

Tvá Kamila

by

Erin Bregman

Erin Bregman
304A Precita Ave
San Francisco, CA 94110

831.295.9788
erinbregman@gmail.com

CHARACTERS

KAMILA STOSSLOVA A young jewish woman, 20's-30's, and mostly always happy, if undereducated.

STOSSEL Kamila's husband, 20's-30's. A dealer in antiques, with military connections. A polish jew.

LEOS JANACEK A Czech Opera composer with a recently acquired international reputation, and a history of infidelity. 60's-70's.

ZDENKA Janacek's wife, 50's-60's. Mostly bitter, though was an optimist in her youth.

SETTING

The Janacek home in Brno, Moravia; The Stossel home in Pisek, Moravia; The Woods..

TIME

1917-1928.

NOTE

All characters and events are based on the string quartet "Intimate Letters" by Leos Janacek, and the more than 700 letters written between himself and Kamila Stosslova during the last ten years of his life. Scene Titles are displayed above, like supertitles in an Opera.

DISCLAIMER

This is not a biography play. Though events and characters are based in history, the play is not meant to be an accurate documentation of what really happened.

PROLOGUE

(All dark. The voice of a six year old girl plays on a record. She speaks in Czech. What she says is translated into English above, like super titles in an Opera.)

GIRL ON RECORD

When you hold them together, they're not the same.
Don't you think this one looks bigger?
I think this one looks bigger.
Maybe that's the one I should be learning to write
with instead.
Do you think it would make me a better writer to use
the big one, or the little one?
I bet the bigger one is stronger.
Does a finger have to be stronger to write well?
Do you think?
Does it?
Do you write pretty things because of big hands?
Maybe small hands and the tiny fingers write the
prettiest things, and the biggest hands with the
strongest fingers write the stronger things.
Do you think?
Maybe I can experiment.
Maybe,
do you think,
if I do one picture with the big one, and one with the
small one, the small one would be pretty and the big
one would be strong?
Can I try it?
Do you think?
Do you think that's how it works?

(The record ends. We see Leos and Zdenka standing together at the edge of an empty, unmade bed. The record player skips back, and begins playing the Girl's Voice again, from somewhere in the middle.)

(As the record repeats a second time, Leos and Zdenka part, and make the bed slowly, together, from opposite sides. It is hard to look at each other, so

they mostly don't.)

(The record ends. It skips back to the same place in the middle, and plays through a third time.)

(As the record repeats, Zdenka keeps making the already made bed, though there is nothing left to do.)

(Leos watches her, then sits at a piano that is in the same little room. All he can do is look at the keys. There is nothing left in the world worth playing.)

(The record ends. It skips back to the same place in the middle, and plays through for a fourth time.)

(Zdenka keeps untucking and re-tucking corners of the same bed. Leos begins to tap out a rhythm on the wood of the piano. It takes on the same rhythm as the pattern of the Girl's speech. By the time the record ends, he is tapping along to her speech rhythm perfectly.)

(The record ends. It skips back to a slightly different place in the middle, and plays through for a fifth time.)

(Zdenka begins to straighten other parts of the room, touching the bed less and less and less. Leos begins to transition from imitating the rhythm of the speech, to imitating it on the piano with both rhythm and melody. He follows the intonation of the voice with his notes perfectly.)

(The record ends. It doesn't skip back to play anything else.)

(Zdenka leaves the room for the kitchen, and begins working to prepare

dinner. Leos plays the exact rhythm and intonation of the Girl's Voice on his piano. At the end, he picks up pen and paper, and records the notes and rhythm, with maybe a note played here and a note played there to remind him.)

(The only sounds are pots in the kitchen, and Leos's pen as he writes out the last speech-melody of their last child.)

THIS WAS HIS LIFE BEFORE THEY MET

(Zdenka and Leos at the dinner table. He eats in peace. She stabs every bite with unbridled fury.)

ZDENKA

So you admit it then.

LEOS

Zdenka, I never had any pretension of hiding it from you.

ZDENKA

No. You wouldn't have thought to do me the courtesy.

LEOS

Would you rather I lie to you?

ZDENKA

I'd rather you didn't make me the laughingstock of the world.

LEOS

Hardly the whole world, Zdenka. Don't flatter yourself.

ZDENKA

The whole of My world, Leos. My world. I don't care if the Queen of England knows, but if everyone from here to Prague is talking about it, that makes it enough to call it the world for me.

LEOS

What bothers you more, my infidelity, or your
tarnished reputation.
Which bothers you.

(beat)

LEOS

If it's the infamy and not the infidelity, I'll be
sure and tell only you next time.

ZDENKA

Do you have someone else already in line then?
It's disgusting. At 64, Leos?
Any self-respecting man would have grown out of that a
long time ago.
I suppose the fame has gone to your head at last.

LEOS

I would give it up in an instant for peace in this
house.

ZDENKA

It's not me who's broken the peace, Leos.
It's not me who's gone and made a fool of themselves
by-

LEOS

No thanks to your support, Zdenka.
Id you had come to the theater that evening, it might
not have happened at all.

ZDENKA

Oh, don't-
By my absence I'm now responsible for-

LEOS

Nothing.
I've said nothing.
I will keep the peace.
I'm going back to work.

THIS IS HOW HE REMEMBERS MEETING HER

(A backyard garden, with several

benches, sparsely populated by summer resort residents. Kamila sits on one bench, reading a book. She is on the verge of laughter. Leos sits on the other end of her bench, empty-handed, and on the verge of despair.)

(Kamila turns a page, and chuckles. Leos notices her, and is half annoyed, half envious. Kamila bursts out laughing.)

LEOS

Is it really
That funny?

KAMILA

I'm sorry. I'll be quiet. You were trying to think,
weren't you.

LEOS

I'd rather laugh.
What are you reading?

(She holds up the cover of her book so
he can read the title.)

LEOS

I don't know it.
What's the story?

KAMILA

Oh, it's just some silly romance novel. Nothing
brilliant or serious or anything.

LEOS

Then why read it?

KAMILA

I like to laugh.
Why read about serious things when we already have to
spend so much of our lives being serious? If you can't
escape it, it drags you down.
No, I'd much rather spend my leisure time reading
silly romance novels and laughing than getting bogged
down and depressed by the big classics. Wouldn't you?

(Leos grins, and Kamila bursts out laughing.)

KAMILA

I can tell right now that isn't how you see it at all, is it?

LEOS

No. It isn't.

KAMILA

So which is it? That you don't like romance books, or you don't like laughing?

(Kamila laughs at the idea of not liking laughing. Leos chuckles.)

LEOS

I think I'm much too serious a person to find my way into either.

KAMILA

Well you're no fun at all then.

LEOS

No. I'm not.

KAMILA

Tell me. What occupies the lives of serious people like yourself?

LEOS

Operas and Symphonies, mostly.

KAMILA

Operas and Symphonies?

LEOS

Yes. I write them.

(Kamila laughs)

KAMILA

And I've never been to a single one. Can you believe that?

I haven't know you two minutes and I'm already embarrassed.

I'm Mrs. Stosslova. Kamila Stosslova

LEOS

Janacek. Leos Janacek.
Perhaps you're heard of my work, even if you haven't
heard it?

KAMILA

No, Maestro Janacek.
I can't say that I have.

CONVERSATIONS ABOUT HAVING ANOTHER: ONE

(Leos and Zdenka sit at the kitchen
table together, drinking tea)

ZDENKA

Leos, I've been thinking.

LEOS

Hm.

ZDENKA

In these next few years,
As long as we do it in the next few years, we could
try again.

(Leos drinks)

ZDENKA

Have another.

(Leos drinks)

ZDENKA

I've been thinking, and-

LEOS

Not yet.

(Leos drinks)

LEOS

Too soon.
I think, maybe later.
That could be nice.

(Leos drinks)

LEOS

But not just yet.

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME HIS WIFE HEARS HER NAME

(Leos comes home after a long vacation.
Suitcase, traveling cloak, the works.
It is summer.)

LEOS

Zdenka?
Zdenka!
Hello!

(Zdenka enters)

ZDENKA

I thought you weren't getting back until tomorrow.

LEOS

Change of plans.
Have we got enough food for four tonight?

ZDENKA

Maybe. Why.

LEOS

I've invited guests. New friends. From the spa. A
beautiful and fascinating young woman,

ZDENKA

Not in my own home, Leos!

(He laughs at her)

LEOS

Oh no!
It isn't like that at all.
Mrs. Kamila Stosslova, and her husband. They are
deeply, deeply in love. They love each other so much,
I fell in love with them. It was contagious. I
couldn't help it.
You'll like her, and I wanted her to meet you so
they're coming. She's a sweet young thing, laughs and
laughs. Never a dull moment, you'll see.

