

THE THREE TREASURES
PART I

MUSICIAN: Who has not heard of Sheherazade, and the stories she told to the Sultan of Persia for a thousand nights and a night? Betrayed by his first love, the Sultan turned his wrath against woman, demanding a new bride each night, only to have her slain the next morning. Through hearing Sheherazade's stories, the brutality of the Sultan was transformed, and a kingdom was saved. This is one of those stories. (#1)

Enter Players 1, 2, 3 and musician, who sits at harp. Players lounge as if asleep

On the 667th night, Sheherazade said, "I have heard, O auspicious king, that in olden times...

Music #1— Players awaken, Player 1 goes to SR book; music closes with "ding," Music resumes as underscore

STORYTELLER 1: (*SR book*) ...in olden times there lived a King of Persia, named Khushrau Shah, who was known for his justice and righteousness. Under his rule, the Tiger and the Lamb drank side by side, his treasury was full, and his guards and warriors were many.

Storyteller 1 speaks overlapping the Musician

He wanted to know of all that took place in his kingdom, good and bad alike. He wanted to catch sight of things seldom seen by kings. So it was his custom to wander the streets at nighttime in disguise, accompanied by his trusty Wazir-- his highest counselor.

One evening as he and the Wazir were walking in a poorer section of town, they heard the voices of three women talking loudly coming from inside a house. He peeped through a chink in the door, and there he saw three lovely sisters, who were sitting together after their meal. So he listened, and this is what he heard the eldest say:

Player 1 turns away from book to become Eldest Sister

ELDEST SISTER/PLAYER 1: If I had what I most desired, I should like to marry the Shah's head Baker! I would always have the best bread in the city – wouldn't both your hearts be filed with jealousy at my good luck!

Mus.2—distinct for each sister

SECOND SISTER/PLAYER 3: Well for me, I would rather marry the Shah's chief cook, and eat all the same dainty foods that the Shah himself enjoys! Why, the Shah's bread couldn't even begin to compare!"

YOUNGEST SISTER/PLAYER 2: Oh, sisters, I have a much less ordinary ambition than yours! I desire to be married to

the King himself, and to become the mother of a handsome prince!”

ST.1: The Shah was amazed at what he had heard, and he determined to gratify all three wishes. So the next day, he had his Wazir summon the three sisters, and he asked them, in a kindly tone, “What were the three wishes you spoke last night? Take care to tell the truth, as all things are known to your Shah.”

Mus. 3 vamp

Mus. 3

Sisters bow to King and freeze in Tableau

TABLEAU #1: SUPPLICATON TO THE SHAH

MUSICIAN: As the morn began to dawn, Sheherazade held her peace, until the end of the 668th night, and then she said, “I have heard, oh auspicious king, that the sisters...”

ST.1: ...the sisters were filled with shame and confusion. The Shah questioned and encouraged them, but they couldn't speak! The youngest was so beautiful that the King fell deeply in love with her, so finally he said, “Do not be afraid, for I intend to fulfill your wishes!” They threw themselves at his feet and begged his pardon, and told the Shah of their conversation. That very day, the Shah gave the eldest in marriage to his chief Baker, the second sister to his chief Cook, and ordered the preparations for his marriage to the youngest. And in time, their wedding was celebrated in the most royal manner.

Mus. 4

Overlapping text, as before

Mus. 5 vamp

Mus. 5 Wedding enacted as a dance until end of Mus. 5

STORYTELLER 3 (*SL Book*): You would think that the two elder sisters would be happy. After all, they each received what they claimed as their greatest wish! But, decree of Destiny deemed otherwise! When they saw the grand estate that was now their sister's, their hearts burned with envy and malice. Day and night it consumed them.

Mus. 6

TABLEAU #2: ENVY & JEALOUSY

MUSICIAN: And as the morn began to dawn, Sheherazade held her peace, until the end of the 669th night, and then she said, ‘I have heard, oh auspicious king, that the sisters talked about it over and over...’ (*bleed into P.3 text*)

Two sisters look out with envy and malice—freeze

ST. 3: ...the sisters talked about it over and over, and constantly looked for a way to cause their sister's downfall, even her death. Some months later the Queen was found to be with child. The two sisters saw their evil opportunity! They went to the Queen, giving their congratulations, and said:

Mus. 7

Overlapping text with Musician

ELDEST & SECOND SISTER: Praise be to Almighty Allah, for this happy day! Sister, we ask one favor of you. Please let us attend you as your midwives when you give birth, and help you in your confinement.”

