

ABRAHAM'S DAUGHTERS

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CHARACTERS

<u>ABRAHAM</u>	A man in his early 70s. Jewish-American from Queens, NY.
<u>MAXINE</u>	A woman, early 40s. Jewish-American, New Yorker.
<u>HUDA</u>	A woman, 44, but may seem older than that. Palestinian Muslim. Wears a thob and hijab.
<u>RACIE</u>	Maxine's daughter. 18. American Jew from Long Island. Lesbian.
<u>AMEL</u>	Huda's daughter. 19. Palestinian Muslim living in a refugee camp in Nablus. Wears a hijab with American-style clothing (jeans, Keds-like sneakers). Amel is pronounced M.L.

1-2 ACT(S), 15 SCENES

1. Nablus, outside, cradling Abraham, company
 2. Nablus and Jerusalem, gravesides, company
 3. Nablus and Tel Aviv, inside, Maxine, Racie, Huda and Amel
 4. Nablus, inside, Amel, Huda and Abraham
 5. Tel Aviv, inside, Huda and Maxine
 6. Tel Aviv, inside, Maxine with Abraham and then Racie
 7. Tel Aviv, inside, Huda returns with Amel, and Maxine
 8. Tel Aviv, outside, Abraham, Racie, Huda and Ame
 9. Tel Aviv, inside, company
- optional intermission
10. Nablus, outside, Abraham, Amel, Racie and Maxine
 11. Nablus, inside, company
 12. Nablus, inside Racie and Amel
 13. Nablus, inside and on the roof, company
 14. Nablus, outside and on the roof, company
 15. Nablus, outside, cradling Abraham, company

Time/Place

Outside Jerusalem, in Tel Aviv and in Nablus under Closure, June, 1993. Stone-colored paths create a sense of terracing. Two distinct spaces with a threshold - a grave for Sara & Haajar - between them. Abraham's co-op in Tel Aviv and Huda's home in Nablus. Huda's home has a roof where Amel and Racie go. Maxine "marks" the threshold with books/stones or boxes, but this changes until the two distinct spaces become one.

Vocabulary

Arabic, Hebrew and Yiddish words are written with phonetic spelling, emphasis on the capitalized syllable(s)

kufFEEyah — men's headscarf
YAMa — mama (my mother) Yam rhymes with Mom, yama with mama
HAGanAH — Israeli army, hag rhymes with log
aleeyAH or aLEEyah — to become an Israeli citizen
GOYim — Yiddish for non-Jew, derogatory
schvARTzeh — Yiddish for black, derogatory
TAYta — my grandmother
JEDDee — my grandfather
HauFEETdi — my granddaughter
BINti — my daughter
BAbba — my father, pronounced to rhyme with cob or rob

G-d is my superstitious way of writing this word, please pronounce as usual.
> means continue to your next line.

Throwing stones is the birthright and duty of anyone subject to
foreign rule. Throwing stones is an action as well as a
metaphor of resistance.
—Amira Hass

We are the only people on earth asked to guarantee the security
of our occupier. . . while Israel is the only country that calls
for defense from its victims.
— Hanan Ashrawi

ABRAHAM'S DAUGHTERS

1.

AT RISE: Nablus, all 4 women cradle ABRAHAM in his summer suit with a bloody kuffiyah around his head.

RACIE

It was the Summer of 1993

AMEL

in the City of Nablus, Camp Oskar

MAXINE

my father, Abraham, I can't even say it

HUDA

my father has died

ABRAHAM gives the kuffiyah to MAXINE who gives it to HUDA who takes it with love.

ABRAHAM

G-d promised to make Abraham the Father of Nations. I am Abraham.

MAXINE (conflicted)

My father Abraham Abramowitz.

ABRAHAM

My whole life I waited for sons, my "nations!"

HUDA

My father Babba Ibrahim.

ABRAHAM

When I was a boy, I enlisted in the U.S. Army. I fought in World War II.

MAXINE

He didn't have any nations.

ABRAHAM

The Father of Nations should know something of war.

HUDA

I never thought he would do anything like this.

ABRAHAM

Then I joined the Hagana, the Jewish army, and fought to make a Jewish State.

RACIE

Amel, why do you think he did it?

AMEL

To leave a legacy

MAXINE

We were never enough for him.

HUDA

We barely had a moment together.

ABRAHAM

All this time I sought out my "Sara" and my "Haajar", even though I had a perfectly nice Sarah waiting for me in Flushing.

MAXINE

What was he thinking?

HUDA

I think he felt responsible.

ABRAHAM

Truth is I found a beautiful Haajar right here in what was then called Palestine. I might have stayed.

HUDA

He could never have stayed.

MAXINE

It sounded to me like he wanted to stay.

AMEL

He could have let us stay in our home in Jerusalem. People did.

HUDA

He said G-d made him a promise.

MAXINE

G-d didn't promise to protect him from bullets.

He made a choice.

AMEL

To walk into bullets?

RACIE

He judged himself harshly.

HUDA

He went looking for trouble.

MAXINE

G-d kept his promise, but Babba couldn't see it.

HUDA

He saw what he wanted to see.

MAXINE

I see it now.

ABRAHAM

2.

(HUDA and AMEL in Nablus and MAXINE and RACIE in Jerusalem pray over their respective mother's grave. ABRAHAM in Jerusalem, alive.)

HUDA & AMEL
 Bismillaahir-rahmaani
 r-raheem Al hamdu
 lilaahi rabbi l'aalameen
 Ar rahmaani r-raheem
 Maaliki yawmi d-deen
 lyyaaka n'budu wa...

MAX & RACIE
 Yitgadal v'yitkadash
 sh'may rabah
 b'almah d'v'ra kirutay
 v'yamlick malhutay
 b'chaiyichon
 uv'yomichon...

ABRAHAM

Remember, Sarah? When Jacob Weinstock asked you to marry him? And you wrote to me and said, "come home and fight for me."

MAXINE

Daddy.

ABRAHAM

I couldn't let you marry a Jacob, a Father of Tribes, when I, Abraham, would be a Father of Nations.

MAXINE

Daddy, let's go home.

ABRAHAM

Sarah, you became my home away from home.

MAXINE

She's gone Daddy. You have to accept that.

ABRAHAM

I accept.

MAXINE

Then why are you talking to her?

ABRAHAM

I talked to her for forty-four years. I should stop now? I'm putting a stone here to mark your grave forever. I've kept my promise to you, Sarah, and now G-d will keep his promise to me.

ABRAHAM exits.

3.

(HUDA and AMEL in their refugee camp housing pack Haajar's things into boxes that MAXINE and RACIE in Jerusalem unpack with Abraham's things in Tel Aviv.)

RACIE

But Mom, what does that mean – G-d's promise?

MAXINE

That he would be the Father of Nations.

RACIE

So you're his promised land? His "count-ry"?

MAXINE

Racie...

RACIE

What? He's your father, and even you don't spend time with him.

MAXINE

We're here, aren't we?

RACIE

How should I know about family? I didn't grow up with one.

MAXINE

That isn't true, and you know it.

RACIE

I might have thought we were a family, but obviously, we're not.

AMEL

What about this hijab? She embroidered it herself.

HUDA

That was her favorite. Until '67, when she gave up on Babba's returning.

AMEL

I thought your father died in '48.

HUDA

Died, or disappeared, but after '67, she never wore it again.

AMEL

Don't you want to keep it?

HUDA

You keep it.

AMEL

I will then. What is it? Does it bother you?

HUDA

No, you're beautiful.

AMEL

I could take it off.

HUDA

You should wear it all the time.

AMEL

But you're crying.

HUDA

You look so much like her, like she looked when, the way I remember her from, when I was a child. It's almost like she's here. In you. My Amel.

MAXINE

Tel Aviv's just like Miami Beach. High rises, palm trees, air conditioning, and everyone's a Jew.

RACIE

Everyone except the help.

MAXINE

Wherever you go, Racie, someone collects the trash. Someone cleans. I'm hiring someone for Daddy tomorrow.

RACIE

I'll take a walk then, try to find something to do here.

MAXINE

Grandpa might want to take a walk.

RACIE

Oh, and I'm supposed to take him?

MAXINE

Racie, you should know your history.

RACIE

Israel is not my history.

MAXINE

I mean your grandfather. His history.

AMEL

You should keep her jewelry box.

HUDA

Why? It's been empty for years.

AMEL

She still has this.

HUDA

What?

AMEL

Some kind of medal.

HUDA

From a soldier?

AMEL

Here. She would have wanted someone to keep it.

MAXINE

You might enjoy yourself.

RACIE

It's hot as hell, and there's nothing to do.

MAXINE

Tourists come to Israel.

AMEL

All these pictures, if you tell me who everyone is, I'll make a note for a scrapbook.

HUDA

Yes, all right. But I want to finish this box.

RACIE

It's a retirement home for old people who smell like old people.

MAXINE

I smell the sea. The Mediterranean's right outside.

HUDA

That's strange. I thought I heard waves and a seagull.

AMEL

I hardly know anyone in your family.

HUDA

Amel, wouldn't it be nice to be a bird?

AMEL

Why don't I know them?

HUDA

Because they're all dead.

MAXINE

We can see the country, witness history in the making.

RACIE

Get blown up in a bus.

MAXINE

So don't ride a bus.

RACIE

Become history.

MAXINE

Did I say you had to ride a bus?

HUDA

Your grandmother was the last to be born there.

AMEL

And what about this photo? Who are they?

HUDA

That's my grandfather with his cigar. And my Uncle. He died in Jordan. The younger man, I don't know.

RACIE

You don't know what's going on here.

MAXINE

I know enough. There are Chagalls and the Dead Sea.

AMEL

If you were a bird, would you fly back home?

HUDA

Do you know why I named you Amel?

AMEL

I am your last hope.

MAXINE

This is a dream your grandparents had.

RACIE

"Next year in Jerusalem." I know! But this is Tel Aviv.

MAXINE

Rachel...

RACIE

A little late for Grandma, don't you think?

MAXINE

At least she was buried here.