And the husband, very courteous man. An officer in the army. He's arranging for us to get regular shipments of flour. I thought you'd like that. Other things too, as we need it, every month.

They're coming by the six o'clock train, I told them I'd meet them at the station and bring them here. I promise you'll like them. It isn't anything like that, so put it out of your head. They're very much in love, you won't be able to do anything but smile when you see it. So run to the store if you need to, there will be four of us tonight.

THE FIRST TIME HE IS GONE FOR WORK, SHE MISSES HIM TERRIBLY

(Stossel and Kamila at home, by their front door. Same space as the home of Leos and Zdenka. Maybe the couch pillows are a different color. Maybe the light comes from different places. Whatever it is, it is almost identical, but younger and more alive)

(Stossel and Kamila at home, by their front door. Same space as the home of Leos and Zdenka. Maybe the couch pillows are a different color. Maybe the light comes from different places. Whatever it is, it is almost identical, but younger and more alive.)

(Stossel in a Uniform and Coat. A packed bag sits next to him. Kamila cries silently.)

STOSSEL

I'll be back.

(He kisses her)

STOSSEL

Soon.

(He kisses her)

STOSSEL

I will miss you.

(He kisses her)

KAMILA

I miss you already.

(He kisses her)

KAMILA

Will you write?

(He kisses her)

STOSSEL

Every day.

KAMILA

Will you think of me?

(He kisses her)

STOSSEL

With every breath.

(He kisses her.)

KAMILA

What should I do?

STOSSEL

Write.

(kiss)

Think.

(kiss)

Breathe.

(kiss)

I'll be back before you know it.

(He kisses her one last time, picks up his suitcase, and leaves.)

(Kamila alone in the house. It is quiet. She closes the door. She goes into the kitchen, and puts on water for tea.)

(She opens an envelope with a record inside, and puts it on. The voice of Stossel.)

VOICE OF STOSSEL

Kamila.

Dear Kamila.

My dearest Kamilka.

It wasn't until I was on the train that I fully realized I would be away from you.

I never liked the idea of it, but the reality is already worse.

Outside it is snowing, and I think I must have forgotten my scarf at home when leaving you.

May it keep you warm in my absence.

Ty, Stossel.

(As the record plays, Kamila opens a book, and looks at it without reading a thing. She closes it.)

(Kamila goes to the coat rack, and finds Stossel's forgotten scarf. She smells it, then puts it on and smells it again. The record ends.)

(Wrapped in the scarf, still smelling it, Kamila goes into the kitchen and finishes making tea.)

THE FIRST TIME THE WOMEN MEET, HIS WIFE LIKES HER IMMEDIATELY

(Leos upstairs in the study, playing music phrases for Stossel, who sits on the edge of the bed listening, rapt.)

(Downstairs, Kamila and Zdenka are in the kitchen. Zdenka works to prepare dinner. Kamila perches on a chair in front of her tea, looking at everything.)

KAMILA

Are you sure there's nothing I can do to help?

I don't mind.

I'd rather be put to use as a guest than sit around getting in the way.

ZDENKA

No no, you're not in the way at all!
Sit back, drink your tea.
There really isn't that much to do anyway.

KAMILA

Allright.

(She drinks her tea)

KAMILA

Don't hesitate to ask, if anything does come up.

ZDENKA

It's very kind of you to offer.
Thank you.

KAMILA

THank you for having us.
I know it's all very surprising and last minute and probably terribly inconvenient timing to have us show up like this just hours after your husband returns from his trip, but he Insisted.
And Pleaded.
And practically Begged us to come right over before our trip home so that we could meet you.
And I must say, I'm glad he did!
You two have a wonderful home here.

ZDENKA

Did he tell you much about me then?

KAMILA

Oh yes! Great things!

ZDENKA

And you're sure it was me?
I was under the impression when he left that he was doing his best not to think of me at all.
Are you sure he wasn't mistaking me for that Other Woman?

KAMILA

Her?

No, definitely not.

I read all about that in the paper actually, before I met your husband, and believe me if he had ever mentioned that Other Woman when I knew full well you were here alone, I would have turned and walked away right then and never spoken to him again.

ZDENKA

Well, I'm glad to know the man has some small amount of decency left.

KAMILA

It was
My wife this,
And Zdenka that,
And pretty much all praises for you, though I can see you don't believe a word I'm saying, do you?

ZDENKA

I do find it pretty difficult to believe, to tell you the truth.
Before he left, it was Her this, and Her that.
No shame. He had none!
He would talk about her in front of me,
He would even bring her to the house.
When I was here!

KAMILA

How awful!

ZDENKA

More than awful.
And I was forced to receive her.
As a Guest.

KAMILA

What did you do?

ZDENKA

What could I do?
I made them tea, and I sat, and I talked, and I willed her to leave as soon as possible.

KAMILA

How you've suffered!

ZDENKA

That isn't the half of it.
 His insensitivity is endless.
 My husband,
 Before he left, went so far as to place a framed
 picture of Her on his desk.
 There is no picture of Me on his desk.
 And every time I went up there to clean, I was met
 with her dark, vicious eyes, mocking me always.

KAMILA

How awful!
 Oh, how you suffer!

ZDENKA

Her!
 In this house!
 I can't stand it.

(Kamila jumps to her feet)

KAMILA

Wait here.

(She runs out, and goes upstairs to the
 door of the study, where Leos still
 plays for Stossel. She knocks.)

LEOS

Yes?

(Kamila opens the door)

KAMILA

Am I interrupting?

LEOS

No, no!
 Not at all, come in.

(Kamila enters, and stands by her
 husband, who puts his arm around her.
 Kamila sees the picture of Her on his
 desk.)

KAMILA

Who is that?

Is she a relation?

LEOS

That woman?

No, she is nobody, not anymore.

KAMILA

Then why do you have her portrait?

(Leos picks up the frame, and takes the picture out of it, and gives it to Kamila.)

LEOS

I have no idea!

Here.

Could you give this to Zdenka and ask her to throw it out?

KAMILA

Allright.

(She takes the picture, and kisses her husband.)

KAMILA

Are you two coming down soon?

I think dinner is nearly ready.

LEOS

Soon, yes.

We'll be down in a moment.

(Kamila kisses her husband again, goes downstairs, and hands the photo to Zdenka, who is stunned.)

KAMILA

Here.

He says "give this to Zdenka, and ask her to throw it out."

(Zdenka embraces Kamila.)

ZDENKA

You,

Are a worker of miracles.

HE WAITS FOR HER LETTER TO ARRIVE

(Leos at home. He is working at his desk, wearing slippers. He checks his watch. It is time.)

(Leos takes off his slippers, and puts on his socks, shoes, coat. He goes downstairs where Zdenka gives him his scarf, gloves, and hat. Leos walks out the door, and down the road to the mailbox.)

(Leos opens the mailbox. Nothing. He methodically searches every corner before closing it, and turning away)

(He returns home. Zdenka takes his hat, gloves, scarf. Leos goes upstairs, takes off his coat, shoes, socks, puts his slippers back on, sits down at his desk once more, and returns to his work.)

HE DELIVERS THEIR FIRST SACK OF FLOUR

(Stossel with a large sack of flour, at the Janacek's front door. Zdenka answers.)

ZDENKA

Ah! You've come!
Welcome!
Come in, come in.
Was it a long journey? I heard trains have been
delayed all week.

(They go into the kitchen, and sit.)

STOSSEL

I got lucky. It wasn't bad at all.

ZDENKA

We're very grateful to you for helping us like this.

You have no idea how difficult it's been around here
to get anything!
Flour, sugar, eggs,

STOSSEL

Are you out of sugar?
I can get you sugar.

ZDENKA

Can you really?
That would be lovely.

STOSSEL

I'll bring some by on my way home next week.
Not a problem.

ZDENKA

Do be sure to keep track of what we owe you!

STOSSEL

Of course. Of course.

(beat)

STOSSEL

Is the maestro in?

ZDENKA

Not today.
He's in Prague all week for rehearsals.
Did you get his invitation? I know he is very excited
to bring you and your wife to the premier with us.

STOSSEL

We did, yes.
Thank him for me for the invitation.
I don't know yet if we'll be able to attend this time,
as much as I would love to, I may be out of town for
work.

ZDENKA

Well, let us know so Leos can hold space in the box.

STOSSEL

Of course, of course.

ZDENKA

And if not this time, the next.

STOSSEL

I hope so.

(He stands)

STOSSEL

Give my regards to the Maestro for me.

ZDENKA

Thank you again for the flour.

STOSSEL

Our pleasure.

(Zdenka shows him to the door, and he leaves.)

THE FIRST AND ONLY PRIVATE CONCERT PLAYED FOR MR. STOSSEL

(Leos leads Stossel into his study.
Downstairs, the women are in the
kitchen as in the earlier scene.)

