

War Whores // Or Ben-Ezra

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Soldier 1

Soldier 2

Boy

Voice of a young girl on the radio

The Whore (H)

Man in a suit

Reporter

The mother of the stabbed soldier

Scene 1

An empty space within it one naked tree. Stars shining from above.

Two soldiers are pointing rifles at each other, alert.

Next to soldier1 a child is bound hand and foot, his head is covered. On the back of this soldier a military bag pack from which a radio antenna is seen.

S1: (Speaks into the air in the direction of the radio, scared) Ostrich... Ostrich this is Dolphin over. (pause) Ostrich this is Dolphin over!

S2: Hand me the child.

S1: Ostrich this is Dolphin over.

S2: Why is he tied up like that?

S1: He killed my friend and tried to kill me.

S2: You were chasing him, he panicked.

S1: He wasn't panicking when he came in stabbing...

S2: Uncover his face, let him breath.

S1: He is breathing, I made sure of that.

S2: I want to talk to him.

S1: You can't.

S2: If you take that fucking cover off of his face I will ...

S1: I am not allowed to do that.

S2: You are not allowed to do that?

S1: He needs to be covered.

S2: (A long pause) You're shaking.

S1: I'm not.

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S2: You're scared.

S1: Scared?

S2: Yes.

S1: I'm a sniper.

S2: So am I.

S1: I never miss a target.

S2: Neither do I. I will feed you to the wolves.

S1: You think you're intimidating?

S2: I know I am. I can smell your fear.

S1: They're coming to get me out of here, and then you're done.

S2: maybe I'll kill you first.

S1: You just move one finger -

S2: maybe I'll shoot you in the balls. It'll hurt like hell and turn you into a cripple.

S1: I am not afraid of you.

S2: You are. You're sweating like a pig.

S1: It's hot. (Pause, to himself) Wants to shoot people in their balls...

S2: I want to shoot you in the balls.

S1: Soon enough there will be lots of soldiers here. We'll see how much of a man you are.

S2: You really think they're coming to get you, ah?

S1: We never leave a wounded soldier behind.

S2: You're not wounded yet.

S1: We don't leave soldiers behind.

S2: I've heard different stories. Friends of yours who died in our arms, begging us to stop.

We didn't. Nobody came for their rescue.

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S1: (Doesn't reply)

S2: No one is coming to help you.

S1: Wait and see.

S2: So where are they?

S1: They are coming.

S2: When?

S1: Any moment now.

S2: They are all dead, my friends were waiting for them. Like I was waiting for you. They are dead now, and you are next.

S1: They will find you.

S2: Let the kid go.

S1: He is a murderer, not a kid.

S2: He's 10.

S1: He needs to be punished.

S2: By you?

S1: By our judges.

S2: 10 years old.

S1: Yes, I get it. 10 . You are very good at sending out 10 year olds and the world thinks we murder children.

S2: You do murder children.

S1: Ok.

S2: No? You don't murder children?

S1: We don't murder children.

S2: So what do you do then?

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S1: We are not murderers.

S2: So what are you?

S1: Let's just stop talking.

S2: Because you don't know what to say?

S1: Because I don't speak to terrorists.

S2: And you are...?

S1: What about me?

S2: If we are terrorists what does that make you?

S1: I'm a soldier.

S2: And what's the difference?

S1: I don't torture or burn people alive using my own bare hands.

S2: You drop bombs on hospitals, what do you think happens to the people in there?

S1: When you take over that hospital and turn it into a missile launching pad - then it's not really a hospital any more. Is it?

S2: There are civilians in it.

S1: You should think about that next time you shoot off the top of its roof.

S2: Never did such thing.

S1: Ok.

S2: I know missiles can hit innocent people. I wouldn't want to do such a thing.

S1: What kind of a game is it?

S2: No game.

S1: Oh, so you have morals (cynical).

S2: What do you know about morals? Look at what you are doing to this kid.

S1: This is not a kid he's a terrorist and I am not doing anything wrong, I'm taking him with

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me as I was told.

S2: So they can punish him?

S1: Probably.

S2: So you do murder children.

S1: Ok, let's just stop here.

S2: Hand me the child and I'll be out of here.

S1: No chance.

S2: I don't want to hurt you.

S1: You think I'm a fool?

S2: No.

S1: Then stop it.

S2: (S2 moves towards S1. S1 moves back) I am not going to hurt you, relax.

S1: I heard you the first time, and I am very relaxed. You are the one who should be scared. I know you have no one watching your back.

S2: What do you know?

S1: That you acted alone. Someone will later claim responsibility. Someone else will take credit for your death.

S2: You're wrong.

S1: I am not.

S2: who do you think was shooting at you over there at the wall? My team.

S1: Lucky me, they were not the best shooters.

S2: They weren't trying to kill you. Only trying to get the kid back. Hand me the child, let's end this nicely.

S1: So now you are threatening me again, are you?

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S2: No, I am not, I am offering you an alternative.

S1: For what?

S2: For this.

S1: It is out of my hands.

S2: No it's not.

S1: It is. I am not the one to decide.

S2: There is no one here. Only the three of us. Tell them we managed to escape.

S1: I am not going to do that.

S2: You're enjoying this.

S1: You really think so?

S2: Yes.

S1: Then you're wrong. I am not even supposed to be here.

S2: Then go home.

S1: It doesn't work like that.

S2: Go home. Give me the kid. End of story.

S1: Let's stop talking.

S2: Why?

S1: Because I don't want to talk to you.

S2: Really?

S1: Really.

S2: Aren't you interested to know who I am?

S1: You're a terrorist.

S2: Don't you want to know why I speak your language?

S1: No.

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S2: Private lessons. Afternoons.

