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# First Time Godfather

By Olga Malea

That's who'll go to Crete!  
Come here.  
I don't think I've ever  
sent you to a baptism.  
I was 2nd best man in Akrata,  
and 3rd best man in Patra.  
It's a tough village to win.  
We need votes from all sides.  
Maybe we should send  
someone more experienced?  
It's an honour to send your son.  
Not a bad idea, Mr. President.  
You're a little one?  
Little, but strong.  
I have to leave,  
to go to Patra...  
and you will go to Crete  
on my behalf...  
...to baptise  
Mr. Panagakis's baby.  
Three o'clock, just the two  
of us, we're going for a ride.  
I didn't forget.  
I know.  
But, this is a great  
chance for you...  
to help in this election.  
Will you help?  
After the baptism,  
you have to read this.  
How hard is it  
to postpone the baptism?  
They've postponed it  
twice already.  
If you can't go,  
that's all right.  
We'll see,  
we'll find a solution.  
I can.  
Are you sure?  
And you don't have  
to read all of it...  
...or by heart, just read it.  
But it's very important

that you read the speech.  
Our weapons are words, speeches.  
That's our battlefield.  
And then...  
a long ride...  
like in California.  
But, only Greek in Crete, right?  
Get Alex ready.  
He's going to Crete.  
The son!  
Bravo!  
Don't worry.  
Panagakis will take care of you.  
Not this way.  
This way. After you, Mr. Alex.  
Not like that.  
Our Chief sits here.  
Don't you understand,  
he must be seen by all, get it?  
Where's your head?  
We'll put this one, it's new.  
Not that one.  
Give it here.  
We'll use these ones,  
they're big and fresh.  
Brother.  
Let's get going.  
Your Godfather's coming!  
A great man, this tall!  
He's brave...  
big and strong.  
Hello.  
Brother, I think  
this gnat is talking to you!  
Whose boy is this?  
- Hello, I'm the son.  
- The son? Whose son?  
Welcome, little man!  
You're our pride and joy!  
Crete was, is and always  
will be democratic.  
Lefteris Panagakis.  
What's your name, boy?  
- Where's your father, Alex?

- To Patra.  
He had to go...  
Inside Patra...  
- He's not coming?  
- He couldn't, I was by him sent.  
Didn't anyone message you?  
Did they message me?  
Sure! We've been messaged!  
It's my fault. A cable came  
last night, I forgot to mention.  
That's what it was about.  
Now you tell me?  
You who never forgets a thing!  
A thousand greetings...  
a thousand plus two more...  
a garden of meetings  
through our open door.  
Welcome!  
You'll sit here.  
Where your father would sit.  
If it isn't the lazy hedgehog!  
A thousand charred devils!  
No, no, stop!  
Go back to hell,  
and don't return!  
Leave it alone!  
It's a living creature!  
Shut the hell up!  
It's the devil's seed.  
Right?  
That's right.  
Not like a lamb,  
scared of the shimmering blade.  
Shame!  
This is our village.  
We're here.  
Wait.  
I'll get the door.  
- A heart, a leg...  
- get out of here.  
Who's this?  
Where's the Chief?  
Get out of here, Moustaka.  
That's the Godfather?

He's little like us!  
Welcome.  
Nice to have you.  
Welcome my child,  
my lord and king.  
It's his son, mother.  
It's the same, even better.  
You'll sleep here, on the bed  
we made up for your dad.  
Not for young men,  
it was for your father.  
This one doesn't even  
speak "Romeika".  
He doesn't, does he?  
For every two words,  
he makes three mistakes.  
What good is a baptism without  
a speech, the way things are?  
You can't pick them like olives.  
Mother of god...  
where's the boy?  
In the bedroom.  
Myrto, go and get him!  
What's "Romeika"?  
"Romeika?" Greek.  
What are they saying?  
It's impossible,  
we have to postpone it.  
It's the third time!  
And leave the baby unbaptised?  
Woman!  
Do you think I'm stupid?  
- What are they saying?  
- It shouldn't happen.  
What?  
The baptism.  
When will we collect the votes?  
If our Chief was here,  
it would be a piece of cake.  
But what can we do  
with the little one?  
What can I say?  
Let's postpone it.  
And what do we do with the boy?

