

AIDA NASRALLA

The Moaning of the Subhat

SCENE ONE

The stage is dark and the disembodied sound of voices is heard. The sound of the slow crushing of a grindstone and the neighing of horses comes as if from a distance.

The curtains open. A spotlight slips slowly onto the stage, focuses on the subhat wrapped around the handle of the grindstone. The spotlight widens on the stage, and the ghosts of four women gradually appear, tied together loosely with a rope around their waists. The women prance onto the stage on tiptoes. All of them are dressed in white.

The women look absorbed in their own thoughts. They circle around the grindstone then drop and curl into fetal positions, then look up, a spotlight focused on their frightened eyes.

The Women scream together: Who are you?

The lights cut to dark. The curtain is drawn.

SCENE TWO

The four women are still in shadow. The light focuses on one of the women (still in a fetal position) and brightens. She rises and slowly approaches the front of the stage.

The Idiot: Where am I?

The Women (*crying rhythmically*): Where am I?

The rest of the women rise and dance on tiptoe, still in shadow. The light is still focused on The Idiot.

The Idiot: Where have you come from?

The Women (including **The Idiot**): From there, from the place...

The Idiot: Why do you come...? Why do we come...?

The Women (including **The Idiot**): We came to take revenge!

Fatmah (*arises and comes to the front of the stage. She speaks to the audience as though continuing a previous speech*): I don't know why I have been killed. All that I know is that the golden heads of wheat killed me.

The Women: Golden wheat?

The Idiot: How?

The Poet: Maybe something horrible hid in the golden wheat.

The Depressed: Maybe the golden wheat was her ritual as the sub-hat was my ritual.

Fatmah (*continues her speech as though she hasn't heard the other women*): I traveled from their world 200 years ago and there in the field of golden wheat, th...e...r...e. (*says "there" as though she goes with the word into another reality*) th...e...r...e. (*The sound of a pipe arises as the light focuses on Fatmah's hands, which hold a bunch of wheat heads.*) There in the wheat fields my cheeks began to shine and sparks entered my eyes (*she looks sad and continues*) but the golden wheat killed me.

All of the other Women: How?

Fatmah: I returned home from the field with a bunch of wheat in my hands. He asked me, "Where were you?" I said, "I filled a jar of water." He said, "But the jar is empty." I said, "But I just filled it." He said, "No, go look at it, it's empty."

Fatmah stares dreamily into the distance, walks slowly to the women and holds the rope as though she's going to pull the women. The women follow her, pulling, like shadows in the dark.

Fatmah: Yes, the jar was empty. Then I looked at his eyes and felt the world dim in my eyes. The smile left me. I was frightened.

The Women: Why were you frightened?

Fatmah (*she walks as though she doesn't hear them and continues*): The golden wheat killed me.

The Women (*whisper*): The wheat, wheat, wheat, wheat.... (*Voices repeat wheat, rising to one very strong "wheat" then stop. Then the women return to their fetal positions.*) How?

Fatmah: The golden heads call me. My legs absorb their wave.

The Poet: The wave.... (*The poet rises and walks on tiptoe moving her hands in a circular swimming movement and singing.*) Wave...wave... wave...wave.

Fatmah: Yes, the wave.

The Poet: Wave...wave, the sea throws me here. Wave, the sea is thunder, the sea is salt, the sea without water. (*She continues with unclear words and returns to her fetal position.*)

Fatmah: There, I saw him, my cheeks began to shine, my eyes absorbed his beauty and I fell in love with the hiss of the wheat. I was enveloped in the golden wave.

The Poet: Wave...wave...wave...sea.

The Idiot: What wave, sea? I don't understand.

The Depressed: You do. Maybe not? The wave...wave...wave.

Fatmah: I heard the sound of the pipe from far away arising. My legs followed the sound, then I saw him. His turban was the most beautiful that I have seen and his moustache was the most beautiful that I have seen, and the fields of wheat started to pull me early in the morning to fill my water jar and plait the stems of wheat. And then my sea turned to a bunch of wheat. The wheat fell in love with the sound of the pipe. They embraced into the golden wave.

