Script: Handful of Fate

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Handful of Fate – Abstract

It’s a special day in town. The townspeople are getting ready to welcome their first foreign teacher. However, they mistake Julia, an accidental tourist, for her. A wind of change starts to blow in the town. Handful of Fate tells three stories on this very day.

Young Ahmet plans to run away with his forbidden lover from the village. Everything falls apart as he is assigned to be Julia’s English guide. But she doesn’t speak English.

Pharmacist Zeynep’s story is about her struggle with her lover Celal and the townspeople over leaving for the city. When Volkan arrives at the pharmacy, another chance arises for the townspeople to spread rumors to separate Zeynep and Celal.

Finally, detective Ragip is on a quest with little Sevgi from the village for a love letter that he wrote to Zeynep. The letter was stolen from his pocket at the foreign teacher’s welcoming ceremony.

Handful of Fate aims to present the townspeople’s modest acts for change despite social repression.
HANDFUL of FATE

by

Ali Vatansever

Revised Second Draft

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In the old days, The wind used to whisper lost letters from ear to ear.

A mid-sized Anatolian town in the 90’s. Spring. Flowers in fresh bloom. The town is washed with the last rays of the sun.

The market square at the center of town is buzzing with action. Flags are being strung; colored bulbs are being put up. We follow individual townspeople one after the other. Some work in a hurry; some flirt and check each other out from afar while working; others are caught in laughter. THE HEADMASTER - a hasty man with whitening hair--looks for a megaphone amidst the action. He starts his announcement as soon as he finds it.

HEADMASTER
Dear townspeople, we are expecting all of you at the celebration at the public square to honor the arrival of Ms. Emily, our very own foreign primary school teacher for the first time ever.

A street lamp lights up on a narrow street of town. The announcement continues from the loudspeaker attached to the lamppost. Beneath the lamp, RAGIP (8) -smart, shy-- sits on a wall, finishing a love letter in his illegible handwriting. Having finished, he places the love letter in an envelope and stands up. Gathering his courage, he takes a leap.

He lands on his hands and knees beneath the meter high wall. His hands and knees are slightly scratched. He gets on his feet, and taking a handful of dirt from the ground, rubs it on himself.
INT / EVENING / PHARMACY

A pharmacy with a wooden exterior façade on the ground level of an old building. Among the shelves of pharmaceuticals, ZEYNEP (28) — dark blonde, attractive—rubs merbromin on the scratch on Ragıp’s leg. Ragıp, sitting on Zeynep’s lap with one hand clutched around the letter in his pocket, waits for the right moment to give her his letter.

ZEYNEP
Does it burn?

Ragıp shakes his head to say no. Zeynep checks Ragıp’s free hand. She makes him take his other hand out of his pocket and cleans it as well. Ragıp sticks his hand back inside his pocket.

ZEYNEP
What’s in your pocket?

Ragıp takes out the letter in excitement. Right then, the phone rings. Zeynep takes Ragıp off her lap.

ZEYNEP
(on the phone)
Yes, Celal?

Instead of Celal, it’s her mother.

ZEYNEP
I was expecting a call from a friend, Mother. Nothing new. How are you?

Ragıp slips the letter back into his pocket. He is upset over the missed opportunity.

ZEYNEP
Oh, good. How are things at your pharmacy?
(beat)
Yes, the drugs will arrive tomorrow. Anything new you can recommend?

CUSTOMER walks in. Ragıp frowns and sneaks out without being caught by Zeynep. Zeynep does not notice the customer.

ZEYNEP
Inventory is set for tomorrow, yes.
The lists are almost complete.

(Continued on the next page)
CUSTOMER
(annoyed)
Is it your mom?

ZEYNEP
I have a customer. Kiss Dad for me.

She puts away the bottle of merbromin.

ZEYNEP
(to the customer)
What can I do for you, auntie?

6 INT / EVENING / PHARMACY -SOON AFTERWARDS

Zeynep is alone at the pharmacy. She takes out the 'For Rent’ sign from beneath the counter. She stares at it silently.

7 EXT / EVENING / OUTSIDE OF MAHMUT’S HOUSE

The sun has set. AHMET (18) -the headmaster’s son, calm, determined- stares at the light on the second floor of the house before him. Slowly, he walks to the door and rings.

The door opens.

AHMET
Is Mahmut home?

The door closes. Ahmet waits. MAHMUT (24) -a tough lad--opens the door. He waits for Ahmet to speak.

AHMET
Were you at the prairie?

MAHMUT
(laughing)
Yes. Are you going to ask about Gülbahar?

AHMET
Did you see her?

MAHMUT
Yeah, we witnessed.

AHMET
Witnessed what?

(Continued on the next page)
MAHMUT
Hot stuff.
(laughing)
Heartbreaking...

AHMET
(getting angry)
Mahmut Abi...

As he is about to rebuke, an announcement echoes.

HEADMASTER
Ahmet, son, you are expected at the square.

MAHMUT
Ahmet, son, quickly.

Ahmet leaves.

EXT / EVENING / TEAHOUSE

A small teahouse beneath the plane trees near the square. The preparations in the town’s square are almost complete. The crowd is even larger.

The elders of town, babbling HIMHIM (71), ruffian old timer TUZSUZ (70), sleepy and conservative EĞİNLI (73) and the town gentleman FERİT (75) are seated in the garden of the teahouse.

TUZSUZ
(to Eğinli)
Hey, don’t sleep! So tactless when we are expecting a visitor!

Eğinli opens a single eye.

EXT / EVENING / TOWN SQUARE

The town square is all lit up in brilliant colors and the townspeople are gathered together. Ahmet, on top of a ladder, is busy hanging up a ‘Welcome’ banner. THE CONFETTI KID is walking among the townspeople with his confetti box hanging from his neck, and is having paper fights with other kids every now and then. Ragıp is the only kid who keeps to himself.

Zeynep arrives on the square. She looks around. GOSSIPING WOMAN approaches her quickly.

(Continued on the next page)
GOSSIPING WOMAN
Celal is still at school.

ZEYNEP
(forcing a smile)
The preparations must have taken longer than expected.

GOSSIPING WOMAN
Celal is working with all his might to make the school better.
(pointedly)
Keep working, and then leave it all behind just because your lover wants to go to the city...

Zeynep is upset. GOSSIPING WOMAN #2 joins in their conversation.

GOSSIPING WOMAN #2
Well-said indeed! Look at you: you are everybody’s doctor in this town. You have been here for so many years; you have become one of us.

GOSSIPING WOMAN
You can get married here. We’ll throw a first class wedding for you. No wedding hall in the city could even approach it!

ZEYNEP
Sabiha Abla, let us put everything in order first...

GOSSIPING WOMAN #2
Aaaaa! Who ever heard of order before marriage?

Ragıp notices Zeynep. She looks bored amongst the two gossipers. Ragıp goes over to the confetti kid and whispers in his ear. The Confetti kid goes over to Zeynep.

GOSSIPING WOMAN
Marriage comes first. Tell your mother your place is where Celal is...

GOSSIPING WOMAN #2
Anyway, can’t your mother find a single apprentice in the whole city?

(Continued on the next page)
ZEYNEP
She has gotten older; she needs to hand the business over.

The confetti kid comes before Zeynep. The gossipers take handfuls of confetti.

Ahmet and HAMÎT (22), the apprentice at the teahouse, are holding up the two ends of the banner from on top of a ladder. The headmaster keeps instructing them from the ground.

HEADMASTER
Lift the right corner higher, son.
Right, right!

HAMÎT
Ahmet, he is talking to you.

Ahmet gets back to his senses and lifts the banner.

HAMÎT
Your mind is elsewhere.
(beat)
Any news of Gülbahar?

AHMET
They returned from the prairie yesterday.

HAMÎT
Rumor has it Gülbahar couldn’t get enough of the prairie.

AHMET
(serious)
Who says?

HAMÎT
People. The teahouse is always filled with rumors.

AHMET
That’s only rumor.

HAMÎT
(laughing)
These are fiery times.

AHMET
Hamit, please don’t you start.

(Continued on the next page)
HEADMASTER
OK, that’s it son. Don’t touch.

Hamit climbs down the ladder. Ahmet climbs down slowly, looking at the faint lights of the village in the distance.

HAMİT
One has to keep a village girl at his side at all times. From this far, not even village lights can be seen.

Ahmet and Hamit look at the banner from a distance.

CELAL (29) — dark blond, born and raised in town—arrives at the square with a large bouquet in his hand. When the headmaster sees Celal, he leaves the banner and heads straight to him.

Zeynep sees Celal from a distance. She smiles when she sees the flowers in his hand. The headmaster heads straight to Celal and starts talking to him in excitement. All throughout this, the gossiping women are still with Zeynep.

ZEYNEP
Please excuse me; Celal just arrived...

Zeynep makes her way through the crowd and starts walking towards Celal. Celal hands the flowers to the headmaster. The headmaster leaves. Zeynep changes direction when she realizes that the flowers are not meant for her. She looks around for someone she can hang out with.

Carrying the flowers in his hands, the headmaster looks for a kid among the crowd. He spots Ragıp and goes to the child.

HEADMASTER
My dear, take these flowers. Listen carefully to your mission.

Ragıp does not even have the slightest chance to say no.

HEADMASTER
Ms. Emily gets out of the car. We throw the confetti. Then I go and shake her hand. Right then you come and hand her the flowers. Then, you say ‘Welcome to our town.’

RAGİP
(surprised)
I can’t.

(Continued on the next page)
HEADMASTER
Right. You can’t ’cause you don’t
know how to.
(Calling out for Ahmet)
Ahmet!

Ahmet approaches the headmaster from among the crowd.

HEADMASTER
Son, teach Ragıp the English for
‘Welcome to our town’

AHMET
(in English)
Welcome to town.

HEADMASTER
Right, repeat my son.

Ahmet and the headmaster repeat but Ragıp does not.

HEADMASTER
Look, so easy! Even I learned to
say it.

RAGİP
Let somebody else give her the
flowers.

Ragıp’s eyes are on Zeynep. Zeynep, on the other hand
watches Celal amidst a crowd of townspeople from a distance.
Celal notices Zeynep and goes up to her.

ZEYNEP
(keeping up her appearance)
Is the school ready?

CELAL
Just minor things left for the
morning.

Beat.

Tuzsuz has arrived at one end of the crowd. He yells to the
midst of the crowd.

TUZSUZ
Hey, lad!

Celal turns to look.

(Continued on the next page)
TUZSUZ
So? When’s the fun starting?

CELAL
We’re waiting Tuzsuz Amca. Sit, we’ll let you know.
(to Zeynep)
What did you do?

ZEYNEP
Not much. Just got ready for tomorrow.

CELAL
There’s work tomorrow?

Zeynep is annoyed that Celal does not remember.

ZEYNEP
Inventory.

A SCOUT BOY yells when he spots the arriving car.

SCOUT BOY
They’re here!

Drums and horns start playing.
The square is caught up in excitement.

Ragıp is frozen on the spot with the flowers in his hand.

HEADMASTER
(yells at the crowd)
Make way for the flowers!

The townspeople part towards the edge of the road. They pull Ragıp to the very front.

As the car gets closer, Ragıp’s stress mounts.

He looks at the car, and then at Zeynep.

First the car, then Zeynep.

The car, Zeynep.

When the car stops before him, Ragıp faints.

The door of the car opens. THE HEADMASTER’S ASISTANT gets out of the car in a hurry and everyone throws their handfuls of confetti. The headmaster’s assistant clears off the confetti from his face and eyes. All drums stop.

(Continued on the next page)
HEADMASTER’S ASISTANT
We couldn’t find our teacher.

The townspeople are frozen in shock.

Zeynep breaks through the crowd and reaches Ragıp. Ragıp is lying on the laps of a few of the townspeople.

Ragıp opens his eyes slowly. Standing before his eyes is Zeynep.

Zeynep
Ragıp, darling, are you alright?

Ragıp comes to his senses slowly. He slips his hand in his pocket. The letter is missing. He looks around.

At the entrance of the teahouse the town elders are craning their necks to see what’s happening on the town square. Tuzsuz parts from the crowd and comes by their side.

Himhim
What happened?

Tuzsuz
Madam fainted the moment she arrived.

10 EXT / NIGHT / STREET

Zeynep and Celal are walking down the street together. Celal carries the bouquet of flowers. Every now and then he casts a look at Zeynep but does not receive a reaction from her.

11 EXT / NIGHT / IN FRONT OF ZEYNEP’S HOUSE


Celal
Are you upset over something?

Zeynep
No.

Beat.

Zeynep
Mom called today.

(Continued on the next page)
CELAL
And? Did you tell her our plan?

ZEYNEP
She’s expecting me. I don’t know how much longer she can do without me.

CELAL
Zeynep, you know I am responsible for my students. You can’t solve problems by just saying yes.

ZEYNEP
I know Celal. You say the same thing all the time, and you know what, I am responsible for my mother. Then, tell me when we can go?

CELAL
I don’t know right now. I cannot see two steps ahead...

Beat.

ZEYNEP
I’m going. Good night.

Celal hands her the flowers.

ZEYNEP
Why don’t you keep these?

Zeynep looks at the flowers in her hands. As she is about to enter,

CELAL
We can be happy here too Zeynep.

Zeynep enters without reacting the slightest.

12 INT / NIGHT / ENTRANCE TO ZEYNEP’S HOUSE

Zeynep opens the door and enters. She turns the lights on and, leaning on the door, looks at the flowers.

ZEYNEP
(mimicking Celal)
Why don’t you keep these?
INT / NIGHT / ZEYNEP’S LIVING ROOM

A wall of bookshelves, a divan directly beneath the large window, a small table in the center.

Zeynep gives the flowers the place of honor. She looks at them intently.

EXT / NIGHT / PHONE BOOTH

Ahmet enters the phone booth. He dials a number hesitantly. Gülbahar answers the phone.

GÜLBAHAR
Hello...

AHMET
Gülbahar?

Beat.

AHMET
(nervous)
How are you?

GÜLBAHAR
(whispers)
You should not call.

Beat.

AHMET
How are you?

GÜLBAHAR
Ahmet, stop. Please. I should hang up.

AHMET
I am coming to the village, tonight.

GÜLBAHAR
No, don’t come tonight.
(suddenly)
Aah.

A loud noise from Gülbahar’s side. Ahmet stops dead and listens carefully.

Gülbahar is arguing with someone inside the room.

(Continued on the next page)
GÜLBAHAR’S FATHER
(on the phone, angry)
Ahmet! I know it’s you!
Speak up.

Beat.

GÜLBAHAR’S FATHER
(menacing)
Look, kid, listen carefully! You come near this village tonight, you will be sorry, I promise you this!

Beat.

GÜLBAHAR’S FATHER
This shall not continue anymore.

He hangs up the phone, discouraged.

15 EXT / NIGHT / OUTSIDE THE CLOCK TOWER
The clock tower at the very top of the hilltop overlooking the entire town. Ahmet holds a letter in his hand. He seems thoughtful.

16 INT / NIGHT / TEAHOUSE
At the rundown teahouse there is still steam rising from the tea maker in the corner. Hamit is busy doing the regular cleaning chores. Ahmet enters.

HAMİT
Ahmet...

AHMET
(cutting him short)
Is your bike here?

HAMİT
At the back. Why?

AHMET
I need your help Hamit.

Ahmet places the letter on the counter.

AHMET
Gülbahar needs to get this.
Tonight.

(Continued on the next page)
HAMİT
Alright, you take the bike and
don’t involve me.

AHMET
Hamit, the whole village is on
alert. They are waiting for me.

HAMİT
Man, why can’t you understand? The
girl is after someone else. You
keep...

AHMET
(snaps)
Hamit...

Beat.

AHMET
That’s a goodbye letter.
And I can’t go.

HAMİT
Then, who’s gonna go?

Hamit realizes just who exactly will have to go.

17 EXT / NIGHT / BACK OF THE TEAHOUSE

Hamit is on his motorbike.

AHMET
Make sure, no one gets it but
Gülbahar.

HAMİT
(worried)
Man... You are gonna get us killed.

Hamit looks like he has given in.

AHMET
Walk to the back of the house.
I’ll wait for you here. Be safe.

Hamit hits the gas and the noisy motorbike disappears slowly
in the distance.
18 EXT / NIGHT / MOUNTAIN ROAD
Hamit makes his way through deserted and dark mountain roads.

19 EXT / NIGHT / ENTRANCE OF VILLAGE
Hamit approaches a GROUP OF VILLAGERS at the entrance of the road leading to the village.
Hamit stops the bike. He raises the letter.

HAMİT
He gave up on her.

The group begins to walk towards him.

HAMİT
Here’s his letter.

GROUP OF VILLAGERS
Read it out loud.

Hamit opens the letter and glances over it. He gets terrified. He looks up. The group is looking at him with all seriousness.

HAMİT
(crumples the letter)
Maybe not.

20 EXT / NIGHT / TOWN ROAD
Hamit, with a slight bruise in his cheek, stops the bike’s engine when he gets close to the village. Quietly, he disappears into the side streets of town.

At the entrance of town, Ahmet sits waiting for Hamit in silence.

21 EXT / DAWN / TOWN
The call to prayer. Everything is still in the town. The wind blows through the town’s streets.
EXT / DAWN / TOWN ROAD

The stillness of the roadside is broken by the noise of an approaching truck.

INT / DAWN / TRUCK

Traveling inside the truck immersed in the soundtrack of Arabesque Turkish music are three people. JULIA (32) - an attractive French woman looking younger than her age --, and her lover Marco (26) - sporty, dark skinned, Italian -- are sitting beside TRUCK DRIVER in what is the calm before the storm.

TRUCK DRIVER
(loudly)
Where are you traveling from?
(beginning to gesture with hands)
Traveling! Traveling!

Anxiously keeping an eye on the road because of their speed, Marco suddenly gets agitated.

MARCO
(in French, pointing at the road)
Careful! Rabbit!

By the time the driver turns his attention back on the road, what’s done is done.

MARCO
(in French, sad)
Oh, no! We ran over the poor thing.

TRUCK DRIVER
What? What are you pointing at?

MARCO
(in French)
Instead of looking at the road, this man is still trying to make conversation. What sort of recklessness is this?

TRUCK DRIVER
You scared the shit out of me, man.

Marco gets more agitated.

(Continued on the next page)
JULIA
(She speaks French throughout)
Marco, calm down!

MARCO
(in French)
Julia! Julia! That’s an animal that was just killed. Does it matter whether it’s a rabbit, cat, dog or man? What kind of vegan are you? (to the driver, with hands clasped as if begging) Please, a little more careful! Please!

TRUCK DRIVER
You’re welcome; the truck takes the same route anyhow. It’s not like your weight is a burden on my tires.

JULIA
(thoroughly calm)
You must have seen wrong. (beat)
Anyhow, if you continue like this, we will be spending the night on the roadside.

MARCO
(in French)
Where is the map? Where is the map?

JULIA
Don’t know.

MARCO
(in French)
Don’t know? Don’t know? How can you be so relaxed? Where are we going to get off? Are we going to watch him slaughter wildlife until morning comes?

24 INT / DAWN / TRUCK - A LITTLE LATER

Marco is still talking.

TRUCK DRIVER
Gosh, you make more noise than the engine.

(Continued on the next page)
MARCO
   (in French, to Julia)
You don’t care, do you? You don’t care where we stay, what we see, who we meet. You just wander blindly. You don’t speak; you don’t listen to anything I say. I say let’s do this; all I get is an "OK." I say "I don’t like it when you do this," and you say "what should I do then?"

As Marco keeps talking, Julia decides she has had enough. She reaches over Marco to the driver.

JULIA
Could you please stop the truck?
Stop.

MARCO
   (in French)
What? Are we going to get off?

JULIA
Not us. Me.

25 EXT / DAWN / TOWN ROAD

Julia gets her backpack from the back of the truck and walks calmly to the side of the road.

MARCO
   (in French, from the truck’s side window)
Julia! Julia! This is the last time! You will soon regret this but it will be too late! Julia!

Julia walks in the opposite direction without even a glance back. Marco keeps talking from where he sits inside the truck. The truck takes off.

Julia walks to the entrance of town with her huge backpack.

26 EXT / DAWN / ENTRANCE OF TOWN

An old bench beneath the still bright street lamp. Ahmet has fallen asleep on the bench while waiting for Hamit.

Julia approaches the bench slowly. Quietly, she sits on the other end. Not knowing what to do, she looks around calmly.
Ahmet wakes up. He looks at Julia sitting beside him. He rises. Nods a brief hello, looks at his watch and starts walking slowly towards town.

27 EXT / DAWN / MOSQUE EXIT

The atrium of a grand mosque. The road to town passes right by the mosque.

The town elders, Tuzsuz, Himhim, Eginli and Ferit are coming out of the morning prayer at the mosque.

Ahmet disappears down the sidewalk by the mosque. Soon afterwards, Julia is seen walking down the same road.

The elders notice Julia in all her beauty and dreamlike appearance. Tuzsuz stops the rest.

TUZSUZ
Oh, my heart! What’s that?

EGINLI
Blasphemy! You shouldn’t stare!

HIMHIM
(with slurred speech)
Must be a tourist; doesn’t look like she is from here and she has a bag.

Tuzsuz has already made a move towards Julia.

FERIT
She must be the new teacher.

Julia takes the road curving towards town beside the mosque. With Tuzsuz at the front, the four elders jump in front of her. Tuzsuz takes off his cap and greets her, grinning widely. Julia greets him back politely and goes on her way.

FERIT
(in Turkish)
Welcome my daughter. Welcome.

TUZSUZ
Huh, stop. Don’t interrupt. Why don’t you come this way? I remember you; you came here years ago.

JULIA
(French as always)
Hotel?

(Continued on the next page)
TUZSUZ
Yes, yes. Hotel. This way.

HIMHIM
(mumbling)
Now, we are screwed. How are we going to hold Tuzsuz back?

FERİT
(to Eğinli)
Eğinli, it might be best to call for the headmaster. Meanwhile, we’ll try to calm Tuzsuz down.

Eğinli is already trying hard not to look at Julia. Agreeing, he leaves them.

28 EXT / DAY / IN FRONT OF THE HOTEL
With Tuzsuz walking ahead of Julia, Ferit and Himhim follow them to the hotel.

FERİT
I’ll take your bag for you.

TUZSUZ
Stop it. Don’t get in the way.

Julia takes off her backpack with a smile and hands it to Ferit.

JULIA
Merci.

Tuzsuz makes a move for the bag.

TUZSUZ
I can take it from here. Merci.

Tuzsuz grabs the bag out of Ferit’s hands, and enters the hotel. Julia follows.

29 INT / DAY / HOTEL RECEPTION DESK
Tuzsuz and Julia are talking to the RECEPTIONIST.

TUZSUZ
Room for two.

Tuzsuz turns around to look at Julia and sees Ferit and Himhim behind.

(Continued on the next page)
FERİT
Why don’t you give her one of your southern rooms? Our new teacher, madam over here, will shift to the teacher’s lodge in the morning in any case.

The receptionist changes the key in his hand for another one.

TUZSUZ
Ferit, look here. Stop your interference now.

Hımhım steps between the two and pulls Tuzsuz back. Ferit takes the key from the receptionist and holds it out to Julia.

FERİT
(to Julia)
After you, madam. I’ll have your bag brought to your room.

Tuzsuz makes a move towards Ferit and tries to grab the key from him.

TUZSUZ
Give me that.

Julia watches what’s happening.

FERİT
Tuzsuz, behave yourself in front of our teacher.

TUZSUZ
Look who’s talking. What’s all this flirtatiousness? "Merci!" Madam this, madam that!

FERİT
Hımhım, hold him!

Hımhım comes to aid. Ferit tries to take the key back.

TUZSUZ
Enough! Let me be!

Ferit takes the key back and places it in Julia’s hand.

TUZSUZ
(outraged)
Look at this man! She’s mine! You, you go, fool around with Saniye!

(Continued on the next page)
Ferit isn’t expecting to hear this.

HIMHIM
   (trying to change the topic)
Be respectful to the dead, now
where’s our teacher’s bag?

TUZSUZ
   (hotheaded)
Who says she’s dead! Let that man
be!

Suddenly Ferit and Himhım stop dead in their tracks. Tuzsuz realizes his mistake but resumes his hotheadedness.

HIMHIM
   He’s just fooling, you know. That
old fool.

FERİT
   Himhım...
   (to Ferit)
   Is this true?

Still mad, Tuzsuz tries to avoid an answer and looks away.

Julia heads slowly to her room.

30 INT / DAY / RAGİP’S BEDROOM

A small and bright room. The walls are adorned with numerous posters (Bogart and plenty of guns) and pieces of paper. Primary school textbooks cover the surface of a small desk. A small number of toys are scattered neatly around the room.

Ragıp wakes up. Voices from the living room carry in to his bedroom. Ragıp opens the door of his room slightly and peeps into the living room. RAGİP’S FATHER (33) and Himhım are in the living room. Ragıp’s father paces the room deep in thought. Ragıp sneaks out of his room without them realizing and creeps towards one of the bedrooms in the back. He tries to open the door but discovers it is locked. He spies through the keyhole.

31 INT / DAY / FERİT’S BEDROOM

Ragıp peeps through the keyhole into Ferit’s bedroom filled with an antique aura. Ferit sits on the edge of the bed lost in thought.

Ragıp returns to his room.
Ferit rises and opens the closet. He takes out a very old letter stuck in a corner of one of the shelves and sticks it in his pocket.

32 INT / DAY / RAGIP’S LIVING ROOM

Ragıp, his dad, Ferit and Hımhmım are having breakfast in silence. Ferit is focused solely on his food. The others keep stealing looks at Ferit.

RAGIP’S FATHER
Dad, would you like to take a walk with me sometime today?

No answer.

The doorbell rings. Ragıp’s father goes to open the door. The table is silent. He returns.

RAGIP’S FATHER
Ragıp, they are calling for you from the school. There’s a ceremony. Go, get dressed.

Ragıp leaves the table unwillingly. Just as he is about to leave the living room...

RAGIP
Can I skip it?

RAGIP’S FATHER
No, son; it’s a ceremony.

Ragıp accepts his fate and goes into his room. His father sits back at the table.

RAGIP’S FATHER
Can you go by yourself, son?

FERİT
I’ll take him.

