

THE TRANSFORMATION

by Doruk Baykal

Setting:

1800s France, a town in good condition.

Arthur's european style vintage house, theater hall, study/practice/costume hall, town square

Characters:

ARTHUR: 25 years old, good looking european/french gentleman, curious but impatient and irritable, dreams to become a theater hall

HENRY: Arthur's cousin, nearly 30 years old, tall, noble, respected by the society, gets a job as a director in theater hall of the town

JOSEPH: Arthur's assistant when Arthur becomes an actor, nearly 30, skinny, clown, trickster, clever and fraudulent

BEATRICE: Arthur's future wife, affectionate, delicate girl of a wealthy family, a little bit yonder than Arthur (22-23)

BEATRICE'S DAD: A wealthy man, french bourgeois, a bearded, elderly gentleman

PRINCIPAL: An old man in his 50s, the principle of the theater saloon

SCENE 1

(Town square, in an autumn, nearly evening, square is busy with some families and coasters, Arthur and Beatrice are sitting under the statue, Arthur declaring his love to Beatrice)

ARTHUR: Beatrice, you do not understand, I am in love with you. What would I do without you!

BEATRICE: Yes Arthur I know, I love you too. But you should understand, my dad is a decisive person and he literally runs the house. He wants me to marry someone who has a job and is respectable. You're still young and you don't have a job. I'm sure after a while you'll get your life back on track and I'll be waiting for you.

ARTHUR: Beatrice, I am ready to do everything for you. Just wait for my news, I will be there when it is the right time.

BEATRICE: See you soon dear.

(Beatrice leaves the square. While Arthur continues to wait thoughtfully, his cousin Henry enters the scene happily, greets a few people and comes next to Arthur.)

HENRY: Greetings, my dear friend! Shouldn't we open the gap too much? We should meet more often.

ARTHUR: Yes, Henry. It has been some time. I have been dealing with some issues.

HENRY: So let me give you some great news and we celebrate this day! I Have been accepted as both a writer and director of the town theater.

ARTHUR: Really!? That's the best thing I have heard this week. You know I also want to become an actor one day, who knows, maybe we will get the opportunity to work together.

HENRY: Actually, the great news was not just about me but also you. I will be visiting the manager and asking for a trial about your acting skills. So me finding a job will also lead you to become an actor!

ARTHUR: Dear Henry, you are amazing!

HENRY: Thanks, but it is your time to prove yourself, I will just open you a door for you. Now, wait for my news and try to work as much as possible.

(They both say goodbye and disperse.)

SCENE 2

(Theater saloon, study room, candidates are lined up, theater principal and Henry are testing the candidates in order.)

PRINCIPAL: *(spreading his mouth widely)* Next!

HENRY: Sir, this is my cousin Arthur, he is a very talented young man who is looking for an amazing career here!

PRINCIPAL: Let's see, Arthur, can you please play this text for me?

(Arthur recites the text for minutes, principal appreciates and gives him another text, Arthur plays every given text amazing and the principal claps for him every time.)

PRINCIPAL: Arthur, what a fabulous performance! We are looking forward to meeting you again. I wrote you on my list. Please wait for our next invitation.

ARTHUR: Thanks! It is amazing to hear that. See you soon.

SCENE 3

(After some weeks, Arthur is set to play his first play ever, theater saloon, a beautiful evening, all actors are getting ready for the start.)

HENRY: Okey Arthur, relax, calm down and do not forget this will be the best night of your life! Praying to God that everything will go flawless. Okay, let's start.

ARTHUR: I am so excited but I think we will figure out a way, my friend. A significant role for my first ever play is a bit too much, but I trust myself and especially you! Let's do this.

(Arthur goes and does a great job in his first play, everyone in the hall applauds)

PRINCIPAL: Arthur, I know you were actually going to do an amazing job, but this is far beyond my expectation! I am looking forward to our next projects

ARTHUR: Thanks, Sir. I would definitely accept new chances.

SCENE 4

(Next day, the whole town is talking about Arthur's performance, Arthur enters the theater saloon to do his daily habits)

PRINCIPAL: Good morning Arthur!

ARTHUR: Good morning sir, how is everything going?

PRINCIPLE: Haha! Glad you asked. Your story is in people's mouths since the evening. Your performance spread so much that people came and asked about the next play's date.

ARTHUR: That's great! So, when is the next play?

PRINCIPAL: So we are doing a 'next one'?

ARTHUR: Yeah, another one won't harm that much.

PRINCIPAL: If you say so, we can do it! I am starting for prepare.

(Arthur plays the same game again, with that, he is even more popular now. The story of Arthur becoming an amazing actor is now being talked all around the city.)

SCENE 5

(Henry and Arthur are sitting on a table, drinking and talking.)

ARTHUR: You know what? I think I will find myself a helper. All this fame is too much for a little period. I need someone to do my extra work for me. I have never seen this much money much in my entire life!

HENRY: Sure Arthur, I will take a look at our team. Let's see if we will find anyone.

(Henry goes to the workers' room and comes back with a guy.)

