



URMILA



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Synopsis

In the land of Ayodhya, where Ancient stories recoil lies the tale of Urmila for us to uncoil. “Sleep my sleep”. With a simple whisper, a whisper causally uttered by Lakshmana’s busy mind. Her life flipped, “Sleep”, he says, a command to obey? Without a reflection of the price that Urmila would have to pay? “Sleep”, he says.

In history the human body is used as a vehicle for all social protests. When an individual runs out of agencies to negotiate the statuesque then that individual always attempts the final act of resistance using once own body as a symbol and metaphor to fight against the same statuesque. Can Urmila dream of an agency that will allow her to fight to reclaim her sanity, her mind and her very own existence?

Can her body becomes a message?

“I won’t sleep”, will Urmila ever able to utter these words?

Then he says, “ Sleep my sleep”.

And as if on cue, soldiers of the sleep goddess rush to comply. She calculates. With a resolute voice, she protests, wide eyed she remains. Her knowing mind struggles. Her fourteen years of sleep, along with his, in a blink she gives up. Deprived of her own life, to remain in a state of slumber, she will never be. Did he say “Sleep”? She laughs, “Who needs consent? Who needs approval? “

Urmila is a play that looks at the gender body and its protest as a last resort in the past, the present and maybe in the future.



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Characters

Urmila

Number 1/ N1

Number 2/N2

Scene 1

[In the darkness we hear Urmila sing. Her voice reflects pain, longing, and anger. Urmila enter from stage left in the darkness from behind the mirror. In a moment's pause, she takes a breath, when the light falls, she is on stage facing a set of three mirrors placed on stage left. . The silhouette slowly reveals Urmila, the light slowly changing with the rhythm of her breath. Standing in front of the mirror Kept on stage right in a fractured order], she looks at herself , and walks forward to the center mirror , reads and sits down to check herself. She turns to the audience, getting ready to sleep, combing with melancholic embrace of Laxman's departure. These wounds so deep, without any trace of its depth leaves her questioning her worth. Was her presence not even worth a goodbye as he departed?She blows the candle that results in a blackout and she goes to sleep in front of the mirror.

Urmila falls into a soundless sleep. The soldiers of sleep Goddess, Number One and Number Two appear on the two ends of the slack, placed stage right, intently watching Urmila in slumber. N1 moves forward tries to pick up the rubber band, N2 follows excitedly. N1 tosses the rubber band which N2 catches and continues to toss until N1 goes to the mirror. N2 follows and together they inspect the mirror and check themselves out. Sensing a movement from Urmila sleeping in front of them, they turn in curiosity. As she stirs in her sleep, they turn towards her, sitting still, they are eager to witness her every move, they quietly shift with every shuffle of her position. A soundless link of sleep establishes between the three of them. Not to be interrupted by anything, so they thought. Urmila is awake knowing their presence. The heaviness on her heart only an indication of a decision, which will twist her soul and slow her pace. Adding to the pain of Laxman's absence, still raw. It dawns on her, now she has to carry the weight of his sleep? As the thought quickens in her mind, the soldiers confused, utter "Sleep" to her. And we see her moving backwards in shock, bound by his sleep, no way to move, no way to shake his decision so cruel.]

Number One and Number Two: Sleep. Sleep.

Blackout



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Scene 2

[We see Urmila standing still, staring at Number One and Number two [soldiers of the sleep goddess]. The beam of light that falls on her is just enough to light her, dimly. Number One and Number two are sitting beside her. She is trying to find her missing hairband and realises, one of them has taken it. A series of movements ensue between the three of them regarding who has the custody of the hairband. N2 finally throws the hairband to her and she ties her hair and move closer to inspect the soldiers. Meanwhile, the soldiers seem to be planning something, with indicative movements to put Urmila to sleep. She senses sleep coming into her eyes and realises, it's their doing, as she falls to the ground. Now seated and the sleep hitting her to the maximum she is unable to pull herself up and so, as a challenge, she engages in different movements such as pick the skirt, trying to focus on the folding of the skirt, occupying herself to not fall asleep. But for a moment she falls asleep without her realising and she quickly tries to get up from the position. The soldiers try different ways to bring her down to the sleeping position including pulling her skirt, but she resists their every trick. At one point in the struggle, she sees the mirror and jumps towards and the soldiers roll to the center stage. She reminds herself in the mirror to derive her strength to stay awake and this goes back and forth until she is able to get in an effort to walk away from them. The soldiers tempt her again and she comes back and drinks some water to wake herself up, which frustrates the soldiers. In anger she throws the bottle at N1, who catches it and throws it back to her like a game. She catches it back and realise the game has begun. She places the bottle on the ground facing them, signaling the beginning of the chase and says,]

