

THE BEAUTY INSIDE
By
Catherine Filloux

THE BEAUTY INSIDE

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THE BEAUTY INSIDE

To my sister Marianne

THE BEAUTY INSIDE

The world premiere of *The Beauty Inside* was co-produced by New Georges (Susan Bernfield, Artistic Director; Sarah Cameron Sunde, Associate Director) and InterAct Theatre Company (Seth Rozin, Artistic Director; Melissa Amster, Managing Director) at InterAct in Philadelphia and The Culture Project in New York City. The cast and staff were as follows:

Nazim.....Edward A. Hajj
Devrim.....Jennifer Gibbs
Yalova.....Tatiana Gomberg
Mehmet/Zeki/Police/Guard/
Orphanage Man/Attorney/Villager....A-men Rasheed
Peri.....Michelle Rios

Director Kay Matschullat
Music composed by Elizabeth Swados
Set Takeshi Kata; Lights Clifton Taylor/Carolyn Wong;
Sound Shannon Zura; Costumes Oana Botez-Ban

The Beauty Inside was also produced in Iraq by Adalet Garmiany/ArtRole, with director Gaziza Omer; Kurdish translation by Nawzad Shwani. The play was workshopped in Arabic at the Higher Institute of Drama & Cultural Animation in Rabat, Morocco, directed by Messaoud Bouhcine.

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CAST: 3 Women/2 Men

NAZIM Devrim's father; a lawyer
DEVIRIM A female lawyer; late 20s/early 30s
YALOVA 14-year-old daughter of Peri
MEHMET/ZEKI/POLICE/GUARD/FIRAT/ORPHANAGE
MAN/ ATTORNEY/VILLAGER
PERI Yalova's mother

PLACE: Istanbul; a shelter in Antalya; and villages in Southeastern Turkey. Locales are suggested by light and sound.

PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE: Shortly after I saw a full solar eclipse on the Black Sea in Turkey, I experienced a large earthquake in Istanbul. Subsequently an article in the Los Angeles Times, by Amberin Zaman, described a 14-year-old Turkish girl, the survivor of an attempted honor killing. "Honor killing" is the murder of a woman by members of her family because the family has determined that her behavior has resulted in a stain on family "honor" that can only be eradicated by eliminating--killing--the person who is seen as the source of the stain. Because the whereabouts of the girl in the article were secret, I never met the girl.

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ACT 1

SCENE 1

Istanbul. DEVRIM, a stylish lawyer, late 20s/early 30s, smokes, standing on a balcony, looking out at the Bosphorus, with her father, NAZIM INAN, who smokes a cigar.

NAZIM. Work, a husband, children. My father used to say: “Children are the flavor of life. Like fruit.”

DEVRIM. Is that why you sent me to Harvard, to marry me off?

NAZIM. Perhaps. And now you’re going to New York!

DEVRIM. My mother came here, and I’m going there.

NAZIM. Think of what you’ll find.

DEVRIM. What did she find here? What made her stay?

NAZIM. Me, of course. (*Looking out; gesturing; we see the Water Light.*) And this. The water. She always said the past was reflected on the Bosphorus, and the future was reflected in her daughter’s eyes.

DEVRIM. She said that?

NAZIM. Yes.

DEVRIM. I wish I could remember her voice. All I have is a photograph.

NAZIM. She would have been so proud of you today, Devrim. Everything we’ve worked so hard for in front of us. You’re the son I never had.

DEVRIM. The eclipse, it’s almost full.

NAZIM. (*Her father hands her a piece of glass.*)

Through the glass. Your eyes.

DEVRIM. It’s so cold! It feels like something is about to happen.

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(Lights shift; Southeastern Turkey. On the other side of the stage the Imam's prayer from a mosque ends. A dog barks as YALOVA, a 14-year-old girl, wearing a headscarf, enters, holding a bucket and sticks. She looks at the ground.)

YALOVA. Stop barking. Just me, remember. *(Reminding dog.)* "Yalova"? Going to the garden. *(Watering a plant.)* Drink, soon you'll grow big. *(Feeling the ground.)* So dry. Here, water, straight from the mountain snow. *(A MAN [MEHMET] enters and watches Yalova from a distance.)*

YALOVA. *(Looking inside the plant.)* Oh, the first flower--the squash will come soon. Here's another.

MAN. Give me some water.

YALOVA. *(Avoiding his glance.)* I only have enough for the plants. I'm sorry...you can take it from the fountain.

MAN. I'll take it from your bucket. *(He drinks from her bucket. She turns to the plants; he bashes her down, dragging her as her headscarf pulls off.)*

YALOVA. My scarf...Stop!

MAN. Quiet. Say nothing! *(Sticks fall from her hand.)* What are those? To stab me?

YALOVA. Don't you hear my mother? Calling me?

MAN. That's enough! Shut up.

YALOVA. *(Turning her head, as if to hear.)* She's saying: *(Calling, as if she is her own mother.)*

"Yalovaaaa."

MAN. *(He puts his foot on her chest.)* SHUT UP. ONCE AND FOR ALL NOW! I MEAN IT!

YALOVA. Your father is Osman. I know you...*(He starts to unzip his pants.)* She's coming. Can't you hear her? "Yalovaaaa."

MAN. I'm telling you to SHUT UP.

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YALOVA. *(She tries to squirm out from under his foot.)*
Stop. If you let me go, I won't say anything! All the men
are at the mosque. *(He gets on top of her, pulling away
her underclothes.)* I hear her! *(Calling.)* "Yalovaaaa."
She'll find you.

MAN. STOP MOVING. *(Lights shift to Yalova standing
outside her body.)*

YALOVA. The plants can see you. The water in the
fountain sees. The night falling, and God.
*(On the other side of the stage, Devrim and her father are
on the balcony, as it gets darker.)*

DEVRIM. They threw my case out yesterday--the
woman's done for.

NAZIM. It was a pro-bono case, Devrim. There's only so
much you can do.

DEVRIM. All that will come of it is a complaint is filed.

NAZIM. Hush, here's to your new job. Congratulations!
And to someday making partner.

DEVRIM. That will be something.

NAZIM. I'll help you find a nice *pied-a-terre*...

DEVRIM. So you can visit New York.