He'll stay here for a a wee bit,  
and then go back.  
They said for you  
to go back.  
Go back.  
Come downstairs... food.  
What's he doing?  
You think I know?  
It's what politicians' sons do.  
Practice every spare moment.  
Instead of saying their prayers  
at night, they make speeches.  
You think so?  
This one was born  
to be a politician.  
You should see this, Panago...  
you who can't even  
make up a couplet.  
What where you doing  
on the balcony?  
He was practising. Right?  
Practice?  
Listen, boy...  
this is no ordinary baptism.  
It's to bring democracy  
to this hard-fought land.  
That's why we want  
to postpone it... have it later.  
My father said that  
I've got to be the Godfather.  
And you can say all this?  
I'm little but strong.  
He'll do fine.  
He's little but strong,  
he'll be a great Godfather.  
Right, husband?  
Whatever we had planned  
for your father, you'll do.  
I'll make you look better  
than your father. Really.  
Let me tell you a few things  
before we start the day.  
Because today and tomorrow  
are two very important days.

You understand?  
For the baptism?  
For democracy.  
Today we'll visit  
two families...  
...the Fountedakis,  
and the Manedakis.  
They're not supporting  
our party...  
...but you're here  
to win them over.  
We need both families  
tomorrow with us.  
Tomorrow, when we  
march in the square...  
...we need both families.  
That's the only way to get  
our 150 votes.  
We need this many votes  
to get elected.  
That's right!  
You have to greet everyone.  
And double greet them.  
You know how? Your hand.  
With both hands. Damn it!  
Is this music?  
Are you joining the other side?  
I'll make a man out of  
you yet, like it or not!  
Let's go on.  
Whatever they offer, you eat.  
Eat, eat, and don't ask.  
Would my father do that?  
And a lot more!  
He'd chortle it all down!  
That way we get  
the women on our side.  
Don't you know what they do?  
Their husband asks them to vote  
for one party, they say "yes"...  
...and then secretly  
they vote for another.  
That's why we'll bring them  
with us, one by one.

**And say:**

"My compliments to the chef."

My compliments to the chef.

Good, come here, my trinket.

You should have been my son.

Now, the men will

ask you to do things.

Things, don't worry, favours.

They're helping us

to bring democracy...

...and we help with their stuff.

Their problems. You see, son?

If they ask for electricity,

you say "electricity".

If they ask for a phone line,

you say a "phone".

If they ask for a road,

you say "yes! The road!"

You say "yes" to everything.

Would my father do that?

That, and much more!

- Leave the boy alone.

- I'll set you straight!

- You're only making it worse.

- Not a word!

Come here, damn it! What are you  
doing? Damn your father!

Here's the Godfather!

Hold the baby, she wants you.

Aren't you her Godfather?

Are you afraid of dropping her?

If you want to practice,

you can lift me, it's fine.

- See, your dumb son again!

- Why, sweetheart, why?

Shouldn't you say something?

Something of your own?

You can't be a politician  
and a mute.

The boy knows how to speak.

Say something that

your father says.

Long live demo-cre-cy.