33 EXT / DAY / NEAR THE PHARMACY

Ferit and Ragıp walk down the street in an easy pace. Ragıp has changed into his black school uniform. Tied around his waist underneath his uniform, the edge of his bandoleer can be seen. They pass by the pharmacy. Ragıp takes a look inside secretly. He sees Zeynep. After a few steps, Ragıp stops Ferit.
RAGIP
Grandpa, Zeynep Abla treated my knee yesterday. She didn’t take any money.

FERİT
Hold on; let me go take care of it.

Ferit enters the pharmacy. Behind the window, Ragıp spies on the conversation of the two inside the pharmacy.

After a while, Ferit thanks Zeynep and comes out.

FERİT
Come on Ragıp.

As they leave...

RAGIP
Did Zeynep Abla mention a letter?

FERİT
No, why? Did you write her a letter?

RAGIP
No, a friend did.

The wind blows, the sound of unintelligible words blend into the wind.

34 INT / DAY / ZEYNEP’S BEDROOM

A small room painted in yellow, with a single window. The sun enters the room from behind the curtain. Zeynep is asleep on a twin bed across from the door.

There’s a knock on the door. There is a louder knock the second time.

Zeynep wakes up.

35 INT / DAY / LANDING OUTSIDE OF ZEYNEP’S APARTMENT

Zeynep opens the door. It’s Celal.

ZEYNEP
Celal?

(Continued on the next page)
CELAL
Sweetheart, the teacher has arrived.

36 INT / DAY / ZEYNEP’S LIVING ROOM
Zeynep takes the flowers from the vase.

37 INT / DAY / LANDING OUTSIDE OF ZEYNEP’S APARTMENT
Zeynep hands the flowers to Celal as sadly and quietly as if she was at a funeral.

CELAL
Thank you sweetheart. You are the one who deserves these flowers.

Celal laughs. He places a kiss on Zeynep’s cheek and leaves quickly. Zeynep closes the door. She is upset.

Inside, the alarm goes off.

38 INT / DAY / ZEYNEP’S BEDROOM
The alarm is going off; it’s 7:30. Zeynep enters the room and shuts the alarm.

Zeynep looks out the window. The road is nearly deserted. A SMALL CAT struggles to climb out of a trash can on the opposite sidewalk. Zeynep watches the cat for a while.

39 INT / DAY / ZEYNEP’S KITCHEN
A bright, long and narrow kitchen. In front of the window is a table with two stools, and in the window a dying plant.

Zeynep is preparing two sandwiches at the kitchen counter. The voice of a RADIO HOST can be heard on the old radio placed on top of the refrigerator.

RADIO HOST
We’d also like to use this opportunity to send our best wishes to all brides-to be who are busy with their wedding preparations. Another listener has sent us a fax message saying...

Zeynep wraps the sandwiches in paper and collects the crumbs in her palm.
Zeynep enters the living room. She throws the crumbs in her palm into the glass fish bowl beside the divan. She notices that a fish is floating sideways.

The streets are still deserted. Zeynep leaves her house wearing a modest skirt below the knees and a light jacket. She walks with quick steps, staring at her feet. She appears not to want to encounter anyone.

Zeynep turns a corner and enters a larger street. The teahouse can be seen up ahead. Hamit approaches Zeynep from behind with his loud motorbike.

HAMİT
How are you Zeynep Abla? Where are you headed on a Sunday like this? Let me give you a ride?

ZEYNEP
To the pharmacy.

HAMİT
Abla, you are leaving and yet the work is not finished.

Zeynep smiles.

HAMİT
When will the journey be if it’s meant to be?

ZEYNEP
I don’t know.

An OLD WOMAN calls out from one of the upper windows.

OLD WOMAN
Hamit, son!

Hamit and Zeynep look up. Hamit turns off the engine, dismounts the bike and starts walking it.

HAMİT
(indicating the noise of the engine)
HAMİT
Sorry, auntie!

OLD WOMAN
(grinning)
Good morning, my bride.

ZEYNEP
(to Hamit)
I’m late.

She quickens her steps. Hamit looks after her.

OLD WOMAN
(to Hamit)
Where’s she headed at this hour?

HAMİT
She has work to do at the pharmacy.

OLD WOMAN
(happily)
Hamit, is she staying then?

Hamit gestures that he doesn’t know. Up ahead, Zeynep has heard the conversation. Hamit heads for the teahouse.

43 INT / DAY / PHARMACY

The phone is ringing inside the pharmacy.

Zeynep raises the shades and enters the dark pharmacy. She attempts to get to the phone on time.

ZEYNEP
Hello?

The caller has already hung up. Zeynep hangs up in distress.

Zeynep takes a look around the pharmacy.

44 INT / DAY / PHARMACY

Standing on a chair, Zeynep is checking the pharmaceuticals on the upper shelves.

VOLKAN (30) —friendly, brown-haired and unshaven—parks his pharmaceuticals car in front of the pharmacy.

Volkan enters the pharmacy with lists in his hand.

(Continued on the next page)
Zeynep is startled standing on the chair. She descends.

Zeynep
You frightened me.

She shakes his hand. The air is somewhat tense.

Zeynep
How are you? Someone else came last month.

Volkan
I was sent elsewhere. Is business ok?

Zeynep
Yes. Good.

Volkan picks up the list of pharmaceuticals sitting on the counter. Zeynep picks up the "for rent" sign a little ways away on the counter.

Zeynep
I am missing one or two things.

Volkan places the list in his hand on the table. He starts comparing the two.

Zeynep
Volkan, why don’t you start and I’ll catch up with you.

Volkan
Sure.

Zeynep goes behind the counter.

45 INT / DAY / AHMET’S BEDROOM

A plain room. A small desk is covered entirely in textbooks. Ahmet sleeps in his bed. The headmaster bursts in through the door in a hurry.

Headmaster
Ahmet! Get up son!

Ahmet wakes up.

(Continued on the next page)
HEADMASTER
Ms Emily arrived in the early morning.

Ahmet sits up groggily.

HEADMASTER
Come on, get up. Let’s go pick her up together at the hotel.

AHMET
What will I do?

HEADMASTER
You’ll speak to her in English!

AHMET
Isn’t there anyone else?

HEADMASTER
It’s good practice for you son. Get up!

Ahmet rubs his eyes.

INT / DAY / JULIA’S HOTEL ROOM

A high-ceilinged hotel room darkened by the drawn curtains. Julia has collapsed on the bed and is fast asleep. On the floor, her backpack lies open with plenty of clothes scattered around.

A knock on the door. A second knock. Julia struggles to wake up.

JULIA
Who is it?

No answer. She rises out of bed and throws on the first piece of clothing she picks up from among the scattered clothes. She opens the door a crack. Ahmet and the headmaster are standing outside of her door.

HEADMASTER
Good morning, Madam.

JULIA
(in French)
Room service?
HEADMASTER
Service?
(carries on as if he has not heard)
Madam, we are honored to welcome you to our town. Let me introduce myself: My name is Mehmet Altıntaş, I am the headmaster of our primary school. Even though we may have made an unfortunate start, we shall do our best so that you shall forgive us.

The headmaster pauses and expects Ahmet to translate. Though with a late start, Ahmet starts translating into English.

AHMET
(in English)
Uhhh, welcome to town. My name is Mehmet Altıntaş. Excuse me.

The headmaster nods in approval.

JULIA
(French as always)
I don’t understand what you are saying. I don’t know English.

Ahmet doesn’t understand a single word.

HEADMASTER
What did she say?

HEADMASTER
Son, you are awfully quiet?

AHMET
I didn’t understand, Dad.

HEADMASTER
What? What? Is this the fruit of all our efforts for all these years? Lad, I carried you to school in the next town every single morning so that you could learn English.

AHMET
She has a weird accent Dad.

HEADMASTER
(angrily)
Fuck off! Accent my ass!

(Continued on the next page)
Julia shuts the door in their faces.

Yet another knock on the door. When she opens, the headmaster stands there grinning widely as if to make up for his earlier mistake. Since the burden is now on his shoulders, he starts gesturing wildly.

**HEADMASTER**
Hello again.
(pauses, to Ahmet)
Uhh, do you have a pen?

He takes out a piece of paper and sketches a school.

**HEADMASTER**
School. We will go.. please.

**AHMET**
(in English)
Please.

**HEADMASTER**
Shut up. Please.

Julia looks tired but indifferent all the same.

47 INT / DAY / HOTEL RECEPTION DESK

With the headmaster in the lead, Ahmet and Julia descend the staircase. As he leads the way, the headmaster keeps scolding Ahmet.

**HEADMASTER**
You humiliated me. But I know what to do with you. You will show Ms. Emily around town the entire day.

**AHMET**
It’s impossible Dad.

**HEADMASTER**
Oh, you’ll see what’s possible. Come back not having practiced at all if you dare. If you still cannot communicate with Ms Emily by evening, then you’ll see.

**AHMET**
Dad, I can’t. There’s stuff I need to take care of today.

(Continued on the next page)
HEADMASTER
Oh yes, you can. One way or the other you can.

They leave the hotel.

48 EXT / DAY / STREET


49 INT / DAY / TEACHER’S LODGING

A narrow hallway in an apartment building. Ahmet and Julia climb the stairs. Every now and then Ahmet’s eyes shift towards Julia’s legs.

Ahmet stumbles and with a quick reflex, Julia catches him as he falls backwards. He is embarrassed.

50 INT / DAY / ROOM INSIDE TEACHER’S LODGING

A brightly sunlit and sparcely furnished living room. Julia opens the door and enters. Ahmet follows her and sets down the backpack.

JULIA
Why all this effort?

AHMET
No, I can’t leave. They’re expecting you at the school.

For a while, they stare at each other. Julia starts checking out her surroundings.

51 EXT / DAY / GARDEN OF TEAHOUSE

Silence at the garden of the teahouse. Himhıım, Tuzsuz and Egiatanlı sit at the only occupied table. All eyes on Tuzsuz.

HIMHIM
(mumbling)
Tuzsuz, your tea is as cold as ice.
Drink up.

Tuzsuz sits sulking.

Ahmet and Julia appear in the distance. Egiatanlı notices them.

(Continued on the next page)
Ahmet leaves Julia outside and enters the teahouse. Hamit is busy before the tea maker. He places the filled tea glasses on the tray and passing by Ahmet, takes them to the garden.

HAMİT
I’ll be right back.

Ahmet stands in front of the tea maker.

HAMİT
Uncle Tuzsuz is rabid.

AHMET
Did you give her the letter?

HAMİT
Yes yes, I did.

AHMET
By hand?

HAMİT
She came to the back window. I handed it to her there.

Ahmet nods his head. Then he realizes...

AHMET
You can’t reach the back window.

HAMİT
I tossed it.

AHMET
But you saw her grab it, right?

Hamit nods an of course.

(Continued on the next page)
AHMET
Bless you.

He leaves the teahouse.

54 EXT / DAY / GARDEN OF TEAHOUSE

Julia is sitting with the elders.

TUZSUZ
... yes, these days English is very popular. Tourists come but none of us understand what they say. We leave a bad impression. But none as beautiful as you has arrived before.  
(pointing at her tea)
Drink, drink...

Julia sips her tea. She rises when she notices Ahmet.

AHMET
Excuse us.

TUZSUZ
Lo, you’re gonna make her choke on tea! Let her drink in peace!

Eğinli and Hımhım lock their arms around Tuzsuz’s and calm him.

55 EXT / DAY / BEHIND THE TEAHOUSE

Julia and Ahmet walk towards the back of the teahouse. Ahmet spots Hamit’s motorbike and goes to it. He looks at the tires. There’s no mud.

He walks back angrily to the teahouse. Julia stays behind.

She looks around her.

Soon enough, the backdoor of the teahouse opens and Ahmet comes to the motorbike pushing Hamit in front of him.

AHMET
Where’s the letter?

HAMİT
I told you, I gave it to her.

(Continued on the next page)
AHMET
There’s no mud on the tires?

HAMİT
The tires... I washed them. I washed the tires.

AHMET
Give me the letter Hamit.

Hamit gives up and taking out the crumpled letter from the small basket of the motorbike, he tries to smooth it. He hands it to Ahmet. The envelope has been opened, and the letter read. Ahmet glares angrily at Hamit.

HAMİT
You’re going to get yourself in trouble Ahmet.
(beat)
The whole village has gone mad!

AHMET
Have they read the letter?

HAMİT
(hesitant)
No.

Ahmet relieves a little and leaves with Julia.

HAMİT
(yelling after Ahmet as he leaves angrily)
But they know you are not done with Gülbahar!

JULIA
(repeating to herself)
Gülbahar.

AHMET
(turning around)
You read nothing, OK?

HAMİT
Go, give it to her if it’s that easy!
EXT / DAY / SCHOOL YARD

A primary school with a cement yard. Almost the entire yard is taken up by a basketball court bordered with the net of a volleyball field. The windows of the pink school building are adorned in flags.

The yard is filled with enthusiastic preparations. The yard has been decorated, it’s no different than a ceremonial field. It feels as if the school is expecting an inspector from the big city.

Having arrived early, SEVERAL PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN await the ceremony in the shade.

Holding a microphone in his hand, the headmaster is busy with sound check. No matter what, there is no sound from the speakers. Celal tries to get the children ready.

Ragıp and Ferit enter the garden. The parents look at Ferit and talk amongst themselves. Ferit and Ragıp start waiting quietly in a corner of the yard.

ELECTRICIAN and his daughter, SEVGİ (7) —a petite girl with long blonde hair, scarred knees and dirty clothes—enter the yard. The headmaster causes mayhem the moment he spots them. He drags the electrician by the arm to the microphone. Sevgi is left alone in the yard. Ragıp comes close by.

BOY #1 approaches Ragıp.

BOY #1
(laughing)
Your eyes are better for me than the sun.

Ragıp is taken back.

BOY #1
Each time I come to see you, I fall sick with love.

Boy #1 laughs in utmost pleasure.

BOY #1
Ha-ha! Fool in love!

Ragıp remains calm as the boy laughs. He point at GIRL #1 leaning against the wall in another corner of the yard.

RAGİP
Look. See who’s there?

Boy #1 stops laughing.

(Continued on the next page)
If you don’t give me the letter right away, I’ll go tell her how you watch her in PE.

Boy #1 looks first at Ragıp and then at the girl.

BOY #1
That’s slander.

RAGIP
I swear I will.

Boy #1 thinks. Ragıp shrugs his shoulders in an "as you wish" sort of way and starts towards the girl.

BOY #1
I don’t have the letter I swear. I heard it from the other kids.

RAGIP
So, one of you has the letter.

Boy #1 gestures he does not know. Ragıp believes him and walks away. Then he turns around and comes beside Boy #1 again. He points at GIRL #1’s MOTHER standing close by her daughter.

RAGIP
If you tell anyone about the letter, then I will tell her mother.

HEADMASTER
Check one two...

The electrician has fixed the speakers, a deafening feedback fills the yard.

Ragıp turns towards the headmaster and finds Sevgi staring at them. She has followed the whole conversation.

Ragıp goes back to his grandfather. Boy #1 leaves.

Sevgi comes beside Ragıp and fixes his uniform’s collar. Surprised, Ragıp lets her.

RAGIP
Where’s your uniform?

SEVGİ
I start next year.

(Continued on the next page)
RAGIP
What are you doing here then?

Sevgi turns around and points at the electrician.

SEVGİ
He is my father. The school electrician went to the city.

Right then, the yard is caught up in excitement. Ahmet and Julia have entered the yard. Seeing Ahmet arrive, Sevgi leaves Ragıp and walks towards Ahmet.

HEADMASTER
Everyone to their places.

Silently, Ragıp leaves his grandfather and gets in line.

HEADMASTER
Dear parents, let’s please move towards the back.

Slowly, the front is cleared. All the students await Julia’s move in line.

The headmaster moves away from the microphone. He greets Julia. Holding her by the arm, he brings her to the middle of the yard before the kids and takes a step back. Left with rows of children before her, Julia does not know what to do.

JULIA
I don’t understand, what is this about?

CHILDREN
(roused by the headmaster)
THANK YOU!

The Turkish national anthem starts. Julia tries hard not to laugh.

Celal kindly signal her not to laugh from a distance.

Amongst the crowd, SNEAKY WOMAN looks first at Julia and then at Celal maliciously.

EXT / DAY / SCHOOLYARD

The ceremony at the schoolyard has ended. Most parents and children have already left. Ragıp walks back to his grandfather Ferit.
FERİT
Come Ragıp. We’re going for a visit.

Ferit holds Ragıp’s hand and they start walking. Sevgi points at Ragıp to her father as he walks by them holding his grandfather’s hand.

SEVGİ
I’ll play with him.

ELECTRICIAN
No, honey. How will you get home?

SEVGİ
(pointing at Ferit)
This grandpa can drop me off, right?

Sevgi expects Ragıp to back her up. She gestures to him to do so.

RAGİP
Sure.

ELECTRICIAN
Come, we’re leaving.

Sevgi gets closer to her father. She speaks in a hushed voice so that Ragıp and his grandfather cannot hear.

SEVGİ
Daddy, please. Mama won’t say anything. She won’t say anything even if I tell her how you sneak sweets out of the cupboard.

Ragıp overhears Sevgi’s sweet threat aimed at her father and enjoys it.

SEVGİ
But I wouldn’t do that.

Her father is taken back.

EXT / DAY / SCHOOLYARD -SOON AFTERWARDS
Sevgi leaves the schoolyard with Ferit and Ragıp.

SEVGİ
I’m going back to the school.

Ragıp does not answer. Sevgi has already left them.
In the distance, Zeynep can be seen walking towards the schoolyard.

59 EXTERIOR / DAY / OUTSIDE OF GÜL NİNE’S HOUSE

Ferit knocks on an old door. Ragıp is with him. GÜL NİNE—a mute and rather old woman—opens the door. She is not surprised to find Ferit standing before her.

FERİT
Peace be with you.

Gül Nine receives his greeting with a nod.

FERİT
Do you know why I come, Gül?

Gül Nine nods yes.

FERİT
So, Saniye lives.

Gül Nine does not respond. Ferit starts walking away with Ragıp.

FERİT
Why did you do this to us Gül?

Gül Nine points at Ragıp.

Ragıp hides behind Ferit.

60 EXTERIOR / DAY / OUTSIDE THE TEAHOUSE

As Ferit and Ragıp walk by the teahouse, Tuzsuz, Eğinli and Hımhım, seated at a table, notice the two. Eğinli runs out and is followed by Hımhım. They step up before the two. Tuzsuz, sulky, remains seated.

EĞİNLİ
Ferit Bey!

HİMHİM
Where are you going old chap? You have Ragıp with you.

Ferit keeps walking.

FERİT
We’re going to the village.

(Continued on the next page)
HIMHIM
Stop being stupid Ferit. At your age! God forbid, your time could end on that road.

Ferit takes no heed and keeps walking.

EĞİNLİ
Make way, Ferit!

Ragıp is disturbed by the quarrel and is clinging to his grandfather’s hand tighter.

EĞİNLİ
Your grandson is by your side. Let the past be the past.

HIMHIM
We all loved girls from the village. It’s youth; it passes away. We all married peacefully.

Ferit stops abruptly and turns around. Ragıp’s hand slips from his.

FERİT
I loved Saniye. You lied to me that she was dead. You lied for sixty years.

EĞİNLİ
Ferit, don’t say these things in front of your grandson. He is a clever boy.

Ragıp listens in shock.

FERİT
Let him see too! Let him see who the town did not allow to be his grandmother.

Suddenly Ragıp runs away. His eyes are filled with tears.

FERİT
Ragıp!

EĞİNLİ
Let the child be! Nursel is his only grandmother.

Ferit loses heart in Ragıp.

(Continued on the next page)
FERİT
Don’t let a soul know I am going to the village.

He starts to walk away in a determined manner. As Hımhım stands there looking after Ferit, Eğînî realizes that Tuzsuz is walking in the opposite direction on his own.

EĞÎNÎ
Tuzsuz! Hımhım, Tuzsuz is leaving.

61 INT / DAY / PHARMACY

At the counter, Volkan is busy with the lists. Zeynep is inside the backroom taking inventory.

VOLKAN
I stopped by your mother’s pharmacy yesterday evening.

Zeynep does not react. She may not have heard.

SNEAKY WOMAN enters the pharmacy.

SNEAKY WOMAN
Is all well Zeynep? It’s Sunday.

Zeynep has not noticed the woman.

ZEYNEP
Welcome. It’s inventory day.

Sneaky woman looks at Volkan.

ZEYNEP
(introduces)
Pharmaceutical investigator.

Volkan nods to greet her.

SNEAKY WOMAN
I recognize him.

ZEYNEP
Is there something you need?

SNEAKY WOMAN
Hand me syrup.

Zeynep nods and reaches for the shelf.

(Continued on the next page)
SNEAKY WOMAN
I don’t know what we’ll do when you’re gone.

Volkan minds his own business.

SNEAKY WOMAN
Why did your Mom have to call for you now?

Volkan pauses for a second when he hears this.

SNEAKY WOMAN
We were going to marry you here. Happily looking forward to it.
(beat)
I saw Celal at school.

Zeynep does not respond.

SNEAKY WOMAN
(pointedly)
He was busy with the new teacher.

Zeynep hands her the syrup.

SNEAKY WOMAN
She is pretty. You are going to have him snatched away by someone else.

She laughs pointedly. Zeynep gets suspicious.

SNEAKY WOMAN
I’ll let you get back to work. Put this on my tab.

Sneaky woman exits the pharmacy. Volkan waits for Zeynep’s reaction.

Zeynep is uneasy.

In order to leave Zeynep alone for a few minutes...

VOLKAN
I should get the boxes from the car.

Volkan exits the pharmacy. Zeynep looks around nervously not knowing what to do.

When Volkan enters with the boxes, Zeynep gets up.

(Continued on the next page)
ZEYNEP
Can you handle the place without me for five minutes?

She leaves in hurried steps.

ZEYNEP
(walking away)
You just wait...

Volkan stays behind at the pharmacy with the boxes in his hand.

INT / DAY / SCHOOL HALLWAY

Silence in the school hallway. The voices of the school committee are heard from a distance.

Zeynep climbs the stairs hurriedly and reaches the second floor. She catches her breath as she stares down the long hallway before her.

One of the classroom doors opens and the school committee exits, followed by Julia and Ahmet. The committee is showing Julia around each classroom.

HEADMASTER
The hallway was polished just recently.

They approach the next classroom. Zeynep looks for Celal.

Julia still does not understand anything, but follows through indifferently. The headmaster opens the door to one of the classrooms and lets Julia inside. The school committee enters first.

Quickly, Zeynep approaches Ahmet to catch him before he enters the classroom.

ZEYNEP
Ahmet...

AHMET
Zeynep Abla?

ZEYNEP
Ahmet, have you seen Celal?

AHMET
He left about half an hour ago saying he had to work with the kids.

(Continued on the next page)
Zeynep relaxes.

ZEYNEP
Do you know where he went?

AHMET
No.

ZEYNEP
Thank you.

Julia stares at Zeynep. They look at each other. Zeynep walks away.

63 EXT / DAY / OUTSIDE THE PHARMACY

Zeynep returns to the pharmacy in a pensive manner. She looks inside through the glass. Volkan is organizing the pharmaceuticals on the shelves.

The wind blows, carrying unintelligible words to Zeynep’s ears.

THE WIND
(with a murmur)
Every time I come to you...

Zeynep looks around. She can’t make anything out of what she has just heard.

Zeynep walks away.

64 EXT / DAY / STREET

THE WIND
(with a murmur)
... you are the meaning... of my illness...

Zeynep enters a deserted street. She sits on a rock and starts thinking.

65 EXT / DAY / STREET - A LITTLE WHILE LATER

A STRAY DOG appears at the end of the street and looks at Zeynep. As the dog starts walking away slowly, Zeynep notices the tin can tied to the dog’s tail.

The dog walks away.

Zeynep looks after him for a while.
The wind blows, trees sway. The hum of the trees fills the street.

66  INT / DAY / PHARMACY

At the pharmacy, Volkan waits by himself for Zeynep to return having finished work. He looks at the picture of Celal and Zeynep.

Zeynep enters the pharmacy. She goes to Volkan.

ZEYNEP
I’m sorry Volkan; I kept you waiting.

VOLKAN
Is everything OK?

ZEYNEP
Yes, yes.

VOLKAN
In that case, my work here is finished.

ZEYNEP
You finished everything?

VOLKAN
There were only a few minor things left. I took care of them anyhow.

Zeynep smiles.

ZEYNEP
(sincerely)
Thank you.

Volkan smiles and walks out to his car.

67  EXT / DAY / OUTSIDE THE PHARMACY

Zeynep and Volkan are outside the pharmacy. Zeynep draws the shades.

ZEYNEP
See you Volkan.

VOLKAN
If you come to the city, we’ll be able to see each other anyhow.
Hesitantly, Zeynep nods yes.

68 INT / DAY / VOLKAN’S CAR

Volkan gets in his car, shuts the door and turns the engine on. He sets on the road, sounds a "goodbye" horn and drives away. Zeynep walks away.

69 INT / DAY / VOLKAN’S CAR - A LITTLE LATER

As Volkan is about to turn onto the main road, he notices someone entering the wrecked house on the side of the road. Volkan pulls aside.

70 EXT / DAY / OUTSIDE THE WRECKED HOUSE

Volkan arrives before a very old house with a wrecked façade and a nearly collapsed roof.

The wind blows.

THE WIND
(with a murmur)
Dear Zeynep... Zeynep...

Volkan looks around him. Slowly, he approaches the house and opens the door cautiously.

71 INT / DAY / ZEYNEP’S LIVING ROOM

Zeynep catches the dead fish in the bowl with a scoop net.

Right then, the doorbell rings.

72 INT / DAY / LANDING OUTSIDE OF ZEYNEP’S APARTMENT

Zeynep opens the door. She is surprised to find Volkan before her.

As Volkan is just about to start speaking, her next door NEIGHBOR opens the door and closes it again.

ZEYNEP
Volkan?

VOLKAN
(tense)
Hi. I was going to ask if you wanted to take a walk.

(Continued on the next page)
ZEYNEP
That would be great but I have some work to do at home.

VOLKAN
Like fishing?

Zeynep smiles.

VOLKAN
There’s a place I’d like to show you.

ZEYNEP
(in earnest)
Volkan, this is a small town, everybody knows one another. It sounds absurd when I say this but it would be more beneficial for both of if we were not seen together.

