

**FINAL SCRIPT OF
STAGE PLAY
HRSJ-5150_01**

NODI-The Girl WHO FIGHTS FOR HER WINGS

**SUBMITTED BY: TANIA FERDOUS
TRU ID: T00759715**

Cast of Characters

Nodi: (13) a young school girl and only child of her family.

Mr. Jamal Hasan: (47) Father of Nodi, a dutiful family man and An owner of rice mill in village. A man with faith in tradition.

Mrs. Hanifa : (32) Mother of Nodi and wife of Mr. Hasan.

Sabrina: (20) A college student and private tutor (part time basis) of Nodi. She also works for part time (once in a week) with a local NGO, named 'Fight for women and girls' and attends it's village awareness meetings.

Total Actors: 3 female, 1 male

Run Time: 20 min. (1.5 pages per min.)

Title

Nodi: The girl who fights for her wings

Set Requirements

2 comfortable chairs for a living room and a centr table. A small flower vass, few magazines, books on the side of the table.

ACT 1

Scene 1

SETTING: a regular well off village home, in Bangladesh. In the middle of the stage two chairs and a small table represents a living room of the house. A soft light is coming from left direction (day light).

AT RISE: NODI is sitting in ease on a chair on the stage with a book in her hand. Nodi's mother, HANIFA BANU enters.

HANIFA

Nodi, my darling girl, what are you doing?
Are you busy?

Mrs. Hanifa seats beside Nodi, an intensity on her face, speaks in low and shaky voice.

NODI

No mother, not busy, just reading a novel

Nodi looks up and glance at her mother quickly, and again get back to reading.

HANIFA

I have something to tell you Nodi, it is a bit serious!

NODI

What is it mother? why are you looking so Serious?

Nodi softly looks at Hanifa with question and sympathy in her eyes.

HANIFA

I want to say... Nodi, you are grown up now... I want to say... I came to say..

Mrs. Hanifa puts her hand on Nodi's shoulder. She is hesitating

NODI

Oh mother! what is the matter? Don't worry mother, please tell me what's on your mind?

Nodi takes Mrs. Hanifa's hand into her hand. She looks worried.

HANIFA

Your father has arranged marriage for you and it is to happen within few days.

Mrs. Hanifa said the line quickly and stared at Nodi

NODI

What! What did you say mother?

Nodi takes her hand back to herself and looks shocked.

HANIFA

yes dear! Shariful is the man who is fixed as your bridegroom. Shariful, from our neighbor village. He is eager to marry you. He said to your father, that he saw you while you were on your way to school and he liked you very much.

Mrs. Hanifa tries to hold Nodi's hand while talking to her in soft voice.

NODI

Shariful! that old man! Mother! are you out of your mind! He is 40 years old!

Nodi forcefully takes her hands back from Mrs. Hanifa's hand and shouted.

HANIFA

NO, no, he is 30 years old Nodi. He is from a good family and owns two rice mills in the village/

Mrs. Hanifa keeps trying to hold Nodi's shoulder and hands.

NODI

so what? He is still double of my age!
Besides I am not in to marriage now mother,
You know that!

Nodi stands from the chair with anger by pushing away Mrs. Hanifa's hand.

HANIFA

Your father said, age is no issue for man. Men can get married at any stage of their life. But daughter, for women it is not same. No one wants to marry an older woman. That's why for girls, it is better to get married as early as possible. When a woman will be older, she will not get a good husband. Your father asked me to tell you this Nodi.

Mrs Hanifa also stands beside Nodi

NODI

I won't get married mother! I am studying now and I will have to finish my tenth. I will have to go to college like Sabrina teacher! I can't marry now mother! Please mother, don't spoil my life! I will die if you force me! I won't marry and certainly not to this old one! I will rather die!

Nodi throws the book that she had in her hands. Quickly moves while speaking behind the chair. She aggressively yells at her mother.