Urmila: This is a chase mind you, zig zag zig zag zig zag, zoom

[Urmila slowly rises on her feet, visibly unsteady.]

The wind blows downwards and I stand still.
If you sharpen your ears
You will hear the dance of the dust.
On your cheeks it might feel soft,
But don't be foolish, it might cut you,
Muddy you, and the stubborn stains will discolour you.
Look here, do you see this ant on my shoulder?
It doesn't blink and nor will I.
It's a task we assigned to our-selves.
If one of us loses, it will always be me who falls.
And if I fall,
I shall balance on my toenail to reorient, to refocus.

My defiance of his sleep in me is my desire to live.



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This is a chase, mind you. Zig zag zig zag zig zag, zoommmmm
Get ready to stand on one leg [To Number 1 and 2]
While the ant and I refuse to blink.

[With unsteady steps she walks towards the mirror, takes off her Bindi to stick it on the centre mirror. She walks off stage. A very curious Number One and Two move towards the Bindi.]

Scene 3

[N1 rolls ahead after Urmila to the centre mirror, followed by a slightly late N2 who tries to cover the delay with flamboyance. N1 is seen keenly at the mirror trying to figure what is it that is giving Urmila her momentum and will to resist, an enthusiastic N2 is seen imitating N1 with much excitement, but also slightly distracted. Reaching out to the centre mirror, with a quick pace of his fingers N1 draws a sketch of Urmila, as how he sees her in his mind's eye. After examining the figure he drew on the mirror N1 turns slowly towards the audience, with a box pass movement. N2 seems to be in his own world, N1 asks N2 to follow him and focus, a slightly upset N2 obliges with some childlike resistance. N2 slowly moves to the back of the mirrors, throwing N1 off his thoughts]

Number two: Thu, shaataaa! I want to sleep.

[An eerie hum is heard and finally N1 realises its her eyes, he turns to the mirror and turns back to receive a glowing ball.]

Number One: Eyes. Urmila's eyes.

[And he takes two more turns to receive two more. He starts juggling and the conversation begins between N1 and N2. A visibly annoyed Number two curses Urmila as he speaks from behind the mirror.]

Number Two: *[From behind the mirror]* Number One, What's her problem, I say? I know she does not want to sleep. But I want to, I have to!

Number One: But you are not supposed to sleep.

Number Two: No, You number Ones are not supposed to sleep.

Number One : eh?

Number Two : ahhhhh....but I think you are sleepy, are you sleepy?, are you sleepy?, no? should I tell her, Should I tell her?,then tell me what did she say?....(referring to sleep Goddess)

Number One: She said she won't shut her eyes. Urmila that bloody Bitch.

Number Two: No...Not this She. *[Indicating to where Urmila was in front of the mirror]* The other She.

Number One: Urmila illayaaaa ??

Number Two: Urmila illa Sharmila, our boss, the slee.slee.slee ...sleeeeeep goddess.

Number One: oh... avala? She said nothing.

Number Two: Nothing? Nothing comes out of nothing. Anything comes of nothing?

Number One : Nothing

Number Two : Nothing

Number One : What was she doing,....Number one?

Number One: She was about to sleeeee.....p[Number One interrupts]



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[N1 and N2 lean into a sideways get up]

Number Two: How.....I saw her between that red dot and purple dot, and she told me clearly, Number two.[Number one interrupts.]

Number One: Number two,Then why do you ask me?

Number Two : Silent

Number One: What did our goddess say?

