

"Shalom, Tzfira, Syria"

A Militaristic Comedy

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Characters:

SHALOM

TZFIRA

TZARFATI



A note on the names and text

Shalom and Tzfira are common Israeli names.

“Shalom” means both peace and hello.

“Tzfira” means an alarm.

“Tzarfati” is a common Israeli last name. Its sound resembles the word “France” in Hebrew.

Names can be changed accordingly in translations to other languages, if parallels can be found. Such is the case with the military jargon of the play.

SCENE 1

SHALOM is sitting in a cafe, next to a round table.

SHALOM: What a perfect table.
Perfect. Effortlessly perfect.
Reminds me of me.
Tall. Successful. Owner of a small hi-tech company
that's about to become huge.
A magnificent army career, in which I was able to
guard both my country and my moral virtues.
Without even trying. Effortlessly.
But at the very peak of my life, rising above
everything else, stands Tzfira.
(sighs) Oh, Tzfira.
(sighs) Oh, Tzfira.
(sighs) Oh, Tzfira.
Tzfira who loves life so much, and especially – loves
me.
Our love has helped us to overcome any obstacle:
First dates, going on a vacation in a boutique hotel up
north, moving in together, going on a vacation in a
boutique hotel up north, arguments about when will be
the best time to get pregnant, and then going on a
vacation in a boutique hotel up north in order to fulfill
this marvelous aspiration.

I am filled with pleasure when I realize that pretty soon, a little Shalom-Tzfira will be running around here between my feet.

A cough is heard.

SHALOM: This is Tzfira.
She coughs in order to give the world some time to prepare for her.
Tzfira is a woman you want to be prepared for. Most definitely.

Enter TZFIRA, who is very pregnant. She stands next to her empty chair.

TZFIRA: Shalom, I'm leaving you.
SHALOM: Sit down, my love.
TZFIRA: Didn't you hear what I said? I said I'm leaving you.
SHALOM: I heard.
Do you want some cake?
TZFIRA: I really am leaving you.
SHALOM: Sit down, my love.
TZFIRA: No, I won't.
SHALOM: How can it be? I am so perfect! You are so perfect!
Our relationship is so perfect!
TZFIRA: That's a lie. Everything is lies. Not perfect. Has never been perfect. Will never be.

SHALOM: How can it be?

TZFIRA: It can.

SHALOM: Let's sit down, let's talk... You can't just, all of the sudden... I'll.. I'll order you some cake.

TZFIRA: I don't want to have any cake.

SHALOM: Why?

TZFIRA: There are so many reasons. But at the end, it all comes down to (points to her belly) this.

SHALOM: But... You were so happy when you found out. We were so happy.

TZFIRA: I'm still happy.

SHALOM: What happened, then?

TZFIRA: I realized I'm going to have the perfect baby boy. Or girl. Therefore he, or she, must have the perfect father.

SHALOM: The perfect father? I'm the perfect father.

TZFIRA: You?

SHALOM: Yes.

TZFIRA: How, exactly?

SHALOM: I'm perfect and I'll be the perfect father.

TZFIRA: You?

SHALOM: Yes.

TZFIRA: How, exactly?

SHALOM: I'm perfect and I'll be the perfect father.

TZFIRA: You?

SHALOM: Yes.

- TZFIRA:** How, exactly?
- SHALOM:** I'm perfect and I'll be the perfect father.
- TZFIRA:** That's all you have to say?
- SHALOM:** What more is there?
- TZFIRA:** You are very mediocre.
- SHALOM:** I am mediocre?
- TZFIRA:** Yes. You have a standard job. An average balance in your bank account. You are self centered, just like everyone else. You like sports, just like most people. You are not curious. Not interesting. Not romantic. You have an emotional intelligence of someone without any emotions nor intelligence. The most exciting thing a couple can do in your opinion is to go on a vacation in a boutique hotel up north. So how can I hurt my child and let you raise (touches her belly) him? Or her?
- SHALOM:** (quietly) We are about to become a family. Sit down, my love.
- TZFIRA:** Stop telling me to sit down!

TZFIRA storms out. SHALOM chases her. Returns.

- SHALOM:** I asked her to sit down and she didn't.
She's gone.
Before she got into the bathroom I was the happiest man in the world. And now – she's gone.

Only this table remains.

This perfect table.

Mocking me.

SCENE 2

SHALOM and TZARFATI sit in a pub. SHALOM's clothes are ragged and he is unshaven.

TZARFATI: She hasn't come back?

SHALOM: No.

TZARFATI: Has she returned any of your...

SHALOM: No.

TZARFATI: Why don't you come to the office tomorrow? We'll go out to some meetings together, have lunch with our investors? Maybe we'll even go to Paris? There's a multidisciplinary convention about digitation in Paris next week. What do you say?

