

Never Late...

Stage script

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Cast

Dugar	Detective, Lieutenant Colonel, age 45
Zolboo	Journalist, age approximately 24
BOLD	Newspaper Editor, age approximately 45
ANKHMAA	Agent, male, age approximately 30
SURENJAV	Friend of the detective, same age as Dugar
PUREV	Detective's assistant, lieutenant, age 23
TUNGALAG	Dugar's wife, age almost 40

3 more people will be playing card game.

The scene will take place in present day Ulaanbaatar.

FIRST SCENE

(When curtain draws: Casino. Dugar is playing a card game. Peoples face is unclear in a clouding cigarette smoke.)

PLAYER 1

All right... I'll bet in all.

PLAYER 2

Wow, you believe in your self this much?

PLAYER 1

What do you say when a real man is brave, wolf will..?

DUGAR

Luck is so blind....

PLAYER 1

There are days you lose and there are days you take...

DUGAR

What if it is like this?

PLAYER 1

God damn it...

He throws his cards onto the table.

PLAYER 2

Oh man... seems we are done...

Holding his head bewailing...

DUGAR

All right, give it here, come here...

He takes all the money.

PLAYER 3

You are one sneaky guy.

DUGAR

Not sneaky. This is intelligence. Fairness still applies to even gambling. This is the first rule.

PLAYER 2

All right then let's do another fair rematch.

DUGAR

No, I am leaving. Second rule. Should be able to stop where needs to stop.

When Dugar gets up to leave the table, his phone rings.

DUGAR

Hello, I'll be there soon Tungaa.

WIFE

I just don't understand your time measurement SOON. Sometimes you say soon and come right in, other times just gone without a trace.

DUGAR

All right, all right. I am leaving right now.

WIFE

I am putting the meal in the stove then.

DUGAR

All right.

Phone rings again.

VOICE

Would you believe that the lieutenant colonel, who worked as a detective for over 20 years, has never made a mistake and still got a clean hand?

DUGAR

Who are you?

VOICE ON THE PHONE

Who I am is not important.

DUGAR

What do you want then?

Phone disconnects

DUGAR

Another blocked number. What am I taking away from this guy now?

FADE OUT.

SECOND SCENE

(Newspaper department. Editor BOLD is sitting behind his desk going through some financial papers.)

BOLD

This quarter's sale has decreased again. Advertisement is getting less with more competitions. There are still a few more days left until the end of this quarter for sales money to come in. Wait a minute...the issue with Zolboo's article has sold quite many. Anyhow I would be able to pay our journalists this time. Zolboo would not let go until the end, when she grabs a hold of a lead. Born journalist. This is how it is suppose to be. He's got a special talent for having people say the important things.

Zolboo enters.

ZOLBOO

Editor, did you call me?

BOLD

Yes, I did. Well what is happening?

ZOLBOO

Not much of a change at the moment. I just gave my statement. I was told to be called in again.

BOLD

Dugar is it not? He is a lieutenant colonel, isn't he. Probably experienced one. But how honest is that tovarish(comrade).

ZOLBOO

He seemed all right to me. I doubt that he would just arrest me and throw me in jail.

BOLD

Don't worry about jail. Lawsuit takes time. It is going to stick around a little.

ZOLBOO

As if I have libeled completely innocent person. Being interrogated. Every time when I am there, I hear Criminal law one hundred eleven and one hundred eleven's two. Libel is a crime, aiming to defame one's reputation and honor...Six months sentence for spreading libel to the public...Very unpleasant and offending.

BOLD

You are not giving up, are you? Most importantly, you should not back down. You did not write about a phony story. Isn't that right, eh? If this matter gets worse, your Editor will find you a decent attorney who is specialized in media. And you just worry about what to write now. You have more hidden gem in your pocket right?

ZOLBOO

Thank you Editor. I have something I am looking into.

BOLD

Very good. Good (raises his thumb) Go do your work.

AANKHMAA comes in as Zolboo leaves.

ANKHMAA

Are you Bold, Sensation newspaper's editor?

BOLD

Yes. That is I.

ANKHMAA

I would like to make an advertizing agreement with your newspaper.

BOLD

Oh. Of course. Come and sit here. Ok.

ANKHMAA

I am ANKHMAA. An agent.

BOLD

Ankhmaa...agent?

ANKHMAA

What? Very unusual and weird agent with a female name?

BOLD

Heh, heh...Well...

ANKHMAA

I am just a black sheep of a family longed for a girl. But this made me not to go bow down under others. Anyhow. Just a prologue. Let's go to work directly. I am offering you a one billion tugrug advertizing proposal.