S1: Your parents had enough money to pay for private tutoring and still you joined a terror organization?

S2: I don't think it's a terror organization.

S1: So what is it then?

S2: An army.

S1: You terrorize and get in the way of people's lives. That's called terror.

S2: Yesterday at lunch time they tore down the house next to ours in the village.

S1: That's exactly what they will do to your house if you make a mistake.

S2: It wasn't even a fighter's house, it was his parent's.

S1: A fighter...

S2: What were the parents of the fighter who executed an operation guilty of?

S1: He's not a fighter, and it's not an operation. He's a terrorist and what he did was a terror attack.

S2: How would you know?

S1: Because this is what you do.

S2: What are his parents guilty of?

S1: Of not disciplining their son.

S2: Then, during the night, dozens of soldiers from your army came in and woke up the whole neighborhood. Made us stand in a line. For four hours. From 1 O'clock at night till 5 O'clock in the morning .

S1: Someone in your neighborhood must have not been behaving nicely.

S2: In the end they left empty handed. Didn't take anyone.

S1: So what's your point?

S2: To wake up a whole neighborhood for what?

S1: To put things in order.

S2: You go in, wake people up, use sirens, speakers, arrange us in lines, point guns. I call that terror.

S1: If you leave us alone we won't have to wake you up in the middle of the night.

S2: I can say the same thing.

S1: Did someone die? (Pause) Answer me. Did anyone die?

S2: No. Not this time. But every time you die a little on the inside.

S1: We're better off with you dying on the inside than exploding on the outside, amongst civilians. We don't kill for fun. For our gods.

S2: I'm secular.

S1: That's strange.

S2: Why strange?

S1: If you're not religious how did they convince you ?

S2: Are you religious?

S1: No.

S2: So how did they convince you?

S1: They didn't. It's mandatory and I wanted to.

S2: What did you want?

S1: I wanted to protect my family. My friends. To keep them safe from people like you.

S2: What is this?

S1: What?

S2: Why do you do this thing with your head?

S1: What thing?

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S2: This (twitches with his head)

S1: I don't know what you're talking about .

S2: Does it hurt? (Pause) what, is it like a tic? Do you also swear? I had a girl like you in school. She used to make this weird noise (Making a weird noise. Pause) He didn't mean to kill your friend.

S1: How do you know?

S2: I heard him screaming "I didn't mean to! I didn't mean to!"

S1: But he did .

S2: By accident.

S1: It doesn't matter. He needs to be punished.

S2: In your prison?

S1: Maybe.

S2: A 10 year old child in prison?

S1: Don't worry he'll get better conditions than his life in the village.

S2: You will only make him hate you more.

S1: Is this your way to justify what he did?

S2: There's no justice here.

S1: There should be.

S2: Then it can't be one sided. We also want justice.

S1: You want to kill us all and take our land.

S2: We want to take back what's ours.

S1: It's not yours anymore. You lost in a war. That's how it works.

S2: We were shepherds. You came with arms and bombs.

S1: And you resisted, and fought back, you recruited all the neighboring countries against

us and lost again. We were generous enough to give you some land and you should have taken care of it. Like we did with our land.

S2: We tried. But every summer you came back knocking on our doors with a new war.

S1: Oh, we just woke up one morning and decided to start a war?

S2: Something like that.

S1: That is a very distorted way of looking at the facts.

S2: These are the facts.

S1: It was always in response to something awful you did.

S2: It's like someone slaps you and you stab him in response.

S1: That's not precise. It's like someone giving you a billion slaps day and night and you ignore them, and then they move on to punching and you continue to ignore, even though it hurts getting punched every day, and then he stabs you, and then – you stab back.

S2: You killed my grandmother.

S1: Me?

S2: Your country. She was suffocated under the ruins of her own house.

S1: I'm sorry about that. Didn't she get the warnings? We send warnings.

S2: There is not enough time for old people to evacuate. Have you ever killed anyone?

S1: What is this now?

S2: Answer the question.

S1: I don't have to.

S2: You probably have.

A girl on the radio: Dolphin this is Ostrich over.

S1: (He wants to reply but also worried).

A girl on the radio: Dolphin this is Ostrich over.

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S1: I tried to reach you.

Girl: We could not get a signal. Most of the channels are blocked. We don't have much time before we will be cut off again. I understand you're in a very uncomfortable situation. We are all very proud of you here in the fish tank. Over.

S1: What are the guidelines?

Girl: Don't move and do not lose Sweetie. A rescue team is being set. It might take a while, over.

S1: A while?

Girl: Yes. You are in zone C... over.

S1: Zone C?! How did we get in?

Girl: You need to say over, otherwise I'm not sure if you are done talking, over.

S1: How did we get in zone C over?

Girl: We are not sure, over.

S1: You are not sure? What am I supposed to do?

Girl: We wait for a mediator. Over.

S1: You're kidding me? A mediator?

Girl: Or a green light from the Nations, over.

S1: The Nations hate us.

Girl: As I said, you must stay exactly where you are and do not lose Sweetie. Is he alive?

S1: Yes.

Girl: Good. Dolphin, we are all very proud of you here in the fish tank. Over.

S1: Where is shark? I want to speak to shark. I want to speak to shark over (But no one's there).

S2: It doesn't make sense... There should be guards and... dogs... and...

Scene 2

Same place.

Enters The Whore (H).

H: Good evening.

S1: Who's there?

H: How did you get in?

S1: Who are you?

H: What are you doing here?

S2: Are you the mediator?

H: (Chuckles) What are you doing here?

S2: I'm from zone B... He was chasing after the kid, also a B, and I chased them... then

I...