SHALOM: No.

TZARFATI: It's been two weeks since you've come to work.

SHALOM: Two weeks?

TZARFATI: Everyone is starting to talk.

SHALOM: Let them talk.

TZARFATI: Someone might blurt out something to our opponents.

SHALOM: Let them blurt out.

TZARFATI: You know that there's a short path between an

innocent slip of the tongue and us being bought out by our opponents.

SHALOM: That's all you care about, Tzarfati? "Digital Combat"?

TZARFATI: You're a bit drunk, Shalom, so I'll pretend I didn't hear the question.

SHALOM: Look at me, Tzarfati. Look. I'm your best friend. I'm hurting. (takes his hand and puts it on his chest) right here. Everything is pointless. Even "Digital".

TZARFATI: You really do love her.

SHALOM: Yes.

TZARFATI: I thought you were with her in order to project stability to our investors.

SHALOM: It started out that way. But there was this one trip, not to a boutique hotel up north, to a regular hotel this time, and I looked at her while driving, and there was this something... how can you describe it?

TZARFATI: I don't know.

SHALOM: You've never experienced it?

TZARFATI: No. Thirty five years, and nada. Not even in the sixth grade, when everyone around me was falling in love with the most popular girl in school. Even towards my parents I only feel fondness. I'll probably be alone for the rest of my life. Which is fine, I've gotten used to it, but the thought that something is supposed to happen to me keeps bothering me, something marvelous,

something shocking, a stroke of lightning... And I don't get any compensation, you know. What do I have in life? A hi-tech company.

SHALOM: Half.

TZARFATI: Yes. One half of a hi-tech company.

SHALOM: Want to buy me out?

TZARFATI: No.

Why do you want to sell? We're a small hi-tech company that's about to become huge.

SHALOM: I'll give you a friendly price.

TZARFATI: Do you have any idea what it'll do to our stocks?

SHALOM: Do you want to buy me out or not?

TZARFATI: No.

You.. you won't sell to anyone else, right?

SHALOM: No. Yes. It doesn't make any difference anyway.

TZARFATI: Don't tell me you lost your faith, Shalom. Because if you did we can let all our employees go tomorrow. We can't do anything without faith in this business.

SHALOM: I didn't lose my faith, Tzarfati, I lost my Tzfira. (sighs)
Oh, Tzfira!

TZARFATI: Alright, Shalom, we have to make a move.

SHALOM: What can we do?

TZARFATI: The current state of affairs is as follows: Tzfira can't stand a single thing about you.

SHALOM: Not a single thing.

- TZARFATI:** What appealed to her when you were together?
- SHALOM:** Until she got into the bathroom – I thought that everything. But after she got out – it appears that nothing. She went in, took a piss and left me.
- TZARFATI:** What about our job?
- SHALOM:** She thinks it's ordinary.
- TZARFATI:** Ordinary... Does she know we're about to change the world? Does she know we're about to become rich in just a moment?
- SHALOM:** We won't change the world and we won't become rich in just a moment, Tzarfati.
- TZARFATI:** That's not true, Shalom.
- SHALOM:** And besides, I don't have a moment. I need to become a perfect father and get Tzfira back now.
- TZARFATI:** What about your combat skills?
- SHALOM:** I don't think she's aware of them.
- TZARFATI:** How can it be?
- SHALOM:** She never asked.
- TZARFATI:** And you never bragged?
- SHALOM:** No.
- TZARFATI:** Great! This is our solution.
- SHALOM:** This is our solution?
- TZARFATI:** Of course. That's the missing piece. The only thing about you that she doesn't know. And because she doesn't know it – she doesn't detest it. And the minute

she gets to know it – she will fall in love with you again.

SHALOM: I need to become a perfect father, Tzarfati. Not Rambo.

TZARFATI: That's the perfect father, don't you see? What does a soldier really do? Protect the borders? His country? No. He Protects his children, Shalom. His children.

SHALOM: His children...

TZARFATI: He's willing to sacrifice everything for his children... He is arming himself with sacrifice....

Your militarism is sizzling, right?

SHALOM: Sizzling. In a very humane manner, of course.

TZARFATI: Great! Join a war, then.

SHALOM: You join a war. I'm not joining any wars.

TZARFATI: You don't have to really join it. Just convince Tzfira that you did. We'll make a hero out of you. How can anyone refuse a hero? You'll get your little family back before the end of this fiscal quarter.

SHALOM: Join a war in order to win Tzfira back. It's very romantic.

Which war can I join?

TZARFATI: You just need to choose.

SHALOM: Ha, the land of blood and army! I just need to choose.

TZARFATI: Exactly. So what will it be? Lebanon?

SHALOM: Boring.

TZARFATI: Gaza?

SHALOM: Enough already. What about Egypt?