BOLD

One billion? That is of course fine. What kind of company is this generous business?

ANKHMAA

"Golden Soil" company

BOLD

"Golden Soil"?

ANKHMAA

What happened?

BOLD

Well, the thing is. Our newspaper...

ANKHMAA

I understand. Giver and taker always conflict with each other. It is the law of nature. And to get them in an agreement, the agent is needed, my brother. Don't be shy.

BOLD

I am not shy.

ANKHMAA

Principals? Let's talk frankly. In this universe there is nothing that can't be understood. There are even a poem that goes "Can, can, there are nothing can't be done", right?

BOLD

That's right indeed. Let's say I accept your proposal.

ANKHMAA

What to do in return? Nothing much. Only one condition.

FADE OUT

THIRD SCENE

(Detective's office. Detective DUGAR is reading a law book and making a note on his pad)

VOICE ON THE PHONE

How should I be talking to a detective who gambles?

DUGAR

What did you say?

VOICE ON THE PHONE

Talk to his ethics? or his conscience? Or else his greed?

DUGAR

Who are you?

VOICE ON THE PHONE

It is not important who I am. The importance is how.

DUGAR

What do you want?

VOICE ON THE PHONE

In this case we can talk like a man. Let's say that I need a favor.

DUGAR

Let me clarify one thing. I work on many different cases at the same time. Which one are you interested in?

VOICE ON THE PHONE

I value you, lieutenant colonel. Let's say, I am interested in "Sensation" newspapers' case. It is actually a small thing.

DUGAR

This case is not going to be solved till the resource is revealed.

Someone knocks on the door.

Well, I have a guest.

VOICE ON THE PHONE

Understand. I will ring again.

ZOLBOO

Can I come in, Detective?

DUGAR

Come on in Zolboo. Sit. What should I do with you? You got yourself into a real mess.

ZOLBOO

What does that mean?

DUGAR

I am sitting here trying to finish up your libel case and transfer it to the prosecutor.

ZOLBOO

I did not libel anyone.

DUGAR

Your destiny is in your hands. Your information source? That is the knot in the rope. Your source might have had you chase a ghost?

ZOLBOO

No, I double-checked it.

DUGAR

How?

ZOLBOO

Professional secret

DUGAR

Well then. You don't seem to help yourself. What can we do?

ZOLBOO

You don't need to ask me about my source again. Journalists have an informant just like police does. I don't know what you do. But for us to protect our source is a professional duty.

The editor BOLD comes in

BOLD

Hello. Is there a lieutenant colonel Dugar here?

DUGAR

I did not give a permission to enter, did I? I am having a meeting here.

BOLD

I am here about the case involving her. I am the editor of "Sensation" newspaper. Bold

DUGAR

I see. Go out and wait until I call you.

BOLD

Lieutenant colonel. Zolboo is a great journalist. But this time she was irresponsible and made a professional mistake. Here...I have an apology letter for "Golden Soil" company and inspection department, and also denial published in the newspaper...Please just disregard this case right now...

ZOLBOO

What are you saying, editor? I did not make any mistake. You are aware of this. What are you guys doing as if you have conspired?

BOLD

What conspiracy. Right, lieutenant colonel? The circumstance demands this. Please understand.

ZOLBOO

What circumstance? What should I understand? Editor? Do you remember what you have told me when I first started the job? "The journalist is the voice of justice"? What kind of circumstance has emerged to cause tostrangle that voice and sell out our own journalists?

BOLD

What selling out. The justice goes down in value when you compare it with the existence.

ZOLBOO

So in your opinion, we should risk all our values in order exist? It is fair to kill and rob in order to exist?

BOLD

(weakly)

I guess, even if it is not fair, it is a law of the jungle.

ZOLBOO

Law that denies value? Isn't it too cruel? Is this your philosophy?

DUGAR

Let's talk about this late at the office. This is it. Let's go.

ZOLBOO

My father used to say "Dog is treacherous, Don is faithless" I am not a Don, nor a dog. If getting arrested and serving six months in jail will set a justice, I am ready. Detective, you may transfer my case to a prosecutor.

BOLD

You don't have to listen to her words lieutenant colonel. She is young and hot blooded. She does not know life. Since the newspaper apologized, this case will probably closed. Zolboo! Lets go.

DUGAR

You can go. Zolboo stay.

BOLD leaves.

So everything is clear now. Your newspaper is not going to protect you. Even your article is not going to be a protection. What to do now?

ZOLBOO

I have said what I would say.

He leaves.