Oh, mother of god!  
Demo-cre-cy!  
Crete's democracy! Cool!  
Shut up, you're  
confusing Mr. Alex.  
Boy!  
Long live demo-cra-cy!  
Demo-cre-cy.  
Mother of god!  
Democra-cra...  
Cra! Cra! Cra!  
Like when you crush hedgehogs!  
- Welcome.  
- Nice to meet you.  
This is our Chief's son.  
- This squirt is the son?  
- He looks American.  
He doesn't look at all  
like the Chief.  
When you couple a Greek  
with a foreigner, you get this.  
I saw the Chief's picture when  
he was young, they're the same.  
My compliments to the chef.  
Come to think of it,  
they do look alike.  
They're identical.  
Tell your father that the road  
must pass below our village.  
It must reach our fields, too.  
We can't always be  
the ignored ones.  
It's all right here.  
- Yes to the road.  
- Below!  
What a voice the duckling has.  
Bravo, my little man!  
My compliments.  
I have a request too, Panagaki.  
He has to tell his father  
to get rid of the policeman.  
He blames our herds, our people,  
he doesn't let us be.  
And it's getting worse.

He must leave.  
I'll give it to you in writing.  
- He will leave.  
- He will leave!  
Who should leave?  
The police-mean.  
This one was brought up  
to govern us one day.  
I wish I could see  
where to lay the blame...  
an island run by goat thieves  
and that's a real shame.  
None in Crete are born  
ready to lie and steal...  
an insult to us all  
when stolen goat is our meal.  
Who's stealing?  
- Who, the Manedakis of course!  
- Already, 200 goats stolen!  
Panagaki, you promised.  
We made it clear.  
When I get elected,  
all goats will be returned!  
All 200!  
Pano, make us a couplet.  
You're a grown man.  
A bee sleeps  
in the thickets of my heart...  
Dear friends.  
Long live demo... cracy!  
How can it be my son spouts  
nonsense at the worst time?  
You're son is a man,  
he must speak in public.  
I agree.  
And talk about  
bees and gibberish?  
He can't even  
make up a couplet?  
Why is god punishing me...  
...with a son that says  
things a woman says?  
Didn't you see how Alex spoke?  
We must have got

at least 35 votes.

Do you know how strong we'll be  
with the Fountedakis tomorrow?

I see our votes walking  
upright on their own.

It seems like you've  
learned a lot from your father.

Where did this come from?

Thank god no one's around!

Are you tired?

Maybe you want to rest a bit?

- No.

- Are you sure?

It's the food...

a lot of food...

there's even more food.

How will we win over the women?

Crete, the land of

"even more food"!

Don't you dare open your mouth  
at the Manedakis.

I don't want to.

Come here, you have to find

a trick to cope with the food.

Pretend you're taking a big one,  
but snatch a small one.

### **Politics:**

Politics is the art of adapting.

And if you can't eat any more,  
dump some here.

- Along with the votes.

- Look here, you see?

The ones that hit me...

they're there...

we should go the back way.

I don't want trouble.

We'll outnumber them tomorrow.

It's different to be strong.

Fear brings fear.

We'll go through the square.

Brother, are you nuts?

Have you spoken?

Mother of god...

After the election.  
You must forget her.  
Here's what you asked for,  
I'll wait for you over here.  
- The Manedakis are like them.  
- Get dressed and don't talk.  
But they're coming closer to us.  
They're still not our people.  
It's the last time I'm helping.  
I'm going to marry her after.  
Walk, and stop talking.  
Welcome!  
It's an honour he sent his son.  
Let's see what  
these ones have to say.  
Why not? If our Chief doesn't  
bide to Cretan tradition...  
fire in their eyes and guts!  
My compliments.  
The kid's got it!  
My compliments.  
He has quite an appetite.  
Listen, boy. You have to tell  
your father about the road.  
I know.  
Below!  
What's he saying?  
He means above!  
Watch out, Panagaki!  
Two roads!  
Above and below!  
We'll start above,  
and we'll see about below.  
The smallest one?  
You don't like our food?  
My compliments.  
We said we'll help you,  
to see what your Chief is like.  
Just don't try  
anything funny with us.  
The road will pass  
from above. It's done.  
The very best of Crete  
load all onto their fork...