NAZIM. Now you need to get rid of the circles under
your eyes. Get your beauty sleep.

DEVRIM. What's that supposed to mean?

NAZIM. You have a lot to do before New York.

DEVRIM. You're right, I need to wrap things up here.

NAZIM. Isn't the view from this balcony dazzling?

DEVRIM. *(Looking through glass at eclipse.)* The
moon's in front of the sun. A piece is still missing.
*(On the other side of the stage, Yalova is in shock as the
man gets up from on top of her.)*

YALOVA. Something is happening to the sun...

MAN. What are you talking about? Watch until I am
gone, get yourself cleaned up, then go.

YALOVA. In the whole village...

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MAN. Your mother is waiting.

YALOVA. Do you see the sun and moon cross?

MAN. Stop babbling. And when I come again, no one is to know. Or I use the knife. YOU HEAR?

YALOVA. You're married. You have a wife.

MAN. *(He takes out a knife and holds it close to her neck.)* Is it understood? When you see me again:

SILENCE.

(The man runs off, as Yalova rises and cleans herself up. Devrim and her father are on the balcony.)

DEVRIM. The Bosphorus is so dark--like a black sea.

NAZIM. It's so quiet.

DEVRIM. Magic.

NAZIM. Make me a promise.

DEVRIM. What?

NAZIM. Bring your children to Istanbul for summers. Never forget how magical it is.

DEVRIM. Is this where you first brought her?

NAZIM. Yes. Where you first came to be. *(They look at the eclipse.)*

DEVRIM. Like glass before it breaks. *(In the darkness of the eclipse, we hear Yalova's mother, Peri.)*

PERI'S VOICE. Yalovaaaa.

(PERI enters wearing a headscarf.)

PERI. Yalova.

YALOVA. Oh, Mama! You came! *(Looking up.)* The dogs stopped barking.

PERI. *(Distracted from her.)* The sun. Look, Yalova. Something is happening. *(Showing Yalova a piece of glass.)* Do you see this piece of glass? Father said to look through it.

YALOVA. *(Looking through glass.)* What's happening?

PERI. The moon. It's an eclipse. *(Peri motions for the glass from Yalova.)* My turn. Now.

YALOVA. *(Giving glass to Peri.)* It's night in day.

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PERI. Yes.

YALOVA. Like glass before it breaks.

PERI. Come. (*Peri hands her back the glass and starts to exit.*) Put on your headscarf.

YALOVA. Why through the glass? Your eyes?

PERI. Come.

YALOVA. (*Yalova watches the sunlight return.*) It's day again? DAY? MAGIC? THE MOON WENT IN FRONT OF THE SUN? All the dogs stopped barking. The sun was black.

SCENE 2

Istanbul. Four months later. Devrim waits at an elevator, smoking, as a male human rights lawyer, ZEKI, holding a report, rushes to her.

ZEKI. I need coffee, I spent the night here. (*Showing her report.*) Another honor killing in the Southeast.

DEVVRIM. Always in the Southeast. Just another number to tally, fodder for the press.

ZEKI. This could be the most significant report you file.

DEVVRIM. (*Devrim adjusts her high heels.*) They're killing me. My father's taking me out to lunch. I leave for New York next week.

ZEKI. Oh, finally the big defection?

DEVVRIM. I keep waiting for you to find a new person.

ZEKI. Always nice to dabble in human rights for your resume.

DEVVRIM. Dabble? I told you four months ago when I accepted the job that I'd be leaving. Can't you be happy for me, Zeki? It's a top firm.

ZEKI. Soon everyone will live in America. All the other countries will be empty and America will sink into the

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sea, just what it deserves. (*Showing her the report.*) “She” grabbed onto a metal pole sticking out from the side of the canal.

DEVVRIM. (*Glancing at report.*) “Yalova”? 14-years-old?

ZEKI. She’s alive.

DEVVRIM. They never live.

ZEKI. Walked to the nearest hospital, filed a complaint to the police.

DEVVRIM. What guts.

ZEKI. Her statement said her brother found her in the orchard, told her it was his duty to wash out the stain. She dishonored the family. Allah’s will must be done. He threw her in the canal and left her for dead.

DEVVRIM. Oh my god. She survived. Her family must be after her.

ZEKI. They’re being charged with murder. (*Handing her report.*) She needs a lawyer, Devrim.

DEVVRIM. (*Looking at report.*) It’s too late, I’m leaving.

ZEKI. (*Zeki starts to leave, picking up a discarded newspaper.*) I must say...I didn’t think he’d stoop this low. (*Devrim looks at him blankly. Zeki reads from the newspaper.*) “No one ever told me I shouldn’t build with sea sand, I’m a poet, not a contractor.” You couldn’t make up something that stupid if you tried.

DEVVRIM. I haven’t read the paper--I’ve been at home boxing up my stuff. “Who” wouldn’t stoop this low? What are you talking about?

ZEKI. (*Referring to newspaper.*) This? (*Devrim takes it and reads.*) You didn’t know what your father is up to with that contractor Turan? My theory is Turan slipped your father’s bid for his new condo in front of the others and your father owes him.

DEVVRIM. I knew they had some condo deal together, I hadn’t thought about it much. (*Staring at article.*) You

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have got to be kidding me? Why would he do this?

(Devrim moves to the elevator, reading the article.)

ZEKI. Maybe that's why he's in such a rush to get you to New York. Speak of the devil.

(Her father steps out from the elevator, dressed in a business suit, holding a briefcase. She looks at him, stunned.)

DEVRIM. Why didn't you say anything?

NAZIM. *(Nazim looks at the newspaper in her hands.)*

Hello, Zeki. Come, we're late for lunch. You've cleared out your desk? Our reservation. Come...

ZEKI. I'll go. *(Zeki exits.)*

DEVRIM. Turan paid off officials to get contracts to build apartments out of sand and garbage!

NAZIM. It's not even him I'm representing, it's his firm.

DEVRIM. The buildings fell like cards during the earthquake, Father. Just days before, we were watching the eclipse from the balcony of your new condo.

NAZIM. After lunch we'll take a walk by the water...

DEVRIM. The buildings were on a fault line!

NAZIM. *(Referring to outside.)* Have you even seen what a beautiful day it is?