ST. 3: The Queen could not see their wicked intent. She replied...

YOUNGEST SISTER: Gladly—I know of no others on whom I could depend so well. But the Shah must consent. Make this known to your husbands, and have them present the matter to him. I have no doubt he will agree.

ST. 3: The sisters told their husbands. The husbands asked the Shah. The Shah presented the plan to the Queen, and so it was arranged.

(Mus. 7 stops)

Soon the Queen was delivered of a beautiful baby boy. The sisters took the child and secretly wrapped the child in a blanket, put him in a basket, and set him afloat in the canal that flowed by the Queen's rooms. They put a dead puppy in the Prince's place! They told everyone that this was what the Queen bore! The Shah was so furious...

Mus. 8a

Mus. 8b

Shah makes murderous gesture—freeze

TABLEAU 3: ALMIGHTY ALLAH

...that he drew his sword, and would have killed the Queen! But his Wazir restrained him, saying,

(Mus. 8b resumes)

Mus. 8c

WAZIR: The Queen is guiltless—it is not her fault, but ordained by the Almighty Allah.

STORYTELLER 2: Meanwhile, the basket with the Prince was carried on the water through the pleasure gardens of the Shah. By decree of Destiny, the Shah's Intendant of the Garden caught sight of it, and had it pulled from the water. It so happened that this Intendant had no children of his own, and was constantly praying to Almighty Allah that he might be blessed with a son to keep alive his memory. He was so delighted! He took the child home to his wife, where they cared for him with gladness as if their own. They told no one.

Mus. 9

A year later, the Queen gave birth to a second son. Again her sisters attended her. This time they put a dead kitten in place of the baby, showing it to all! Again the Shah would have slain his wife, and again the Wazir calmed him with his wisdom. Again they put the real child in a basket in the canal. Again by the mercy of Allah Almighty, this child also came into the hands of the Intendant, who took care of

Mus. 10a

Mus. 10b

Mus. 10b stops

him as he had the first.

Another year passed, and the Queen gave birth to a beautiful daughter.

Mus. 11a

The sisters took the child as they had her brothers, and set her in a basket in the canal. The Intendant found her also.

The evil sisters reported to all that the Queen had given birth to a muskrat! This time Khusrau Shah could no longer hold back his wrath.

SHAH: This woman only gives birth to monstrosities! What, shall I allow her to continue to share my bed?! She must be a monster herself, and we need to be rid of such a cursed creature!

Mus. 11b

ST. 2: He commanded that she be put to death.

(end Mus. 11b)

But all the ministers and high officers of the kingdom fell at his feet, and begged for mercy for the poor Queen. The Grand Wazir said:

Mus. 12a

WAZIR: O King of Kings! It is not in accordance with the course of justice or the laws of the land to take the life of a woman for no fault of her own! She cannot interfere with Destiny, and such mishaps call for compassion, not punishment. If you are so displeased, then cease to live with her, and set her apart. This loss of your favor will be penalty enough.

ST. 2: The Shah recognized it would be wrong to slay the Queen. He said to the Wazir:

SHAH: Her life will be spared, thanks to you. But I command that she be put into a wooden cage at the side of the Cathedral Mosque, and that all must spit in her face before they enter in to say their prayers. Anyone who does not do so shall receive the same punishment.

Mus. 12b

ST. 2: The Wazir had no choice but to carry out the Shah's orders.

Cage is put over Queen-freeze

TABLEAU 4: THE CAGE

PLAYER 2: The Queen, knowing she was not deserving of this, bore her sufferings with patience and fortitude. Many felt her to be blameless, pitying her, and offering up prayers and vows for her release.

Mus. 12c

PART II

ST.1:(*SL Book*) Meanwhile, the Intendant and his wife brought up the three children with all love and tenderness. They named the princes Bahman and Parwez, and as the princess was of rare beauty and grace, they named her Perizadah, which means "Fairy-born". They saw to their good instruction in reading, writing, and all the arts and sciences. The most learned philosophers were their tutors, and they even taught them the mystic doctrines of the Enlightened. Perizadah learned to sing and to play music, and became the peerless pearl of her age.