stolen goat and stolen sheep  
and stolen sweet white pork.  
What are they saying?  
Something about goats.  
God may put the saint  
high up in his great chapel...  
but loves without constraint  
the thief who stole the apple.  
Now that we're on the subject...  
...what does your Chief  
think of our Cretan tradition?  
All 200 goats back!  
What's the son saying?  
He's learning Greek now.  
Our traditions never change.  
I think he said something else.  
This is the best appetizer.  
You must try our snails.  
No one makes them better.  
They were for your father.  
The sauce took 3 days.  
The art of faking.  
Who said he's not eating?  
Eat it, love, it's tasty.  
Long live democracy.  
Long live democracy!  
- What are you doing?  
- He doesn't want our food?  
Who said he doesn't want it?  
Be careful, Panagaki.  
Traditions in Crete  
never change.  
Our traditions and our snails.  
Lord have mercy.  
He's just a kid.  
If he's just a kid,  
he shouldn't be here.  
Everything will be as you wish.  
Come with us tomorrow, and see  
what a nice speech he'll make.  
Come with you, after this?  
God wouldn't allow it!  
Peace be with you.  
What a disaster! We lost

the votes, because of a snail.  
Was it that hard  
to just eat it?  
The poor kid was stuffed.  
I can eat. I can.  
I have to be the Godfather.  
I can eat.  
Don't worry...  
you will be the Godfather,  
my darling dear.  
Go to sleep.  
Sometimes I wonder  
why you do all this.  
What do you gain?  
You're asking me?  
All these expenses, and work,  
and what about the boy?  
Democracy requires sacrifice.  
Mr. Alex! Where are you, boy?  
The people are here.  
Where is he?  
Where is he?  
- I don't know.  
- Come downstairs.  
The boy will be right down.  
He's getting ready,  
he'll be right down.  
Quicken up, we're in trouble.  
- Come here.  
- Let me go!  
- You are the son!  
- I am not!  
I told you about the leg, but  
the right one, not the left.  
It's useless, not good  
for the Chief!  
But you are the son...  
what's up?  
No gathering votes today?  
Get out of here.  
What did you say?  
I can't get votes anymore.  
I can't say "my compliments".  
What will you do?

I can't eat damn snails either!  
What are pancakes?  
They're a kind of sweet bread.  
Mr. Alex!  
Why are you shouting?  
They'll know we lost the kid.  
There go our votes.  
I can see them running away.  
Does my father know  
where you are?  
Now the real fun begins!  
What are you doing  
with the rocks?  
They'll be looking for you.  
They can't find you here.  
My stupid son got him  
all worked up.  
What have I done, god,  
and you punish me like this?  
He's somewhere around here.  
He probably went  
to get some fresh air.  
You shouldn't blame Panago.  
And you shouldn't  
get him worked up.  
I work him up? You send him  
to English and piano class.  
When you have kids of your own,  
raise them as you wish.  
I didn't propose yet  
for your sake.  
And never propose to her.  
I'm not helping  
in the next election.  
You'll help until we win.  
I helped in '58, in '61.  
Last time.  
Afterwards, I'll propose.  
They'll never  
give you her hand.  
Brother, if they don't,  
I'll steal her.  
Do you think  
they stole the boy?

What are you saying?  
You're thinking like they do.  
Why don't you speak Greek?  
My father came here  
to be a politician.  
Go back to the votes.  
I'm protecting the hedgehogs.  
They go by here to drink water.  
With this, they'll return  
through the fields...  
...without going on the road,  
where my father crushes them.  
- And go cra-cra...  
- like democra-cra-cy.  
Shout it out loud!  
The whole village should know!  
You'll find him.  
He's no needle in a haystack.  
- They certainly stole him.  
- They did not.  
Either way, go out there,  
and tell the people.  
We're leaving, Panagaki.  
You can't fool us any longer.  
He's not here.  
They stole him.  
They did this to us.  
Now they're doing it to you?  
And what will you be  
when you grow up?  
You?  
I'll be a poet, a real one,  
not a rhyming coupleteer.  
You?  
You, not your father.  
Think of one thing you like.  
It's from America, right?  
Run, villagers!  
They stole the boy,  
the Chief's son!  
Bring your guns, if you don't  
have any, find some!  
These people are enough.  
How far can the boy have gone?

