

THE BOX

MARINA APOSTOLOU



Marina Apostolou was born in Athens in 1981. She is a teacher. She has published two collections of poems “We will walk together” (2010) and “Notias” (April 2011) and a theatrical play with one act (February 2012) by publications “Oselotos”. The box is her second theatrical venture and it was released by Saita publications.

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The box

Theatrical play

Translation from Greek:
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THE BOX

Theatrical play in 3 acts

The theme of this theatrical play is transplantations in Greece and the general irresolution and lack of action on this specific matter.

A four-member family lives happily in the suburbs of Athens. The parents are educated and employed, their older son is a first-year student at the university and a driver of a motorbike and their daughter is junior high school student. Their carefree life is about to change, when the son has a fatal accident with his motorbike.

THE NAMES OF THE CHARACTERS ARE RANDOMELY SELECTED
AND THEY BEAR NO RESEMBLANCE TO REALITY

6 CHARACTERS

1. **Alexandros:** father of the family, 52 years old, director in a bank
2. **Mary:** mother of the family, 49 years old, teacher
3. **Petros:** son of the family, 19 years old, first year student
4. **Ann:** daughter of the family, 14 years old, junior high school student
5. **Eleni Patrikiou:** anesthesiologist, transplant coordinator
6. **Nephrologist**

FIRST ACT

It is Peter's 19th birthday. Early October. We are in the family's living room.

M- Good morning! Mmm! My dear, are you awake that early?

P- Yes, and I'm in a hurry. I'm leaving

M- That early?

P- Yes! I'm having an early class at the university. It starts at 8.

M- Come here, come my baby, let mom give you a kiss. Come here... Happy birthday to you, my prince!

P- Thank you... Don't kiss me mom, as if I am a little boy! (He pulls himself away)

M- You will always be my baby!

P- Not again. That's what all nerve racking mothers say, especially here in Greece!

M- Well, that's the way it is. When you have your own baby, you will see what love and tenderness mean. Nothing can be more important than that! When you become a father, you will understand...

P- Fine! We have a long time until then! A decade, at least...

M- Are you ready already? Have you eaten anything?

P- I only had a cup of coffee. I will buy a sandwich on my way to university.

M- Wearing your helmet already. You can't wait for your first ride with your new motorbike. Alexandros come here. Come and take pride in your son. He's like a wild rider.

P- Yes. We had an agreement with dad! My present for my 19th birthday and my success to be admitted to the university would be a quick motorbike! She's a doll.

M- Yes, you have exhausted yourself by sitting the university exams twice! You are a fighter, committed to your cause! We love to spoil you. You have given us so much pleasure! Only be very careful on the streets. It's very dangerous. Do not ever, ever take your helmet off!

P- Not again! Don't jinx it!

M- Don't think badly of me. I'm just scared. So many people are killed every day on the streets. Athens is like a jungle. There's always heavy traffic, and people drive insane. Always wear your helmet, ok?

P- You're getting annoying again, mom! Haven't you got work to do? Go to your work in primary school. Take Ann to her school. Prepare her breakfast and leave me alone!

M- I know, I know. You are all grown up now. You got your driver's license and you have been admitted to the university. You are going to meet new people and broaden your horizons. An independent young man like you will be spending even less time with us, from now on.

P- OK... I'm out of here.

Alexandros enters the living room.

Al- Good morning everyone.

P- Good morning and goodbye.

Al- Happy birthday my son. May all your wishes and dreams come true.

P- Thank you dad.

M- Will you be back for dinner tonight? I have bought your favorite cake.

P- I have plans for tonight... Forget it!

M- Aren't we going to celebrate birthday like a family? Have I done all the preparations to no avail?

P- Most probably mommy. I don't believe we will dine together tonight.

Al- Come on boy. Come only for an hour and after that you are free to go anywhere you want. After all, you have your own vehicle now.

P- I told you, I have made my arrangements for tonight. No way!

M- Oh, I understand! Is there a woman involved? Already? Who is she? Is she from the university?

Al- Mary, don't be indiscreet. We don't want to get involved into his personal life. It's none of our business after all. We just want to spend some time with him, on his birthday and have some time as a family. That's all.

P- OK, we'll see. I'm going now otherwise I'll be late!

M- It's all my fault because I care for you, I'm doing everything for you, I love you and I work like a slave for you.

P- Because you are being tender to us, and you are even willing to give your life for us (Teasing attitude)

M- Stop teasing me. You're lucky you have your birthday. Take care! I will call you.