TZARFATI: Nah, we have a peace treaty.

SHALOM: Jordan?

TZARFATI: Likewise.

SHALOM: What's left?

TZARFATI: Syria.

SHALOM: Syria? We're at war with Syria?

TZARFATI: Don't you read the papers?

SHALOM: Only the sports section.

TZARFATI: We'll be at war with Syria in a day or two. Our army is already mobilizing near the Syrian border. Everyone has been feeling it in the air for a few decades now. One can claim that there's a tremendous international pressure to go to war against Syria. How did we manage to avoid it until now? I don't understand it.

SHALOM: But joining a war... against Syria... isn't it... dangerous?

TZARFATI: Shalom, let me remind you that you don't really need to join the war. We just need to make Tzfira believe that you did.

SHALOM: (sighs) Oh, Tzfira! How will we do it?

TZARFATI: You just disappear for a couple of days. I'll take care of everything. She'll come back to you before the convention in Paris.

SHALOM: But, Tzarfati, do you think it's the moral thing to do?

TZARFATI: What?

SHALOM: We're sitting here in a pub planning how I'm going to get Tzfira back while there are soldiers fighting in Lebanon, Gaza, Syria! Fighting for real! The ground beneath our feet is shaking.

TZARFATI jumps down on the ground and puts his ear on it.

TZARFATI: Nothing is shaking.

SHALOM also jumps down on the ground and puts his ear on it.

SHALOM: Nothing?

TZARFATI: (stands up) Nothing. The future of this country depends on it, Shalom.

SHALOM: (stands up) The future of this country?

TZARFATI: The future of this country. Even the future of the whole middle east. Right now, the best thing you can do for all those brave men who are fighting in Lebanon, Gaza and Syria is to get Tzfira back. Because if you don't, "Digital Combat" will collapse. And after that, this country's economy will collapse. And after that, the regional economy. Like a tower of cards.

SHALOM: You're exaggerating, Tzarfati.

TZARFATI: Yes, you're right. I'm exaggerating. We should really call the whole thing off. You'll come around, eventually. The company will also come around. Or come to its end. Whatever comes first. We'll fire all our employees. We'll fire ourselves. All the soldiers will return from the battle fields and find themselves standing in front of closed doors. They'll become unemployed, won't be able to finance psychiatric treatments, take their guns and start civil riots in the streets. (chokes) It won't be such a big disaster.

SHALOM: Don't talk like that, Tzarfati. If the future of this country depends on it...

TZARFATI: It does. Like hell it does.

SHALOM: (quickly arranges himself) So we'll do anything to let me win Tzfira back.

TZARFATI: We'll meet tomorrow, eight in the morning? Full team pressure, world cup final?

SHALOM: Yes. But no. We'll take a few days to build our tactics, this time. We need to be the winning underdogs.

TZARFATI: You're back, Shalom. You're back! You've got a new light shining in your eyes!

SHALOM: All thank to you, my best friend. Ha, joining the war against Syria in order to win Tzfira back. Another genius idea of mine.

TZARFATI: Shalom? (points to the check) You wouldn't mind,

right?

SHALOM: Where did you leave your wallet? At home?

TZARFATI: At home, yes.

SHALOM takes out his wallet and pays the check.

TZARFATI takes out a small cart with some water bottles on it.

SHALOM: OK, soldier. Waiting for your updates.

They exit.

SCENE 3

TZARFATI sits in the cafe. Enters TZFIRA.

TZARFATI: Tzfira, hi.

Hello, Tzfira.

Hey there, Tzfira.

Hola, Tzfira?

Tzfira?

Well, hello there....

TZFIRA: (interrupts him) Hi Tzarfati. You're early.

TZARFATI: Yes. I'm so nervous these last few days.

TZFIRA: Me too. The situation is very tense, all of a sudden. We hear bad news from all the fronts.

TZARFATI: Especially from the Syrian front. Horrible, just horrible.

TZFIRA: Horrible, just horrible.

TZARFATI: Horrible, just horri...

TZFIRA: (interrupts him) You need to make Shalom stop calling me all the time.

TZARFATI: It's hard on you? All the memories come back?

TZFIRA: Nothing comes back. I'm dating and he keeps interrupting me.

TZARFATI: You're dating? Already?

TZFIRA: I'm a very intense woman. And I also need to find the perfect father.

TZARFATI: Have you found him?

TZFIRA: Not yet. It's not easy with the current situation. But I have another two and a half months to go. (stands up)

TZARFATI: I won't keep you. Just have a cup of coffee. On me.

TZFIRA: On you? Didn't you leave your wallet at home?

TZARFATI: (takes out a big wallet) On me.

TZFIRA: (shocked) How is this possible?

TZARFATI: Shalom landed a big deal abroad.

TZFIRA: Shalom landed a deal? Abroad?