Volkan doesn’t know what to say. Seeing he cannot respond, Zeynep closes the door.

Volkan rings the door bell again. Zeynep opens again.

VOLKAN
I saw Celal at the wrecked house with a girl.

INT / DAY / MAYOR’S OFFICE

THE MAYOR—covering his bald head with the long tufts he has grown on the side—waits for the flash photography with Julia’s hand tightly clasped in his, and his chest puffed up. The school committee that has been following Julia around stands beside the door.

Flash goes off.

MAYOR
(in English)
Yes. Thank you. Great, great.

JULIA
(French as always)
You hairstyle is lovely.

The mayor does not understand what Julie says but pretends to.

(Continued on the next page)
MAYOR
(in English)
Ah, you too, you too.

Flash goes off.

74 EXT / DAY / PHONE BOOTH

Julia is inside a wrecked phone booth. The crowd has surrounded the phone booth and is watching Julia’s every move.

Julia looks around.

JULIA
Could you leave me alone?

She motions everyone to step back a little. The headmaster warns everybody. The crowd takes a few steps back altogether. Ahmet stands in the very back. He is deep in thought.

JULIA
I need to get out of this loony bin fast.

Julia takes out a notepad from her pocket, puts it on the phone and picks up the receiver. She realizes she doesn’t know how to work it.

Everybody searches for a phone token in their pockets.

The headmaster’s palm is soon filled with a number of tokens.

Ahmet places the tokens in the slot one by one and then steps back.

THE WIND
(with a murmur)
Your eyes are... better for me... your eyes... better than the sun...

Ahmet looks around.

Julia opens her notepad and opens the page with the number for Marco’s beeper. The dial tone is still heard.

JULIA
So, which number do I dial?
Julia looks around. Everybody looks at her intently. Julia places the receiver back. She gets out of the phone booth.

CROWD
She must have decided not to call.

The tokens fall one by one to the return slot on the phone. Ahmet enters the booth and takes the tokens. For a split second, he hesitates to make a call.

HEADMASTER
Ahmet, son. Collect all; we’re leaving.

Ahmet exits the phone booth.

EXT / DAY / STREET

Julia, Ahmet and the school committee following them walk down the street. The HEADMASTER slips out of the crowd and places himself before Julia.

HEADMASTER
(pointing at the mosque on the side of the road)
Mosque...
(When Julia does not understand, he turns to Ahmet)
Son, talk. Talk about the mosque, say something about it.

Ahmet hesitates. Realizing this, the headmaster asks for a dictionary from his assistant and makes a point of handing it to Ahmet. Ahmet looks in the dictionary.

AHMET
Mosque.

HEADMASTER
Yes.
(writing on air)
Built in 1843.

WOMAN WITH WALKING STICK stops before Ahmet.

WOMAN WITH WALKING STICK
Ahmet, my son,
(pointing at Julia with her walking stick)
who is this little lady? Why don’t you introduce us?

(Continued on the next page)
AHMET
She’s the new English teacher, auntie.

WOMAN WITH WALKING STICK
(turning towards Julia with her mouth wide open)
Ah, (smiling) I thought... Welcome my daughter. You brought us much pleasure. Maşallah, she is tall and all...

Woman with walking stick pets Julia’s elbow both with her hand and her walking stick.

AHMET
Auntie, she doesn’t understand you. She’s foreign.

WOMAN WITH WALKING STICK
Ah, she is foreign?
(raising her voice and shaking her head up and down)
Welcome, welcome.

Julia, distressed, nods solely out of politeness.

WOMAN WITH WALKING STICK
But your face is so faint. You haven’t been fed properly. Anyhow, our bread will be good for you.

Julia catches Ahmet’s eye.

AHMET
That’s fine, auntie.

WOMAN WITH WALKING STICK
(as the crowd walks away)
Beautiful! Beautiful!

76 EXT / DAY / STREET
Tuzsuz plants himself before the group following Julia. A little far off, Himhim is trying to catch up.

HIMHIM
(calling from afar)
Hold him, don’t let that madman do anything.

No one understands anything he says.

(Continued on the next page)
TUZSUZ
Let me pass.

A large number of people throw themselves between Julia and Tuzsuz and try to hold him off.

TUZSUZ
Tell her; I have a house and a field...

In the chaos, Ahmet and Julia catch each other’s eyes. Julia is slowly getting ready to make a quick escape. Ahmet indicates he will let her go.

Julia sneaks off unseen in the chaos Tuzsuz causes.

When the headmaster turns towards Julia, she is already gone.

HEADMASTER
(in panic)
Ahmet!

Ahmet is nowhere to be seen either.

77 EXT / DAY / WALLSIDE

On one side of the road, a waist-high wall. On the other, neighboring houses.

Ahmet, separated from the group, walks down the street with quick steps in a pensive state.

A little further down, Sevgi sits on the wall.

Ahmet does not notice her when he passes by. In order to catch his attention...

SEVGİ
Hello.

AHMET
(recognizes Sevgi)
Where did you come from?

SEVGİ
I came for a trip.
Ahmet enters the teahouse. Hamit is busy with the tea maker. He straightens up as he sees Ahmet.

AHMET
Hamit, I’m taking your bike.

Without waiting for a response from Hamit, Ahmet sets for the back door.

HAMİT
Are you going to the village? Are you mad? No, wait.

Hamit runs out the back door after Ahmet.

Ahmet has already mounted the bike. Hamit is beside him, talking in panic.

HAMİT
At least wait until darkness.

AHMET
In the dark, I will go to take her away with me.

HAMİT
Allah! Allah! Didn’t you hear what happened to Uncle Ferit?

He starts the engine. He stops as he is about to set on the road.

HAMİT
The whole town lied to him. For years they said his sweetheart from the village was dead.

Ahmet’s face changes.

HAMİT
They’ll beat you up.

AHMET
(somewhat hesitantly)
I need a car tonight. Who will help?

No answer.

(Continued on the next page)
AHMET
(stops him)
Hamit.

HAMİT
I can only think of Mahmut.

80   EXT / DAY / OUTSIDE OF MAHMUT’S HOUSE
Ahmet dismounts the bike and knocks on Mahmut’s door. The door is opened.

WOMAN AT THE DOOR
Mahmut is on the hilltop.

81   EXT / DAY / ENTRANCE TO TOWN
As Ahmet rides away from town on the bike Râşip and Sevgi stare at him from behind.

SEVGİ
No!

82   EXT / DAY / PATH TO THE HILL
Ahmet rides the bike towards the hilltop. He parks beside the wrecked wall by the road.

83   EXT / DAY / HILLTOP
A green pasture overlooking the town. Near the edge of the cliff, Mahmut and FRIENDS have set up a meal on the ground.
Ahmet comes out from behind the wrecked wall. He walks slowly towards Mahmut.

MAHMUT
Welcome, come and join us...

AHMET
Can we talk alone Mahmut Abi?

Mahmut gestures his friends to leave them alone.
Mahmut’s friends leave.
Ahmet sits across from Mahmut.

(Continued on the next page)
AHMET
As you know, I have never had any issues with you. I have also never asked you for a favor before.

MAHMET
Do tell.

AHMET
I’m going to run away with Gülbañær. I need a car for a few days.

Mahmut starts to laugh.

AHMET
What are you laughing at Mahmut Abi?

MAHMET
(still laughing)
Just a little while ago, old Ferit passed by. By and by.
Now you... Don’t you learn from your elders?

Ahmet does not respond.

MAHMET
You’re going to ruin both your life and the girl’s. Let it be, did you not hear what I said yesterday?

AHMET
I did. What happened at the prairie stays at the prairie. Gülbañær loves me, Mahmut Abi. The soul wants one thing, the eye another.

Beat.

AHMET
In a little while, I’ll go and ask her myself. If she says she’ll come, I’ll be at her door tonight.

MAHMET
If she doesn’t?

AHMET
If she doesn’t...

(Continued on the next page)
MAHMUT

(laughing)
You are really mad. Look, lad, I
say give it up. Any love for a
village girl is fleeting. But if
you say your mind is set, the car
is easily found.

84 EXT / DAY / HILLTOP - A LITTLE WHILE LATER

Ahmet mounts the motorbike. Mahmut yells from afar.

MAHMUT
You’ll ride by Ferit; look at him
and think hard. Mahmut says you
will regret this.

After a moment of hesitation, Ahmet continues.

85 EXT / DAY / VILLAGE ROAD SEQ.

Ahmet is taking the winding roads slowly on the motorbike.

The wind blows after the bike.

THE WIND
(with a murmur)
We will leave this place...
Together... Let’s leave...

86 EXT / DAY / VILLAGE ROAD

Ahmet takes a turn and soon rides by Ferit. Ahmet slows down
as he passes Ferit. Ferit, though tired, walks with
determination.

AHMET
Ferit Dede, let me drop you off.
I’m going to the village.

FERIT
Thank you but this is the nature of
this journey, son.

Ahmet continues on his bike.

After leaving Ferit behind a little, Ahmet turns around and
takes another look at Ferit. He is lost in thought. Ahmet
stops by the side of the road when he reaches the next turn.
He changes his mind. He turns the bike around.
EXT / DAY / CEMETERY

A messy town cemetery. The weeds have grown wild. Ragıp prays with his hands turned to the heavens by the side of his grandmother’s grave. As he prays he also watches AN OLD WOMAN WITH A BLACK HEADSCARF weep before the grave of a little child.

Ragıp watches the SNAILS IN EMBRACE on his grandmother’s tombstone. He finishes his prayer. Taking off his school uniform, he shrouds the tombstone with it.

RAGIP
Keep it for the day grandma.

His bandoleer shines on his waist. Ragıp leaves running.

EXT / DAY / TOWN SQUARE

Ragıp arrives at the square running. The town square is filled with remainders of the ceremony the day before.

Ragıp starts searching the ground.

EXT / DAY / TOWN SQUARE - A LITTLE LATER

Ragıp finds the envelope of his letter under a tree. The envelope bears small dirty fingerprints. He leaves in a hurry.

EXT / DAY / STREET

Ragıp spots Sevgi beside a wall as he passes by the intersection of two streets.

Sevgi secretly watches Ahmet amongst the crowd showing Julia around. Julia has snuck away during the crowd’s efforts to take Tuzsuz under control.

Ragıp goes by Sevgi. Sevgi does not notice him arrive.

RAGIP
What are you doing?

Sevgi is taken back. She turns and looks at Ragıp, does not respond and motioning Ragıp to be quiet, she goes back to watching Ahmet.

(Continued on the next page)
RAGİP
Who is that?

Sevgi does not respond. Taking advantage of Julia’s departure from the crowd, he also leaves the group and starts walking away on his own. Seeing this, Sevgi gets excited.

Sevgi starts following Ahmet.

After a few steps, she turns around to look at Ragıp.

SEVGİ
Come on.

RAGİP
Where?

SEVGİ
You’ll see.

Sevgi has already started walking ahead.

RAGİP
(loudly to Sevgi)
But I have work to do.

SEVGİ
It can wait, come on now.

After a few more steps, Sevgi realizes Ragıp is still not following her.

SEVGİ
Oh, come on.

Ragıp follows her.

91 EXT / DAY / IN FRONT OF THE WALL

Sevgi enters the street running. She sits on the wall. Ragıp follows. Out of breath, he stops beside her.

Sevgi takes out an ancient lipstick from her pocket. She paints her lips with it.

RAGİP
What are you doing?

SEVGİ
You wouldn’t understand.

She fixes her hair.

(Continued on the next page)
SEVGİ
Come on, hide.

RAGİP
Sorry?

SEVGİ
Kneel behind the wall. He’ll be passing any minute now.

Ahmet, separated from the group, walks down the street with quick steps in a pensive state.

SEVGİ
He’s here. Go!

Ragıp jumps behind the wall in panic. He scratches his knee a little on the ground.

Ragıp listens to their dialogue from his hiding point.

SEVGİ
Hello.

AHMET
Where did you come from?

SEVGİ
I came for a trip.

AHMET
All alone?

SEVGİ
Yes. I’m big.

AHMET
How are you going to go back to your village?

SEVGİ
I will go when my shadow is my size.

AHMET
All by yourself?
That won’t do.
(beat)
Don’t go too far, we’ll arrange something for your return.

When Ragıp realizes that Sevgi has climbed down the wall, he sticks his head out.

(Continued on the next page)
RAGIP
Is he gone?

Ragıp jumps down the wall and notices the blood on his knees. Sevgi is lightheaded with happiness.

SEVGİ
Did you hear what he said?

RAGIP
No. I need to go somewhere. Are you coming?

SEVGİ
(grinning)
Yes. I have time. It’s not far, is it?

92 EXT / DAY / STREET

Ragıp and Sevgi are with the BOY WITH THICK GLASSES.

Ragıp takes out the envelope from his pocket. The entire thing appears to be conducted in secrecy. Ragıp shows the letter to the boy. The child takes the letter from him. He inspects the fingerprint carefully. Meanwhile, a little ways away, Sevgi stands around, waiting.

BOY WITH THICK GLASSES
Who is the letter for?

RAGIP
That’s irrelevant.

BOY WITH THICK GLASSES
About our age.

Beat.

RAGIP
Left-handed.

BOY WITH THICK GLASSES
(after studying awhile)
Yes... If you look at the dirt on his hands...
(thinks again)
He kicked a ball around all day.

RAGIP
(wide-eyed)
Who had a soccer game yesterday?

(Continued on the next page)
BOY WITH THICK GLASSES
(looking behind his glasses)
I wouldn’t know.

The wind blows.

THE WIND
(with a murmur)
Must stay together...

Ragıp looks around. Nobody in sight.

THE WIND
Together... We must toil...

RAGIP
Did you hear something?

The boy with thick glasses shakes his head to say no.

At that moment, up ahead from the head of the street Sevgi spots Ahmet riding away on the main road.

SEVGİ
No!

Sevgi starts running. Hearing Sevgi’s voice, Ragıp looks towards the voice. He gestures to the boy with thick glasses from afar and runs after Sevgi.

93 EXT / DAY / TOWN ENTRANCE

Running, Ragıp and Sevgi arrive at the entrance of town. Ahmet is leaving town on the motorbike.

SEVGİ
No!

Ragıp and Sevgi stop by the side of the road out of breath. They haven’t been able to make it. Sevgi looks upset.

Ragıp puts a hand on Sevgi’s shoulder and turns her in the opposite direction. The duo starts walking away together.

RAGIP
(with the air of a grown man)
Don’t be upset. I have felt the same way so many times.

They keep walking away.

(Continued on the next page)
RAGIP
Come on, together we must toil.

SEVGİ
What’s that?

RAGIP
Like we have work to do.

Sevgi walks alongside Ragıp sadly and in silence.

94 EXT / DAY / BEFORE THE PUBLIC BAKERY

A small public bakery sales kiosk. Inside, the BETTING BOY sits reading the newspaper before him syllable by syllable.

RAGIP
(his head barely reaching the counter)
How did the games end yesterday?

The betting boy raises his head.

BETTING BOY
The Hawks massacred the rest.

RAGIP
Who are the Hawks?

BETTING BOY
Didn’t you come to bet?

RAGIP
No.

The betting boy goes back to his paper.

As Ragıp and Sevgi walk away, Sevgi has already managed to walk off with a loaf of bread from the bakery.

95 EXT / DAY / STREET

Sevgi sits on a bench nibbling the edge of the loaf. Ragıp arrives with two bottles of pop soda and sits beside Sevgi. For a while, they munch away on their bread quietly.

SEVGİ
What are we doing now?

Right then, an OLD HUNCHBACK approaches them. He stops and stares at Sevgi and Ragıp reproachfully in silence.

(Continued on the next page)
Ragip and Sevgi look at the old man without understanding.

The old man walks away slowly shaking his head in what seems to be disapproval of their sitting together.

Ragip continues as if nothing has happened.

RAGIP
We’ll go to the field.

Calmly, they eat their food.

RAGIP
Do you still have the thing you put on your lips?

INT / DAY / WRECKED HOUSE

Almost all inner walls have fallen down. Several pitiful furnishings of older days.

Zeynep enters the wrecked house on her own. She walks along the lower level without making a sound.

INT / DAY / WRECKED HOUSE - ROOM

A sofa, various torn pieces of furniture and window frames with no glass.

The door of the room is almost closed. Slowly, Zeynep pushes the door open.

INT / DAY / WRECKED HOUSE - A LITTLE LATER

Volkan enters the wrecked house. Not a single sound. Slowly, Volkan walks towards the room.

INT / DAY / WRECKED HOUSE

Volkan slowly opens the door.

A sofa, various torn pieces of furniture and window frames with no glass.

Beside the window Zeynep is calmly looking at the backyard.

She notices Volkan’s entrance into the room. She turns around and looks at him.

(Continued on the next page)
ZEYNEP
Did you see her face?

VOLKAN
Not clearly.

ZEYNEP
Did you see Celal clearly?

VOLKAN
I saw him clearly from the car. Not in the room.

ZEYNEP
You saw him from a distance.

Volkan nods quietly.

ZEYNEP
You also know Celal brought me here.

Volkan does not answer. He goes by the window. Quietly, Zeynep sits down on the sofa.

Zeynep lies down on the sofa.

Volkan walks to the edge of the window. He looks out.

VOLLKAN
(upset)
I’m so stupid.

Zeynep has only half-heard Volkan’s voice.

Sounds of animals from outside.

ZEYNEP
Uncle Ahmet’s cows.

Beat.

Zeynep rises and walks towards the door. Volkan looks after her.

100 INT / DAY / ENTRANCE OF WRECKED HOUSE

Zeynep arrives at the entrance of the wrecked house. She starts to climb up the stairs to the upper floor.
INT / DAY / WRECKED HOUSE - ROOM ON UPPER FLOOR

A messier room than the one on the lower floor. Zeynep enters the room. She looks around the room from where she stands. Then she starts strolling around.

Volkan comes in the room.

Zeynep brushes her hand against a scribble on the wall. Celal’s name is written in the lower corner.

ZEYNEP
I haven’t come here in so long.

She looks at Volkan.

ZEYNEP
Tell me, what am I to do now?

An announcement echoes across town.

HEADMASTER
(announcement)
Dear townspeople, our new foreign teacher, Ms Emily is currently lost. You are requested to please inform the Town Hall upon any sightings of our guest.

Right then, they hear the sound of the door. Zeynep and Volkan look towards the door.

EXT / DAY / OUTSIDE THE PHARMACY

The school committee is carrying out a thorough search for Julia. They enter the street of the pharmacy. Celal approaches the pharmacy and then stops. The shades are drawn. He draws near and looks inside.

With troubled eyes, Celal joins the crowd and continues the search for Julia.

INT / DAY / LANDING OF ZEYNEP’S APARTMENT

Celal rings the bell. No answer. He rings again. Zeynep’s neighbor across the hall opens her door slightly.

CELAL
Do you know where she went?

(Continued on the next page)
ZEYNEP’S NEIGHBOR
Zeynep went out, my son.

CELAL
Do you know where she went?

ZEYNEP’S NEIGHBOR
No. Some unfamiliar guy came over. He rang and she went with him.

Celal walks away.

INT / DAY / WRECKED HOUSE– ROOM ON THE UPPER FLOOR

YOUNG LOVERS joke and flirt around in the room where Volkan and Zeynep were talking not long before.

LOVER BOY
I thought your Mom would talk forever.

LOVER GIRL
Whenever Papa yells at her, she comes glowing at me.

LOVER BOY
Well, we got you out of the house finally...

The boy looks like he could just eat her up.

Volkan and Zeynep have squeezed tightly into a dead corner behind the door where they cannot be seen by the lovers.

LOVER BOY
How much time do we have?

LOVER GIRL
Not much.

LOVER BOY
Come, let’s sit a little.

The girl is being coy.

Volkan and Zeynep try hard not to make a sound.

LOVER BOY
Come now, I’m not going to do anything.

Volkan and Zeynep look at each other.

(Continued on the next page)
LOVER BOY
I’ll come there then.

The girl is standing by the window.

Zeynep sticks her head out just enough to see. The boy has got up from the sofa and is trying to squeeze the girl into a corner.

The girl attempts to run from him but he catches her. She lets out a cry of joy.

LOVER BOY
Where will you run now?

Zeynep motions Volkan that they should leave.

Zeynep checks the scene once more and with Zeynep in front and Volkan at the back, the two sneak out the back quickly and quietly.

The lovers hear nothing.

As Volkan and Zeynep are about to leave the building, there is a light sound. The lovers look at the door.

LOVER GIRL
I thought I heard something.

LOVER BOY
(indifferent)
It must be the wind.

105 EXT / DAY / STREET
Volkan and Zeynep run out and away from the wrecked house.

106 EXT / DAY / STREET
Volkan and Zeynep run until they reach the corner. Once around the corner, Zeynep leans against the wall and tries to catch her breath.

Volkan leans against the wall a short distance from Zeynep.

They are still out of breath and smiling.

Right then, the OLD HUNCHBACK approaches them. He stops and stares at Volkan and Zeynep reproachfully in silence.

(Continued on the next page)
Zeynep and Volkan look at the hunchback in surprise. The old man walks away slowly shaking his head in what seems to be disapproval.

Zeynep looks at Volkan and they start walking together.

Even though the smile on Zeynep’s face is lost, she seems relaxed.

Volkan follows and catches up with her.

EXT / DAY / NEAR THE PHARMACY

Zeynep and Volkan talk as they walk. They keep their distance from each other as they walk.

ZEYNEP
How many times have you come to investigate?

VOLKAN
It must be seven.

ZEYNEP
When you first came, you had long hair. It looked as if you had a perm.

They laugh briefly.

VOLKAN
You were wearing a white dress. You had your hair up in a ponytail.

Celal calls out from behind them.

CELAL
Zeynep!

Zeynep and Volkan stop. They look at Celal. Celal comes up to them.

CELAL
Where were you?

ZEYNEP
At the wreck.

Celal’s face is suddenly distraught.

(Continued on the next page)
CELAL
What were you doing there?

ZEYNEP
You should know that better than me.

Without waiting for Celal’s answer, Zeynep starts walking away. Volkan does not know what to do. He is left standing there, face to face with Celal.

CELAL
Zeynep!

Celal goes after Zeynep. Volkan looks after both of them.

108 EXT / DAY / STREET

Zeynep walks towards her house and Celal follows her.

CELAL
Zeynep!

Zeynep walks towards home without answering.

CELAL
Zeynep, stop. Let’s talk. What were you doing at the wreck?

ZEYNEP
No. What were you doing?

Celal is surprised.

ZEYNEP
How many other girls have you taken there after me?

Beat.

ZEYNEP
Before me?

Zeynep continues walking angrily.

CELAL
What are you talking about Zeynep? We’re looking for the foreign teacher.

Zeynep suddenly stops. Close enough to hear them, there is a FAMILIAR RESIDENT.

(Continued on the next page)
ZEYNEP
I stopped by but you were not there, Celal. Ahmet said you left with your students.

CELAL
Yes. What’s wrong with that?

Celal is cautious and shy because of the resident nearby.

CELAL
Let’s talk about this tonight Zeynep. Not now, in the middle of the whole neighborhood.

ZEYNEP
Neighborhood, neighborhood, neighborhood. Celal, that’s exactly why I want to leave this place.

Ragıp and Sevgi arrive at the side street neighboring Zeynep’s house.

ZEYNEP
Don’t you see? According to them we should get married or they will separate us themselves using all their might.

Celal holds Zeynep by the arm. She stops half way through her sentence.

CELAL
Then, marry me Zeynep.

109 EXT / DAY / ENTRANCE TO TOWN
Ahmet returns to town alone on the bike.

110 EXT / DAY / BACK OF THE TEAHOUSE
Ahmet has turned the engine off in order not to make any sound and is now walking the bike to the back of the teahouse.

He leaves the bike and walks away down the back road.
Lost in thought, Ahmet walks on the high sustaining walls on the river bank.

Below the wall, he spots Julia pacing up and down the river with her feet in the water.

For a while, Ahmet watches her from a distance.

Julia stands calmly at a place that could prove very dangerous.

Ahmet starts climbing down.

Ahmet comes beside Julia. When she notices Ahmet, she smiles briefly and turning her head, keeps walking. Ahmet catches up with her and starts walking next to her. When they near the stone steps ahead, Ahmet heads that way.

Julia follows Ahmet.

Together, they get out of the water.

An old mosque under the tall trees at the entrance of town. Ahmet is talking to the IMAM of the mosque. Julia is looking at the rows of tombstones of holy men. She has covered some of her hair with the scarf on her neck. Ahmet simultaneously listens to the imam and watches Julia.

IMAM

You have not come by lately.

AHMET

Forgive me.

IMAM

I know you have exams. It is a tough job to prepare for university entrance exams. But don’t you forget: faith is as necessary as intellect for a good exam.

Julia turns her head towards Ahmet. They look at each other. With a movement of her head, Julia indicates that she will get out of the courtard. Ahmet nods. Meanwhile, he listens to the imam.
IMAM
If you at least make it to Friday prayers, your mind will be refreshed, and your heart filled with the effort to study.

AHMET
(absent-mindedly)
You are right sir.

IMAM
You know you are young yet; you may get distracted by temporary excitements.

Julia has already left the mosque and walked onto the small wood bridge nearby. She leans out to look under the bridge and her below-the-knee skirt rises slightly. Ahmet looks at her legs while listening to the Imam.

IMAM
Don’t be tempted by the fire of youth, or do evil or forget your brethren’s rights. Don’t you go wounding and offending others.

Julia looks towards Ahmet. He shifts his gaze. They look at each other. She turns her head away.

AHMET
(absent-mindedly)
You are right sir.

IMAM
When the moment arrives, you shall meet your kismet. Your family will decide for the best.

Ahmet comprehends the imam’s words for the first time. His eyes are suddenly more serious. He holds his tongue and does not respond. He takes a few steps, turns around and greets the imam politely. He points at Julia and walks in her direction.

114 EXT / DAY / BRIDGE

A wooden bridge uniting the two sides of town separated by a narrow river at the entrance of town. Another bridge can be seen a little farther out. Julia stands in the center of the bridge, looking at the water. GIRL IN LOVE and BOY IN LOVE sit on a bench off the next bridge. The girl sits as far from the boy as possible. She does not respond to his conversation attempts but appears busy with something else.