RACIE

Why couldn't she be buried at home where she lived?

AMEL

And the house in the background, where was this house?

HUDA

You know that's our home in Jerusalem.

AMEL

I love when you say it. Our home in Jerusalem.

MAXINE

They lived through the Holocaust.

RACIE

Not in the camps.

MAXINE

Your grandfather fought in that war, and then for Israel. Then the Red Scare, McCathy's purge of the Communists -- things you're too young to know about.

RACIE

Grandpa's a Communist? Cool.

MAXINE

He wants to live in Israel the way *goyim* dream of heaven.

RACIE

Can't you say Christians? What about lesbians? Do you call us all dykes?

MAXINE

Racie, you're not a -- Ok, Christians.

HUDA

Are you going to help me or stare at the past?

AMEL

I'm staring into the future.

HUDA

You're not my last hope, you are hope.

AMEL

You could do more.

MAXINE

Before you know it, we'll be shopping for college.

HUDA

We let people in. We show them. We talk about it.

HUDA and MAXINE

I'm so proud of you. Now help me with this box.

MAXINE and RACIE exit

4.

AMEL

She got a letter today.

HUDA

Let me see that.

AMEL

It's from B'tSELLem, the Israeli agency.

HUDA

Why didn't you mention it before?

AMEL

With the funeral and all, I forgot.

HUDA

Amel, give me the letter.

AMEL

It isn't addressed to you.

HUDA

It isn't addressed to you either.

(AMEL exits)

HUDA

To Whom It May Concern, I am searching for a Palestinian woman by the name of Haajar Barakat. She left Jerusalem in '48. I'm not sure how to locate her now. I understand this agency works with refugees. If there's anyone who could help me find her, I'll be making *aliyah* in the next few weeks, and I look forward to supporting your organization. Please give the enclosed letter to her if she can be found. Sincerely, Abraham Abramowitz. >

(ABRAHAM enters)

HUDA and ABRAHAM

My dearest Haajar...

ABRAHAM

Many years may have passed since you've thought of me, but I think of you...

HUDA

Really?

ABRAHAM

Often. I was unable to write to you for many reasons,

HUDA

Hm-hmm.

ABRAHAM

Logistics - I don't know if you'll ever get this letter.

HUDA

She didn't get it.

ABRAHAM

I'm sure you've had a fruitful life, and I too have had my own >

HUDA and ABRAHAM

in America,

ABRAHAM

but it's time for me to make *aLEEyah* and return to Israel

HUDA

Palestine.

ABRAHAM

as it is my homeland.

HUDA

Mine too.

ABRAHAM

I'll be moving there in a few weeks. I enclose my address,

HUDA

Tel Aviv.

ABRAHAM

so you may contact me if you choose.

HUDA

When was this written?

Of course I'll understand... ABRAHAM

A month ago. HUDA

... if you decide not to... ABRAHAM

So he's here now. HUDA

...if you see things differently... ABRAHAM

In Tel Aviv. HUDA

...after all the time that has passed... ABRAHAM

Expecting you. HUDA

...since 1948 so much has happened... ABRAHAM

Since '48? HUDA

but of course I'll continue to look for you when I get there. ABRAHAM

Persistent. A man who expects a miracle. HUDA

Since you'll always be welcome in my home... ABRAHAM

Generous. HUDA

so that either way I'll know that you are well... ABRAHAM

Optimistic. HUDA

or not well, Heaven forbid... ABRAHAM

Realistic. HUDA

or interested... ABRAHAM

Interested in what? HUDA

in speaking to an old man who will always believe you are the most beautiful woman who ever thirsted in the desert. ABRAHAM

He is trying to be romantic? HUDA

With love and respect, ABRAHAM

Abraham Abramowitz. ABRAHAM and HUDA

An American Jew. So this is his medal. From World War II. And you, Yama, you kept it all these years. HUDA

5.

(ABRAHAM's condo, Tel Aviv. MAXINE alone on the phone as SHE welcomes HUDA from Nablus.)

MAXINE (to HUDA)

Hello, yes, yes, come in. I'm on the phone, but I'll be with you in a moment.

(to Mrs Gottlieb)

Sorry Mrs. Gottlieb, I'm calling to invite you to shiva. Will you help us make a minyan tonight?

(to HUDA)

The kitchen's that way, through the dining room.

(to Mrs. Gottlieb)

We're only the three of us, me, my father, my daughter. That's right, just the one daughter. But with the two of you, we'll be five. Plenty for a minyan – we're Reform!

(to HUDA)

The powder room's that way.

(to Mrs. Gottlieb)

We've got enough food to feed an army.

(to HUDA)

Bedrooms!

(to Mrs. Gottlieb)

No, I just meant – no, the army was not invited... I'm fine with the army. Do they come to shivas? . . . then we'll see you and Mr. Gottlieb tonight! "Shalom!"

(to HUDA)

I asked for someone who speaks English. You do speak English, don't you?

HUDA

Yes.

MAXINE

Cause I don't speak Hebrew or Arab. What's your name?

HUDA

I think you think I'm someone else.

MAXINE

You weren't sent by the agency? For the job?

HUDA

I think we should talk.

MAXINE

I think you should go.

HUDA

But I haven't told you/ why I'm here.

MAXINE

I wasn't expecting anyone, and we're in mourning./ I have a lot of unpacking --

HUDA

Has something happened to Mr. Abramowitz?

MAXINE

My father? You know my father?

HUDA

No, but I wouldn't wish him any harm.

MAXINE

Are you threatening me?

HUDA

I'm praying for his good health.

MAXINE

He's fine. I'm sorry, but I'm not used to Israel. It's late in the afternoon,

HUDA

I know. It took me all day to get here.

MAXINE

What did you say you came for?

HUDA

You haven't given me the chance.

MAXINE

Please, have a seat. I have seltzer, lemonade, Coke or Orangina. Please.

HUDA

Thank you.

MAXINE
Hummus?

HUDA
You are kind.

MAXINE
Not really. I ordered trays of it.

HUDA
I eat when I am, like buzzing bees inside.

MAXINE
Nervous?

HUDA
Yes. I eat.

MAXINE
Please. Go ahead.

HUDA
And you?

MAXINE
I get nervous all the time.

HUDA
Won't you eat?

MAXINE
Celery takes more energy to digest than it has calories, so it's like negative calories.

HUDA
You struggle like I do.

MAXINE
Everything I do is a struggle. Please, tell me why you've come.

HUDA
I am also in mourning. My mother has died.

MAXINE

I'm sorry. The hardest thing is losing a mother. We buried mine yesterday, outside Jerusalem. The old cemetery there.

HUDA

My mother would have loved to have been buried near our home in Jerusalem.

MAXINE

You live in Jerusalem?

HUDA

As my family used to joke, I was made there. We are refugees.

MAXINE

I'm sorry again. So where do you live now?

HUDA

In Nablus. About an hour north of Jerusalem.

MAXINE

I've never been here before.

HUDA

It's part of what they call "the Occupied Territories." We live in a refugee camp.

MAXINE

A camp?

HUDA

Since we lost our home in Jerusalem

MAXINE

But that was decades ago.

HUDA

Yes, forty-five years.

MAXINE

So you are from Nablus?

HUDA

I am from Palestine. My mother had a home in Jerusalem. One day, I will return.

MAXINE

And this is why you've come?

HUDA

No - I - my name is Huda. Huda Sa'id. My mother was Haajar Barakat. We, my daughter and I, yesterday, a letter came.

MAXINE

And?

HUDA

From an Israeli organization. B'tSELLEM. They work with us to end the Occupation.

MAXINE

There are Israelis working with Arab refugees?

HUDA

Palestinian refugees, yes. They document human rights violations. B'tSELLEM.

MAXINE

I don't speak the language.

HUDA

They sent a letter from your father in search of my mother.

MAXINE

My father knows your mother?

HUDA

I think it might be easier if I could speak with him. Could he join us?

MAXINE

Is there something in the letter he needs to know?

HUDA

No, no, he sent the letter./ What I mean to say is --

MAXINE

My father sent a letter to you?

HUDA

To my mother./ It seems that he knew her, and --

MAXINE

But your mother died. I'm so sorry.

MAXINE

I'm not so sure I understand.

HUDA

I'm not so sure you understand.

HUDA

Your father knew my mother.

MAXINE

They were friends?

HUDA

In '48.

MAXINE

In the middle of the war?

HUDA

I think more than friends.

MAXINE

What do you mean more than friends?

HUDA

I think your father knew my mother in the biblical sense.

MAXINE

We're not that religious.

HUDA

—?

MAXINE

We don't take the Bible literally.

HUDA

I think I am the result of a union between my mother and your father.

MAXINE

Ah... No.

HUDA

I know it sounds impossible, but...

MAXINE

Mrs. Sa'id, maybe you'd better/ come back another time,

HUDA

I have always had a feeling that...

MAXINE

when my father / can help you sort this out.

HUDA

It is difficult to explain. But when I read the letter...

MAXINE

What letter? Can I see this letter?

HUDA

I think it would be best to wait for Abraham.

MAXINE

"Abraham." I see.

HUDA

Please understand, I travelled many hours to get here.

MAXINE

Well he isn't here.

HUDA

Checkpoints. Searches.

MAXINE

You could come back tomorrow?

HUDA

It would be best if I could see him today.

MAXINE

I'm sorry.

HUDA

We live in a big prison.

MAXINE

We just arrived. I still feel the time difference.

HUDA

I didn't ask for this letter.

MAXINE

I think you should leave now.

HUDA

But I need to speak to him.

MAXINE

It's ridiculous.

HUDA

I just need to see for myself.

MAXINE

I don't believe it.

HUDA

I was born in '49. I thought I knew who I was. And now I might be related to you. We might share a father. I grew up without one. Many of us did. It wasn't strange to grow up without a father. It was strange to grow up without a country. Finding a father is not the same as going home. It feels like, like there is a bird inside me, poking at me with her beak, trying to fly, to break free.

MAXINE

Please go.

HUDA

It is the truth. You can not take it away. I know what it means to live my entire life pretending there is nothing wrong.