H: Ok both of you put your guns down please and leave. (They don't move) You cannot use these in here, put them down now. (They still don't move) Well?

S1: (To himself, but loud) We can't just do that...

H: Pardon?

S1: I said, I can't put our guns down and leave.

H: You can't?

S1: It was an order.

H: And who gave you this order?

S2: Shark did.

H: Shark? who's Shark?

S1: My commander.

H: Well. (Takes a moment) Here is your new order from... Medusa: Get the fuck away from

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here.

S2: How will we do that?

H: The same way you got in.

S1: I'm from zone A and I'm waiting here for a mediator or a green light from the Nations to leave this... area, as I was told. I don't know who you are and what...

H: The mediator won't come. It's been... A while since he was here.

S1: Ostrich Dolphin over.

H: You don't believe me? Hey! Look at me when I'm talking.

S1: I'm sorry I can't, I'm in the middle of something.

H: You're actually in the middle of nothing. (To S2) You, look at me.

S2: I can't either.

H: So you can both look and then go back to your business. Alright? Oh! I know, I know. I'll count to three, you both turn to have a quick look, and then, again on the count of three you turn right back. Mediator (Points herself), hello – hello, then you go. Yes? Deal?

S1: No.

H: Oh. Why not?

S1: I don't trust him.

H: Do you trust me?

S1: I don't know you.

H: I'm from the Nations ok?

S2: He doesn't trust anyone. Only that girl on the radio...

S1: I don't trust you. He wants to shoot me in the balls.

H: What girl?

S2: The one who told us we need to wait for mediator to come...

S1: She wasn't saying anything to you...

H: Oh.... Poor kids, they told you you should wait for the mediator, that's not very nice. And you believed her? Oh... No one has seen him for ages. Well, back to reality? (she does not give them time to think) Ready? I'm counting 1...2...3... (They both turn their heads at once, pointing their guns towards her) Hey hey hey (Counts quickly) 1-2-3 (They both turn back to their positions, facing one another) You've got some nerve pointing your rifles at a Nations' representative!

S1: You're not the Nations' representative.

H: And how would you know?

S1: You're not dressed like one.

H: And how would a representative be dressed?

S1: Not like that.

H: (Chuckles)

S2: So How did you get in?

H: I work here.

S1: What do you mean here?

H: Right here. Exactly where you are both standing, and I need you to leave.

S1: You don't understand what is happening here.

H: I do. And It's not good for business.

S1: What business?

H: Costumer service. (S2 Chuckles)

S1: What kind of service do you provide?

H: Service that needs providing.

S1: What kind of service? There's nothing here.

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S2: She's a prostitute, don't you get it?

H: Hey hey hey... language... Please.

S2: What would you like me to call it then?

H: Costumer service.

S1: Where did you come from?

H: Home.

S1: Ok then who sent you?

H: No one.

S1: Fine, but which side are you... I mean where did you physically come from?

H: My mother's cunt.

S2: (Giggles)

H: You're more fun than him. (Gets closer to S2) What brings you here?

S2: I was sent to bring the kid back home.

H: Is he that important? (We can see her thinking as she collects information and pennies start to drop)

S2: To the people who sent me here.

H: And who are those people?

S2: My army.

H: Why is he tied up like that?

S1: Because he is a terrorist.

H: A terrorist? That's a bit harsh. What did he do?

S1: Stabbed a soldier and killed him.

S2: By mistake, he is just a child.

S1: That mistake killed my friend.

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H: And started a war. Children are so precious aren't they? I would love to have children. Didn't quite work out. It actually almost happened once but I miscarried. I fell down the stairs. That's why my foot... I did try a second time, but I realized it was a lost cause... I love kids.

S2: He wants to kill him.

S1: I don't want to kill him. I'm just watching over him.

H: What for?

S1: He's wanted.

H: By whom?

S1: My army.

S2: He can't breathe.

S1: He can, I made sure of that.

H: If you boys promise to behave and move just a few steps away to the right, next to that tree, I promise to get you a green light from the nations to leave.

S1: I don't see any tree.

H: How do you expect to see a tree when your eyes are fixated on him all day long? Look aside for a moment, see the beauty.

S1: The second I do that he shoots me.

H: (To S2) That's not very nice.

S2: He'll do the same to me.

H: True?

S1: Don't buy his lies, a moment ago he wanted to shoot me...

H: In the balls, we got it. Do you want me to cut the boy in half and you can both share him? (But they do not laugh. S2 is scared).

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S2: Maybe you could take the boy with you? He's injured, he needs to see a doctor.

S1: This is not a boy and he is not injured-and he stays with me.

H: There is no doctor around here love.

S2: No?

H: No. Actually, there's no one around here. Well, except us three, four.

S2: (Confused) So what is this.... here I mean... what is this exactly... this zone C?

H: Well, hmmm.... How should I put it... The main thing is that ... there is no war here. It's a No War zone. It is safe. You can actually talk in here, like I believe you two did. It's a... kind of... a... people that oppose war can get in... that's why I wonder how you... and it belongs to the Nations. No war and belongs to the nations, briefly.

S2: But you just said we started a war.

H: (Smiles) You did. But... (Listens to the air) not here. Can you hear it? Can you hear the war? Of course not. You are right, there is war, a crazy-brutal-violent war, but it's not here. In zone G. Nice isn't it?

S1: I heard different stories about C. Bad things happened here. Awful things.

H: It doesn't look awful to me.

S2: (To S1) You see? We are all safe. There is no war here. There is no one here. Give me the child and each one of...

H: Sweetie, you can't just leave. I'm not sure how you got in but leaving – now that's going to be a problem. You don't decide around here. It doesn't work like that. It is still the Nations' land.

S2: You told us to move away and now you're saying that we can't get out?