LEOS

Welcome to my study!

STOSSEL

Wow.
So this is where it happens, then?
The Creation of Music

LEOS

Some of it, anyway.

(Stossel notices the bed.)

STOSSEL

Do you sleep in here as well?

LEOS

On occasion, when Zdenka and I need a night apart.
Naps, mostly.
Have a seat.

(Stossel sits on the edge of the bed.)

STOSSEL

Are you working on anything new at the moment?

LEOS

Oh yes, always!

Would you like to hear the beginnings of some new ideas I had while I was away?

STOSSEL

Absolutely

LEOS

Inspired by the two of you, actually.

It's been a long time since I've been in the presence of young love like yours.

STOSSEL

We're very lucky.

LEOS

So these are still just ideas.

The beginnings of melodies, maybe. Not yet fleshed out.

A song cycle, maybe?

Or a quartet.

I'm not sure.

(Leos plays. They are the beginnings of melodies, not yet fleshed out, and disconnected. Still, they are the beginnings of great things.)

(Kamila goes upstairs to the door of the study, where Leos is playing. She knocks.)

LEOS

Yes?

(Kamila opens the door)

KAMILA

Am I interrupting?

LEOS

No, no!

Not at all, come in.

(Kamila enters, and stands by her husband, who puts his arm around her. Kamila sees the picture of Her on his desk.)

KAMILA

Who is that?
Is she a relation?

LEOS

That woman?
No, she is nobody, not anymore.

KAMILA

Then why do you have her portrait?

(Leos picks up the frame, and takes the picture out of it, and gives it to Kamila.)

LEOS

I have no idea!
Here.
Could you give this to Zdenka and ask her to throw it out?

KAMILA

Allright.

(She takes the picture, and kisses her husband.)

KAMILA

Are you two coming down soon?
I think dinner is nearly ready.

LEOS

Soon, yes.
We'll be down in a moment.

(Kamila leaves.)

(beat)

STOSSEL

Who was she?

LEOS

Oh, a mistake, probably.
Definitely a mistake.
A mistaken muse,
who only inspired household strife, and the beginnings
of truly terrible music.

(They look at the empty picture frame
on Leos's desk.)

(Stossel pulls out his wallet from a
breast pocket, and unfolds a photo of
himself with Kamila, and gives it to
Leos)

STOSSEL

Here.
As a remembrance of new friends, and young love.

LEOS

Are you sure?

STOSSEL

Please! Take it.

(he does)

LEOS

Thank you! Very, very much.
It captures the two of you perfectly.
I am sure it will inspire great things.

(He puts the picture of Kamila and
Stossel in the frame, places it on his
desk, and gets up.)

LEOS

Hungry?

EN ROUTE TO A REHEARSAL IN PRAGUE, THEY INVITE HIM TO DINNER

(Stossel and Kamila sit with Leos at
the table drinking a post- dinner tea.)

LEOS

It's a mess.

Frankly, I'm terrified to think what they've been doing with it in my absence.

STOSSEL

Have you worked with the conductor before?

LEOS

Yes. Unfortunately.

(Kamila and Stossel laugh)

LEOS

Fundamentally, we like to see the same results in the end, but we like to get there by going in opposite directions. There is nothing more frustrating than a brilliant collaborator who insists on acting like a fool.

But there's no point in complaining about it tonight, I'll have to worry about it enough all week. Do you know what I'd like to do instead?

STOSSEL

What's that?

LEOS

I'd like to hear the story of these gypsy children I heard rumor of on my way over.

(Kamila grins)

STOSSEL

It's not much of a story,

LEOS

I heard it was the talk of the town! Please. Tell it?

(beat)

KAMILA

He's right. It's not much of a story,

LEOS

Please.

KAMILA

Well,
I came across them. Near here, three children by

themselves.

So since they had no parents I found them a home in town, and now they're in school.

The end.

(beat)

KAMILA

That's all.

Like we said, it's not much of a-

LEOS

It's a beautiful story.

Thank you.

HE DELIVERS THEIR SECOND SACK OF FLOUR

(Stossel, with a large sack of flour, at the Janacek's front door. Zdenka answers.)

ZDENKA

Ah!

Welcome!

Come in, come in. How was the journey?

STOSSEL

Not too bad.

(They go inside.)

ZDENKA

We're very grateful. Again, thank you.

STOSSEL

Not a problem.

(Beat)

STOSSEL

Is the Maestro in?

ZDENKA

Not today.

He's off giving a speech somewhere, or getting an

award, I'm not sure which actually. One was today, the other is tomorrow.

For the life of me, I've never been able to keep track of that man's schedule.

STOSSEL

Well, give him my regards when he returns.
Oh. And this.

(hands her an envelope)

STOSSEL

A thank you from my wife for the invitation we weren't able to accept. I'll be away for work then, unfortunately.

ZDENKA

I'll be sure he sees it.

(He stands to leave. She shows him out.)

ZDENKA

Thank you again.

STOSSEL

My pleasure.

(He leaves.)

THIS IS THE MOMENT HE OPENS THE BOX

(Leos alone in his study, a large box in front of him on the desk. He opens it.)

LEOS

Dear Kamila.

Distracted by all the work and feeling uninspired, I bought something that will help remind me of you, and bring the passion into my work once again.

(He pulls out a blue dress, admires it, and hangs it up in a prominent place, then returns to the box.)

LEOS

You don't write. I need to be reminded of you. My work is failing in every way. Even Zdenka has noticed. My playing causes her headaches now. Her descriptions of their pain are the only words she has spoken to me this week.

Today I received something long awaited.

It reminds me of you.

(He pulls out a Yellow Dress, admires it, hangs it in a prominent place and returns to the box.)

LEOS

In my dreams you are standing here with me, seeing what I see, feeling the same air I feel, and our closeness is such that we nearly share the same skin.

(He pulls out a red dress, admires it, hangs it in a prominent place.)

LEOS

In my dreams there is no distance between us, and we breathe from the same soul when embracing.

(Leos sits, and puts all his attention into admiring the dresses.)

CONVERSATIONS ABOUT HAVING ANOTHER: TWO

(Leos and Zdenka sit at the kitchen table together, drinking tea.)

ZDENKA

Leos, I've been thinking.

LEOS

Hm.

ZDENKA

This year,
Maybe if you want to try again this year we could do it.

(Leos drinks)

ZDENKA

Have another.

(Leos drinks)

ZDENKA

I've been thinking and-

LEOS

Not now.

(Leos drinks)

LEOS

It doesn't feel right.

I think, maybe later.

That could be nice.

(Leos drinks)

LEOS

But not now.

HE STILL WAITS FOR HER LETTER TO ARRIVE

(Leos at home. He is working at his desk, wearing slippers. He checks his watch. It is time.)

(Leos takes off his slippers, and puts on his socks, shoes, coat. He goes downstairs, and Zdenka gives him his scarf, gloves, hat. Leos walks out the door, and down the road to the mailbox)

LEOS

Dear Kamila,

(Leos opens the mailbox. Nothing.)

LEOS

Your silence worries me.

(He methodically searches every corner.)

LEOS

Are you ill?

(Before closing it, and turning away.)

LEOS

Yours,
Leos.

(He returns. Zdenka takes his hat, gloves, scarf. Leos goes upstairs, and removes his coat, shoes, and socks. Leos puts his slippers back on, sits down at his desk once more, and returns to his work.)

THE SECOND TIME HE IS GONE FOR WORK, SHE MISSES HIM TERRIBLY

(Stossel and Kamila at home, by their front door. Stossel in a Uniform, Coat, and Scarf. A packed bag sits next to him. Kamila is nearly crying.)

STOSSEL

I will miss you.

(He kisses her)

KAMILA

I miss you already.

(He kisses her.)

KAMILA

Will you write?

(He kisses her.)

STOSSEL

Every day.

KAMILA

Will you think of me?

(He kisses her)

STOSSEL

With every breath.

(He kisses her)

KAMILA

What should I do?

STOSSEL

Write.

(kiss)

Think.

(kiss)

Breathe.

(kiss)

I'll be back before you know it.

(He kisses her one last time, picks up his suitcase, and leaves.)

(Kamila alone in the house. She closes the door. She goes into the kitchen, and puts on water for tea.)

(She opens an envelope with a record inside, and puts it on. The voice of Stossel.)

VOICE OF STOSSEL

Kamila.

Kamilka dear,

It was no easier leaving you this second time.

It is colder than even before, but I seem to have managed to leave with all of my clothing intact this time.

Even so, we are drinking pots of tea one after the other to stay warm.

I am being called into a meeting.