Mus. 13a

The Intendant bought a good-sized piece of land outside the city. He began building a mansion of great magnificence. When all was ready, the Intendant, who had served the royal family for generations, begged his leave of Khusrau Shah, and asked to retire to the country. So the Shah dismissed him with thanks for his faithful service, and the Intendant's family left for the country dwelling.

*Mus. 13b**Mus. 13c*

The Intendant's wife had passed on some years before, and after only a few months in their new home, the Intendant himself suddenly fell deathly ill. He had never told the children the story of how they came to him, and he carried that secret to his grave. But he did have time before he died to tell them that they must always live together in honor, affection, and respect, and that they must never be separated from each other.

Mus. 14

*St. 1 looks at P.2 & P.3
Death of the Intendant mimed*

They grieved his loss, and stayed together in peace and plenty.

ST.3: (*SR Book*) One day when the brothers were out hunting, an ancient holy woman came to the door, and asked to come in, as it was the hour to say her prayers. When the woman's devotions were complete, Perizadah showed the woman the beautiful mansion, lastly the gardens. The holy woman was pleased, recognizing the artistry and care. She and Perizadah sat together where they could see the enchanting view, and Perizadah said:

*Mus. 15a**Mus. 15b*

PERIZADAH: I am fortunate to have the company of one who is as pious as you! Please speak, so I may learn from your words of grace! Tell me, good woman, what do you think of this mansion? Is there anything lacking?

HOLY WOMAN: I confess, the building and furnishings are all to perfection, and everything is of the finest quality. Still, there are three things missing, which if you had them, would make everything complete.

PERIZADAH: You must tell me, and I will spare no effort to get them!"

Mus. 15c

HOLY WOMAN: The first thing is the Speaking Bird. He is rare and hard to find, but when he sings, all birds flock to him and join in his song. The second is the Golden Water. Put just one drop of this in a basin, and the whole vessel will fill and sprout upwards like a fountain, never losing a drop. The third thing is the Singing Tree. When the wind moves in the leaves, it sends out beautiful music that touches the hearts of all.

Mus. 16a

Mus. 16b

Mus. 16c

PERIZADAH: You must know where they are to be found! I pray you, tell me!

Perizadah pleads with the Holy Woman—freeze

TABLEAU #5: THE HOLY WOMAN

HOLY WOMAN: You must go twenty days journey to the East. On the twentieth day, ask the first man you meet, and he will further direct you.

Mus. 17

ST.3: Then with many blessings and good wishes, the woman left, little guessing that Perizadah truly intended to seek the treasures. But Perizadah kept this knowledge in her heart, and firmly resolved to gain possession of these wonders. As she reflected upon it, the task seemed more and more difficult, and she began to feel anxious and ill at ease. It happened just then that her brothers returned home from the hunt. Seeing her troubled look, they said,

Mus. 18a

Mus. 18b

BAHMAN (P1): Sister! Tell us what is bothering you, so we may be of help to you, or share your sadness. We will not leave your side until you tell us.

ST.3: Finally, upon seeing their distress, Perizadah told them about the treasures.

Mus. 18c

BAHMAN: My brother and I are both ready, heart and soul, to carry out your purpose. Give me a clue as to where the treasures can be found, and I will set out tomorrow!"

Mus. 18d

ST.3: Prince Parwez volunteered to go also, but Prince Bahman bade him to stay home to look after their sister. So it was decided. The next day, when Prince Bahman was about to leave...

Mus. 19a

PERIZADAH: Dear brother, if only we might have some news of you from day to day, I would feel somewhat comforted.

Parwez takes out a knife and gives it to Perizadah—freeze

TABLEAU #6: LOVE FOR BROTHER

BAHMAN: Take this knife as a token. If at any time you fear for my safety, all you need do is to glance at this blade. So long as it is bright and shiny, I am well, but if you see blood upon it, know that I am as one dead, and pray for my soul.

Mus. 19b

ST.3: With these words, he set on his way.

ST.2:(*SL Book*) Upon the twentieth day, he saw an ancient man, a sheik, sitting before a thatched hut. The sheik was a holy man, who had left all worldly pleasures, living a life of poverty and chastity. His white whiskers had grown so long that they completely covered his mouth, and his beard was so long it swept the ground. Prince Bahman rode up to him, certain that he was the one spoken of by the holy woman, and said,

Mus. 20a

BAHMAN: Honored sir, Allah Almighty prolong your years and grant all your wishes!O holy man, I have come far in search of three treasures—the Speaking Bird, the Golden Water, and the Singing Tree.