(Continued on the next page)
Ahmet comes beside Julia. They both look at the next bridge and quietly watch the two youngsters flirt for a while.

A GROUP OF BOYS approaches the flirting youngsters and disturbs them.

JULIA
A calm, little town.

Ahmet does not react. When the group leaves the youngsters, the girl appears hurt by the indifference of the boy.

JULIA
It’s the same as everywhere else.

Beat.

JULIA
Everyone expects something from you.

Suddenly, the boy gets up and walks away; the girl catches up with him shortly.

JULIA
When do they hold their peace? When do they give in?

Julia and Ahmet are still watching the couple.

AHMET
We were able to talk to each other only twice in the past three months.

Beat.

AHMET
Is it like this where you are from?

Girl in love makes up with boy in love. Slowly, they walk back to the bench.

AHMET
Do they ever leave you in peace?

Girl and boy in love sit quietly on the bench.

AHMET
(sighs)
Waiting is worse than anything.

Beat. Ahmet turns to Julia. Julia is looking at him.
Ahmet and Julia are walking side by side. They arrive before a small restaurant. Ahmet stops and shows Julia the eatery. Julia looks inside. She turns and looks at Ahmet.

JULIA
I’m vegan.

Ahmet looks at her blankly.

JULIA
I don’t eat animal products. Ah, how can I explain this?

A small restaurant. The street façade is all glass. The eatery’s name is written on the glass pane in blue and red letter stickers. The food station is right next to the entrance. Steam rises from the food. A CHEF at the station. Several tables inside. Since it’s Sunday there are only a handful of people inside.

The WAITER sits at a corner table, buried in a newspaper.

Ahmet and Julia enter.

The EATERY CUSTOMERS take a break from their food and look at Ahmet and Julia.

CHEF
Welcome. The food is hot.

AHMET
How is the food today?

CHEF
Our food is always good.

AHMET
We have a foreign guest. Our school’s new teacher.

CHEF
(to Julia)
Of course we’ve heard. Welcome Miss, welcome.

Julia greets him back. She looks at a piece of meat on one of the dishes.

(Continued on the next page)
AHMET
Meat.

JULIA
(speaking in French and also gesturing)
No meat.

AHMET
No meat.

She points at the egg yolk on the spinach dish.

JULIA
No egg.

AHMET
No egg.

He starts laughing. Julia joins him.

AHMET
(to the chef)
You heard, our teacher does not want any meat or egg.

CHEF
There’s karnıyarık.

The chief points at the eggplant stuffed with minced meat. Julia shakes her head to indicate that there should be no kind of meat at all.

AHMET
No meat... How about türlü?..

CHEF
It won’t taste like anything at all. How about a tiny bit for the flavor...

The chief puts some türlü on a plate and starts explaining to Julia by gesturing.

CHEF
Shall I add a little broth?

Julia does not want any.

CHEF
It’ll add flavor. You won’t notice, you’ll swallow it without even knowing.

(Continued on the next page)
AHMET
Uncle, our teacher is a foreigner.

CHEF
Don’t worry; we’ll please her. You just pick yourselves a table.
(to the waiter)
Lad, set the table.

The waiter gets working. Julia follows Ahmet and they sit. The waiter cleans the table.

WAITER
(grinning)
Welcome.

Julia is smiling.

117 INT / DAY / RESTAURANT - A LITTLE LATER

The waiter approaches the table and places food before Ahmet and Julia. The entire place is awaiting Julia’s reaction to the food. Julia tastes the food. She likes it. Everyone takes a deep breath.

As Ahmet and Julia eat, all the customers in the eatery focus their attention on Julia. Julia looks around her. All eyes are on her.

118 INT / DAY / RESTAURANT - DREAM SEQ.

Julia and Ahmet continue eating. Ahmet raises his head to look at Julia. Julia is looking at him.

AHMET
Did you like it?

JULIA
It’s very good. Could you pass me the salt please?

Ahmet hands her the salt. Julia smiles to thank and then bending slowly, she places her hand on Ahmet’s. He looks at Julia and notices the customers around them. They all stare at Ahmet in a most discomforting way. Under the table, Julia rubs her foot lightly against Ahmet’s leg as if to caress him. When Ahmet looks back at her, Gülbahar is sitting in Julia’s place.
CUSTOMER #1
(to Ahmet)
Son, ask her why doesn’t she eat meat. Look at her, she’s tiny.

AHMET
She follows a healthy diet, uncle.

CUSTOMER #1
But you did not even ask her. Ask away, we want to hear our daughter’s voice.

All customers are watching Ahmet now. He turns to Julia involuntarily.

AHMET
(in English)
You don’t understand me but talk please.

JULIA
(still in French)
What happened?

Ahmet motions her to keep talking.

AHMET
You talk. Talk a lot.

JULIA
What should I say? I had been looking forward to this vacation for so long. I thought I would travel to my heart’s content with Marco only; away from everyone. But Marco... Marco started getting weird, getting serious...

Julia thinks for a moment... The customers look at Ahmet. Ahmet seems to have realized Julia is troubled by something.

CUSTOMER #1
So? What did she say?

AHMET
(back to his senses)
She says it’s good for her health.

(Continued on the next page)
CUSTOMER #1
That’s all? She talked so much longer than that. She babbled marco marko something.

AHMET
She explained in more detail. Cholesterol, weight, all that stuff.

Julia appears unaware of the conversation and seems to be reflecting gravely on her recent words.

CUSTOMER #2
Oh, yes. It’s a noble language.

Customer #1 gets up. He goes up to Julia, takes off his hat, and with his other hand, shakes Julia’s hand.

CUSTOMER #1
Our children have a lot to learn from you.

He looks at Ahmet, expecting him to translate.

AHMET
(jabbering in English)
Life, responsible, reality.

Julia seems to have understood a few words.

120 EXT / DAY / IN FRONT OF THE RESTAURANT

Ahmet leaves the eatery. Julia is still trying to make her way through the customers’ immense show of affection. She thanks them all without losing her smile.

The wind blows.

THE WIND
(with a murmur)
Gülbahar... I shall come in the evening... I shall come to you...

Julia exits the eatery. She hears the murmur but does not comprehend.

JULIA
Take me away from here.

(Continued on the next page)
AHMET  
(to Julia)  
Let’s go.  
(he points at the tower at the  
town’s hilltop.)  
Up there.

Julia looks up at the hill. She starts walking.

121 EXT / DAY / FIELD

The neighborhood’s large dirt field. KIDS PLAYING SOCCER  
chase after the ball shouting at one another.

122 EXT / DAY / EDGE OF FIELD

One of the kids kicks the ball hard and the ball bounces  
hard towards the edge of the field.

The ball bounces off the field and down a street.

Shouting away amongst themselves, the kids send the KICKER  
OF THE BALL -a spoiled brat- to retrieve it.

123 EXT / DAY / STREET

The ball is still bouncing away.

Suddenly the ball disappears. Ragıp has grabbed the ball  
faster than lightning.

The kicker of the ball runs after the ball and stops when  
the ball abruptly disappears out of sight.

He starts walking as he scans the edge of the field baffled.

124 EXT / DAY / STREET

After taking a few steps, the kicker of the ball arrives at  
the opening of the next street. Further down the street,  
Sevgi stands holding the ball and staring at him.

KICKER OF THE BALL  
Hand me the ball.

Sevgi shakes her head to say no. Then she starts running.

The kid stares in shock for a moment and then sets off  
running after her.
125 EXT / DAY / STREET

Still holding the ball, Sevgi quickly climbs up a street of narrow steps.

The kicker of the ball chases her.

126 EXT / DAY / DEAD END

Sevgi stands out of breath at the end of the dead end.

The kicker of the ball enters the street. Out of breath, he walks menacingly towards Sevgi.

Ragip pulls a string tied to a stone on one end. The kicker of the ball loses his footing and falls on his face.

Ragip jumps on the boy and pulling out a pair of handcuffs from his back pocket, he cuffs the boy.

KICKER OF THE BALL
What’s happening?

RAGIP
Don’t move. If you cooperate, we won’t hurt you.
(to Sevgi)
Paint him.

Sevgi lowers the lipstick to the eye level of the boy whose head rests on the ground.

RAGIP
Were you in yesterday’s game?

KICKER OF THE BALL
Mommy!

Ragip motions Sevgi to paint the boy. Sevgi touches the lipstick slightly to his cheek.

KICKER OF THE BALL
Allah!

RAGIP
That was your first warning. We could do much worse.

(Continued on the next page)
KICKER OF THE BALL
Let go of me!

RAGIP
Were you in yesterday’s game? One of you stole something from my pocket.

Sevgi presses the lipstick against his cheek.

KICKER OF THE BALL
Ah, I don’t know. I didn’t see anything.

RAGIP
You were at the ceremony yesterday. Tell me who took it.

KICKER OF THE BALL
Help! I don’t know where it is. I can’t read.

RAGIP
So, you know it’s a letter after all.

He motions to Sevgi again. Sevgi touches the lipstick to the boy’s lips and waits.

RAGIP
If you do not say who, you will turn scarlet.

The kid falls quiet.

RAGIP
Think fast. They’ll come looking for you any moment now.

The kid is about to burst into tears.

KICKER OF THE BALL
Bekir the Bastard... Bekir the Bastard took it.

Ragıp and Sevgi exchange looks. Ragıp motions at Sevgi to start running before him. Sevgi stands up. Right before she sets off to go, she draws a huge red mark on the kid’s cheek.

KICKER OF THE BALL
Aaah!

(Continued on the next page)
Ragıp is shocked since he didn’t expect this. Sevgi has already set off running. Ragıp runs after her. Half weeping, the kid tries to stand up with his hands still handcuffed.

KICKER OF THE BALL
Untie me.

Ragıp turns back. He loosens the handcuffs, grabs the ball and runs.

At the opening of the dead end street, he tosses the ball down a street near the field.

127 EXT / DAY / ZIGZAGGING SETS OF STEPS
A stone set of steps zigzagging among houses on a slope. Ragıp takes the stairs two or three steps at a time and reaches the top. Sevgi is halfway to the top.

RAGİP
(at the top)
Come on!

SEVGİ
I’m coming.

Sevgi reaches the top of the steps as well.

SEVGİ
(out of breath)
Ah, I’m out of breath.

RAGİP
Let’s get to the top and then we can rest.

Ragıp continues walking up the slope. Sevgi follows him after a few breaths.

128 EXT / DAY / OUTSIDE THE CLOCK TOWER
Sevgi and Ragıp are lying down commando-style on the rocks in front of the tower. Ragıp has shaped his hands into a pair of binoculars and is scanning the streets of the town stretching beneath them.

SEVGİ
Did you see him?

(Continued on the next page)
RAGIP
No. Bekir the Bastard is everywhere.

SEVGİ
You look really funny with your hands like that.

RAGIP
You see better like this.

SEVGİ
Can you see my village that way?

RAGIP
No.

SEVGİ
Did you ever come to my village?

RAGIP
No.

SEVGİ
Why?

RAGIP
My father won’t let me.

Beat.

SEVGİ
(showing her bracelet)
Ahmet got this for me.

After playing with her bracelet a little, Sevgi makes her hands into a pair of binoculars as well and mimics Ragıp.

Ragıp spots Zeynep, Celal and Volkan standing together on one of the streets.

RAGIP
(with excitement)
No.

Ragıp takes his hands down in panic, gets up and starts running down the slope.

RAGIP
.running
Run! Celal knows.

(Continued on the next page)
Not having understood what’s going on yet, Sevgi sits. She looks after Ragıp. Then she gets up slowly and starts walking.

Ragıp is already far ahead of her.

EXT / DAY / ZIGZAGGING STEPS

Ragıp reaches the top of the zigzagging steps. He is still running. His father calls out to him from afar.

    RAGIP’S FATHER
    Son, stop!

Ragıp stops suddenly. His dad catches up with him.

    RAGIP’S FATHER
    What’s the hurry? Where’s your grandpa?

    RAGIP
    Nothing.

Ragıp turns around to look for the first time. Sevgi is not there.

    RAGIP’S FATHER
    (worried)
    Where’s your grandpa?

    RAGIP
    Dunno.

    RAGIP’S FATHER
    You don’t know? He was going to drop you off at school. He didn’t make a scene, did he?

Sevgi takes the corner; she walks slowly towards Ragıp. She passes by him and starts descending the steps. Ragıp watches Sevgi. He doesn’t answer his father.

    RAGIP’S FATHER
    Son, answer me. You’re worrying me.

    RAGIP
    Grandpa loves another woman.

Ragıp starts running down the steps as soon as he finishes his sentence.
Ragıp catches up with Sevgi. Sevgi gives him the cold shoulder. Ragıp walks alongside Sevgi.

**RAGİP**
I’ll show Pharmacist Zeynep my knee.

Still sulky, Sevgi keeps walking.

**RAGİP**
From there, we can go and find Ahmet. He can’t have gone too far.

Beat.

**RAGİP**
We’ll first get ice cream.
Chocolate... Pistachio... Lemon...

Beat.

**RAGİP**
I’ll buy one for Ahmet, too. I have money.

Beat.

**SEVGİ**
Do they really have pistachio?

Ragıp smiles.

Ragıp and Sevgi suddenly run into Zeynep and Celal.

**CELAL**
Then, marry me Zeynep.

Ragıp becomes terribly upset at hearing Celal’s marriage proposal. He turns and walks away.

Zeynep does not answer Celal and walks towards her house on the corner.

Under Sevgi’s gaze, Zeynep opens the door of her house and enters. Sevgi turns back.

(Continued on the next page)
Then she sets off after Ragıp.

132 EXT / DAY / STREET
Sevgi nearly catches up with Ragıp on the neighboring street.

SEVGİ
Wait!

Ragıp turns around to look and seizing the opportunity, Sevgi catches up with him. She drags him by the hand.

SEVGİ
Come, she didn’t accept his proposal. You still have a chance.

Sevgi turns and smiles at Ragıp.

SEVGİ
Now I understand.

133 EXT / DAY / THE ROOFTOP ACROSS ZEYNEP’S HOUSE
Ragıp pushes the wooden cover open and climbs onto the roof. Sevgi finds her balance with Ragıp’s help. They walk to the edge of the roof. Ragıp lies down on the bricks. He watches Zeynep’s apartment.

RAGİP
(assuming Sevgi is beside him)
That’s where Zeynep Abla lives.
Right across, at that apartment.

Sevgi is looking around her.

Through the open curtains, the interior of Zeynep’s apartment can be seen. Zeynep sits on the sofa, lost in thought. When Ragıp turns his head, he realizes that Sevgi is not beside him. Sevgi is standing beside the chimney.

RAGİP
What are you doing there?

Ragıp stands up and carefully walks over to her. Sevgi is looking at the BABY BIRDS in the bird’s nest on the chimney.

(Continued on the next page)
SEVGİ
They don’t even have any feathers.

Lightly, Ragıp touches one’s beak.

SEVGİ
They’re hungry.

RAGİP
What do they eat?

SEVGİ
Worms.

Ragıp turns around and walks carefully until he reaches the cover. Before leaving, he checks out Zeynep’s apartment once again. Zeynep is still sitting lost in thought. Ragıp opens the cover and climbs down.

RAGİP
(to Sevgi)
Wait, I’ll get us some worms.

Right then, a door opens a few buildings down and Julia and Ahmet exit.

Volkan enters the street. Ragıp has already reached the lowest floor and stepped out onto the road. Volkan passes by Ragıp and walks towards Zeynep’s house. Ragıp does not notice Volkan.

Volkan and Julia come face to face. As Volkan enters Zeynep’s building, Julia and Ahmet walk towards the road leading out of town.

Ragıp enters a garden to find worms.

134INT / DAY / ZEYNEP’S LIVING ROOM

Zeynep sits lost in thought.

Ragıp and Sevgi appear on the rooftop across the street.

Beat.

The doorbell rings. Zeynep is startled. She does not get up. Doorbell rings again.

VOLKAN
(outside the door)
Zeynep...

Zeynep looks towards the door when she hears Volkan’s voice.
Zeynep stands before the door, unsure whether to open or not. She notices the handbag she has tossed onto the hallstand. The sandwiches she had prepared in the morning are halfway out of the bag.

A note is slipped under the door.

Zeynep bends and takes the note.
"I DID NOT WANT TO LEAVE WITHOUT GOODBYE. TAKE CARE."

Zeynep reads the note and opens the door. She catches up with Volkan on the staircase.

They look at each other.

Volkan stands before Zeynep’s bookshelf, looking at the books.

Volkan comes to the kitchen door and leans against the doorframe. He watches Zeynep without saying a word.

Volkan and Volkan eat in silence. Tension in the air.
Volkan reaches out for the bottle of water. He fills Zeynep’s glass before filling his own.
Occasionally Volkan looks at Zeynep.

Instead of Volkan, Ragıp sits across Zeynep at the table. His hands are still pressed against his eyes like binoculars.

ZEYNEP
If the menobromin hurts, I could heal your knee with kisses. It won’t hurt a bit.

Zeynep looks at Ragıp, smiling. Ragıp is very happy.
The phone rings. Even though it rings several times, Zeynep doesn’t pay any attention.

140 INT / DAY / ZEYNEP’S LIVING ROOM - CONT.

ZEYNEP
It’s probably Celal...

Beat.

VOLKAN
Lift your head and sneak a peek out the window.

Zeynep looks out the window. Ragıp and Sevgi are on the rooftop.

VOLKAN
Looks like you have a little admirer.
He cares about you.

Zeynep smiles.

141 EXT / DAY / ROOFTOP ACROSS ZEYNEP’S APT - THE SAME MOMENT

Ragıp and Sevgi watch them from the rooftop. Ragıp’s hands are pressed against his eyes like binoculars. Ragıp smiles when he sees Zeynep smiling.

142 INT / DAY / ENTRANCE OF ZEYNEP’S APARTMENT

Volkan gets ready. Zeynep checks out the landing through the eyehole. Nobody in sight.

Zeynep opens the door.

Volkan leaves the apartment.

VOLKAN
See you.

Volkan starts to leave.

ZEYNEP
Do you know the way?

VOLKAN
Yes. The car’s by the pharmacy. Are you going to stay home?

(Continued on the next page)
Zeynep nods an innocent yes.

Volkan smiles. He descends the stairs. Zeynep closes the door.

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143 EXT / DAY / ROOFTOP ACROSS ZEYNEP’S APARTMENT

Ragıp and Sevgi look down from the rooftop. Volkan leaves the building and walks towards the end of town. Zeynep goes back into the living room.

SEVGİ
Go to her.

RAGİP
Me?

SEVGİ
Yes. Look, she’s so lonely.

Ragıp looks at Zeynep.

SEVGİ
I’ll come with you.

RAGİP
No way.

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144 INT / DAY / ZEYNEP’S APARTMENT BUILDING – STAIRCASE

Sevgi is ahead of Ragıp in climbing up the stairs; Ragıp follows her unwillingly.

RAGİP
Can we skip this? Let’s go find Ahmet.

They reach Zeynep’s floor.

SEVGİ
Which apartment?

Ragıp points out shyly. Sevgi rings the doorbell, runs down the stairs and hides.

Ragıp is caught unprepared. As he attempts to descend the steps, Zeynep opens the door.

ZEYNEP
Ragıp?

Ragıp stops not knowing what to say.

(Continued on the next page)
ZEYNEP
(smiling)
What is it?

RAGIP
Zeynep Abla...

He can’t go on. He starts running down the stairs. Sevgi follows him.

Zeynep looks down the staircase and sees them both running.

145 INT / DAY / ZEYNEP’S LIVING ROOM

Zeynep looks out the window at the street. Ragıp and Sevgi run out the building and away. Zeynep smiles.

The wind blows.

THE WIND
(with a murmur)
Let’s leave this place together...
Together... Leave this place...

Zeynep raises her head. Suddenly, she makes for the door.

146 INT / DAY / ZEYNEP’S APARTMENT -STAIRCASE

Zeynep shuts the door of her apartment and rushes down the stairs.

147 EXT / DAY / OUTSIDE THE PHARMACY

Volkan gets in his car. He starts the engine. Zeynep catches up with him and knocks on the glass.

ZEYNEP
Where are you going?

VOLKAN
I’m going back.

Zeynep walks around the car and climbs into the front seat beside Volkan.

ZEYNEP
So, you have time.
Volkan and Zeynep drive quietly.

RADIO SPEAKER
(on the car radio)
Another listener sent us a message.

Zeynep turns the radio off.

Beat.

Zeynep rolls down the window next to her. The wind blows in hard. Zeynep sticks her head out.

The words in the wind hit her in the face as an incomprehensible murmur.

The main road. On one side is a trail; on the other, flatland.

Volkan’s car is parked at the mouth of the trail.

Zeynep and Volkan walk down the trail.

Zeynep talks constantly and heatedly. Volkan listens to her calmly.

The trail gets flatter. It reaches a steep slope. Below, a river flows.

The river is weak and shallow. Zeynep and Volkan stand on the edge of the river.

VOLKAN
The water level is low.

Zeynep starts to walk slowly to the river.

ZEYNEP
Let’s see if you can make it across this time.
VOLKAN
Don’t go yet.

Balancing herself, Zeynep manages to make it across the river.

ZEYNEP
Come on.

Slowly, Volkan takes off his shoes and socks. Both of them laugh at this.

VOLKAN
Last time I fell in the water, you got wet as well, don’t you remember.

Volkan enters the water slowly, feeling cold. He takes cautious steps.

ZEYNEP
Celal proposed, Volkan.

Volkan looses his footing in the middle of the river and briefly falls and recovers. He looks at Zeynep.

Zeynep can’t help herself; she laughs.

152 EXT / DAY / OUTSIDE THE CLOCK TOWER

Ahmet and Julia arrive before the clock tower. Julia catches her breath and looks at the town. For the first time, she watches the town in pleasure.

JULIA
(pointing at the tower)
Can we climb up there?

153 EXT / DAY / CLOCK TOWER - A LITTLE LATER

Ahmet opens the door to the balcony of the tower and Julia steps out. She watches the town calmly.

When she turns to look at the lower level of the clock tower, she notices the school committee gathered beneath.

The old hunchback has joined the crowd as well. He looks reproachfully at Ahmet and Julia.

Everyone in the crowd is shouting something else and trying to get Julia to climb down.

(Continued on the next page)
JULIA
My God!

Beat.

JULIA
Ahmet, do something to get rid of these people.

Julia has said his name for the first time. They look at one another.

Ahmet silence the crowd below with a gesture of his hand.

AHMET
(shouting to those below)
She says she will throw herself off if you don’t leave.

The crowd below sighs altogether. Julia pretends to throw herself off. Everyone sighs again.

HEADMASTER
Son, tell her please not to do so. I’m afraid we may have been overzealous.
(to the crowd)
Don’t be quiet. Say something.

CROWD
(various people)
Yes, yes. We need you. Let’s leave the girl alone; come on.

The crowd leaves slowly. Julia and Ahmet watch them leave.

JULIA
Let’s go somewhere quieter.

The wind blows.

THE WIND
(with a murmur)
Only with you... Against everything... With you...
Everything...

The wind blows continuously. Ahmet and Julia listen to the wind.

AHMET
I should go to the village.

(Continued on the next page)
JULIA
Behind the hill.

AHMET
First, let’s dress you up as a town local.

154 EXT / DAY / OUTSIDE OF GÜL NİNE’S HOUSE

The door opens. Gül Nine stands before Ahmet and Julia.

AHMET
Gül Anacım. How are you?

Gül Nine nods modestly. She looks at Julia and scans her from head to toe. She turns to Ahmet and nods her head. She takes Julia’s hand and pulls her in. Julia does not resist. With her other hand, Gül Nine grabs Ahmet’s hand as Julia enters and looks at him sincerely.

AHMET

She rubs his back as if to say “this too shall pass.” All three of them go inside.

155 INT / DAY / GÜL NİNE’S LIVING ROOM

A patched up but tidy house. In the small living room, Julia and Ahmet sit on a low divan. Gül Nine sits before a wooden hope chest at the other end of the room. She opens the chest and takes out the spotless clothes one by one. With her finger, she motions Julia to come and seats the girl by her side.

Gül Nine weighs the clothes inside the hope chest, pulls one from the bottom and tries it. She approves and hands it to Julia.

JULIA
You want me to wear this?

Julia looks at Ahmet. Then, slowly, she stands up. Gül Nine holds out her hand for Julia to help her get up. Together, they move into the next room.
INT / DAY / GÜL NİNE’S BEDROOM

A bright room with old picture frames, laces and a queen sized bed.

Gül Nine opens the door. She enters the room with Julia. Julia scans the room as she walks in and lays the clothing on the bed. Gül Nine motions Julia to take her time and leaves the room. She puts her index finger through the gap as she closes the door and leaves the door ajar. Slowly, she returns to the living room.

INT / DAY / GÜL NİNE’S LIVING ROOM

As Gül Nine puts the clothes back in the hope chest, Ahmet’s eyes shift to the room in which Julia is changing. Through the small gap Gül Nine left, Julia can be seen getting changed.

Julia comes out of the room. The outfit has added a different aura to her. Gül Nine gets up from her seat before the chest and walks up to Julia. She hugs Julia warmly. Ahmet watches them.

EXT / DAY / STREET

BOYS are getting ready to play long donkey—a game where a kid jumps on top of a line of bent down kids to knock them down.

Julia approaches the kids slowly. She stops at a distance where she won’t disturb them and leans against a wall.

She starts watching the boys without them noticing.

Ahmet comes nearby and waits.

The boys slowly take their places.

One of the boys runs and jumps on the other kids. Julia reacts involuntarily.

JULIA
What are you doing?
(stepping ahead)
That’s really dangerous.

The children turn towards Julia upon hearing her voice. They all freeze in the collapsed long donkey queue.
Ahmet starts the engine. With Julia seated behind Ahmet, they set off together.

Hamit watches them leave.

Ragıp and Sevgi run out of Zeynep’s building and run until they turn the corner.

Once they turn the corner, Ragıp leans against the wall. They are both out of breath.

RAGIP
It’s all your fault.

They are so out of breath they can hardly talk. Sevgi starts laughing.

RAGIP
Why are you laughing?

Sevgi continues to laugh. After a while, Ragıp joins her as well.

RAGIP
Let’s get ice cream.

Sevgi’s eyes shift to her shadow on the ground. She studies it for a while.

RAGIP
What are you looking at?