Number Two: Nothing.

Number One :What did she say, Number two?

Number Two: Nothing.

Number One: What did she say ??

Number Two: Nothing (number one gets visibly upset)

Number One : Two hiccups

Number Two: Number One,do you like Tapioca chips?

Number One: Yes! Why?

Number Two : Whyyyyy...

Number One : Why

Number Two: Because you are one. Fry yourself and eat and get fat, while you are at it let me have some peace.

Number One: You are such a bully!

Number Two: I am a bull's eye!

Number One : Eyes, Urmila's eyes.

Number Two :This is pointless.

Number One: This is pointless because they are round balls [Number

Two Looks at the ball and at General direction referring to Urmila]

Number Two: Number 1!

Number One: Number 2!

Number Two: Number 1!

Number One: Sorry

Number Two: Attention. [Number One puts head down]

Number Two:Attention !

Number One: You said I have to put my head down whenever you say attention!

Number Two: This is pointless boss...

Number One: This is pointless because they are round ba..[gets hit by number two]

Number Two: Boss.. she will not give in. What shall I do?

Number One: Number Two, hahah actually Urmila is there, See See .



Number Two: Howwwwwww?

Number One: Chakkarakutta, what did say ?

Number Two: She said, Number Two, stand still with your toes raised, but we are allowed to gently float.[the two pick up glowing balls and start sit swaying]

Remove those dancing shadows from Urmila's eyes to wipe them white. Apply pressure and close them tight. [stop in a tilted posture] Close them, close them, close them tight. Harder and harder and when she falls...

Number One: Have that bed ready. [N1 and N2 throw and exchange the balls with this line]

Number Two: Ready, with no delay. You catch her head and me her legs. It has to be feather touch, like this.

[Demonstrates]

Number One: Like this , Slide her without shaking, like this.

[Demonstrates]

Number Two: Slip her into a Grass matt. Like this. [Demonstrates]

Number one: Grass is hard.

Number Two: It's not that hard.

Number One: But it is hard. [They turn and look at Urmila's reference direction and say fuck] [N1 gets up, N2 follows]

Number Two: idamaate?, nee ennai tunga vidamaate?[Referring to Urmila]

Number One: Myreeee

Number One: I have an idea,How about a Sleepwell mattress?

Number Two: Have you slept on one of those?

Number One: What are our instructions? [Pass the balls]

Number Two: To Pour Laxmana's Sleep.

Number One: Of? [Passes the balls back]

Number Two: Fourteen years. Uninterrupted. [Looks at Goddess then Urmila and says]

Number One & Two: FUCK! [Looking at Sleep Goddess]

Number One & Two: FUCK! [Looking at Urmila]

Number Two : I have another idea, how about a Kurlon?

Number One: But we need her straight! Not curled. [N1 throws the ball that N2 catches on the other side]

Number Two: A hammock? [N2 passes it back]

Number One: Too much sway. [The pass movement continues]

Number Two: Then what about suspending her in mid-air?

Number One: The wind will not agree to hold her still.

Number Two: Then what? Then what? [Both N1 and N2 pauses mid squat]

Number One: Push ups?

Number Two: 18 lakh 36 thousand 569!Chiselled [With flamboyance and flexing]

Number One: Per minute?

Number Two: Per second!



Number One: wow [Lying down]

Number Two: Po ball poooo

Number One: Now you are ready to hold her still.

Number Two: Me?

Number One: You.

Number Two: Can we hit her on her head and make her unconscious and then put chloroform?

Number One: Arambikalama (shall we start)

Number two: Payasa?

Number One: Push Ups, hahahaha!

Number One: Number two, do push ups, nose to ground, Chest to ground , Crotch to ground.

Number Two: Crotch to ground means (In the middle of a strange bad push up)



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Scene 4

[Urmila emerges from the left corner of the stage. She looks like as if she is absorbing the golden harshness of the tall grass surrounding her. Her long hair loose, is parted in the middle and is endless on either side as far the eyes can extend. Her eyes are covered with small silver plates with a hole in the middle, allowing just enough to see. The vastness of the horizon, reflecting the dancing shadows of the past were no comparison to the measure of her sleep. Soldiers are sitting on the ground and watching Urmila walking in from stage right. She walks in with two flowers her hand, looking like she is lost in a thought and she is trying to recollect what she had forgotten. She sits next to the soldiers and begins to say something but give up and instead places the flowers behind each of their ears as if she knew exactly what she wanted to do. With a determination that she has done the job that she has come for, she walks, stops.]

