



ATÉTIQUE

MELODRAMMA

A FOUR-ACT OPERA WITH OVERTURE AND REQUIEM

BY

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ACT II

VI century AD. The sun rises over the fortress of Dara. Outside the walls, Kandal – returning from the long exile to which he has been condemned – watches the new day break as a possibility of redemption. From the chambers of the Palace of Mirrors, Princess Urumj also watches the sunrise on the tenth anniversary of the Feast of Flowers: the day on which Kandal, the man she fell in love with, rejected her heart before the entire people, humiliating her publicly. Since that day, a curse has hung over Kandal's head – that his death alone shall satisfy the dishonour inflicted upon her. Temiro, captain of the Palace Guard, patrols the streets of Dara to prevent the sacrilegious man – marked by a tattoo on his left hand – from ever setting foot on that ground again. The penalty: a

dishonourable death at the hands of the lowliest of his soldiers.

As the city stirs back to life, adorning itself for the day of celebration, an irrepressible will to live drives Kandal to defy fate. To cross the forbidden streets once more, in search of his beloved Kemal. Once again inside the walls of the city that witnessed the birth of their pure, spontaneous, and secret love. Once again behind that door, waiting to hold him close, to bind their souls together forever into one. Two men, each the other's destination and half – united in a single soul. Two sides of the same coin: Kandal, the exuberant fugitive; Kemal, the patient stillness of one who, in the face of hardship, remains. Accepting the pain, the loss, and the humiliation branded on his face by Temiro as a mark of a nature deemed wrong. A warning to all who dare challenge power.

Kandal touches the door. Kemal opens it. Time is powerless before bound souls. The same flame burns bright.

Alone in their shelter, the two lovers embrace once more. Sleep arrives like a consolation – a mantle that covers and warms, making them forget time, and the wrong they have suffered. In the streets, the noise grows.



ACT III

Burning with the dream of a new life – to be lived together, in the truth of Love – Kandal and Kemal make plans to leave Dara. Memories of the past flow freely, joyful and light, filled with the certainty that they have not lost each other.

Then anger rises: that mark demands vengeance. Kandal's spirit ignites. He wants to punish the Princess, to wound her with the full weight of the truth. To strike Temiro in open confrontation. Kemal draws the flames back to calm – to the warmth that governs Love, to the

founding cell of all they feel, still vivid across the years. Kemal's love is full and mature, unconditional in form and time. Kandal's is bold and vigorous, inseparable from passion and form. Yet the bond is true, and the will to live and love surpasses everything. The plan for their departure takes shape: at dawn the following day, when the people, exhausted from the feast, will be deep in sleep.

A journey of no return, however, demands a farewell – a final walk through those beloved walls, the motherland of their quiet, dignified Being. How to do it? Kandal has the answer: a game, a challenge – disguise. A true nature that needs no mask, yet chooses one freely, to move among ordinary people as itself.

The farewell leads Kandal and Kemal to cross the threshold of their shelter and merge into the crowd of the Feast of Flowers, ten years on. Kandal, dressed as a woman, is the first to step beyond the door. Kemal follows. But Kandal's game becomes a test. The test becomes a provocation. And from there, the step toward outright challenge is short. The

ordinary life they long for lies beyond the speed of time, along the dangerous edge of a space where anyone might recognise Kandal.

Ill-fated is the destiny of those who defy the limits of space and time of the age in which they live.

Temiro, patrolling the streets, suddenly seems to recognise that tattoo. He moves closer, but two women in the crowd collide with him, drawing his attention away. It had seemed like him. Yet nearby, just a few steps away, Kemal too walks freely, happy. The deduction follows. Captain Temiro calls his Guard around him. The encirclement tightens slowly. The circle closes. The couple is exposed. Kemal is pulled away from the centre where Kandal remains.

Kemal's cries pass from mouth to mouth, reaching every ear in the city, until they arrive – carried by human hands – at those of Princess Urumj. Her heart, stirred by her subjects, finds no compassion, no forgiveness. Nothing moves to stay the hand she has armed. Ilo, hurled by proud Temiro, delivers the mortal

blow to Kandal. His soul takes flight.

Time slows almost to a halt. In the widening space of that suspended moment, Najro – the supreme arcane angel of Love – descends upon the scene. Moved by the feeling that governs his mask – by the end of a part of himself, taken by merciful death from the life it should have lived – he weeps, caressing time as it slows and becomes tangible matter.

The decision is made: to bend Time. To transform the figure-eight of the hourglass into a circle. The face of a clock. A Time that moves in reverse, counterclockwise – carrying everything back to the moment where it all began. The unspooled thread of their lives rewinds, returning Kandal and Kemal to the moment that sealed their fate: their meeting.

There, having placed the two lovers so they cannot see each other, Najro lets time flow forward once more. The circle becomes the figure-eight again, resuming its rightful course. Moving between them, Najro tries to prevent that encounter – that glance – from ever happening.

Turning their eyes away each time the magnetism draws them together. Placing distractions between them to stop the bond pulling toward its inevitable destiny.

But the attempt is in vain. Kandal meets Kemal's gaze. At doubled speed, the thread that joins two lives wraps and binds the two existences together – all the way to the martyrdom now about to be fulfilled.

Najro, powerless, accepts the higher destiny. He tries to fly away, to avoid witnessing the pain that kills a part of himself – the part that lives in every lover. But the weight of grief holds him. His wings break under the burden. Once again, he must witness the death of that true feeling.

One last attempt: as a mortal being, Najro tries to move those around him to compassion for Kandal's soul. His voice, vibrating at a frequency too low for human ears, reaches nonetheless the souls of the otherworldly. Breathed into a vessel by the Sighs – the lesser arcane ministers of Love – and carried by the Immortals, it travels through the Shadows of Time to

reach the ears of the Princess, who is healed of her pain.

Forgiveness tears through her divided soul: the woman who loved pardons and sets free; the offended regent punishes without mercy. The power of Love has accomplished the miracle of forgiveness. But the desperate race arrives too late – when the events have already reached their end. When Ilo, driven by proud Temiro, has already delivered the mortal blow to Kandal. In a surge of life – rushing to seize the other half of himself as it takes flight – Kemal raises a blade and cuts his own throat, falling dead beside his Kandal.

Not even compassion can alter life, which is as it is because the threads are laid elsewhere.

Kandal's death arrives pathetic – in a grief amplified until it becomes all the grief of every lover in the world. Kemal chooses to follow him, abandoning a life empty without the other half of his incomplete soul.

Because Love is not man and woman. Love is an indissoluble bond – true and absolute. All weep with a feeling of melancholic

sorrow, of sadness, of
compassion, of pity.

The stars go out. The rain arrives.