

REBORN

CHARACTERS

George, the father

Sevan, the son

Doctor

Helen, the dead wife

(Helen and the doctor are played by the same actress)

(A kitchen of a house. A table and two chairs. A 60-year-old man is sitting on a chair drinking a cup of coffee. After a while, a 35-year-old man, his son, enters.)

SCENE 1

SEVAN

Morning.

GEORGE

(angrily) Where the hell have you been? I haven't seen you for the last three days.

SEVAN

You know, fooling around.

GEORGE

Fooling around and wasting my money. I can't take it anymore. I've been working for almost all of my life. I want to retire.

SEVAN

Retire, then.

GEORGE

How can I? I'm the only one working in this house. You must find a job.

SEVAN

I can't, father. I'm sick. You know that.

GEORGE

Yes, you can. It is very easy. You can do it.

SEVAN

What?

GEORGE

Live a normal life again.

SEVAN

What do you mean normal?

GEORGE

Find a job, get married, do something with your life.

SEVAN

I can't, father. You are having illusions. I have tried so many times. It's impossible.

GEORGE

Nothing's impossible. When your mother died, I said to myself: «George, you have to be brave. You can help your child.» And I promised her that I would never leave you alone. And now...nothing. Oh, come on. We can do it together. I will help you.

SEVAN

Why don't you want to understand? I'm sick father. There is no salvation for me anymore. I am doomed. Stop hoping. Please, father, stop having dreams for me. I have no future.

GEORGE

(angrily) How can you say that? What about me? We're a family. You are my son...*(moved)* I love you, son.

SEVAN

I'm so tired. This is it what I've become. A parasite, a leech sucking your blood, sucking your life. I feel so guilty. I am so sorry...

GEORGE

Look. I have something to tell you. I've been told about a new method. There's a doctor. All her patients have been cured. In fact, I've made an appointment. Tomorrow evening. You will be reborn; you must believe me. *(daydreaming)* You know, I've been having this dream lately. I am here in the kitchen. Your mother comes and sits close to me. "Don't worry, George," she says. "Don't worry. Our son will be saved. He is a survivor. He has always been."

SEVAN

(interrupting him) Bullshit!

GEORGE

(continues as if he hasn't heard him) But then your mother starts melting. Her face first. Then her whole body. And I'm just sitting there, and I can't do anything! I can't stand up. The more I try to stand up, the more I feel like I'm tied on the chair. I can't move. I yell.

SEVAN

And?

GEORGE

(looks at Sevan, the daydreaming stops) I yell, I scream and then wake up. Scared, horrified, numb.

SEVAN

OK. OK. Look, father. I've tried everything so far. I've been to all the places supposed to help me. Therapeutic communities, I even went to Athens to change my blood. Remember? Ten years ago. Mother hadn't left yet. And nothing fucking happened. Hospitals, therapies, doctors, pills, drugs to help me detoxify from heroin. Hospitals, therapies, doctors, more pills, more drugs.

GEORGE

You have to listen to me!

SEVAN

You should have let me kill myself that time. Think about it. It would have been difficult in the beginning, but time heals everything. When someone's gone, he's gone forever. He won't return. Never. You suck it up and move on. It wouldn't be that bad after a while. Think about it. You could

even find a new wife, someone to love you, someone to take care of you. You deserve it after all you've suffered. So, stop looking after me. It's useless. I'm lost.

GEORGE

(worn out) Don't say that, please!

SEVAN

I'm talking to you, but you don't want to listen to me.

GEORGE

I'm listening.

SEVAN

No, you aren't. I'm lost in a labyrinth. Its streets are narrow and dark. I'm wandering in the dark and it is always after me. I turn left, I turn right, everywhere I go there is a wall. I'm moving on, I'm moving back, I turn around.... it's always after me. Sometimes, I manage to escape. But suddenly it appears again, a temptation you can't resist. You won't get out of it. It's too late for you, it says. You know something? If someone told me «I can make your dreams come true. What would you like more? The best car in the world?» *(answers to himself)* IT! «A mansion by the beach?»

GEORGE

Yes! Yes! Let's go to Santorini. That sunset...that sunset...We had just been married, honeymoon in Santorini...

SEVAN

(interrupting him) “To become the richest person on Earth?” IT! «Your father happy again?» IT! «Your mother back?» IT! HEROIN! IT! I am an addict, why can't you understand? Why?

SCENE 2

(A doctor's office. The doctor is sitting on her chair. George and Sevan are sitting on a couch next to her. The doctor looks like a crazy scientist, white hair, white gown.)

DOCTOR

As you already know, you are here because of the drug addiction you are suffering from. No matter

how hard you try to detoxify, the disease will be always there, like a volcano expelling lava and ashes. It may seem inactive, but it is always ready to erupt. And that is why, even though some people claim that they have beaten addiction, they never forget their former lives as junkies. And that is the reason why the danger of lapsing into it again never stops existing.

GEORGE

Doctor, we know all these. But what can we do? Is there anything that could save my son? Is there still any a kind of hope?

SEVAN

Dad let her talk. Although I can't see any point, I will listen to her. But bear this in mind, it's the last time. If nothing changes this time, you will leave me alone, as you promised me. That was the deal, that's why I followed you here today.

DOCTOR

OK. What I have to offer is a life free from addiction. You will be reborn. My therapy is a very simple one. Neither medication, nor any kind of surgery. I will intervene into that part of your brain where the memories lie. And I will erase them all. After that, it will be as if you were never an addict. You are going to forget everything. Everything you know about yourself, about your family, your friends. And this is the price of this therapy. All your memories will stop existing. You won't be Sevan after that, you will be nobody's son, nobody's beloved friend. A stranger among strangers. You are going to forget everything and thus you will be free. I realize it's a difficult decision for a human being to make but this is the solution I have to offer... To be reborn...