MAXINE

I am sorry for your losses, but —

HUDA

Everything here is wrong. But you and I can make things right between us.

MAXINE

I don't see how I can do anything.

HUDA

You cannot erase me. My father will recognize me. He'll tell you about his love for my mother. Ask him about Haajar. Haajar Barakat. Ask your father.

(HUDA exits)

6.

(ABRAHAM enters the condo in Tel Aviv.)

ABRAHAM

Maxine, what a day I've had! This city! And Jerusalem!

MAXINE

You went to Jerusalem?

ABRAHAM

I told you I was taking the shuttle. I went to the Wailing Wall, easier than going into Manhattan from Great Neck. I ran into an old friend I haven't seen since Grade School. Coming to *shiva* tonight. Marty Fine, now they call him Mordecai, so Mordy Fine, bringing his son who lost his wife a few years ago, huh? Huh?

MAXINE

Daddy!

ABRAHAM

On his way! Sarah, d'you hear? A young widower for Maxine! So maybe you'll stay. They don't live far. We could all be together. A family. And he has children. Eh? The nations over which I'll preside. Uch, remember how upset I was, that I couldn't settle in the Old City. This is everything!

MAXINE

Daddy

ABRAHAM

Maxine

MAXINE

I didn't come to Israel to find a husband.

ABRAHAM

You have something against love? Family?

MAXINE

No. But /setting me up with -

ABRAHAM

The desert blooms!

MAXINE

My divorce isn't even final yet.

ABRAHAM

So? Everywhere I went there were flags. Jewish flags! Flying from the rooftops! The windows! The doors! G-d is here Maxine, and He loves us. Any mail come today?

MAXINE

Why do you ask?

ABRAHAM

I was out. Now I'm back. Thought I'd ask.

MAXINE

Are you expecting something in the mail?

ABRAHAM

Maybe.

MAXINE

Like what?

ABRAHAM

What is this? Did we get any mail?

MAXINE

No, but... Dad?

ABRAHAM

If your mother could have been here to see all this...

MAXINE

Can I ask you something?

ABRAHAM

I can just picture her.

MAXINE

Why didn't you ever come here with Mom?

ABRAHAM

I wish we had. We should have.

MAXINE

But was there any reason you might have avoided Israel?

ABRAHAM

We were always so busy. With you. Working. Time goes by faster than you think.

MAXINE

So when you were here fighting, you didn't, it wasn't, -I know you never talk about the war/, but I wanted to ask if...

ABRAHAM

The other war, I don't talk. But here/ I had my own regiment, and I was / in charge of -

RACIE

I hate this place.

MAXINE

Rachel.

ABRAHAM

No hello? No kiss?

RACIE

Hi Grandpa.

(kiss)

But I hate it here.

ABRAHAM

What happened?

MAXINE

Don't worry Dad. I'll talk to her.

ABRAHAM

What? I want to know

RACIE

I was in that big square.

ABRAHAM

Ben Yehuda?

RACIE

There are soldiers everywhere! With guns!

ABRAHAM

That's what soldiers have.

RACIE

They sit on park benches and girls fawn all over them.

ABRAHAM

That too!

RACIE

At first I was like, well, I can deal, but then I saw regular people. And they had guns. Big guns. And they were my age. Maybe even younger. They look totally American. Like people I know. Wearing tshirts with the American flag on them, and some of the tshirts say, "don't worry America, we've got your back."

ABRAHAM

They have a point.

RACIE

One girl was just sitting on a bench with a canvas bag, printed with the American flag, flung up against this huge gun. The gun wasn't even attached to anyone. I coulda gone right up and walked away with it. I almost did.

ABRAHAM

So this is the heart of it.

RACIE

They were oblivious.

ABRAHAM

You scared yourself.

RACIE

In the middle of the square making out!

MAXINE

That's why you're upset!

RACIE

Ignoring the gun and her stupid American flag-bag!

MAXINE

It was a heterosexual moment!

RACIE

Mom, you are so mean!

ABRAHAM

I understand Maxine. She's a nice American girl.

RACIE

Don't call me nice!

MAXINE

Racie, the Israelis have a right to defend themselves.

RACIE

Against what?

ABRAHAM

They are big guns. M-16s.

MAXINE

We're surrounded by Arabs here.

ABRAHAM

She was scared that's all.

RACIE

I wasn't scared. I'm offended.

ABRAHAM

You'll get used to it.

RACIE

I don't wanna get used to it. Why's it okay to live in a world that needs guns? This is supposed to be a homeland, a safe place.

MAXINE

The guns make it safe.

RACIE

I don't feel safe.

MAXINE

I feel much better knowing there are people walking around who could defend us.

RACIE

But they could just go off.

ABRAHAM

But you agree we have the right to protect ourselves, yes?

RACIE

Protect ourselves from what?

MAXINE

Racie, don't be like this.

ABRAHAM

Leave her alone Maxine. She doesn't understand.

RACIE

I was told this was a special place.

ABRAHAM

The promised land! When we landed in the plane after the sun came up over Israel, when they played Hatikva, I felt as if I could cry for happiness.

MAXINE

Only because you couldn't sleep all night.

ABRAHAM

I kissed the earth.

RACIE

Gross.

ABRAHAM

The first time I came here, in '46, it was still Palestine. Now it is my home.

RACIE

You really believe that Grandpa?

ABRAHAM

I may have spent most of my life in America, but this is my land. I fought for it. I won it fair and square.

RACIE

Seems like we're still fighting for it.

MAXINE

And we have every right to keep fighting.

RACIE

So what does it promise?

ABRAHAM

The freedom to be who you are. Without explanation. No apologies. To be proud.

RACIE

So I can walk outside and scream at the top of my lungs, "hello Israel! I'm a LESBIAN!"

MAXINE

Rachel!

ABRAHAM

Oy guvult!

ABRAHAM

You're a Jew. Whatever else you are /comes second,

MAXINE

you don't even know yet

RACIE

I know who I am

ABRAHAM

You can be proud of being a Jew.

RACIE

So Judaism is a biological imperative and sexual orientation is only a choice?

MAXINE

Rachel, that's enough.

RACIE

Then why do we need to hang flags everywhere?

MAXINE

You can't understand the impulse to want to announce yourself?

RACIE

That's different. People despise lesbians. There are hate crimes!

(realizing the similarities)

Oh.

MAXINE

Oh? That's all you have to say for yourself?

ABRAHAM

She's learning.

MAXINE

You could apologize to your grandfather.

ABRAHAM

For what? This is a family discussion.

MAXINE

Fine.

(MAXINE exits)

ABRAHAM

When you interviewed for that job last summer as a camp counselor, did you tell them, "hello, I'm a lesbian?"

RACIE

No, but /that's not the—

ABRAHAM

A simple yes or no will please the court.

RACIE

I didn't know I was on trial.

ABRAHAM

It's a nice trial -- you get to be the jury.

RACIE

I'll try not to hang myself.

ABRAHAM

Good. Second question: is your what-did-you-call-it? "sexual orientation" written on your face or your birth certificate?

RACIE

No.

ABRAHAM

Imagine it stamped on your face or tattooed on your arm, the way a schvARTzeh's skin/ is seen, or

RACIE

Grandpa, we don't say that!

ABRAHAM

the way a Jewish man is supposed to have a big nose. Imagine.

RACIE

But it's not.

ABRAHAM

Or it's part of your name, like Lipschitz, a Jewish name if there ever was one.

RACIE (that is her last name)

Okay, I'm imagining.

ABRAHAM

Would you want to live where you're mistrusted, followed through department stores, detained on corners for small infractions, imagined infractions, or worse, be an object they hate and want to destroy?

RACIE

Okay, I'd rather live in a place that accepts me.

ABRAHAM

(triumphant, singing and dancing)

Oh-oh say shalom bimromah, come on Racie!

ABRAHAM and RACIE (continuing together)

hoo ya-ah say shalom aleinu, vi'al kol Yis'ra'el, / v'imru,
v'imru -- amein

MAXINE (entering)

Is she bothering you?

RACIE

Grandpa's showing me how to dance like a lesbian!

ABRAHAM

She is the apple of my eye.

MAXINE

Racie, /try not to --

ABRAHAM

Don't stick your nose in Maxine. We were perfectly fine without you!

MAXINE

I was alone here all afternoon. You don't seem to realize how exposed we are, to people, all kinds of people, maybe trying to infiltrate. They'll do, I don't know, anything to get in here.

ABRAHAM

What?

MAXINE

People have records.

ABRAHAM

What are you talking about?

MAXINE

They know you fought in the war and they're looking for you.

ABRAHAM

Wait a minute.

MAXINE

And maybe it's not so safe,

ABRAHAM

Who is looking for me?

MAXINE

People.

ABRAHAM
What people?

MAXINE
Arabs.

ABRAHAM
How many people?

MAXINE
They came here today, said they knew you, asked to speak to you

ABRAHAM
I want to hear a full account of what went on today.

MAXINE
They made claims.

ABRAHAM
What claims?

MAXINE
Probably some scam for unsuspecting newcomers. I don't know what they want or how they got your name, but I won't be here to guard this place every day.

ABRAHAM
Why didn't you say something?

MAXINE
I am saying something.

ABRAHAM
Okay, slow down.

MAXINE
I'm saying something.

ABRAHAM
Who was here?

MAXINE
A woman.

ABRAHAM

You said people.

MAXINE

Okay, a woman. An Arab woman.

ABRAHAM

Uch, that sounds threatening.

MAXINE

If you're going to make fun of me --

ABRAHAM

I'm sorry. Tell me, beginning to end.

MAXINE

Racie, will you excuse us a minute?

RACIE

Why?

ABRAHAM

What? You have something to hide?

MAXINE

Not me, you.

ABRAHAM

I don't know what you're talking about.

MAXINE

But maybe you do. I haven't said anything yet.

ABRAHAM (to RACIE)

Racie, sit, listen, secrets I don't got.

MAXINE

Fine. This woman, an Arab woman, she gave me her name, Huda Sa'id,

ABRAHAM

Huda?