DEVRIM. This was a man who behaved like a kid making sandcastles.

NAZIM. When are you going to come down out of the clouds? You said you were leaving this place months ago. What's your problem?

DEVRIM. It's not my fault if the reports stream in. A girl, raped--thrown in a canal by her family?

NAZIM. Devrim, these people live by primitive customs. We can't apply our values to them. They're backwards.

DEVRIM. An honor killing is murder.

NAZIM. Let's go--you didn't even take time off like you promised. At least give me a rematch, so I can still say I beat you at tennis.

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DEVTRIM. Turan says he's a poet? Tell him poets get put in jail in this country if they say the wrong thing.

NAZIM. We're lawyers working for clients.

DEVTRIM. You think he was in hiding for weeks because he was innocent? He'll get off with a fine because of you.

NAZIM. *(Taking her arm.)* We're having fun today.

DEVTRIM. Drop the case.

NAZIM. I'll tell you more about it over lunch. Tonight we'll go hear music. *(He sings from Louis Armstrong's "What a Wonderful World.")*

DEVTRIM. I'm not going to let you convince me.

NAZIM. There may be a deal. These things are complicated...

DEVTRIM. He bribed people to get contracts. It's murder.

NAZIM. Look at you. You were dying to try this place.

DEVTRIM. *(She looks at the report Zeki gave her.)* I'm not hungry.

SCENE 3

Southeastern Turkey. Yalova, 4 months pregnant, lies in a bed in a rural hospital, her arm in a sling, half-dreaming, breathing hard. Devrim enters, holding her briefcase and a legal report.

DEVTRIM. Yalova? Were you dreaming?

YALOVA. *(Staring at Devrim unknowingly.)* Did he come because the sun and the moon crossed?

DEVTRIM. The sun and moon?

YALOVA. My mother saved me. She came.

DEVTRIM. When?

YALOVA. In my dream. The dog barked. That's when my mother came. She was there and the moon was

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covering the sun. She showed me with a piece of glass, I was safe.

DEVTRIM. You're safe here.

YALOVA. (*Imitating her mother.*) "Let me look at your stomach." Then my brother came to find me in the orchard...

DEVTRIM. You did well to grab onto the pole in the canal. You were brave.

YALOVA. (*Feeling her head, anxiously.*) Where's my scarf? Help me look...

DEVTRIM. (*Taking her hand.*) Now you can speak for other girls. You may have heard of other girls, in your village...?

YALOVA. (*Yalova scrutinizes Devrim's face.*) Are you a prostitute?

DEVTRIM. No. Actually, I'm a lawyer.

YALOVA. Your face, why do you paint it?

DEVTRIM. It's "makeup". We wear it in the city. I've come to help you. We've arranged a car for you, it's waiting outside.

YALOVA. My scarf--it must be somewhere...

DEVTRIM. Your life is about to change in every way.

YALOVA. I need a new scarf.

DEVTRIM. (*Devrim hands Yalova a piece of paper.*) You need to request a lawyer by signing this paper, and I have to file a report to the state. Your family will have a few lawyers. You have none.

YALOVA. A scarf.

DEVTRIM. I'll find you one. Stay. (*Devrim hurries out. Yalova closes her eyes. After a moment Yalova's mother, Peri, wearing her headscarf, sneaks toward the hospital bed, shaking Yalova.*)

PERI. Yalovaaaa, get up, this instant! OUT! What have you done?

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YALOVA. Mama, it's you? The fisherman heard me cry, I didn't call to him. I promise.

PERI. You told the police to shame us! Now, I will take you back, and you will say you jumped into the canal to save yourself.

YALOVA. (*Touching stomach.*) Is she dead? I bumped into rocks.

PERI. (*Peri pulls her out of the hospital bed.*) That's enough! We'll go by the back.

YALOVA. My head, it is turning, mama...

PERI. I, who gave you milk, sang to you when you cried...

YALOVA. The walls slipping...

PERI. What a curse you have brought on this family!

YALOVA. (*Yalova slips to the floor, shielding her stomach.*) Be careful.

PERI. I, all alone, without our men. (*Kicking her.*) I say get up and walk.

YALOVA. Stop it, please.

DEVTRIM. (*Devrim rushes into the room with a headscarf and some girl's clothing.*) What are you doing to her? Get away. Move away from her.

PERI. Let go of me. I am her mother.

DEVTRIM. Get out.

PERI. This is not for you. There are certain things between a mother and a daughter that are private.

DEVTRIM. Your son left her for dead in that canal, Mrs. Kireç. (*To Yalova.*) Come, let me help you, we need to call the doctor, come. Stand up now.

YALOVA. (*Yalova hallucinates; lights shift.*) In the rain time there was silver on the canal...

DEVTRIM. Stand up, now, that's good.

YALOVA. Like a million fish.

DEVTRIM. One foot in front of the other.

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YALOVA. Sun so bright on the silver, like blinding lights...

DEVTRIM. Almost there, you'll rest...

YALOVA. Don't go in the water, it's dirty, mama told us. How could something so beautiful be so dirty, just put a foot in, a toe...*(Lights are restored as Devtrim helps Yalova back into the bed.)*

DEVTRIM. Let me put the blanket around you. You're not the only one, by far, but when the girl dies the crime disappears. Not you, Yalova. Not you.

YALOVA. How could something so beautiful be so dirty?

PERI. She dishonored our family. *(To Yalova.)* Your brother Halil is in jail, and your father...

YALOVA. Jail? No. Mama! I'm so sorry.

DEVTRIM. For ordering your killing, and for the murder of the man who raped you.

YALOVA. Please forgive me.

DEVTRIM. Stay in bed.

PERI. *(Changing tactics.)* Now, now, hush, let me help her. Does it hurt?

YALOVA. *(Softly.)* ...does it hurt *her*?

DEVTRIM. Don't you come closer.

PERI. She needs a doctor. Shhshh, little one. *(To Devtrim.)* We must pray now. Would you please leave us alone to pray?

YALOVA. Father and Halil aren't really in jail?

PERI. *(To Devtrim.)* May I ask you for a small favor? We need cold water. My throat is parched, I walked so far in the hot sun. My village is very far away. Water. Please. You are very gracious, we are both unwell.