The Poet: Wave...wave...wave.

The Depressed: Garosha...Garosha...Garosha...Garosha.

The Women: Garosha, sea, wave, Garosha, wave, sea, wave.

The Idiot: I don't understand anything.

The Poet: You will understand.

Fatmah: It was just a look...less than a look.

The Poet: Just one look killed you, for one look I broke the window and burst out.

The Depressed: Just one word killed me.

Fatmah: Yes, it is, one word. He said to me, "Hello marhaba," and gave me a lone head of wheat, and my breath became interwoven

with the sound of the pipe. His eyes glanced at me through the sea of wheat. He said, "Do you like the sound of the pipe?" I said, "Yes, it's nice." He said, "No more beautiful than you." (*She smiles and gradually sinks to the floor. Her expression turns from a smile to a wild look. She turns to the audience.*) I didn't realize that there were wolves spying on me.

All of the Women: Who was?

Fatmah: He that asked me where I was. (*Fatmah continues to speak, absorbed in her thoughts.*) He said that my jar was empty. I said to him, "I filled the jar." He said, "No, it's empty." He asked me to go with him to fill the jar again, I said, "Why now? It's sunset." He said, "Because now the colors of the wheat are more beautiful. Don't you love the wheat? Let us go fill the jar."

The Women: Who was?

Fatmah: I went with him to the field. He said, "Go in front of me." I said, "What do you want from me?" He roared, "Go ahead, don't look behind you." I felt my eyes lose the road. My legs moved quickly. (*We hear the rhythm of drums, becoming faster and louder. Fatmah speaks with the rhythm of the drums.*) I felt my legs running like the wind... (*silence for a moment*) and I felt something strike my neck. (*One very strong beat of the drum.*)

The Women: All of this for a bunch of wheat?

Fatmah: Yes, it was the first and the last time that sparks entered my heart. It was a moment of dreams...and he killed me.

Light focuses on all of the women.

The Women: Fatmah was killed without reason. Only for adoring the heads of wheat. She didn't know his name, didn't taste his touch, didn't breath his scent. She only adored the heads of wheat.

We hear music of the pipe. The light turns down and the curtain closes.

SCENE THREE

We hear the sound of the Garosha, the cries of cats, and the drumbeat of grain being pounded. The curtain opens. All of the women are in the dark, as in Scene One. The light focuses on the Depressed Woman. She holds a subhat in one

hand and in the other hand makes the circular motion of grinding with a Garosha. Her head is down.

The Depressed: Only I have been asked to walk the straight path.

The Women: All of us were asked to walk the straight path.

The Depressed: Only I was asked to carry the honor of my men. Only I was asked to make the beds of my sisters' husbands.

The Women: All of us were asked to do this.

The Depressed: Because of this I am here.

The Women: Because you make the beds?

The Depressed: No, no, because I'm a coward.

The Idiot: All of us are cowards.

Fatmah: I, too, was a coward.

The Poet: No, we are not cowards, we had our dreams.

The Depressed: Yes, maybe. Only I was swallowed by my dreams. But I was a coward. I was more cowardly than the sandfly, ground into the dust. I led myself to my own slaying when I first learned the meaning of the bleating. Then I started to suck my own milk and depression came to be my daily bread.

The Women: Who led you to the slaughter?

The Depressed (*continues as if she doesn't hear*): I was slain twice. First, when I realized the sound of the bleating, and second, when I was throw into this world.

Fatmah and The Idiot: We don't understand. How were you slain twice?

The Poet: Yes, she was slain twice, as I was slain ten times.

The Idiot and Fatmah: It seems to us that we are strangers in this world. Who slew you?

The Depressed: That slothful man was a frozen mass and I was to purify my self from that ice. Through my purification I led myself to death. Only I have been asked to walk the straight path.