MAXINE

but it could be false.

ABRAHAM

Huda? You're sure it was Huda?

MAXINE
I only let her in/ because...

ABRAHAM
Maxine, what was her name?

MAXINE
I don't remember.

ABRAHAM
How old a woman?

MAXINE
I don't know. My age, only older.

ABRAHAM
Ten years older. Twenty years, thirty?

MAXINE
Daddy, she was around my age. A little older. Why? You know her?

ABRAHAM
It's possible.

MAXINE
How? How would you know her?

ABRAHAM
What did she want Maxine?

MAXINE
To speak with you. She had a letter/, probably forged,

ABRAHAM
She had a letter? Didn't I ask about the mail?

MAXINE
This was a letter you'd written to someone else.

ABRAHAM
This was the answer to my letter to Haajar.

MAXINE
Yes, that was the name... You know her?

ABRAHAM

Haajar Barakat?

MAXINE

Daddy?

ABRAHAM

What? It's a crime to know a person? A Palestinian person?

MAXINE

It wasn't Haajar. It was her daughter. Huda. She said her mother was dead.

ABRAHAM (struck with the news)

Haajar

MAXINE

She threatened me. She said you were her father.

ABRAHAM

Well maybe I am.

RACIE

Whoa! This is great!

MAXINE

Daddy, I am not kidding around.

ABRAHAM

Let me get this straight. Did she ask for money?

MAXINE

No.

ABRAHAM

Did she hold a knife to your throat?

MAXINE

Why are you interrogating me?

ABRAHAM

So what exactly constituted this threat?

MAXINE

Don't you see? If you're her father, then she has some kind of claim. To the land.

ABRAHAM

What land? I own shares in a co-op.

MAXINE

It's clearly something these people /do with people like us.

RACIE

What do you mean "these people"?

MAXINE

If you're going to sit here, don't interrupt.

ABRAHAM

Anything is possible, Maxine.

MAXINE

It's a scam.

ABRAHAM

She could be my daughter.

MAXINE

She's an Arab!

ABRAHAM

Does she look like me?

MAXINE

She's much too old, probably fifty.

ABRAHAM

I am Abraham, Father of Nations. Nations, Maxine. I should have children coming out of my eyeballs by now.

RACIE

Pretty cool if you ask me.

MAXINE

Ridiculous.

RACIE

I could start the Lesbian Nation!

ABRAHAM

You don't know, Maxine. Anything is possible.

MAXINE

Possible? What is possible? Two weeks ago, I was married twenty years, and now I'm divorced. My baby girl >

RACIE

Mom. . .

MAXINE

is about to leave for college. My father moved to the other side of the world! And is it possible, is it possible I'll never again hear my mother's voice? Israel feels so strange to me. What kind of a Jew does that make me?

ABRAHAM

All good questions Maxine, but it is very possible that I have children you never heard of, children I've prayed for, children I've waited all these years to discover!

MAXINE

Thank you, Father of Nations. Very comforting.

(Phone rings.)

RACIE

Mom, the phone.

((A knock on the door. The phone rings.))

MAXINE

There's a woman chasing after me. A bird beats in her chest.

(The doorbell. The phone rings.)

RACIE

Mom, the door.

MAXINE (on phone)

Hello? Racie, can you get the door?

RACIE

But you want me to spend time with Grandpa.

MAXINE

I'll get the door. Just a minute!

ABRAHAM

Sarah, I love you.

MAXINE

Racie, can't you help, it's shiva!

RACIE

I'm spending time with Grandpa.

ABRAHAM

Rachel, are you ready for our last night of shiva?

RACIE

I love you Grandpa, even if you have other children.

ABRAHAM

I love you too, Rachel. Even if you are a lesbian.

7.

(The next day, HUDA and AMEL in the Tel Aviv condo with MAXINE.)

HUDA

We've come to see Abraham.

MAXINE

I told you yesterday, he isn't here.

HUDA

Then we'll wait for him to return.

MAXINE

He isn't coming back.

HUDA

We'll wait anyway.

MAXINE

I'll call the police.

HUDA

No, you won't.

MAXINE

I won't? You know I won't?

HUDA

Yesterday when you spoke to your father, he told you the truth.

MAXINE

Yesterday? We sat shiva yesterday. I didn't ask.

HUDA

Then call the police. Do you know what the police will do to us?

MAXINE

What do you want?

HUDA

I want to meet Abraham.

MAXINE

You have the wrong man.

HUDA

I want to know the man who loved my mother.

MAXINE

I don't know him.

HUDA

I want to meet my father.

MAXINE

I don't know who that is.

HUDA

I want to introduce him to my daughter.

MAXINE

You've made a mistake.

HUDA

Already this has changed my life. I'm standing here in Tel Aviv with my daughter.

MAXINE

Obviously it's not impossible for you to get here.

HUDA

You don't know what it's like to live under Closure.

MAXINE

You came yesterday. You're not a prisoner.

HUDA

There is a curfew, soldiers, checkpoints, and it is a very, very long walk.

MAXINE

You walked here?

HUDA

We took a bus, but there were places we had to stop and walk.

AMEL

It wasn't so terrible.

HUDA

We risked our lives to come here.

AMEL

Knowing our purpose, I felt as if we floated.

HUDA

This is my daughter, Amel.

MAXINE

I'm sorry Amel, but your mother is deluded.

AMEL

I could walk here if I had to.

MAXINE

My father's not the man she's looking for.

AMEL

I work in a hospital, and most of our patients are children.

MAXINE

I wish you would go.

AMEL

Most of them are wounded in/ the Intifada, and --

MAXINE

This has nothing to do with me.

HUDA

If you truly doubted us, you wouldn't mind if we stayed. You would feel certain your father would send us away in the end.

MAXINE

I don't have to explain myself.

HUDA

Will you please fill our canteens with water?

AMEL

Yama?

HUDA

Then we'll go.

AMEL
You're giving up?

HUDA
We've done our best.

MAXINE
Thank you. I will.

(MAXINE exits)

AMEL
But — ? Yama, you have a right to meet him.

HUDA
Do you think I will beg her?

AMEL
You have the letter. Show her the letter.

HUDA
It's private.

AMEL
You never stand up for yourself.

HUDA
I do what I think is best.

AMEL
Yama.

MAXINE (entering)
Here they are full of Israeli water.

HUDA
Thank you.

8.

(AMEL and HUDA move to a path outside ABRAHAM's condo)

AMEL

Yama, don't walk away. We can't go until we meet Abraham.

(HUDA sits and AMEL stands drinking from the canteen.)

(ABRAHAM enters from a high path and sees only AMEL in Haajar's hijab)

ABRAHAM

Haajar. The first time I laid eyes on you, before I even knew your name, I loved you. Daughter of my friend, Abu Ahmed, who invited me in for coffee. You served us, wearing that embroidered scarf. And afterwards, in the garden, you drank from my canteen. You drank and said the water was sweet from my well.

(RACIE sneaks up behind ABRAHAM and covers his eyes with her hands as AMEL sits with HUDA out of ABRAHAM's sight.)

RACIE

Grandpa, guess who?

ABRAHAM

Rachel, take your hands off! Wait, where did she go?

RACIE

Who? Where?

ABRAHAM

Follow me - we'll find her!

RACIE

Is this a game? Who are we looking for?

ABRAHAM

Sssh.

Hi!

RACE

Hello.

HUDA

ABRAHAM

Oh, I didn't mean to disturb you. I thought you were -- someone else... I thought...

HUDA

I am here with my daughter.

ABRAHAM

Oh, --

AMEL

We've been waiting for a man who lives in this building. Abraham Abramowitz. Perhaps you know him?

ABRAHAM

Yes, I know him.

RACIE

But that's /-

ABRAHAM

You have something to discuss with him?

RACIE

But Grandpa...

HUDA

It's a personal matter. We will wait until he returns.

ABRAHAM

You look as if you have waited a long time already.

AMEL

We don't mind.

HUDA

You're an American.

ABRAHAM

I am. Where are you from?

HUDA

Palestine. I was born in 49, in a refugee camp. But my family is from Jerusalem, the Old City.

ABRAHAM

It isn't easy, is it? And who made your beautiful head scarf?

AMEL

It was my grandmother's.

ABRAHAM

Don't be shy. I'm a nice man, for an American.

AMEL

I was thinking of my Tayta. We buried her a few days ago.

ABRAHAM

A few days? Haajar. Haajar Barakat. May her memory be for a blessing. It is good you wear her scarf. You keep her alive this way.

HUDA

Abraham.

ABRAHAM

She used to call me Ibrahim.

HUDA

Ibrahim.

ABRAHAM

It's a terrible thing to lose a mother, but now you have a father. You are born again in Tel Aviv. Let me look at you. Strong. Determined. With your mother's eyes. What's your name?

HUDA

Huda. Huda Sa'id.

ABRAHAM

Huda. Don't cry. There's nothing to cry about now.

HUDA

Only happiness. Here's your letter, and I think this belonged to you as well.

ABRAHAM

My silver star?

HUDA

You can take it as proof.

ABRAHAM

I don't need proof. I recognized you right away. And, and --

HUDA

My daughter, Amel.

ABRAHAM

Amel. In Haajar's scarf. I always knew this day would come. Amel. Huda! Amel! Welcome to my home. We must celebrate. Please come in. What's wrong? Ah, Rachel, this is my granddaughter everyone calls Racie. Racie, Amel. Cousins! Racie, Huda, your aunt! Huda, Racie, your niece! A celebration! A feast! My G-d has kept his promise! What is it?

HUDA

We also met your daughter.

RACIE

You'd better go inside and talk to Mom.

HUDA

I didn't mean to upset her, but ...

9.

(ABRAHAM enters the co-op)

ABRAHAM

Maxine? Maxine!

MAXINE

Absolutely not!

ABRAHAM

I haven't even said anything yet.

MAXINE

You want me to talk with those, those --

ABRAHAM

You're being ridiculous.

MAXINE

I'm the only one thinking of the family.