Prince bows at Sheik's hem—freeze

TABLEAU #7: SUPPLICATION TO HOLY MAN

BAHMAN: Can you direct me to them?... O holy father, did you not understand my request?... Or if you do not know of these things, please tell me straightaway, so I can continue my search.

Sheik makes mumbling noises, unable to respond because of his excessive hair.

ST. 2: Prince Bahman cut the holy man's beard so that he could speak.

SHEIK: O stranger, I do know of these things. But because of your goodness to me, I do not wish to say, for your own sake!

Mus. 20b

BAHMAN: Why?

SHEIK: The way is perilous and full of danger. Many have come, like you, many I have warned, many have pressed me and compelled me to tell what I know. O good son, know that in their pride, all have perished! Not one has returned. If your life is dear to you, take my counsel, and turn back!

BAHMAN: You have given me good advice; I have heard you and I thank you. But I do not care about any danger. I am armed, and well able to defend myself.

SHEIK: Ah, but these enemies can not be seen. How can you protect yourself from them?

BAHMAN: It does not matter, I am not afraid. I ask you again to show me the road!

SHEIK: Alas my son! Yet I must let you follow your willful way. Take this ball, and throw it in front of you. As long as it rolls, follow it. When it stops in front of a hill, leave your horse and climb up. There you will see many large black boulders on both sides of the path. You will hear confusing sounds of many voices, terrible and loud, that will try to anger you and fill you with fear. Beware! No matter what, do not turn your head and look backwards! If you do, even for an instant, you will be turned into a black rock like all the others. Know, Oh Prince, that all those stones you see were once brave men who sought what you now seek, but failed. However, if you succeed in reaching the hilltop, you will find a cage, and in that cage is the Speaking Bird. He will be ready to tell you all the rest, so ask him where to find the Golden Water and the Singing Tree. Once you have these three treasures, you will be safe from further harm. But, I beg you, do not go! Return home in peace while you still may!

TABLEAU #8: WARNING

BAHMAN: I will never go back until I gain what I came for!"

ST. 2: So he mounted his horse, threw the ball in front of him, and followed it. Just as the holy man had said, it stopped at a hill, and all along the path up the hill were huge black boulders. The Prince felt no fear.

He had hardly taken a few steps when a frightening clamor of loud voices surrounded him. But he walked on valiantly with his head held high. The voices called out threats,

*Sheik takes out ball,
[back & forth biz during
following section]*

gives it to Bahman

*(Mus. 20b ends)
Bahman looking far away and
up to mountain, Sheik looks
out—freeze*

Mus. 20c

*Mus. 21a
P3 & musician yell
taunts, insults, etc. ad lib*

insults, and taunts of every kind. For a time he continued dauntlessly, but the voices grew louder and louder, closer and closer, more and more numerous. His legs began to tremble. He forgot the holy man's warning! He looked back! And in that instant he, too, was changed into a black stone.

Voices and music make sudden stop on "looked back"

ST.1: Back home, the Princess was constantly checking the knife for assurance of her brother's safety. And even that morning, the knife was clean and bright. But in the evening when she pulled the blade from its sheath, she and Prince Parwez saw drops of blood.

Mus. 21b

PERIZADAH: Ah, woe is me! My brother, you have given your life for me! If only I had not asked that holy woman how she liked our home! I wish she had never darkened our doors! How could she repay my kindness to her with this? Oh, why did I ask how to find the treasures? What do I care for them now that my brother is gone?!

ST.1: *(to audience)* But in spite of their sorrows, Prince Parwez could see that his sister still wanted the three treasures.

Mus. 22a

PARWEZ: Sister, I must set out right away to discover what has happened to our brother. If he has been slain by some enemy, I must avenge his murder.

PERIZADAH: Do not follow your brother on such a dangerous journey! In my fear to lose you also, I do not care for those treasures! Beloved brother, do not leave me!

Mus. 22b

ST.1: But the Prince didn't listen to her. The next day he prepared to set out.

PERIZADAH: Our brother had left the knife--how shall I know what happens to you?