SEVGİ
My shadow.

RAGIP
How big is it?

Curiously, they study Sevgi’s shadow. She lies down on the ground.

SEVGİ
Take a look.

RAGIP
Same as you.

Sevgi gets up. She cleans her hands.

(Continued on the next page)
SEVGİ
I have to go.

Sevgi seems to expect a reaction out of Ragıp.

RAGİP
We were going to eat ice cream.

SEVGİ
Some other time. Bye bye.

Sevgi starts to walk away quickly.

RAGİP
(calling after her)
Can you go by yourself?

SEVGİ
Of course. What did you think?

Sevgi walks away.

Ragıp watches her for a while, and then turning around, he walks away. Sevgi stops at the first intersection and looks around.

161 EXT / DAY / STREET

Lost in the streets of town, Sevgi looks for the way to the main road.

162 EXT / DAY / STREET

Ragıp passes by Zeynep’s house but continues walking.

163 EXT / DAY / STREET

Ragıp counts the change in his pocket and enters the convenience store.

164 EXT / DAY / STREET

Sevgi spots the photograph of a girl her age in the window of a photo shop. She tries to strike the girl’s pose.
Ragıp goes to the movie theatre. He looks at the posters.

Right then, BEKİR THE BASTARD and THE BASTARD’S GANG come out of the movie theatre talking and shouting loudly. Quickly, Ragıp sinks into a corner behind a low wall.

Bekir the Bastard and his Gang reach the wall. Ragıp watches Bekir the Bastard and his Gang closely from a his safe spot.

As Sevgi walks down a street, she notices the SHOE SHINER on a corner. She watches him from a distance. The shoe shiner calls out to her to come nearer. Sevgi does not approach him.

Ragıp runs towards the main road. As he passes the street corner, he spots Sevgi and the shoe shiner. Taking a breath, he goes up to her.

RAGİP
I found Bekir the Bastard.

Bekir the Bastard is still sitting on the wall with his gang.

Ragıp watches them from a safe distance.

Sevgi proceeds towards them along the wall. She stops right behind Bekir the Bastard.

She drops her lipstick in Bekir the Bastard’s pocket without him realizing. After having put some distance between herself and the boy, she raises her head and gives Ragıp the thumbs up.

Ragıp takes a step from his hiding place. Slowly, he walks towards Bekir the Bastard. Bekir the Bastard and his Gang see Ragıp.

BEKİR THE BASTARD
Hey, fool in love! Hey, lover boy!

Ragıp stops at a certain distance.
BEKİR THE BASTARD
Are you looking for your letter?

RAGİP
Bastard, can we talk one on one?
Man to man?

Bekir the Bastard gets down from the wall and gestures his gang to keep behind. He steps ahead.

Ragıp and Bekir the Bastard meet in the middle of the street.

BEKİR THE BASTARD
Speak.

RAGİP
Hand over the letter, Bastard.

BEKİR THE BASTARD
(mocking)
Me? To you?

RAGİP
Yes.

BEKİR THE BASTARD
What if I don’t?

Sevgi comes out from behind the wall and stands close to Ragıp.

RAGİP
Then I shall tell all your friends you carry lippaint in your pocket.

Bekir the Bastard is shocked by what he has heard. He slips his hand in his pocket. He feels something strange.

BEKİR THE BASTARD
Look here. Are you playing with me?

RAGİP
Take it out and see for yourself.

Bekir the Bastard checks around carefully. He takes out the object slowly and looks at it secretly.

RAGİP
Now, if you don’t want me to announce your secret, hand it to me along with the letter.

Bekir the Bastard tries to find a way out.

(Continued on the next page)
GANG MEMBER
Is there a problem, bro?

BEKİR THE BASTARD
No.

RAGIP
Once I get the letter, this problem will be water under the bridge. Trust me.

Bekir the Bastard takes out the letter in desperation and places the lipstick among the folds. He holds it out to Ragıp. Ragıp and Sevgi exchange looks.

RAGIP
It’s over. Sevgi...

Ragıp turns around and starts walking slowly with Sevgi.

After 10 - 15 steps, they break into a run.

GANG MEMBER
What just happened?

BEKİR THE BASTARD
(looking after them)
Nothing.

169 EXT / DAY / RIVERBANK – A LITTLE LATER
Zeynep sits on a rock.

Volkan, half-naked while waiting for his hung clothes to dry, remains behind a tree.

Volkan appears pensive.

The wind blows.

THE WIND
(with a murmur)
Let’s go far away... Far away...
Let’s go...

ZEYNEP
Sorry?

Beat.

(Continued on the next page)
ZEYNEP
Celal proposed for the first time today.

Beat.

ZEYNEP
You know how you sit and dream about that moment... It was nothing like it.

Beat.

ZEYNEP
Are you dry?

Volkan is changing back into his clothes.

VOLKAN
Wait a sec.

ZEYNEP
I hope you’re not going to another customer in that outfit.

VOLKAN
I have another set of clothes in the car.

ZEYNEP
How nice, you’re always traveling... You’re always meeting new people...

Volkan stands up. He comes beside Zeynep. He shows Zeynep his clothes. She starts laughing.

VOLKAN
I guess this didn’t dry too well.

ZEYNEP
It needs a little wind.

VOLKAN
Let’s run then.

Volkan starts to run towards the trees. Zeynep is surprised.

ZEYNEP
Volkan, what are you doing?
VOLKAN
(yelling as he runs)
I’m drying it.

ZEYNEP
Wait up.

Zeynep stands up and starts running as well.

170 EXT / DAY / GROVE OF TREES
Volkan runs amongst the trees not knowing where he’s going.
Zeynep runs after him.

171 EXT / DAY / GROVE OF TREES
Out of breath, Volkan stops behind a tree.
Zeynep comes next to him; she is out of breath as well.
They wait till they catch a little breath. Zeynep feels Volkan’s clothes.

ZEYNEP
Done!

They start laughing. They are very close.

172 EXT / DAY / GROVE OF TREES - DREAM SEQ.
Volkan bends towards Zeynep and kisses her. When she lifts her head, Volkan has been replaced by Celal.

173 EXT / DAY / GROVE OF TREES - CONT’D.
When Zeynep comes back to her senses, she finds that Volkan has already spotted a tortoise nearby and gone up to it.
Volkan lies on the ground beside the tortoise. Propped up on his elbows, he watches the tortoise.
Zeynep joins Volkan. She sits on the ground. The tortoise has stopped and is watching its surroundings.

VOLKAN
You are so different here than you are in town.
(beat)

(Continued on the next page)
VOLKAN
That’s why you want to leave, isn’t it?

Beat.

ZEYNEP
It’s more complicated than you think, Volkan.

VOLKAN
(cutting her off)
I know your mother is not expecting your return.

Beat.

VOLKAN
You’re the one who wants to go.
Because if you stay here, you’ll marry Celal. You’ll be happy but something will always be missing. I don’t know what that is. But if you go to the city... If you take Celal along with you...

Beat.

VOLKAN
Returning to the city with Celal is a temporary solution to the problem.

Zeynep turns her back on Volkan and blocks her ears.

ZEYNEP
(eyes wet, on the verge of a nervous breakdown)
Enough Volkan, enough.

Enough...

Volkan stops. He seems to regret having spoken such.
The tortoise is still slowly walking away.
Zeynep straightens up and gets to her feet.

ZEYNEP
Yes, you understood it all, OK.
Except why I came here.

Beat.

(Continued on the next page)
ZEYNEP
Shall we go?

174 EXT / DAY / ROAD - MONTAGE SEQ.
Ahmet and Julia travel along the main road on the motorbike.

175 EXT / DAY / ENTRANCE OF VILLAGE
Once Ahmet approaches the village road, he slows down and stops at the mouth of the road.
Julia touches Ahmet’s back to show her support for his decision.
Ahmet turns to the village road.

176 EXT / DAY / NEAR THE VILLAGE
Beneath a tree on the lower outskirts of the village. Ahmet and Julia climb off the motorbike. They take off their helmets.
Ahmet and Julia look towards the village. The village is further high up.

AHMET
Let’s travel the rest on foot.
They start walking together.

177 EXT / DAY / TRAIL - MONTAGE SEQ.
The trail keeps getting steeper.
Ahmet looks at the road stretching before them and starts walking.
Julia has a rough time trying to climb over a rock. Ahmet takes her hand and pulls her up.
Ahmet and Julia keep climbing further up.
EXT / DAY / ROCKY SLOPE

Julia scrapes her knee while stepping over a large rock. She pulls herself back and checks her knee. Ahmet takes out a tissue from his pocket. Julia bends and brushes off the dirt with her hands. She takes the tissue from him and presses it on the scratch for a little while. She stands up and smiles.

JULIA
It has been years since the last time I got a scar.

They keep walking.

EXT / DAY / ROCKY SLOPE

The path starts getting more level. They draw near the village. Walking ahead, Ahmet turns to look at Julia. Out of breath, she tries to smile at him.

EXT / DAY / ENTRANCE OF VILLAGE

An unkempt village. A handful of houses stretch on both sides. Outside, several villagers are busy with their regular routine.

Julia walks around casting curious looks around her. All eyes are on them.

The villagers whisper amongst themselves.

Ahmet walks ahead with a serious look on his face and determined steps.

SEVERAL VILLAGE YOUNGSTERS approach them. Ahmet motions Julia to stop. He continues walking himself and meets the village youngsters halfway.

Julia watches. Ahmet has a heated conversation with the youngsters. Ahmet points at Julia and the youngsters turn to look at her. One of the youngsters makes a move towards Julia but Ahmet blocks him. They continue talking. Ahmet takes a quick look at Julia. She frowns, lowering her eyebrows. After talking a little more, the youngsters walk with Ahmet to meet Julia.

VILLAGE YOUNGSTER #1
(all bend their heads)
Welcome to our village.

(Continued on the next page)
VILLAGE YOUNGSTER #2
Our door is open to you anytime.

Julia looks at Ahmet, he nods in approval. Her eyebrows still cast in a frown, she does not accept their greetings. The villagers turn towards Ahmet.

AHMET
She does not know our customs.

Julia turns and starts walking. Ahmet follows her.

VILLAGE YOUNGSTER #1
(calling after them)
She’s our guest. She’s welcome anytime.

VILLAGE YOUNGSTER #1
(calling out)
But you’d better know your place Ahmet.

Ahmet does not pay attention. They walk away.

JULIA
(in French)
What are they saying?

AHMET
What happened?

JULIA
(in French)
They do not allow you to see each other, is that it?

Beat.

JULIA
(in French)
Tell me. I understand you.

181 EXT / DAY / THE ROAD TO GÜLBHAAR’S HOUSE

Ahmet’s eyes are now focused on Gülbahar’s large, plastered house and arbor up ahead. Slowly, he walks that way. When he arrives at the door, he stops and tries to see inside.

Julia comes next to him and wondering what he is looking at, she looks in as well. Ahmet pretends nothing has happened and walks ahead.

(Continued on the next page)
JULIA
(in French and in a voice Ahmet can hear from up ahead)
This is the house, right?

Ahmet starts walking without saying anything. A VILLAGE WOMAN walks towards them yelling.

VILLAGE WOMAN
Lady!

AHMET
(points ahead)
The town looks best from a spot a little ways ahead.

JULIA
(in French)
I see.

Julia persists on following Ahmet.

JULIA
(getting angry)
That’s the house, right? Why are you withdrawing?
No matter what you do, they are not going to leave you in peace. They will not leave you alone if you do not take a stand.

Ahmet casts a quick glance at Julia.

AHMET
Why are you here?

Julia thinks for a moment.

A VILLAGE WOMAN catches up with Julia. She starts talking as she walks alongside them.

VILLAGE WOMAN
Welcome to our village, you bring us much pleasure.

JULIA
(as if muttering to herself)
Right, who am I to say this. Look at me, didn’t I do exactly like you?

The village woman continually tries to butt in.

(Continued on the next page)
Instead of facing the problem, I chose to run away and vacation with Marco. As if I could cope with it on vacation...

Village Woman
Come, taste my tea. Look at your hair, Maşallah.

Julia
Who knows where Marco is now.

Village Woman
What happened? (tries to take Julia’s hand) Is something troubling you?

Finally, Julia stops and then bursts out in a very loud voice:

Julia
Aaaaah! Go away! Leave me alone!

Ahmet turns around and tries to calm Julia. The village woman has already bolted, frightened.

Julia
(still repeating)
Go! Go away!

Julia keeps shouting and shrieking as if having a nervous breakdown.

Ahmet
It’s OK. It’s over.

Ahmet and Julia sit on Kocakaya, giant rock on the edge of the cliff. Below Kocakaya lies the abyss and the town stretching out beneath their feet. Ahmet and Julia sit quietly side by side. Julia’s eyes are still red after a good cry. She holds a tissue paper in her hand.

Ahmet takes out the letter he had written for Gülbahar.

He leaves the envelope to the wind. The wind blows the letter back towards them as if trying to make sure that the letter shall not fly away. Julia turns and looks at the letter. It has landed on the bottom the rock.

(Continued on the next page)
Julia spots Ragıp and Sevgi on the hillside leading towards town. Holding hands, they are running towards the village. Sevgi’s happy voice reaches Julia and Ahmet. Ahmet notices them as well. For a while, they watch the two children without disrupting the silence.

Julia stands up and picks up the letter. She looks at Ahmet.

Julia holds her hand out to Ahmet to help him stand up. Ahmet straightens up and they look at each other for a brief moment. Julia walks ahead. Ahmet follows her. They walk towards Gülbahar’s house. At this very moment, Sevgi, frozen with shock, has witnessed everything from the hillside.

183 INT / DAY / PICKUP

Ragıp and Sevgi sit quietly beside the PICKUP DRIVER.

   PICKUP DRIVER
   So, you’re visiting your uncle.

   RAGİP
   Yes.

   PICKUP DRIVER
   Hey, Maşallah.

184 EXT / DAY / SIDE OF THE VILLAGE ROAD

The pickup drives away. Sevgi and Ragıp look at each other.

   RAGİP
   How far is the village?

   SEVGİ
   Right there.

   RAGİP
   That’s far. How big is your shadow?

   SEVGİ
   It has gotten bigger.

   RAGİP
   (starts running and laughing)
   Run then!

Sevgi goes after him laughing.

(Continued on the next page)
RAGIP
Last one in is a rotten egg!

They run for a long time.

185 EXT / DAY / THE VILLAGE PATH

Ragıp is running ahead of Sevgi. Sevgi keeps falling behind. Ragıp turns around to look at her. Sevgi has stopped and is catching her breath. Ragıp goes back to her and holds her hand. They continue running while holding hands.

186 EXT / DAY / A CLOSER SPOT ON THE PATH TO THE VILLAGE

Ragıp and Sevgi are still running. Sevgi is laughing out happily. They are very close to the village.

Suddenly Sevgi spots Julia and Ahmet sitting on the large rock on the way to the village. She stops abruptly. She is out of breath. She watches Ahmet and Julia. Ahmet looks sad.

Suddenly Julia stands up and extends her hand to Ahmet. She helps him get up. They look at one another and start walking towards Gülbahar’s house. Anxious, Ragıp awaits Sevgi’s reaction.

With wet eyes that she does not let Ragıp see, Sevgi sets off at a quick pace towards Julia and Ahmet. Ragıp follows her.

RAGIP
(worried and curious)
What happened? Where are we going?

Sevgi does not respond. They walk.

187 EXT / DAY / THE ROAD TO GÜLBAPHR’S HOUSE

Julia walks towards Gülbahar’s house with Ahmet beside her.

Sevgi and Ragıp catch up with them. Sevgi starts following them only a step behind. She doesn’t make a sound. Julia turns around and notices Sevgi.

Julia and Sevgi come face to face. Julia smiles and keeps walking. Ragıp comes next to Sevgi.

RAGIP
(whispering in Sevgi’s ear)
What are we doing?
Sevgi does not respond.

EXT / DAY / OUTSIDE GÜLBAHAR’S HOUSE

Julia knocks on the door. Ahmet stands right next to her, embarrassed and stressed. Sevgi and Ragıp are right behind him.

The door opens. GÜLBAHAR’S FATHER (35), a polite, heavy built and mustachioed man, opens the door. He is surprised to find so many people outside his door.

JULIA
Hi.

Julia turns to Ahmet for him to translate. When the man sees Ahmet, his face drops.

JULIA
I am the town’s new English teacher.
(to Ahmet)
Ahmet, say so.

GÜLBAHAR’S FATHER
What is this about?

AHMET
Our town’s new foreign languages teacher.

JULIA
On my first day here...
(she leaves her sentence unfinished and looks at Ahmet)
Tell him to allow you to see each other.

AHMET
(not knowing what to say)
Well, she just arrived in town. I am showing her around. She wanted to see the area.

JULIA
How dare you interfere in these kids’ lives? What right have you got?

AHMET
(not knowing what to say)
Well, she wants to meet and get to know her students better before

(Continued on the next page)
AHMET
school starts. Granted, she is new to our customs.

JULIA
It’s the pressure of those around you, right? They make you do this.

AHMET
With your permission, she wants to meet your daughter as well.

Gülbahar’s father looks into Julia’s eyes for a long time.

GÜLBAHAR’S FATHER
I have never heard of anything like this. Is this true, Sevgi?

Everybody turns to look at Sevgi.

GÜLBAHAR (16), an innocent and graceful village girl dressed in a ponytail and floral patterns, listens to the conversation from inside.

Gülbahar catches Sevgi’s eyes for split second. Gülbahar looks at Sevgi pleadingly.

Sevgi nods yes. Gülbahar’s father looks into Julia’s eyes for a long time to decipher her intention.

JULIA
It’s not your happiness, it’s your daughter’s.

AHMET
Please...

GÜLBAHAR’S FATHER
(yelling indoors)
Gülbahar.

189 EXT / DAY / VILLAGE ROAD

Gülbahar’s house keeps getting smaller in the distance. Gülbahar’s father watches them from a distance.

Julia walks with Gülbahar on one side and Ahmet on the other. Sevgi and Ragıp follow them.

Sevgi goes by Ahmet’s side and taking out her bracelet, she presses it into Ahmet’s palm. She goes back to Ragıp and the two of them start walking in another direction.

(Continued on the next page)
Once the road winds and Gülbahar’s house falls out of sight, Julia unites Ahmet and Gülbahar’s hands.

Julia places Ahmet’s letter back in his hand and taking a step back, leaves them alone.

190 EXT / DAY / VILLAGE ROAD – A LITTLE FURTHER

RAGİP
I guess you just took Ahmet out of your life?

SEVGİ
It was a passing fancy anyhow. Mother always said Ahmet would make a good fried, not a husband.

Ragıp laughs. Sevgi joins him.

Julia hears their laughter and smiles.

RAGİP
Is your mom waiting for you?

SEVGİ
She is but nothing will happen now. We are in the village.

191 EXT / DAY / ON KOCAKAYA

Ahmet and Gülbahar reach Kocakaya and sit on the huge rock. Ahmet turns and looks at the village. Though small, it can still be seen.

AHMET
If we lie down, they won’t see us.

Ahmet and Gülbahar lean back.

Julia waits right beside the huge rock formation.

She looks around.

On the other side of the village, Ferit is approaching the village.

As Ferit draws closer, Julia recognizes him.
192 EXT / DAY / OTHER SIDE OF THE VILLAGE
Ferit turns towards a nearby house.
Curious, Julia follows Ferit.

193 EXT / DAY / OUTSIDE SANİYE’S HOUSE
A patched up house with a paper-plastered outer façade. Before the old wooden door of the house, an ANCIENT DOG sleeps.

Slowly, Ferit approaches the house. He stops right at the door.

Beat.

Ferit steps over the sleeping dog and pushes the door open.

A little ways off, Julia draws near. When she sees Ferit enter the house, she also takes a turn towards the house.

194 INT / DAY / ENTRANCE OF SANİYE’S HOUSE
A rather old room with almost no furniture. Across the main entrance of the house is a second door.

Ferit enters. He walks slowly to the other door and opens it.

195 INT / DAY / SANİYE’S BEDROOM
A wooden and desolate room. Everything is covered in dust. Apart from the inner wall with the door of the room, all walls feature windows opening outside. A white handkerchief tied to a corner of the central window. Next to the window, an aging bed, a chair beside the bed, several pieces of furniture.

SANİYE HANIM (74), snow white and wrinkled, lies on the bed no different than a dead body.

Ferit goes beside Saniye. He looks at her with deep longing.

Ferit notices the white handkerchief tied to the window. His eyes are suddenly filled with tears.

Ferit pulls the nearby chair and sits beside Saniye. He caresses Saniye’s face.

(Continued on the next page)
FERİT
Saniye.

196 EXT / DAY / THE SIDE OF SANİYE’S HOUSE
In the side garden, Julia is looking inside the house through the window and watching Ferit and Saniye with a faint smile.

197 INT / DAY / SANİYE’S BEDROOM
Saniye wakes up slowly. Ferit is all smiles.

FERİT
Do you remember me?

Saniye nods slowly.

SANİYE
Welcome.

Ferit takes Saniye’s hand and opens her palm. He glides his finger on her lifeline.

FERİT
It has been sixty years Saniye.

He places his finger near the starting point of her lifeline.

198 EXT / DAY / ROLLING HILLS - MONTAGE SEQ.
Ragıp and Sevgi are holding hands.

They look at each other and count to three.

Then they start running down the hill. They scream out of joy.

FERİT (V.O)
Do you remember? We met right here.

(beat)
Back then, we were not aware of anything.

When they reach the flatland, Ragıp and Sevgi roll onto the ground.

(Continued on the next page)
FERİT (V.O)
We were children; nobody bothered.

SEVGİ’S MOTHER comes to the top of the top of the slope. She looks down. When she sees Sevgi, she calls out to her.

FERİT (V.O)
They’d look upon us with the evil eye, but we wouldn’t understand.

Sevgi looks up. She calls back that she’s coming.

Sevgi’s mother walks towards the village.

SANİYE (V.O)
Give me your hand. Help me get up.

199 INT / DAY / SANİYE’S BEDROOM
Ferit is replaced by Ragıp, Saniye by Sevgi.
Ragıp helps Sevgi get out of bed.
Behind the glass, Julia still looks into the room.

200 EXT / DAY / ROLLING HILLS
Ragıp helps Sevgi get up from the ground. Together, they climb up.
The letter Ragıp got back from Bekir the Bastard is in his back pocket.

201 INT / DAY / SANİYE’S BEDROOM
Ferit and Saniye are seated by the window.
Ferit takes out the old letter from his pocket. He holds it out to Saniye.

202 EXT / DAY / KOCAKAYA
The wind blows. Gülbahtar and Ahmet are leaning on their backs on the huge rock. Both are restless.
Ahmet starts talking.
Gülbahtar answers.

(Continued on the next page)
FERİT (V.O)
It was the day I turned 18. For months, your father had confined you to the village.

(beat)
I wrote the letter and handed it to Tuzsuz. He was supposed to deliver it to you.

Gülbahar smiles. Slowly the coldness between them starts to melt away.

SANİYE (V.O)
I remember.

FERİT (V.O)
The elders of the village must have surrounded him.

Ahmet holds out the letter to Gülbahar.

FERİT (V.O)
They must have convinced Tuzsuz. He brought the letter back to me. He said "Saniye is dead."

Gülbahar starts reading the letter.

SANİYE (V.O)
I read the letter and started preparing for the night. My father came into my room. He had heard everything from Tuzsuz. He found the letter.

Gülbahar finishes reading the letter.

She looks up at Ahmet and smiles at him. She nods her head in approval. Ahmet says he will come for her in the night.

SANİYE (V.O)
That night they took me in panic to another town to stay with my eldest aunt.

INT / DAY / SANİYE’S BEDROOM

In Saniye’s house, Ferit has been replaced by Ahmet, and Saniye by Gülbahar. Gülbahar ties a white handkerchief to the window.

Julia watches them from outside.
Gülbahar stands up. She bids farewell to Ahmet and walks to the village.

In the distance, a VILLAGER has seen Gülbahar and Ahmet together. He watches Gülbahar’s return to the village with burning eyes.

FERİT (V.O)
What happened next?

Zeynep and Volkan walk among the trees without speaking. They arrive at an opening. The trees sway in the wind. Zeynep looks around her peacefully. Volkan watches her from a few steps behind.

SANİYE (V.O)
I cried for a long time.

Zeynep and Volkan are back by the river. Zeynep gives Volkan a mocking look. She steps into the river and starts crossing.

SANİYE (V.O)
I got used to it in time. I married there. Allah never blessed me with children.

Volkan catches up with Zeynep and holds her hand. They look at each other. Zeynep places a light kiss on Volkan’s lips.

SANİYE (V.O)
Nevertheless, my husband and I lived happily until five years ago.
Volkan and Zeynep are heading back to town in the car. Zeynep watches out the window.

Beat.

SANİYE (V.O)
When he passed on, I returned to the village. Everybody was long gone anyhow. I settled in this tiny house.

FERİT (V.O)
Did you not think of me?

SANİYE (V.O)
I did but what good was it?

Beat.

SANİYE (V.O)
Others prevented us from being happy together. But we found happiness in others, didn’t we?

Saniye has been replaced by Zeynep, Ferit by Volkan.

Zeynep sits silently on the edge of the bed. Volkan looks out the window.

Julia watches from outside the window.

As Zeynep gets out of the car, Volkan takes her hand. Zeynep smiles, pulls her hand free and closes the door.

She walks to town on her own.

SANİYE (V.O)
This letter’s significance is over for us, isn’t it?

Saniye tears Ferit’s letter to pieces with her tired and wrinkled hands.
210 EXT / DUSK / BACK OF SANİYE’S HOUSE

Right outside one of the bedroom windows.

SANİYE
Right, Ferit?

The window is opened, slowly Saniye’s hand reaches out into the evening and frees the pieces of the letter into the wind.

Julia looks after the pieces.

The wind blows.

211 EXT / DUSK / PAPER IN THE WIND MONTAGE SEQ.

The wind sweeps away pieces of the letter.

Pieces of paper fly over the village.

They fly down the hill. Over the plain. Across the river. It keeps getting darker.

212 EXT / EVENING / TOWN

The pieces reach the outskirts of town.

213 EXT / EVENING / TOWN STREETS - MONTAGE SEQ.

The wind blows through the deserted streets of town. Murmurs.

The wind carries the pieces now here, now there.