ABRAHAM

They are family.

MAXINE

They're Arabs.

ABRAHAM

You think everyone who's an Arab is an enemy?

MAXINE

You want to take chances with your life, go ahead. But not with mine, not with my daughter.

ABRAHAM

You have no faith in people.

MAXINE

You don't even know them.

ABRAHAM

I know my own flesh and blood.

MAXINE

Mom's dead ten minutes, and you want a whole new family?

ABRAHAM

This happened long before I married your mother.

MAXINE

Whenever it happened, you can't expect me to be happy about it.

ABRAHAM

You can serve them a meal. They came all this way.

MAXINE

There's nothing to serve.

ABRAHAM

There's plenty of food in there. Now go make a nice table.

MAXINE

I am not feeding them.

ABRAHAM

There's plenty of food in the kitchen. Go heat something up!

(to HUDA and AMEL)

Huda, Amel, come in, come in. A feast is in the making. Would you like something to drink? Coca-cola?

HUDA

Thank you.

ABRAHAM

Sit. Be comfortable. Relax.

HUDA

Please, we don't want to make trouble.

ABRAHAM

No trouble at all. Racie, drinks.

AMEL

I can help.

RACIE

It's okay, I'll be right back.

ABRAHAM

I want to hear all about you and your mother. I worried, how she survived the war. But she must have, to look at the two of you, and I wanted to help her, the whole family, you must know that. I warned them, and I had to. . . I never realized that we... well, please, tell me.

HUDA

I don't know where to begin.

RACIE

There's seltzer, lemonade, Coke and Orangina.

HUDA

Thank you.

AMEL

Thanks.

ABRAHAM

Racie, have a seat.

HUDA

Amel, why don't you start? You know it as well as I do.

ABRAHAM

It's good to be able to tell these things.

AMEL

My Tayta, my grandmother, she always thought she would be able to return. She said she would never have left if she had known she would not be able to return. She left everything behind. The house all furnished. The fields full of fruit.

ABRAHAM

Yes, I remember.

HUDA

You remember?

AMEL

You were there?

ABRAHAM

Yes, your home in Jerusalem, your fields just north of Herod's Gate. Your father, I mean, Haajar's father and I used to walk them. Almond trees. Olive trees. Roses.

AMEL

She was married the day before the British left.

ABRAHAM

May 14th. I was mobilized the week before. But I warned them. I tried to get them to leave before the fighting started, but every time I stopped by she would cry and run away. I thought it was the war, but she must have known she was pregnant by then. When were you born?

HUDA

Seven months later, in '49, but she always said I came early.

ABRAHAM

I wish she had told me.

AMEL

The morning after the wedding, they walked to Gaza where JEDDi, my grandfather, her husband, put her on a boat that cost three months of his salary.

HUDA

Nine days in a small boat with only heaven and sea.

AMEL

She had nothing to eat, and she was sick.

HUDA

Sick with me, of course.

AMEL

She tried to get to the West Bank where Jeddi had a cousin. But she ended up in a refugee camp in Beirut.

HUDA

Where I was born.

AMEL

She found someone to take her to Damascus,

HUDA

and after Damascus, to Amman, and...

AMEL

and after Amman she finally arrived in Nablus.

HUDA

When I was six years old.

AMEL

His cousin's house was crowded, so they lived in the camp.

HUDA

Maybe his cousins would have smiled on us if I had been a boy.

AMEL

Tayta was angry when she saw relief workers handing out food. She asked them, "why give us food? why not let us return to our homes

AMEL and HUDA

where we can cook for ourselves?"

HUDA

She always said there was more than enough food sitting at home,

AMEL

as if nothing spoiled from the day she left.

HUDA

The persimmon ripe in a crystal bowl on the table.

ABRAHAM

I remember that.

AMEL

As if she could go there and eat.

HUDA

Tell us what it was like.

ABRAHAM

Your grandfather and I used to sit in the garden. He would smoke cigars. I would peel fruit with my knife. But what has it been like for you?

HUDA

Every day is worse than the day before.

AMEL

More houses destroyed.

More refugees created. HUDA
 More fruit trees cut down. AMEL
 To build settlements. HUDA
 To swallow more land. AMEL
 But peace is for everyone. HUDA
 We need to recognize each other. AMEL
 She was always hoping we would be able to return. HUDA
 We are still hoping for that today. AMEL
 Well, here it is! Right, Dad? As soon as Racie and I clear out, you can have full run of the place. MAXINE (having been listening)
 That is not what we mean. HUDA
 You are certainly welcome. Maxine, this is Huda and her daughter, Amel. Huda, Amel -- Maxine. ABRAHAM
 Have something to eat. MAXINE (with platter)
 It's very nice to meet you. HUDA Thank you for your hospitality. AMEL
 We didn't come here to take over your home. HUDA

AMEL

We only came to meet you, to introduce ourselves.

HUDA

And only because we got your letter. We thought we might find a sense of kinship.

MAXINE

Kinship?

AMEL

This is very good hummus.

HUDA

Yes, the way I like to make it, with the olives mixed right in.

MAXINE

It's from the deli.

ABRAHAM

Your story reminds me of my own grandmother's journey out of Russia. Although she didn't take a rowboat. I guess you see me as a Cossack.

HUDA

It's not your fault you were born to one side and we the other. Right, Amel? We had a long talk about it on our way to see you.

ABRAHAM

But I fought with the Israelis.

HUDA

But Ibrahim in the Koran only does what Allah asks him to do.

ABRAHAM

You were forced to leave. Like Abraham in the Torah, I sent Haajar and Ishmael into the desert.

HUDA

Allah gives Haajar a well. And Ibrahim acts blindly without knowing what will happen based on his belief in Allah.

MAXINE

But you are not satisfied with that.

HUDA

We didn't come here for satisfaction.

MAXINE

Because his name is Abraham and your mother's name was Haajar --

RACIE

And Grandma's name was Sara, don't forget that.

HUDA

I am not trying to say that we are those people.

ABRAHAM

But we are.

MAXINE

My father plays games. Whatever our names, we are not fundamentalists. We do not interpret anything literally.

ABRAHAM

It isn't fundamental. It's the way things are.

MAXINE

So now I'm Isaac? You want to cut my throat on an altar? I see -- that's the problem isn't it -- I'm not Isaac!

ABRAHAM

Maxine, enough!

RACIE

So you don't want to live here with us?

MAXINE

Of course not. They want to live here without us.

HUDA

No, we live in Nablus.

ABRAHAM

I am asking you to be kind.

MAXINE

Then you be kind to me.

ABRAHAM

Maxine.

MAXINE

How am I supposed to understand this?

ABRAHAM

You are loved. By me, by your mother.

MAXINE

I'm supposed to leave in a week and go thousands of miles away.

ABRAHAM

We raised you to be kind, we expect it, especially now.

MAXINE

Suddenly you're embracing a family from an entirely different culture?

ABRAHAM

What could be better? A new daughter! A sister and a niece for you, family for Rachel, people we can learn from, and share with. Huda, tell me more.

HUDA

We have a saying: sometimes it is better to only speak of camels.

MAXINE (trying)

So you have camels?

HUDA

That is not what I meant.

AMEL

I don't mean any disrespect, but almost everything in our lives has something to do with politics.

MAXINE

You see. . .

ABRAHAM

But you're an attractive young woman. Don't you ever go dancing?

AMEL

Dancing is "an expression of identity". So the Israelis shut down our cultural center. They said it was a front for political activity.

MAXINE

Was it a front?

AMEL

If dancing is political.

HUDA

The Israelis think that if we stop dancing, we will forget who we are.

AMEL

Then they can force us to give up our claims.

MAXINE

Why don't you tell us why you think my father is your father?

ABRAHAM

It's a feeling, Maxine. Don't you have cooking to do?

RACIE

She never cooks, just heats things up.

HUDA

This isn't the easiest thing to imagine. If my mother was still alive, it would bring her great shame.

ABRAHAM

There was nothing shameful in it at the time.

HUDA

I don't mean to say she was ashamed of you.

ABRAHAM

I was friendly with your grandfather.

HUDA

Our culture doesn't accept this sort of thing so easily.

ABRAHAM

If I had known she was pregnant, I would have stayed.

HUDA

I am sure this is why she never mentioned it to me. She was an honorable woman.

MAXINE

But you believe your honorable mother conceived a child with my father out of wedlock, a soldier in the Haganah who drove your family from their home?

ABRAHAM

Maxine, that's enough!

MAXINE

That's what it sounds like to me.

ABRAHAM

We were in love!

MAXINE

Mrs. Sa'id, I don't mean to offend you, but I thought in your culture a family would stone a woman to death for sex out of marriage.

HUDA

You are being offensive. Your. . . everything you say to me is offensive.

MAXINE

It's what I've been told.

HUDA

You are misinformed.

ABRAHAM

I was a friend of the family.

HUDA

We are not barbarians.

MAXINE

It must be very hard to live without a father, but that doesn't mean you can take mine.

ABRAHAM

Maxine, we farmed the land. We were neighbors. We made friends.

MAXINE

Friends? In the army?

ABRAHAM

Yes, even in the army. We thought our love would bring our people together. Maybe it still can.

HUDA

Sometimes my mother told me of a man from Nablus, but I could tell she didn't want to talk about him. Other times she would smile and stare into my face and tell me about my father. A man she loved. She never said he wasn't the man she married.

ABRAHAM

Thank you.

MAXINE

Flattery might get you far with him, but it doesn't fly with me.

ABRAHAM

Is this how it is with two? Must there always be fighting?

HUDA

I don't want to fight.

RACIE

You could get a paternity test.

ABRAHAM

If she says she's my daughter, she's my daughter.

MAXINE

You're a fool.

HUDA

We should go.

AMEL

But Yama, you said -

ABRAHAM

Maxine, apologize. Huda and Amel don't deserve to be insulted.

RACIE

Mom, just apologize.

MAXINE

All right, I'm sorry! It's a lot to take in all of a sudden.

ABRAHAM

Please don't go.

