

UNSEEN
by Mona Mansour

About the play (from the playwright):

Conflict photographer, Mia, wakes up in the Istanbul apartment of Derya, her on-again, off-again girlfriend after being found unconscious at the scene of a massacre she was photographing. Mia can't even remember being there, but she wired photos of the site hours before she was found. The two women resume their volatile push-pull when Mia's well-meaning Californian mother arrives in Istanbul from the U.S., trying to help unravel what happened to her daughter. As we learn more about the incident itself, we also find out about some of the dynamics between all three women, and how they each navigate the difficulties of the worlds they encounter.

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JANE – female, 60s, white

About the scene:

JANE, white, early sixties, finds herself alone with DERYA, Turkish, early thirties. Both women are worried about Mia. In an attempt to try to understand her daughter, and calm herself down, Jane remembers a story from Mia's childhood.

JANE

There was always a part of her that was just drawn to the fragile things, you know. Or had a capacity for looking at them. God. I don't know. Maybe it seems to you we couldn't have had anything terrible to look at in our neck of the woods. Where Mia grew up. I mean, how do you measure these things? People's suffering. Is it measurable? Is it just about what each of us perceives to be suffering? I think about those things . . . We had a dog when Mia was, oh, seven or so. And he was, a rescue, and um, crippled or something from the start, and we did everything. German shepherd. They have this thing, it's—well it's part of their breeding. It's resulted in this hip thing, so, we got him the operation, and then animal physical therapy—they have that—and even a heating pad for him every morning. So he could walk, but it was always—just a funny walk—and, and people would see him and assume we were horrible people, and he was in pain, and why didn't we just put him to sleep. They'd say that. And Mia was always, just. She didn't care what anyone said. She said one time, and she had to have been no more than ten, she said, said to me after one of these people had offered their opinion again, she said, "It's hard for them to look at him because they're afraid for themselves." I mean, who is this kid? Can you believe she said that? I can't believe she said that. I always supported her doing this work because I thought, she could bear the cost of witnessing. And someone has to witness. You know? I'm sorry. I think I'm just a little exhausted.