TZARFATI: Yes. Just before he disappeared.

TZFIRA: Shalom disappeared?

TZARFATI: Yes. Didn't he say goodbye?

TZFIRA: We've already said our goodbyes.

TZARFATI: Not that kind of goodbyes. The kind of goodbye one says when he goes to war.

- TZFIRA:** You think that Shalom joined the war against Syria?
- TZARFATI:** I know he did.
- TZFIRA:** How?
- TZARFATI:** He took some time off work.
- TZFIRA:** He never takes time off work.
- TZARFATI:** I know. He also turned off his mobile phone.
- TZFIRA:** He never turns off his mobile phone.
- TZARFATI:** I know. And he is also very unresponsive to emails.
- TZFIRA:** Very unresponsive to ema...
Why would he join the war?
- TZARFATI:** His conscious was killing him. He couldn't sit around while there were soldiers lying in the trenches of three different fronts. He wouldn't stop talking about his secret unit in the army. "My soldiers are like my children", he said. "A father must take care of his children".
- TZFIRA:** I didn't know he was such an idealist. He used to only talk about sports with me.
- TZARFATI:** He's so modest.
- TZFIRA:** I heard in the "News Channel" that there's a twenty three point eight percent chance that the confrontation with Syria will return to its low intensity level very very soon.
- TZARFATI:** True, but I heard in the "Commentary Channel" that the real numbers are somewhere between ten to fifteen

point six percent.

An alarm is heard. TZFIRA and TZARFATI stand up immediately.

TZARFATI: No reason to panic.

TZFIRA: Yes, those rockets can't penetrate anything.

You think they have a panic room around here?

TZARFATI: I'm not sure that there are even rockets in the sky every time we hear an alarm. I heard that most of the times it's just a drill that checks the citizens' alertness.

TZFIRA gets closer to TZARFATI.

TZFIRA: Well, still, I'm...

TZFIRA gets closer and closer to TZARFATI. He doesn't know what to do but enjoys it very much. They stand close to each other for a few moments.

TZFIRA: (whispering on his ear) Boom.

TZARFATI: Boom?

TZFIRA: (steps away at once) Didn't you hear the boom?

TZARFATI: Was there a boom?

TZFIRA: Probably over the sea.

They sit down.

- TZFIRA:** Do you want some water?
- TZARFATI:** I'm so worried.
- TZFIRA:** No reason to. Their long range missiles will run out in a couple of days. Heard it in the "News Channel".
- TZARFATI:** Yes, but...
- TZFIRA:** Did you hear anything different in the "Commentary Channel"?
- TZARFATI:** Shalom. What will become of Shalom?
- TZFIRA:** Nothing. He'll join the war, fight and come back home.
- TZARFATI:** I've got a feeling he won't be coming back.
- TZFIRA:** That would be perfect.
- TZARFATI:** How can you think that? How can you say that?
- TZFIRA:** That's me thinking it. (thinks for a moment) And that's me saying it. It would be perfect.
- TZARFATI:** And the baby boy? Or girl?
- TZFIRA:** Will be an orphan. Maybe that's the perfect father I'm looking for: a dead one. That's the most perfect thing for everyone involved. And I'm sure they'll let the boy, or girl, read the most moving poems in the remembrance ceremonies.
- TZARFATI:** You make me want to get married, have children and get killed myself.
- TZFIRA:** Of course. You're an honest man.
- TZARFATI:** Of course.

TZFIRA laughs.

TZARFATI: You have such a beautiful laughter.

TZFIRA: I know. And I'm feeling free all of a sudden.

TZFIRA continues to laugh. TZARFATI joins her.

TZARFATI: Do you think it's adequate to laugh, in the current national situation?

TZFIRA continues to laugh. TZARFATI watches her, enchanted.

SHALOM enters. Stands in the corner, outside the cafe. TZARFATI notices him.

TZARFATI: I... I have to go. I mean, you. You have to go.

TZFIRA: Why?

TZARFATI: I'm meeting someone here.

TZFIRA: Really? Who?

TZARFATI: One of our business partners.

TZFIRA: I think I'll stay.

TZARFATI: It's a private meeting.

TZFIRA: Is he a reliable man?

TZARFATI: No.

TZFIRA: Married?

TZARFATI: Married and has three children, a cottage and a puppy in the suburbs.

TZFIRA: Is he considering to leave his wife and start over?

TZARFATI: He's never been more in love with her.

TZFIRA: So maybe he'll consider raising a boy, or a girl, outside the marriage? As an adventure?

TZARFATI: He gets a rash from adventures.
Come, I'll walk you out.

TZARFATI gets her up and leads her to the back exit, far from where SHALOM is standing.

TZFIRA: Would you... would you send a message to Shalom from me?

TZARFATI: Sure. What?