Urmila: Is my eleventh toe nail longer than the others?

[The soldiers look back at their own toes, confused. When she doesn't get a reply, she walk back she does back behind the slack and stops midway hearing the sound of a loom (a bird) calling out to its mate. All three register the sound. She turns and suddenly realises she knew what she was trying to recollect. She sits on the slack realising that the lack of sleep was playing with her memory now.]

Determined to not fail, she starts to recollect and says .We also see Number and Number Two on the center of the stage. Looking at Urmila, they look curious but also intimidating and listens to her.]

Urmila: [She is facing Number One and Two and sings her signature tune] I am sitting here. And he... [Pauses to think] I don't know where he is! But I ... but I remembered where he was yesterday! And she suddenly falls off the slack but manages to balance on her hands without landing on the ground. Hanging from the slack mid-body and looking at where the Goddess would be, she says [Starts to talk to herself] "Don't hallucinate... focus... and don't lose the game to her". [Suddenly remembers] Yes! He is in the forest. I heard them sing yesterday, my so-called husband and his brother... [Pauses again to think] do I remember his face? [Thinks again and tries to remember any particular marks on his face or his features that stood out] "The scar", N1 whispers! Urmila hears and she realises, and says "scar, yes ". Every now and then the loom gives out a call as if to make her remember what she was forgetting. As she struggles to be coherent in her thoughts, she continues, "my scar, no...no his car. My scar faced husband. He has a scar on his face. Instead of... [She forgets what she was about to say and leaves it unfinished sensing the sleep coming to her again]

[N1 hits N2 on his head to stop his partner from falling asleep himself. She awakes again by that slap and she tries to move away from the soldiers and gets up onto the slack and trying to finish her sentence because she is determined to not let the sleep interrupt her thoughts.]



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She says “Instead ofinstead of...” [But before she can complete her sentence, sleep hits her and she falls back on to the slack. The soldiers lift up their body to check if she has finally fallen asleep. The soldiers are visible to her and unable to get herself up, frustrated, she points to them.]

[She pushes her eyes open and asks]

“Can you see them? [Sticks her head forward and slowly points her finger to her eyes] The soldiers of the sleep goddess. They dance on my eyelids. She hears the loom again. [Thinks again] how many years has it’s been...” and in her final effort she is able to sit up on the slack. [Does a much-burdened flicker movement with her hands, suggesting she has lost the notion of years] The soldiers shake their legs and looks at the audience with excitement and a wide grin as if showing off their skills with pride.

Urmila continues :

“They stamp on my eyelids voicelessly, trying to close them.

A war of a different kind.

While fighting them I lose my words...

[Offended, Number One and Number two sit back.]

Number One and Number two roll on their backs and whisper to each other of their strategy to put her to sleep (repeat , stand still with our toes raised)

[At this point she slowly starts to rotate her head as if she is going into a trance.

The image will be that of Kalamezhuthu pattu where they brush the hair on the floor smudging Bhagavathi’s image which is drawn on the floor. It gradually picks up speed and as the rotation is happening, she closes her eyes. She starts to slap herself all over trying to wake herself and says] She slowly lifts her legs

and place it on the slack in the sit mount position and slowly turning to the soldiers , she starts to say while swinging at the same time .

“Slap slap slap the sleep

Slap this sleep this sleep.

I slap I slap, I slip I slip,

I slap I slip

I slap this sleep this sleep”.

The swinging and the determination she gives the energy to shake off her sleep and feeling triumphant she says

[At the end of it she opens her eyes wide, the white part on the top of the eyes clearly visible, and she says]

Urmila: I won this time!