DUGAR

Hold on. Truth... Truth will be the proof. Zolboo? How do you prove that it is an unauthorized chemical substance? Even though it is authorized, it was lost to the soil due to irresponsibility?

ZOLBOO

Sheep's lung was damaged from drinking in the river is not proof enough?

DUGAR

Who actually investigated that the damage to the lung was caused by it?

ZOLBOO

Well the investigator who analyzed was bribed.

DUGAR

Who is proving that he was bribed?

ZOLBOO

Well then that five million tugrug...

DUGAR

Who is proving that was bribe money?

ZOLBOO

My source.

DUGAR

Who is it? Believing in anonymous source...

ZOLBOO

Not anonymous source, but source who did not want to be known. You can't protect him. So I can't have taking a risk. Might lose a job or even worse, could put the life in danger.

DUGAR

There are some questionable things in your article.

ZOLBOO

Well, you answer those questions. I did my job. Now you do yours.

DUGAR

Trying to teach me my job?

ZOLBOO

Isn't it the borderline between journalistic investigation and professional police investigation. I don't have the authorizations as you do.

FADE OUT

FOURTH SCENE

(RESTAURANT. ANKHMAA and
SURENJAV are talking)

SURENJAV

Aah, that is what this is about. Fellow who I did not see a long time...also a guy who ignored me when I greeted you the other day...invites you in a big restaurant, one should assume it is a big deal.

ANKHMAA

Yes indeed. You are not letting go of your detective character. Well I called you so we could catch up and ask you a few pointers.

SURENJAV

You have faced a tough cookie.

ANKHMAA

Everything is a mess these days. I got the newspaper hooked up, but your friend is not moving. I thought he would just let go, but he started digging deeper. Pinched him. No use. If I could see the end to it, I could use some of the money. Who doesn't like money right? Should I just pay him directly?

SURENJAV

Don't... You might push him deeper.

ANKHMAA

Well since you have known him from childhood, you will help me to tame that stubborn detective. You probably know how without me telling you. I will not disappoint you. I'll give you a share from "Golden Soil". I even brought the shareholder papers just in case if you don't believe me. Here. We just need to write your name on it.

SURENJAV

Is this necessary.

SURENJAV

Too small?

SURENJAV

No, no. I am just not sure.

ANKHMAA

Really? Then just tell me friend's weakness.

SURENJAV

Well the weakness is...

ANKHMAA

I know about the gambling. I knocked at that already. I just need to corner him. How? There might be a way to hook him. Your friend drives really fancy car...

SURENJAV

I was told he got it for the debt. He gambles time to time. Lucky, he is. Generally speaking he digs nice cars. Spends his weekends at the car dealer. Dugar blows everything on fancy cars, like someone would pay generously on racehorses.

ANKHMAA

Really? That sounds interesting...

SURENJAV

He is gawking at the Lexus newly arrived from America. But...

ANKHMAA

But what?

SURENJAV

He doesn't let go off of things he grabbed that easily. He would breath easily only when he is behind it. He is a born detective. True to his profession.

ANKHMAA

True to his profession? Born Detective you say? It is better if the game gets exciting like this. I also had a similar opinion. Well we are understanding each other. You have given me enough important information. Here. Here is the share. I am true to what I say. That share has enough value. Here. You can call this number and could even sell it there. I am going to go. I hope you would help me even more next time we meet. There are secrets that you can't reveal, my brother. Think about it.

SURENJAV

What do I suppose to think of that?

ANKHMAA

However, you should think. It is very easy to talk to people like that. All right, goodbye!

FADE OUT

FIFTH SCENE

(NEWSPAPER DEPARTMENT. Editor's office.
Zolboo enters)

BOLD

What is up Zolboo?

ZOLBOO

Because of you, I can't show my face anywhere now.

BOLD

Well, don't worry. But because of you, I don't have to worry about how to get money and can sleep sound for a year. What are you going to write next? Oh, where the hell is it? Here it is. Public complaint. You go, research...investigate and find out. You are the only one I can count on in this department.

ZOLBOO

Here, editor.

BOLD

What is this? Resignation paper? Zolboo, aren't you rushing too much and making a wrong decision here? I think you have gotten a wrong understanding. Look at this. Sales report. Even our subscription decreased, sales have gone up in the last quarter. Issues with your article have helped this. All the stands have sold out of our newspaper.

ZOLBOO

Editor? Is this really you? Where has that editor, I respected and worshiped, gone?

BOLD

It is not easy to apologize for making a mistake.

ZOLBOO

There is no mistake in what I wrote. You know that.