The Women: All of us were asked to walk the straight path.

The Depressed: When they led me to the first slaying, they sang the wedding song. (*The Women circle her, their hands swaying in unison.*)

We-li-le He-e-nachi Ya-a`-roois. We-lile he-nak ya hiii. Ma hada zieek ya a`roos, ma hadaa zaiiik ya hiiii.

The mourning song continues in the background while The Depressed continues her story.

The Depressed: An old woman, the mother of the groom, gave me a mass of henna and said, "Glue this on the wall." (*The woman acts as if to press henna on imaginary walls.*)

The Depressed: And the mass fell (*a drum beats*). The second mass fell (*two drum beats*). The third mass fell (*four drum beats*). The fourth mass fell (*four drum beats*). The fifth mass fell (*five drum beats*).

The Idiot: It was a cursed wedding. She was a cursed bride...cursed bride...cursed bride.

The Depressed: I am more cowardly than the sandfly, I am more cowardly than the sandfly, I am more cowardly than the sandfly. (*Her voice drops slowly to a whisper and the sound of the drum quiets. The women still sing the song in whispering voices.*)

The Depressed (*whispering*): When he held my hand, I felt thorns pierce my palm. I followed him with a broken heart. I felt a bitter taste in my throat. He kissed me and I felt the earth swallow me. (*She writhes like a snake, then takes a tray of wheat flour and forms a hole in the middle, pouring water into the hole. She begins to mix the water and flour very slowly, then with increasing intensity, kneading rhythmically, her tongue out.*)

The Depressed: Ahh...ahh...ahh.

The Idiot: Ahh...ahh...ahh, stop, don't continue, stop. (*The light focuses on The Idiot; she pushes The Depressed away from the bowl and starts to nervously knead the bread, moaning. She looks at The Depressed with wild eyes.*) He opened my legs; I was icy. (*With the dough she shapes a ball then inserts her finger into the ball.*) Like this he slew me, without mercy, and the kneading became the pattern of my life.

The Depressed: I was like a sheep bleating, bleating, bleating until I shouted, "I don't love you!"

The Women: What did he say?

The Depressed: I felt like I swallowed a poison frog. My body was clenched.

The Idiot (*without interruption, continuing the story of The Depressed as if it is her story too*): He said to me, "Take off your dress." I wanted to kill him, but my tongue was glued in my mouth.

The Depressed: I felt that my body was a limestone mould. I didn't want to remove my dress. He said to me, "People must witness your innocence." (*She pauses and stands up, her face turning to anger.*)

The Depressed and The Idiot: He crushed me.

The Women: Crushing me, pounding me, crushing me, pounding me, crushing me....

We hear a single thump of the grain pounder. The curtain closes.

SCENE FOUR

The stage is lighted. The Depressed is still standing, absorbed in her thoughts; she holds the subhat. Each of the other women holds a pounder and makes a motion onto the ground, as though rolling pita. All sing softly.

heee hi lebnaia...heee hi tzwajaat...hee hi khlafat walad...heee hi ma kebrat...heehi ma kibraaat...heeeehii ma firhat...heeeehii maafer-haat...womakbrat.

The Depressed: He crushed me like dough.

The Women (*rhythmically very fast*): Crushed her, crushed me, pounded her, pounded me, slay her, slay me....

The Depressed (*shouting*): Hush! What do you know about a body bleeding without blood? I said to him, "I hate you." He didn't care and he didn't stop. (*She sits down and stares blankly, imitating the movement of grinding with the garosha.*) What do you know about grinding body like a green wheat? Garosha...garosha...garosha.

The Women: Why didn't you run away?

The Depressed: Did you run away?

The Women: Garosha...garosha...garosha.

The Depressed: I grew tired and depression lay on my heart. I was bored with the walls. I entered a melancholy dream.

The Poet: Nobody knows the dream like me.