(The lights dim as George and Sevan look at each other stunned)

SCENE 3

(Back at home again. Sevan is preparing breakfast and seems to be in a good mood. George enters the kitchen. He looks troubled)

GEORGE

I couldn't sleep all night. I was thinking of the doctor.... I don't know... I'm not sure if this is going

to work. She didn't convince me.

SEVAN

I think that I will take her offer. For the first time in my life I see some light at the end of the tunnel.

I can be free again. I want to do it. I have nothing to lose.

GEORGE

Except for your own self.

SEVAN

I was lost anyway.

GEORGE

Maybe we should think about it again.

SEVAN

I've made my decision. In fact, tomorrow is the big day. I am seeing the doctor.

GEORGE

There must be other ways, too. We should not rush.

SEVAN

(angrily) WE! WE! WE! There is no "we" in this. It's me. And I'm alone in this as I have always been. Stop talking about us, stop it!

GEORGE

Have you ever thought how it is going to be, having no past? No memories?

SEVAN

Memories can't keep me alive. Memories haven't helped so far.

GEORGE

What about me? To forget your own father?

SEVAN

You won't forget me, that's the good thing.

GEORGE

How can you be joking? You have no emotions at all?

SEVAN

Why are you acting like that? I thought you would only want me to be happy.

GEORGE

Of course, I do. The best for you, this is all I want.

SEVAN

Then let me decide for my life. I choose not to have past so that I can have a future.

GEORGE

There is no future without a past. There will be no tomorrow if it weren't for a yesterday.

SEVAN

When you are on the brink of the abyss, nothing of all these matters. Either you move forward and fall or you step back and die.

GEORGE

I wish I had never introduced you to that woman.

SEVAN

One man's loss, another one's gain.

GEORGE

Who is going to lose and who is going to gain?

SEVAN

Stop being so melodramatic. I thought you wished the best for me.

GEORGE

I DO! But not like that. What will I become? A husband without a wife. A father without a son.

SEVAN

It will be better that way. For both of us. You'll see. Why can't you let me for once take charge of my own life? This is what you were supposed to desire. Father, the time has come and once again you can do nothing.

SCENE 4

(The following morning. They are in the doctor's office again. The stage is divided in two rooms, the waiting room where the father is and the room where the treatment is going to take place. The doctor enters the waiting room where Sevan and George are.)

DOCTOR

Welcome. Don't worry about your son. Everything is going to be just fine.

GEORGE

Thank you, doctor. I have been thinking of it over and over. I can't deprive Sevan of this opportunity. We will get used to the new situation as we have always had.

DOCTOR

OK, then. Sevan is coming with me now, but you have to wait here. It won't take more than 15 minutes, ok? You can hug your son, if you wish. Everything is under my control now, so just relax...you look so stressed.

(George stands up and he goes to hug him almost staggering)

SEVAN

Are you ok, dad? You're trembling.

GEORGE

Yes, I'm fine. I'm just getting emotional, you know. Come on, go ahead. I will be here for you when all this will have finished. Go ahead and don't forget, I love you, son.

SEVAN

I love you, too, dad...in case I won't remember to say that later...

(They hug and Sevan leaves with the doctor. Sevan is lying on the bed and the doctor attaches a device with wires to Sevan's head and starts the therapy. Sevan and the doctor don't talk at all, they fade into darkness and the focus is on the waiting room. George seems rather anxious, paces the room and talks)

GEORGE

Oh, my God. What have I done? How are we going to cope? I'm not feeling very well.

(He sits on the sofa and a woman, his dead wife, enters the room)

GEORGE

This can't be happening! Helen, my baby, I've missed you so much! *(tries to stand up but he can't)*

I want to hug you...I can't move!!!

HELEN

(calmly) Calm down, George. You have paid your dues in this world. Now it's time you came with me. Sevan will make it. It's his turn now to live, to take his life back. You have to depart. It's time for you to retire...from your life.

GEORGE

But I can't. I can't leave him alone. You made me promise you that.

HELEN

Forget the promises, forget life, forget him. There are no memories in the place we're heading to.

Only eternal happiness and ignorance. Only bliss and oblivion. Come with me, come....

(George is having a heart attack, faints and dies as Helen exit. The lights fade until the waiting room gets completely dark. Lights on the other room, where Sevan is sitting on a chair and looks lost)

DOCTOR

Sevan don't be afraid. I will explain everything. You went under a treatment. You were a drug addict. You're ok now but you have lost your memory forever. But don't worry. Outside there is your father waiting. He will take you home and then you can start your new life.

SEVAN

But why? Who am I? How old am I? Where do I live? Where do I come from? Where am I going to?

Do I have children? A wife, maybe? What kind of person am I? Am I a criminal? A drug addict???

Have I killed a human? Have I stolen, have I cheated, have I seduced? Tell me please I want to know.

DOCTOR

Come on, Sevan. Your father is waiting for you. He will provide you all the answers. Come on.

(they go into the waiting room where George is lying dead.)

DOCTOR

George, George. Oh my God, what happened to him? *(she touches him to see if he has a pulse)* He's dead! Oh my God!

SEVAN

Who am I? How old am I? Where do I live? Where do I come from? Where am I going to? Do I have children? A wife, maybe? What kind of person am I? Am I a criminal? A drug addict??? Have I killed a human? Have I stolen, have I cheated, have I seduced, have I deceived? *(he keeps repeating these words as the stage fades into darkness)*