Petros leaves. Ann enters the stage with her school bag.

Al- You won't even say hello?

A- Leave me alone dad. Good morning!

M- You should talk to your father with more respect! Come here... Drink your milk and eat something.

A- I don't want to eat anything. I've got a stomach ache.

Al- What happened?

A- I am sitting a science test and I am very nervous. I stayed up until late to study, and I am so dizzy, I could even forget the theory.

M- Drink some milk, for the dizziness. We don't want you to collapse!

A- Leave me alone mom, as if I am some kind of infant who needs to drink milk. I go to the senior class of Junior High School.

M- Alexandros listen! Our children have grown up for good! The one is already a student at the university, with a chick and a motorbike, and the other one goes to Junior High School and she doesn't want to drink milk anymore. As if she is fully grown up yet.

Al- That's the way it is, my dear Mary. Our children have grown up, even if we don't want to accept it! Come my dear Ann, come my sweet girl, drink some milk and go to school with your mum. Just a sip. (He ties his tie while talking)

A- Don't talk to me as if I was some kind of infant. "Just a sip."

M- Are we going to beg you for a long time little lady? Hurry up, because I have to go to work as well.

A- Just a second mom. I'll do it for you...

M- Oh really? You are doing it for me, not for you? You need to be hydrated in order to study. You only drink colas and chocolate milk... But it's my fault after all, that I give you pocket money to buy them. OK, let's go. (She holds her car keys).

Al- You both are very funny, women of my life. (Smiles proudly)

Ann drinks a sip, takes her bag, Mary gives Alexandros a kiss, as he prepares to leave for his working place.

They wish each other good morning again. Scene closes.

Scene opens, we are in the family's house. It's dark. The couple is more formally dressed, Ann is nervous and bored. Mary has set the table and has already cooked the food and bought the

cake for her son's birthday. Both parents' mood is notably pleasant.

A- Why did you cook so much food mom?

M- I didn't do anything special Annie!

A- Don't call me Annie! I despise it! It's like we are some kind of peasants!

M- There's the Chef Salad, my Athenian!

A- Why are you doing all these preparations since Petros isn't probably coming? Can't you understand that he has got a chick? He has got better staff to do than join us for dinner.

Al- Ann, please! Watch your mouth... Don't use the word "chick"!

A- Mom used it this morning, remember? I'm not the only one saying the word!

Al- Did you hear that? (Looking at Mary)

A- Are we going to eat the cake alone?

Al- Your brother said he would come, even if it's only for an hour.

A- Yes... since mom begged him so much. I heard how she was talking to him on the phone before. We beg Sir Petros for his birthday party, when he doesn't want to have one. He doesn't care about us.

M- It isn't a "party"! We are going to propose a toast, sing "Happy Birthday" and then he is going to leave again. We are going to have a quick bite and that's all.

The phone rings. Mary picks it up. It's Petros.

M- Hello son. When are you coming? Yes, just for an hour, as we had agreed. Ok, son, ok... I have everything prepared... Which road are you going to take to come? From Patision? Forget it! Come through Acharnon. Yes, listen to me. Don't go

through Patision, because it's Tuesday and the shops are open. There will be a lot of traffic. Come through Acharnon. Ok? And don't drive between cars, so as to come home faster. Don't act childish with the motorbike. It can get dangerous. Are you coming now? Ok, so you'll be here in half an hour.... And if you're late, if you're stuck in traffic just give us a call, ok? Come, we are waiting for you. (Phone call ends)

Al- For God's sake, Mary. You are suffocating him. When are you coming? How much time do you need? Which route will you take? If you are late, give us a call... Even if he's ten minutes late, what's the problem? Must he give us a call? For God's sake... It may have a lot of traffic and he will be stuck... What will happen if he's a little bit late? Be careful and be careful (ironic voice). You have always been so overprotective. The children caught a cold, and you gave them antibiotics. They had minor injuries while playing and you acted as if they would remain cripples for the rest of their lives.

A- Tell her dad! She's unbearable!

M- Stop it, both of you, father and daughter. I want to know how long it will take him to be here, so as to light up his birthday cake candles. Be prepared. When he opens the door, we will sing "Happy Birthday" and he will blow out the candles.

Al- Ok, we can light the candles when we hear footsteps. We are going to lock the door as well, so that he can't enter right away. When we hear sounds from the door you can fetch the cake.

A- I don't believe you two. As if he was 5 years old!

M- Ms chatterbox, go to the kitchen and fetch some glasses and stop commenting on everything.

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