The Depressed: I started to craft the illusion and pull it like a rope around my waist. I dressed it in beautiful flowers. I became a part of the illusion and it baptized me in my depression. I hallucinated, painting my dream.

The Poet: All of my life I relied on the illusion like a guarantee. I was living for a look, for a word. The illusion became a man that I grasped for until I was broken, but I didn't give up.

The Women (*singing, starting slowly and gradually building. The last sentence is very strong. The women drum to the rhythm, with a final thump on the last word.*):

*Green, green became tree / Green, green became seed
The tree falls, the seed weeps / The oil bleeds.
Green, green became one / Green, green became two
Green, green became three / Green, green became four
Green, green became five / Green, green became six
Green, green became seven/ Green, green became eight
Green, green became nine/ Green, green became ten
And the ten driven by the wind.*

The Poet (*stands and holds the hand of The Depressed. They circle together slowly, building speed then abruptly stop*): Does the dream come to you?

The Depressed: Yes, he comes.

The Poet: He comes to me, too.

Fatmah (*sadly, eyes downcast*): And he comes to me.

The Poet: When I was a child, I read a story about a man who lived in the sea. He was like a fish, but also the most handsome man. He became my dream. I slept with open eyes, to see my Neptune. Every night I gave him another name. Neptune obsessed me.

The Depressed: Were you killed for that?

The Poet: Nobody killed me.

The Depressed: Leave our circle. You don't belong to us.

The Poet: I belong. I killed myself because of him.

The Idiot: Who?

Fatmah: Who?

The Poet: Who stole my dream? The sea. The sea gave birth to me. He was like a turtle without his shelter.

The Idiot: Our shelter fell on our heads and he didn't care. He forced me to travel with him to the city. There I saw him make love with her. I would like to run away. I was afraid to be lost in the city. He obliged me to see them naked and after that he was taking me, buying me a new dress and buying me a cake for children. When we returned home, I was scrubbing the dishes, and the scene remained before my eyes. When I was cleaning the floor, I wished I was cleaning their faces from it. (*She acts the movements of scrubbing.*)

The Women (*singing in the background, a sort of moaning*):

*Hiiy hiiy heee kant elbent hilweeh / Hiiy heee kant elbent hablaah
Hi he hi hi ma harbat / Hi hi enkhursaat
Enkharsaat / Kant elbent hablllah owhilweeh
Hihee hi heee hi heee hi heee*

The Idiot returns to a fetal position and is silent.

The Poet: He comes to me with barbed wire. I tried to keep a distance from the wire because I knew him from the first look.

Fatmah: Was he a wolf? I'm sure he was a wolf like my brother. Yes, a wolf, a wolf.

The Poet (*continues as though she hasn't heard*): He doesn't have anything except his golden hands. His hands create the songs of the rain and from the colors create the skies for flying. When he came he was like a hole in the sky, his eyes masked and his mouth mute. When his hands touched me I felt God found his home inside of me. Then I entered the hole and didn't escape until my skin melted. When he came I grasped a flower and from it flowed....

The Women: Birds, the whinny, winds, fire....

The Depressed (*alone*): And I rushed to my rosary counting the beads. (*She begins to thumb the beads.*) Coming...not coming...coming...not coming...coming...not coming....

The Poet: She flies to the dream. The thumbing of the beads housed her years and her flower. Her flower retreats into itself. (*She sings*):

*They said to me your dreams are still soft, without flesh
Don't travel to the stars
Don't touch the garosha.*

The Women: Don't touch the garosha...garosha...garosha.

The Poet: Their words tumble in my ear, "Your nakedness will turn to a thorn. Your voice will be strangled. Don't try to dance on the wings of the wind. Don't neigh in the nights, nobody can embroider your moans. Oh my daughter, don't approach the garosha."

The Women: Garosha...garosha...garosha.

The Poet: Because it is stronger than the staff of the Sultan and stronger than the staff of Venus. Don't approach, you will be slain at midday.

