

The Young Ones / Eki jash (1938)

Kasymaly Jantoshev (1904–1968)

OVERVIEW

Author

Kasymaly Jantoshev (1904–1968) was a Kyrgyz writer, prose author, and playwright. He was born in the village of Tepke, now in Ak-Suu District, Ysyk-Kol region of Kyrgyzstan. He learned to read at age sixteen with the teacher Orozakun Ilepes uulu and saw a book for the first time in 1920, as he describes in his memoir *The New School in Tepke* (*Tepkedegi jangy mektep*). In 1921, he joined the Komsomol, the Soviet youth organization for young communists, and studied at a village school until 1924.

In 1926, Jantoshev enrolled in the Pedagogical Technical School (College) in Frunze (Bishkek), where he began writing plays. His early works included one-act plays such as *Shepherds* (*Koychular*), *In a Dream* (*Tushto*), and *We Komsomol Members* (*Biz komsomoletster*), as well as multi-act dramas including *Karachach* (*Karachach*, 1928) and *Alym and Maria* (*Alym menen Mariya*), staged in 1929–1930.

He published textbooks and guides for teachers, including *Reading Book* (*Okuu kitebi*), *Program and Teaching Methods for Kyrgyz Language for the Illiterate* (*Sabatsyzdar uchun kyrgyz tilinin programmasy jana okutuu metody*), *Textbook for Collective Farmers* (*Kolkhozchular uchun okuu kitebi*), and guides on language and arithmetic.

In the early 1930s, he worked as a teacher, district education head, and methodologist in southern regions of Kyrgyzstan. His experiences influenced his prose. The novella *The Young Ones* (*Eki jash*, 1938) depicted social changes and class conflicts during collectivization.

Jantoshev worked in both prose and drama. His historical novel *Kanybek* (*Kanybek*) was first published in three volumes (1939, 1941, 1948) and later revised into a two-volume edition. His plays included *Kurmanbek* (*Kurmanbek*, 1942), *Revenge* (*Och*, 1942), and *The Folk Singer* (*Eldik yrchy*), based on the life of poet Toktogul Satylganov. Later prose works include *Dream* (*Tilek*, 1949), *Fiery Youth* (*Jalynduu jashtar*, 1952), *The Shepherd of Khan Tengri* (*Khan Tengirlik chaban*, 1963), and *My Fate* (*Menin tagdyrym*).

He also translated works by Russian authors Mikhail Lermontov and Alexander Ostrovsky, and by Hans Christian Andersen (from Russian translations), into Kyrgyz. He received honors including Distinguished Figure of the Literature of the Kyrgyz SSR (1946), People's Writer of the Kyrgyz SSR (1968), Medal for Service in World War II (1941–1945) and state medals. Jantoshev died in 1968. Institutions named after him include the Ysyk-Kol Regional Drama Theater, schools, and libraries.

Novella

The novella *The Young Ones* (*Eki Jash*), written in 1938, was one of the first prose works in the form of a *povest* (short novel or novella) in Kyrgyz literature, depicting a story of forced marriage alongside the anti-Soviet insurgent (*Basmachi*) movements.

Background

Women often become tools in social change in traditional or conflict-affected societies because their social value and agency are limited by patriarchal norms. In contexts like early 20th-century Kyrgyz villages, women's lives are shaped not by personal choice but by family, marriage, and political alliances. Marriages are used as a way to:

1. Secure status or wealth; fathers marry daughters to powerful men to protect the family or gain influence.

2. Forge political alliances; women's marriages connect families, clans, or political factions, making them symbolic carriers of loyalty or obedience.
3. Enforce social norms; women are expected to obey fathers, husbands, or elders, reinforcing hierarchical and gendered control.

In these situations, women's personal desires and love are secondary. Their bodies and relationships become instruments to achieve social, political, or economic goals. The novella *The Young Ones* shows this clearly: Ainagul's father uses her as a link to Nurmat, the anti-Soviet insurgent, while she loves Arzymat. Her life becomes a site where political, economic, and social pressures intersect, showing how women are often positioned as tools rather than actors in change.

MAIN CHARACTERS

Ainagul – protagonist, village woman, chairman of the collective farm

Arzymat – Ainagul's secret love, later her husband

Nurmat – the man who coerces Ainagul into marriage, anti-Soviet insurgent

Joldosh – Ainagul's father

Mother – Ainagul's mother

Laylykan – close friend, Arzymat's sister

Ergesh & Arzymat's comrades – village leaders

Kulu Kalpa – former religious and wealthy figure, anti-Soviet insurgent

Kalbaymat, Nasir, Juma, Maty, Adyl – guards, relatives, and allies in Ainagul's abduction, anti-Soviet insurgents

SYNOPSIS

The story takes place in southern Kyrgyzstan in 1935. The author meets a mysterious young woman at Kanabat station in the Fergana Valley. On their journey to Ozgon district, she begins to tell her story. Her name is Ainagul. She grew up in a poor Kyrgyz family during the early Soviet period. Although she loved Arzymat, a young Komsomol leader, powerful villagers tried to marry her to Nurmat, the son of the anti-Soviet leader Mamat Korbashy. Despite letters, secret meetings, and efforts to resist, Ainagul was kidnapped and forced into marriage. She bravely defied Nurmat, who threatened her with violence, and was later rescued after clashes between Soviet patrols and the anti-Soviet insurgents. Severely injured, she recovered in a hospital, where Arzymat finally learned the truth and asked for her forgiveness. Their love was restored. Years later, Ainagul became the chairperson of a collective farm, symbolizing resilience, justice, and the transformation of village life under the new Soviet order.

SCENES

AUTHOR MEETS AINAGUL

Morning at Kanabat Station It was in 1935. The author remembers that morning at Kanabat station (now in Uzbekistan). Perhaps because he had not seen people for a long time, or because quiet joy filled his heart, he could hardly sleep until dawn. When he woke, the town was still resting. Only the station was alive with movement. Steam engines whistled, wagons loaded with fresh grain shifted along the rails, and the sharp calls of conductors echoed in the cool air. Soon people awoke, *samovars*, tea urns *boiled*, and *chaykhanas*, teahouses opened. Though small, Kanabat station in the Fergana Valley was a lively crossroads, connecting distant cities, fertile valleys, and mountain villages.