PARWEZ: Take this string of a hundred pearls. As long as I am well, they will be separate and loose upon the string, but if they become fixed to each other, know that I am as one dead.

*Mus. 22c
Parwez takes out pearls*

ST.1: And the Prince rode off. But, sadly the same fate befell Prince Parwez as his brother. The Princess checked the pearls day and night. At the hour when her second

Mus. 22d

brother was changed to stone, she found the pearls sticking close together, and so she knew he was now lost to her.

Storyteller 1 looks at Perizadah as she weeps—

TABLEAU #9: PERIZADAH IN MOURNING

ST.1: *(to audience)* She grieved, thinking how they had sacrificed their lives for her, and her wish to have the treasures. And she thought, "my life will be bitter without them..."

Mus. 22c

ST.1 & PERIZADAH: It is only right that I should share the same fate.

PART III

ST.1: So the very next day, she put on mans' clothing --- and set out alone on the same road. On the twentieth day, she also met the ancient man.

Mus. 23a

Mus. 23b

PERIZADAH: O holy father, let me rest here a moment in this place of good omen. And then, if you can, please direct me to where I may find the Speaking Bird, the Golden Water, and the Singing Tree. I will consider this the greatest favor.

SHEIK: Your voice tells me you are not a man, but a woman. I do know of those treasures, but why do you ask me? What is your purpose?

PERIZADAH: I have heard many tales about these wonders, and I wish to bring them back to adorn my home.

SHEIK: O my daughter, these treasures are indeed rare and wonderful, and fitting for one such as yourself. But you have no idea of the dangers involved.

Optional biz:

Sheik gets a little fresh with Perizadah.

It would be better for you to give up this vanity and go back where you came from!

She slaps him—this is a visual music cue and can be omitted, using instead the underlined word cue

PERIZADAH: O holy father, I come from far away, and I will never return until I win my wish. Please tell me about those dangers, so that my heart may judge whether or not I have the strength and spirit to meet them.

Mus. 23c

ST.1: So the Sheik told the Princess all, describing the unseen terrible voices, the fears, the furies, the black stones

PERIZADAH: From what you say, these voices can do nothing but threaten and frighten. Although I am a woman, I have the strength and

the nerve to carry this out. The voices will have no power over me, for I have thought of a way to assure my success.

SHEIK: What will you do?

PERIZADAH: I will stop my ears with cotton so that I will not be disturbed or dismayed by these voices.

SHEIK: My lady, I think you are the one destined to gain these treasures! No one has thought of this so far! But still you must take good care.

Mus. 24

PERIZADAH: I have no cause for fear, and my heart bears witness that I will gain what I seek.

ST.1: So the ancient one gave her the ball and the instructions, and blessed her.

SHEIK: Go, my daughter, in the peace of the Almighty Allah.”

Sheik blesses Perizadah and gives her the ball—freeze

TABLEAU #10: SHEIK BLESSES PERIZADAH

ST.1: She said farewell to the ancient man, mounted her horse, rolled the ball, followed it to the hill, and dismounted. She carefully plugged both her ears with cotton. Then, with fearless heart, and dauntless soul, she began to climb the slope. As with all the others, she had only gone a few steps when the voices began to call out with taunts, insults, and threats.

*Mus. #25
taunting sounds as before as she “climbs;” here P. 3 may play Dumbek ad lib
Stop on “Return, O fool!...”*

BIRD: Return, O fool—go back and do not dare to come nearer!

*She grabs cage
Mus. 26a*

PERIZADAH: At last I have you, and you will not escape from me!”

BIRD: O valiant lady, be of good cheer, for no harm or evil shall come to you now. Although I am in a cage, I have

Mus. 26b

much secret knowledge of what happens in the world of men. I am content to be your slave. I even know more about you than you do yourself, and one day of the days I will do you a service that will deserve your gratitude. What now is your command? Speak.

PERIZADAH: There are many things I want, but first, tell me where to find the Golden Water.

Mus. 26c

ST.1: The Bird directed her, and she filled to the brim a pitcher she had brought.

PERIZADAH: The last prize I seek is the Singing Tree. Where do I find it?

BIRD: Merely pluck a small branch and plant it when you return home. It will soon grow large and fair.