[Urmila gets up from the slack , walks towards the soldiers and stands in front of N1 , who has sat up realising she is awake again. She bends down and looks at a visibly annoyed soldier , and says to N1]

Urmila: This is a chase mind you. Zig zag zig zag zig zag..... . [slaps N1 on the face in the place of Zoom and Exits behind the mirror] The soldiers sit back disappointed looking in the direction of her exit and react to sounds from backstage , which is indicative of Urmila going through her usual home routine.



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Scene 5

[Urmila emerges from behind the mirror to place herself in front of Number One and Number Two from stage left. Soldiers realise her presence and turn around . She is carrying a set of threads and bends forwards and snaps her finger. In response N2 snaps back. She sits in-front of them. She starts to swings both sides, in a kind of hypnotic movements and through a series of rotations , she manages to put both soldiers to sleep.

Urmila , hears the sound of weaving looms from a distant and she looks at it and finds familiarity in those visuals. She walks towards the mirror to tie the loom thread and finally ends up tying the threads to the soldiers legs and arms. She tries to work the same movements with her hands using her threads and says.]

Urmila: Was it this side or was it the other side [Urmila moves to Number ones toe] Don't lose it.[Urmila moves to Number two's finger to tie the thread.] Did I put the thread and pull the finger? Or did I put the thread pull the knot and then push the fingers? [Urmila begins to weave the thread that she tied to Number One and Two] These fingers, they were experts at weaving, once. Now numb and directionless they look pale.

[She sits down exhausted and hears the soldiers sleep talk and she realises and says]

Urmila : Urmila, can you see the finishing line, it's not different from any other line. [Turning to the mirror]You can't rest, you can't pause, you can't sigh, not yet and you are not tired, you need to get to the finishing line till then your story will only have one sentence, that you will not sleep. Repeat, I will not sleep.

[She moves towards the soldiers, who by now has gotten back to the same position as the previous scene by sleep talking . Urmila stands in the exact same position as the previous scene and slaps N1 to wake him up.]

Urmila: This is a chase, zig zag zig zag zig zag...

Number Two: [Confused] Zoom...



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Scene 6

[Urmila exits behind the mirror and the soldiers talk about other strategies to put her to sleep including using chloroform and goes behind Urmila.

Urmila comes with a pilates ball, bored of everything and sits on the ball, in front of the mirror thinking.

Soldiers are seen gazing at Urmila from behind the mirrors using the Glowing Eyes-Balls, and then they walk and sit in front of the mirror watching the direction and moves with Urmila. Then they start juggling until Urmila pauses, gets up and rotates to come in front of the ball. She looks at the ball and pushes the ball outside the stage. Urmila walks to the centre holding the stones and she sits down to play. N1 & N2 walk towards Urmila in excitement. N1 is not interested but N2 plays along with Urmila. N1 catches a stone and this forces Urmila to leave all the stones and move from there. At the peak of her boredom, Urmila bends down, lifts her skirt and puts on her head. N1 & N2 stare at Urmila. As Urmila walks towards the slack, N1 walks towards the mirror while N2 just gazes at the spot where stones get disappeared. Urmila takes a bubble blower and sits on the slack and continues to make bubbles. N2 is excited and lost in admiration of air bubbles but N1 is comparing the glowing balls against Urmila's eyes and trying to strategize to put her to sleep.]



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Scene 7

[Urmila throws bubble blower at N2 but ends up in N1s hands. Disappointed, N2 sits back, and Urmila continues to examine slack. As Urmila is about to get on the slack, N1 says.....]

Number One: Urmila, watch your step, you will trip.

Urmila: I am already on a trip.

Number One: Urmila, if you are on a trip, isn't it easy to drift and fall asleep?

Urmila: I feel like having some chips.

Number Two: Hi chips!

Number One: Chips!

Number Two: Hot chips! I also want! [N2 gets excited and walks towards the slack describing how to make chips and sits on the slack]

Number One: Sleep!

Urmila and Number Two: I won't/ she won't.

Urmila: You think he would have asked me before signing away his sleep to me?

Number One: Sllleeeppppp!!!

Urmila: Mine or his?

Number One: Both!

Number Two: Both? He should have asked her first.