H: I told you to move towards the tree. As long as you're in C you can move freely but getting in and out is a different story. You'll need someone's approval . Look, I want to help

you but you must work with me here. I'll be honest with you, I have a business meeting here in a few moments, and if you promise not to move or to make any sound throughout, I will help. If my client notices you're here that's it for me, I'm done. He'll start saying it's becoming too dangerous, and if the word spreads I'll be finished. These are shaky times and the last thing I need is, well... a change. He is also a very very dangerous man. We don't want him to feel insecure.

S1: Who is this client?

S2: How will he not notice we're here?

H: I have a piece of cloth.

S2: What?

H: I'll cover you with camouflage cloth.

S1: No fucking way.

H: The other option is that I take the client somewhere else and the deal is off. (chuckles)

Wait for the mediator. Look, I know how weird it must be for you to be here and, I personally, would never send out boys your age to do the dirty job. But you are in zone C now. Enjoy the privilege. Trust me. Trust each other. Put your guns down and relax. I will help you. Ok?

S1: How would you do that?

H: I was once like you.

S1: Like me?

H: Scared. Lost. It gets better. In the end, you get used to everything. Trust me I know everything about this place. I live here. I was born here.

S2: Where?

H: Next to that tree actually.

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S2: I don't understand. How is it even possible?

H: My dad was a very important General and my mom is a singer. He used to rule this place.

S2: Where are they now?

H: Gone. Do you want a quick game before my meeting?

S2: What kind of a game?

H: Each one of us shares something about themselves. The craziest thing you have ever done. Or ever happened to you.

S1: Seriously?

H: Why not? I go first. Ok? I once hid inside a horse.

S2: A horse?

H: A horse.

S1: How is that even possible?

H: It was a very hot day, I was tired and some people were chasing me... and I saw this horse... and hid. Inside.

S2: Was it alive?

H: No. It was already dead when I saw it. Some animals were eating its flesh so I kicked them away and hid inside the horse.

S1: It sounds disgusting.

S2: Who were you hiding from?

H: Some bad people.

S2: You said it's a place with no war. No bad people.

H: I never said no bad people. There are worse things than war love.

(They hear something. She quickly takes a piece of cloth and covers the soldiers and the

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boy. She sorts herself out, stands up and waits. While doing that:)

H: No talking, no sneezing. You can breathe, but quietly. I'll be done with him and then I take care of you two. Be good. Ok?

Scene 3

Same place.

Man in a suit enters.

H: Welcome mister ambassador.

M: Thank you.

H: What for?

M: For seeing me in the middle of the night.

H: No worries. Come here.

M: I can't sleep.

H: The bombings.

M: That too.

H: What else?

M: Just a lot on my mind. Everything is a mess.

H: Oh... come to me. (He comes closer but not enough) New suit?

M: You noticed.

H: Where did you get it from?

M: I had it specially made in the East. A bit tight at the thighs.

H: You look so nice. Come in.

M: How many tonight?

H: You are the first.

M: Really?

H: And If you'll be generous like last time you might also be the last one for tonight.

M: Is that so?

H: Do I look like a liar to you?

M: You look like a queen to me.

H: Queen of the desert. Come in.

M: (Goes towards her, he is close) What a scent...

H: What scent (She's worried, maybe he is onto something) ?

M: The scent of youth (Comes closer. She tries to seduce him).

H: Come inside.

M: In a minute (lost).

H: (She's not happy) What's wrong?

M: Nothing.

H: What is it?

M: Everything's a mess.

H: I don't understand.

M: It does not matter anymore.

H: (She gets closer, looks into his eyes, mimicking a little girl) Come on, fuck me.

M: (Turned on, he's voice becomes deeper) Who are you?

H: I'm Sharon.

M: How old are you?

H: I'm fourteen.

M: Where are we?

H: In my room. You picked up on my hints, and went after me upstairs. I'm a very naughty little girl.

M: Where are your parents?

H: They're hiding.

M: From whom?

H: From you.

M: But I won't hurt them. I'm one of the good guys.

H: We can't tell any more. Everyone is so scary.

M: You seem like a brave little girl to me (leans forward to kiss her, but he is too lost in his own mess).

H: Sure. I'm very brave. Come in. (He is not moving, she is losing her patience) What's the matter?

M: I fired my driver today. He keeps on listening to very sad songs on the radio and cries. Drives and cries. I asked him a few times, using hand gestures because we don't speak the same language, to play other songs. He either didn't understand, or just pretended not to, but he keeps on listening to those depressing songs and cries and cries. See, it is very frustrating to start your morning like that. To end your day like that. It's simply frustrating. This morning we were dropping off my daughter at the American school. On the way I noticed she knew all his songs and lyrics by heart. And she too - Sings and cries. My little princess! What are we sending her to the foreign school for? Hearing those songs so often must have had a real effect on her. Seeped in. I asked her - Why are you crying? Do you know what she said?

H: What did she say?

M: She said - Father, how could you possibly not understand? I said, I don't speak the language. Do you know what she said?

H: What did she say?

M: She said - Father, you don't have to speak the language in order to feel. And kept on crying. So now they're both crying in the car. and I lost it. I spoke to my wife and was persuaded the man had to go. He's a negative influence and as long as I can choose for

her I'll do it without thinking twice. I know what's best for her. I'm her father. There have been certain situations in the past if you know what I mean. (Pause) I am leaving this place. I'll apply for a relocation first thing tomorrow. I've had enough. It's been 10 years now in zone A. Enough. I hope they move us somewhere sunny by the sea. We've gotten used to that. Have I ever told you we live right by the sea? I get the view of it from every window, I go for short runs on the beach, enjoy my fresh fish and ice cream on the boardwalk. The cool breeze on my willy when I pee in the water at night.