In the Teahouse The station was crowded. Every teahouse and café was full; when one person left, another quickly took the seat. The sun had just touched the mountain peaks, covering them with golden light. The cool morning air was fresh and gentle, as if washing away worries and filling hearts with quiet joy. The author sat with a cup of tea, calmly observing the lively scene around him. A woman beside him noticed his thoughtful look and smiled, asking why he seemed distracted. He replied briefly that it was nothing. She laughed softly, suggesting that sometimes people hide their feelings when the time is not right.

The Mysterious Woman The woman was graceful and slender, with the proud shape of a mountain deer. Two long black braids shone behind her like dark silk. Her bright face, curved nose, and gentle brows framed her deep, shining eyes that quietly drew attention. She wore a white silk dress, a red coat, a red scarf, and delicate jewelry that sparkled softly in the morning light. She looked like a red rose greeting the rising sun. Though calm and modest, a small beauty mark between her brows showed she was from the south. She smiled and spoke in riddles, remaining a quiet mystery to everyone in the teahouse.

Journey Through Memories The sun spread golden light as they rode in a rattling car toward the northern part of Ozgon town. The woman beside the author spoke gently, smiling, her words carrying the weight of many hardships despite her young appearance. The author listened, thinking of her mysterious name and story. Ainagul promised to tell of struggles endured, warning that her tales were heavy to hear, yet he knew he must listen.

AINAGUL'S CHILDHOOD AND FAMILY

Life with poor parents Ainagul recalls living with her poor parents when the villagers returned from summer pastures to settle in the nearby autumn pastures. Her family had no cattle and only a small house. Her father Joldosh had once worked like a servant for rich families, earning little, but in 1928 he received land and began growing vegetables, grain, and fruit. Though the village still respected wealthy figures like Kulu Kalpa, though they were anti-Soviet movement members. The Soviet government protected the poor. At fourteen, she faced many suitors, even her maternal uncle sought her for his son, yet her father firmly refused.

Kulu Kalpa's Visit Her father Joldosh was cautious and timid, slow to decide, yet once he spoke, he rarely changed his mind. By 1929, she remained unmarried. When the village moved from summer pastures, her mother urged her to visit Kulu Kalpa's home to help with chores and fetch fresh yogurt. Wrapped in a worn coat and scarf, she walked with her mother. Their visit was soon interrupted by Kulu Kalpa himself, an elderly man with white hair and sharp eyes. Though brief, her mother prepared tea and food, while her father brought fresh melon from the garden.

A Celebration of the Melon Joldosh lifted the cut melons with pride, praising their sweetness. "Is it sugar in the melon or God's gift?" Kulu Kalpa asked, admiring them. "If all goes well, I'll give even more next time," her father added, puffing up with joy. The meal was set: *pilaf*, steamed rice and strong green tea. Kulu Kalpa spoke of the land reforms of 1927–28, hidden livestock, and the growing influence of hardworking people under Soviet guidance. Though her mother and she listened closely, her father remained silent, leaving her curious about his thoughts and responses.

The Blessing of Kulu Kalpa Kulu Kalpa raised his hands, giving a heartfelt blessing: "May God grant you livestock, and long life. May your lands grow and your herds prosper!" Her parents listened with joy, her father's face glowing with pride. In Kyrgyz tradition, receiving a blessing was rare and precious, often requiring invitations and offerings. Yet Kulu Kalpa came willingly, honoring them. She watched quietly, heart pounding, ears alert. Her father smiled secretly, sharing a glance with her mother, and the blessing left a warm, lasting glow in their hearts.

Wisdom and Guidance of Kulu Kalpa Kulu Kalpa advised thoughtfully, reminding them to honor both tradition and the law. He praised their kindness and honesty, saying the government trusted the poor. She watched quietly, feeling her father's cautious pride and her mother's silent support. Kulu Kalpa urged careful decisions, balancing respect for elders and the state. Her father nodded, smiling with a hint of pride and relief. Her mother glanced at him, knowing the weight of his judgment.

ENCOUNTERS WITH KULU KALPA

The Sad Night That night, Kulu Kalpa had left, and her mother was away on an errand. Ainagul understood that Kulu Kalpa came to ask her hands for someone. Her father tended the melons and prepared food, while she lay with her head on a pillow, unable to stop her tears. In the evening her parents sipped tea, counting their animals and planning the next day. Her father urged her gently to join them, but her sorrow only deepened, and he grew very angry. Soon, visitors arrived, Arzymat and Ergesh, young leaders of the village committees, watching her with quiet curiosity.

The Village Leaders Her father often said, “Ergesh is fair and wise, and Arzymat is clever but strict; both lead the village.” He respected Ergesh, but he feared Arzymat more. When tea was served, Ergesh and Arzymat said that they should attend the upcoming meeting. Her father frowned, worried that he might have forgotten the rules discussed at the last gathering. The discussion then turned to Kulu Kalpa. Her father suggested that Kulu Kalpa could also join the kolkhoz, since he had given all his possessions and land to the Soviets. However, Arzymat objected, saying that it was against soviet policy.

A Night of Tears Arzymat asked Ainagul why she was sitting so sadly. He only wished to draw her into the conversation, but she could not answer. She could not even lift her face to look at them. Shame and fear kept her silent before her father and mother. She understood that her father had agreed to marry her off to Nurmat, the son of Mamat Korbashy, a rebel leader. Soon her father, Ergesh, and Arzymat left, though she did not notice when. Her mother tried to comfort her, saying that every girl must face such a fate. But the words felt cold and painful to her. That night she could not sleep.

Moonlight and Restless Thoughts Moonlight entered through the small window and shone softly on a little wooden chest. The rest of the house lay in quiet darkness. Only Ainagul could not find peace. Wrapping her cloak around her shoulders, she stepped outside, hoping to escape her sorrow for a moment. When the door creaked, her mother awoke and asked if she was afraid. She returned to bed, but sleep did not come. In her mind appeared Arzymat, Nurmat, and the dark shadow of Mamat Korbashy. Their cold words filled her heart with pain, and she greeted the dawn in tears.

LOVE, THREAT, AND SECRET LETTERS

Laylykan’s Visit After morning tea, Ainagul’s father went to work. Her mother spread dried apricots in the sun and asked Ainagul to finish sewing her dress. But Ainagul said her head ached and her body felt heavy. Her mother made a bed for her under the apple tree and told her to rest. She did not sleep; sorrow filled her heart. Soon her friend Laylykan came. They were the same age and had studied together at the literacy school. They had learned to read and write a little. In those days many families did not send even their sons to school, but Ainagul’s father felt proud of her learning.