Number One: Don't you understand...

Number Two: No.

Number One: She can't refuse his sleep.

Number Two: Why, why, why?

Number One: He has signed the contract. It's not like he can just take it back now. It's done. Urmila you must [Urmila interrupts and continues to walk on the slack]

Urmila: I Must?! [Thinks for a while.] If you continue to insist, I will drip Laxmanan's sleep into his [Number two's] eyes.

Number Two: why me? Helloo, I don't dream normal dreams because I am an abnormal being. I would have taken Laxmanan's dreams if they had flying chariots and upside-down walking goats! It would be hilarious to watch some purposeless chickens bathe cats. And it would be cool to have reading lamps that actually live up to their name and actually read and kidney beans with their very own kidneys? Honestly, Laxmanan's dreams are so dull, even I wouldn't want them! It's whiter than the white rice that we had yesterday with that funny tasting yellow oil.

I actually prefer hot chips! Urmi, shall I order some chips?!

Urmila: You want?

Number One: I cannot.

Number Two: Why not?

Urmila: You want? [To number two]



Number Two: I want.
Number One: Will you shut up.
Number Two: I shutted.
Number One: Urmila sleep.
Urmila: I won't.
Number Two: That's what she is saying
Number One: Will you shut up and leave.
Number Two: I shutted. Urmil bye.
[Number two disappears behind the mirror, annoyed.]
Number One: it's your duty to sleep his sleep.
Number One: Urmila, it's your duty to sleep Laxmanan's sleep.
Urmila: Duty? Let me ask you, what about my exercise?
Number One: He is exercising for you.
Urmila: What about my dreams?
Number One: He is seeing them for you.
Urmila: Number One, what of the life that's only mine to live, that's not his to take?
Number One: Urmila, your life is safe and sound with Laxmana while you sleep.
Number One: Think of it how he walks in your shoes, speaks in your voice, and lives in your stead.
Urmila: How lucky am I? How lucky am I to have Laxmana to live my life, for me. What more could I ask for than to have him walk in my shoes, carry my burdens, speak in my voice, and live in my stead? It's not like I wanted to live my own life or anything. How wondrous indeed!
[Begins to laugh]
Number One and Two: Urmila ? Urmila ? Urmi!
Urmila: Shhh!!
[She notices some kind of dirt on her hand and walks to exit the stage but she senses the soldiers following her and so she stops and turns to them and says.]
Number Two: Urmi..!
Urmila : If you are preparing milk don't bother. I will not drink. I am not sleeping.
[Exits the stage right]
Number One : Sleep [shouts]
Urmila : I wont.
Number One: Urmilaaa
Urmila: I won't
Number Two: Bro, I told you not to insist.
Urmila: [Sneezes]
Number Two: [Noticing the sound of Urmila] We should have just given her some chips... Now what to do with this milk? can we drink this milk?
Number One: Throw it.
Number Two: I throwned.
Number One: Shhhhhh.....[Throws the milk]
Number Two: You Shh.....[Throws the milk]



Scene 8

[Number 1 & 2 follow Urmila as she goes, keenly listening to what she is doing beyond the visible frame, she re-enters with two chairs, full sleep hits and she is trying to sit in front of the mirror as she is unable to balance anymore and unable to remember why she has come in with the chair. Unable to control her sleep, she tires all ways to stay awake. A series of movements are explored which indicates a mild hallucination and hyper mood swings. This includes her swinging the chair back and forth, trying to not sit down on the chair but showing the lack of decision-making skills. When she finally drops the chair as she sees the mirror, the soldiers take their chance to snatch the chairs and sits on them, their side profile to the audience. Urmila reaches the mirror and searches for the bindi which she seems to have lost. She starts searching for it on the mirror and then her skirt. But exhausted, she slips and falls to the ground. Meanwhile N2 starts whistling ,in conversation with the loom ,annoyed N1 shuts him up. As N2 continues to distract, N1 says....]

Number One: Number One, my ideas...

Number Two: Are not working.

Number One: why?