H: You pee in their sea and you get paid for it.

M: (Chuckles) I hope I relocate to somewhere that's less hot.

H: Are you not in the mood today?

M: I was. Then I wasn't.

H: Sweetie, it's getting late.

M: I was reprimanded.

H: What?

M: By their foreign minister. My prime minister condemned the attacks during the past hours. He said they were not proportionate. Too many people dead. And for what? All because of this bloody stabbed soldier. And now everyone is looking for this bloody kid. They made him a hero. And the other side wants to hang him. Save the kid, hang the kid. In a nutshell. Why did he have to go and condemn the attacks? What does he care? So they summoned me to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs office an hour ago. So there he is, sitting on his leather armchair, comfy. I am sat on a little children's chair like in my son's kindergarten. Being scolded. As if I am responsible for my prime minister and what comes out of his mouth. i'm only the fucking ambassador. I didn't see it coming. We were at the opera, until then everything was fine and then this happened. Now they expect me to

comment. To do something. What am I supposed to do? What can I say? How humiliating. Tomorrow's newspapers are all going to be filled with pictures of me sitting on a nursery school chair. Things can change so rapidly.

H: My poor baby... (She is very affectionate, warm all of a sudden) those fools..

M: Ten years, ten years I managed to say nothing. Neutral. There are clear guidelines; we - do - not - choose - sides. They should have told me that he is about to say such a thing. I would have gone off traveling with my family. Would have waited until the storm passed.

Ah... As if this is the first kid who stabbed a soldier. They have elections coming soon. I tell you something - they planned it. So the people would vote out of fear. It was pretty quiet lately.

H: Everybody wants the kid.

M: They started a bloody war! Let this kid rot in his village. Who cares. (Pause) It is so peaceful in here. So quiet. Unbelievable. I wish I could stay here.

H: I can help you.

M: No, don't be ridiculous I can't really stay here...

H: No I mean I have a plan to get you out of this mess.

M: Go on.

H: Give them the child.

M: What child?

H: The stabber. Give them the child and become a hero.

M: And how will I do that?

H: I can find him for you.

M: Are you serious?

H: Do I look like a liar to you?

M: No. You look like my saving angel. (And then) How much do you want?

H: Not too much.

M: So?

H: A visa and shelter in your country.

M: You'll need to come with me to the embassy to do that.

H: You know I can't go there without a visa.

M: How long will it take you to find the kid?

H: An hour... I will grab him and wait for you here.

M: Is he alive?

H: Does it matter?

M: It does. It takes out the thrill if they don't kill him themselves.

H: Will they really kill him?

M: Who cares.

H: He is alive. Yes.

M: Good. Now you must not mention it to anyone until I'm back.

H: Who can I talk to? The trees?

M: Not even.

H: I know what I'm doing. Did you bring it?

M: Yes (takes out a mango and hands it to her).

H: (She Eats rapidly) I love mangos.

M: You're not supposed to eat the skin.

H: (She did not like this coment) Hurry up, go.

M: I'm sorry... I didn't mean to... Soon you will be eating loads of mangos. Give me some.... mmm.... so sweet...

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H: Is it cold in your country?

M: In the winter time.

H: I don't have a coat.

M: I will find you something. (Pause) Hey.

H: What?

M: Go and change.

H: Why?

M: You can't... go like this...

H: Fine. Go.

M: Thank you. You are saving my life.

(Man stands up and walks out slowly, the whore cleans herself up from the mango making sure there are no stains. She is very focused on that. Then, one of the soldiers coughs, the whore and the man hear it but the man is quicker than her and he coughs louder as if he was the one who coughed)

M: (While coughing) That is too sweet, I don't understand how you eat them like that. See you soon.

Man exits.

Scene 4

Same place.

She looks at the cloth hiding the soldiers. Takes another look to make sure Man in suit has left. Sorts herself. She is happy. Then she removes the cloth.

H: Well done boys. Now follow me.

S2: where are we going?

H: To get you some help.

S1: I'm not going anywhere.

H: Don't be stupid.

S1: Ostrich Dolphin.

S2: She is not there. Let's do what she says, let's go.

S1: I am waiting here. With the child

S2: No one is coming we already know that.

S1: Stop saying "we" as if we're on the same team or... I am not going anywhere. I'm waiting here for...

H: Listen sweetheart, no one is allowed in here without permission from the Nations. Ok? I am from Nations. Now I'm sure there's a good explanation as to why you're both here but not Ostrich nor Shark can help you with that matter. If they could, I believe you- that they would. But they can't. The rules here are different. I'm your Ostrich ok? Trust me. Let me help you, Ok? Let's go.

S1: You said everyone left, and I don't have the impression you're in charge of anything...

(The child suddenly collapses)

H: (She is worried, goes to the child, kneeling)

S2: What are you doing?

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H: (To the kid) Hey sweetie... hey, wake up. (But he does not move. To S1) What did you do give him?

S1: I gave him a sleeping pill.

S2: You did what?

S1: He was trying to run away.

S2: Are you fucking mad he is 10!

S1: I only gave him one half. I take these every night, he is fine. Just sleepy.

S2: Let me see.

S1: (Alert with the gun) He is fine, calm down.

S2: I want to see him!

S1: Don't move!

H: (Tries to check beneath the child's cover)

S1: (Alert)

H: I'm only checking his mouth.... (A moment) he's unconscious! He is completely parched!! Hey sweetie wake up! We need water! Shit! Who gives a kid a sleeping pill on a sodding boiling day like this ?

S2: Could you get him some water?

S1: He is breathing, he's fine!

S2: Please get him some water!