The Red Envelope Some village women mocked Ainagul, saying her father was a poor man who followed the Bolsheviks, and that she would be the same. They whispered scornfully about her attending school. Her friend Laylykan, bright-eyed and graceful, shared every secret with her, and Ainagul trusted her, except for the secret about Arzymat. Ainagul and Arzymat shared quiet, tender feelings, though she kept them hidden because Arzymat was Laylykan’s brother. Laylykan brought a red envelope. She said it came from the district and asked Ainagul to read it first. Trembling, she opened the letter, blushed, and folded it quickly as Laylykan leaned close, eager to know what it said.

Arzymat’s Letter Ainagul could not keep the letter from Laylykan. Laylykan was her equal, and she needed help sharing her troubles. Swallowing her pride, Ainagul read aloud Arzymat’s words. He wrote of his love, faithful and devoted to her, and of the promise they had made. Yet danger shadowed them. Mamat Korbashy, cruel and powerful anti-Soviet insurgent demanded her hand for his son Nurmat. The forces around them, greedy, violent men, threatened their young hearts. Arzymat trusted her to understand the threat and their secret, while their love remained bright, delicate, and trembling against the dark weight of the world.

Arzymat’s Plea Arzymat’s letter spoke of danger and love. He warned Ainagul of Kulu Kalpa, a cunning man whose hands reached both Mamat and Nurmat, threatening their lives. He urged her to see clearly who was friend and who was foe, to understand the world around her. Ainagul read the letter aloud. Laylykan, moved by the words, wept with her instead of offering advice. Gathering her courage, Ainagul wrote her own reply and entrusted it to Laylykan to deliver to Arzymat.

Love and Danger Several days passed, heavy with tears and sorrow. Ainagul felt trapped, her parents watching her every move. She and Arzymat had promised to meet, but fear, gossip, and her father’s anger kept them apart. One night, under the moonlight, she crept from her bed, heart pounding. When she met Arzymat, they spoke quietly. “Will you truly run away with me?” he asked. “I would, but I cannot. My parents would be in danger,” she whispered. “Then speak your love openly. I love you through every delicate vein

of my heart." She confessed her love and begged him to kill Nurmat. Arzymat said Nurmat had too many allies; all had to be dealt with. In the end, he left, saddened, knowing she could not run with him.

Tears and Fear Ainagul felt the weight of Arzymat's anger and wondered how to make him forgive her. She wept until her tears flooded like a river, losing herself in sorrow. Hearing her cries, her parents ran and lifted her to her bed. "I don't know... the girls came to play, I touched the wood, and screamed," she whispered. They tried to calm her, sprinkling water, burning incense, murmuring, "Is it a spirit, a jinn, or a fairy?" Her heart trembled, torn between fear, shame, and longing.

THE ORDEAL OF FORCED MARRIAGE

Wedding Preparations A week passed. Her father returned from the market, happy as if for the first time, showing her mother the gifts he had brought. Ainagul could not look at them. Her heart felt tight, and everything, the jewelry and the ornaments, reminded her of Nurmat. Her father went to discuss the upcoming wedding with Kulu Kalpa and Nurmat. Her mother invited village women to admire the gifts. Laylykan came, smiling but with sadness in her eyes. Has Arzymat come, Ainagul asked. No, I do not know what will happen. I am afraid, Laylykan whispered, for Arzymat has been chasing the bandits ever since the fight with Mamat Korbashy. They spoke long into the day. Grief filled their hearts, and tears clouded their eyes.

Three days passed. All the gifts made for Ainagul were ready. The village buzzed with news: tomorrow the wedding would come, and her beloved, Nurmat, would arrive. Her father oversaw the wedding preparations, her mother and the village women cooked for the celebration. They spoke of the groom, the gifts, the songs, and the games, laughing and gossiping, comparing past weddings. For Ainagul, their chatter felt like fire and laughter, but her heart ached. She and Laylykan could not calm themselves. She had sent a letter to Arzymat three days ago, but still there was no reply, and he did not appear.

Waiting for Arzymat Ainagul asked one of the women, "Do you know what happened to Mamat Korbashy?" "They say the free squads chased him. Two bandits died, and a Komsomol boy in the squad was shot," the woman replied. "Which squads?" "Arzymat's," she said. Laylykan began to cry. Ainagul wondered if Arzymat was safe. She wanted to cry with Laylykan, but fear of shame and revealing secrets held her back. She longed for Arzymat's safe return, counting every moment in anxious hope.

Gossip and Truth Ainagul, sick with sorrow, spoke only to Laylykan and avoided all other village girls and women. The others whispered about her, mocking her silence and her love for Nurmat. They said, "Does she not speak because she favors Nurmat? Or is he the clever ruler of the village?" But Ainagul knew her father's words were clear: she loved Nurmat, and no one could stop her heart. His words spread through the village, believed by all, repeated by Kulu Kalpa and Nurmat, yet the truth remained only with them.

The Newspaper At five in the afternoon, Ainagul wandered in the garden, tears in her eyes, sorrow in her chest. Laylykan ran to her, holding a newspaper, saying Nurmat would take her as a bride. Fear and doubt gripped Ainagul, but she read. The article revealed how her father had been deceived by Kulu Kalpa, how he feared Mamat, and how Nurmat would claim her. The village whispered and passed the news, some blaming Kulu Kalpa, others her father's ignorance. Her mother wept, cursing the writer, and her father hurried to Kulu Kalpa to seek guidance. Each word burned her heart, making private sorrow public.

News from Arzymat The sun set, night came. The villagers preparing for the wedding heard the newspaper news and quietly returned home, uneasy. The house grew dark. Ainagul hid in a corner. "My brother is safe. He received your letter. Tonight he will come. He will find you in the garden," said Laylykan. Joy overwhelmed her, and she cried without words. She clung to Laylykan, kissed her, and shared her happiness. She dressed in the clothes made for her, ready for any place, but Arzymat had not come. She waited, anxious and eager.

Secret Night Ainagul and her mother laid the bed as usual. Her mother did not notice her trembling from crying. Just as she reached to extinguish the lamp, her father entered, his face tense, silent, almost fearful. "I wanted to celebrate my only daughter's wedding with joy and laughter," he said finally. "But it cannot happen. I spoke with Kulu Kalpa and Nurmat. There is only one way to keep you safe. Tonight, you must leave with him, quietly and willingly. If we delay, everything will be lost." Overcome with shock and relief, Ainagul fainted.