Number Two: why? Because you are number one, and number one's have just one, one. But number two's have two ones.

so who is smarter? Who is cleverer? And I have that magical "If", do you have that magical "if"?

Number One: No. What to do now?

Number Two: That's why. So watch her, observe her.

Urmila: It's Here

Number Two: What's there...?

Number One: Shhhhhh.....

Number Two: You shhh, are you Scared ??[Suspiciously]

Number One: [Startled].....Noo

Number Two: He is scared [to loom]

Number Two: [looking at Number One]..You are scared number one!!!..

Remember that time when we crossed the white river on that particular boat and the dust started singing two different notes and at that very moment your hair turned why and mine went bhummm... upwards.[Number One interrupts]

Number One: What's your point?, tell.

Number Two: I couldn't tell you then...

Number One: Then tell me now.

[Number 1 and Number 2 starts swinging back and forth on the chair.]

Number Two: I wanted to pee... but you kept singing 124 124 124

Number One: So



Number Two: So when you are scared aren't you supposed to sing
1..1..5 1...1..5 1...1..5 ? So that I can pee!

[Urmila is slowly falling to the ground and trying to get up
but falls back again and start looking at her toes.]

Number One: Scared me? Ha ha ha

Number Two: You are Scared! Don't worry,It's a professional hazard, it's very
understandable, why not?. Look at her, she won again and I want to peeing again
and I can hear you sing 1..1..5 1...1..5 1...1..5 and when you are scared you are
making all of them bored.You think our boss will like it.

Number One: Who said?

Number Two: I said. Look at them [Looks at the audience] we need them awake.

Number One: For what?

Number Two: For momentum, for progression and to watch us for catharsis.

Number One: Number Two,for a change why don't you watch them

[Number Two turns towards the audience]

Number Two: Me? I can't, I will be breaking the fourth wall, they will kill me.

Number one: Then break the fifth.

Number Two: That I can do.[He turns to the audience]...Trrrr...taka takai takai
,,taka takai takaihiiiiii...“Trrrrrissur” (with singing) number one look at the
person on 4th row on the 4th seat looks like she needs a root canal.

Number one: Tonight.

Number Two: And the person behind also.

Number one: Tomorrow

Number Two: Look at that Uncle, uncle yesterday night...it's so strange everyones
teeth are pearly white.

Number One: Number two what do you think a collective yawn could do?

Number Two: Collective yawn!!! bad reviews one after another, let me remind
you, you think our boss will like it?

Number One: No No No No.

Number Two: No

Number One: No....It induces sleep! [Urmila hears and tries to sit up but fails.]

Number Two: Ahhh

Number One: If I yawn would you not feel like yawning?

Number Two: I don't know, I never tried it, all I know is enemy of the people ever
sleep.

Number One: Number two attention!!!,Come let's try it now! [They have a
yawning match. This forces Urmila is pulled towards them as if by some other
force and ends up in front of them]

Number Two: Does this means we can put her to sleep just by yawning? (Cuts
Number one's 2nd yawn)

Urmila: But I won't.

Number One: Yes.



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Number Two: You are a genius Bro! , How come ?

Urmila: I won't.

Number One: Shh.

Urmila: [looking at her hand] I feel my blood evaporate, a steam of red that's slowly turning white at the end. Do you think if I try hard, I could smear it back, to feed dots of life? [She begins to laugh] My husband's thoughtless gift of sleep robs me of perfect delight, turning my lips pale, cutting me sharp and bleeding colourless dreams.

Hmmmmmm.... My breath flutters, but what is it to him? My skin scratches, oozing the fat of countless sleepless nights, but what is it to him? But I won't, I won't... I won't... I won't.... [Urmila ends up on the ground and falls asleep]

[As they are about to turn, visibly happy and shaking each other's hand in happiness, Urmila says, "I am not Asleep". A very exasperated N1 and N2 look in the direction of the Goddess say Fuck , then they pick up their chair put it over their heads and rush off talking about how feather touch won't work, now we need to use force.

Urmila gets up and exits stage right and enters with a vessel of water in her hand.]



Scene 9

[Number One and Two continue to murmur behind the mirror. They seem to be scheming. They pop out roll balls asking her to sleep and she avoids it.]