I'm not turning them out for  
the boy, but for the votes.  
We'll get our 150 votes,  
come hell or high water.  
- They stole the boy?  
- He vanished into thin air.  
Why does the outlaw State  
meddle in our affairs?  
Let's show them our strength!  
We're doing good.  
You're incredible...  
democracy is our top priority!  
Listen, villagers!  
You go above the stream.  
You take the higher road,  
we'll circle the mountain.  
We'll take the road,  
in the cars.  
Don't leave a stone unturned!  
We must sweep the whole place!  
Road above, road below, goats!  
It's always like that.  
Everyone wants something else.  
There's only one thing  
that everyone likes: Couplets.  
I'm a minority.  
Eat, you!  
And listen to our Chief's words!  
The fields belong to you, and  
Greece belongs to its people!  
Have you seen the son?  
He ran like the devil  
was chasing him. Like crazy!  
Where did he go?  
They stole him.  
Not our people.  
- The ones that hit me?  
- Of course!  
An army was chasing him!  
They ran upwards!  
From here on,  
we go upwards!  
They do that here.  
When they're happy, bang!

When they're sad, bang!  
Except if it's for us!  
This is Pano's hide out.  
I'm sure he did the deed.  
He took him to the devil's nest.  
But he can't fool me,  
I can sniff him out!  
No one will find us.  
This is my hide out.  
My father calls it  
the devil's nest.  
I put the young ones here.  
And when they get big,  
I set them free...  
...and my father kills them.  
When I like something,  
he hates it on purpose.  
What doesn't your dad like?  
This one will make it.  
They're coming from everywhere.  
They'll see us!  
He'll kill all of them!  
He'll kill them all...  
there's the boy.  
Thank god almighty!  
Who stole you, son?  
Tell us, we'll get them!  
Tell us, why did you leave  
without saying anything?  
- Did Panos bring you here?  
- Not Panos.  
Listen, villagers!  
The boy told me everything!  
We were right!  
He was stolen!  
He was stolen,  
but not by men.  
The beauty of Crete  
stole him.  
- Enough!  
- Enough?  
Go with Fountedakis  
and whatever you promised him.  
What are you saying?

Our Chief is counting on you.  
Our Chief is counting on you.  
Don't listen to Manedakis.  
Don't listen to Fountedakis.  
I'm throwing dust in his eyes.  
It's just a game.  
We'll be together from now on!  
See how wrong you were?  
Nobody stole him.  
If democracy doesn't come,  
everything's wrong.  
It's our only goal.  
Come on, young man.  
Let's go home.  
Let's go home  
and get you rested.  
Stop it!  
He's like Panagos,  
not like his father.  
Listen, boy...  
did you learn it?  
You and me,  
will learn it together.  
I don't want to be  
the Godfather.  
This is a problem.  
Remember what you told me  
when you got to Crete?  
That you must  
be the Godfather...  
...and that you must  
read the speech...  
...and that you're  
little but strong?  
You have a duty,  
and you can't back out.  
I can't be the Godfather.  
There's no such thing as "can't".  
Only "I don't want to".  
Do you want democracy  
to come to this land?  
For us not to be scared,  
not to be chased...  
...not to be afraid