DEVTRIM. No water.

PERI. *(To Devtrim.)* She is with child. *That* is what happened.

DEVTRIM. Yes, she told the police. It's in the report.

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PERI. *(To Yalova.)* Are you *crazy*? What have you done?

YALOVA. The fisherman told them!

DEVTRIM. Yes, I spoke to him.

PERI. *(To Yalova.)* And how did he know? Stupid foolish child! *(Obsequious; to Devtrim.)* I must approach, lady. If it is not asking too much. *(To Yalova.)* You will go to the police and tell them your brother and father are not to blame. To restore their honor.

DEVTRIM. And hers?

PERI. It is not for *her* to have.

DEVTRIM. I can't accept that.

PERI. *(Disgusted.)* You're not from here.

DEVTRIM. I'm from Istanbul! For generations, on my father's side.

PERI. Istanbul!

DEVTRIM. You're right. We might as well be from two different countries. *(Facing Peri.)* I will protect her now.

PERI. And our family? Will you protect us? Without a husband and son I will become so poor I will survive on handfuls of dirt. All my village, talking: "There goes the dishonored one." We can get no dowry for her.

YALOVA. *(Faintly.)* Mama...

PERI. Don't call to me now.

YALOVA. If only you'd called. *(Starting to go.)* Let me go with you.

DEVTRIM. The police are outside.

PERI. Too late, you should have come with me before when I told you to. Your life will get worse.

YALOVA. If only you'd called me a little earlier. *(Imitating her mother, calling.)* "Yalovaaaa!"

PERI. Enough! You know what you must do to save us. *(Peri puts her scarf over her head, exiting, head bowed against the hot sun ahead. Devtrim watches Peri go, then approaches Yalova.)*

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DEVTRIM. I got clothes for you. I had trouble finding the scarf. *(Yalova sits, frozen.)* There are other girls in Turkey and elsewhere--One who died because she brought dishonor to her husband, not getting permission to go to the movies. Another's throat cut because a love song was dedicated to her on the radio. But you're alive. *(Yalova takes the headscarf. Devrim shows her the paper.)* Could you write your name? *(Yalova stares down at her arm in the sling.)* Should I get the doctor. There's so little time. *(Devrim starts to go)*

YALOVA. No doctor.

DEVTRIM. *(Devrim sees a girl, in pain, touching the baby inside her.)* When I was a little girl, my own mother died. She died in a car crash. If you ever go to Istanbul you'll see that traffic lights are only there for decoration. She was American--the type to stop at them. So I was raised by my father. On the night of the earthquake, buildings made of sand fell from bad construction. He's using all his gifts to defend someone who's guilty. You're innocent, think of what I could do. *(Yalova tries to put on the scarf, using her good arm.)* Do you need help?

YALOVA. *(Doggedly.)* No.

DEVTRIM. *(Devrim watches Yalova.)* You're being taken to a secret location.

YALOVA. No, I'm going home.

DEVTRIM. You know they'll kill you if you do. *(Trying to help her put on the scarf.)* With one arm, it's hard.

YALOVA. You're doing it wrong. *(Readjusting scarf.)* I'd never hurt my family. *(Touching her stomach.)* I screamed for her. I was in the canal, not just a toe but my whole body.

DEVTRIM. *(Whispering.)* The secret place will be Antalya. It's on the beach. My friend Zeki found out about it. You must tell no one. You'll like it. *(Showing*

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her the paper.) Do you think you could sign your name?
“Yalova” is the name of a city East of the Bosphorus.

YALOVA. My mother never told me but I saw it on the map.

DEVRIM. The Bosphorus separates two continents.

YALOVA. Your city “Istanbul” is on the West. (*Devrim holds out a pen; Yalova looks at it.*) When I was twelve I started wearing the scarf. Then my mother took me out of school. (*A POLICEMAN enters, addressing Devrim.*)

POLICEMAN. You said you would get her dressed. She is not ready.

DEVRIM. I’m sorry, there were some interruptions.

POLICEMAN. If you don’t get her ready, we will.
(*He exits. Devrim picks up the clothes she brought in earlier.*)

DEVRIM. Why don’t you try on the top? They’re waiting and if you don’t get dressed, they’ll do it themselves. Do you want me to turn around? Put it on. (*Yalova stares at Devrim with curiosity.*) Do you want to wear my shirt? We can switch. (*Devrim swiftly takes off her own shirt and puts on Yalova’s.*) Don’t you want to wear my top?

YALOVA. (*Curious.*) Where do you come from, older sister?

DEVRIM. Istanbul.

YALOVA. Who is your father?...Mine is “Ibrahim Kireç”, he’s a farmer. Pistachios.

DEVRIM. Mine is “Nazim Inan”. He’s a lawyer. Real estate. (*Devrim takes a thin sweater from her briefcase.*) Okay, you can wear this sweater.

YALOVA. I won’t go. I’ll run. (*Devrim tries to force the shirt on Yalova.*)

I want to go home! My mother’s waiting for me.

DEVRIM. No. She’s not. (*Putting on the shirt.*) Did you know where we’re going there’s a sea?

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YALOVA. Don't touch me!

DEVTRIM. Will you swim with me?

YALOVA. Leave me alone, don't!

DEVTRIM. (*Devrim puts the sweater on Yalova.*) You can keep the sweater, it was my mom's...I swim everywhere I go.

YALOVA. STOP!

DEVTRIM. I've been in three oceans and four seas. Now the skirt. You have to. I'm sorry, you don't have a choice.

YALOVA. Don't!

DEVTRIM. (*Devrim wrestles the skirt on Yalova.*) Will you swim? Where we go?

YALOVA. ...You're coming with me?

DEVTRIM. Of course. I need to speak to Mersiye *Hanim* [*hanim*= lady], your social worker. See that everything's safe. You're going to need to write your name.

“YALOVA KIREÇ.” And the name of your town, “Urfa”. Sanliurfa. Glorious Urfa.

YALOVA. I know that.

DEVTRIM. Did you have anything else here you want to take? (*Yalova glances around unconvinced.*)

YALOVA. I had some...(Pacing.) Sticks--for my game? (*Looking around the room.*) I left my house when my brother took me--didn't look back. Does it rain...at the sea...?