TZFIRA: (leans over and kisses him slowly) That. I mean, the spirit of things.

TZARFATI escorts TZFIRA outside. Bumps into a table or two on the way.

TZARFATI: I'll tell him.

TZARFATI stops.

TZARFATI: I forgot what I'm supposed to tell him.

TZFIRA gives TZARFATI a very long kiss. TZARFATI gargles a bit.

TZFIRA: Like a nice little puppy.

TZARFATI: Nice.

TZFIRA: Goodbye, Tzarfati.

TZARFATI: Goodbye.

TZFIRA: I'm leaving.

TZARFATI: Leaving.

TZFIRA walks out. TZARFATI watches her.

SHALOM enters quickly.

SHALOM: What was that?

TZARFATI: (talks slowly) What was that?

SHALOM: She kissed you. Twice.

TZARFATI: (slowly) Twice.... (shakes it off) What do you think you're doing? You want to screw up everything?

SHALOM: I couldn't resist it. I had to see Tzfira. I had to.

TZARFATI: You're lucky I prevented her from seeing you.

SHALOM: (still stands) And the kisses?

TZARFATI: They were meant for you.

SHALOM: The kisses were for me?

TZARFATI: For you and only for you.

SHALOM: So the deal is done? The tension is killing me, Tzarfati. Tell me already, will the plan work?

TZARFATI: Well, it depends on your definition to the term "work".
(takes out his mobile phone) I made a presentation that explains exactly how...

SHALOM: (takes his phone) Forget about your presentations. You've just spoken to her, right?

TZARFATI: Right.

SHALOM: You've seen her reaction, right?

TZARFATI: Right.

SHALOM: You've seen the state she was in, right?

TZARFATI: Right.

SHALOM: So what do you say? Will my brilliant plan work?

TZARFATI: Your plan?

SHALOM: Yes.

TZARFATI: Since when is it your plan?

SHALOM: Since forever.

TZARFATI: But I thought of it.

SHALOM: And I developed it. What do you need to do in order to think of an idea? Have a random spark going through your brain? But in order to develop an idea – in order to develop an idea you need to be persistent, you need to put in the hours, you need to be efficient. There's a reason why I'm the company's chief developer, right?

TZARFATI: Right.

SHALOM: So, will it work?

TZARFATI: (hesitates for a moment and then hugs Shalom) Yes. Without any doubt.

SHALOM: You see? That's how you develop an idea!

TZARFATI: Sure. She believes you joined the war. And most

importantly: the option of you not coming back worries her terribly. She was almost hysterical.

SHALOM: She seemed perfectly calm to me.

TZARFATI: (takes a moment to think and then) She was already catatonic when you came. You should have seen her crying earlier.

SHALOM: How did she cry?

TZARFATI: Like a widow who buried ten husbands.

SHALOM: Did she call my name?

TZARFATI: All the time. (weeps) Shalom! Shalom! Don't take my Shalom away from me! What will happen to our baby boy, or girl?

SHALOM: I knew she still cares for me.

Awesome, Tzarfati. You're a great friend.

TZARFATI: True.

SHALOM: And now – we move on to the next phase of the plan.

TZARFATI: Exactly. Let's move on to the next phase of the plan!

SHALOM sits down and they look at each other.

SHALOM: Well?

TZARFATI: Well what?

SHALOM: You know I don't know it by heart.

TZARFATI: But you are the one who developed it!

SHALOM: And you are my loyal aid who remembers all the details and never gets any glory.

- TZARFATI:** Of course.
The next phase of our plan after you join the war: your heroic death.
- SHALOM:** Exactly. (thinks for a moment) Heroic death?
- TZARFATI:** Sure.
- SHALOM:** How will I be able to win Tzfira back and be a perfect father if I die?
- TZARFATI:** There are so many options with today's technology.
- SHALOM:** We've never discussed death. Maybe we talked about leading a heroic military operation or being a heroic prisoner of war. A heroic death is a bit of a dead end.
- TZARFATI:** You being a heroic prisoner of war. That will really melt her heart.
- SHALOM:** Won't it damage my future fatherhood?
- TZARFATI:** Not a chance. You'll be able to teach the little boy, or girl, the art of dealing with crisis.
And you'll also be able to write Tzfira a letter from captivity.
- SHALOM:** A letter from captivity... you know how well I write letters.
- TZARFATI:** Exactly.
- SHALOM:** A letter! In my authentic handwriting!
- TZARFATI:** Don't tell me you're going to write it with your fountain pen.
- SHALOM:** I should?

