



Performance Notes for The Girl Who Changed Her Fate

THREE WAYS THAT STUDENTS AND TEACHERS CAN UTILIZE THIS PLAY

1. *Students can read the play aloud while sitting in the classroom.* Ask the readers to skip all bracketed stage directions. You may prefer to rotate your actors to give all students a chance to read the speaking parts.
2. *Students can perform the play in the classroom.* Clear an area that can be used as the stage. Have the audience sit on the floor in front of the stage. Students in the play can make simple costumes and/or sets as described below. When the scene change, the characters "on stage" simply walk to the back of the room where they wait until their next appearance "on stage."
3. *Students can perform the play on stage.* Refer to the production notes that follow. Ask the actors to enter from the back of the room and move through the audience as they approach the stage.



COSTUMES

- NARRATOR — Perhaps nice shirt and slacks and/or a nice skirt and blouse, or a nice dress.
- WIDOW — Solid black or black-patterned skirt with a dark colored long-sleeve top. A dark colored apron and a dark-colored fabric or bandana worn as a headscarf.
- CASSANDRA — A light blue dress with a white shawl or cardigan or a light blue skirt with a white blouse. A dark-colored fabric or bandana worn as a headscarf.



- **HELENA** — A light red dress with a tan shawl or cardigan or a light red skirt with a tan blouse. A dark-colored fabric or bandana worn as a headscarf.
- **ALENA** — A dark blue dress with a gray shawl or cardigan or a dark blue skirt with a gray blouse. A dark-colored fabric or bandana worn as a headscarf.
- **CYBIL** — Brown or tan patterned dress or skirt with a solid blouse. A black shawl or long cardigan and a dark-colored fabric or bandana worn as a headscarf.
- **SUITORS** — Black pants with a white button-up shirt and black vest. Each Suitor can have a different colored sash, perhaps one that matches their respective bride. Each wears a black fez. To make a fez, you will need black card stock.

Measure the actor's head. Cut the pieces of cardstock, lengthwise, into strips about 6 inches wide and staple them together to form one long strip of paper that is a few inches longer than measurement of the actor's head. Bring the edges of the strip together so that the top of the hat is a little smaller than the base and staple at the top and bottom.

Trace the open circle at the top of the hat onto another piece of black cardstock. Cut out the circle and tape to the top of the hat.

Optional: Tape a tassel to the top of the fez.



- **BAKER** — Black pants, a white shirt, a white full-length apron and a chef hat. To make a chef hat you will need white tissue paper, white cardstock, a stapler and scissors.

Cut two pieces of cardstock, lengthwise, into strips 3 inches wide and staple them together to form one long strip of paper. The strip of paper should now be approximately 18 to 20 inches long. Take a sheet of tissue paper and slowly bunch it along the top edge of the card stock, taping it to the strip as you go.

When you get to the end of your first piece of tissue paper, bend the long strip of card stock into a circle and staple the ends together at the top and bottom.



Continue to bunch up the tissue paper, taping it to the inside of the card stock circle until you have made it all the way around. Affix a few pieces of tape inside the hat to hold any gaps in the tissue paper together.



- **SEAMSTRESS** — A solid-colored skirt and long sleeved shirt and a white half apron. A dark-colored fabric or bandana worn as a headscarf.
- **QUEEN** — A nice dark red dress tied at the waist with a gold-colored rope or sash and a long piece of dark fabric to be work as a long robe. The robe can be pinned onto the back of the dress or can be worn draped over the shoulders like a shawl, but hanging low and flowing. A crown or a gold-colored headband. Optional: Gold-colored jewelry.
- **FATES** — Long, flowing dresses of pale colors tied at the waist with sashes. Or solid white pants and shirts with flowy pale-colored fabric draped around the shoulders and tied at the waist with sashes.
- **SCALE** — All black and holding scale parts (see prop notes for Scene 5).



PROPS

Scene 1

- A tray on the table with: 4 cloth napkins, a plastic or cardboard knife, cheese, figs, and Baklava. Food can be real or made from paper.
- A basket with a loaf of bread for WIDOW. Bread can be real or made out of paper.
- A vase, on the table.
- Red flowers- can be real or fake.
- A broom.
- A brush.
- A bag for ALENA.
- A basket of food for WIDOW to hand to ALENA. (The same basket that WIDOW carried in).
- A gold colored necklace for SUITOR #1 to give to CASSANDRA.
- A silver colored talisman for SUITOR #2 to give to HELENA.

Scene 2

- A bouquet of flowers for QUEEN to hold. One must be loose for QUEEN to drop. This is the same one she gives to ALENA.