DEVTRIM. Yes. But don't mention the sea. Don't mention anything. The policeman is going to return now. Sign the paper. You said you went to school until you were twelve. You know how to write your name.

YALOVA. I can't.

DEVTRIM. (*Devrim puts her hand on her left side, feeling her own heart.*) Is your heart beating? (*Yalova looks at Devrim.*) Feel it. Put your hand on it.

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YALOVA. *(Yalova does.)* It's not beating. I must be dead. *(Devrim and Yalova have their hands on their chests.)*

DEVTRIM. It's "life". You chose it. When you held on in the canal. I think a child wants to know...her mother.

YALOVA. Yes. She does. She's inside me. *(Touching her left side.)* I feel her on the left.

DEVTRIM. Do you want to give me your hand? *(Yalova reluctantly gives Devrim her hand.)* Will you sign?

YALOVA. One of my hands is in your hand and the other hand is in the sling.

DEVTRIM. Take the hand that's in mine out and write. *(Yalova takes her hand out of Devrim's and signs.)* Good.

SCENE 4

Yalova cries under her blanket in the state shelter in Antalya. Lights shift as, in Yalova's dream, Peri appears carrying a basket, singing a Turkish folksong.

PERI. *(Singing.)* "Don't let them send daughters far away...Don't let them be cruel to the mother's only girl."
(Yalova joins in.)

PERI/YALOVA. *(Singing.)* "Let the birds above know I miss my mother, miss my mother, miss my father, miss my home."

PERI. *(Calling.)* Yalovaaaaa, come help me. *(Peri turns suddenly furious, looking at Yalova.)* Your stomach, LET ME LOOK!

YALOVA. *(Trying to reverse the bad memory to a good one.)* Wait! The story about the horse! Smile the way you smiled. He kidnapped you. Father?

PERI. *(Peri becomes less strict, suppressing a smile.)*
What a girl!

THE BEAUTY INSIDE

YALOVA. Yes, why does his beard wiggle like that when he hears the story?

PERI. He stole me away! He knows that's what happened!

YALOVA. He's smiling under the beard!

PERI. You see what you want to see, girl.

YALOVA. I see water in the sky before it rains in the form of smoke.

PERI. Yes, the girl with her head in the sky, if she runs looking up she falls, every girl your age except you knows that!

YALOVA. (*Urgently.*) The story, Mama, please!

PERI. (*Starting to go.*) Like a bad verse, repeated over and over.

YALOVA. He came with his brothers. Four! He was the most handsome.

PERI. (*Turning.*) Not the most handsome.

YALOVA. But the oldest!

PERI. Yes, that he was.

YALOVA. And *still* he was handsome--You were feeding the roosters--they were making so much noise. Make the sound!

PERI. The sound is bad enough no one wants to *repeat* it too! (*Yalova makes the crowing rooster sound.*) All right.

YALOVA. He came with his brothers, all on horses.

PERI. You tell the story.

YALOVA. No, you tell it. NOW, HURRY, before he comes back.

PERI. So, he came and he whisked me away and I never went home again.

YALOVA. No, you didn't say it right. The part about his hand.

PERI. His hands are coarse and old.

YALOVA. On your blouse?

PERI. I don't remember that part.

THE BEAUTY INSIDE

YALOVA. His hand touched you and you turned.

PERI. I turned from the roosters, adjusted my headscarf, looking down at the dirt. There were some droppings from their horses on the dirt...

YALOVA. And you kept your head lowered but you could hear him breathing.

PERI. It was I who was breathing, from carrying the food to the roosters.

YALOVA. And he picked you up, with one hand you were so light.

PERI. Yes...True. (*Strictly.*) Come here!

YALOVA. (*Quickly.*) And your father came out from the shade where he was sharpening his scythe and said, "Ibrahim wants you for his wife. He saw you when you were bringing the cherries to the market with your mother. And he came to inquire but the dowry was too small. Now, he has returned. It is fine."

PERI. And his hand, your father's, tightened on my waist. He raised me up on his horse. I never saw my family again. It was too far away. I was the only girl in a family of brothers. Like you. (*Strictly; looking at her stomach.*) LET ME LOOK.

YALOVA. "Better if there are no girls." That's what Father said about me. And you said...

PERI. (*Under her breath.*) Better if there are no roosters.

YALOVA. Better if there are no roosters! That's what you said to Father! Better if there are no roosters!

PERI. That's enough. You imagine things.

YALOVA. I know everything. I hear everything.

PERI. That kind of behavior will get you into so much trouble. BEST TO KNOW NOTHING AND TO HEAR NOTHING.

YALOVA. Did you cry?

PERI. He took good care of me.

YALOVA. For your Mama, did you?!

THE BEAUTY INSIDE

PERI. I'd walk a little behind the rest of the women in the fields...

YALOVA. *(To herself.)* Look up at the sky, where I could follow the blue and imagine them down below. It's the same sky, the same wind you feel on your neck.

PERI. I never told my husband how much I missed my mother and my father. *(Peri exits, humming the folksong.)*

YALOVA. Can songs travel? In the wind? In the hollow of my stomach, like a cup, is you. *(Devrim enters, laying a blanket down on the floor next to Yalova, who is under her blanket, crying, as lights are restored.)*

DEVRIM. Are you thinking about your home?

YALOVA. *(Toughening.)* I heard you arguing with the social worker, Mersiye *Hanim*. She doesn't want you to sleep here. *(Imitating the social worker.)* "You're starting bad habits."

DEVRIM. The night is worse when you're lonely. I know how you feel, Emine.

YALOVA. That's not my name!

DEVRIM. Yes, your name is "Emine" now. We gave it to you for your protection. You cannot forget it. *(Devrim takes off some of her clothes to get under her blanket.)*

YALOVA. You're naked.

DEVRIM. Not *naked*. You sleep in all your clothes and your headscarf.

YALOVA. Allah's angels won't come into the house unless you do. Do you know which way is Mekke?

DEVRIM. No. We'll ask in the morning.

YALOVA. I don't even have a prayer carpet.

DEVRIM. We'll get one.

YALOVA. How many children do you have?

DEVRIM. None. I have a cat.

YALOVA. Are you married?