Mother's Suffering Ainagul's eyes fluttered open. The room was dim, the lamp flickering. Her mother wept beside her. "Look at me, my child! I carried you nine months. Don't make me suffer!" Her father had struck her. "Why?" she whispered, trembling. He said your daughter loves another. She fell, calling Arzymat. Is she still sane? Ainagul could hardly believe it. Her heart raced, Arzymat's secret revealed. Blood streaked her mother's face. Her cries confirmed the harsh truth. "Nurmat is coming. Ainagul must be ready," her father told her mother.

Ainagul's Plea Ainagul trembled as her mother clutched her, crying. Her father stormed in, furious, striking and blaming her mother for favoring Arzymat. "Will you send her with Arzymat or Nurmat?" he demanded. She shielded her mother, pleading, "Father, believe me, she did no wrong." Her heart pounded, tears blurring her vision. She held a knife to prove her vow. Memories of her mother's sacrifices, her own childhood, the warmth of love and care, rushed through her. Her father paused, knife falling, eyes wild yet attentive. Ainagul whispered, "The fault is mine, not hers," as the room trembled with fear and sorrow.

Ainagul's Truth Ainagul's father grabbed the knife from her trembling hands. Her heart froze, her body stiff as ice. Her mother lay pale, helpless. "Explain your guilt!" he demanded, shaking her toward the center of the room. "Father, do not be angry! The fault is not mine or hers," she whispered. "You once said a poor father with a pure heart never sells his daughter. I go to Nurmat, but never to live with him. The words in this letter are true. Akmat wrote it. The district Komsomol secretary delivered it." He snatched the letter and ran outside, leaving trembling silence.

Ainagul's Fear and the Letter Half an hour passed since her father left. Her mother sat, tearful and leaning for support. Ainagul paced, frantic, her heart racing. Her father returned, accompanied by Ergesh, a respected man known for honesty and courage. He had survived two attacks from the anti-Soviet insurgents and now spoke with authority. "This is wrong, Joldosh" Ergesh said sternly. "A fool wishes harm, the wise seeks safety. The newspaper and this letter match. You claimed you would sell your daughter, but the truth is revealed. Secrets hidden bring death. Stand firm. Enemies act as enemies. What will you do joining them? The letter had been written by Arzymat, disguised through Akmat.

Joldosh's Decision Ainagul watched as her father Joldosh and Ergesh argued long into the night. Her father finally broke down, crying like a child. "I am foolish, cruel, a deceitful man... I am no human," he wept. Her mother joined, scolding and pleading. "You are not human. What would the world be with men like you?" Her father sobbed, promising not to give Ainagul to Nurmat, even if he had to die. Ainagul's heart ached, feeling Ergesh's presence lift her sorrow. Yet fear pressed upon her. Who would come first, Nurmat or Arzymat? The question churned like a stormy sea within her.

Night Whispers Near midnight, the house was dark and silent. Her parents slept, yet her father's cough broke the calm. Ainagul lay awake, listening for Arzymat. Outside, faint sounds of hooves and whispers made her heart race. She crept to the door, peering into the shadowed garden. Two figures approached, voices murmuring. "Is that Ainagul?" "Perhaps." Her pulse leapt. One voice, Nasyr, she recognized from Arzymat's company. Relief and fear mixed; Arzymat might be near, yet danger lingered. Shadows and sounds danced in her mind, her heart torn between hope, anxiety, and the promise of love under the hidden night.

Ainagul Kidnapped Ainagul stepped forward carefully. Voices whispered, guessing who she was. "Ainagul!" one called. "Yes," she answered. Hands grabbed hers, guiding her to the horses. "Where is Arzymat?" she asked, but a sharp voice ignored her. Fear seized her as four figures forced her onto a horse, riding through dark fields. Hooves shuffled, branches scraped. She recognized Nasyr and Juma; the other two were strangers. Her heart raced. Wild and unknown, she felt trapped like a fawn in a predator's grasp. Every sound, every shadow threatened. Yet ahead, her hope lingered, a fragile light in the night.

Ainagul in Captivity Ainagul was caught in a strange, terrifying world. The four men spoke harshly, comparing her to a trapped bird and a cloud beyond reach. Her heart raced, her mind dizzy with fear. She did not know where they were taking her. Every step brought confusion, every word from Juma and Nasyr tightened her chest. Juma mocked and warned, yet promised rest only after a journey she could not foresee. Ainagul felt her pulse hammering in her throat. Death seemed close, her body frozen in suspense, as the unknown path stretched endlessly before her.

Ainagul's Arrival Ainagul arrived at two white yurts glowing in the night. Voices called out, men and women rushing forward. "Bring oil for the bride," they said. Confused, she looked around, trying to understand who had brought her and who would be her partner. A man lifted her from the horse, women surrounded her, guiding her gently. "Bow, bride," they instructed as part of the ritual, but Ainagul refused. A woman struck her neck sharply, forcing her to bend. Trembling, Ainagul obeyed, her heart racing with fear and curiosity. She felt lost yet watched by careful, guiding hands.

Nurmat, a Future Husband Soon, they led Ainagul into the house. A woman put oil on her lips, kissed her face, and guided her inside. She was given a cotton bundle tied to a ladle, part of the wedding ritual, and seated to the left. Women whispered about her beauty, her calm eyes, and posture. Ainagul felt trapped, powerless, and silent, only watching. More women arrived, adding to the whispers. Outside, men greeted quietly. Ainagul trembled with fear and curiosity as people congratulated Nurmat, saying, "May he be blessed! May the marriage be happy and strong!"

The Runaway Bride The sun rose, spreading golden light over the world. Inside, women whispered, astonished. "See the bride when she comes, the elder when she dies," they murmured. One left, another arrived, doors opening and closing in rhythm. They whispered that Ainagul had come through elopement. "Who has ever seen a runaway bride?" "The wealthy give daughters with pomp and ceremony. Poor girls never have such honor." "Even if she ran, is her honor lost? Watch how she carries herself." Ainagul appeared, quiet and composed, defying gossip, her dignity intact.

Forced Ceremony The house filled with men. Ainagul sat among other brides and girls, the ritual cotton bundle in her hand. Elders, Adyl, Maty, and others observed. Nurmat organized the guests, calling relatives. The mullah blessed the pair, asking if they agree to marry each other. Ainagul stayed silent. Women whispered, urging her to speak, but she remained mute. The mullah declared that even without her voice, the marriage would be valid. Ainagul's heart raced, trapped between tradition and fear, powerless as the ceremony continued. Her silence did not stop the ritual, and Nurmat's claim over her was now official. Ainagul fainted, collapsing to the floor.