HEADMASTER
Dear townspeople, as you very well know Ms Emily has arrived in our town safe and sound. Last night’s unfortunate ceremony will be held properly this evening. Everyone is invited to the celebration at the public square.
Ahmet hears the announcement as he is making final arrangements for the car outside of Mahmut’s house.

Zeynep hears the announcement as she talks to her mother on the phone.

ZEYNEP
Hi mom.

Beat.

ZEYNEP
Mom, I have news for you.

Zeynep draws the shades. ‘For Rent’ sign is hanging next to the door.

Zeynep locks the door and walks away.

Celal, from a distance—enough for him to read the sign—watches Zeynep walk away.

Ragıp lies on his back on the wall with the aura of a detective who has accomplished his mission, and checks out the letter in his hand with pleasure. Then, he tears the letter into tiny pieces.

The wind carries the pieces of the letter to the town square.

The town square is decorated in the same way as the night before. The entire town has gathered on the square.

Upon the Headmaster’s signal, confetti rains down on Julia the moment she sets foot on the square.

Julia smiles.

Deafening applause on the square.

(Continued on the next page)
With the headmaster’s signal, drums and horns start playing. The square is animated with the spirit of the festivities.

The headmaster accompanies Julia to the table of honor. Ahmet is in the crowd. Ahmet and Julia exchange looks amidst the crowd. They smile at each other.

Bekir the Bastard spots Ragıp in the distance.

Ragıp stands a little ways off the crowd. Bekir the Bastard pushes his way through the crowd and steps before him.

**BEKİR THE BASTARD**

Give me a single reason not to beat you up.

**RAGİP**

The lippaint is still in your pocket.

Bekir the Bastard’s face changes. He checks his pocket. Nothing. When he lifts his head up, Ragıp is laughing. Bekir the Bastard starts laughing as well.

Ragıp notices Zeynep in the distance. After a brief look, he turns his head away.

Zeynep reaches the square. She looks around. Slowly, she joins the crowd.

Tuzsuz passes by Zeynep and approaches the drum and horn players. He presses money into their hands. The musicians’ instruments burst with energy.

Grinning widely, Tuzsuz heads over to Julia’s table and asks her for a dance. Julia accepts and by and by the entire town starts dancing.

The square is animated with energy.

Celal arrives. Zeynep sees Celal in the distance. They look at each other.

Celal looks down.

The gossiping woman approaches him.

Zeynep smiles and turns her head away.

Julia gets people to dance. She gets Ahmet to dance.

Then, Zeynep.

Then, Ragıp.
As Julia dances happily, she notices Marco in the distance at the end of the square. She stops dancing. She walks to him before anyone notices.

At that very moment, Tuzsuz sits in a corner clutching his chest as Eğinli and Hımhım fan him.

Julia reaches Marco. The couple starts walking away without talking at all. As Julia walks away, she turns around and her eyes meet Ahmet’s. They nod their farewells across the square.

Ahmet looks around. When he is sure nobody is looking, he starts walking away from the crowd.

Smiling, Zeynep leaves the town square alone.

Julia loads her stuff on the back of a minibus. Then, she climbs in and sits. Marco climbs in after her. They take off.

A little later, Ahmet speeds towards the village with the car he has borrowed from Mahmut.

EMILY (38), dragging her luggage on wheels, crosses the road and stops beside Zeynep, who is walking down the sidewalk alone.

    EMILY
    (in English)
    Excuse me, do you speak English?

    ZEYNEP
    (in English)
    Ahh, a little.

The wind blows. The confetti rise into the air.

Pieces of Ferit’s letter start raining down on the town square.

INDIVIDUAL TOWNSPEOPLE start catching and reading the pieces of the letter. Those who discover the letter’s pieces stop dancing.

The wind whispers Ferit’s letter in the townspeople’s ears.
It is said that in the old days, the wind used to blow happiness in our faces.

-END-
THE IDEA

Before I submitted my thesis proposal, I had a short film idea in mind that I wanted to develop further into a feature length script.

The idea was to have pieces of a love letter torn into pieces that spread over a neighborhood and effect people’s lives. I had many reasons to think that the story had potential as a feature length script:

• Since we are dealing with more than one character, a feature length script will give me a better opportunity to develop each of them.

• The flying pieces of paper would work better as a story device in a broader narrative, allowing more time for the paper to search after each character’s hidden wounds.

I worked on this idea for some time and proposed it for my thesis project, titled: Please Read My Letter.

EARLY THESIS TOPIC

PLEASE READ MY LETTER is the story of the two days of a small town neighborhood. The first day is the day of the elections and the second one is the first day of the new school year. The story follows different pieces of papers torn from a love letter; each piece effects different lives and brings people together and intersects their paths.
In the early stages, I planned to build the story around a paper theme. Since the basic premise included pieces of papers, I thought that I would be able to push this theme by making the major background events related to paper in some way.

I created several characters from different backgrounds within the same small town, so that upon getting to know their stories the audience might have a better grasp on what it is like to live in such a town. Instead of following only one major character, multiple roles revolving around the paper theme worked better for my purposes.

I picked characters from different ages:

- **Ragıp**, the young boy, represents the naivete of town life and of love.
- **Zeynep**, a teacher, represents the respect of the townspeople and a love affair caught between friendship and romance.
- **Julia**, a teacher arriving to the town who represents the Western view contrasting with the eastern way of living, as well as desire versus love.
- Finally, the grandfather of Ragıp, who represents the memory of the small town and parental love.

**STRUCTURING THE FIRST DRAFT**

From the beginning, I had the idea of approaching the small town from a wider perspective, where instead of concentrating on a single character, I would try to show the lives of various people to depict an organic town life. In order to achieve this, I structured the script around three characters – Zeynep, Ragıp and Ahmet- and their relationships in various stages of life.
THE CORE

To begin, I studied myself and my affection for the story in order to name my motivation for writing the script. After a period of self-reflection, I realized that people in the small town are resistant to progress. People carry on with their lives in such a way that the future always mirrors the past. There is no wish for change that makes the future unique. Any attempt to capture this on film is very difficult since narrative films are mostly concerned with change and progress and Please Read My Letter revolved around the opposite. But aren’t we all longing for change? Within this question lies the real issue. Even though each person cares about change, it may be the society that holds him/her back. Therefore this film should be about the struggle between people and society. The topic also fit very well with one of the major problems Turkey faces right now, neighborhood pressure, namely the right that people feel that they have to interfere in other's decisions to unconsciously protect their own way of living.

CHANGES IN THE FIRST DRAFT

To keep in accordance with the general themes - that of the paper and of neighborhood pressure, I revised the structure of the story and rewrote the treatment.

I limited the plot to only 24 hours of time. It begins with a celebration, which gets interrupted and ends on the same celebration this time fulfilled.

The initial plot had 4 major stories, but for the second draft I shortened the story with the grandfather. It remained but I used this particular story to bring the other three together at the end. The grandfather is on a journey to the village to see his lover, whom he couldn't marry because of a different religious sect. All three stories basically reflect the past relationship between the grandfather and Saniye Hanim, his former lover. Thus,
the three other stories, which happen at the same time, will act as mirrors for the past of the grandfather, showing that things stay the same and what happened in the past will still happen in the present. This moral of the story, the stagnation of societal norms, will be told by the gang of the elderly to which the grandfather belongs. This gang is based on a traditional Turkish shadow theater play 'Ferhat and Sirin' (Ferit and Saniye Hanim), very close to Romeo and Juliet.

Towards the end of the film, everybody gathers together to join the pieces of the letter and Ragıp runs away without anyone discovering that he is the writer. This is where all the secrets are revealed. The Grandfather is at the heart of this scene and since all the other stories act as a past dimension of his earlier life, there arises a clever way to join the letter and the history of these people together.

The three stories are humble stories. They follow three separate one-day relationships, each with loose and open endings.

The letter gets torn at the beginning of the script, during the first night. It gets confused with the confetti thrown at the car, which should contain Julia. The problem is that Julia is missing.

The night turns into day as we follow each piece flying in a different direction. There is a total of ten pieces of paper flying around. Each story has three unique pieces and one piece they all share.

The story continues the next day. It is the day for the elections and Celal - Zeynep's husband-to-be and a member of the political party- is an officer in charge at the school for the elections. Celal sends her to knock on doors and invite the townspeople to go vote. On the day when Zeynep wants to stay away from everyone, she is forced to face those that represent the antagonism in the script. Therefore in this
draft, Zeynep is not solely at the school, giving me more range and possibilities with her character and story.

The pieces of the letter also act like living characters. They react to the people when they see them harming other papers. Ragıp also acts as their agent. He takes revenge on people who harm the papers.

Upon reading the changes I made, my advisor Adrianne Carageorge asked for more character development. She thought that the characters' secrets were not portrayed well enough and that the characters didn’t seem to resist the fact that their secrets had begun to surface.

Adrianne’s suggestions came right on time. While writing the first draft, I realized that I was losing the balance between the three stories. I therefore stopped writing in order to think deeply and analyze each characters' relations. The unbalance basically occurred because Zeynep has more solid wants and conflicts than the other the characters in the other two stories. Therefore, the film became centered only around Zeynep, leaving everyone else as a minor player. Adrianne also asked me to bring the grandfather back into Ragıp's family, since she thought that parental love should be kept in the film.

After thinking about Adrianne’s suggestions, I changed the grandfather and Ragıp's relationship and added a past relationship wound to Zeynep that will be revealed with the help of Volkan. I made Ragıp run after the pieces of paper in order to collect everything before the townspeople find them. And so, Ragıp meets Zeynep and falls in love. However, he gradually comes to realize the friendship of Sevgi, and that his "love" for Zeynep is merely a childish affection.
In order to be able to use Ragıp and Sevgi’s story as a bridge between the Zeynep/Volkan and Ahmet/Julia stories, I made Sevgi fall in love with Ahmet. Therefore, Ragıp and Sevgi begin by chasing Zeynep and then Ahmet.

Because this is the story of the small town’s people I made Ahmet more of a central character than Julia. Ahmet is her translator and in order to punctuate Ahmet’s wound, which is his impossible love of a girl in a neighboring, rival village, I made Julia and Ahmet unable to understand each other due to the language barrier (French and Turkish respectively). Nonetheless, gradually they begin to tell one another about their problems in their own relationships. I also wanted to push a subtle sexual affection between them. Ahmet is 18 years old and his struggle is between his love for Gülbahar and his sexual lust for Julia.

Another key point of the script to refine was the magical power of the papers. While the characters should feel realistic, the papers should bring a magical level to the story. I did not feel the urge to specify a reason for the supernatural but did directly connect Ragıp to the paper world. At the beginning of the first act Ragıp is mysteriously surrounded by a storm of papers. From then on he seems to be the only person who feels a connection to their world. Whenever he sees someone mistreating paper, he punishes them using the papers’ surreal but generally non-malevolent powers (i.e. the papers fly towards a man and obscure his face, causing him to fall down from a ladder).

I finished the first draft in January 2008. The three plots fit together very well towards a major theme. In the third act, the three plots merge into one at Saniye’s house
as Ferit and Saniye’s story is revealed. Simultaneously the pieces of the letter come together in the hands of the three heroes (Zenep, Ragip, and Ahmet).

At that point I had successfully implemented the magic of the papers into the story. The papers were also intervening in each of the stories at the right moments. The dreamlike scene during the third act at Saniye’s house was therefore more believable because of these magic/surreal undertones.

The overall message was becoming clearer. It is a magical story concerning relationships with a social commentary on neighborhood pressure and how that affects our choices.

PROBLEMS

Overall I had achieved what I was planning to do. But I was aware of the script’s problems

• Since the screen time for each plot was around 40 minutes, I was lacking character development mostly on Zeynep and Julia and their secret motivation.
• The second act was too repetitive in the sense that each plot turned into a humble road journey.
• After the first act, the story becomes a bit predictable.
• Side characters feel stereotypical.
• There are too many subplots happening concurrently, making the story overly complex.
• The backdrop with the whole election seems unnecessary.
SECOND DRAFT

After analyzing the first draft with my advisors, I concluded that I should work on character development more while also eliminating unnecessary story elements. Now well aware of the script’s problems, I took began to restructure the whole story and find a better base for a fresh start.

First of all, I updated Zeynep’s story with Volkan and Celal.

Zeynep is now a pharmacist and she is from the city. She is together with the town’s teacher Celal but is unable to find the courage to end her relationship and leave for the city. Volkan’s arrival is a major plot to device to help her with this decision.

I decided to find one key event that connects the three plots together. Julia’s arrival to town, because of its location in the script and amidst the characters, works as a perfect connecting point. I changed Julia to a tourist who is mistaken for the teacher. This allowed me two things:

1. Her arrival can be used as an exploding event that reveals many secrets of the town.
2. Since the audience will know from the first moment that she is not the teacher, the resulting interactions can have comedic effect.

I have connected her arrival to three plots:

1. Ragip is assigned to present her flowers upon her arrival but is unable to do so in front of Zeynep and faints out of excitement, causing him to lose the letter from his pocket.
2. Julia’s arrival helps the townspeople to spread gossip about her and Celal that will bring Zeynep and Volkan closer.
3. Instead of running away with his lover, Ahmet is assigned to be Julia’s guide for the day.

Instead of having magical pieces of paper flying around waiting to be found by the townspeople, I found a better filmic usage of the letter and decided that the words from the letter should be spoken by the wind into people’s ears. This also allows me to give the inanimate objects more life. At the end, during the final celebration, the actual letter appears in pieces, allowing for a scene with both audiovisual elements.

END OF SECOND DRAFT

*Handful of Fate is a poetic fairy-tale on the lives in a small town, where the past is a mirror of the present and peace comes to those who love has pre-assigned. But our story is about the others.*

Since I set out to change a big portion of the story, I waited to show my advisors the script until I was completely through a new draft.

With the second draft I solved the major problems of the first draft. The story has a better flow; characters are developed better; there are no complex side events, etc.

I shared the second draft with my advisors and got positive responses. Other than minor changes the script was ready to be presented as a final thesis submission.

THESIS REQUIREMENTS - PRE-PRODUCTION

Since *Handful of Fate* is also an ongoing feature production, I had extra thesis requirements.
For the pre-production of the film, I have been through all the stages listed below.

- I have attached two producers to the film.
- Locations have been found. The film will be shot in Göynük and in one of the deserted village nearby. The permissions were cleared.
- We have applied to:
  - Hubert Bals Project Development
  - Eurasia Coproduction Platform
  - Balkan Fund
  - CROSSROADS
  - Turkish Ministry of Culture Film Support Fund
- The budget breakdown has been done.
- The website for the film has been opened.
- The second draft of the script has been sent to actors and actresses, both national and international.
- Cinematographers have been contacted.

SCRIPT READING

The final step for my thesis submission was to gather a script-reading session together.

I came to Rochester three week ago before the final submission and began searching for actors via email and friends. Soon enough I brought a great team of readers together. I rehearsed the condensed version for the script with 15 actors. The
most challenging thing was to have everyone pronounce the Turkish names the same way so that the audience would not get confused.

Since this was the first time I was holding a script-reading session for Handful of Fate it would also prove to be very informative to see how the dialogues would read.

On September 19th, 6pm at the theater room I presented my thesis and had a script reading session. It was a successful reading with only minor reading problems. The reading was followed by a Question and Answer session.

I got a great response from the audience. Despite the fact that it was 75 minutes of reading, everyone seemed to follow the story easily through to the end.

Overall, everyone found the characters believable and the story charming, and the structure seemed to work for the most part. Some people thought that a full reading of the script would have been a better idea.

The major issues were:

The story of Julia and Ahmet needs to be developed further. Out of all the characters Julia seems to be least believable.

Instead of Saniye it should be Ferit who tears the letter apart.

Marco’s return is not believable because of the lack of development in Julia and Marco’s relationship.

The second act needs some development because it lacks tension as the story progresses.

Most of the problems mentioned were due to the fact that it was a partial reading of the whole script. The missing scenes would have helped for the audience to better understand the character’s motivations and to follow the action.

I agree that it would have been a better idea if Ferit had torn the letter.
I do not agree with most of the critique on Julia. Julia is a foreign eye to the town. Her arrival breaks the order in town. Because of her many secrets were revealed and most of these reveals happen without her will or control. She is not a problem solver for the story and is in fact almost a neutral element. Julia is like the wind. She is a call for change but at the end of the day she is not the reason for change.

Julia ends up in town in order to have a break from her relationship. Without caring much about the townspeople lives, she wanders around but eventually decides to take action for Ahmet and Gülbahar and attempts to bring them together. This is precisely what Marco complains about - her lack of taking action and caring. Just as Volkan helps Zeynep make a decision towards going to the city and/or staying with Celal, Julia stands for the same thing towards Ahmet. In the same way that we do not need to learn much about Volkan, the story does not necessarily require more explanation for Julia’s problems in her relationship.

Handful of Fate deals with the resistance to change. No matter what happens at the end of the day all things return to normal in the humble small town life. Handful of Fate is the story of Zeynep, Ragıp and Ahmet and their will to change. There are no heroes in a small town, there are only people with humble desires.
PLEASE READ MY LETTER - SYNOPSIS

PLEASE READ MY LETTER is the story of two consecutive days in a small neighborhood. The first day is the day of the elections and the second is the first day of the school.

Ragip finishes writing an innocent love letter to his teacher and gets caught by the neighborhood kids. They read his letter out loud, humiliating him, and then tear it into pieces. The wind blows each of the pieces away. As each piece enters people’s lives, it affects and changes them and intersects their lives according to how its finder interprets what’s written on each specific piece.

In the first act, the flying pieces of papers pass each character as a means of introducing them. However, no one notices the pieces.

“DEAR TEACHER ZEYNEP,”

Zeynep (27) is having difficult times at home and with her relationship. She arrives late to her work at school as polling clerk because she brings her sick granny to vote. After getting permission from Volkan, a polling officer, to bring her granny back she stumbles across her jealous and paranoid boyfriend.

“I AM HAPPY SCHOOL OPENS TOMORROW.”

Julia (30) is an idealist teacher from the US. On her first day in town, already homesick, she wants to have some space away from all of the townspeople and asks her guide, the school director’s son Ahmet (15) to take her to a park. She ends up at the mountains because of a mistranslation.

“I DID NOT SEE YOU THE WHOLE SUMMER”

Ahmet accompanies Julia without knowing English and using only a dictionary. Unable to see his lover who was away for the summer, he takes Julia to the mountains where his lover lives.

“AND MISS YOU MUCH.”

The grandfather of Ragip (74) is in a rest home and on the day of elections
Ragip's parents are visiting mainly to ask him to finish his will. The grandfather gets very upset because they didn’t bring Ragip. At the same time everyone in the rest home is getting ready for a tour to the voting station at school, including the grandfather and his gang of the elderly, the leader of which thinks he is a pirate.

“PLEASE READ MY LETTER”

A little street dog, with which the second act begins, is the first one to notice a piece of paper and tries to catch it. From this point on, as everyone begins to notice the papers, their lives change and intersect with others.

“I REALIZED THAT I LIKE YOU VERY MUCH”

Zeynep is followed by her boyfriend to the school where the old people from the rest home arrive for voting and create a huge chaos involving a pirate-like fantasy fight between the elderly and the neighborhood kids, a satire of the polling in Turkey. Zeynep sees her boyfriend flirting with a nurse and breaks up with him, quoting the opposite of what the piece of paper she finds outside the school says.

“AND DON’T WANT TO STAY AWAY FROM YOU.”

On the way back to the rest home, the grandfather finds this little piece of paper and decides to escape from the rest home the following day to visit Ragip on the first day of school.

“RAGIP”

After his love letter is torn apart, a little girl begins walking with Ragip. He continues wandering with her without talking much until, unaware of the flying pieces of papers, he finds the piece which has his own name on it. The girl takes a piece of paper from her pocket, which has:

“RAGIP’S SQUIGGLY SIGNATURE”

Ragip begins searching for other pieces with the help of the little girl.

Meanwhile Julia gets angry at Ahmet when he leads her in circles. They end on a path next to his lover’s house, yet he cannot dare to knock on the door because of her father.

Back in the rest home, the gang of the elderly meet secretly in the garden to plan their escape to the treasure island (school) the following day.

Ragip and the little girl see Zeynep and Volkan, the polling officer, together during a break. Ragip forgets about the letter and begins following them. The little girl stays next to him.

Zeynep and Volkan spend two hours together, eating and wandering around, and they end up lying under a tree. Volkan shows her the piece he has found: DEAR TEACHER ZEYNEP. Surprised, Zeynep puts her piece next to it, I REALIZED THAT I LIKE YOU VERY
MUCH.

As Julia and Ahmet sit silently on a rock, one piece of paper falls down on him, (I DID NOT SEE YOU THE WHOLE SUMMER), which makes him cry and makes her curious to translate. Julia decides to help him; she knocks on the door and asks his lover to come out with the excuse of meeting her student. As his lover comes out, Julia leaves them alone. One piece of paper falls down on her: I AM HAPPY SCHOOL OPENS TOMORROW.

The third act: the first day of school begins as Volkan and Zeynep, Ahmet and Julia, Ragip and the little girl, walk to the school, and the gang of the elderly escape the rest home.

The ceremony starts. The gang of the elderly enters the court and another chaotic fight begins between the gang of the elderly and the neighborhood kids. Under this wild disorder, Ragip collects the pieces and puts them together, but as a shorter letter this time and gives it to the little girl. “I REELIZED THAT I LIKE YOU VERY MUCH AND DON’T WANT TO STAY AWAY FROM YOU. –RAGIP”

PLEASE READ MY LETTER is a fairytale-like story of flying pieces of papers trying to fulfill the purpose of the original letter, which is to connect people together.
PLEASE READ MY LETTER – TREATMENT

NARRATOR
(quick-cuts of referring images)

Meet Ragip; he recently learned to write. He drew his first line when he was 2. Crayons tasted terrible. At the age of 4, he gave names to paper-planes with unrecognizable letters. Learning how the numbers look, he painted by numbers. When he was 5 he learned that markers don’t mix together and make the paper tear if they overlap too much. Still not good at punctuation marks, it didn’t stop him to write his first letter. He folded it neatly and put in an envelope; he turned 8 two weeks ago.

Sunday - the election day. It is very early in the morning. RAGIP (8), on the rooftop of his apartment block writes a letter. The gang of neighborhood kids sees him and sneaks to the roof. Ragip folds the letter gently and puts it in an envelope. As he stands up he sees a crowd of kids watching him. The leader of the gang harshly takes the envelope; opens it and begins reading aloud. Ragip fights back inevitably. Surrounded by heavy laughter he tears it into pieces. Ragip runs away crying; all his clothes are worn out. The wind blows the papers and each piece flies to a different location in the neighborhood.

ZEYNEP(27) tries to rush her granny to change her clothes. She is running late to her single-day job as a polling clerk at the school where she also teaches. Under her granny’s heavy complaints she takes her downstairs and they head to school. A small piece of paper flies past her; it says:

“DEAR TEACHER ZEYNEP,”.

Neither of them notice it.
At the school the school director scolds her for being late, even though the polling process hasn’t begun yet. VOLKAN (29), the polling officer, who comes from Istanbul to watch over the voting process hears their quarrel and stands by her side. Zeynep makes her granny vote. Under the strange look of the school director she asks for permission from Volkan to bring her granny back. Volkan allows her.

JULIA, an idealist teacher from the United States, enters the school. The school teacher welcomes her joyfully. He gives his AHMET (15) a dictionary and explains in detail how he should take care of the school’s new and only foreign teacher from the United States on her first day in the small town, even though Ahmet doesn’t know any English words other than “yes”, “no” and “of course”.

Julia and Ahmet begin walking on the street of the small town aimlessly and passing people getting out to vote. Julia is homesick already and doesn’t like to be the center of the attraction. She is overwhelmed and Ahmet is shy about the number of people trying to communicate with her. With the help of the dictionary Julia asks him to take her to a park. He takes her the wrong way and instead they head to the mountains. On their way, a small piece of paper flies past her, it says:

“I AM HAPPY SCHOOL OPENS TOMORROW”.
She doesn’t notice it.

A couple of feet away another piece of paper flies past Ahmet. It says:

“I DID NOT SEE YOU THE WHOLE SUMMER”
Ahmet doesn’t notice it. He looks through a window of a house they are passing and sees no one inside. He gets very upset about it.

Ragip returns home. Upon seeing his clothes ragged, his parents get mad. They punish him by leaving him home as they go the rest home for a visit to Ragip’s grandfather. Ragip sneaks out as they leave.

The GRANDFATHER enters the office of the director of the rest home with the gang of the elderly (the grandfather and his friends always act together) hoping to see Ragip. In vain, they leave the grandfather alone with his family and the director.

The main topic of the parent’s visit is to make the grandfather sign his will even though the grandfather mostly utters about how much he misses Ragip. The parents
continue talking to the director as the grandfather leaves the room. They ask the
director to include the grandfather in the tour for voting.

In the garden, nurses are preparing everyone for a group visit to the school for
voting. The leader of the gang of the elderly, the oldest, believes that he is a pirate and
claims that leaving their camps (rest home) may be dangerous. The grandfather joins
them later; he is very upset. On their way, a small piece of paper flies past him, it says:

“AND MISS YOU MUCH”.

No one notices it. The leader of the gang tries to cheer him up by talking about
his overseas experiences as a pirate.

On her way back to school, Zeynep stumbles across her boyfriend. They argue
about the previous night. He claims that she met someone else and doesn’t love him
anymore. He doesn’t even believe that she is a polling clerk and decides to follow her to
the school. As she rushes to the school, he walks one step behind her. They pass a dog
that barks nonstop as if pointing to the piece of paper lying in front of him. It says:

“PLEASE READ MY LETTER”.

Zeynep stops to calm the dog down and barely notices what’s written on the
paper as it flies away. Her boyfriend continues complaining.

As Zeynep climbs up the steps of the school, a huge group of old people from
the rest home enter. The leader of the gang constantly shouts pirate-monologues. The
grandfather is still sad about not seeing Ragip. The gang of neighborhood kids is also
there to accompany their parents while voting. They shout back to the old pirate. Within
this chaos, Zeynep looks up and sees a piece of paper flying towards her. As it is about
to land on her shoulder, she grabs the paper. It says:

“I REELIZED THAT I LIKE YOU VERY MUCH”.