HUDA

Thank you, but/ we don't want to impose

ABRAHAM

I only want to make things better for you. You must have suffered terribly. We should be more considerate.

MAXINE

He's right. I'm sorry.

ABRAHAM

And Maxine is not herself these days.

RACIE (to AMEL)

She's getting divorced.

MAXINE (exits)

I'll get the food.

ABRAHAM

And you, Huda. What about you? Your life?

HUDA

I married. I had six children.

ABRAHAM

Six children! Pinch me!

HUDA

Five boys and Amel.

ABRAHAM

Five boys! Did you hear that Racie, you have five more cousins.

(toward kitchen/dining room)

Did you hear that Max?

RACIE

I look forward to meeting them.

ABRAHAM

Five sons! Maxine?

MAXINE

Here I am. Our feast is ready. Please join us in the dining room.

HUDA

We appreciate you going to all this trouble for us.

ABRAHAM

Well then, shall we?

HUDA

Only if you'll come to Nablus so that we can return your hospitality.

ABRAHAM

Of course!

MAXINE

Are you crazy?

ABRAHAM

Tomorrow night, we'll go to Nablus!

MAXINE

What do you want me to say?

ABRAHAM

Mazel Tov! I have five grandsons!

(optional intermission)

10.

(NABLUS, outside, the next day.)

AMEL

Welcome to Nablus!

ABRAHAM

HauFEETdi!

(my granddaughter)

AMEL

JEDDi!

(my grandfather)

MAXINE

What are you saying?

AMEL

I hope it wasn't a difficult trip.

ABRAHAM

It was fine.

AMEL

Good.

MAXINE

What did you say to her?

ABRAHAM

I called her granddaughter, and she called me Grandpa, what?

MAXINE

It wasn't really fine.

RACIE

There was a checkpoint.

ABRAHAM

Nothing to worry about.

MAXINE

The truth is Amel, it was hell. I don't know how you manage.

AMEL

I don't manage.

MAXINE

I'm still recovering.

AMEL

Yesterday was the first time I ever left here.

RACIE

What?

MAXINE

Oh everything's all right with him. When we were shot at everything was all right.

ABRAHAM

We weren't shot at.

RACIE

They fired into the air.

AMEL

There was a problem?

MAXINE

He doesn't have the slightest paternal instinct. A gun goes off, he doesn't even flinch.

ABRAHAM

That bullet didn't have anyone's name on it.

MAXINE

You don't know that.

RACIE

It was nothing, Amel. She makes a big deal out of everything.

MAXINE

You vomited /all over the ground.

RACIE

Mom, do you have to - ?

MAXINE

I almost jumped out of my skin to keep you safe. What did he do?

ABRAHAM

I got us here, didn't I?

AMEL

And the car is safe? With a kuffEEyah on the dashboard?

ABRAHAM

Exactly as you suggested.

MAXINE

Of course, he listens to you, Amel.

ABRAHAM

Lead the way, haFEETdee.

AMEL

The streets are deserted today for a self-imposed Closure.

RACIE

Self-imposed?

AMEL

Instead of being shut in by the Israelis, we choose certain days to make Closure on our own. We control our own oppression.

RACIE

But aren't you making things worse?

AMEL

We need to have control over something. It shows solidarity.

ABRAHAM

But aren't you breaking Closure by coming out to greet us?

AMEL

Some things are more important than politics.

ABRAHAM

Like family?

AMEL

Yes, family.

RACIE

It's so quiet. Like a ghost town.

AMEL

There's someone. Over there, see? Picking cactus fruit.

MAXINE

Cactus is edible?

AMEL

It's delicious! The Palestinian National fruit!

MAXINE

How can you have a national fruit if you're not a nation?

AMEL

But we are a nation.

MAXINE

I don't know about that.

RACIE

I don't understand why it's self-imposed.

AMEL

One day a month. But with the Israelis, Closure is random and can last for any amount of time.

RACIE

But what does it mean?

AMEL

That we can't go out.

ABRAHAM

See the lookouts, Maxine?

MAXINE

What? Where?

AMEL

We can't work or buy food. The shops are all closed.

ABRAHAM

Over there, a soldier on the roof. And on that one.

AMEL

House arrest for everyone. Now we are entering the camp.

RACIE

You've never been out of the West Bank in your entire life?

AMEL

The only place I ever wanted to go was Jerusalem. I dream of Jerusalem without shutters on the windows or gates on the doors. I dream the cactus there has no thorns. But I know the old mosque where my great-grandfather prayed was destroyed.

MAXINE

If it gives you any comfort, I'm sure the Temple where my great-grandfather prayed is gone too.

AMEL

We are all without a homeland.

MAXINE

What do you mean?

AMEL

You are from America and yet you are Jewish. Doesn't that make you part of a diaspora?

MAXINE

Well, yes, but...

AMEL

I am part of one too. So here we are.

11.

(HUDA welcomes EVERYONE with AMEL.)

HUDA

Hello and welcome. Arabic coffee? Coca Cola?

ABRAHAM

Hello Huda, BINti. (my daughter)

MAX

BINti? What's BINti?

HUDA

BAbba! (my father)

ABRAHAM

BINti means my daughter, and BAbba means father.

HUDA

I'm so glad you could be here with us.

ABRAHAM

Thank you. I'm glad too. I'm anxious to meet my grandsons.
(teasing)

You were terrible to me last night. To make me wait so long to hear one word. But I see photographs! Mmm! This coffee is good! Have some coffee, Maxine. It's delicious.

MAXINE (with coffee)

I am full of adrenaline. Cheers!

HUDA

I so want to make you feel welcome, I could hardly sleep all night.

MAXINE

Huda, I am happy to be here.

HUDA

You don't have to say that.

MAXINE

I wouldn't lie to you. I am. It was a difficult trip.

RACIE

They stopped us at the checkpoint.

HUDA

But you made it, and that is what is important.

ABRAHAM

Exactly.

HUDA

I hope you'll be comfortable. We made some food, some of Amel's favorites. We hope you will enjoy them.

ABRAHAM

I'm sure we will.

HUDA

Amel, will you help me in the kitchen?

(to everyone else)

Please excuse us a moment. I hope you brought your appetite!

MAXINE

Did we tell anyone we were coming here today? Does any other person in the world know where we are? No.

ABRAHAM

We were recorded at the checkpoint.

MAXINE

And the Israeli soldiers are going to come looking for us?

RACIE

Mom, calm down. Look at the food!

HUDA

This is called "upside down".

MAXINE

Exactly how I feel!

AMEL

It's made with eggplant and carrots.

HUDA

And this is Arabic beef.

AMEL

And this is called *sumac*. Please help yourselves.

MAXINE

Sumac? As in poison *sumac*?

ABRAHAM

Maxine, you have an overactive imagination.

HUDA

Is something wrong?

ABRAHAM

Not at all. It's delicious.

HUDA

It's made with onion, olive oil, spice and almonds. You can eat it with your hands. We do. And there is yogurt and tabouli.

AMEL

And this is chicken.

RACIE

This is great, Mom. Dig in!

MAXINE

I'm getting there. I'm looking at the photographs.

AMEL

And we have a special surprise for dessert.

ABRAHAM

Try to enjoy yourself, Maxine. It's delicious!

MAXINE (with photo)

Daddy?

ABRAHAM

Huda, you are a wonderful cook.

MAXINE

This, this is you, Daddy, in this photograph.

HUDA

May I see it? It is you!

ABRAHAM

You see?! I told you I was a friend of the family. I knew Haajar's father.

AMEL

Right, like the Jews knew the British, and the British said enjoy Palestine, isn't she beautiful?

HUDA

Amel(!)

ABRAHAM (to AMEL)

What do you mean?

MAXINE (to ABRAHAM)

That's all? That's all you have to say?

ABRAHAM

It's a photograph. What do you want me to say?

RACIE

Mom, come eat. It's really good. Way better than what you make.

HUDA

Amel helped too.

ABRAHAM

Amel, my hahfeede, thank you. But where are my grandsons? Aren't they joining us for the feast?

HUDA

I didn't know how to tell you.

ABRAHAM

Tell me what?

(HUDA can't answer.)

ABRAHAM

What?

(AMEL would speak, but)

HUDA

No. I'll tell him. It's usually not so difficult. It is difficult, but... with you... Oh, Babba!

ABRAHAM

It's all right, Huda. Everything's going to be all right.

HUDA

I'm sorry.

ABRAHAM

BINTi, please, tell us. Please.

HUDA

There are people who come, to document what is happening, and I tell them everything, but to sit here with you, to give this news to you... They are dead.

ABRAHAM

My grandsons? All five of them?

HUDA

All five.

ABRAHAM

I understand Haajar being dead, she lived a long life... But children - my children, my grandchildren, my grandsons. What is this world that we cannot raise our children?

MAXINE

I am so sorry, Huda. I didn't mean to be so rude.

HUDA

Maxine, I think I would like to be your sister, because it is not good to be on the wrong side of you, but our lives are different, I don't know if you will ever understand what I've been through. These are the photos of my sons. Mohammed was the oldest.

ABRAHAM

Handsome.

RACIE (turning the photo over)

They're - Mom - they're. . .

MAXINE
What?

RACIE
They're. . .

HUDA
Then Arafat,

MAXINE
You had a son named Arafat?

HUDA
Everyone has a son named Arafat.

RACIE (to MAXINE)
Bloody, they're dead, Mom. . .

MAXINE
What are you talking about? I know they're dead.

RACIE
On the other side, they're all shot up. Turn the photo over. Do you see?

MAXINE
Oh my G-d.

ABRAHAM
This one's a fighter, like me. See the resemblance?

HUDA
Then Yusif,

ABRAHAM
He was a dreamer, eh?

HUDA
He was always the one bringing home something to fix. Very bright. The dreamer was Hasan.
(pause)
And my youngest Najib.

ABRAHAM

A fine bunch of sons. I'm so sorry Huda. Please, tell me what happened.

HUDA

Mohammed went to university. A very smart boy. But the soldiers used to pick on him. "Where are you going, Mohammed?"