BOLD

Don't interrupt me. You probably hate me. Go on. Hate me. It is said in blind's place go blind, in cripple's place go limping. This is the society we live in. It was not easy for me to make that decision. I thought of you too. I was afraid that you might get hurt at the peak of your time. These are dangerous people and they are not going to let go that easily. I was thinking of your future.

ZOLBOO

Lets assume you are right. Who am I after our newspaper's apology? Could you please tell me, Who am I? No, Editor. I cant work with you anymore. We are never going to understand each other.

VOICE

Editor! What happened?

BOLD

I'll be there. The stubbornness never wins. By accepting that money I rescued you and our newspaper. You can't leave. Wait for me.

He leaves. Phone rings.

ZOLBOO

Hello?

VOICE

Hi, Is this "Sensation" newspaper's journalist Zolboo?

ZOLBOO

Yes, it is.

VOICE

I heard you are a good journalist. My company is looking for a public relations' officer. You are good fit for this. High salary.

ZOLBOO

Which company is it?

VOICE

You probably know already. Nationally known mining company. "Golden Soil"

ZOLBOO

Of course I know. Do you think that I would work there?

VOICE

Why not? There are always opportunities in life. If said no, it is same as loosing that opportunity.

ZOLBOO

Maybe. But I am a journalist. I am not experienced in public relations.

VOICE

That can be solved easily. We will send you to a school over seas with full expenses paid. We need to encourage talented journalists.

ZOLBOO

There are no priceless gift and unreturned favor. What should I do?

VOICE

You get it right away. This type of person goes far. You did not reveal your source to the detective, right.

ZOLBOO

Yes. How do you know?

VOICE

I know what I need to know.

Editor comes back in.

ZOLBOO

Seems like it.

VOICE

You can't trust Dugar. He gambles. You probably know those kind of people are willing to pull out their eyes for a money.

ZOLBOO

Really.

VOICE

So do you want to do a high salary work and go to school in over seas?

ZOLBOO

I want to go to study in over seas.

VOICE

Well then we should meet in person and talk. I will call you back.

ZOLBOO

I will wait. Editor? I think our conversation is finished. I am leaving.

BOLD

Where are you rushing? I am not finished talking.

ZOLBOO

I am sorry, editor. I need to hurry. I am going to over seas.

BOLD

Looks like it. All right, congratulations.

ZOLBOO

I accepted “Golden Soil”’s proposal, just like you.

He leaves.

FADE OUT

SIXTH SCENE

(DETECTIVE’S OFFICE. DUGAR and
ZOLBOO are talking)

DUGAR

Very good. You did it very professional like. Not too many words.

ZOLBOO

You told me “speak less, listen more” I might have said too much, if you did not remind me.
Detective? Has anyone ever hurt your feelings greatly?

DUGAR

Well, have I? Maybe not?

ZOLBOO

Someone they respected hurts people’s feelings even worse. The editor...

DUGAR

You are not going to cry, are you? I can’t picture you crying. What you said is probably right. I
sometimes stumble with your questions, even though I am as old as your father. In my opinion, if
you don’t ease your hurt feelings, it turns into hatred. If then, life would be difficult.

Zolboo reaches into her bag and pulls out a file.

ZOLBOO

Here. I was collecting materials to continue writing my article.

DUGAR

What are these buildings in the picture?

ZOLBOO

I have checked Supervising Agency chairman’s property and income report submitted to the
Independent Authority against Corruption. I even took the pictures of property and buildings that
was linked to the document. This is the cost that was written on the property and income report.
But this is the actual cost.

DUGAR

These are pictures of restaurants.

ZOLBOO

I followed this person for a week. He always goes to these two restaurants to meet and dine with people. His wife's brother operates this place. Secret owner is this person.

DUGAR

Says who?

ZOLBOO

You can't trick me to say it.

Both laugh.

DUGAR

All right, who are these people in the picture?

ZOLBOO

Picture of giving presents and dining with "GOLDEN SOIL" company's bosses.

DUGAR

What have you been doing hiding these pictures until now?

ZOLBOO

I now trust you.

DUGAR

Ha ha... You are a tough cookie for your age. You are leaving me with no job. What else are you hiding for yourself?

ZOLBOO

What else? Could I ask you one thing?

DUGAR

Please.

ZOLBOO

How this that guy found out that I did not reveal my source?

DUGAR

I told him.

ZOLBOO

Really?

DUGAR

Needed to wait the bear. It's a tactics.

ZOLBOO

Could I ask one more thing?

DUGAR

I think I guessed what you are going to ask me. But go ahead, ask.

ZOLBOO

Is gambling also a tactics?

DUGAR

No. That is my...time-to-need-to-change strategy. Shall we finish for today?