Zeynep stands still for a while then enters the school.

Meanwhile, the chaos spreads to the whole school as the leader of the gang of
the elderly asks everyone to draw their swords against the gang of the mischievous
neighborhood kids. All the voting clerks and nurses begin chasing them through the
corridors. Zeynep sees her boyfriend downstairs talking to a nurse from the rest home.
She breaks up with him stating:

“I realized that I don’t like you any more.”
In front of the school, the neighborhood kids follow their parents to home as the tour takes the opposite way to the rest home. The old-pirate still talks about the epic fight they had. The grandfather doesn’t talk much. A piece of paper hits the grandfather’s face. He reads:

“AND DON’T WANT TO STAY AWAY FROM YOU.”

The grandfather turns to the pirate and explains excitedly. Tomorrow they should go to the treasure island (school) again for he knows where the treasure (Ragip) is. The pirate gets excited and begins whispering plans for their escape.

Ragip wanders on the streets looking at the shops that are closed due to the elections. A little girl shows up next to him and joins his stroll. Gradually they begin to communicate. After a while Ragip notices a piece of paper on the ground. It says:

“RAGIP”.

Surprised, he takes it.

The piece of paper Ragip holds reminds the little girl of the piece of paper she found earlier that day. It has

“RAGIP’S SQUIGGLY SIGNATURE” on it.

Together they begin searching for the other pieces.

After walking for hours, Julia and Ahmet end up again next to the house whose window he was looking through earlier. Julia gets angry at last and breaks the silence. After complaining non-stop for minutes, she stops talking and looks at him. He looks embarrassed. Julia continues walking. Ahmet waits. After Julia takes couple of steps, she turns back and waits for him to walk. He joins her. They continue walking.

Back in the rest home, the gang of the elderly meet secretly in the garden to plan their escape to the treasure island (school). The grandfather states that he has the map to the island.

Ragip climbs the stairs to the roof-top of their apartment block. The little girl follows him. He begins gazing at the streets from high up. The little girl gives up and sits down. Ragip joins her eventually. Even though he seldomly responds, the little girls constantly asks questions. All of a sudden, Ragip sees Zeynep passing by on one of the streets. Volkan is with her. Ragip stands up and freezes. As they get out of sight, Ragip begins running down. The little girl is still sitting. A couple of seconds later Ragip sticks
out his head from the door and waits for her to join him. Moving slowly, she stands up and follows her.

The polls are closed and Zeynep and Volkan are taking a break before the vote count. Zeynep takes Volkan to a restaurant.

Zeynep and Volkan wander the streets and decide to go to a park.

After spending two hours together, they lie down on the grass under a tree. They stay silent for a while. As Zeynep attempts to talk about her break-up, a piece of paper falls down from above on Volkan. It says:

DEAR TEACHER ZEYNEP.

Volkan looks at it for a while, and then extends it to Zeynep. Zeynep stops talking, takes out the piece of paper from her pocket and places the two next to each other.

“DEAR TEACHER ZEYNEP, I REEIZED THAT I LIKE YOU VERY MUCH.”

Ragip and the little girl watch them from a distance. Seeing him upset, the little girl tries to cheer him up as they walk away. Fifty steps later, he stops looking back. Hundred steps later, she makes him laugh.

Julia and Ahmet are sitting on a rock, away from each other and looking to the scenery underneath them. A piece of paper falls down from above on Ahmet. It says:

“I DID NOT SEE YOU THE WHOLE SUMMER”.

He begins crying, quietly. Julia notices him and sees the paper. She takes it from his hand and with the help of the dictionary translates it.

Julia knocks on the door of the house whose window Ahmet was looking through. The father opens the door and is surprised to see a foreigner. Using sign language and the dictionary she tries to ask for his daughter to come out so the girl can meet her new English teacher. She comes out. Ahmet watches them from a distance. Julia brings her to Ahmet and they begin walking together. As Julia follows them from a couple of steps back, a piece of paper falls from above on her shoulder. She translates it using the dictionary.

“I AM HAPPY SCHOOL OPENS TOMORROW.” She smiles.
Monday - the first day of school. The gang of the elderly meets quietly in the garden to escape from the camp (rest home). The grandfather does not show up. The old pirate sneaks into his room to check and sees the director of the rest home trying to push the grandfather into signing his will. He informs the other gang members about the black pirate (director) stealing the treasure map (the grandfather’s will). They draw their swords (broomsticks) and get into the grandfather’s room. They save him and run out of the camp (rest home) before getting caught.

Volkan waits for Zeynep in front of her house. She climbs down and they begin walking to the school, arm-in-arm.

Ahmet waits for Julia in front of her house. She climbs down; they smile and begin walking to the school silently.

As Ragip walks to the school by himself, he sees the little girl waiting for him at the corner. They begin walking together.

At the school, there is a huge crowd in the court. As the school director begins talking, the gang of the pirates (the elderly) enters the court, shouting. The old pirate asks the grandfather loudly to show the map. The grandfather takes out the piece of paper from his pocket. It says:

“AND DON’T WANT TO STAY AWAY FROM YOU.”

As the gang of neighborhood kids begins attacking the gang of the pirates, Ragip smiles and runs towards his grandfather. They hug each other. Ragip asks for the piece of paper. Zeynep emerges from behind. She hands Ragip her piece of paper. Ragip takes out tape from his schoolbag, puts the pieces together, and brings it to the little girl. It says:

I REELEDIZED THAT I LIKE YOU VERY MUCH
AND DON’T WANT TO STAY AWAY FROM YOU.
–RAGIP
The little girl smiles. Volkan, Julia and Ahmet smile in the distance. Just outside the school, a passer-by hears the strange cough of the dog and help it to spit a piece of paper out, it says:

“PLEASE READ MY LETTER.”

THE END
Working Title: PLEASE READ MY LETTER
Producer: Selin Vatansever
Potential: Karma Film
Investors
Medyavizyon
Demir Makine A.S.
Republic of Turkey - Ministry of Cult.&Tourism
Eurimages
Budget: $427,104 – HD

PLEASE READ MY LETTER – CHARACTER CHART

TOWNSPEOPLE

VOLKAN

BOYFRIEND

ZEYNEP

SCHOOL DIRECTOR

GANG OF THE KIDS

GANG OF THE ELDERLY

RAGIP

GRANDFATHER

MOTHER

FATHER

JULIA

AHMET

LOVER

LITTLE GIRL
PLEASE READ MY LETTER - STORY APPROACH

PLEASE READ MY LETTER is a poetic fairy-tale, structured around the sentences seen on each piece of paper. Flowing camera-moves (steadycam, jib, crane) for the flying papers and quick cut montage sequences for each person's interaction with the different papers (as shown at the begin of the treatment for Ragip character) will be the visual cues of the film. Each individual story has intentional cues for different papers (dictionary, votes, will, etc.). The proposed story structure is still a work in progress (sentences may be added or cut out) and does not show additional characters from the neighborhood who are involved in the story but miss the papers. They will be used to add a cultural touch to the neighborhood and will be involved in satirical scenes regarding the happenings during elections in Turkey. Even though there is a general color scheme, each story will have a slightly different and reoccurring color coding. PLEASE READ MY LETTER is a fantastic portrayal of small town life rather than a realistic one; for example the two main fight sequences between two gangs will be shot from the imagination of the old people and the kids. Films like Amarcord (Fellini, 1973), Shortcuts (Altman, 1993), The Circle (Panahi, 2000), The Fabulous Destiny of Amelie Poulain (Jeunet, 2001), Phantom of Liberty (Bunuel, 1974) and poems by Nazim Hikmet are influential to the project.
ng Title: PLEASE READ MY LETTER
Producer: Selin Vatansever
Potential: Karma Film
Investors
Demir Makine A.S.
Republic of Turkey - Ministry of Cult.&Tourism
Eurimages
Budget: $427,104 – HD

PLEASE READ MY LETTER - BUDGET FOR HD PRODUCTION
(does not include addtnl. deals, price-cuts and discounts, an estimate of up to %40)

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**TOTAL POST-PRODUCTION** 73,810

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**TOTAL OTHER** 25,800

**Total Above-The-Line** 75,050

**Total Below-The-Line** 296,345

**Total Above and Below-the-Line** 371,395

**Contingency @ 15 %** 55,709

**GRAND TOTAL** 427,104

### ABOVE-THE-LINE

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#### 01-00 Script

**01-01 Writer's Salary**

- **Final Draft**
  - 0 0
- **Research**
  - 0 0
- **Clearance**
  - 0 0
- **Copyright Registration**
  - 75 75
- **Script Copying**
  - 200 200
- **Script Timing**
  - 250 250

*Total for 01-00* 525

#### 02-00 Producers Unit

**02-01 Executive Producer**

- 0 0

*Total for 02-00* 5,000

#### 03-00 Direction

**03-01 Director**

- 10,000 10,000

*Total for 03-00* 10,000

#### 04-00 Cast

**04-01 Lead Actors**

- **Role of RAGIP**
  - 15 Days 1 500 7,500
- **Role of ZEYNEP**
  - 15 Days 1 500 7,500
- **Role of JULIA**
  - 15 Days 1 500 7,500
- **Role of GRANDFATHER**
  - 15 Days 1 500 7,500
- **Overtime @1.5**
  - 2 Hours 2 5,625 5,625 35,625

*Total for 04-00***
### 04-02 Supporting Cast

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### 04-04 Casting Director/Staff

| Allow                            | 1    | 4,500 | 4,500 |

### 04-05 Looping (Actor’s fees)

| Allow                            | 1    | 2,000 | 2,000 |

Total for 04-00: 59,525

### BELOW-THE-LINE

Total: 59,525

### 05-00 Production Staff

### 05-01 Unit Production Manager

| Prep    | 3 Weeks | 1 | 600 | 1800 |
| Shoot   | 4 Weeks | 1 | 750 | 3,000|
| Wrap    | 1 Week  | 1 | 700 | 5,500|

### 05-02 First Assistant Director

| Prep    | 1 Week  | 1 | 600 | 600  |
| Shoot   | 4 Weeks | 1 | 750 | 3,000|

### 05-03 Production Coordinator

| Prep    | 1 Week  | 1 | 500 | 500  |
| Shoot   | 4 Weeks | 1 | 600 | 2,400|

### 05-04 Script Supervisor (PA)

| Prep    | 1 Week  | 1 | 500 | 500  |
| Shoot   | 4 Weeks | 1 | 600 | 2,400|
| Wrap    | 1 Week  | 1 | 500 | 500  |

### 05-05 Production Auditor/Accountant

### 05-06 Production Assistants

<p>| PA #1 Prep | 3 Weeks | 1 | 400 | 1,200|
| PA #1 Shoot| 4 Weeks | 1 | 400 | 1,600|</p>
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### 16-00 Transportation

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**Total for 16-00** 9,500

### 17-00 Location Expenses

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**Total for 17-00** 10,000

### 18-00 Accomodation Expenses

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**Total for 18-00** 8,000

### 19-00 Videotape Stock - Production

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**Total for 19-00** 13,040

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**Total for 20-00** 0

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**Total for 21-00** 40,530

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**Note:**
Total for 28-00: 8,000

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**29-00 General & Administrative Expenses**

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21
**Working Title:** PLEASE READ MY LETTER  
**Producer:** Selin Vatansever  
**Potential:** Karma Film  
**Investors:** Medyavizyon  
Demir Makine A.S.  
Republic of Turkey - Ministry of Cult.&Tourism  
Eurimages  
**Budget:** $427,104 –HD

**Start Date:** Jun -07  
**End Date:** Feb-09  
**Running Time:** 100 min.  
**Rel. Format:** 35mm.

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**Working Title:** PLEASE READ MY LETTER

**Producer:** Selin Vatansever

**Potential:** Karma Film

**Investors**
- Medyavizyon
- Demir Makine A.S.
- Republic of Turkey - Ministry of Cult.&Tourism
- Eurimages

**Budget:** $427,104 – HD

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**PLEASE READ MY LETTER - TIMELINE (CONT.)**

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Working Title: PLEASE READ MY LETTER
Producer: Selin Vatansever
Potential: Karma Film
Investors
Demir Makine A.S.
Republic of Turkey - Ministry of Cult.&Tourism
Eurimages
Budget: $427,104 –HD

Start Date: Jun -07
End Date: Feb-09
Running Time: 100 min.
Rel. Format: 35mm.

PLEASE READ MY LETTER - TIMELINE
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### ADVISING COMMITTEE – PLEASE READ MY LETTER

Malcaum Spaull  
Cathleen Ashworth (Pending)  
Baris Pirhasan*

* **BARIŞ PİRHASAN** (director, screenwriter, author)  
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**M.F.A.** Film an TV – Directing  
National Film and TV School, UK

### Filmography:

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**Desperate Road**  
**Körebe** 1985  
**Adi Vasfiye** 1985  
**Her Name is Vasfiye**

| Güneşin Tutulduğu Gün | Adi Vasfiye 1985 |
| Badi | 1983 |
APPENDIX B: Synopsis
HANDFUL OF FATE – SYNOPSIS

‘Others prevented us from being happy together. But we found happiness in others, didn’t we?’ asks Saniye towards the end of our story, when she meets Ferit, the love of her youth. ‘Handful of Fate’ is the story of those who chase happiness, striving to be together. Set in a humble Anatolian town, it follows three stories of those who repress their desires because of others.

First let us talk about Ferit.

Old Ferit, the town gentleman, when he was young, he loved a village girl, Saniye - of a different religious sect. Neither the town nor the village approved of this relationship. When he grew tired with all the gossip, Ferit decided to run away with Saniye. He sent her a letter; but they brought it back to him, telling him she was dead. And until this day the townspeople kept the truth a secret. Until the day the foreign teacher came to town.

Then let’s talk about Zeynep the pharmacist.

Zeynep is the pharmacist of the town. She came from the city four years ago, in order not to be an assistant in her mother’s pharmacy there. Now, her mother insists that she returns to the city, saying she can’t handle everything by herself anymore.

Zeynep is with the town teacher Celal. The townspeople like Celal so much that they try to manipulate them so Celal doesn’t leave with Zeynep for the city. Zeynep cannot decide about her relationship and future with Celal. Until the day the foreign teacher comes to town.

And there’s Ahmet…

Ahmet is the son of the school headmaster. He has the same problem Ferit had years ago. He loves Gülbahtar from the village. Nobody wants them to be together. They haven’t seen one another in three months now; and Gülbahtar has just arrived from the summer meadow. The rumors reached the town. She loves someone else. Ahmet didn’t believe them. He has sent her a letter, letting her know that he will arrange their runaway the next day, if she wants it as well. His friend was afraid to deliver the letter. Ahmet is determined to go ask himself today. Until the foreign teacher comes to town.

There is also little Ragıp, Ferit’s grandson. Another hero of our story.

Ragıp is in love with Zeynep the pharmacist, each day he makes his knee bleed and goes to her for treatment. At last he sits down and writes down his feelings and prepares her an innocent love letter. Just when he is about to deliver it, the letter gets stolen from his pocket.

All because of this foreign teacher coming to town.

By the way, we forgot to mention – the foreign teacher cannot make it to the town. The school headmaster’s assistant cannot find her at the airport. Instead, it’s Julia that comes. With her backpack and her young boyfriend, Julia is travelling from one country to another. That night, riding in a truck that they have hitchhiked, she gets tired of quarrelling with her boyfriend. She gets off the truck.
And when she reaches the town at the time of the morning call to prayer, everybody thinks she’s the new school teacher. Julia doesn’t decline the role; she was going to wander around aimlessly anyway.

See how Julia’s arrival will affect the course of everything.

It’s old Ferit and the court of elders who first see Julia. Among them, old wolf Tuzsuz tries to flirt with her. And when he sees Ferit kindly helping her with the hotel procedures he grows jealous of him, and angrily drops the bomb, ‘You go dally with Saniye.’ Finding out that Saniye is not dead, Ferit sets on the road all alone to go find her that very day. Also with him, he has the letter he had written to her sixty years ago.

That day, Zeynep is busy taking inventory, together with Volkan -the medicine distributor. Julia has given new hope to the townspeople who want to spoil Zeynep and Celal’s relationship, and a rumor that Celal is flirting during the school visit immediately reaches Zeynep. When she goes to the school, she finds out that the rumors are false. Celal is not even there. But Volkan tells her he knows where Celal is: ‘I saw Celal at the wrecked house together with a girl.’ When Zeynep and Volkan reach the wrecked house, Celal is no longer there. Or did Volkan lie to be alone with Zeynep in that house? Seeing Zeynep together with Volkan, the people spread another rumor, this time to Celal. Is she going to leave the town or not? Zeynep will make her decision at the end of the day.

That day, Ahmet’s plans to go to Gülbahar are interrupted as the sun rises. Someone who can speak English is needed to accompany the foreign teacher. As his father -the school headmaster- had been proudly sending him to a school in another town where he should learn English better, Ahmet is to be the guide. There is only one little problem. Julia is French and doesn’t speak English. Ahmet naturally does not understand her; but his father does not believe him and makes him follow Julia around to practice his English. Julia and Ahmet do not understand one another at all in the beginning. But later on, they begin to talk about similar things. When Ahmet’s courage to go to Gülbahar fails him, Julia encourages him and together they go to the village. Maybe in doing this, Julia is facing the problems in her own relationship.

Now, little Ragıp. When he is given the duty to give flowers to the foreign teacher, and as this is especially to take place before Zeynep’s very eyes, Ragıp faints. When he gets his consciousness back in the arms of Zeynep, he wants to give her the letter, so he puts his hand in his pocket, but the letter is no longer there. Next day as he searches for the letter, a little girl from the village, Sevgi, accompanies him. At the end of their quest, Ragıp finds the letter. But more importantly, after this journey adventure voyage with little Sevgi, will he realize that he no longer needs to deliver the letter?

And Ferit... When he finds Saniye in the village and their stories are told, we think Ferit and Saniye are Ragıp and Sevgi. Or Ahmet and Gülbahar... Or Zeynep and Celal.

‘Others prevented us from being happy together. But we found happiness in others, didn’t we?’

‘Handful of Fate’ is a cross section of the daily humble town life. No matter how much the bricks move they never fall out of their places. The comedy as well as the tragedy of this town is already written in its fate.
HANDFUL OF FATE – TREATMENT

SATURDAY - THE CEREMONY THAT DIDN’T TAKE PLACE

“In the old days, The wind used to whisper lost letters from ear to ear.”

An Anatolian town. The 90’s. Spring. Flowers just blossoming. Saturday evening. The headmaster of the school makes an announcement through the streetlamps:

“Dear townspeople, we are expecting all of you at the celebration at the public square to celebrate the arrival of our first foreign school teacher, Ms Emily.”

As the announcement continues, RAGIP (8), an introverted child, concludes his love letter, written in his illegible handwriting. He puts the letter in his pocket and stands up on the wall he is sitting on. He gathers his courage for a moment and then jumps off. He falls on his hands and knees right by the wall that is hardly a meter high. There is some blood on his hands and knees. Right to Zeynep, the pharmacist.

ZEYNEP (28), pharmacist of the town. She arrived in town 4 years ago and opened her own pharmacy -she did not want to be an assistant in one of her mother’s pharmacies in the big city. And for a long time now she has been with CELAL (28), the town’s teacher. Ragıp arrives to the pharmacy. He’s very happy while Zeynep sits him on her lap, sterilizing his hands and knees. He waits for the right moment to give her the letter. Right when he’s about to take it out and hand it over, the phone rings; her mother is calling. They talk about tomorrow’s stock taking at Zeynep’s pharmacy. Ragıp leaves, without achieving to give the letter to Zeynep.

When it gets all quiet at the pharmacy, Zeynep pulls out ‘for rent’ sign from below the counter and looks at it hesitatingly.

AHMET (18), the school headmaster’s son, a young man of calm and resolved disposition, stands under a streetlamp, looking up to the top floor of the house before him. Ahmet loves Gülbahar, a girl from the village. She’s from another religious sect. Neither the village, nor the town wants this relationship. They are constantly starting rumors to end the affair. Today another of those rumors has reached Ahmet.

Ahmet knocks on the door of this house. He asks for young Mahmut. He asks Mahmut if he has seen Gülbahar at the prairie. Mahmut makes fun of him, saying that another boy got Gülbahar at the prairie. Right when Ahmet is about to get angry, his father’s announcement is heard. He has to go to the public square. He goes away, with Mahmut meanly grinning behind his back.

On the square, a crowd, having put up welcoming banners, is expecting the newly arriving foreign English teacher. While the school headmaster is anxiously walking around; the court of elders, the four prominent personalities of the town, Hımhum, Tuzsuz, Eğini, and FERİT (75) are sitting comfortably and commenting on the crowd. Ferit, Ragıp’s grandfather, the town gentleman, is the quietest among them.

Ragıp is in the public square as Zeynep arrives. Celal is not around. Gossiping women immediately gather around Zeynep, and after much effort, bring up the subject to her leaving for the city. She should go back to the city because her old mother cannot deal with her pharmacies in the city all by herself anymore. Gossiping women put
pressure on Zeynep to stay in town and marry Celal. Their main worry lies elsewhere, they do not want her boyfriend Celal to leave the town.

Ahmet is also at the square, putting up a ‘Welcome’ banner. His father is right under the ladder, constantly giving instructions. The teahouse-boy Hamit approaches him. He has already heard the rumors. They talk about Gülbahtar. Ahmet hasn’t seen Gülbahtar in three months. She has just arrived from the prairie. Aside from the rumors that reached him, there has been no other new of Gülbahtar.

Celal reaches the square with a bunch of flowers in his hand. His eyes meet Zeynep’s. Zeynep smiles when she sees the flowers. They cannot find the opportunity to talk, because of the people that have already surrounded Celal.

The school headmaster approaches Celal and takes the flowers from him; he calls out to Ragıp, who is watching Zeynep and Celal’s glances at each other from a distance. He has been given the duty to give the flowers to the foreign teacher. Thus Zeynep realizes that the flowers are not meant for her. Ragıp, on the other hand, panic’s when Zeynep sees him with the flowers in his hands. How could he give the flowers to someone other than Zeynep? And right before her eyes too…

Suddenly the drums start playing. The vehicle carrying the foreign teacher has appeared in the distance. Everyone gathers by the road, with confetti in their hands. Ragıp, at the very front, looks back and forth at the car and Zeynep. He cannot figure out what to do, becomes confused, anxious, and finally faints from nervousness. Right at that moment, the door of the vehicle is opened and the confetti rains down on the headmaster’s assistant’s head instead of the foreign teacher’s. They could not find the teacher at the airport. Zeynep disperses the crowd around Ragıp.

Ragıp opens his eyes to find Zeynep beside him. When he recovers a little, he puts his hand in his pocket to give her the letter. The letter is not in its place.

Meanwhile, the court of elders is poking fun at the people in the public square from a distance.

After the celebration, Zeynep and Celal leave the place together. Celal is tired after having helped set the school in order until late night for tomorrow’s inspection by the arriving foreign teacher. Zeynep is silent. As they reach Zeynep’s house, they begin to argue about Zeynep’s leaving for the city. Celal feels responsible for his students and wants to stay for some time. He hands the flowers to Zeynep.

Ahmet goes into a phone booth on a quiet street. He calls Gülbahtar. She answers coldly. It’s either because of her father is around or her feelings have changed. Ahmet gets worried and tells her he will be coming to visit her at the village tonight. Her father overhears the conversation, he grabs the receiver and threatens Ahmet.

Lost in thought, Ahmet heads for the teahouse and finds the teahouse-boy Hamit. He asks him to carry a letter to Gülbahtar that very night. The boy is very reluctant, but Ahmet forces and persuades him by saying it’s a farewell letter.

Hamit sets on the road with his motorbike. At the entrance of town, Ahmet sets to wait for the boy’s return.

Hamit arrives to the village, meets the villagers who are on guard for Ahmet and gives then the news. As Hamit opens the letter in front of them, he sees that Ahmet lied to him. The villagers get mad.
Hamit, with a slight bruise in his cheek, returns secretly to town. Ahmet, unaware that the boy has returned, is still waiting for him at the same place.

DAWN
Meanwhile, a couple backpacking from country to country, JULIA (32) and Marco (26), are riding by the driver in a truck traveling in the dark. Julia, French, sexy, appealing, stubborn, and dressed younger than her age, sits quietly as Marco complains about almost everything. Julia, annoyed with the situation, rebukes Marco. Julia doesn’t want to have to answer anyone. Finally she gets fed up, and signals the driver to stop. The truck stops, and Julia gets off with her huge backpack and walks away. Marco calls out after her; then he tells the driver to continue. As the truck goes away, the morning call to prayer has begun. Julia is left all by herself by the road. There are no lights except for the streetlamp in the distance.

Julia walks to the town center to find a place to stay. Walking out of the mosque, Ferit, Tuzsuz, Eğinli and Hımhm see Julia in a distance, in the mists. The old wolf, Tuzsuz is struck by Julia’s beauty, and immediately jumps in front of her. The four old men walk to the hotel with Julia, trying to restrain Tuzsuz whose blood has already begun to run wild. When they realize that they will not be able to hold Tuzsuz back, Eğinli goes to inform the school headmaster; the foreign teacher has arrived. Julia, still indifferent, heads towards the hotel.

They reach the hotel. Tuzsuz is cross with Ferit for helping Julia with the registration procedures in an all gentlemanly manner and lets it out.

“You go and dally with Saniye.”

In an instant, the faces of the old men and of the hotel manager look all chilly.

‘Saniye?’ asks Ferit. They try to cover up the subject, but the word has been spoken. Julia gets the key to her room, and walking away from the scene, goes upstairs.

SUNDAY – CEREMONY AT SCHOOL
Ragıp wakes up. In the living room, his father is talking with Hımhm. Everyone is nervous about Ferit finding out that Saniye had not died. Ferit has shut himself in his room. He opens his cupboard and takes out a very old letter. He puts the letter in his inner pocket.

Ragıp, his father, and Hımhm are having breakfast. Ferit doesn’t speak at all. Hımhm and Ragıp’s father are commenting on the situation, whispering and gesturing with their eyes. There is a knock on the door. Ragıp is being called upon for the ceremony at school. Ragıp doesn’t want to go, he has other things to do –such as finding his stolen letter. Then Ferit interrupts his silence saying that he will take Ragıp to the ceremony.