The Depressed: You said my words; you stole my thoughts. You, who run to the subhat.

The Poet: Your dreams, you must crumple and bind them.

The Depressed: My mother said, "Your dreams, you must crumple and bind them. Try to choke off the child of the light. Prevent the birth of the fire inside you."

The Poet: Prevent the flame of your small star.

The Women: Coming...not coming...coming...not coming...coming...not coming.

Fatmah: Coming...not coming...coming...not coming, it was the dream that followed me and made me like a flare of light in the dark. A small star pushed me to sing the dream of the heads of wheat.

The Poet: And to paint the holes of my spoiled old skin and to weave a woman, a roaring lioness, and to run to death, to my death, to my dream.

The Women: Coming...not coming...love me...not love me.

The Poet (*performs a movement of swimming*): Wave...wave...
sea...the sea killed me.

The Idiot: How?

Fatmah: Who killed you?

The Poet and The Depressed: The dream killed us. (*The Poet continues the motion of swimming. We hear the cries of cats.*)

The curtains close.

SCENE FIVE

As the curtains open, all the women, except for The Poet, are sitting in a circle. They shift their gaze to The Poet and stare woodenly at her.

The Poet (*stretches as if to encompass the whole world*): She wants to turn life's neck around by the spark of her eyes. She couldn't be tied to the pole.

All of the Women gradually come back to life.

The Depressed: The meowing, like a snake, wakes her in the night and plays with her like a game. She wants to rebel against....

Fatmah: Before she could understand the meaning of rebellion the heads of wheat killed her, the music of the pipe killed her.

The Idiot sits completely still, without expression. The Depressed counts the beads of the subhat. Fatmah weaves the heads of wheat. The Poet returns to her swimming dance. Suddenly, The Idiot begins to howl.

The Idiot: Ah...à...à

The Poet (*angry*): Oh idiot woman, stop your moaning.

The Idiot: Let me moan. Maybe I had a dream, a dream to keep my home together. But there were seven children whom I fed the agony and the misery and abuse of the slave markets, because I was a spinster. My parents sold me to escape that fate. (*She begins to cry.*)

The Women: You sold yourself!

The Idiot: They sold me.

The Women: You sold yourself.

The Idiot: All of the girls my age talked about the eternal ring, and I didn't have a ring. All of them spoke of their first night, only I didn't have a night, even for dreams.

The Poet: Hadn't you games, like my game with Neptune?

Fatmah: Hadn't you dreamed about the heads of wheat?

The Depressed: Even about a bead of subhat?

The Idiot: I was always late. I remember when I reached puberty, when the girls began to examine their bodies, my friend asked me, "Did your public hair grow?" I couldn't understand what she meant.

The Women: Public hair!

The Idiot laughs. All of the women laugh.

The Idiot: She meant pubic hair.

The Women: Oh...oh...oh.

The Idiot: That day I returned to my home sad because I didn't find my public hair. I despaired to be a woman. I became a spinster and my dream became to escape that life. When he came, they sold me.

The Women: You sold yourself.

The Idiot: They sold me.

The Women: You sold yourself.

The Idiot (*cries rhythmically starting loudly and gradually declining to a whisper*): They sold me...they sold me...they sold me. Yes, I sold myself. The first night I tasted the happiness, not like you, Depressed Woman, but it was just one night and then I started to taste the bitterness that is painted on my skin. (*The Poet starts writhing, her hands performing the movement of swimming.*) His hobby when I had braids was to drag me by them.

Fatmah (*touches her hair*): I had two braids. They attracted the man with the pipe.

The Idiot: My braids were the only thing that I was proud of, but I cut them off to prevent my crying out. That day he roared, "What did

you do bitch?" I said nothing. He slapped me and said, "Do you think I can't drag you now?" He grabbed the rest of my hair by the roots. He plucked me like a hen.

Fatmah finds her braid and smiles. The Poet and The Depressed crawl towards The Idiot.

The Poet and The Depressed: Didn't you run away?

