

**Jaan Tätte**

**THE HIGHWAY CROSSING, OR THE TALE OF A  
GOLDEN FISH**

*Hitch-hiking to go to a party, the young lovers Laura and Roland find themselves stuck in the middle of the countryside. It's getting dark and nobody will give them a ride. They find a solitary cottage in the woods, inhabited by Oswald, a middle-aged oddball bachelor. Reluctantly he allows them both to stay, although he'd clearly prefer it if Roland left. Oswald is infatuated with Laura and makes the couple an unexpected proposal. He claims that a magical golden fish gave him four billion dollars. He now offers Roland one billion to forget about Laura, and promises to fill all of Laura's dreams with the rest of the money. Roland and Laura think that it's crazy talk but when they check the back room of the shabby cottage, they indeed find boxes full of money. Laura decides that this is too good a chance to let go. She agrees to stay with Oswald and urges Roland to leave. Secretly she suggests to Roland that this is only a temporary arrangement – they can get back together after they have gotten hold of the money. Oswald overhears them and decides to back down from the deal but now the young couple is ready to do anything to change his mind. Disillusioned and heartbroken, Oswald offers them to simply take the lot. As they're about to start celebrating, the real owner of the money arrives. It turns out that the money Oswald found in his back room was not a magical gift; it was simply hidden there by a gang of criminals on the run from the police. They now quickly remove what's theirs and leave. As the fairytale is over, there's just one more thing to do: to start the play all over again!*

*The characters: Oswald Koger (Carp); a lonely middle-aged man living in a cottage in the woods; Laura Siig (Whitefish), a young woman from the city; Roland Räm (Sprat), her boyfriend, a young man from the city; Kaupo Koha (Pike-perch), a middle-aged man, big-time criminal.*

Extract from the play:

ROLAND: I don't want any offers.

OSWALD: You'd better listen to it first. Would you die without Laura?

ROLAND: Sure.

OSWALD: Don't be rash again. How do you picture that?

ROLAND: I'd simply die.

OSWALD: You'd kill yourself?

ROLAND: I don't know. Perhaps.

OSWALD: Well, I see. You wouldn't die. I wouldn't either. Would Laura die without you? (*Pause.*) She wouldn't die without me either. So we aren't talking about life and death here. Well. What are we talking about? I could give you something that compensates for your pain and loneliness.

ROLAND: What?

OSWALD: I would offer you a certain sum of money, if you would agree to imagine your future life without Laura.

ROLAND: Money?

OSWALD: Money.

ROLAND: This is making me sick.

*(He looks really sick.)*

OSWALD: Would you like a drink? (*Pours out two drinks and drinks his own at once.*) Take it.

ROLAND: How disgusting. This can't be happening.

OSWALD: Take it easy, dear friend. This offer doesn't mean that I think you are bad or narrow-minded or anything like that. I won't touch Laura either. It's just an offer. You can take it or leave it.

ROLAND: That's enough!

OSWALD: Ten million dollars. Twenty million dollars. Fifty million dollars. I'm not joking, you see. I've got the money. In cash. Are you listening? Seventy million dollars. You could get anything for this kind of

money. Except a flight to outer space, I suppose. The most expensive cars. Any house – anywhere. Villas in the most expensive resorts of the world, investments, politics, fame. Absolute safety for you and for your children. But let's stop now. I've decided to offer you a billion dollars. No more, no less. I've got the money and I'm ready to give it to you. On one condition, and you know what that is. (Pause.) I can't let you think for very long. You must decide here and now. I can tell you there's no need to be ashamed. You're going to experience the envy of others, but with that amount of money, it will also be admiration. In a minute, no, in five minutes, I'll take my offer back.

**Jaan Tätte**

**THE BRIDGE**

*The heroine is a beautiful, bright and witty woman, but never in her life has she experienced love. And she is running out of time. Due to a serious heart condition she has spent more than enough time at hospitals, and it was there where she saw him. He was a young doctor, working there. Their eyes met. She didn't know his name; they never spoke. One morning the girl woke up, feeling different. Instead of going to work she took a taxi and drove to the hospital. She stuck a small note under the door of his office, asking him out on a date. The play starts with the woman sitting on the bridge, waiting for the man. The man comes. Is it a hazard or destiny, who knows, for he hasn't received her letter. They are not looking at each other. The woman talks a lot – mainly about herself. The man doesn't say much; he's just listening. But finally he says it. The thing the woman has been waiting to hear all her life.*

*Interwoven to the tale of the man and the woman is a counter-story, at times a bizarre party of middle-aged people, including heroine's father. When the action with the two young lovers is sincere, radiant and tender like a violin solo, the elder characters resemble more an out-of-tune jazz band. Those openly grotesque personages are similar in one thing: they are all incapable of love. All six have died in an explosion and now they find themselves stuck in a mid-way to the other side, incapable of moving on. We will never find out, whether their efforts to escape have succeeded or whether they will forever remain the victims of their own egocentricity. Knowing that the woman will die, and hoping for a change – or for salvation – they are waiting for her arrival, but in vain, since she is not coming. She has learned to love.*

*The characters: Leele – a woman in her late twenties; Sten – a man, about the same age; Ebe, Hume, Maara – middle-aged women; Knaut, Larek, Armer, Remis – middle-aged men.*

Extract from the play:

EBE: Let's play. Who's playing? All of us? What are your rules?

ARMER: You can't play our game.

EBE: I learn new things fast and accurately. What's the principle?

*(Pause.)*

KNAUT: You can't play our game.

EBE: Why?

HUMEE: Because we're still learning it ourselves.

EBE: What's the principle?

LAREK: The principle, the principle!

ARMER: Do you belong here, Ebe?

EBE: I don't know.

ARMER: Right. That's what I wanted to know.

KNAUT: Look, all of us... How should I put it...

MAARA: Just tell it as it is.

KNAUT: All of us... we don't know much about love.

ARMER: Something like that.

KNAUT: Of course we have all loved in our own way...

ARMER: Something like that.

KNAUT: ...but...

LAREK: But, but!

KNAUT: We never said it to anyone.

ARMER: Something like that.

KNAUT: And we don't know if anyone has ever loved any of us. We don't know. *(Pause.)* We don't know. That's the way it turned out. We didn't leave...

ARMER: ...happy, content.

KNAUT: ...Something like that. But we all had a chance. Back there. We couldn't come around to saying it.

ARMER: We couldn't come around to saying it.

LAREK: When we should have.

MAARA: When we still had the chance.

HUMEE: Had the chance.

REMIS: I've said it. (*Pause.*) Many times. Many times. Too many. I've always lied. But...

EBE: But?

REMIS: I had the chance to tell the truth.

EBE: I know.

REMIS: You know.

EBE: I do belong here. Sadly. I had a chance. I had. What about your daughter Leele?

KNAUT: She'll come right after dawn.

EBE: Here?

MAARA: She still has a chance.

KNAUT: Oh well. We all did.

EBE: And your game?

KNAUT: I thought...

ARMER: We thought.

KNAUT: We thought that perhaps... if we tried, again... then perhaps... here... perhaps.

EBE: I want to play too. Let me play. Please!

ARMER: Here we go.

**Saistībā ar lugu izmantošanas iespējām aicinām sazināties ar Igaunijas Teātra aģentūru ([info@teater.ee](mailto:info@teater.ee))**