H: Ohh... shit shit shit! Ok, Ok! Water. Shit! (before she leaves) Listen he was right, some awful things can happen to you in here. I wasn't saying the whole truth because I didn't want to scare you. It is not as safe as it used to be. Be very careful with what you say or do, wait for me. ok?

S2: He needs water, please...

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She exits.

Scene 5

Same place.

S2: You tried to kill him.

S1: On the contrary! Would you prefer it if I shot him in the leg? He tried to escape so I had to control him somehow. It is according to the protocol.

S2: If you killed him...

S1: He is ok I told you. Don't move!

(Enters Man in a suit holding some olives in a bag, and a bottle of water. He makes an awful lot of noise when eating the olives. He stands and stares at the fighting soldiers).

M: Water? (The soldiers point their guns at him) Calm down, calm down, down (Goes towards the child). I'm a friend of the whore's (a moment) Fine... here... (Shows the bottle of water) Do you want to do it yourself? I heard you talking about the child, it is ok. He needs to drink.

S2: (Rapidly, S2 puts his gun on the ground and takes the water then goes towards the child)

S1: You can't touch him! You are not supposed to.... you should...

S2: Would you shut up already! *You can – you can't - I'm not allowed!* Shut up! The kid can die because of you! And you're the only one who's holding a gun here now, so let me help him first. And shut up (rehydrates the child until he is back to normal)

M: Wow, are you guys alright? Having a bad day? It's nice of you to be watching over the kid for the whore like this but if it takes so much energy out of...

S2: Come again?

M: I said I really like how you both....

S2: I heard what you said – I am not doing it for her.

M: Oh.... She didn't tell you... I'm sorry I didn't want to...

S2: Didn't tell us what?

M: Never mind, I will come back later...

S2: Don't move! She didn't tell us what?

M: That she is taking the boy.

S2: How do you know that?

M: I was here a while ago.

S1: In the business meeting?

S2: Are you the mediator?

M: (Chuckles) The mediator. Who told you that?

S2: What does she want the child for?

M: She wants to sell him.

S2: She would never...

M: What makes you so sure? You have known her... for...how long... 10 minutes? I have known her for many years. She is a very dangerous lady. What do you think she is doing here? Ha? where does she belong? Ha? They found her right here, on the sand dunes next to that tree, a baby. Someone probably left her there, hoping she will be rescued. The Nations' soldiers found her. They took care of her like a street cat. Fed her, played with her, washed her, put her to bed. They took good care of her. Now, because she hasn't got a clue who her parents are...

S1: She said her father was a general and her mother was a...

M: Famous singer, yes sure. Any way, because she hasn't got a clue who her parents are - she has no documents. You get it? She does not belong here nor there. Stuck. She tried several times to sneak out of here but never succeeded. Last time she even paid dearly,

and the fellas from A shot her in the leg. They thought she was a terrorist. Don't get me wrong - she is a poor little thing, but with that kind of history... she doesn't really care for anything. She always puts herself in first priority. And it is understandable, because she has no one to look after her you know... but she is also very dangerous. You must not trust her.

S2: Don't tell me - it is you we should trust.

M: Oh no. Never trust anybody. Only yourself. But you must learn to ask the right questions.

S2: The right questions?

M: Minimizing the losses. The whore for example, asked me to give her a visa and shelter in my country.

S1: In exchange for the kid.

M: You got it right. And I refused. I'm not into this... dark business. Oh no, not at all. Do you know who I am ? I am the ambassador. Did you ask yourself why am I not covered with mud and dirt like you guys? Like the whore? That's because I have two nice men who walk ahead of me, wherever I go, holding this plastic pallet making sure my shoes stay clean. They are armed. They are willing to die for me. I also have an armored car with a private driver whom I can wake up in the middle of the night if I'm craving an ice cream they only make up north. And he will go and get it for me. I can get in and out whenever I want and wherever I want, and no one says a word. Ask yourselves, with whom you are the least likely to get hurt. With me? Or with the whore? And the answer is clear. I can help you. This child is a poor thing. The media is full with pictures of him. They say you kidnapped a child. It looks bad.

S1: But he killed my friend...

M: Oh I know, I know. But now with the war and everything... The world doesn't care about your friend. About you. They told you to wait here for the mediator right? Busturdes. You are only a sad excuse for the war. Let me help you, give me the child. (He then chokes on the olives, in a genuinely severe manner till he drops dead on the ground. The soldiers look at him, shocked)

S2: What the fuck... (goes to him, kicks him gently to check if he is alive) I think he is dead...

S1: Shit...

S2: what are we doing... what are we doing now?

S1: Shit... shit...

S2: Let's get out of here. Hey? What do you want to do?

S1: I don't know what I want. What I think. I have two days left for my service and then i'm a free man. Two days. Instead of celebrating with my friends I'm here. With a dead body and a broken radio and my friend...

Scene 6

Same place.

The reporter comes in. she speaks to the audience as if talking to a camera. S2 takes his weapon back and they both stand alert and try to understand what now.

Reporter: It all began here, on this very spot. Here the skies are painted with “unskyly” colors. The sun does not always shine. The people wear the uniform of lament, smear themselves with dirt, and plead the stars to go out. In the last hours, heavy iron birds were flying, laying metal eggs, destroying lives. Deafening whistles, terminal wailings, short breaths. Hands outstretched for help but the trees remain silent. I went to ask questions and seek for answers in a stormy sea. In the eye of the Storm. Equipped with a rickety boat and a great curiosity to know. To fathom.

S1: Stop.

R: (Signals to the audience as if he is asking his cameraman to stop recording) Good evening. It is a great honor.

S1: You can't shoot here, it is a closed military zone.