I will write to you soon,

Ty, Stossel

(As the record plays, Kamila opens a book, and looks at it without reading a thing. She closes it, makes herself more comfortable, and opens it again. This time she reads. The record ends. She chuckles.)

(The water in the kitchen boils. Kamila closes the book, goes into the kitchen, and finishes making tea.)

THIS IS THE DAY HE CREATED YELLOW KAMILA

(Night. Leos sits at the kitchen table with Zdenka. Stony, angry silence on both sides. They eat, and hate each other.)

LEOS

Could you pass the-

(Zdenka glares. He thinks better of asking her, gets up, crosses the table, picks up the butter, and returns to his chair. They eat.)

LEOS

Could you-

(Zdenka glares. He thinks better of asking her, gets up, crosses the table, picks up the salt, and returns to his chair. They eat.)

(Leos opens his mouth to say something, thinks better of it.)

ZDENKA

What.

(He says nothing, gets up, crosses the table, picks up the pepper, and returns to his chair. They eat.)

(Leos begins to hum as he eats. It's nothing good, he's working through a new melody. Zdenka glares. He is immersed in his melody, and doesn't notice.)

ZDENKA

Enough, Leos.

(He stops)

LEOS

If we aren't going to be talking, I may as well work.

ZDENKA

It's grating.

LEOS

I'll eat upstairs then. Away from this miserable existence.

ZDENKA

It isn't just me who makes it miserable, Leos.

(He leaves, and walks upstairs to his study. All is dark, save for the light of Yellow Kamila who stands by his desk, waiting for him. Upon seeing her, he grins.)

LEOS

You have no idea how glad I am of you.

(He sits down to work.)

LEOS

This house is nothing but dark dreary misery.

(She lights his desktop candle.)

LEOS

Nothing for it but work till it doesn't matter.
Help me with something?

(He sings the beginning of a melody, then stops, stuck. Yellow Kamila sings the next note. Leos sings from her note into the next phrase, then stops, stuck. She sings the next note. He sings from her note through to the end of the melody, then again all the way through, as he writes it down by the light of Yellow Kamila and the candle.)

OF ALL THE LETTERS HE EVER SENT HER, THIS WAS HER FAVORITE

(Leos in bed in his study. It is raining outside. He listens to its sound.)

LEOS

I hear
what you're saying.
I wish I were so eloquent.
Could you do me a favor?

(It rains harder.)

LEOS

Deliver a message for me,
put my song into the rhythm of your falling, and play
it on the roof of her room. Not to wake her, just to
guide her to the dream where I'm waiting.
You're going that way anyway.
It would mean a lot.

(Leos hums out a song that the rain catches, plays back to him, and turns into a light drizzle and fades away.)

HE DELIVERS THEIR THIRD SACK OF FLOUR

(Stossel, with a large sack of flour, at the Janacek's front door. Zdenka answers. Leos is upstairs playing. They can hear him.)

ZDENKA

Come in, come in!
How was the journey?

STOSSEL

I'd better not today. Tight schedule.

(He hands her the flour)

ZDENKA

Very grateful. Thank you.

STOSSEL

The Maestro is in?

ZDENKA

Yes, but working. He isn't one to be interrupted when he's working.

STOSSEL

Of course.

(Beat. He listens to Leos play.)

STOSSEL

Until next time,

(He leaves.)

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME SHE UNDERSTANDS HOW THINGS MIGHT SOMEDAY
CHANGE BETWEEN THEM

(Stossel and Kamila sit with Leos at
the table drinking a post- dinner tea.)

LEOS

It's a mess.

Frankly, I'm terrified to think what they've been
doing with it in my absence.

STOSSEL

Have you worked with the conductor before?

LEOS

Yes. Unfortunately.

(Kamila and Stossel laugh)

LEOS

Fundamentally, we like to see the same results in the
end, but we like to get there by going in opposite
directions. There is nothing more frustrating than a
brilliant collaborator who insists on acting like a
fool.

But there's no point in complaining about it tonight,
I'll have to worry about it enough all week.

Do you know what I'd like to do instead?

(For a moment Kamila is terrified at what he might say in the presence of her husband.)

STOSSEL

What's that?

LEOS

I'd like to hear the story of these gypsy children I heard rumor of on my way over.

(Kamila grins. Relief.)

STOSSEL

It's not much of a story,

LEOS

I heard it was the talk of the town!
Please. Tell it?

(beat. Leos and Kamila share an invisible moment.)

LEOS

I have heard the story once, but from your lips it will shine the brightest.

(She breaks the moment.)

KAMILA

He's right. It's not much of a story,

LEOS

Please.

KAMILA

Well,
I came across them. Near here, three children by themselves.
So since they had no parents I found them a home in town, and now they're in school.
The end.

(beat. Another invisible moment.)

LEOS

I am more proud of you than I can say. Dear, kind soul.

(She breaks the moment.)

KAMILA

That's all.
Like we said, it's not much of a-

LEOS

It's a beautiful story.
Thank you.

THIS IS WHAT HER LIFE WILL GO BACK TO AFTER HE IS GONE

(Kamila and Stossel in the sitting room. Stossel reads. Kamila pours him tea. She adds sugar and milk, and gives it to him. Stossel takes the mug without looking up from his book, and drinks without any indication of pleasure.)

(Kamila sits down, and fingers a ring on her right hand. She takes it off, stares at it, puts it back on. She pours tea for herself, adds milk and sugar. She drinks it with great pleasure.)

(Kamila begins to tap out a rhythm on her mug with the ring on her right hand. Stossel looks up. She stops tapping.)

(Kamila puts on a record, and sits down to listen. It is one of Janacek's greatest operas.)

(Kamila takes the ring off, stares at it, puts it back on again. A female voice sings an aria.)

KAMILA

He wrote her to be me.

(Stossel looks up, says nothing, and returns to his book.)

KAMILA

Not literally.
Inspired by.

(She drinks her tea. Stossel closes his book, gets up, and turns off the record.)

STOSSEL

I'm going to bed.

(Stossel hands Kamila his empty mug, and leaves. Kamila puts it down, and turns on the record, so quietly we can barely hear it.)

(She sits right in front of the speaker and presses her ear to it. Kamila taps her finger with the ring on it against her mug in perfect rhythm with the opera. It is the same rhythm she was tapping out before.)

AND STILL HE WAITS FOR HER LETTER TO ARRIVE

(Leos at home. He is working at his desk, wearing slippers. He checks his watch. It is time.)

(Leos takes off his slippers, and puts on his socks, shoes, coat. He does downstiar. Zdenka gives him his scarf, gloves, hat, and he walks out the door, and down the road to the mailbox.)

LEOS

Dear Kamila,

(Leos opens the mailbox. Nothing.)

LEOS

Why haven't you written? Are you angry?

(He methodically searches every corner)

LEOS

Are you sick? I worry that you are sick.

(Before closing it, and opening it again.)

LEOS

Please write to ensure me all is well.

(He closes the mailbox, and turns away.)

LEOS

Yours always,
Leos.

(He returns. Zdenka takes his hat, gloves, scarf. Leos goes upstairs, and removes his coat, shoes, and socks. He puts his slippers back on, sits down at his desk once more, and returns to his work.)

THIS IS HOW SHE LOVED HER SON OTTO, EVERY DAY FOREVER

(Kamila tucks a small, quiet thing into a pile of blankets on the bed upstairs. She sings to him. The song she sings is to the tune of "Cradle Song" by Leos Janacek.)

KAMILA

(singing)

Oh bird of the morning,
Oh bird of the evening,
guide him to the dream where
we are here and singing
sweet baby.

(After singing, Kamila stands, and looks at the bed for a long time. She sings one more verse to herself, turns off the light, and closes the door.)

THE THIRD TIME HE IS GONE FOR WORK, SHE MISSES HIM

(Stossel and Kamila at home, by their front door. Stossel in a Uniform, Coat, and Scarf. A packed bag sits next to him. Kamila is smiling sadly. Water is already on for tea.)

KAMILA

Will you write?

(He kisses her)

STOSSEL

Every day.

KAMILA

Will you think of me?

(He kisses her)

STOSSEL

With every breath.

(He kisses her.)

KAMILA

What should I do?

STOSSEL

Write.

(kiss)

Think.

(kiss)

Breathe.

(kiss)

I'll be back before you know it.

(He kisses her one last time, picks up his suitcase, and leaves.)

(Kamila closes the door, and opens an envelope with a record inside, and puts it on. The water boils. As she makes tea, smells it and drinks it, the voice of Stossel.)

VOICE OF STOSSEL

Dear Kamila.

I am sorry to be writing this time only to ask a very important favor of you, but I'm sure you will forgive me this once.

I left a parcel on the table that I desperately need here by friday. Could you mail it to the address on the back? I will be indebted to you forever,

Yours Always,
Stossel.