HENRY: Arthur, this is our friend Joseph, he is actually a financial helper, but you know, there is not even a considerable economy these days so he is doing extra work here to maintain his life.

JOSEPH: Hello sir, I would gladly do what is needed.

ARTHUR: Thanks, I have been certainly dealing with issues about money calculation. I never even thought I would earn this much money. I need someone to deal with it. I can pay you a great share.

JOSEPH: Appreciate it, sir, let's look at the situation first, then we can discuss other stuff. *(Turns to the audience)* Bourgeois, bourgeois! They commit all kinds of corruption and then expect the best service. I will show them the service!
(Laughs angrily)

SCENE 6

(Meanwhile, Arthur plays the same game times and times, him struggling from this much tempo and public pressure, his journey is shown as a speechless scene.)

SCENE 7

(Joseph enters Arthur's room to give his money which he earned after playing the same game for too many times. He is bored and complains about the situation to Joseph.)

JOSEPH: Sir, I have never seen anyone who became so famous and successful with his acting. Here is the check of your next payment.

ARTHUR: You know what Joseph, as much as the gain looks desirable, I am tired of playing this game. I can't protect myself mentally. It is just too much.

JOSEPH: Sir, of course it is not easy to play the role of aggressive king. How many people have played a character who gradually goes crazy? You are a brand

new face, you are the new step this world needs. You are that jewel, sir, who criticizes this royal order.

ARTHUR: Maybe, I am really what you say Joseph...

JOSEPH: Now sir, please sign this agreement about your new play. (Arthur signs something without paying attention.)

JOSEPH: (turns to the audience) Look at this, how sad! As if he's not doing it for money and he's feeling bad, you'll see the real evil!

SCENE 8

(Another day, Arthur is preparing for the game, wearing his costume, sitting in front of the mirror, talking to himself.)

ARTHUR: I have played this role so many times that I have turned to, him. No, I am alright, where does this all come from? I, I don't know what do anymore. I am no longer myself.

HENRY: Arthur, the game is about to begin.

ARTHUR: (aggressively) Henry, I don't want to do this anymore.

HENRY: What?

ARTHUR: All this, affects me. I don't want to be the king who is hated by everybody.

HENRY: What are you talking about Arthur? This is just some type of fiction. Not real, don't care about it this much.

ARTHUR: You don't understand. In the game, every role is played by different people. Only I stay the same, no one would understand this.

PRINCIPAL: Hey, what is going on here!? The game is about to start and you guys are arguing? Come on, we don't have time for this.

(The argument is glossed over, they all do their work for now.)

SCENE 9

(Game ends, at the exit of hall Arthur and Beatrice are talking. Arthur is starting to act strange.)

BEATRICE: Hey Arthur, you were looking exhausted today, is everything okay?

ARTHUR: (with a cold expression) I am not exhausted.

BEATRICE: You are actually. Look at yourself...

ARTHUR: (shouting) I said I am not exhausted!

(Everybody in the public starts to look them and Beatrice feels embarrassed.)

BEATRICE: Arthur, it is impossible to know you anymore.

ARTHUR: Beatrice, I, I didn't mean to...

(Beatrice doesn't listen Arthur and leaves.)

SCENE 10

(The next day, messenger clowns are walking around the street shouting that Arthur used violence against his girlfriend. Principal, Joseph and Henry are talking about the situation of Arthur.)

PRINCIPAL: Alright gentlemen, we have to discuss this issue. Arthur is out of control.

HENRY: Indeed, my friend. Reporters saw him last night when he was using violence against his girlfriend.

JOSEPH: I am deeply concerned about him. He doesn't care what he does and acts like he is the only person in the world.

PRINCIPAL: Gentlemen, I believe we should implement the restraining order in the contract. His existence may adversely affect the prestige of this hall. Also, Joseph, you proved you were worthy for a better job. Dealing with Arthur is difficult. You will be promoted.

JOSEPH: Thanks sir, it is an honor.

HENRY: As you wish sir, but let's still follow a peaceful regulation.

SCENE 11

(Joseph and Beatrice meets to talk about Arthur)

BEATRICE: Joseph, what should I do, I can't understand him anymore.

JOSEPH: My lady, I suggest you to move away from him for some time. He needs some assistance. We are also trying to figure out what he is doing.

BEATRICE: Please help us Joseph... I can't continue like this. (hugs Joseph, Arthur sees them together.)

ARTHUR: Joseph!! You caused all this, you made me do it and ruined my career.

(from nowhere, a group of protesters block Arthur and start to react him because of his actions.)

PROTESTERS: Arthur, resign! We don't want psychopaths!

(Arthur runs away and emigrates from the city, quits acting. No one ever wonders him ever until then.)

SCENE 12

(Years later, Henry still works in theater, and an assistant brings some old documents.)

ASSISTANT: Sir, here are some old documents from the previous years, should I throw them or let them stay in the storage.

HENRY: Let me take a look, thank you.

(When Henry opens the files, he sees the documents that Arthur signed, which are about Joseph's scam.)

HENRY: Wait, Arthur was scammed by Joseph? That dishonest made Arthur to play the same role and transferred his money to his accounts? Joseph!!!

THE END