S2: It is not a military zone, it's C.

R: (Back to the the audience) zone C. No man's land. A terrifying silence fills the space. A divine sound hits back from the walls. This is the story of two nations. Two people. Two dreams. Two hopes. One war. I was sent to cover...

S1: Turn it off.

R: (to s2)How long have you been here?

S1: It is not your bloody business...

R: (Ignores s1, to S2) What's your name?

S1: You can't be here, get out.

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R: Everyone can be here.

S1: You have one second to...

R: (To S2) How is your little brother feeling? Don't worry I already know... I visited your mother earlier.

S1: Your little brother?

S2: Get out.

R: (To the audience, pointing at S2) Look at him. Poor kid. A hero. Matured very quickly. Too quickly. His father was arrested a couple of days ago in the middle of the night. The pillar of the family. A river flowing with power and confidence. Torn from their arms. They were left with absolutely no choice but for this poor kid to hit the road. The road to the unknown. A man's journey, a journey to bring dad home.

S1: You sent your little brother to kill my friend.

S2: He wasn't meant to kill him, I told you, he panicked.

R: Two brothers. Two offsprings. Two strands of life, holding on to dear life. Anything - in order to survive, to carry on. To not be extinguished. To not be broken, to not give up.

S2: You kidnapped my dad. You won't let us speak to him. I don't know if he is alive.

S1: Me?

S2: Your people.

S1: And what if he is alive? You just killed an innocent soldier.

S2: It was a mistake, I told you.

S1: You know, I thought you really cared about him. An honest and moral concern for a kid.

S2: I do care about him he is my brother.

S1: So why did you let him run with a knife into our zone?

S2: It was a mistake!

R: (To the audience) It is getting complicated. It's a bumpy road, mined with obstacles. It is unpredictable. They made a mistake. They had to improvise. The original plan was...

S2: Shut up! Shut the fuck up!

S1: Go on! What was the plan?

S2: (Goes to the reporter and threatens her with his gun) Get the fuck out of here. You hear me? I'm going to count to three...

R: (To the audience) The danger skips no one, here I am, exposed. For you all. Bringing you close as possible to life. To reality.

S2: 1....2....

S1: (Goes up to S2 and pushes his gun against his head) Leave her alone. (to R) Go! now!.

R: (To the audience) I am safe. I won my life back. But what about them? Who will save them?

S1: Go.

(Reporter Exits)

S1: Drop it.

S2: (Slowly dropping his gun)

S1: Hands behind your head. (He obeys) On your knees (Obeys again). I shouldn't be here. I should be dancing and drinking with my friends, celebrating my last two days in the army. It was the fourth friend I have lost this year. Because of you. And your brother. Because of your crazy people. Because you know nothing but revenge. You don't respect life. You have more faith in death than in life. You wouldn't care if your own brother died. Look at you- look at us. You see the difference? Fucking animal.

Girl: Dolphin this is Ostrich over.

S1: Go on.

Girl: Both sides agreed, cease fire.

S1: What about the mediator over?

Girl: Forget about it we don't have time for him to come. You just need to kill "sweetie" and the rescue team will take you home. Over.

S1: Come again.

Girl: Ceasefire. Both sides agreed. You need to kill "sweetie". The rescue team is waiting for a go. Over .

S1: Both sides agree on killing the kid? (A long pause) Ostrich Dolphin.

S2: Please don't. Please don't do it. He never meant to kill your friend. I am sorry about that. It was my idea, we wanted to see our dad. That's it. It was me. Kill me. Please, he is only 10. He never shot anyone, neither have I.

S1: What was the original plan?

S2: Someone contacted me...

S1: Who?

S2: I don't know... a guy, gave us all the details.

S1: What details?

S2: About you and your friend. That if we bring you in alive we will get our dad back.

S1: So the original plan was to kidnap me?

S2: Not you, a soldier. And bring him in safe. Alive. So they could swap you, him.

Exchange, make a deal. And my father too. Please don't kill him.

S1: (Pause) I shouldn't be here.

S2: You don't have to do this.

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Girl: Dolphin Ostrich over.

S2: You really don't have to do this. They didn't care about you when they let you run like a moving target into our village. They just want to kill my brother for revenge. Nothing else.

And you are going to be a part of it.

Scene 7

Same place.

Enters the mother of the stabbed soldier.

Mo: Hello.

S1: Now what?

Mo: I'm looking for my son.

S1: Is this your mother?

S2: No.

Mo: I'm the stabbed soldier's mother.

S1: How did you get in here?

Mo: I ran.

S1: You ran?

Mo: I ran in. Nobody stopped me. I have been running for a while. Not sure how long though. Have you seen my son? (Pause) I know, he is dead. I know. I want to give him a kiss. Where could I find him? Nobody is giving me answers. They knocked on the door, gave me the news, gave me a little medal, took some pictures and left. Here (showing the medal) did you know he was a poet? Here.. (Shows a notebook) Do you want me to read one of his poems?

S1: I really don't think you should be here.

Mo: I was hoping to get hit by a missile. It did not happen. Flew right by me. Can I read it to you? It is a short one, please. It helps to remember:

"I do not speak the entirety of languages in the world.

I speak one only.

A language that everyone understands.

A language that awakens the sleepers, heals the sick, revives the dead.

Brings joy to crying children who have lost a loved toy, or bruised themselves, or perhaps just realized the truth about something.

A language that is a poem, that longs to something missed yet unfamiliar, that craves to be something different.

A language that builds.

Purifies, cleanses, sanitizes, sanctifies, revitalizes .

a language that speaks the heart, a fantastic language.

A language that is fantastic...”

He must have spilled some coffee or juice and I can not understand the last three words (Goes to S2 and shows him the notebook) Could you try and help me with...