AMEL

All the soldiers think all the boys are named Mohammed, because many are.

RACIE

How can you stand it?

HUDA

They demanded to see his papers for no reason. They stopped him every day and questioned him, insisting he was with Hamas when he was not.

AMEL

Hamas is a fundamentalist organization.

MAXINE

You mean terrorists?

AMEL

Some people call them freedom fighters.

MAXINE

You see?

RACIE

Mom, stop.

HUDA

No one in my family ever belonged to Hamas.

MAXINE

Don't you see?

ABRAHAM

I'm trying to listen.

RACIE

We all are.

HUDA

But he would come home with bruises and crying and tell me, "if they already think I am Hamas, why not be Hamas?"

MAXINE

Why not?

ABRAHAM

Maxine, please.

HUDA

I begged him not to join.

AMEL

He was listed as Hamas long before he ever joined.

HUDA

Our neighbors were made to report on him, so he hid.

AMEL

Our house was watched. Once the sun set, no one could visit and no one could go out.

HUDA

Sometimes soldiers fired bullets into the house to see if they could make him to come out.

AMEL

But he was never here.

HUDA

One bullet hit Arafat.

AMEL

My brother the peacemaker. Our first martyr.

HUDA

Mohammed could not come to his funeral. After two years he tried to visit, hiding in a house across the street. The soldiers threw gas into the house to force everyone out. And even though he was armed, he didn't shoot.

AMEL

He did not want to endanger the people who sheltered him.

HUDA

They came out with their hands up. An informer identified him.

AMEL

As if they would only shoot him.

HUDA

The family had to stand by the wall of the house with Mohammed beside them.

AMEL

They shot them all.

HUDA

They shot them so full, their insides emptied out.

AMEL

Afterwards they took pictures and passed them around. They said, "we will do this to you if you join the *intifada*."

HUDA (to ABRAHAM)

These pictures are on the other sides.

MAXINE

Daddy, are you all right?

HUDA

With all this, my other sons grew up very angry.

AMEL

Even Najib was arrested for throwing stones at the soldiers twice before he was eleven.

MAXINE

So you blame the Israeli soldiers?

HUDA

It is not for me to blame. Racie, do you know what this is?

AMEL

Tear gas.

HUDA

Don't worry. It's empty. It was a present from the Israelis.

(picks up plastic flowers)

This is my present to the Israelis.

MAXINE

Flowers? You can't be serious.

HUDA

Why not?

MAXINE

If someone did that to my daughter, I would hate them.

HUDA

Yes?

MAXINE

You're trying to trick me, aren't you? You think I'm ridiculous.

HUDA

Not at all.

MAXINE

If I prove how shallow I am, he'll prefer you over me.

ABRAHAM

Maxine, it has nothing to do with that.

MAXINE

Of course not. Because you've always been so fair.

He was a judge, Huda. He spent his whole life being fair.

ABRAHAM

Trying to.

HUDA

I have no more sons to lose. I offer flowers in the hope of peace.

MAXINE

What about you, Amel? How do you feel about all of this?

AMEL

I don't want to see any blood, either from us or from them, but we must stay alive.

RACIE (with gas canister)

It says this tear gas is made in Pittsburgh. You must hate us.

AMEL

We don't want to hate anyone, but that doesn't mean I want to live like this, in a camp. When we try to improve things, the soldiers come tear it apart. They control everything, even our water supply.

MAXINE

I am sorry about your sons, but it seems to me that they may have died for specific reasons. Reasons the Israelis can defend.

HUDA

Think what you want, Maxine. I can't make you understand.

MAXINE

I understand that you need to make sense of their deaths. But what makes you think you deserve your own state?

ABRAHAM

They are a People. They were thrown off their land and --

HUDA

Babba, you don't need to defend us.

ABRAHAM

Of course I do. I was one of the men who threw you out. I was there yesterday. In Jerusalem. I saw your house. If you had stayed, you could have stayed. Many did. But I followed my orders. I warned you. I thought I was doing the right thing. I thought -- but I didn't think of this -- this is -- monstrous!

MAXINE

Why don't they go and live in Jordan or Lebanon?

ABRAHAM

Maxine, you don't understand.

HUDA

Jordanian Arabs. Lebanese Arabs. We are Palestinians.

MAXINE

What's the difference?

HUDA

Racie, where do you live in America?

RACIE

New York.

HUDA

New York City?

RACIE

I grew up on Long Island, but I'm moving to the city for college.

HUDA

And you think of yourself as a New Yorker?

RACIE

I guess so.

HUDA

And what if people said you had to go and live in the South. That you were the same as the people in the South.

RACIE

But I'm not. At least I don't think so.

HUDA

Do you think I can tell the difference between an American from the South and an American from New York?

RACIE

I don't know. Have you met a lot of people from the South?

MAXINE

Fine, you made your point.

HUDA

They fought in a war against each other, yes?

MAXINE

I bet it's a lot more complicated than that.

HUDA

Not really. Amel, shall we clear?

RACIE

I'll help.

MAXINE

Can we go now? Are you satisfied?

ABRAHAM

I'd like to see their graves, pay my respects.

MAXINE

Sure, make them break their Closure to worship your boys.

HUDA

Janeen's too far, but we could go to the ones here.

RACIE

I can stay with Amel. I'll help her clean up.

MAXINE

But/ maybe you should -

ABRAHAM

Let her stay, Maxine. She can get to know her cousin.

HUDA

I'll get my purse.

AMEL (to RACIE)

We'll go to the roof.

MAXINE

Don't do anything crazy.

RACIE

We'll be fine.

ABRAHAM

Maxine, Huda, shall we go?

(ABRAHAM exits with
MAXINE and HUDA)

12.

RACIE

What are you doing?

AMEL

To go outside, I'm putting on my hiJAHB.

RACIE

But why do you wear it? What's it mean? Isn't it all about keeping women down?

AMEL

Down where?

RACIE

Below men.

AMEL

You're a feminist.

RACIE

And a lesbian too. Does that bother you?

AMEL

Should it?

RACIE

No. Come on, tell me why you wear it.

AMEL

Everyone wears them.

RACIE

So you're trying to fit in?

AMEL

I never thought about it like that.

RACIE

But if you didn't wear it, what would your friends think?

AMEL

I was rebelling, but they would understand. When you wear *hijab*, you are saying you're a woman. I waited all my childhood to wear it, and when it was time, it was special. We celebrated. Now, I'm used to it.

RACIE

Like you're used to the Israeli patrol.

AMEL

If I didn't wear it, I would feel undressed.

RACIE

Sounds like a conspiracy to me.

AMEL

Now you sound like your mother.

RACIE

No! Wash out my mouth!

AMEL

Racie, try to understand so we can know each other. Then we'll be truly related. Here, try one on for yourself.

RACIE

My mother says we can't be related because we have nothing in common.

AMEL

Is she a lesbian like you?

RACIE

No.

AMEL

Then what do you have in common?

RACIE

I don't know.

AMEL

In my family, we share everything: who is born, when they walk, talk, how they do in school, cooking, marriage, everything.

RACIE

You make it sound easy.

AMEL

When good things happen you celebrate, when bad things happen you cry. Isn't that what a family is for?

13.

(HUDA returns with ABRAHAM and MAXINE)

HUDA

The road is blocked. There's some kind of trouble.

MAXINE (to RACIE)

What are you wearing?

AMEL

Racie, let's go to the roof.

(AMEL and RACIE go to
the roof)

MAXINE

Was that a head scarf? Is she wearing a headscarf?

HUDA

Hijab.

ABRAHAM

They look like sisters.

MAXINE

They're on the roof? Is it safe for them up there?

HUDA

As safe as anywhere. I'll bring more coffee.

(AMEL and RACIE appear
on the roof)

RACIE

Nice roof! This is where you sleep?

AMEL

Sometimes. When it's hot or I want to be alone. There's the hospital where I work. There's the graveyard.

MAXINE

But we can't see the graves.

ABRAHAM

Why Maxine? Why are you like this?

MAXINE

What about you?

ABRAHAM

What about me? I want to tear off my own skin.

RACIE

You say you're Palestinian, but how do you know?

AMEL

Don't you think of yourself as an American?

RACIE

I don't know.

AMEL

But you're a feminist and a lesbian.

RACIE

So maybe we are what we have to fight to be.

ABRAHAM

I wanted to leave something behind, a legacy, and the truth is I destroyed it.

MAXINE

Your new father, Huda, is not that interested in daughters.

ABRAHAM

That isn't true.

MAXINE

Father of nations! I'm sick of it.

ABRAHAM

I'm sorry./ I --

MAXINE

I couldn't give you a grandson, and I tried.

ABRAHAM

I never expected you to.

MAXINE

And when Mom got sick, and I spent my time taking care of her,

ABRAHAM

You did everything you could. We all did.

MAXINE

that was for you, so you would notice me, be proud of me.
You don't even see me.

ABRAHAM

What are you saying?

MAXINE

I'm not a boy.

ABRAHAM

You think I don't care about you?

MAXINE

I can't be your legacy.

(The Muslim call to prayer is
heard.)

RACIE

What's that?

MAXINE

What's going on out there?

HUDA

The Adan.

ABRAHAM

It's their Shabbat.

AMEL

The call to prayer.

RACIE

It's beautiful. Do you have to go?

AMEL

We're not that religious.

RACIE

Like us.

MAXINE

Same as our Shabbat? We should leave.

ABRAHAM

Maxine, we don't keep Shabbat.

HUDA

We still have dessert for you. Excuse me.

MAXINE

Daddy, you want to make a whole new family with strangers?

ABRAHAM

I wanted to be larger than life. You were right. I'm a fool.

RACIE

I just want to know who I am and who you are, not because I think you're a terrorist—

AMEL

Freedom fighter.

RACIE

I don't - I -

AMEL

Look, there's the Israeli patrol.

RACIE

Do you throw stones?

AMEL

No, I --

RACIE

Don't you wonder?

AMEL

Stones don't fall up to the roof.

RACIE

So you're a Freedom Fighter?