Threat The house was dim, the smoke from the cotton oil lamp hanging heavy in the air. Ainagul sat at one end, Nurmat looming above her, two women at the other. A woman offered cold yogurt to drink. Weak and crushed, Ainagul followed the women outside, fear pressing down like a weight. Inside, she was guided to bed, but every movement brought tension. Nurmat approached, insisting, whispering, and threatening. Ainagul resisted, declaring she would never live with him. His demeanor shifted, cruel words and a drawn dagger threatening her.

The Final Defiance Nurmat shook, dagger in hand, his threat trembling in the dim room. He slashed the knife across Ainagul's shoulder, sending a sharp pain through her arm. Heart pounding, she summoned her last strength, defying him. She reminded him of Chynygul, the innocent and pure girl he had killed while forcing marriage. Rage and defiance surged within her. "Strike, spill my blood, shatter my heart if you must, but I will not yield!" Before the deadly moment could end her, Maty and Adyl, sons of wealthy man, burst in and dragged Nurmat away. She collapsed, exhausted, powerless, trembling on the floor.

Ainagul's Ordeal After a long time, Ainagul opened her eyes. Around her, women stared, fearful and cautious. "What has this evil done? Like someone's dark shadow..." whispered Kunduz, as she helped cover Ainagul's wounds from the dagger, tending to her bloodied shoulder. The sun rose. Nurmat, Adyl, and Maty spoke quietly together, while villagers waited, tense with unease.

ARZYMAT'S CAMPAIGN AND HEROISM

Arzymat's Letter Arzymat sent a letter to Ainagul. He reported riding through the Kara-Kochkor, Kara-Kulja, and Kapchygay mountains for several days, patrolling continuously. He observed the terrain, noting glaciers and peaks while watching for suspicious activity. He spotted a lone rider in an area without villages and informed his commander. Following orders, he sent two comrades to intercept the rider while he positioned himself at a strategic point in the gorge. Arzymat emphasized vigilance and readiness, remaining prepared for any threat, including armed anti-Soviet insurgents. The mission focused on protecting people, monitoring movement, and ensuring security in the mountainous region.

Mountain Ambush Arzymat and his comrades spotted five armed men, including two familiar fighters from Mamat's group. They signaled their team to let the lead rider pass while preparing to intercept the others. Gunfire erupted, bringing down two riders; another fell, and the fifth escaped into the bushes. They held fire to avoid alerting the fleeing outlaw. As the sun set, one comrade was shot in the arm. Arzymat and his team coordinated with their commander, who assessed the situation. A captured outlaw revealed partial information but avoided fully disclosing the group's location. Wounded comrades were sent to safety.

Evening Operation Following the commander's orders, they tied the horses and ate briefly. The terrain was steep, rocky, and narrow along the river, with stars hidden behind thick clouds. "Children, the sun is setting. Will it affect our mission?" the commander asked. "No, it won't," they replied, encouraging one another. "Comrade Arzymat! Horses are ready. Lead the way," the commander said.

Enemy's Campfire Arzymat mounted his horse and rode forward. Familiar with the mountains, pastures, and settlements, he remembered the flocks of wealthy shepherds. The path was narrow and dark, slowing their progress. Spotting smoke from the enemy's campfire ahead, the commander ordered them to advance cautiously and surround the area.

Tracking the Outlaws A fire still glimmered, but no one was visible. They reached the dawn area and waited for the commander's signal. Smoke from the fire revealed the outlaws had left earlier. Mounting their horses, they followed the trail through valleys and up the slopes, reaching a high ridge. From there, the entire area was visible. They spotted a lone figure approaching on horseback and two others in the distance, moving cautiously. All were prepared to intercept.

Morning Pursuit By morning, the tracks of the fleeing outlaws were clear. The men discussed horse prints and the absence of other patrols, realizing only Mamat could be nearby. Hidden behind rocks, they waited silently. The commander ordered hands up and don't move. Soon, five figures appeared, armed with pistols, rifles, and carrying coins and letters addressed to Mamat. Two were escaped convicts from Osh. As they watched, more figures emerged, three, four, then five, confirming these were the outlaws they had been tracking, ready to confront them without alerting anyone.

Encirclement at Dusk As the sun neared the horizon, the previously traveling on foot men mounted horses and joined the lone rider in the valley. Over thirty men gathered, greeting the lone rider, then moved north along the right flank. Arzymat's group stayed hidden, preparing to surround the outlaws from the Cliffside. Their team split into three: the first group moved ahead to block the outlaws, the second descended behind them, and the third climbed the ridge to strike from above. As the outlaws reached the open slope, gunfire erupted from the lead group. Surrounded, the outlaws dropped their weapons and horses and surrendered.

Ismail's Defiance A man stood tied to a horse, wearing torn clothes, bloodied and injured, one ear cut and one eye pierced. He was Ismail, an orphan who became village secretary through cleverness and courage. The outlaws tortured him, hoping he would reveal hidden allies, but he refused. Everyone gasped at his resilience, recognizing his bravery against the bandits. Children ran around, and blood covered his face, yet he remained unbroken. During the struggle, some outlaws, led by Nurmat, were shot. Ismail's courage and silence protected others, showing steadfast defiance even under extreme pain and threat.

Arzymat's Letter Arzymat rode Nurmat's horse, accompanied by two others, and helped capture Ismail, while the rest escorted the prisoners to Ozgon. He explained to Ainagul that their enemies were wealthy landowners and traitors, indifferent to the people. To strengthen the fight and free her from Nurmat, he reported to authorities and wrote to the "*Leninchil Jash*" newspaper. In his letter, he condemned Ainagul for forgetting their promise, calling her shameless and unfaithful. Reading it, she felt both pride in his courage and deep sorrow at his harsh words, tears streaming as her heart ached.

Ainagul's Letter Ainagul's health and spirit deteriorated daily. Her body felt cold, her heart heavy, and the world around her seemed bleak. Lying in bed for five days, she felt both weak and burdensome to others. Her mother visited, but Ainagul could not respond, appearing as if on the edge of death. Memories of Nurmat's past abuses and the deaths he caused haunted her. With no way to escape, she resolved to write to Arzymat. Securing the door, she prepared a pen from a twig, dipped it in ink, and began pouring her thoughts onto paper.