The Idiot: How could I run away? The night he dragged me, I slept between my children. My sobbing strangled me, and the eyes of my children were closed, but their hearts were awake and when he went out, the children soothed me, saying "Don't blame him. He was drunk." No, he was not guilty. He was a man like all the men, but not all the women have braids and honey eyes.

The Poet: Oh, you speak poetry.

The Idiot: I don't know poetry. I don't know gladness. I don't know the dream. All of you had a dream, and I was satisfied to dry the sweat from the ground of the rooms. The ceiling was going to collapse on our heads, but he didn't care. My children watched the food in the mouths of the neighbor's children, but he didn't care.

The Women: Who?

The Idiot: Are you still asking? He who bought me. He who saved me from becoming a spinster.

The Women: Who killed you?

The Idiot: He didn't kill me.

All of the Women: Yes, he killed you.

The Idiot: No, he didn't kill me. I killed myself. I didn't despise him. Maybe I didn't know how to live with him.

The Women: Do you still blame yourself?

The Idiot: Yes.

The Women: Go, he is crushing you and you still forgive him. Go. *(They gather around her to push her out.)*

The Idiot: Oh, please, there is nowhere to go. Just hear me, please.

The Women: Oh, Idiot, you haven't anything to tell us.

The Idiot: I tried to explain my problem to my parents. They shouted at me, "He is your husband! You must keep your home together!"

The Women: And you kept it.

The Idiot: Yes, I kept it. And when I felt a rope around my neck, I ran away.

The Women: Oh, you finally ran away.

The Idiot: But I swear that I didn't betray him. (*Crying.*) Nobody believed me.

The Women: Where did you run away to?

The Idiot: Nowhere. I was without direction. I just walked the fields until I got tired. I rested and when I woke up, I returned, broken, to my children. They were crying and he asked me, "Where were you?" I told him I just went out.

We hear the sound of whipping and the soft sound of the pounder.

The Women: What did he do? Did he kill you?

The Idiot: No, he just slapped my face, my head, my back, until I passed out. He was shouting, "Bitch, I will kill you!" And then I woke up here.

The Women: For such a simple thing.

The Idiot: Yes, for such a simple thing. I heard their laughter in my house, on my bed, and I couldn't protest. I just ran, ran until I met you here.

The Women: Your blood is still warm. You are new in this world.

The Idiot: I don't know, just a moment before I was there. Maybe someone saw me in the field.

Fatmah: Oh, the field, I have a field, too.

The Idiot: No, I'm not like you. You have a dream but I haven't. I swear I didn't betray him. I must eat the bitter and keep silent.

The Women: She still doesn't know anything in the world. Oh, Idiot, oh, the spinster that sold herself.

The Idiot: No, I didn't sell myself and you — didn't you sell yourself?

The Women (*seem to shift suddenly into another world*): Coming...not coming. They stole the words, they stole the dream.

The Idiot: Yes, they stole your dreams, stole your words. You sold yourself.

The Depressed: Yes, I sold myself to the one that I dreamed about all of my life. He came like a spark and ignited the ashes of my heart, but he went in a blink, without word, like a cat that you raise and feed but who takes the first chance to scratch you. But the scratching this time was very hard, and I opened my doors for every knock and in the dark night....

The Poet: ...in the dark night when the words were choked off and I was forbidden to perform my only ceremony. My saliva was dry, my tubes were dry, and I dreamed about who that is coming...not coming...coming...not coming.

The Depressed: Coming...not coming...love me...don't love me.

Fatmah: Coming...not coming...love me...don't love me...but I haven't the time to wait. I was on the threshold of the song, just beginning to understand its meaning.

The Poet: In that dark night I performed my last ceremony and went to the sea. My sea was different from all the seas. My sea was my blood.

The Depressed: My sea was my solitude in that dark night, as I counted the beads of the subhat. That was my ceremony. I was grinding the garosha, milling...grinding...milling...grinding.