(As the record plays, Kamila puts on her coat, hat, scarf, picks up the envelope Stossel left on the table, takes one last sip of tea, and leaves.)

AT FIRST SHE DOESN'T WRITE BACK. THEN RELUCTANTLY. THEN NOT.

(Kamila sits in front of the stove, on which a kettle of water sits above a flame. She wears a shawl, and snuffles. Not because she is sad, but because she is sick.)

(Kamila begins to hum a simple tune, conducting with both hands. It ends with a flourish.)

(She snuffles, and pulls the shawl closer.)

KAMILA

Dear Maestro. I am quite well, aside from a (sniff) passing cold which (sniff) has decided to stick around long past (sniff) its welcome. I thank you for the (sniff)

(She pulls the shawl closer)

KAMILA

Dear (sniff) Maestro. Thank you for the lovely (sniff) shawl. It arrived just as the weather was changing and (sniff)

(She pulls the shawl up so it covers her head.)

KAMILA

Maestro. Your shawl arrived yesterday, and I have not parted with it for a (sniff) moment since. I seem to have (sniff) caught cold somewhere, and the (sniff)

(She pulls the shawl off of her body, holds it gently in her arms and speaks to it.)

KAMILA

Your timing was perfect in every way.

(Holding the shawl like a lover, she wraps it carefully around her body.)

(The water boils. Kamila conducts the whistling kettle with both hands, and turns off the stove with a flourish.)

(She makes tea, and sits down to write her letter.)

THIS IS HOW THEY LOVED EACH OTHER FIFTEEN MONTHS AFTER THE
WEDDING

(They sit on the rug playing a game, and drink brandy. Stossel makes a move in the game, and Kamila bursts out laughing.)

STOSSEL

Is it really that funny?

KAMILA

I made you do that.

(She drinks)

STOSSEL

Did you?

(He drinks)

KAMILA

It was a trap.

STOSSEL

And have I fallen in too deep to climb out?

KAMILA

Maybe.

(She drinks)

KAMILA

We'll see

(He drinks)

STOSSEL

Unless you fall into my trap before you can bury me in yours.

KAMILA

What trap.

STOSSEL

It's a secret.

(They both drink.)

KAMILA

You mean that one there?

STOSSEL

Maybe.

(She laughs.)

KAMILA

If you mean that one there, it isn't a very good secret.

(She drinks.)

(He drinks.)

STOSSEL

I'll just have to push you in then.

KAMILA

Not if I get you first.

(Without losing eye contact, they set their drinks safely out of the way. They begin a tickle fest. It changes to kissing, to the start of undressing, but the doorbell is pulled three times, and Stossel jumps up to get it, as Kamila straightens things up again, her clothing included.)

THIS IS HOW HE DREAMS THE PREMIER WILL BE

(A grand, tall space. The impression of an opera house in Prague. Leos leads Red Kamila into their own private box seat. Noise of a large opening night crowd.)

LEOS

See how they look at you?

(Red Kamila goes to the edge of the box to look at all of the people looking at her.)

LEOS

Who is she, they're thinking.
And what does he want with her.

(Red Kamila looks at more people, as more people turn to look at her.)

LEOS

Let them wonder.
Let them whisper about all that they think they know.
Let them posit, and theorize, and guess.
Let them.
Do you know what they'll never guess?

That the moment I look to your soul through those eyes, they cease to exist.

(Red Kamila turns to Leos, grinning,

and they lock eyes. The crowd ceases to exist. The opera house itself ceases to exist. It is only their box, and it is quiet.)

LEOS

Our own, private premier.
Just you, and I, and my music.
Our music.
Music I never would have written had you not been here
breathing it into me.

(Red Kamila and Leos sit, eyes still locked. They begin to kiss, to make love alone in their box.)

(They are interrupted by three taps of a conductor's baton. They stop, straighten up, and the opera begins.)

SHE MAKES A ROUTINE OF DESTROYING CERTAIN WORDS

(Kamila sits at a table with one of Leos' letters and a small pen knife. She reads by candlelight. With each of the following words, she carefully cuts it out of the letter and feeds it to the flame.)

KAMILA

Mouth.
Caressed.
Flesh.
Bed.
Pleasure.
Naked.
Wrist.
Palm.
Ring.

(Last word burnt, she holds up the letter, riddled with holes, and reads it.)

(The words in parenthesis below are felt by Kamila, but are not spoken.)

KAMILA

My dearest Kamilka.
 This is the dream I had of you last night.
 When with your open (mouth) we (caressed flesh) on that (bed), had our heaven -(pleasure)- it's nearly found. Wish I could hold your, feel your (naked wrist), give you this (ring) myself for another purpose.
 Ah, but only in a dream. Ever only a dream.
 Yours forever, Leos.

(She stares at the letter, and recites to herself)

KAMILA

Mouth, caressed, flesh, bed, pleasure, naked, wrist, palm, ring.

(She folds the letter, places it carefully in a box on the table, and blows out the candle.)

THE FOURTH TIME HE IS GONE FOR WORK,

(Stossel and Kamila at home, by their front door. Stossel in a Uniform, Coat, and Scarf. A packed bag sits next to him. Kamila is drinking tea.)

(He kisses her)

KAMILA

What should I do?

STOSSEL

Write.

(kiss)

Think.

(kiss)

Breathe.

(kiss)

I'll be back before you know it.

(He kisses her one last time, picks up his suitcase, and leaves.)

(Kamila closes the door, and drinks the last of her tea. She puts on a record out of an envelope. As it plays, she puts on hat, gloves, coat. The voice of Stossel.)

VOICE OF STOSSEL

Kamila,
Made is safely, despite heavy snow and train delays.
Should return on the 27th by the 4pm train.
I will let you know if that changes,
Yours, Stossel.

(Halfway through the record, she leaves.)

THIS IS HOW SHE RESPONDS TO HIS INVITATION

(Leos at a mailbox, letter in hand. He drops it into the mailbox, while humming a short ditty.)

(Kamila at home. What she says is lost on Leos, hidden beneath his song.)

KAMILA

I can't come.

(Leos takes a letter from his coat pocket, and drops it into the mailbox. He hums a variation of the short ditty, slightly longer and more elaborate than the first.)

(Kamila at home. What she says is again lost under his singing.)

KAMILA

I can't come.

(Leos takes a letter from a different

pocket, drops it into the mailbox. He sings another more elaborate variation.)

(Kamila at home, lost under the song.)

KAMILA

Leos,

(He takes a letter from another pocket, drops it into the mailbox singing another variation.)

(Kamila still at home, still lost under the song.)

KAMILA

I've told you I can't come.

(He takes a letter from under his hat, mails it singing.)

(She is at home, lost under song.)

KAMILA

I won't be there.

(He takes letters from his sock, pant leg, sleeves, all his secret hidden places, and drops them into the mailbox singing the most elaborate and beautiful of variations on that original ditty.)

(Kamila at home, shouts to be heard above the music.)

KAMILA

I'm sorry Leos, but it's Impossible!

(He stops singing.)

KAMILA

Another time.

(He mails one more letter.)

KAMILA

No. I won't be there.
Just now it's impossible.

CONVERSATIONS ABOUT HAVING ANOTHER: THREE

(Leos and Zdenka sit at the kitchen
table together, drinking tea.)

ZDENKA

Leos, I've-

LEOS

I've been thinking, Zdenka.
This year,
I'd like to try again.

(They both drink)

LEOS

Have another.

(They both drink.)

LEOS

I've been thinking and-

ZDENKA

Not now.

(Zdenka drinks)

ZDENKA

Too late.
I think, maybe before.
That could have been nice.

(Leos drinks.)

ZDENKA

But not anymore.

(Zdenka drinks)

ZDENKA

Maybe last year.

Or the year before,
but not now.
It's too late.

THIS IS HOW HIS WIFE LEARNS OF THEM

(Leos is upstairs playing new music. He is inspired by the presence of Yellow Kamila. She sits in the corner wearing the Yellow Dress, reading. Every time she laughs, his music laughs.)

(Downstairs, Zdenka and Stossel drink an awkward Tea together. Bags of flour and other pantry items sit nearby.)

ZDENKA

Thank you again for the flour.
Be sure and keep track of everything we owe you.

STOSSEL

You're more than welcome.
We're happy to help friends.

ZDENKA

We're very grateful.

(beat)

ZDENKA

My apologies for Leos's absence.
When he gets music in his head, there's no interrupting.

(They listen)

STOSSEL

It's lovely to listen to.
You must just love listening while you're working during the day?

ZDENKA

Not usually
Today is a good day.
Usually, it gives me a headache.

He must be inspired.

(They listen)

STOSSEL

How are the dresses?

ZDENKA

The what?