- TZARFATI:** You could.
- SHALOM:** When?
- TZARFATI:** In a couple of weeks.
- SHALOM:** No, no. A couple of weeks? No way. I'll be taken hostage in a day or two. In an operation called "Purging theTunnels".
- TZARFATI:** We're talking about the northern front. There aren't any tunnels there.
- SHALOM:** So what is there?
- TZARFATI:** Ramps.
- SHALOM:** Ramps?
- TZARFATI:** Ramps.
- SHALOM:** Is it new?
- TZARFATI:** No.
- SHALOM:** What can you do with ramps?
- TZARFATI:** T..t...t...tanks.
- SHALOM:** Tanks. In a couple of days I will be taken hostage in an operation called "Liberating Ramps". A day after that – a letter from captivity. A week after that – liberation. Two weeks after that – wedding. Two months after that – birth.
- TZARFATI:** Great plan.
- SHALOM:** Should I pay for you?
- TZARFATI:** (takes out his big wallet) No, no need, I'll pay for you.
- SHALOM:** (takes his wallet) Tzarfati? How can it be? (laughs and

looks inside the wallet) A wallet? That has some money in it? (takes out money bills) Real money? (laughs) Maybe now you can stop looking for sales on mineral water. How are things in our company, by the way?

TZARFATI: Things are actually quite...

SHALOM: (storms out) I was just being polite. Don't forget to update, soldier.

TZARFATI puts a few bills on the table.

He changes his clothes and looks more elegant now.

SCENE 4

TZARFATI, dressed elegantly, sits in the cafe smoking a cigar. A cough is heard.

TZARFATI: I think I've been waiting for this cough all my life.

Enter TZFIRA. TZARFATI stands up and pulls a chair for her. She sits down.

TZARFATI: Hello there, Tzfira.

TZFIRA: Tzarfati?

TZARFATI: (blows smoke) what?

TZFIRA: Is it halloween?

TZARFATI: No, that's my standard these days. There. (pulls closer

a plate with some cake on it) I took the liberty of ordering it for you. With cream.

- TZFIRA:** What happened?
- TZARFATI:** A lot of things happened these last few days.
- TZFIRA:** Yes, the situation is horrible, just horrible.
- TZARFATI:** Horrible. So horrible. Definitely horrible. Anyway...
- TZFIRA:** I'm glued to the "News Channel" all day long.
- TZARFATI:** Yes, me too, but...
- TZFIRA:** And I zap to the "Commentary Channel" on the commercial breaks.
- TZARFATI:** Yes, of course, but sometimes...
- TZFIRA:** And when there's a commercial break in the "Commentary Channel" – I zap back to the "News Channel". It's so nice having those two coordinated.
- TZARFATI:** Yet still, sometimes, in front of the "News Channel" – you drink a glass of wine? You eat some chocolate?
- TZFIRA:** Tzarfati!
- TZARFATI:** (leans over) Sorry. I didn't mean to make you mad.
- TZFIRA:** Someone can hear you.
- TZARFATI:** Aren't you tired? Aren't you tired of being worried all the time? Aren't you tired of hearing alarms every five minutes? And then hearing the explosions? It's frightening. And sometimes there are no explosions. And that's even more frightening. And it's tiring, tiring, tiring, tiring. We need a vacation.

- TZFIRA:** How dare you talk like that? The soldiers don't go on vacations.
- TZARFATI:** They're soldiers.
- TZFIRA:** They may die.
- TZARFATI:** You don't die so quickly. The situation is not that bad.
- TZFIRA:** The situation is horrible. Everyone is in the front and no one has any time to date me. I even miss Shalom.
- TZARFATI:** You miss Shalom?
- TZFIRA:** Or worry for him. I'm not sure.
- TZARFATI:** There's no reason to worry for Shalom. He'll be alright.
- TZFIRA:** You think so?

TZARFATI hands the cake to TZFIRA. TZFIRA tastes it.

- TZFIRA:** It's not sweet.
- TZARFATI:** Is it bitter?
- TZFIRA:** No. But it's not sweet, either.
- TZARFATI:** Perfect. You can feel the cake's real taste.
Come with me.
- TZFIRA:** Me? With you? Why?
- TZARFATI:** Why not? We'll get away for a while.
- TZFIRA:** I don't want to get away. I need to find the perfect father.
- TZARFATI:** That's me, Tzfira. I am the perfect father.

TZFIRA: You?

TZARFATI: Look at me, Tzfira. Just look at me. I'm not the same Tzarfati you used to know. I've changed, Tzfira. I closed twenty deals this past week, Tzfira. And you know why, Tzfira? You know who for, Tzfira? For you, Tzfira. And for the baby boy, or girl. I don't talk so much, Tzfira. I can't stand sports, Tzfira. I can give you space and do the heavy lifting, Tzfira. A classic wingman, Tzfira. A millionaire wingman.

TZFIRA: Sounds pretty boring.

TZARFATI: That's exactly what kids need: boredom. Otherwise they won't have any stability. They need stability and boredom, boredom and stability. And a gigantic trust fund they can open when they reach the age of eighteen.

