it out in his hand, checking whether there's any left: he is satisfied with the result. He takes Lora's hand.

You see, you can do it. And there you were: "I can't, I can't." You need to be more certain of yourself.

They walk for a short while in silence.

Your hands are freezing.

LORA: Da Costa's syndrome.

EMPLOYEE: Do you have any harmful habits?

LORA: I'm breastfeeding.

EMPLOYEE: Excellent! As soon as my wife found out she was pregnant she was straight off the smoking, drinking and working. She didn't go and bathe in the Ganges when we were in India.

LORA: Did you?

EMPLOYEE: I wanted to, but.

LORA: What?

EMPLOYEE: I saw a dead body floating in the river. I filmed it on my phone for my eldest son, he collects videos and puts them on the Internet. He's a good kid, he'll be finishing school next year.

LORA: Do you do yoga?

EMPLOYEE: Why?

LORA: You went to India.

EMPLOYEE: No, all that "om pranayama" stuff isn't for me. But, interestingly, I did feel very at home in India. I felt very soulful. The people sit amidst the rubbish tips, just walk around however they please, but it was like the spirituality –

A cat screeches loudly.

LORA: *(scared)* God!

EMPLOYEE: *(leaning in)* I'm here. *(laughs intimately)* Were you frightened? *(Lora doesn't respond)* Don't be scared, it's just a stray cat.

LORA: I hate cats!

EMPLOYEE: *(tenderly)* Well I love them. Whenever I see a stray cat my heart just melts. *(sharply)* You allergic to cats?

LORA: What are you talking about?

EMPLOYEE: Then stroke it, stroke it, it's positive energy, you need to recharge yours whenever possible.

LORA: My hands'll get dirty.

EMPLOYEE: We'll wipe them down ...