Urmila: I have no intention of sleeping. [We hear Number One and Number Two whispering something and slowly it fades out]

[Urmila sits down with the vessel in-front of her after she hears a music that reminds her of her old days and perhaps how her life would have been if not for this curse. She starts to wash her hands ritualistically and starts to speak]

Urmila: The other day I had an illusion, that I was a ghost. A ghost with big, fiery, sleepy, red eyes. And as I floated, with my sleepy gaze, yawning a big breath that moved a cloud of dark, and sliding my feet along, I saw him. The weight of his betrayal glued me to the spot and I knew I was tricked. Why? Was it because I was only an extra, pushed to the background, summoned when needed? To be cursed without a thought, to be a burden bearer. Is that our only role?

[Pauses again. Goes back to the washing and then, Very slowly she tries to push her eyelids up. And leans to the audience, she draws kajal around her eyes as a war mark and asks] Laxmana, “Do you see these dark circles around my eyes, they are the mark of my protest against your sleep in my eyes”. Can we step out and fight our unwanted curses?

I do not want to be a mere straw which floats on the water aimlessly. Laxmana, I refuse your elaborate sleep, right here. [to the audience]

And you are my soul witness. [Urmila goes back to washing and the soldiers are seen entering from stage right , crawling past the slackline and waits with the balls . Urmila sees them and realises soemthing and says]

Sleep. [Long laborious breath]

Sleep in my eyes. [Long laborious breath]

Fourteen years of sleep in my eyes.

His fourteen years of sleep in my eyes. [Urmila begins to sing a song and it is stopped abruptly.]

Forgot to tell you the most important part! [Urmila vigorously starts washing and movements gets faster] These sleep curses come in different packages, one day, two days, one month, one-year packages and so on... if you are lucky you will get to negotiate, otherwise they come like this. The one-day package - a little headache. Two-day package- headache plus loss of appetite. Four-day package- blurry images and erratic mood swings. One month- paranoia with a bottle of glucose [aside] for weakness. One year – be careful you might pop it.

But if you don't, you will be intoxicated beyond substance abuse.

Fourteen years is the most attractive package- intoxication, loss of weight, matted hair, yellow teeth, big medium and small hallucinations, long and curly nails with dirt under them, you can sing loudly and climb an oily pole, you don't have to wear matching earrings, you can fall and break your face. And if you act a little



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*mad...[gets up] you will be forgiven, and you can be inside your mind's forest.
[Walks to stage left and places the vessel on the side and walks back to the center
of the mirror]*

Urmila : I had no option; fourteen years was mine.

[Number One and Two are seen walking towards Urmila and they roll the balls towards her]

Urmila: Don't do that anymore, enough.

[She walks to the stage left and as she walks back, she senses a quick movement from them. In a quick flash they move towards her. We see a fight ensue between Urmila who is trying to get away from their physical aggression to put her to sleep. She fights back and manages to push them away. Assumptions are broken. In total control we see Urmila in fight with Number One and Two. They are being thrown in multiple directions...]

Number One and Two: Urmi!

[She dusts her hands and turns from the audience to face the mirror backwards. As the light falls on her, we see her reflection in the mirror. We see Urmila walking slowly towards the mirrors backwards]

Urmila: Come up you clowns. Let us continue our fight.
Can't you see, a razor tinted with blue and white shines my Will?
Look at my eyes, are they not bright with silver shine?
If you hear a cry, be assured, it is not mine.
Don't be too foolish to assume you have the grace
To interrupt my breath that is elaborate.
Come up you clowns!
In plain sight Let us fight.
Show your muscle.

Let us see who wins the fight, of the blue night.
[She turns towards the mirror and sits down in front of it. She stares at herself, almost in admiration. She begins to sway, almost replicating the movement of vaalpayattu, rubbing the sword against one's own body. Slowly the mirrors begin to move with her rhythm .The movement gets vigorous and slowly as Urmila slows down the mirrors also slows down and as she halts, the mirror halts and the lights fade out slowly.]

The mirrors move to Urmila's will.
The end.



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