Ferit and Ragıp walk by the pharmacy. Zeynep is on the stairs, trying to reach the upper shelves. Ragıp decides to use his grandfather as a spy to find out whether Zeynep got the letter, he sends Ferit in saying that he didn’t pay for his care yesterday. As Ferit talks to Zeynep, Ragıp is secretly looking inside. When they get out, he questions Ferit about Zeynep’s behavior. Mission accomplished: Zeynep does not have the letter.
The wind blows, unintelligible words blend into the wind.

A knock on the door. Zeynep wakes up. It’s Celal, asking for the flowers – foreign teacher has arrived. Zeynep hands them back sadly. Her alarm just goes off.

There is the Sunday morning quiet in the streets. She looks out of the window. The small cat struggling to get out of the garbage container gets her attention. She watches it for a while. She prepares breakfast in the kitchen for Celal and herself. On the radio, someone sends a song to newly wed friends. Zeynep turns off the radio; puts the remaining bread crumbs into the aquarium in the living room. One of her fish is dead.

Zeynep walks out into the street. On her way, she sees the teahouse-boy. “Sister Zeynep, when is the journey?” Then the old telltale of the district calls out from the window: “She’s not leaving, right my bride?” Zeynep walks away.

Zeynep opens the pharmacy. It’s the day to take inventory of the medicines. She begins counting the boxes on the shelves.

VOLKAN (29), from the city, works in a medical company, arrives once every two months for inventory. After a hesitant greeting, they begin to go through the list with Zeynep.

The school headmaster rushes into his son Ahmet’s room and wakes him up. The foreign teacher has arrived and they need someone to speak English. After having sent Ahmet for years to school in their neighboring county, he assumes that Ahmet’s English must be good. Ahmet cannot say no.

Julia has fallen asleep in her hotel room, the curtains drawn, her backpack open, and wearing the first pieces of clothing that she has pulled out of her suitcase. There is a knock on the door. At the second knocking, she gets up, grumbling. Ahmet and the school headmaster are at the door. The headmaster speaks Turkish for a while, and then turns to Ahmet for translation. Ahmet, with much effort, gets out a few words. Julia answers in French; Ahmet doesn’t understand a word. His father gets very angry, and begins to scold Ahmet. Julia shuts the door. The headmaster knocks on the door again, and tries to tell her that she has to come to school. Julia, having already allowed the day to lead where it will, prepares to go out. The headmaster punishes his son Ahmet: He is to show Julia around the whole day, and practice his language as well. Ahmet is now to accompany a complete stranger throughout the day he was supposed to run away with his girl.

Ahmet, with Julia’s suitcase in his hands, is taking her to the teachers’ lodgings. There is no conversation between them.

Ahmet and Julia walk by the teahouse. Ahmet asks the teahouse-boy about the letter. The boy says he has delivered it. He has knocked on Gülbaşar’s window, and handed the letter to her, he says. When he gets out of the teahouse, Ahmet sees the boy’s motorcycle. There is no mud on the tires. However, the road to the village is always muddy at this time of the year. When he questions the boy a little more strictly, Ahmet realized that the boy is lying. He gets the letter back; read. Half threateningly, Ahmet tells the boy to keep his mouth shut. All the while, Eğinli and Tuzsuz are sitting in the garden of the teahouse; and as Eğinli sleeps, Tuzsuz is trying to converse with Julia.
Town’s school. A middle sized courtyard, very clean, and decorated with flags, as if expecting an inspector from the city. The parents are around, a few kids in uniforms run around in the schoolyard. Ragıp and Ferit enter the garden. The news about Saniye has already spread across the whole town.

SEVĞİ (7), the daughter of the electrician from the village, petite and in a dirty dress, comes to school with his father. The electrician is needed, because the headmaster cannot make the microphone work. Meanwhile, a boy repeats Ragıp’s words from the letter and makes fun of him. “Your eyes are better for me than the sun.” Ragıp gets serious and silences the boy by threatening to tell his mother what he had done to the girls during PE, and then questions him. The boy has not seen the letter; he has only heard from others. He doesn’t know who has the letter. Sevgi is witnessing the scene from a distance. Then she walks up to Ragıp and straightens his tilted neck-tie of his uniform. They begin to chat until Ahmet and Julia shows up. On Ahmet’s entering the garden, she suddenly walks away. Sevgi is in love with Ahmet.

Ahmet and Julia enter the school garden; the school headmaster looks as if welcoming the president of a foreign country who is just stepping out of his aircraft. Julia walks towards the center of the garden. She looks at the students standing in lines before her. “I don’t understand, what is this?” she asks. The kids answer in chorus: “THANK YOU!” The national anthem begins.

Sneaky woman gazes Celal and Julia with bad intentions.

At the school garden, the ceremony is over.

Ferit grasps Ragıp’s hand and interrupts the silence. They are to go visit an old friend. They will visit Saniye. Ragıp doesn’t want to go; he still has to find the letter. His grandfather, despite all his excuses, is determined to drag Ragıp along with him. Meanwhile, Sevgi is begging her father to let her stay in town. While Ragıp and Ferit pass by them, she says that she will play with Ragıp and Ferit could keep an eye on them. She signs at Ragıp and gets him to say yes. Her father doesn’t want to give permission at first. But Sevgi gets the permission by blackmailing him that she will tell her mother about the sweets he sneaks from the fridge at night. Promising to be in the village before sunset, Sevgi walks along with Ferit and Ragıp. And as soon as her father’s car is out of sight, she leaves Ferit and Ragıp and sets to find Ahmet in the school building.

Ferit and Ragıp get to walking. As they are passing by the teahouse, Himhm and Eğinli jump up. They come up to them. Ferit is set on visiting Saniye. He will take Ragıp with him as well, and show him whom the town and village did not allow his grandmother to be. Pulling his hand away from Ferit’s, Ragıp gets away. So is Tuzsuz.

Sneaky woman walks into the pharmacy, and while she speaks she implies slyly that Celal is flirting with the foreign teacher, and then she leaves. Zeynep tries to remain calm for a while. She cannot re-concentrate on work. A short while later, she trusts the shop to Volkan, and heads towards the school.

The school committee is showing Julia around. Zeynep enters the building and goes upstairs. She sees Julia and Ahmet. Zeynep approaches Ahmet and asks for Celal. He has left already.
Zeynep returns to the pharmacy and watches Volkan from outside the shop as he works with full concentration. She leaves.

Zeynep sits calmly and thoughtfully on a bench at a deserted street. The wind blows, trees sway. The words in the wind hit her in the face as an incomprehensible murmur.

Volkan finishes the job at the pharmacy as Zeynep comes in. Volkan walks out towards his car. A formal good-bye and Volkan leaves. Zeynep heads home.

While driving, Volkan notices something next to the road and steps out.

A knock on the door at Zeynep’s. It’s Volkan. Tense, he asks her out for a walk. Zeynep rejects, stating that it will be inappropriate in the eyes of the townspeople. He let the real reason out. He saw Celal with another girl.

Julia and Ahmet leave the school building to walk around town, accompanied by a crowd. Upon seeing the crowd, people on the street stop them and are overcurious about Julia. Julia loses her nerve, and getting angry with people, starts talking back at them rudely in her own language. As the crowd moves along, Tuzsuz interrupts and causes trouble. While the crowd tries to get him under control, Julia attempts to get away. Her eyes meet Ahmet’s. Ahmet allows her to go. As the crowd looks around, both Julia and Ahmet are missing.

As Ahmet rushes to the teahouse, he sees Sevgi sitting on a wall. As he learns that Sevgi is all by herself, he promises to arrange her ride back to the village. Sevgi is very happy.

Ahmet goes to the teahouse. He borrows the teahouse-boy’s motorbike and stops at Mahmut’s. Mahmut is out on the hill.

Ahmet arrives and confronts Mahmut. He needs a car for tonight to run away with Gülbahtar. First, Mahmut takes it as a joke. As he sees that Ahmet is serious, he asserts that Gülbahtar is not worth it but still he can arrange a car if needed. He advises not to become like Ferit.

Ahmet, riding slowly with the bike, sees Ferit walking towards the village. Wind blows words to his ear. Thoughtful, Ahmet goes his way. A little further, he stops again, looks at Ferit who is a little behind, and having lost his nerve, he decides to go back to town.

Ragıp, having escaped from Ferit, reaches the place where the ceremony was held the day before. He begins looking around on the ground. He searches for his letter. Beside a tree, he finds the envelope of the letter. It bears traces of a little kid’s dirty hands.

As Ragıp walks with the envelope in his hands, he sees Sevgi on the corner of a street. Sevgi watches Ahmet from a distance. As Julia sneaks away from the crowd, Ahmet walks in the other direction. Sevgi begins to follow him secretly; taking Ragıp along with her.

Sevgi sits on the wall; puts on lipstick and waits for Ahmet’s arrival. Ahmet enters the street and sees Sevgi. As he learns that she’s alone in town, he promises to arrange her ride back to the village. As Ahmet leaves, Ragıp appears from behind the wall. Sevgi is very happy. Now she can go wherever Ragıp takes her.
Ragıp shows the letter to a nerdy kid who suggests that the letter was taken by one of the soccer kids from yesterday’s big tournament. Wind blows. At that moment Sevgi sees Ahmet at a distance, riding away from the town. She runs after him; Ragıp follows Sevgi. They cannot catch Ahmet; he drives away.

Ragıp tries to cheer Sevgi up. Together they go to the public bakery to learn more from the betting boy about the yesterday’s soccer tournament; No luck. But Sevgi has already stolen a bread from the counter.

Zeynep and Volkan enter the wrecked house. Celal is not there. Zeynep is not even sure whether Celal was there earlier. They stay silent for a while.

Zeynep goes up on the second floor. She looks at the wall covered with memories from the past with Celal, when they often visited this place for some peace. Volkan joins her upstairs. Suddenly they hear voices from downstairs.

Meanwhile, Celal learns from the neighbor of Zeynep that she is out with a guy. At the wrecked house, two youngsters from town have met in secret and are flirting with each other. Volkan and Zeynep are hiding behind the door, trying not to laugh. They sneak away without getting noticed. They run away from the wrecked house, laughing. Together, they begin to walk towards the pharmacy.

On the way to the pharmacy, they come across Celal. His face turns pale as he hears they were at the wrecked house. Zeynep leaves. Celal follows him. Volkan stays behind.

Celal follows Zeynep, as she walks home. Celal tries to prevent a quarrel in front of the townspeople that makes Zeynep get angrier. Zeynep tells Celal that the townspeople is going to either force them to get married or separate. “Then marry me, Zeynep”.

Meanwhile, Ragıp and Sevgi turn the corner and end up in front of them. Zeynep leaves without an answer. Ragıp runs away.

Ahmet gets to the teahouse. He returns the bike to its place without telling the teahouse-boy. Walking around in deep thought, he discovers Julia walking with her shoes off in the middle of the river that runs across town. He watches her for a while from a distance. He goes up to her. They begin walking around together without understanding a word of what they say at one another.

Julia begins to walk around in the courtyard of the mosque. Meanwhile, the imam of the mosque is preaching to Ahmet, telling him to restrain the fever of his youth. If he were to follow these advices, Ahmet would not only have to give up his love for Gülbahar, but also to take his eyes off of Julia who sways before him in graceful sexuality. Julia climbs up to the bridge on the river at the end of the yard. Ahmet walks up to her. They both watch a flirting young couple in the distance, and pour out their sorrows in their own languages, as if expecting the other to understand. The things they talk about turn out to resemble each other more and more.

Julia and Ahmet, who have left the bridge and gone to a nearby restaurant, eat with everyone’s curious eyes set upon them. At one point Ahmet dreams that he is eating together with Gülbahar instead of Julia. All the while, there are many things the restaurant patrons want to know about Julia. While the forced interpreter Ahmet makes up the questions and the answer, Julia, though she cannot understand what is being
spoken, understands what is going on, and laughs at Ahmet’s situation. As they leave the restaurant, the wind is blowing words from the letter to their ears.

Ragıp and Sevgi watch kids playing soccer, from the corner of the street. They divide the labor among them, and lie in ambush. When the kids’ ball rolls to the end of the street, Sevgi grabs the ball and runs away. One of the kids runs after the ball; Ragıp catches the boy in the street and threatens to paint the boy’s face red. His instrument of crime is a red lipstick Sevgi has taken out of her pocket. They find out who has the letter: Bekir the Bastard.

Ragıp and Sevgi run right to the stairs zigzagging to the top of the Victory Tower, located on a hilltop in town. They aim to spot Bekir the Bastard from the tower. Ragıp, viewing the town from above, recognizes Zeynep with Volkan and Celal in one of the streets, and getting all excited, he forgets about Sevgi and begins to run down. Sevgi follows him unhurriedly.

Running down the zigzag stairs, Ragıp meets his father. His father is looking for Ferit. Meanwhile, Sevgi has caught up with Ragıp; and is continuing to walk down the stairs without waiting for him. Ragıp tells his father that Ferit has gone to visit somebody in the village and runs after Sevgi. But Sevgi ignores him. Ragıp manages to make it up with her, by promising her ice-cream. Together, they go after Zeynep.

As Ragıp and Sevgi turn the corner, they witness Celal’s marriage proposal to Zeynep. As Ragıp hears those words, he runs away. Sevgi follows Zeynep to her home and sees that Zeynep doesn’t answer Celal’s proposal. She goes after Ragıp and brings him back. They climb up to the roof across Zeynep’s house and begin watching inside.

Zeynep sits at home thoughtfully. Volkan knocks at her door. Zeynep does not answer at first. Volkan leaves a note under the door. Right then, she opens the door and catches Volkan in her hallway.

Volkan and Zeynep eat silently in the living room.
Volkan leaves the house. Zeynep is alone. Soon, the doorbell rings.
Meanwhile, Ragıp and Sevgi are on the roof of the house across Zeynep’s. Volkan leaves Zeynep’s house. Sevgi insists that Ragıp must seize the opportunity to talk to Zeynep and drags him to Zeynep’s door.

Sevgi rings the bell and hides away. Zeynep opens the door. Ragıp cannot find the words to say. He runs down the stairs and Sevgi rushes after him… Zeynep looks at Sevgi and Ragıp running away together in the street from the window, she smiles… The wind blows some words to her. She gets herself together and leaves the house.

She catches Volkan getting ready to leave in his car. Together they drive away from the town. They step out and begin to walk towards the hills.

Zeynep and Volkan have reached the river where the mountain road begins. Zeynep takes out her shoes and crosses the river rapidly. Volkan has barely stepped in. As she waits for him, she tells him that Celal proposed her. Volkan looses his balance for a brief moment.

Julia and Ahmet are on top of the Victory Tower and enjoying the view. The school crowd approaches. At last they have found Julia. She asks Ahmet to come up with something to get rid of them. “She says she will throw herself off if you don’t leave.” he says. As if she understood him, she acts that way. The crowd clears off quickly out of
fear.

The wind blows. Julia tells Ahmet she wants to get away from the town. In a town to which she has come by a whim, she finds everyone overwhelming her. They go to the teahouse-boy to get his motorbike.

**THE TRIP TO THE VILLAGE**

Ragıp and Sevgi run out of Zeynep’s building after ringing the bell. They stop at the end of the street. They are laughing, and gasping. Suddenly, Sevgi remembers what she had promised her father; it must be late. She says she has to leave urgently. “Okay” says Ragıp, confused. Sevgi says that she can find the way, and sets out to return. Ragıp is left alone.

As Sevgi is on the way out of the town, Ragıp begins to walk around by himself. Sevgi is in front of the photography shop’s window, trying to imitate the posture of the girl in the photo. Ragıp with ice cream in his hand, returning from the grocery, he sees Bekir the Bastard on the way. He hides out in a corner, and begins to watch him closely. Then he runs to the path leading out of the town and finds Sevgi. He has a plan to get the letter from Bekir the Bastard and needs Sevgi’s help.

Ragıp walks towards Bekir. When he sees Ragıp approaching, Bekir begins to make fun of him. Ragıp stands in front of him and asks for the letter. Bekir laughs, how dare Ragıp? In an instant, Bekir’s gang gathers around them. Sevgi slips in, and without anyone’s noticing, she slips her lipstick into Bekir’s pocket. Ragıp leans over to Bekir and whispers in his ear that he knows there is a lipstick in his pocket and if he doesn’t give the letter back, he will tell everyone. Bekir reaches into his pocket. He finds the lipstick, and does not dare take it out. Puzzled and bothered, he takes the letter out of his other pocket and hands it to Ragıp. Ragıp and Sevgi first march away victoriously, then they begin running with all their might.

Next to the river, Volkan and Zeynep wait for their clothes to get dry. Volkan seems thoughtful as Zeynep talks about Celal’s proposal in detail.

They continue to the woods and find a calm spot to rest. Volkan tells her that he knows she is lying by saying her mother is asking her to return to the city. It’s her who wants to go away from town, else there’s no way out other than marrying Celal. Distressed from his questions, Zeynep hushes Volkan. She wants to go back.

Julia is hanging on to Ahmet, and together they are getting away from the town on the teahouse-boy’s motorbike. Ahmet stops where the road to the village begins. Julia, as if understanding what is on Ahmet’s mind, gives her consent to go to the village. They take the road to the village.

The village lies in the distance. Ahmet leaves the motorbike by a tree. Going up the steep hill, Julia needs Ahmet’s help from time to time. Talking to each other in their own languages, the two of them now quite comfortably understand each other.

Entrance of the village. Patchily built houses lay along the rough path. Some of the youngsters of the village have seen them from afar and are waiting for them at the entrance of the village. Ahmet tells Julia to wait and goes up to them. “The new school teacher wants to see the village.” he says. However it’s not Julia but Ahmet that they have a problem with. Julia doesn’t like the way the villagers act towards Ahmet. She walks
up to them, and begins to walk on with Ahmet. The villagers come up to them and annoy Ahmet. The village youth with them, Ahmet and Julia walk towards Gülbahtar’s house. An old woman of the village also joins them as they pass her by. First she is kind to Julia; then she turns to Ahmet and begins grunting at him. As they pass by Gülbahtar’s house, Ahmet glances cautiously at the door. Julia is insistently asking Ahmet why the villagers are treating him this way. As she cannot get her answer, she gets angry with Ahmet and starts yelling at him. While trying to help Ahmet, she is actually laying bare her own relationship in her mind. At the end, she gets out of control because of the insistence of the old woman and yells out loud. Ahmet tries to calm her.

Ahmet and Julia sit, without talking, on a rock facing the point where the village ends. Far away, Ragıp and Sevgi are approaching the village.

Ahmet takes the letter out of his pocket and lets it fly away. The letter lands on the rock. Julia stands up; reaches for the letter and gives a hand to Ahmet. She begins walking towards the village. And Ahmet after her… Sevgi witnessed everything from a distance and is very upset.

Ragıp and Sevgi walk out of town; they hitch a ride on a truck and get on it. They get off at a point near the village, and begin walking the rough path. “Last one in is a rotten egg!” Ragıp is still holding the letter tightly in his hand. Sevgi walks fast before him. The village appears in the distance.

Sevgi sees Ahmet and Julia sitting on a rock and freezes. Is the man she is to get married to cheating on her with the new teacher from the first day? When Julia gets up, Ahmet follows her. Sevgi is quick to start following them. And of course, Ragıp follows Sevgi…

Ragıp and Sevgi catch up with Julia at a point nearby Gülbahtar’s house and continue to walk with them. Julia knocks on Gülbahtar’s door. Ahmet is worried. Gülbahtar’s father opens the door. Julia undertakes the teacher role for the first time and says that she would like to meet Gülbahtar as his daughter is still at the age to attend school. Ahmet is expected to translate. Ahmet makes up similar sentences. Gülbahtar’s father listens to both; then turns to Sevgi, who has caught up and is standing before the door, if what has been said is true. Sevgi catches Gülbahtar’s eyes, from where she has been standing inside the house and listening to the conversation. ‘Yes’ she says, and walks away. Ragıp follows her.

Julia, Ahmet and Gülbahtar, who is now allowed to join them with her father’s permission, walk towards the edge of the village. Julia hands the letter to Ahmet, and leaves them alone.

SANİYE’S HOUSE

Towards the edge of the village, Julia sees a house even more ruined than the others. Old Ferit is walking towards it. Ferit jumps over the dog curled up at the door, and steps into the house. Julia slowly approaches the house. She enters the garden of the house that is covered with newspaper on the side, and looks in through the window.
Ferit slowly opens the door to the ruined house. SANİYE (73), who has the whitest of skin, is sleeping in the next room. Ferit enters the room quietly and looks around. Old photographs hang from the ruined walls of the dusty room. He goes up to Saniye, and sits on the bed. Ferit holds Saniye’s hand. Saniye wakes up and looks at Ferit for a while. ’been 60 years, my dear Saniye’.

The two old people begin talking about the past. Ferit puts his finger on the life line in the palm of his hand. “We met right here, do you remember?”

As Julia watches them behind the other window, they talk about the first time they met. Meanwhile Ragıp is trying in every way to cheer Sevgi up. Finally he succeeds and the two kids begin to joke around with each other. Together they begin to run downhill. They laugh out loud.

Right then, Ferit takes out the letter that he wrote to Saniye years ago and that had returned the night he had sent it. Saniye has never seen the letter before; she begins to read it.

As Saniye reads the letter, Ahmet and Gülbahar are sitting silently on the rock at the end of the village. Ahmet takes out the letter from his pocket. Holds it out to Gülbahar. Gülbahar reads. Then She looks up at Ahmet and smiles at him. She nods her head in approval.

Gülbahar goes away. One of the villagers sees them together.

As Saniye finishes the letter and tells about what has happened to her, Volkan and Zeynep are back to the river. As they pass it together, Zeynep holds Volkan’s hand and gives him a slight kiss.

The day Ferit would come to run away with her, her father had taken her away to another town. Saniye tells about the new life she built in the other town; but that she had come back to the village years ago. She had learned that Ferit had a family as well, so she had not gone to town, not to distract his happiness.

“Others prevented us from being happy together. But we found happiness in others, didn’t we” says Saniye and she slowly rips the letter up and lets the pieces into the wind. Julia, who is still watching the couple through the window, looks behind the flying pieces. The wind slowly carries the pieces of paper far away. The pieces travel past meadows, the river. And by the time it gets dark, they reach town.

AND THE CEREMONY TAKES PLACE

The school headmaster announces tonight’s celebration. As the announcement continues through the speakers, Ahmet is making the final arrangements with Mahmut over the car.

As the announcement continues, Zeynep talks with her mother on the phone. “I have a news for you, mom.”. Zeynep draws the shutters. ‘For Rent’ sign is hanging next to the door. Celal, from a distance -enough for him to read the sign- watches Zeynep walk away.

As the announcement continues, Ragıp sits on the wall, holding the letter victoriously. He tears the letter into pieces and let them fly away.

Julia arrives to the square, there’s a big cheer. Zeynep, Ragıp and Ahmet are also there along with the townspeople. Julia calls them to dance.
Julia notices Marco. He is standing at a distance from the crowd, deadpan. She walks up to him. With no one noticing, the two lovers walk away.

Zeynep leaves the square. As she walks along the road, Ahmet drives past her. Someone approaches Zeynep, carrying a huge luggage. It’s teacher Emily.

The wind blows. The confettis rise into the air. Pieces of Ferit’s letter start raining down on the town square. Townspeople start catching and reading the pieces of the letter. Those who discover the letter’s pieces stop dancing.

The wind whispers Ferit’s letter in the townspeople’s ears.

“It is said that in the old days, the wind used to blow happiness in our faces.”

THE END
APPENDIX D: Character Sheet
HANDFUL OF FATE - MAIN CHARACTERS

(grouped according to plot relations)

ZEYNEP(28)
VOLKAN(30)
CELAL(29)

RAGIP (8)
SEVGİ (7)

AHMET (18)
JULIA(32)  (SPEAKS FRENCH THE WHOLE TIME)
GÜLBAHAR(16)

FERİT(75)
SANİYE (73)
HIMHİM, EĞİNLİ, TUZSUZ

THE WIND
## TOTAL PRODUCTION BUDGET SUMMARY

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### GRAND TOTAL $941,811.13
## TOTAL PRODUCTION BUDGET

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### F  PRE-PRODUCTION STAFF

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**Total Pre-Production Staff:** $122,352.00

### G  PRODUCTION STAFF

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**Total Production Staff:** $28,896.00

### H  CAST

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**Total Cast:** $3,000.00

### I  ART/SET DESIGN/PROPS

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**Total Art/Set Design/Props:** $39,168.00

### J  PICTURE VEHICLES

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**Total Picture Vehicles:** $48,920.00

### I  SET OPERATIONS

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### O SOUND

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### P TRANSPORTATION

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### Q LOCATION

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### R ACCOMODATION

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### S LIVING EXPENSES

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### T FILM & LAB

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<td>150 pcs</td>
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**Total Cost:** **$154,808.00**
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<th>Unit Cost</th>
<th>Total Cost (TL)</th>
<th>Total Cost ($)</th>
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APPENDIX F: Location Photos
HANDFUL OF FATE – LOCATION PHOTOS

TOWN
STREETS
TOWN ENTRANCE

TOWN SQUARE
WRECKED HOUSE

TOWN MOSQUE AND THE BRIDGES
VILLAGE
SANIYE’S HOUSE
APPENDIX G: Financial Plan
HANDFUL OF FATE - FINANCIAL PLAN FOR DEV. AND PRODUCTION

Confirmed Sponsor for the script development:
TEVERLER TEKSTIL provided €5,000,00.

Sponsor Meetings:
Single meetings with major companies, July.08-Apr.09

Fundraising Meetings:
Single and group meetings with major companies, Aug.08-Apr.09

Turkish Ministry of Culture Film Fund Application,
Pending application for script development phase
Grant application Feb.09 (date to be confirmed)

Balkan Fund Application
Pending application for project development phase

Eurasia Production Platform
Pending application for script development for the meeting in Oct. 08

Production Equipment and Facilities Meetings:
Negotiations for discounts at major production companies, Jun.08-Jun.09

Eurimages Application, TBA

Fundraising Parties and Concerts:
At interested bars, Jan.09-Jun.09

Personal/Family/Company Investments:
1/10 of the production budget.

Bank Loan:
If necessary, up to the 1/5 of the production budget.

Cast and Crew Meetings:
If necessary, negotiating the contracts of the cast and crew to be paid after theatrical release / in case of profit