AMEL

I do my part at the hospital. I've never thrown a stone.

RACIE

But you brought the stones up here.

AMEL

Yes, but

RACIE

You want to, don't you?

AMEL

I want to.

RACIE

My feminist cousin! Ready?
(hurling stones with AMEL)
Bastards!

AMEL

Yella! Get down. [come on/quick)

ABRAHAM

I believed in the promise – that I would be the Father of Nations – as if it was a blessing. But it's a curse. A curse for sending Haajar to the desert, for sacrificing my sons,

MAXINE

You have no sons!

ABRAHAM

I had sons, Maxine. Sacrificed for an illusion.

AMEL

Let's go inside.

ABRAHAM

I'm sorry. I only wanted to--

MAXINE

I am your legacy. Racie is your legacy.

ABRAHAM

You're right, Maxine. Ah, my daughters! Amel, Racie, Huda, Maxine. My daughters! With a cake? All lit up with candles! There is only one thing to wish for: Peace.

(ABRAHAM blows out the candles.)

MAXINE

It isn't his birthday.

HUDA

Yesterday you said I was reborn. I wanted to do something for you, to mark the day you became my father.

ABRAHAM

So we should celebrate! Huda, let's dance!

(ABRAHAM begins humming Hava Nagilah.)

AMEL

I know this dance. It is like our debke.

RACIE

Your what?

AMEL

Palestinian dancing. I'll play some music.

HUDA

Join us Maxine.

MAXINE

I thought music was illegal.

HUDA

Not music. Only dancing. Dance Maxine.

MAXINE

You're kidding, right?

AMEL

You see, Racie, this is how you know who you are!

RACIE

I'm dancing! And what does this make me?

AMEL

A Jewish Palestinian!

ABRAHAM

If she can be a Jewish Palestinian, I can be a Palestinian Jew.
Give me a kuffEEyah!

MAXINE

Daddy, that's rid- you look like - I can't even say it.

HUDA

Now you look like my father.

ABRAHAM

I am your father. The question is, can I learn to be a better
father? Can I, Maxine?

MAXINE

I don't know anything anymore.

AMEL

Dance!

RACIE

Dance, Mom!

ABRAHAM

Dance Maxine!

HUDA

Dance with us!

MAXINE

But you said it was illegal.

HUDA

Who will know?

ABRAHAM

Maxine, dance with me!

MAXINE

All right I'm dancing! I'm dancing!

ABRAHAM

We should all be dancing.

MAXINE

I love you, Daddy.

ABRAHAM

Now you Huda. Come dance with me!

ABRAHAM

Hey! Hey!

ALL

Hey! Hey! Hey! Hey!

HUDA

Oh! It wasn't a seagull. It's a dove!

MAXINE

What did you say?

HUDA

That bird in my chest. I let it go.

MAXINE

I forgot how wonderful it is to dance!

HUDA

You didn't get arrested.

MAXINE

I wouldn't know what to say if I did.

HUDA

I'm sure you always have something to say.

(THEY hear a skirmish outside: children, soldiers.)

ABRAHAM

What's going on out there?

HUDA

Amel, turn off the music.

RACIE

Amel, let's go to the roof!

MAXINE

Wait, girls. Where are they going?

HUDA

We should be quiet.

ABRAHAM

I will not be silent now. I didn't fight in two wars for this.

MAXINE

Daddy, you didn't know what would happen.

ABRAHAM

We said "never again". Never again! And now this?

HUDA

Babba, don't go outside. It isn't safe.

ABRAHAM

My children died out there. And I have been silent. I'm going.

14.

(ABRAHAM goes outside.)

ABRAHAM

People of Nablus, Soldiers of Israel, I am Abraham!

MAXINE (to HUDA)

What do we do now?

ABRAHAM

Father of Nations!

HUDA

What do you usually do when he is like this?

MAXINE

He's never like this.

HUDA

We can watch through the window like this.

MAXINE

We're just going to stay in the house?

HUDA

It's not safe out there.

ABRAHAM

There is a grave with my name on it in Hebron.

RACIE

What are the soldiers saying?

AMEL

"Go home or get hurt."

ABRAHAM

It's a mosque and a synogogue. Where we all pray together.

MAXINE

What's he doing now?

HUDA

He's speaking to the soldiers.

MAXINE

Do they speak English?

ABRAHAM

Let the children come and gather round me.

HUDA

Maybe. Some of them.

MAXINE

At the checkpoint no one understood a word I said.

ABRAHAM

My children, we should all be dancing!

(snaps his fingers and sings, dancing)

O-oh **say shalom bimromah / who yah-ah say shalom alei-einu**

RACIE

He's trying to hug the soldiers.

MAXINE

We should go to him.

v'al kol y'israel,
vimru, vimru amein
Ya'asay shalom,
ya'asay shalom,
sha-ahlom aleinu
v'al kol y'israel.

AMEL

He's a peacemaker.

ABRAHAM

Ya'asay shalom,

MAXINE

Bring him back inside

ABRAHAM

ya'asay shalom,

HUDA

It isn't safe

sha'alom aleinu

v'ialkol yisrael

RACIE

The boys are so young.

MAXINE

Then he shouldn't
be out there.

ya'asay shalom

ya'asay shalom

AMEL

Sh'**babb,**

MAXINE

This is crazy.

ABRAHAM

shalom aleinu

RACIE

Like your brothers?

What's he doing?

vi'alkol yisrael

Bim bom

AMEL
Yes, like my brothers,
they're rushing toward him
from every part of the camp.

MAXINE
It doesn't
make any sense.
I can't stand it.

ABRAHAM
Bim bidee bom
Bim bidee

RACIE
Such little boys.

We should do
something.

Bim bim bom
Bim

What should we do?

HUDA (cued from Maxine)

Bom

How should I know?

MAXINE

Bim bidee bom

RACIE
As they throw their stones,
they make the sign for peace.

ABRAHAM
Bim bidee
Bim bim bom.

AMEL
That is not for peace – that is the sign for victory!

ABRAHAM
Do we have choices?
Or are we caught
in dreams?
What blinds you?

RACIE
And what's that?

AMEL
Gas. Cover your face.

Is that tear gas?

MAXINE

HUDA
The wind will take it, see? Sometimes it blows back at them.

Do we make choices?

ABRAHAM

Enough is enough.

MAXINE

Or follow orders?

ABRAHAM

Daddy, stop it.

MAXINE

Ooh, see that kid!

Where?

Without questioning

In the green. He hit that soldier in the eye!

The soldiers will start to shoot.

I was only thinking of myself

Why is he just standing there?

Grandpa, be careful

not even for those I love

Yella, Jeddi.

I never thought of this.

He is trying to protect the children.

We should stand together!

We should go home.

He stoops to pick up the stones.

RACIE

AMEL

ABRAHAM

RACIE

AMEL

ABRAHAM

MAXINE

RACIE

ABRAHAM

AMEL

ABRAHAM

HUDA

ABRAHAM

MAXINE

RACIE

ABRAHAM

When I first came to Jerusalem, I stood at the Jaffa gate.

AMEL

If he throws a stone, they'll shoot him.

ABRAHAM

I put my hands on the stones.

MAXINE

I'm sorry Huda. We have to go.

HUDA

He stands there

ABRAHAM

I thought, this is my birthright, my homeland, my destiny.

RACIE

It's like slow motion

HUDA

and I want to believe

MAXINE (fed up with him)

He thinks he's a stone.

AMEL

his hands are full

RACIE

he has fistfuls of stones

ABRAHAM

I will return to this!

HUDA

he can make a difference

RACIE

And then he lets them fall

AMEL

Stones fell

through his fingers
like sand.
I thought
I thought
this is mine
he was going to throw them
and mine alone,
I thought
but nothing is mine.
he would change things
These stones
Where's Racie?
They're on the roof

(MAXINE goes
toward roof)
withstand weather and war

RACIE

HUDA

ABRAHAM

MAXINE AND HUDA

ABRAHAM

MAXINE AND HUDA

ABRAHAM

MAXINE AND HUDA

ABRAHAM

MAXINE AND HUDA

ABRAHAM

MAXINE

HUDA

ABRAHAM

MAXINE (off)

Rachel, come down from there.

ABRAHAM

beyond what anyone is ever asked to endure

AMEL

by then he was surrounded by all the boys in the camp

ABRAHAM

but they don't see

MAXINE (off)

We've got to go now.

ABRAHAM

the beauty and the innocence - I will protect you. I will walk into the bullets, as the father of us all.

MAXINE (returning)

He thinks he can do something significant.

ABRAHAM

We are one family!

(Gunshots)

HUDA

Ya'Allah. (Oh my G-d)
Babba!

MAXINE

Gunshots.
Daddy?!!

MAXINE

Oh my G-d.
Daddy!
NO! Daddy!

AMEL

Jeddi?
Jeddi!
Yama?

RACIE

Grandpa!
Grandpa?
Mom?

HUDA

Yella,
Babba, no
Ya'Allah!

15.

(EVERYONE gathers ABRAHAM in their arms.)

AMEL

He's bleeding,

RACIE

there's a gunshot wound to his head

MAXINE

Daddy, I didn't want this.

HUDA

It was never your fault, Babba.

MAXINE

Huda, what can we do?

HUDA

He's gone.

ABRAHAM (as from the beginning)

G-d promised to make Abraham the Father of Nations. I am Abraham.

HUDA

There is nothing left to do.

AMEL

Yama, there is everything to do.

HUDA

Will you call me sister?

MAXINE

Now, in the middle of this?

HUDA

There is no better time.

RACIE

Mom, please.

MAXINE

It isn't so simple.

HUDA

Then you leave it up to them?

MAXINE

I - they will find a way to make peace.

RACIE

Sure, put it all on us.

AMEL

We can work together.

RACIE

Mom, you can do better than that.

MAXINE

Huda, our father was a good man.

AMEL

Yama. . . please. . .

HUDA

He would have wanted more from us.

MAXINE

He always wanted more

HUDA

I am waiting for you

ABRAHAM

We all are each of us a beginning.

END OF PLAY