STOSSEL

The dresses I brought by last month.
Have you had occasion to wear them yet?

ZDENKA

I haven't had occasion to see them yet.

STOSSEL

Well.

I seem to have done a perfectly good job spoiling what
was meant to be a lovely surprise. Forget I asked.

ZDENKA

Forgotten.

(They listen.)

ZDENKA

Thank you
again for the flour.
You are keeping track of everything we owe you?

STOSSEL

You are more than welcome to it.
We're honored to help our friends.

THIS IS HOW HE DECIDES WHICH RING TO SEND HER

(Leos in his study, with three rings on
his table. He picks them up, and looks
at each ring carefully, one by one.
Blue Kamila stands next to him, also
looking at the rings.)

LEOS

Which do you like best?

Which would remind you most of me while wearing it?

(She considers. Leos puts one on her finger.)

LEOS

This,
This was my mother's ring. She bought it one summer,
traveling, in Italy I think it was.
She always wore it. On the ring finger of her right
hand.
I would look at it, and think of pirates when I was a
boy, because of this curve here.
Right there. For some reason. Pirates.

(He puts the second ring on one of her
other fingers.)

LEOS

Or do you like this one?
It was her mother's, that's all I know.
I don't know where it came from, or why she never wore
it, but the color of the stone and the color of her
eyes were exactly the same.

(He puts the third ring on one of her
other fingers)

LEOS

And this,
This was my mother's wedding band.
If I could marry and love you freely, my Kamilka, this
is the one I would send.

(She considers the rings)

LEOS

But You,
which feels best on your finger? Which reminds you
most of me while wearing it?

(Blue Kamila takes off the first ring,
and gives it back to Leos. She takes
off the second ring, and gives it back
to Leos. She looks at the third ring,
still on her finger, and grins.)

LEOS

Then it is yours.

(He kisses her on the forehead, slips the ring off of her finger, and drops it into an envelope.)

AND STILL, STILL WAITING FOR HER LETTER TO ARRIVE

(Leos at home. He is working at his desk, wearing slippers. He checks his watch. It is time.)

(Leos takes off his slippers, and puts on his socks, shoes, coat. He does downstairs where Zdenka gives him his scarf, gloves, hat,)

LEOS

Dear Kamila,

(and walks out the door, and down the road to the mailbox.))

LEOS

I still haven't heard from you.

(Leos opens the mailbox. Nothing.)

LEOS

Three days, and not one word!

(He methodically searches every corner)

LEOS

I fear now that something is wrong. Perhaps your boy has fallen ill?

(Before closing it, and opening it again.)

LEOS

Perhaps you have become ill yourself?

(He closes the mailbox, and opens it again.)

LEOS

My nerves are weak. Write me. I fear the worst.

(He closes the mailbox, and turns away.)

LEOS

Yours forever and always,
Leos.

(He returns. Zdenka takes his hat, gloves, scarf. Leos goes upstairs and removes his coat, shoes, and socks. He puts his slippers back on, sits down at his desk once more, and returns to his work.)

A NORMAL DAY THAT WINTER

(Leos upstairs, sick.)

(Zdenka downstairs, busy.)

(They are both busy with their own respective work. Zdenka cooks. Both hands full. Leos revises a musical score.)

LEOS

(calling out)

Zdenka!

(sniff)

Zdenka, is there any more (sniff) tea?

(sniff)

Zdenka?

Is there (sniff) any-

ZDENKA

(calling out)

It's on the stove, Leos!

Come get it yourself!

LEOS

(calling out)

(Sniff) Please?

ZDENKA

(calling out)

My hands are full, Leos.

Come down and get it yourself!

(Annoyed, Leos stops working. Kamila enters, and puts on the blue dress becoming Blue Kamila.)

LEOS

Tea for a (sniff) sick man.

Is that (sniff) too much to ask?

(Leos goes back to working)

(Blue Kamila kisses his forehead, and feels it to make sure it isn't overheated. She kisses it again.)

LEOS

I'm (sniff) on deadline too.

Corrections.

Damn (sniff) opera.

Corrections all (sniff) day.

(Blue Kamila brings him tea, and pours it.)

LEOS

Thank you. (Sniff)

(Blue Kamila takes off the blue dress and leaves. Leos drinks his tea, and works.)

THE TWENTY-SECOND TIME, AFTER WHICH SHE NEVER MISSES HIM AGAIN

(Stossel and Kamila at home, by their front door. Stossel in a Uniform, Coat, and Scarf. A packed bag sits next to him. Kamila is drinking tea.)

(He kisses her)

STOSSEL

I'll be gone again before you know it.

(Kamila closes the door, and puts on the record in an envelope. Just scratching, nothing on it.)

THIS IS WHY ALMOST NONE OF HER LETTERS SURVIVE

(Leos, alone, in his study. A newly opened envelope from Kamila sits on his desk. He places the record that was inside on the record player, and listens. As he does, he holds the red dress.)

KAMILA ON RECORD

Maestro. Your shawl arrived yesterday, and I have not parted with it for a moment since. I seem to have caught cold somewhere--your timing was perfect in every way.
Your last letter made me blush so fiercely, I felt feverish! I had to cross out and remove so many of your dear words, the page it came on hardly looks like a letter anymore.
But I've committed the lost words to memory, and will know how to read the spider web pages forever.

Come to me.

My husband is gone until the 14th, but when he has returned, visit then, so no one will think ill of us. Do come. I miss the sound of your smile.

Tvá,

Kamila

(He places the needle back, and plays the record again. As it plays, he plays piano, pulling a melody from her words.)

(The record ends. Leos plays the music

of her letter, and commits it to memory forever.)

(Leos picks up the record, and drops it on the floor, shattering it to pieces. He sweeps them up, and throws them away.)

(Leos picks up the envelope from her on his table, and carefully burns it. When it has all been destroyed, Leos plays her letter again, and begins notating it for the future.)

THIS IS WHEN THE EARTH SHOOK, ABOUT TO SPLIT

(Leos and Kamila are walking in the woods. She walks in front, looking at the world. He walks in back, looking at her.)

(Kamila comes upon a rock in a sunlit clearing. She jumps on top of it and calls back, hurrying him to her.)

KAMILA

Here! Here is where you tell me.
It's perfect, don't you think? The perfect place for a secret.

LEOS

Not under the cover of trees?

KAMILA

It's not a dark secret, is it?

LEOS

No. It's one I'd share with the world.

KAMILA

But since I won't let you, share it here.
In This out-in-the-open. To This world.
There's even a perfect sitting rock for you to come back to, to rest on over and over again after I've gone home.

You can sit here, and pretend I'm back again.
 I'll infuse my feeling of you when you say it into
 this rock so that when you come back, little pieces
 will leak out every time you touch it, and you'll
 never forget.
 How does that sound?

LEOS

Lovely.

KAMILA

Are you ready then?
 To shout it to the world?

LEOS

It's only you I need to hear it.

KAMILA

Whisper then.

(Leos approaches Kamila, standing below
 her on the rock. She bends down, and he
 whispers into her ear.)

(The earth shakes, about to split
 apart. Everything moves, but Leos and
 Kamila do not notice anything except
 each other.)

(Leos and Kamila breathe, together, not
 out of relief, but as if testing the
 first breath of their two newly unified
 selves.)

(Kamila umps down off the rock, and
 sees the change in the shifted world.
 She laughs.)

KAMILA

You made the earth move!

OF ALL THE TIMES HE EVER HURT HER, THIS WAS BY FAR THE WORST

(Janacek alone at his desk. He tries
 playing a melody. It's shit.)

(He tries playing another melody. It is also shit.)

(He gets up, and pulls back a cloth revealing the three dresses. He sits back down at the piano, staring at them.)

(He lays again. Shit.)

(Zdenka downstairs through all of it, trying to write a letter.)

(He plays again. Shit.)

ZDENKA

If you can't play anything good don't play at all!
My head is killing me!

(As if summoned by this call, Kamila enters Leos's study, and after some deliberation, slips the red dress on, becoming Red Kamila.)

(Red Kamila goes to Leos, and kisses one ear, then the other. He plays a few notes. She does it again. He plays a few more. She does it again. His melody isn't shit anymore.)

(Downstairs, Zdenka notices. As Red Kamila kisses more and more of Leos, he plays longer and more beautiful melodies. Zdenka stops working. She sneaks to the door of his study, and presses her ear against it, listening.)

(The song finishes. The kissing stops. Zdenka still sits, listening.)

THIS IS ALL HE SAYS ABOUT IT, BEFORE NEVER MENTIONING IT AGAIN

(Kamila and Stossel by their front door. He wears hat, coat, scarf. A packed bag on the ground beside him. Kamila drinks tea.)

STOSSEL

Tell Otto goodbye for me, when he is awake.