TZFIRA: And what am I supposed to do? Get bored with the baby boy, or girl? Raise him, or her, in a house without any love?

TZARFATI: I think I love you.

An alarm is heard. TZARFATI and TZFIRA immediately get up. They raise their voices.

TZFIRA: You think?

TZARFATI: I'm sure.

TZFIRA: Prove it.

TZARFATI: I'll change the company's name to "Tzfira Digital".
(takes out his mobile phone, taps on it) There. (shows it to TZFIRA)

TZFIRA: I'm your first love, right?

TZARFATI: Of course.

TZFIRA: I've never been anyone's first love. Since when do you...

TZARFATI: From the last few days, all of a sudden... When you were with Shalom this kind of thought never crossed my mind.

TZFIRA: I was hoping to hear you say you fell in love with me the first moment you laid eyes on me. No one has ever fallen in love with me from the first sight.

TZARFATI: Of course I fell in love with you from the first sight. I simply didn't realize what was happening to me. I thought I'm incapable of falling in love. Only yesterday something snapped in me, like a cork, but the kind of cork that flies up to the sky when it gets out of the bottle, a missile cork, and I realized that I have actually fallen in love with you from the first sight and that I've been in love with you from the first sight and that I will always be in love with you from the first sight.

The alarm stops. TZARFATI sits down and looks at his phone. Both of

them now speak in their normal tones of voice.

TZARFATI: The rockets fell in unpopulated areas. No casualties, no damage.

TZFIRA: This is really thrilling, Tzarfati.

TZARFATI: I'm also thrilled.

TZFIRA: But I don't love you.

TZARFATI: I know. How could you? We barely know each other. But as soon as you hear about the plans I made for the baby boy, or girl, I'm sure you'll like me, for the very least.

TZFIRA: (sits down) Where to?

TZARFATI: Where to what?

TZFIRA: Where do you want to take me to? I won't go to another of those boutique hotels up north.

TZARFATI: (clicks on his phone) Paris. For the weekend. We'll talk about the baby boy's future. Or the baby girl's. I'll have an educational presentation ready for its first six years.

TZFIRA: Paris. There's a reason why they call you Tzarfati.

TZARFATI: Really? I thought there was no reason at all.

TZFIRA: And what if I'm not pleased with the presentation?

TZARFATI: Have you ever seen one of my presentations?

TZFIRA: No. But still.

TZARFATI: If you are not pleased, you'll return rested after four

days of vacation.

TZFIRA: Four days of vacation. They say that in four days the Syrian front will become a low intensity front and we'll have a ceasefire in Lebanon.

TZARFATI: That's right. You can cancel your subscription to the "News Channel". Watch stupid shows on TV without feeling national guilt. You'll probably want to rest a bit from the vacation and then maybe, just maybe, you'll consider going away with me again.

TZFIRA: Where to?

TZARFATI: (with confidence) Paris. There's a reason why they call me Tzarfati. We'll sell "Tzfira Digital" for billions in the multidisciplinary convention about digitation. We'll raise the baby boy, or girl, in Paris. We'll hire a nanny, or a manny. Coffee, cakes, Champagne and water. Come with me.

TZFIRA: Where to?

TZARFATI: Paris. I already told you.

TZFIRA: Just checking.

TZARFATI pays the check and they exit.

SCENE 5

SHALOM, dressed in uniform, sits in the pub. TZARFATI, dressed in his usual clothes, enters.

SHALOM: You're late.

TZARFATI: Why are you dressed like this? Do you think it's Halloween?

SHALOM: I'm getting into character. Well?

TZARFATI: Well, what?

SHALOM: I'm getting tired of you. Do you have any updates for me or not?

TZARFATI: You can go and have some rest if you're tired.

SHALOM: What was that?

TZARFATI: Nothing.

SHALOM: Updates.

TZARFATI: She got your letter.

SHALOM: Good. Did she read it?

TZARFATI: Yes.

SHALOM: In front of you?

TZARFATI: Yes.

SHALOM: And.... ?

TZARFATI: She read it to me aloud, Shalom.

SHALOM: She did?

TZARFATI: Yes. She couldn't help herself. You have such a way of writing letters... She couldn't stop crying, either. At first she cried quietly. Then loudly. Then she started sobbing. And then she cried quietly again. The letter was gone. Completely wet. And she continued to cry and to cry... after ninety minutes of constant crying,

she passed out.

SHALOM: Tzfira passed out?

TZARFATI: I think she stopped breathing for a couple of seconds.

SHALOM gets up quickly.

TZARFATI: Where are you going?

SHALOM: To visit Tzfira. We went too far, Tzarfati. We're jeopardizing both Tzfira and the baby boy. Or girl.

TZARFATI: (helpless) Everything is alright, Shalom.