Sorrow and Hope Ainagul wrote to Arzymat with all her heart. The paper and ink carried her pain, guilt, and longing. She asked him not to see her, but to feel her frozen sorrow and burned spirit. She blamed herself for broken promises, for Nurmat's cruelty, and for sitting idle while others fought for justice. She wished Arzymat's future partner to be kind, honest, and devoted. Reflecting on love, she saw true human connection as rare and precious, unlike fleeting desire. Though enemies had broken her hopes, she trusted truth, heartfelt bonds, and the resilience of human courage.

Ainagul's Secret Letter Ainagul asked Totu, a distant relative's wife, to deliver a letter to Laylykan. Totu had her husband carry it, reassuring Ainagul that it was safe and private. As they entered the house, Totu explained that when Nurmat had threatened Ainagul, Maty and Adyl arrived unexpectedly. Authorities were being informed about Nurmat's crimes and his connection with Mamat Korbashy. The district investigator would visit with police to question Ainagul's father Joldosh, unaware of her location. Meanwhile, Maty's friend Ashyr notified him, and together with Adyl, they hurried to prevent Nurmat from harming Ainagul.

Ainagul's Secret Protection Totu explained the situation to Ainagul. Maty and Adyl helped Nurmat escape, while Ainagul was taken to Kunduz's house to keep her hidden from the investigators. When the investigators arrived, they found Nasir's wife, who pretended to be Ainagul and gave false testimony. She defended Nurmat, insisting that Arzymat's accusations and the newspaper report were false, and that she had never loved Arzymat, supporting Nurmat instead. Meanwhile, Maty and Adyl secretly coordinated with the authorities while maintaining control of the village, warning people not to speak. The investigators left unaware of the deeper schemes, and Ainagul remained safe, though tension and secrecy surrounded her.

Ainagul under Watch Ainagul stayed at Nurmat's brother's house, anxiously sending Totu's eldest son to Arzymat. Dark clouds loomed, and night felt heavy. Kalbaymat watched her constantly, while household members moved cautiously. Despite attempts to escape, Ainagul was trapped. As the sun set, two riders, Nasir and Juma, arrived, heightening her fear. Nasir led her inside, and Juma's teasing hinted at hidden intentions. Outside, whispers and movement suggested ongoing schemes. Totu's earlier warnings proved true: Adyl and Maty remained at large, planning mischief. Ainagul felt closely observed, her every move scrutinized, yet her guardians prepared to leave for Kapchygay and Alay-Kuu valleys.

Journey to Kashgar Ainagul was tied and escorted toward Kashgar along the high village ridge, surrounded by family and guards. Nasir accompanied them partway, while Juma held her tightly, warning her against running or resisting. Exhausted and disoriented, Ainagul struggled to breathe as they climbed higher. Suddenly, gunshots rang out ahead and from the side. Everyone scattered in panic. Ainagul slipped from Juma's grip and fell hard to the ground. Fear and confusion gripped her as she tried to understand the danger around her. Despite the chaos, she remained determined, aware that enemies and uncertain allies surrounded her on the treacherous mountain path.

RECOVERY AND NEW LIFE

Winter in Ozgon Days passed as yellow autumn gave way to winter. Ainagul lay in a hospital bed, weak and trembling, gazing through her southern windows at bare trees and the distant Ozgon town tower, steeped in legends of slaves, kings, and prophets. Her mind wandered to the tower being built under cruelty. Medical nurse Gafifa reminded her of a letter. Trembling, Ainagul reached for the envelope, unable to open it, aware that her cherished life with Ergesh and Totu had kept her safe and cared for.

The Unknown Letter Ainagul turned the envelope, noting only her name outside. Who had sent it? Last week she had received a letter from Arzymat, answered through Gafifa without reading. Now, the handwriting was unknown. The letter warned of danger from Maty, Adyl, Nasir, Tashmat, and Kalbaymat, claiming someone might try to kill her at the hospital. She awoke to strangers tending her, with Gafifa by her side and Arzymat quietly present. Doctors treated her broken ribs and injuries. Arzymat left, asking if she had words to say; she whispered none, hiding fear and uncertainty.

Ainagul's Terrifying Dream Ainagul dreamed she was trapped in a dark hospital ward, haunted by imagined watchers. Shadows moved, and Arzymat appeared, chasing her with a dagger. She tried to escape, but he caught her, pressing the blade to her chest. Her voice failed, fear paralyzed her, and she couldn't call for help. Suddenly, her mother appeared, and nurse Gafifa, offered comfort. The ward grew

quiet, and dawn broke. Exhausted, she realized it had all been a dream. Later, a young man in uniform appeared, yet the lingering terror of her dream left her trembling.

Reunion in the Hospital Gafifa told Ainagul that a handsome young man in a Komsomol uniform had come to see her. Nervous, Ainagul allowed him in. When the door opened, she was shocked, it was Arzymat. Her heart raced, remembering the nightmare she had seen the night before. They spoke awkwardly. Arzymat said he had come to apologize for the harsh words he once used against her. Ainagul, still afraid, asked if he had come to harm her. She showed him the warning letter. Arzymat calmly admitted that he himself had written it to protect her. Silence followed as both struggled with embarrassment and unspoken memories.

Forgiveness and Love Restored After a long silence, Arzymat softly reminded Ainagul of the night they had once pledged their love under the moon. She admitted she remembered it too. Arzymat explained that enemies had deceived him and caused him to accuse her unfairly. Now he understood the truth from the investigation and her letter. Both reflected on their mistakes and suffering. Gradually, their conversation grew warmer, and old feelings returned. Arzymat asked for forgiveness, and Ainagul agreed. Their hearts softened toward each other again. When he gently asked to hold her hand, she accepted, and he embraced her, kissing her face with renewed affection.

Ainagul's New Life After telling her story to the author, Ainagul showed him her village. She explained that their collective farm had been founded in 1930 and that she had served as its chairperson since then. She suggested that he see its achievements with his own eyes. In the village square, young people were celebrating International Youth Day with red flags. The girl carrying the banner was the Komsomol organizer, and beside her stood Arzymat and her brother Ergesh. Ainagul announced that she had returned from Kanabat and that the grain delivery plan had been fulfilled at 105 percent. The joyful crowd applauded and continued their festive march.