KAMILA

I will.

STOSSEL

And that I will be back on the 12th and will write him soon.

KAMILA

I will.

(She drinks)

STOSSEL

Will you write Zdenka and let her know I will be by with her flour next week?

KAMILA

I will.

STOSSEL

That poor woman.
It's the least I can do, for all the suffering we cause her.
Don't you think?

(Bear. She realizes he knows everything. It is something of a relief.)

KAMILA

I-

STOSSEL

Otto is an exceptionally good boy. Keep in mind, it is his reputation you play with as much as our own.

(beat)

KAMILA

I will.

(He leaves)

STILL, STILL, STILL WAITING FOR HER LETTER TO ARRIVE

(Leos at home. He is working at his desk, wearing slippers. He checks his watch. It is time.)

(Leos takes off his slippers, and puts on his socks, shoes, coat.)

LEOS

Dear Kamila,

(He goes downstairs and Zdenka gives him his scarf, gloves, hat.)

LEOS

Dearest Kamilka,

(Leos walks out the door, and down the road to the mailbox.)

LEOS

Kamila.

Every day I wait longer, with the hopes that if I do your letter will be in my box when I open it. And day after day it is filled with nothing.

(Leos opens the mailbox. Nothing.)

LEOS

Send me word that you are well.

(He methodically searches every corner)

LEOS

I hear nothing, and I am filled with fear.

(before closing it, and opening it again.)

LEOS

Have you caught cold?
Are you staying warm?

(He closes the mailbox, and opens it again.)

LEOS

Have you rested your feet today, or are you still standing at the stove, long after you should be?

(He loses the mailbox, and opens it again.)

LEOS

Write only that you are well,
if there is nothing else to say.
Write that you are well, and I will breathe easy again.

(He closes the mailbox, and turns away.)

LEOS

Only yours, forever yours,
Leos.

(He returns. Zdenka takes his hat, gloves, scarf. He goes upstairs, and takes off his coat,)

LEOS

P.S.
I won't sleep tonight, for fear that you're not sleeping.
Still yours,
Leos.

(shoes, and socks. Leos puts his slippers back on, sits down at his desk once more, and returns to his work.)

THIS WAS A DAY WHEN HE SPOKE ONLY THE TRUTH

(Leos and Zdenka sit across the table from one another, drinking tea. An open envelope with a letter and a record is on the table in front of them.)

ZDENKA

Is that true?

LEOS
YEs.

ZDENKA
And she feels the same?

LEOS
Yes.

ZDENKA
Does her husband know?

LEOS
Yes,

ZDENKA
And he condones it?!

LEOS
No,

ZDENKA
But he allows it.

LEOS
Yes.

ZDENKA
Have you sinned together?

LEOS
No.

ZDENKA
Is that true?

LEOS
Yes.

ZDENKA
Not once?

LEOS
Not Once.

(Beat. They drink.)

ZDENKA
What should I do?

LEOS
I don't know.

ZDENKA
Should I leave?

LEOS
No.
Should I leave?

ZDENKA
If you want to.

(Beat. They drink.)

ZDENKA
Her husband knows?

LEOS
Yes.

(Beat. They drink.)

ZDENKA
What do you plan on doing?

LEOS
We don't know yet.

ZDENKA
Are you going to take her as a wife?

LEOS
I would like to,

ZDENKA
Divorces are not easy to get, you know.
Are you famous enough yet for favors from the church?

(Beat. They drink.)

LEOS
She's coming to stay.

ZDENKA
Here?

LEOS
Upstairs.
I'll sleep on the couch.

ZDENKA
I'm sure.

LEOS
She's bringing Otto.

ZDENKA
For how long?

LEOS
I don't know.

ZDENKA
Why now?

LEOS
Her mother just died,

ZDENKA
And you are her comfort?

(Beat. They drink.)

ZDENKA
Well by all means, don't let me get in your way.

TWO DAYS BEFORE HIS DEATH, THE RAIN IS ENDLESS

(Kamila is asleep in the upstairs bed. Leos, downstairs, on the couch with sheets and blankets, coughing and sneezing. He has a bad cold. Zdenka is downstairs making tea.)

(It is raining. He listens to it.)

LEOS
I hear (sneeze)
what you're saying.

I (sniff) wish I were so eloquent.
 (sneeze)
 Could you do me a (sniff) favor?

(It rains harder. Zdenka brings him
 tea, and feels his forehead.)

ZDENKA

Drink this.

LEOS

Thank you.

(She leaves. He drinks.)

LEOS

Deliver a (sneeze) message for me,
 put my love into the (sniff) rhythm of your falling,
 and play it on the roof of her room.

(Sneeze)

Not to wake her, just to (sniff) guide her to the
 dream where I'm waiting. (Sniff)

You're going that way anyway.

It would (sneeze) mean a lot.

(It rains harder)

THIS IS HOW HE WROTE THE GREATEST MOMENT IN HIS BEST OPERA

(Leos upstairs on the piano. Yellow
 Kamila sits on the bench beside him.
 His arm is around her, and he is
 overjoyed that she is there.)

LEOS

You, as Her,
 come in, full of Youth and Beauty.
 Radiating joy.
 You, as Her,
 are the Peak of life's happiness.
 In that moment,
 your skin shines in love,
 in love with your new husband,

in love with your new home,
 in love with your new child growing inside of you.
 I want to show all of that in the first six notes.
 If You, as Her,
 were to throw open your heart and show every piece,
 in the happiest moment of your happiest day,
 what would it sound like?

(Yellow Kamila smiles at him, and plays
 a few notes. He follows the notes after
 she plays them, and adds a few more.)

(He plays more. Joy. Perfect.)

THIS IS THE ONLY TIME SHE EVER SANG TO HIM

(Leos in bed, upstairs. He is very ill.
 Zdenka is downstairs, making tea.
 Kamila is upstairs, by the bed. Leos is
 halfway conscious.)

(Kamila feels his forehead, kisses it,
 and feels it again. She sings him the
 same lullaby she sings to her son.)

KAMILA

(singing)

Oh bird of the morning,
 Oh bird of the evening,
 guide him to the dream where
 we are here and singing
 sweet baby.

(When it is over, she kisses him again
 on the forehead, and sings a verse to
 herself as she gets up, turns off the
 light, and shuts the door.)

ONE DAY BEFORE HIS DEATH, A BAD CASE OF PNEUMONIA

(Zdenka downstairs, making tea. Leos, quite sick, in the bed upstairs. Kamila has been reading to him. At the end of a chapter, she pauses.)

KAMILA

Did you hear the rain last night?
I thought I would never get to sleep with all that
pounding.
And still worried about Otto catching cold,
and now you sick.
But once I fell asleep, I dreamed the most incredible
dream.
All flying, and colors, and sounds.
it was like seeing one of your operas up so close, all
I could see were bands of color from the costumes.
Do you ever dream like that?

(Beat. She feels his forehead, kisses
it.)

KAMILA

When I woke up,
I wondered if that's how music comes to you,
in big swaths of dream-light that get translated and
transcribed onto piano.

(She adjusts blankets.)

KAMILA

My husband comes home on Tuesday.
He says he needs me there for the week. Then he goes
again.
So tomorrow I have to go home for a while, but I'll be
back again before you know it.

(She kisses her forehead. He holds her
head there for a moment.)

KAMILA

Will you drink some tea?
I think Zdenka has made some.
You should have at least a little.

(She kisses his forehead one more time,

and leaves.)

(Slowly, Leos sits up, and gets out of bed, sniffing. He opens the closet door where the dresses hang, then gets back into bed, and lays there, looking at them.)

THIS IS THE HAPPIEST HE WOULD EVER BE

(Leos sits on a chair in Kamila's kitchen as she bustles about, happy, making things. Leos drinks tea.)

(In the corner, in another room, Stossel sits with a paper.)

KAMILA

What do you think would go better with the chicken tonight.
These, or these?

(She holds up two different kinds of vegetables.)

LEOS

Whichever my Kamila likes better.

KAMILA

These then.

(She holds up the brighter of the two.)

KAMILA

Did you see the picture of you they had in the paper early last week? The one of you by the river?

LEOS

So you saw it?

KAMILA

Your hat was perched at such a funny angle!
I couldn't help but burst out laughing when I saw it.
And you know what else?

LEOS

What?

KAMILA

As I was standing there laughing, I hadn't even bought it yet I was just still looking, two men came up to buy papers too, who must have been at opening night, because they were talking about the show and looking at your picture straight away.

LEOS

Did they like it?

KAMILA

Well, they didn't laugh at it like I did!

LEOS

Who were they?

KAMILA

Not anybody that I knew.
All I meant to tell you, here I am going on and on about nothing as usual, the point was, I was sitting there laughing at the funny angle of your hat, and they were talking about the same man, you, in such serious tones it made my sides ache.