HANIFA

I can do nothing for you my child, I am powerless, I also had to get married at your age. It is your father who is in charge of everything! We can do nothing girl. Just accept it Nodi, just go with it. This is our fate. This is women's life here. It will be good for you at the end.

Mrs. Hanifa looks down and keeps talking, she looks helpless.

NODI

No, I will talk to father. I don't want to get married now. I don't like Shariful. I want to study Mother. Please you tell this to father.

Nodi tries to control herself, tries to not shouting, yelling. Mrs. Hanifa slowly leaves the room. Nodi quietly seats in the middle chair of the room. Her face looks sad.

Scene 2

Nodi is sitting on the chair in the living room, she has that book in her hand, which she is not reading but only staring. She seems lost in her thoughts. Sabrina enters in the room.

SABRINA

Hi Nodi, I have come to see you for the last time. Your mother just told me not to come to teach from tomorrow. There will be a ceremony in the house. You are getting married!

Sabrina smiles and seats on an empty chair near Nodi, while talking. Nodi slightly delights to see Sabrina.

NODI

My father has arranged my marriage with a

much older person, to whom I never met, but teacher, I want to study, I don't want to get married. Please, save me, please save me if you can!

Nodi gets tears in her eyes while talking to Sabrina. The smile on Sabrina's face vanished. She looks serious now.

SABRINA

Are they forcing you Nodi?

NODI

I have just come to know about this, like you. Mother told me that everything is arranged. I will have to now marry instead of study. I haven't talk with my father yet. He is out of home, how can he arrange my Marriage without even letting me know! He didn't ask me what I want!

Nodi lets her head down with despair. Sabrina touches her head

SABRINA

you should talk with your father. Tell him that you haven't attained legal age for marriage yet. It is illegal.

NODI

Teacher, if it is illegal, then will I be saved from this marriage? but how do then so many girls are getting married of my age in the village?

Nodi looks at to Sabrina and she looks little hopeful.

SABRINA

It is certainly illegal. They are getting Married without complying with law. This is even punishable Nodi!

NODI

so, what can I do now?

Nodi looks anxious and confused.

SABRINA

don't worry! I will help you if you want. I am involved with a local NGO, you already know that right? They work with women child issues. So, let me talk with them to see if anything can be done.

NODI

Ok teacher!

Nodi still looks confused and worried.

SABRINA

Nodi, first you have to talk with your father. Tell him your point. Maybe he will agree with you at the end! After all, he is your father! If he doesn't, then we can talk with the NGO to see how the matter can be dealt.

NODI

OK Teacher!

Nodi looks worried but slightly eased in expression. Sabrina hugs Nodi and left the room.

Scene 3

NODI is anxious, tensed and pacing from one corner to another of the living room, while waiting for her father to come. Her hairs are messy and she looks puzzled and bemused. Her eyes shows that she is lost in to deep thinking. Mr. JAMAL HASAN enters in the living room and changes his shoes. Nodi takes a deep breath to talk to her father and tries to carefully manage her emotions.

NODI

Father, I heard about something, that I just can't believe, please father, tell me that this is not true!

MR. HASAN

what is it Nodi?

Mr. Hasan is calm and firm in his voice. He walks middle of the stage and stands beside NODI.

NODI

I heard my marriage is fixed. Mother told me, it is with a man named Shariful, whom I never met, never talked. I don't believe that it is true! but mother keeps telling me this is true!

Nodi speaks in trembling voice

MR. HASAN

Nodi, I have my tension for your future, you are big enough to understand this. Yes, it is true that, as your father, I chose this man for you. He is from a good family and earns a decent amount, which is enough to protect you for the rest of your life.

Mr. Hasan takes a deep breath and sits slowly; his face is strict but voice is soft and straight.

NODI

But father, you haven't asked me what do I want. I knew nothing about this plan.