ZOLBOO

Ok. Could I tell you one more thing? I gave my resignation form my work. The editor thinks I am going to school in overseas with "GOLDEN SOIL" company's fund. But I don't know if it's my tactic or strategy, I have no idea.

They both laugh. PUREV comes in. ZOLBOO leaves.

DUGAR

How is the progress?

PUREV

What you thought was right. I checked the accounts. There is a monthly payment of five million tugrug deposited from "GOLDEN SOIL" as a rental fee. Other than his brother's two restaurants, there are no other buildings they lease out.

DUGAR

Very good. Have you checked into the imported materials?

PUREV

Yes, sir. Entire five wagons of cargo were cleared in three minutes. I talked to the workers who unloaded the cargo. They said they unloaded faulty smelling canned stuff. It did not say chemical substance in the customs declaration. I met the person who collects plastic bottles from them to resell and I confiscated it. I sent the bottle to the lab. Should get the results back tomorrow morning.

DUGAR

Very good. I will transfer this case to the prosecutor as soon as I get the results. This is it. Call Zolboo and ask her to come in tomorrow at five. There is an only congratulations left now that her case is going to be dismissed.

PUREV

All right...

DUGAR

What? Are you sad? Learn to separate personal and political works, lieutenant. Why are these young people always put their personal matters first?

PUREV

Your phone is ringing, sir.

PUREV leaves immediately.

VOICE

Shall we continue our conversation? You probably thought enough about it for the last few days. You have only two options. First option, the gambling detective with no ethics will lose his job. Second option, stay with gambling and the investigation. Plus free Lexus? How about it?

DUGAR

Listen! Leave the two options dream to yourself! I have made my choice. Don't call me again!

FADE OUT

SEVENTH SCENE

(DUGAR'S HOME. Doorbell rings, TUNGALAG opens the door. DUGAR comes in holding a box of documents and papers)

TUNGALAG

I am glad, you got in just as the meal is ready to serve...

DUGAR

I am not late?

TUNGALAG

First time ever in your life you are not late.

DUGAR

Don't worry. Your love will always be on time for the hot meal.

Someone coughs.

Someone came?

TUNGALAG

Surenjav. He is a little...(flicks her throat) Surenjav? Dugar is here. Here, let me serve the food.

She leaves. Surenjav comes in.

SURENJAV

You don't have to forgive me. I am a horrible person.

DUGAR

Can you be decent and make some sense.

SURENJAV

How can an indecent person be decent? I should probably work as an agent?

Tungalag comes in with food.

TUGALAG

You two start eating that. I will be...

SURENJAV

Do I have the right to eat at your home? No, I don't have the right.

DUGAR

Stop being drunk. Eat your food while it's still hot.

SURENJAV

I sold my good friend for a dirty paper. Here take this.

DUGAR

"GOLDEN SOIL" company shareholder certificate. Ha ha...Gambling. Lexus. That was you?

SURENJAV

I did not tell about the gambling. They probably found out themselves. Lexus is mine... But I praised that you are true to your profession and a born detective.

DUGAR

This is how the talk about the losing job came up.

SURENJAV

What happened? Did they say they were going to rat you out and have you fired? I am...I should be dead. Stupid thinks afterwards....You are probably not going to forgive me.

DUGAR

Hags and pats Surenjav on the shoulder

My friend. Forgiveness is never late.

Tungalag comes in.

TUNGALAG

Look at you two...Food is getting cold.

DUGAR

For once, let me eat a food not heated afterwards. Could you turn on the TV, Tungaa

Images of Ankhaa getting arrested and Crime investigation department buildings come on the screen

JOURNALIST

Based upon the article on “Sensation” newspaper’s 312th issue, the detectives worked quickly to solve one of the biggest corruption network between Supervising Agency and one of the top ten Mongolian mining company “GOLDEN SOIL”. The above company and it’s officials and affiliated people have all been arrested and being investigated for illegally imported and stored an unauthorized chemical substances through the customs, caused a severe damage to the environment, threatened others, gave bribe and an excessive use of authority. We could not get in touch with the detective who investigated this case. We heard he was fired from his work. But we would like to introduce you the journalist ZOLBOO, who first unearthed this case and delivered the truth to the public.

SURENJAV

My friend...That is my friend.

TUNGALAG

I did not understand anything. Were you on time for the meal, because you were fired?

DUGAR

That’s right. Voluntarily...But achieved what I aimed. Tungaa, you now have an unemployed husband with no income. How do you feel?

TUNGALAG

Did I marry you? Or marry your income and career?

THE END

October 20th of 2012