THE BEAUTY INSIDE

DEVTRIM. No. I'm actually moving to the U.S., maybe I'll meet a husband there.

YALOVA. Who gave you permission to come here?

DEVTRIM. I don't need any permission.

YALOVA. You're poor.

DEVTRIM. Why...do you say that?

YALOVA. (*With pride.*) My father lets me have as much sugar as I want.

DEVTRIM. ...I'm thin? Is that what you mean?

YALOVA. Why aren't you married? You'll dry up. Like a fig.

DEVTRIM. Well...You'll have to tell me what Osman's son did to you, how many times, if anyone saw.

YALOVA. There was the water in the fountain that saw. The night falling.

DEVTRIM. Yes.

YALOVA. The plants I was watering. The Imam.

DEVTRIM. The Imam?

YALOVA. His voice was praying before. His ears might have seen. And there was God.

DEVTRIM. I'm going to have to go back to Istanbul to get the report your family gave to their lawyers.

YALOVA. Will you talk to them? My family?

DEVTRIM. No, I'll read what they say to their lawyers. They'll lie and look innocent.

YALOVA. They are innocent.

DEVTRIM. For us to win this case you'll have to tell the truth in front of the judge and your family. It's not to go against them--it's for yourself and your child and it's for me. When I heard you survived I felt hope for the first time in a long time. It will be very hard, but I'll be there, with you. Always.

YALOVA. You're leaving. Your father won't give you permission to come back. I know it.

DEVTRIM. Look, I do what I want.

THE BEAUTY INSIDE

YALOVA. I'm never going to sleep. Ever again.

DEVRIM. You're going on a sleep strike?

YALOVA. What do you mean?

DEVRIM. You stay awake to show your protest.

YALOVA. I don't understand anything you say.

DEVRIM. Right now, you need your sleep for what's to come, Emine.

YALOVA. That's not my name.

DEVRIM. "Emine" is like a password.

YALOVA. What's a password?

DEVRIM. It's to get you into a secret place. Where you belong.

YALOVA. You miss your mama, that's why you come sleep next to me.

DEVRIM. Maybe. *(A beat.)* Maybe, I don't want to dry up like a fig.

SCENE 5

Devrim faces her father Nazim in his office in Istanbul. She holds a report.

DEVRIM. Our presiding judge is a conservative. *(Reading from the report.)* "Even a hint of complicity is sufficient for a presumption of guilt." That's from one of his prior cases.

NAZIM. You're crazy. *(Holding out a small glass.)*
Drink your tea.

DEVRIM. What is a hint of complicity?

NAZIM. You've got blinders on.

DEVRIM. I won't talk to you about your contractor friend Turan if you won't criticize me.

NAZIM. When do you intend to study for the New York bar?

THE BEAUTY INSIDE

DEVTRIM. Is going to the public garden alone to water plants the slightest hint of complicity? Not killing herself to save her family from misery? And yet the Koran tells her she can't die by her own hand.

NAZIM. It would have simplified matters. Drink.

DEVTRIM. The General has the power to change the judge. He's your friend, he's progressive.

NAZIM. And you accuse me of being corrupt?... You look tired.

DEVTRIM. This is to set a precedent. It's different.

NAZIM. Every case is "different".

DEVTRIM. I'm up every night thinking of how to win this. There's no chance for this case without your help.

NAZIM. Don't take on the world! These issues are better left to the politicians.

DEVTRIM. Then we'll wait forever.

NAZIM. Tribal codes are ancient, set in the soil with roots that go deep. You can't change them overnight.

DEVTRIM. How 'bout day-by-day?

NAZIM. These family squabbles worsen everything. Her family will never let her testify. Oh, come on, drink.

DEVTRIM. If you help me, I'll prepare the case and hand it over to Zeki--I promise.

NAZIM. Let me take you to the restaurant we never got to try.

DEVTRIM. She didn't even have a lawyer before I met her.

NAZIM. Obsessions are dangerous!

DEVTRIM. I need to go see Zeki, then fly back to Antalya. I have to get her to trust me so she'll speak the truth.

NAZIM. Ah, my Devrim. If I talk to General Yavuz, you pass on the case and go to New York. You know what a handshake means?

DEVTRIM. Yes. *(They shake hands.)*

THE BEAUTY INSIDE

NAZIM. *Insha'allah.* After we eat, I'll drive you to the airport. I got some new CDs.

DEVRIM. Just as long as you don't sing along with them.

SCENE 6

A GUARD stands on the sun-drenched beach, smoking, as Devrim puts down a beach chair and Yalova lays out a small kilim. Devrim sips coke.

YALOVA. Why don't you eat?

DEVRIM. Why don't you? (*Looking out.*) I never leave a place without going in the water.

YALOVA. Why not?

DEVRIM. In the Pacific at Half Moon Bay I was the only one, besides the seals. Cold and rain, but I can say I've been in it.

YALOVA. What are seals?

DEVRIM. Did you ever notice that in your hometown, Urfa...

YALOVA. You never listen.

DEVRIM. All the statues on the mountains are missing their heads?

YALOVA. I like them that way.

DEVRIM. Right. It's because they're old, from wars and earthquakes. It's not your family's fault they believe old ideas, but they're not always true. A woman has to put a stone in her mouth so she won't speak too loud? Is that what you want, a stone in your mouth? (*Looking at her hand.*) Nail polish is polluted? Do you think I'm polluted?

YALOVA. (*Yalova picks up a small stone and puts it in her mouth.*) You lie.

DEVRIM. Spit that out.

THE BEAUTY INSIDE

YALOVA. No. I'm keeping it. I like it!

DEVTRIM. Spit out the stone, or I'll have to tell Mersiye *Hanim*. (*Yalova doesn't spit it out.*) Your family has a fantastic case. Their family honor is at stake and they have a whole clan of men paying for their lawyers. You'll have to say your father ordered your brother to kill you. If you won't help, I can't fight your case.

YALOVA. Good. (*Looking at her.*) You're crazy! Why don't you have a baby?

DEVTRIM. Why does everyone say that?

YALOVA. Because.

DEVTRIM. Because?

YALOVA. You look like a mother. (*A beat.*) I swallowed it. The baby will like it!