MR. HASAN

you don't need to know. I already have observed everything. This will be the best for you. You, with your little experience of life, will not be able to see, what I have seen Nodi. you are really fortunate, trust me!

NODI

Father, I don't want to get married now! I want to finish my study first. I have my own dreams father. I don't see myself being one's wife at this point of my life!

Nodi stands beside her father and request in her voice.

MR. HASAN

Dreams are good in sleeping. This is but real life and it is not easy! I understand your perspective, because I also once, was at your age. These fantasies are not reality. Girls at your age lives in bubbles, and so as you. Someday the bubbles will disappear leaving you in very harsh reality! your fantasy will go very soon but by then you will lose your chance. This marriage will give you security and a stable life. People work to get a secured and stable life. You are getting it right now by marrying this man. For what then you want to go to school or study!

NODI

a secured life like a caged bird! I would rather die than marrying him! I can't live like a machine, where I wouldn't have a say or any participation in any matter, I will have to be there just to obey the orders, just to say 'yes' on everything like a slave! is that what you want for me!

Nodi's body is shaking because of the heat of the conversation. She is trying hard to control her emotion.

MR. HASAN

Marrying him doesn't mean you will be a slave of him. You will be his wife and he will take good care of you!

Mr. Hasan takes little sigh in silence, cannot meet his eyes to Nodi's eye.

NODI

So why then he marries to a girl of my age. He is more than twice of my age! does he has any shame! he comes to marry a girl of my age! I can imagine how he will treat me and you are forwarding me in to his claws! How can you do that, father!

Nodi throws a little flower vase on the table out of anger and despair and immediately sat on the floor

MR. HASAN

You are crossing all lines Nodi! This is also, about our family, our tradition and honor! It is not only about you! We are living here in a village. Most girls are getting married at your age here. They do not disobey their parents.

NODI

They did not get married at their will. I do not want this marriage, a caged slave life. I want my freedom. I want to be independent.

Nodi keeps the voice tone as angry.

MR. HASAN

We are not living in Hollywood. Our family is living here and we have to maintain the rules traditions of this place. You are talking about matters of some foreign

western places, which has nothing to do with our lives.

Mr. Hasan also talk with anger but by managing the rage.

NODI

Father, I am not talking about any distant places. If you know the rules, I am not even attained the age of marriage. have you considered the consequences of this marriage? Those girls who were married at my age, are they really living a good life? No. they are not! Last year Meena apa, from our neighbor house, you remember, she died because of her early marriage. Don't you know that she died while giving birth? Do you want the same for me?

MR. HASAN

everyone is not same, Nodi. Meena was sick, a weak girl, but you are not.

Mr. Hasan seems to taken a back, he now speaks in a low voice

NODI

Meena apa was ok, only her age was not good enough for bearing a child. Father, I cannot live a life like that. You gave me the opportunity to go to school and now please father, don't take it away from me.

Nodi stands from seating position and speaks with firm voice.

MR. HASAN

from where are all these coming from? Is this your lady teacher, right?

Mr. Hasan talks with annoyance. Nodi doesn't reply to that. MR. Hasan takes big breath, looking tired and little exhausted.

MR. HASAN

Nodi, my dear daughter, I raised you with utmost care. You don't understand the reality. It is dangerous to be unmarried at this age in this village. Don't you know what happens with the unmarried girls in the street? they are being mocked, harassed in many ways, even worst things happen which I cannot even discuss with you! last month a girl, Jarina, you remember, of our village has been a victim of acid throwing? The mockers, criminals, eve teasers are everywhere in the village. I want your security. I cannot protect you from these on growing violence and crimes. As a father I only want to take care of you! what is my wrong in this! I am only following what our fellow villagers are doing. Marriage will be your good shelter.

NODI

Father, villagers are changing. If there incidents like this then we can fight against this, legally. We can raise our voice. To save me from these dangers you can not put me in to another life risk situation!