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Ainagul

Ainagul is the central heroine of the story, a young woman from a poor village family whose life becomes shaped by social pressure, political conflict, and personal struggle. At the beginning of the narrative she appears as a modest village girl, but as the story unfolds, she reveals a strong and determined character. Ainagul grows up in a traditional rural society where daughters are often expected to obey their fathers and accept arranged marriages without question. However, her life becomes a struggle when powerful men attempt to force her into marriage with Nurmat, the son of a rebel leader. From that moment, Ainagul begins to fight for her dignity and her right to choose her own life.

Courageous Ainagul is portrayed as a courageous young woman who refuses to accept injustice, even when she faces powerful social pressure. Living in a traditional rural society, she is expected to obey her father and accept an arranged marriage without question. However, when she learns that she will be forced to marry Nurmat, a man she does not love, Ainagul openly resists this decision. Despite fear, shame, and the authority of her family and village leaders, she refuses to surrender her dignity. Her courage becomes especially clear when Nurmat threatens her with violence. Instead of submitting, Ainagul bravely declares that she will never live with him as his wife. Even when she is kidnapped and forced into the marriage ceremony, she remains silent and refuses to accept him willingly. This resistance shows that Ainagul values her freedom and moral principles more than her safety.

Loyal Another important trait of Ainagul's character is her loyalty, particularly in her love for Arzymat. From the beginning of the story, their relationship is based on trust, promises, and shared feelings. Even when circumstances separate them and misunderstandings arise, Ainagul remains faithful to him. Although Arzymat accuses her in his letter and believes that she betrayed him, Ainagul does not respond with anger or hatred. Instead, she explains the truth of her situation and expresses her sincere feelings. Her loyalty is also shown in the fact that she refuses to accept Nurmat as her husband, even under extreme pressure. This faithfulness demonstrates the depth of her emotional integrity and her commitment to true love rather than forced obligation.

Resilient Ainagul also demonstrates remarkable resilience throughout the story. She experiences many hardships: forced marriage, kidnapping, violence, illness, and emotional suffering. These events could

easily destroy a person's spirit, but Ainagul continues to endure them with patience and determination. Even after being injured and hospitalized, she does not lose hope. Instead, she reflects on her experiences, writes letters, and continues to fight for her dignity. Eventually, she recovers and returns to society as a respected and active member of the community. By the end of the narrative, she becomes the chairperson of the collective farm, showing how she transforms her suffering into strength. Her resilience allows her not only to survive but also to rebuild her life with confidence and purpose.

Joldosh

Joldosh, Ainagul's father, is an important character in the story because his decisions strongly influence his daughter's fate. He is portrayed as a poor peasant who has experienced hardship and social inequality. After the Soviet land reforms, he receives land and begins farming, which gives him a sense of dignity and hope for a better life. However, his character is complex. At times he appears cautious and weak under social pressure, yet later he shows deep emotional change and moral awakening. Three main traits define Joldosh's character: timidity, sense of responsibility, and capacity for repentance.

Timid One of Joldosh's most noticeable traits is his timid and cautious nature. He is often unsure of himself and easily influenced by stronger personalities in the village. The narrative portrays him as a man who is slow to make decisions, and although he rarely changes his mind once a decision is made, he often reaches that decision under the pressure of others. This weakness makes him vulnerable to manipulation by influential figures around him. Joldosh's behavior toward Kulu Kalpa clearly illustrates this timidity. Although Kulu Kalpa is known for his connection with anti-Soviet forces, Joldosh still respects and supports him. At one point, he even suggests that Kulu Kalpa should be allowed to join the collective farm, defending him in front of the village leaders. At the same time, Joldosh is noticeably afraid of the young Soviet representatives in the village, particularly Arzymat and Ergesh. While he respects them, he also fears their authority and influence. Because of his timidity, Joldosh initially agrees to give his daughter Ainagul in marriage to Nurmat. He fears the power of Mamat Korbashy, anti-Soviet insurgent and the pressure of the community, believing that refusal might bring danger to his family. Instead of defending Ainagul's wishes, he submits to social expectations and the influence of others.

Repentant The most significant development in Joldosh's character is his ability to recognize his mistakes and change. When he learns the truth about the conspiracy surrounding Nurmat and understands Ainagul's suffering, he becomes deeply ashamed of his actions. He breaks down emotionally and calls himself foolish and cruel. This moment reveals an important moral transformation. Joldosh promises that he will no longer give his daughter to Nurmat, even if it costs him his life. His repentance shows that beneath his earlier weakness lies a genuine love for his daughter.

Responsible Joldosh is responsible. Despite his timidity and fear, he genuinely cares for his family's well-being. He works hard to provide for them after receiving land and tries to make decisions he believes will protect Ainagul from danger. Even when pressured by the village and powerful figures, his actions reflect a desire to fulfill his duties as a father and safeguard his family.

Arzymat

Arzymat is a main character in the story. He is brave and loyal. He works as a Soviet activist and protects the villagers from anti-Soviet fighters. He cares deeply for Ainagul and keeps his promises to her. Arzymat shows courage, honesty, and determination. He faces danger without fear and always tries to do what is right. He is responsible and thoughtful. He plans carefully before taking action. He respects rules and follows orders, but he also acts quickly when people are in danger. Arzymat is fair and wise. He does not give up, even when situations are difficult. His strong character helps him gain the trust of others and keep the community safe.

Brave Arzymat is brave, not only in facing physical danger but also in confronting powerful enemies of the state. He rides through treacherous mountains and patrols remote valleys, often in harsh weather and rough terrain, to confront armed anti-Soviet insurgents. He faces these threats with calm and precision, he knows that any hesitation could cost lives. His courage is decisive and purposeful, that reflects the strength, authority, and moral clarity expected of a Soviet leader in a turbulent region. Unlike ordinary men, he does

not shy away from conflict; instead, he embraces it as a necessary part of enforcing justice and protecting the vulnerable.

Loyal Arzymat is loyal to both his people and the ideals of the Soviet state. He obeys orders faithfully, yet his loyalty is more than blind obedience; it is guided by a clear moral vision. He protects villagers from insurgents and lawless figures, ensuring that the safety of ordinary people comes before personal comfort or gain. At the same time, he defends Ainagul with unwavering devotion, demonstrating that his commitment extends beyond duty into the personal realm. His loyalty blends political responsibility with human empathy, revealing a leader who is disciplined, dependable, and guided by principle.