DEVTRIM. That's good if you think a baby will like a stone. Didn't you say you wanted to go in the water, but your mother wouldn't let you?

(*Yalova looks out at the sea, singing the Turkish folksong. Devrim starts to take off her clothes.*)

YALOVA. "If my mother had a boat she would sail to me. If my brothers knew the way they would come to me..."

DEVTRIM. What's that from?

YALOVA. A wedding song. You should get married. (*Devrim is in her two-piece bathing suit. Yalova clutches her stomach, staring at Devrim's bare flesh, kicking sand at her.*) Just go back to wherever you live! I hate you!

DEVTRIM. It's a "bikini". I'm sorry. Does it shock you?

YALOVA. (*Staring.*) No!

DEVTRIM. Do you want me to cover up?

YALOVA. No.

DEVTRIM. That's why I got you this dress to swim in. (*Showing her a dress.*) Put it on. It's so hot to be covered up like that.

THE BEAUTY INSIDE

YALOVA. Go to America! I don't care. (*Yalova dry heaves. The guard moves forward, protectively.*)

DEVRIM. It's okay, it's the heat, and morning sickness. (*Trying to help her.*) No, no, no, here.

YALOVA. It comes and goes.

DEVRIM. Sit, on the towel. (*Taking off Yalova's shoes.*) Let me take off your shoes. Put your feet in the sand, it feels good. Do you want to take off the sweater?

YALOVA. No! I like it.

DEVRIM. It's yours but now in the sun you should take it off.

(Lights shift to the next day. They are on the beach. Yalova removes the sweater, taking a postcard from the pocket.)

DEVRIM. Do you like the postcard of Antalya I bought you? Did you know there are black beaches? In Hawaii.

YALOVA. Like the Black Sea? Is the Black Sea really black?

DEVRIM. It might have looked black to the person who discovered it. You get to name things you discover.

YALOVA. Like the way you named me?

DEVRIM. I didn't discover you. You were already there. (*Yalova replaces the postcard and lays the sweater on the kilim.*) Your body's had so much happen to it...

YALOVA. Just go away. You don't know anything.

DEVRIM. Look my colleague Zeki will check out the orphanage, and if you can't live without the baby when it's born--something else will be done, I promise.

YALOVA. She won't be an orphan.

DEVRIM. That's true but where you're staying you can't keep babies.

YALOVA. Why do you smoke? Why did you ask Mersiye *Hanim* for cigarettes?

DEVRIM. What?

THE BEAUTY INSIDE

YALOVA. It's bad. (*A beat. Yalova stares at Devrim.*)

DEVTRIM. You're right. I do smoke.

YALOVA. I saw you.

DEVTRIM. You did. I drink too--too much, sometimes. And I don't pray...I'm not really sure where I'd start.

YALOVA. I pray God will save me. For the bad I've done.

DEVTRIM. I want to tell you something important. You got unlucky. But you are not bad. You're the opposite. And sometimes when you pray. Think of me, okay?

YALOVA. (*Looking at Devrim's bare skin.*) You're a whore!

(Lights shift to the next day.)

YALOVA. Mersiye is right, Americans are rich and spoiled. "Too glamorous for this kind of dirty job."

DEVTRIM. She says that? (*Yalova nods.*) I'm not American.

YALOVA. Yes, but you're going to America. Your father will never let you come back.

DEVTRIM. I love my father, I want to please him. You love yours, don't you?

YALOVA. He gave me life.

DEVTRIM. My father's given me everything but there are some things that make you outside your family. You know that. So do I.

YALOVA. (*Singing.*) "If my mother had a boat she would sail to me..."

DEVTRIM. Yalova, teach me the song.

YALOVA. You said my real name. You're not supposed to! (*Singing.*) "Let the birds above know I miss my mother..." (*Devrim joins in.*)

YALOVA/DEVTRIM. (*Singing.*) "Miss my mother, miss my father, miss my home."

THE BEAUTY INSIDE

DEVTRIM. Look, you just have to know the words, I'll write the score. Think of it like memorizing a song. Osman's son, how many times did he...rape you?

YALOVA. ...Five.

DEVTRIM. Did you scream?

YALOVA. Loud!

DEVTRIM. When a man goes inside you and makes a child there's a word. You'll have to say it.

YALOVA. What is it?

DEVTRIM. Think of it as a word that gets you to the next place, then the word can change meaning, another time. *(Devrim whispers the word in Yalova's ear. Yalova walks into her own light, looking at her postcard, as Devrim disappears. The guard lingers at the edge of the light then exits.)*

YALOVA. The guard goes to buy cigarettes. Put it in the mailbox: the postcard winds its way down the road, past rivers, over mountains, through the caves--but before the wolves can get their teeth on it, agggghh, it hops down the wind on the dusty path, through the orchard. Stop and eat an apple, the dog barks. Run, in between the squash, past the fountain, to your door. The house with two windows, near the roof. You're home. *(Yalova slips the postcard into a mailbox slot on a wall.)*

SCENE 7

Peri reads the postcard, calling out.

PERI. Firat? Come. Bring paper and something to write with.

(Yalova's BROTHER [FIRAT] enters with paper and pen. She shows him the postcard.)

THE BEAUTY INSIDE

PERI. Your older brother Halil had a map from school. I saw the name of a faraway city, “Yalova”, and named her for it. I wanted her to go far away, but not this way. *(Handing him the postcard.)* The postmark says “Antalya”. You must take a letter to her. *(She dictates; he writes.)* “Your father’s eyes have sunken into his head. He sits in prison, all life sucked out of him. What a heavy duty falls on your father. Only blood can clean the sin. He is a man of God.” *(To herself.)* If you turn away, for an instant, do you miss it?

BROTHER (FIRAT). What did you say, mother?

PERI. What is the exact moment between day and night? I didn’t keep her covered, I didn’t keep her inside. If you turn away, for an instant, you miss it. *(She lets out a keening sound, waving him away.)* Get your father’s gun. Go find her. We must put an end to this. Go.

SCENE 8

Devrim talks on her cell phone, standing on a beach boardwalk.

DEVRIM. *(On phone.)* I told you, you’re not allowed to come to the shelter. Just keep the cell phone on, and walk down the boardwalk.