S1: I really don't think you should be here.

Mo: Were you there? (A moment) When they killed him were you there?

S1: Yes.

Mo: What did you do?

S1: I tried to help him with the...

Mo: Did he say anything?

S1: I don't remember... I mean....

Mo: What were you guys talking about when it happened?

S1: I don't...

Mo: They asked me what I want, when they gave me the medal, I said I want to be alone.

So they left. Then at the door the tall guy said they are going to find him, the stabber, and hang him in the town square. I asked why, they said because. He must belong to a mother.

To hang a mother's child. That is wrong. Malicious. (She looks at the child) Is it him?

(Pause) is this the child who killed my son?

S2: Yes.

Mo: And you are?

S2: I'm his brother.

MO: Oh.

S2: I'm so sorry.

Mo: Is your mom still alive?

S2: Yes.

Mo: I want to take him to your mom.

S1: You can't do that.

Mo: And why is that?

S1: Because he is our prisoner.

Mo: Our? Mine too?

S1: Yes...

Mo: Then I want to set him free and take him back to his mother.

S1: But why?

Mo: Because she does not know what's coming for her. (A moment) I do. This was my second time. My oldest son died four years ago in the Eleven Day War. I only had two. As if you deliver them for the country to swallow. They let you keep them for several years, feed them, wash them, clean them, keep your eye on them, only to be taken away from you when the time comes. I failed. I thought I did a good job educating them but I failed. It is my fault. You know, I really thought I was exempt, that I've already given one for the country so I get a pass. I was wrong. (Pause. Goes to the child) Sweet little thing. Such deep sleep.

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S1: I gave him a sleeping pill...

Mo: Why?

S1: He was trying to...

Mo: Go home. Go to your mommies. Take a shower. Go to sleep.

S1: We can't get out.

Mo: How did I do it then?

S1: You are a civilian.

Mo: So are you. (Pause) How old is the child?

S2: 10.

Mo: Can you show me the way to your mother?

S2: Yes.

Mo: Is it far?

S2: I don't think so.

Mo: Can you walk?

S2: Yes.

Mo: Good. Help me with the child...

They both help her carry the child. Then, once S1 has completely dropped his gun so he could help the mother)

Scene 8

Same place.

The whore comes in holding a bottle of water, sees them, grabs one of the guns and points at them all.

H: Nobody move! (She sees the ambassador) What? Who did this to him? Is he dead?

You idiots! Why? (Runs towards him and checks his body) Son of a bitch. (Then) Did you move anything?

S2: He didn't get it for you.

H: What are you talking about?

S2: He came empty handed, no visa, nothing.

S1: A few minutes after you left he was back, he tried to take the child for himself.

H: Son of a bitch... what an idiot! What an idiot! What was I thinking? What an idiot! I thought he was going to help me! I thought i'm getting out of here!! (Pointing the gun at the mother) Are you his wife?

M: No, I am the stabbed soldier's' mother.

H: What the fuck are you doing here?

M: I'm here to take this child back to his mom.

H: You're fucking kidding me.

M: I am not.

H: Ok, ok. You can't have him, hand me the child. (The mom shields the child) Get the fuck out of my way and hand me the child!

S1: It doesn't matter anymore, they want him dead you can't do anything about it. There's nothing for you in it.

H: Who wants him dead?

S1: Both sides. They have an agreement.

H: So why haven't you killed him yet?

M: No body wants to kill here... Please, take your gun down...

H: Shut your bloody mouth! Fuck fuck fuck! I thought i'm getting out of here!! what an idiot!!
fuck! (Tries to think) Ok, ok. They want a dead child? I'll give them a dead child. Move!

M: (Protects the child) Please don't...

H: So i'll kill you first.

S2: You don't want to kill her... Hey...

H: Yes I do! I want to kill her! I want to kill her!

M: You are a lost child... Here, take the gun down....

H: I don't need your pity, I don't need it. What I needed is for you to protect me, and you failed. We needed you to protect us, to keep us safe. You should have shielded us from the horror with your bare bodies. Should have gone out into the streets. You, who have seen so much destruction, disasters, wars, falling governments, sinking ships, you who smelled the burning bodies, heard the screams, and the cries of babies, you who saw what men are capable of doing to each other, you! And what did you do with all of this? Ha? You wrote about it in your books, you cried in your national memorial ceremonies, you stayed in your homes, slept in your beds, you sat and ate in front of the tvTV nibbled on crackers and tragedies. You said "No, that was then, it can't happen again" and went back to reading shit on the trains' newspapers. You traveled to exotic destinations and gave coins to poor kids with open wounds which were covered with blood-licking flies and felt good about yourselves. You should have prevented this from happening again! You should have secured our future. Life. Without fire, killing, hunting. But no, you taught us how to hate. You sicced us on each other, you voted for violent, cruel leaders, perverts, who fuck little

girls and burn their daddies in front of their innocent eyes, who beheaded terrified people on live tv, dug pits and shot kids in their teens, kicking them and leaving them to rot in the sun. Then, you dressed us up in uniforms, you gave us weapons, ranks, medals, you were proud mothers who took pictures with their sons in military bases, you voted for more borders and against compromises. You took us step by step back to square one. So now that you've lost your bloody son and you've finally realized how stupid you are, now that you have one foot in the grave, that's when you open your eyes and get off your bloody sofa! Now you think you can save the world? Save me? Too fucking little too fucking late. Hand me the child and say "Thank you for not blowing my brains out on the ground".

M: I am sorry (She does not move)

H: Me too (H shoots the mother and kills her, S2 jumps to his weapon and kills H)

A girl on the radio: Dolphin this is Ostrich over.

The End.