Determined Arzymat is determined, relentless in pursuing justice and completing his mission. He tracks insurgents through valleys and high ridges, plans ambushes with careful strategy, and acts swiftly to prevent threats before they escalate. Nothing distracts him from his duty: he balances careful planning with decisive action, making him a formidable figure against enemies of the state. Beyond his public role, Arzymat shows personal resolve in protecting Ainagul from a forced marriage. He writes her case in the newspaper, coordinates efforts to prevent the wedding, and watches over her from a distance. Even after facing obstacles and seeing her in danger, he remains steadfast, ensuring her safety and ultimately finding her.

THEMES

Tradition vs. Modernity: Ainagul's story vividly illustrates the tension between centuries-old customs and the transformative pressures of modern social change. In her village, decisions about marriage, property, and family honor rested firmly with fathers and elders, reflecting a deeply patriarchal structure. Women's voices were often ignored, and personal desires were subordinated to communal expectations. Ainagul's father initially plans to give her to Nurmat, showing how tradition prioritizes alliances and obedience over individual choice. Yet the arrival of Soviet reforms challenges these norms. Policies promoting education, women's participation, and legal protections for the poor begin to undermine the unquestioned authority of elders. Through her resistance, Ainagul embodies this shift: she asserts her own wishes, challenges the control of her father and village leaders, and refuses to accept a marriage imposed upon her. Her actions reveal the emerging possibility for women to participate in decisions about their lives. Meanwhile, Arzymat's interventions, protecting her, reporting threats, and enforcing justice, represent the new authority of the state over local, traditional hierarchies. Together, their story captures the messy, often dangerous intersection of old and new, showing how social reform can empower individuals, challenge patriarchal control, and slowly reshape the moral and social landscape of a community.

Illustrative moment: Ainagul's eyes fluttered open. The room was dim, the lamp flickering. Her mother wept beside her. "Look at me, my child! I carried you nine months. Don't make me suffer!" Her father had struck her. "Why?" she whispered, trembling. He said your daughter loves another. She fell, calling Arzymat. Is she still sane? Ainagul could hardly believe it. Her heart raced, Arzymat's secret revealed. Blood streaked her mother's face. Her cries confirmed the harsh truth. "Nurmat is coming. Ainagul must be ready," her father told her mother. Ainagul trembled as her mother clutched her, crying. Her father stormed in, furious, striking and blaming her mother for favoring Arzymat. "Will you send her with Arzymat or Nurmat?" he demanded. She shielded her mother, pleading, "Father, believe me, she did no wrong. The fault is mine, not hers," as the room trembled with fear and sorrow.

Wedding Traditions: Weddings were major social events, deeply rooted in Kyrgyz customs. Ainagul's wedding preparation shows these traditions in detail. Her father bought the wedding clothes and dowry, while women from the family and village were invited to cook the wedding meals. They talked about how the groom would arrive, which nomad games would be held to honor the wedding, and discussed the bride's price. When Ainagul arrived, she was asked to bow as part of the bride's greeting. The ceremony included the symbolic cotton bundle, blessings from elders, and guidance from women helping the bride. The Islamic *nikah* ceremony also formalized the marriage. These practices emphasized family honor, social status, and communal approval. Yet for Ainagul, the wedding became a source of tension and conflict, as tradition clashed with her personal desires and the threat of forced marriage.

Illustrative moment: The house filled with men. Ainagul sat among other brides and girls, the ritual cotton bundle in her hand. Elders, Adyl, Maty, and others observed. Nurmat organized the guests, calling relatives. The mullah blessed the pair, asking if they agree to marry each other. Ainagul stayed silent.

Women whispered, urging her to speak, but she remained mute. The mullah declared that even without her voice, the marriage would be valid. Ainagul's heart raced, trapped between tradition and fear, powerless as the ceremony continued. Her silence did not stop the ritual, and Nurmat's claim over her was now official.

Basmachis Uprising: Enemies of the State or National Protesters In Soviet literature, the Basmachi were shown as violent enemies of the state. They were described as rebels and bandits who opposed collectivization, land reforms, and the spread of education, especially for women. Their raids, kidnappings, and attacks were seen as threats to public order and progress. They were often portrayed as cruel and dangerous people resisting modernization and Soviet authority.

Later historians and some modern sources look at the Basmachi differently. They are seen as defenders of local traditions, culture, and independence. From this view, their actions were a form of national protest against the social and economic changes imposed by the Soviet government. So, how the Basmachi are seen depends on perspective. Soviet sources focus on their violence and opposition to progress, while later views emphasize their resistance and efforts to protect local ways of life.

Illustrative moment: Over thirty men gathered, greeting the lone rider, then moved north along the right flank. Arzymat's group stayed hidden, preparing to surround the outlaws from the Cliffside. Their team split into three: the first group moved ahead to block the outlaws, the second descended behind them, and the third climbed the ridge to strike from above. As the outlaws reached the open slope, gunfire erupted from the lead group. Surrounded, the outlaws dropped their weapons and horses and surrendered.

Love: Obstacles The love between Ainagul and Arzymat unfolds during a time of great social and political change in the 1930s Fergana Valley. Soviet reforms were challenging old hierarchies, promoting education, and protecting the poor, yet village traditions and patriarchal expectations remained strong. Ainagul faces the threat of a forced marriage to Nurmat, arranged by her father Joldosh and sanctioned by the village elders, revealing the deep gender inequalities in her society. Despite this, her love for Arzymat gives her courage. She secretly writes letters, confides in her friend Laylykan, and navigates danger, refusing to submit quietly to the expectations around her. Arzymat's love drives him to ride through treacherous mountains, confront armed insurgents, and even report her case in the newspaper to keep her safe. Together, their relationship defies social convention and patriarchal authority, showing that love can give women the strength to assert their desires and that personal loyalty can become a force for justice. In this story, love is not just an emotion, it is a source of courage, resistance, and hope in a world caught between tradition and change.

Illustrative moment: Ainagul could not keep Arzymat's letter to herself. Laylykan was her closest friend, and she needed someone to share her fears with. Swallowing her pride, Ainagul read the letter aloud. Arzymat wrote of his loyal love and the promise between them, but he also warned of danger. Mamat Korbashy, a powerful anti-Soviet insurgent, wanted Ainagul for his son Nurmat. Arzymat cautioned her about Kulu Kalpa, a cunning man connected to them both. He urged her to understand who was friend and who was enemy. Deeply moved, Laylykan wept with Ainagul. Afterward, Ainagul gathered her courage, wrote a reply, and trusted Laylykan to deliver it to Arzymat.