Nodi quickly comes to her father, seats near to Mr. Hasan's chair on the floor. She has hope in her eyes, trembling voice. Mr. Hasan looks defeated, but not given up.

MR. HASAN

daughter, you don't understand duty and responsibility. This is bigger than your personal wish/

NODI:

O Father, please let me have a chance to choose. I will be a dutiful daughter in future. Don't I deserve that?

Mr. Hasan looks hesitant and conflicted.

MR. HASAN

sometimes it is more important to sacrifice than having one's selfish wish.

NODI

Even if it costs more than my life, father?

Nodi speaks with conviction. Mr. Hasan couldn't say anything in reply. There is a long pause. Mr. Hasan looking far away and it seems he is not as convinced as before about Nodi's marriage. His spirit seems in dilemma.

NODI

please father, let me have a chance. If I am not good with my choice, you can ask me later for marriage. I will not put you down. For now, please, let me study.

Nodi passionately touches her father's hand. Mr. Hasan takes his hands away, and his voice is conflicted and has resilience.

MR. HASAN

It is too late for all these. Everything is ready now. It's just couple of days left for your marriage. Now it is not possible to cancel! daughter, you will regret later for your actions and words! Remember, a father is telling this. You will have to pay the price.

NODI

I will father! I will pay the price but let Me chose my own destiny.

They both stands there in silent for few moments. The heat of their conversation and emotions are floating in the air. At last, Mr. Hasan slowly left the room. He looked conflicted but still in resilience. Nodi stands there in the room, emotional but strong and determined in her body language.

Scene 4

NODI is sitting on a chair of the living room. She is dressed as a bride. Her eyes are red, tired and hopeless. She is waiting there in silence. Suddenly she overhears noise outside the living room door. She stands immediately. Slowly goes to near door, one side

of the stage, tries to see outside. The noise increases. She hears sirens, shouts, sounds of many people. she comes center of the room again, patiently waits to figure out what might happen. SABRINA enters in the room. She rushed to Nodi and gives a hug with a bright smile on her face.

SABRINA

Nodi, congratulations!

Sabrina comes and hug Nodi with a smiling face! Nodi surprises to see Sabrina with such smiling face!

NODI

what happened teacher!

SABRINA

Nodi, we waited till the end to see whether your father dismisses the marriage or not. He told me that even if he wants to call it off, he couldn't, because of the fear of these villagers. It would be a great dishonor for him and his family now, if he calls the marriage off. Everything is set to go. Your father told me that if he does not agree now with marriage, then the villagers will outcaste him and you. No one will ever marry to you, because everyone will say, that there must be some problem with you, that's why the bridegroom left the bride unmarried. This will bring utmost shame for the whole family. After hearing it, then, I had no choice but to inform it to police through my local NGO. I went to the police station along with my one NGO colleague and reported your child marriage to police station.

NODI

really teacher! what happened next?

Nodi still in surprise. Sabrina keeps smiling and holding gently Nodi.

SABRINA

police told us to wait for actual marriage day, which means to wait for today, when bridegroom will come to marry you and then they will catch Shariful and his family then and there.

NODI

Oh! why did police say to wait till marriage day? I had to go through a lot of pain for the past few days.

SABRINA

because police had to wait till the child marriage crime about to take place. They said, before the actual attempt, legally, they can't take any action. They said they will catch the offenders with evidence. They also assured us that marriage will not take place, so, not to worry!

NODI

Are police here?

Nodi still in surprise and happy!

SABRINA

not only police, but also the executive magistrate with local journalists all are here to catch Shariful.

NODI

where are all they? What happened in the outside?

Nodi made a little jump with great joy! Sabrina keeps talking with exiting voice!

SABRINA

Shariful is taken by police and asked to sign a legal bond stating that he will never attempt to commit child marriage in future. He also fined for 50 thousand taka, for attempting to commit child marriage and also ordered to be in jail for 7 days by the executive magistrate.