ST.1: Now that she had all three treasures, the Princess said,

end Mus. 26c

PERIZADAH: I have won my wish, but still I feel unsatisfied, as my dear brothers lie here somewhere as huge black stones. Tell me how I can free them.

Mus. 26d

BIRD: That's easy, all you have to do is sprinkle some of the golden water on each stone, and whoever is trapped there will come to life again."

Mus. 27 vamp

ST.1: So she set out down the hill, putting a few drops of water on each and every stone. And indeed, as if a miracle, each one sprang up again as a man or horse! Her brothers came back to life!

Mus. 27 singing begins

PERIZADAH: My brothers, what have you been doing?

Mus. 28a vamp

BROTHER: We have been sleeping.

(Mus. 28a continues)

PERIZADAH: It is strange that you have been enjoying your slumber here, forgetting the purpose you came for! Did you not see all these black rocks? But by the grace of Almighty Allah...

ST.1: ...due to the drops of the Golden Water they are now all given back their proper forms as men and horses. When all were ready to ride forth, all the princes and knights insisted that the Princess lead them on the way.

They came again to the place where they had all met the holy man, desiring to thank him.

*Mus. 28b
players create soundscape
like wind blowing*

But he was gone—he had passed to the next world.

*all bow towards empty pillow,
center stage—freeze*

TABLEAU 11: PASSING

ST.1: So they journeyed on, and as each rider came to his road, he took leave of all and turned his horse to the land of his birth. Finally only the Princess and her brothers were left.

Mus. 28c

At last they reached their own mansion. The Princess hung the Bird's cage in the garden, and it began to sing, drawing flocks of other songbirds. She planted the twig, and it took root, growing as large as its parent tree, and sending out magical music. She had a basin carved of marble, and put the Golden Water in it. Straightaway it filled the bowl and shot upwards as a fountain.

The gates of the garden always stood wide open, and word of these beautiful treasures spread amongst all the people. Many came every day to walk on the grounds and see these rarities, which brought such admiration and delight.

Tree and fountain props are brought out & set up cage is set up, for the Bird

*Mus. 29 —should be a long interlude:
players rest around set as if relaxing in a garden, creating a peaceful sound atmosphere with instruments or voices—bird calls, light breezes, etc.*

PART IV

ST.1: Soon the Princes began to go hunting as before. It happened by decree of Destiny that the old Shah came that same day to the same place. The Princes stood bowing, with heads bent low. Seeing how fine their horses and their garments were, the Shah desired to see the faces of the two Princes, so he bade them raise their heads and stand upright. Their handsomeness and grace charmed so he asked them to come and join him at his meal. To the King's astonishment the brothers refused. They said that because of their commitment of love and duty for their sister, they must first ask her permission. So the brothers left the King, and went to their sister's chambers and told her all that had happened.

Mus. 30

She was upset at their thoughtlessness, and she said, "Fortune has favored you..."

Mus. 31
The Storyteller's words
overlap those of Parizadah

PERIZADAH: Fortune has favored you to bring you to the notice of the Shah! It troubles me that you put our fraternal love before your service to him! You have been so rude and foolish! I will go and ask counsel from the Speaking Bird, to benefit from his excellent advice.

BIRD: Do all that the Shah asks of you. Moreover, you should make ready a feast, and humbly pray the Shah to visit, to show him your loyalty and devotion.

Mus. 32

PERIZADAH: Is this wise? Will this not offend the Shah?

BIRD: Do as I say, and do not fear. It is for the best, and good will come of it.

PERIZADAH: But, do I show myself to him unveiled?

BIRD: By all means, it will be to your advantage.

Bird hovers, over cage,
Perizadah listens, storyteller
looks at them—freeze

TABLEAU #12: HONORING THE BIRD'S WISDOM

ST.1: Early the next day the two Princes rode to the hunting ground and again met the Shah. As their sister had advised, they invited the Shah to "please do them the honor to come to their home for a feast.: The Shah agreed! The Princes rode home and told Perizadah, who went to the Bird and asked his advice. "You have excellent..."

*Mus. 33**Mus. 34a*

BIRD: You have excellent chefs, and they can prepare their choicest dishes. But above all, you must make sure that they prepare for the Shah a dish of new green cucumbers stuffed with pearls.