to go through the square...  
...not to be like scared  
animals, like Moustakas...  
...no one stepping on us,  
to live with dignity?  
Do you want democracy, Alex?  
It's in your hands.  
Should I help you?  
Are you sure?  
The difficult, noble...  
dear friends, together we start  
the difficult, noble work...  
to build!  
To build a country  
that's governed...  
that's governed by the people.  
We want Greece  
to belong to the Greeks.  
Long live democracy!  
For democracy...  
this time we're getting close.  
For democracy.  
I want to see you after  
we bring democracy.  
You promised everyone  
something different.  
What can I do?  
Everyone gets something.  
Isn't it always  
that way in life?  
Have you ever seen  
anyone get everything?  
What you get, as is with truth,  
is always in the middle.  
Your Chief doesn't do that,  
he wants to go forward.  
I'm trying to help him.  
In my own way.  
They locked me in my room.  
Let's get out of here.  
No.  
You'll be the Godfather?  
You'll read the speech?  
Is this what you want?

Then don't do it!  
By the time democracy gets here  
all the hedgehogs will be dead!  
Welcome, boy!  
My young man!  
Good work, the kid.  
Do you renounce Satan?  
- I renounce.  
- Louder.  
- Do you renounce Satan?  
- I renounce!  
Your name shall be hope,  
in the name of the father...  
...and of the son...  
...and of the holy spirit.  
Amen.  
Excellent, the Godfather!  
Long live!  
A worthy Godfather!  
Long life to our fellow man!  
Your father's message.  
They're waiting.  
And now, Mr. Alex...  
...our worthy fellow-man...  
...and our Chief's son...  
...will read his message.  
What happened to the boy?  
Nothing happened. He'll say it  
by heart, like he's supposed to.  
Of course!  
I came to Crete for democracy.  
For democracy to come  
to our country.  
Because, in a democracy...  
everybody's allowed to live...  
he who walks fast...  
he who walks slow...  
even he who walks  
really really slow...  
like Pano's hedgehogs.  
Long live democracy!  
Maybe he isn't the son.  
His ways are different.  
You fooled us, Panagaki.

He'll read the message!  
He'll read the message,  
he's our Chief's son.  
Erotokritos and digenis,  
kornaros and venizelos...  
all were born in Crete  
yet very different fellows.  
Likewise our leader and his son  
are not at all the same...  
yet fight for one big cause  
democracy by name.  
The evil eye, it's upon him!  
Help me!  
I'm with you.  
I have to hand it to you.  
Finally, our votes.  
This is the moment  
for democracy.  
Can I lift you?  
Lift me?  
What for?  
To see if I can.  
- I'm heavier than the baby.  
- I know.  
Farewell, young man,  
have a good trip.  
Farewell, darling.  
I'll be back.  
I'm the Godfather.  
I, Sifalios,  
son of Sifi Sifaka...  
...want to offer our Chief:  
A liver, a heart, two lungs,  
a kidney and a leg.  
Not the right one,  
it's damaged.  
I'll pay the doctor, to remove  
them and give them to him.  
Where's that vile creature?  
Go to bloody hell,  
and don't come back!  
The votes, what happened?  
You've learned the language,  
but you didn't read the speech.

Why didn't you?  
What will you tell my father?  
What do you want me to say?  
The truth.  
Alex, I must say  
you're a brave boy.  
Welcome.  
Can we be left alone?  
They told me you did well.  
You brought me 150 votes,  
plus the entire village.  
I didn't do it the right way.  
I don't even do it  
the right way all the time.  
I know that. But you must have  
said something. What was it?  
I told them that everybody  
is the same...  
...everyone fits in a democracy,  
even the hedgehogs.  
The hedgehogs?  
Even I hadn't thought of that!  
Look what Crete did to my son...  
- they want you, Chief.  
- One moment.  
I don't know if we can go  
on that ride today, but...  
...it'll happen soon.  
Soon?  
Soon.  
I want to tell you something  
really important to me.  
I don't care only  
about democracy...  
there's more to life...  
there's the fact that...  
Chief, the government's  
been overthrown!  
My father never  
finished his phrase.  
I'm sure he wanted  
to tell me...  
...that besides democracy...  
...he loved me

very, very much.  
Edited by LeapinLar