Nodi jumps around the living room with cheers and clapping. Sabrina keeps her exiting expression and smile on her face.

NODI

Really? oh! I can't believe that this evil guy has been caught up by police! Thank you so much teacher! you are my angel!

Nodi runs to give Sabrina a tight hug. There is moment of silence while they are hugging.

SABRINA

There is also something that I need to tell You Nodi.

Sabrina let Nodi stand beside her and speaks now in a calm voice

NODI

what is that teacher?

SABRINA:

Mr. Hasan, your father is also cautioned by police. He also had to sign a legal bond copy for arranging this marriage. He said to police he will never going to arrange anything like this, before you attain the age of marriage.

Nodi takes a little breath. Sabrina is calm now.

NODI

Is father angry?

SABRINA

he doesn't look so

Nodi smiles again.

NODI

Thank you, teacher, for all your support.
One day I also want to go to college like
you. You are my inspiration. Please be
always beside me.

Sabrina hugs Nodi and keep holding her for a while and speaks

SABRINA

I will, Nodi, I will. Because, you are
different. Nodi means river, right? You are
really like a flowing river, calm but
powerful. You know, I see you, just like
your name, a river, uninhibited,
independent, source of great energy. If you
are aware of your power and ability, Nodi, I
promise, you can go way far. You have now
responsibility to save girls like your age,
who may suffer like you. You can be their
inspiration, their example. Because, now,
truly, you can say that, girls for
education, not marriage.

Nodi looks at Sabrina's eye with hope in her own eyes.

NODI

Teacher, I also want to help you in your NGO
work. I can volunteer once in a week with
you. Can I teacher?

SABRINA

of course, my dear. I will love your company. Now let me go outside to see what is going on. You know, the marriage registrar also is sent to jail for 7 days. The excited villagers are also cautioned by police for attending this marriage. They are told that if police find these villagers in any other child marriages, then they will be sent to jail as well. All of the attendees were signed and took oath not to present in any other child marriages. Let me go and see how things are going on. I also have to see off the magistrate and police.

Sabrina leaves the stage.

Scene 5

MR. HASAN enters in stage

He has tears in his eyes. He slowly comes to NODI, who is standing middle of the living room set up stage.

MR. HASAN

Nodi, my dear daughter, I am so sorry for all these. I was under social pressure and Shariful was pressuring me to arrange a quick marriage. I don't know how I ended up like this.

Nodi is calm and sympathetic towards Mr. Hasan

NODI

Father, don't be sad! It's ok now.

Mr. Hasan tries to control his emotion.

MR. HASAN

I was unaware of negative effects of child marriage. The magistrate told me about domestic violence issues and health issues. He told me that if Nodi becomes

pregnant after her child marriage, she may even die! If not dead, she will have to suffer immense physical damage. He said, you cannot bear a child at this age. I didn't think all of these Nodi. The villagers were telling me the reverse.

NODI

Father, I told you about these

There is regret in Mr. Hasan's eyes.

MR. HASAN

yes, but I ignored you because I thought you are little and you don't understand the world. But now I realized how right you are. I could have ended up in jails for my actions!

Nodi holds Mr. Hasan's hands and forgiveness in her eyes.

NODI

Father, I know, whatever you have done, you have done it for my benefit. But..

MR. HASAN

Yes, my dear. But from now on, you will go to school and dream whatever you want to dream. I will never come in to middle of it.

Nodi smiles and hugs little to Mr. Hasan. Speakes in soft tone

NODI

Father, can I ask something? Can I go once in a week with teacher Sabrina for her NGO work? I want to help girls who are in the situation of me. I want to talk with fathers who may not know the negative sides of girls marriage. Will you give permission, father?

Mr. HASAN

o absolutely my dear! You can go with
Sabrina. I will be glad.

Mr. Hasan keeps his one hand on Nodi's head, as if he is
blessing her silently.

THE END