Scene 3

- Basket for ALENA (same one that WIDOW gave her in Scene 1).
- Baklava (can be the same used in Scene 1).
- A ball of thread.
- Flower for ALENA to give to FATE (same one that QUEEN gave to ALENA).

Scene 4

- Ball of thread (same as in previous scene).

Scene 5

- Tray (with food. Same as in Scene 1).
- Ball of thread (same as in previous scene).
- Gold coins- can be plastic or made from paper.



- Two step stools for scale. These should be short and sturdy enough that SUITOR #3 can easily step onto one and it will hold his weight. Cover them in gray or black fabric.
- Scale parts for SCALE to hold: Two flat round discs cut from cardboard and painted black which each hang from three pieces of yellow yarn.
Cut out two cardboard discs, each about a foot in diameter, and paint them black. These will be the pans of the scale. Punch three holes into each disc, along the outer edge, equidistant from each other:

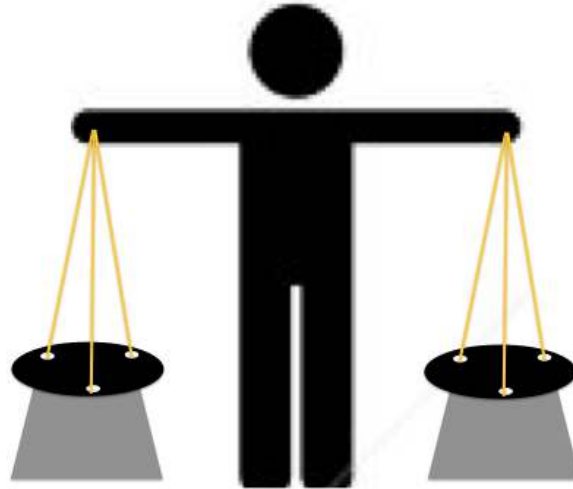


Thread a long piece of yarn (see below for note about length) through each hole and knot on the under side so that the yarn won't slip back through the hole. Tie the other ends of the three pieces together at the top, creating a triangular shape:





Note: The length of the yarn should be the distance from the top of the footstool to the SCALE'S hands, so that when SCALE holds them, the pans hang right at the top of the footstools:



Note: SCALE enters with all of his or her props, carrying the two pans with yarn and the footstools. (He/she can use a small cart to help transport them, or can have a stage hand help bring them out and set up.) The set up can take a minute, as the dialogue allows for an awkward waiting period while the SCALE sets up.

When it comes time for SUITOR #3 to buy the yarn, ALENA will place the yarn on one of the pans. SCALE will lower that pan below the top of the footstool to show the weight of the yarn. SUITOR #3 will place gold coins on the other pan, which will not move.

When it is time for SUITOR #3 to step on the scale, he will step up on the stepstool under the pan with the gold coins. As he steps up, SCALE will move his arms to even out the pans. Since the pans should now be flush with top of the footstool, it will look like SUITOR #3 is standing in the pan.



SETS

To make scene transition easy, divide the stage into three sections. If you want to make a backdrop, you can paint it to show the three locations, or you can just rely on set pieces. The three locations are:

- 1) The Widow's Cottage, on one end of the stage.
- 2) The Village Market, in the middle of the stage.
- 3) The top of a mountain range, on the other end of the stage.

- **Scene 1** — The Widow's home. A small table and four chairs are onstage. On the table sits a vase and a tray. On the tray there are 4 cloth napkins, a knife, and food- cheese, figs, and baklava. The food can be real or made from paper. A broom rests against one wall.

There are also three beds on stage. Beds can be represented by blankets and pillows on the floor, or you can use chairs with milk crates. For the latter, use three chairs (one for each daughter) and place a milk crate at the foot of each chair. Cover chairs and milk crates in blankets. The actors can sit up and stretch their feet out, pretending to be sleeping in beds.

- **Scene 2** — The village market. A long table is on stage to represent a market stand. On the table are various goods- food, blankets, scarves, etc. You can cover the table with a white tablecloth and put goods on top. Food can be made from cardboard.

If you want, you can make a sign to hang on the outside of the table that says "Market Stand" or something more specific that describes the goods being sold.

- **Scene 3** — The top of a mountain range. Different sized rocks can be placed around to create the terrain. Rocks can be made of cardboard, cut out and painted. Cardboard rocks can be propped up against milk crates or with a cardboard brace.

Another option is to carve them from Styrofoam, and spray paint them.



- **Scene 4** — The Village Market, same as Scene 2.
- **Scene 5** — The Widow's home, same as Scene 1.