(Devrim’s father enters, dressed inappropriately for the beach, in a suit, on his cell phone, holding his briefcase.)

NAZIM. It’s strange that in my life I’ve never once had the inclination to come here.

DEVRIM. Why are you here?

NAZIM. I spoke to my friend, General Yavuz. He said he will help.

DEVRIM. Thank you for making the call.

THE BEAUTY INSIDE

NAZIM. Now I've done my part, you need to come home...The sun, it's intense. (*Looking at water.*) It makes you want to take a swim.

DEVVRIM. This place has that effect.

NAZIM. The firm is waiting. You owe me something.

DEVVRIM. I'm grateful. My client's depending on me.

NAZIM. I'm depending on you. This case will not change anything--these fundamentalists won't ever allow themselves to be educated.

DEVVRIM. Allah warns against such killing. "When the sun shall be folded up; and when the stars shall fall; and when the mountains shall be made to pass away; and when the camels ten months gone with young shall be neglected; ...and when the seas shall boil; and when the souls shall be joined again to their bodies; and when the girl who hath been buried alive shall be asked for what crime she was put to death; and when the books shall be laid open..."

NAZIM. "Every soul shall know what it hath wrought." You're right, the Koran seems to forbid honor killings. But it's interpretive, Devvrim, like the law.

DEVVRIM. Your nightly lectures at the dinner table don't apply to poor women? "Only in countries where there's a consistent rule of law can democracy exist?" Is that how you put it?

NAZIM. What is this? Some kind of rebellion? That's why I gave you an education so you could get away from all this!

DEVVRIM. I'm indebted to you.

NAZIM. Come back to Istanbul, get a good night's sleep, hand the case over to Zeki--he's in the trenches.

DEVVRIM. I'm in the trenches.

NAZIM. I kept my promise, now I need you to keep yours, to respect me. That's democracy...Let me tell you something about your mother.

THE BEAUTY INSIDE

DEVTRIM. What?

NAZIM. When she came here she said she wanted a chauffeur. She didn't want to drive. I insisted. For her freedom.

DEVTRIM. And look what happened.

NAZIM. Please let me feel that I'm able to help you.

(Lights shift to Yalova, now very pregnant, wearing the same sweater over a white-blouse, plaid-skirt school uniform, holding her school notebook as she prays on the shelter veranda. Her brother Firat motions from outside.)

BROTHER (FIRAT). Sister...

YALOVA. *(Confused.)* Brother? Firat! I thought I saw you...

BROTHER (FIRAT). Come out so I can look at you.

YALOVA. What are you doing here? Did Mama get my postcard? *(He approaches, taking her postcard, folded, from his pocket.)*

BROTHER (FIRAT). You wrote "a shelter on the beach." Come out...

YALOVA. *(Staring at him.)* In the street, I saw you...

BROTHER (FIRAT). *(Amazed.)* You're a student. You grew up.

YALOVA. I can't come out. The minutes go by, clocks ticking. Devrim Inan says I have to stay inside.

BROTHER (FIRAT). *(Teasing.)* What are you holding so seriously?

YALOVA. My notebook. I write my new name. It's stupid to write a name that doesn't belong to you...

BROTHER (FIRAT). I know you always stole my book --about the man who climbed to the summit and laid the flag?

YALOVA. I liked the map of the mountains.

BROTHER (FIRAT). I never thought I'd see you again, you look so different.

THE BEAUTY INSIDE

YALOVA. The guard will come back in a minute. You look the same. *(Lights shift to Devrim and her father on the beach boardwalk.)*

NAZIM. Devrim, Devrim, Devrim, if you put in your years in America now, you can do all the philanthropic work you want later. Build a hospital, a concert hall. Somewhere I can sing opera.

DEVVRIM. Is Turan in jail?

NAZIM. Turan. He's awaiting trial.

DEVVRIM. Living the good life.

NAZIM. It was a terrible mistake.

DEVVRIM. It was a crime.

NAZIM. You've reached a verdict before you know all the facts. There were many engineers and contractors involved. It's a difficult case to untangle...

DEVVRIM. If the laws can always be bent to accommodate the guilty what are they worth?

NAZIM. *(Looking out.)* Is the water nice? I did what you asked me to do. You have a new judge.

DEVVRIM. Thank you.

NAZIM. *(Looking out.)* The problem is I didn't bring a bathing suit.

DEVVRIM. Can you believe we've never been here before? Or Aspendos--that's right near by. There's so much I still have to see--I can't leave.

NAZIM. I get calls from my friends, "What's Devrim doing on this case?" I make things up.

DEVVRIM. I called New York. The firm agreed to defer their offer for a year. I'm sorry.

NAZIM. You betrayed me.

DEVVRIM. If all the educated leave, what hope is there?

NAZIM. Fine, let's drive to Aspendos. Maybe in an amphitheater with those acoustics you'll hear me.

DEVVRIM. I can't.

(Lights shift to Yalova and her brother in the hallway.)

THE BEAUTY INSIDE

BROTHER (FIRAT). Mama cries, I hear her crying, and saying your name.

YALOVA. I say her name, each night, so my baby (*touching her stomach*) will know her.

BROTHER (FIRAT). (*Urgently.*) The guard will be back soon, I've watched him. I want you to listen--you need to pay attention to what the teacher is saying. There are people here who can take care of you.

YALOVA. Is father still in jail?

BROTHER (FIRAT). He's sick. (*Giving her letter.*) I have something for you, Yali.

YALOVA. A letter? Is it from mother? (*As she begins to read the letter, he takes his gun from his pocket, grabbing her.*)

BROTHER (FIRAT). Do you see what she wants me to do?

YALOVA. Firat, you need to go away now.

BROTHER (FIRAT). (*Holding her to him; lowering gun.*) I can't. (*Warningly.*) YALI, DON'T EVER WRITE TO US AGAIN! DON'T EVER TELL US WHERE YOU ARE!

(*Devrim comes in from the boardwalk, seeing the gun.*)

DEVTRIM. Yalova! (*He points the gun at Devrim.*)

YALOVA. Firat, run! (*Firat starts to run and exits. Devrim motions offstage, screaming.*)

DEVTRIM. Guard! (*Blackout. We hear a gunshot.*)

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