The Women: Garosha...sea...garosha...sea...garosha.

The Depressed: In the dark night I felt something throb inside me. I didn't understand what it was. I went to my mother and she shouted at me, she told me to sleep on my stomach. "I want to save you from that throbbing!" she shouted.

All of The Women stare at The Depressed.

The Depressed (*Her voice is rhythmic, starting softly and building. It turns to a howl on the word 'garosha'*): My mother was carrying the

garosha...garosha...garosha...garosha. (*End the last 'garosha' sharply.*) My mother threw me on the ground, pounded me on the back, and then the garosha she crushed my desire.

The Poet: In the dark night I stopped, too. (*The Poet stands and performs her swimming movement.*) I was going to swim in my sea. I wrote my last word and looked at my veins. "I let you carry more than you could. You must rest now." And I brought my knife down. My sea became a mass of color and I swam in it gladly. (*Her hands stop moving. She looks at the women.*)

The Women: Coming...not coming...coming...not coming.

The Idiot (*slowly standing, her eyes becoming wild*): Yes, he killed me. Yes, he killed me. He dragged me to the floor, tied me like a dog, and said to me, "You stay here without food without drink."

The Women: Oh, Idiot, you forgave him.

The Idiot: Maybe I shouldn't have run away. After a week of torture he took hold of his grandfather's oak club. If I had known that I would die by that club I might have broken it, but it broke my head. My blood is still hot, my blood is still hot. (*She crumples to the floor.*)

The Women (*approaching The Idiot and leaning over her, whispering*): Her blood is still hot...her blood is still hot...my blood is still hot...my blood is still hot. (*They crouch closer, embracing each other. The lights fade to black and the curtain closes.*)

SCENE SIX

The curtain opens. All of The Women are dressed in white, crowned with garlands of wheat and wearing subhats as bracelets. They sit around a bowl of oil, then place their hands in the bowl. We hear a voice from offstage. "At the last supper, the people planned to exorcise the disturbed ghost that upset them."

The Poet: Her feet were her testimony and the wetness of her mouth the proof that she covered herself with night, the cover of love. She went out into the night, hoping to be quenched. She filled her nights wishing that the flood wouldn't steal her spirit until she became a sea and drowned herself.

The Depressed: Her sea was an illusion until it became the song that killed her.

Fatmah: All of us were in love with the wheat and its waves... wave... wave... wave.

The Idiot: I dreamed of running away from that hell and living like the others.

The Women: All of us were killed because we dreamed, we dreamed with songs, with beads, with subhat, with heads of wheat, with garosha—and now we will take revenge. (*They put their hands together.*) We will disturb their sleep.

A sound is heard from offstage, "kharboosh kharoosh, maltooosh maltooosh, hantooosh hantooosh, go out, kharboosh maltooosh hantooosh."

The Women (*in competition with the sound*): Allah hi...Allah hi...Allah hi.... (*The Women remove their hands from the bowl and block their ears.*)

Fatmah (*whispering*): He is coming with his axe!

The Poet (*whispering*): Oh, I am cutting my vein.

The Depressed (*whispering*): Garosha...garosha...garosha.

The Idiot (*whispering*): He comes to drag me.

The Women : We must struggle...struggle...struggle.

The lights begin to dim. The Womens' bodies become like ghosts that disappear slowly, then vanish. The curtain closes. In the background, we hear a song:

*Hi heee kant el-benit elhilwee-kanat
Kant hilwe we-smira-kant
Wkhadha zahir ruman-khadha
Kant zahr el-romaan-kanat
Kant helwi wnahiffee-kanat
Kant mhaa a `l-maii-kanat
Kan sha `arha tweel-kanat
Mlar el-jara min el-beer-kant
Ahh iaa a `een, ahh ia a `iin,ah...ya...a `eeeen*

The curtains open to the sound of the garosha. The light focuses on the handle of the garosha with the subhat hanging from its handle. The curtains close.