LEOS

I like to think of you so amused.

KAMILA

Everyone takes you so seriously right now!
It's as if you're someone only to be studied.

LEOS

Don't You study me?

KAMILA

Oh, but not like they do.
When you love someone, it can't be helped.
Everything they say, do, each way they move and look at you is something to be studied.
I'm bound to it now.
I'd never have chosen though, say, a scholarly study of you.

LEOS

Don't you think it might have been interesting?

KAMILA

Interesting, maybe.
But I'm sure I would have entirely missed the point.

12 YEARS LATER, HE FUNDS A TIMELY DEPARTURE AHEAD OF THE GERMAN
ARMY

(Stossel at Kamila's desk. He is finishing up the counting of letters. They are divided into three large piles)

STOSSEL

Seven nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen,
seven hundred and fourteen.

(He neatens the piles, and slips each one into its own large envelope, which he labels.)

STOSSEL

For the tickets,
For the papers,
For the passports.

(He puts them in the suitcase, puts on his coat, picks up the suitcase and goes to the door. He gives the empty house one final look)

STOSSEL

Back again before you know it,

(and leaves)

TWO DAYS BEFORE HIS DEATH, THE WOODS CONFOUND OTTO

(Leos and Kamila walk into Leos's house, happy. Zdenka is in the kitchen, making tea. It rains.)

KAMILA

Otto!
 Otto!
 OTTO!
 Are you here?

LEOS

Otto!

KAMILA

He isn't here.

LEOS

He might just be upstairs.
 Maybe-

KAMILA

I'm going back out.

LEOS

Kamila, stay. You'd catch cold.

KAMILA

If he's lost,

LEOS

He isn't.

KAMILA

What if he is though,

(Zdenka enters.)

KAMILA

(to Zdenka)

Did Otto come back before us?

ZDENKA

Not that I heard.

(Kamila begins to panic.)

LEOS

Calm, calm!
 I know the forest like the back of my hand, I've been
 walking it for years.
 I'll be back with him soon.

(Leos leaves)

KAMILA

If anything happens to him,
The death of a child, how does anyone continue?

ZDENKA

Poorly.
Take off your coat and warm up, you're soaking.

(Kamila takes it off, puts on something
dry)

ZDENKA

Sit. I'll get you some tea.

(Kamila sits. Zdenka brings her tea.
They drink.)

KAMILA

Thank you.

(They drink. It is still raining.
Kamila is still panicked.)

ZDENKA

Whenever I worry, I always sing this lullaby to myself
that I learned when I was little.
Would you like to hear it?

KAMILA

Allright.

(Zdenka sings the Czech lullaby Kamila
sang earlier. Kamila listens at first,
then joins in for the last part. The
two woman sing together.)

ZDENKA

(singing)

Oh bird of the morning,
Oh bird of the evening,

ZDENKA AND KAMILA

(singing)

Guide him to the dream where
we are here and singing
sweet baby

(As they finish, a door opens, and Kamila sees Otto, and is overjoyed.)

KAMILA

Otto!

CONVERSATIONS ABOUT HAVING ANOTHER: FOUR

(Zdenka sits downstairs reading a book and chuckling to herself. Leos upstairs in his study, thinking. Kamila enters, and puts on the Blue dress, becoming Blue Kamila. Blue Kamila makes the bed, and as Leos watches her, he begins to play the last speech-melody of his daughter)

(Downstairs, Zdenka hears it playing and stops reading.)

(When Leos finishes the speech-melody, Zdenka goes back to reading. After a moment, Leos begins again, from somewhere in the middle.)

(Zdenka stops reading, and goes to the kitchen to prepare dinner. She makes as much noise as she can with the pots and pans, trying to drown out the melody from above.)

(Leos plays through the speech-melody a third time. Zdenka, still making noise, begins to cry without making a sound.)

(Blue Kamila finishes making the bed. The playing stops. Blue Kamila takes off the dress, and leaves.)

(When it has been quiet for a few moments, Zdenka quietly climbs the stairs, and knocks on Leos's door.)

LEOS

Yes?

(beat)

ZDENKA

There's tea ready. If you'd like some.

LEOS

I'll be down in a minute.

AT THE MOMENT OF HIS DEATH, ALONE WITH HIS MUSIC

(Leos, upstairs in bed, mostly conscious. Zdenka and Kamila are downstairs. Zdenka drinks tea, and watches Kamila, as she packs.)

LEOS

The last speech-melody of Leos Janacek.

(He says it again, with a more melodic intonation.)

LEOS

The last speech-melody of Leos Janacek.

(He says it again, while tapping out the rhythm of his speech on his bed.)

LEOS

The last speech-melody of Leos Janacek.

(He taps the same rhythm, and hums the melody of the words. He does it again. He looks for paper and pen to record it, but it's too far away to bother getting.)

(He hums the melody once more, in imperfect rhythm this time, though still pretty good for a dying man.)

(Then he stops breathing, and is dead.)

(Downstairs, Zdenka pours herself more tea, and drinks.)

TWO DAYS BEFORE HIS DEATH, THEY WALKED TO WATCH THE SUN SET

(Leos and Kamila outside, in the forest. The sun is nearly setting, and they are walking a path they know well, on Janacek's grounds. Kamila's son Otto has just run on ahead.)

KAMILA

(calling out)

Stay to the right, Otto!

When it branches, stay to the right!

LEOS

You don't think he remembers?

KAMILA

I'm sure he remembers.

The question is, will he also forget.

(they walk)

KAMILA

It smells good here.

I'd forgotten how good it smells.

I feel like I've spent the last six months indoors.

I wouldn't have traded that time with her for

anything, but it is nice to be surrounded by fresh air again.

(they walk)

KAMILA

Let's watch from here, before heading in.

LEOS

Allright.

(They stand, and watch the sun set in the west.)

KAMILA

It's good to watch the sky when you're sad.

Because even though it hasn't changed except for the weather since the moment you were born, it always looks different enough to engage you.

To make you either forget
 why you were sad in the first place, or
 allow you to place that particular Sadness into a
 piece of the world above you, and watch it grow
 or change
 or disappear.
 I think,
 Today my sadness is the sun.
 Before it disappears, it fills the entire sky like
 it's filled my entire Being,
 then slowly fades away before it vanishes, giving me a
 short time alone before my sadness returns again with
 its next rising.
 My mother was dying for such a long time, I thought my
 sadness would die with her.
 I didn't know that, like the sun, it's never fully
 gone.
 It just cycles, has seasons, reflects itself all over
 until you forget it's even there because you're so
 accustomed to seeing the world through its light,
 changing everything you see.
 But it's going now.
 For a moment, at least,
 And tonight I will be Happy.

(Leos and Kamila put their arms around
 the other, and they stand watching as
 the sun disappears.)

(They stand and watch the sun set
 through the following scene.)

WHEN HE IS DEAD, HIS WIFE ERASES HER FROM THE STORY

(An empty house. Zdenka alone. She
 stands in Leos's study, looking
 around.)

(She finds a pile of records, and puts
 one on. They are unsent letters.)

LEOS ON RECORD

Dear Kamila.

You can't know how my heart aches for you today.
 This morning I found a new melody.
 One for your eyes.
 It is deep and calming as they are.
 I want to find a melody for every part of you. One for
 your small, tiny fingers, one for your-

(Zdenka lifts the needle up, picks up
 the record and drops it on the floor.
 It shatters. She puts on another record
 from the pile.)

LEOS ON RECORD

Dear Kamila.
 Last night I had the most wonderful dream of us yet!
 We stood in a field together, like the one we walked
 in last time you were here when I told you-

(Zdenka lifts the needle up, picks up
 the record and drops it on the floor.
 It shatters. Next record.)

LEOS ON RECORD

Dearest Kamila.
 I am losing my mind without you here.
 Next to me, if only for a-

(Needle up. Shatter. New record.)

LEOS

My dear Kamila,
 Thank you for that tiny word, which-

(Needle up. Shatter. New record.)

LEOS ON RECORD

Dear Kamila,

(Needle up. Shatter. New record.)

LEOS ON RECORD

Dearest Kamilka,

(Needle up, shatter, new record.)

LEOS ON RECORD

My love,

(Needle up, shatter.)

(Zdenka picks up the remaining small pile of unsent records, and drops them on the floor, shattering everything.)

(Zdenka continues looking through the room. She picks up the photo of Kamila and Stossel in the frame on the desk, and drops it on the floor with the records.)

(Zdenka finds the three dresses. One by one, she tries them on. They do not fit. One by one, she throws them on top of the shattered records in the middle of the room, then sweeps it all together, and throws it away.)

END OF PLAY