The Bird's words overlap those of the Storyteller

PERIZADAH: Never have I heard of such a thing! How will the Shah take this!? Besides, I do not have enough pearls for even one cucumber!

Mus. 34b

BIRD: This is easy, do not worry. This will all be for the good. To get the pearls, go and dig a hole at the foot of the first tree to your right. You will find plenty of pearls there.

Mus. 34c

ST.1: So the Princess had a gardener-boy dig a hole as the Bird had instructed, and they found a casket. Sure enough, when she opened it, inside it was filled with pearls! She showed it to her brothers, and the three of them were amazed.

Mus. 34d

Then she told them of the Bird's instructions. All three of them marveled at the strangeness of it, but they agreed to follow the Bird's wisdom. The Princess commanded the head cook, and so it was arranged...

TABLEAU #13: THE SURPRISE IS READY

Bird & Perizadah hide the cucumber & pearls dish

ST.1: The Princess greeted the Shah with all honor, and led him through the house, showing all its magnificence. The Shah was amazed at the beauty of the Princess, and he delighted in the mansion and the grounds, especially at the Golden Water and the Singing Tree.

Mus. 35a

SHAH: How did you come upon these wonders? Is this by Nature, or by magic?

PERIZADAH: It is a long story, which I will tell you presently. But first, let me show you the third treasure, the Speaking Bird. All were obtained by me at the same time.

TABLEAU #14: BIRD APPEARS TO SHAH

Bird gawks out towards Shah, surprising him—freeze

BIRD: O great Shah, may Almighty Allah grant you all health and happiness!"

*Mus. 35b—timing adapts to visual cue:
Perizadah unveils the cucumber & pearls dish*

SHAH: What is this? Never before have I seen such a dish! It cannot be food, so please explain why you have set it before me!

[no music]

BIRD: O King of the age, do you think this is strange? How much stranger then is it that your own Queen gave birth, contrary to the laws of Nature and of Allah, to a puppy, a kitten, and a muskrat! This should have caused you far more wonder!

Mus. 35c

SHAH: I thought it strange, but I believed the reports of the midwives. They were her sisters—how could I do otherwise than trust their words?

BIRD: O Shah of Shahs, I know the truth in this matter. The Queen's sisters were consumed with envy and jealousy, and sought only evil against her, to hide her virtue from you.

The Shah in shock—freeze (short)

TABLEAU #15: THE TRUTH REVEALED

These two brothers and lovely sister are your own children, to whom your Queen gave birth! Now, Khusrau Shah, awake from your sleep of ignorance!

Mus. 35d

(SHAH)

The Shah falls to his knees keening

PLAYERS 2 & 3: (*chanting*) I know this to be true. The voice of my blood calls to me to confess. You are from my seed. Borne of my Queen. Her dreadful Destiny suffered at my hand! Allah forgive me! Allah forgive me! Allah forgive me!

Mus. 36—starts at the beginning of the Shah's keening

ST.2: He returned to the palace, and immediately summoned the Grand Wazir, and ordered him to put the two evil sisters to death!

Mus. 37a

Then the Shah and his attendants all walked to the Cathedral Mosque where the Queen had been caged for so many years, and with his own hands Khusjhrau Shah set her free and embraced her.

Mus. 37b

Seeing her in such a pitiful and careworn condition, he wept, and he called out,:

*Mus. 38
Shah lifts cage from Queen, kneels next to her, takes her hand, and weeps*

SHAH: Allah forgive me!

“ding” for Tableau comes when Mus. 38 is finished

TABLEAU #16: THE SHAH'S SHAME

Shah bows to Queen

ST.2: And as for the Queen, she was blessed with the mercy of forgiveness, and her newfound joy released her from the memory of all the terrible torments she had endured. So Destiny gave each of them the best of lives, until the time that they were brought to a close.

Praise be to the Great One who never dies and knows no shadow of change! Destiny ever afterwards endowed them, one and all, with days the most delectable, and they led the liefest of lives, until at last there came to them the destroyer of delights, and the sunderer of societies, and the depopulator of palaces, and the garnerer of graveyards, and the reaper for Resurrection Day, and they became as though they never had been. So praise be to the Almighty, who dieth not, and who knoweth no shadow of change!

Players 1 & 3 lie down

*Mus. 39 begins;
Player 2 lies down
Music continues until
all Players are lying down;
then fade & blackout*

FINI