SHALOM: Everything is alright? Tzfira stopped breathing for half a minute in the eighth month and you're telling me that everything is alright?

TZARFATI: I'm not sure she stopped breathing. And if she did it wasn't for half a minute.

SHALOM: Doesn't matter. She passed out.

TZARFATI: She didn't really pass out, she just lost her balance and fell on the couch. Could happen to anyone.

SHALOM: She will pass out if she continues crying like that.

TZARFATI: (shouts and grabs SHALOM) No... I shouldn't have suggested you write the letter with your fountain pen. That was the mistake. The combination between your writing abilities and the ink that was pouring from the pen was just too much. I beg your forgiveness. (cries)

SHALOM: (looks at TZARFATI and hugs him) I forgive you, Tzarfati. But that's the last time. Get a grip on

yourself, soldier.

TZARFATI: (still sobs, salutes) Yes, sir. Can we move to the next phase of our plan?

SHALOM: (sits down) Yes. What is the next phase of our plan?

TZARFATI: What do you say?

SHALOM: Captivity. Letter. The next phase has to be my release.

TZARFATI: Wonderful. Release, and after a few months – the hostage finally comes back home.

SHALOM: A few months?

TZARFATI: You can't come home the minute you are released from captivity. First you have to go through a very long debriefing. Then you have to go away and clear your head. You're not done the second they release you. Not to mention the nightmares.

SHALOM: Nightmares?

TZARFATI: Sure. Screaming at night. Suicidal tendencies. You know what captivity's like.

SHALOM: I can't afford having nightmares. Tzfira will think it might hurt the baby boy, or girl.

TZARFATI: Tzfira won't think that.

SHALOM: How do you know?

TZARFATI: Just guessing, that's all.

SHALOM: I can't take this kind of risk.

TZARFATI: You're right. So at least wait a few days for the debriefing. Or she really won't believe you.

SHALOM: How many days?
TZARFATI: I'd say seven. At least.
SHALOM: You got four.
TZARFATI: Six. Or it won't sound believable.
SHALOM: Four. You'll set everything up?
TZARFATI: Yes.
SHALOM: And update me constantly?
TZARFATI: Yes.
SHALOM: How are things in our company, by the way?
TZARFATI: As usual.

They look at each other for a long moment.

TZARFATI: Alright, so I will be leaving now.
SHALOM: I understand that the last time was a one time thing.
Tzarfati still has no money. And will never have.
TZARFATI: That's what you say.

TZARFATI exits. SHALOM pays the check and exits.

Lights out.

SCENE 6

A silent scene. TZARFATI and TZFIRA are in Paris. They laugh, eat, drink, hug, kiss.

Lights out.

SCENE 7

TZARFATI and TZFIRA enter the cafe with their suitcases. TZARFATI carries a big bag.

TZFIRA: Oh, Tzarfati!

TZARFATI: Oh, Tzfira!

TZFIRA: Oh, Tzfira!

TZARFATI: Oh, Tzarfati!

TZFIRA: It was marvelous.

TZARFATI: It was perfect.

TZFIRA: It was perfect.

TZARFATI: It was marvelous.

TZFIRA signals to TZARFATI and he hurries to bring her a chair. She sits down.

TZFIRA: What took you so long?

TZARFATI: Going around with this bag is not easy.

TZFIRA: I told you to put some of the money in the suitcase.

TZARFATI: I did.

TZFIRA: Liar. Your suitcase is filled with water bottles from Paris.

TZARFATI: You know how cheap is the water in Paris? And it never turns sour. And we're talking about Paris! Such a cultural place. I'm sure the water there is also cultural.

- TZFIRA:** Oh, Tzarfati.
- TZARFATI:** Oh, Tzfira.
- TZFIRA:** I'm so glad we went away.
- TZARFATI:** Me too. And I'm so glad we came back. Straight to the cafe with our suitcases. So everyone here can see us and tell themselves: they've gotten back from a trip abroad. Right now. They are having it good. Really really good. Going abroad is routine for them. So if they feel like having coffee on the way back from the airport – they'll get into the cafe with their suitcases and wallets. Wonderful.
- TZFIRA:** I don't feel like having coffee.
- TZARFATI:** We can have some cake.
- TZFIRA:** Cake. I love you so very much, Tzarfati.
- TZARFATI:** You do?
- TZFIRA:** Yes. One weekend in Paris and that's it – I love you. Without even noticing it. I thought I was feeling like it because of the foreign air, or because of the French. I thought I'll get over it in passports control, or when we'll be waiting to pick up our luggage. But no. We've landed more than two hours ago and I still love you. And the presentations you make... Let's go home. I'll unpack and rest a little bit. You'll finalize our move to Paris that will secure our family's future. I want to give birth in the middle of the Champs-Élysées.

TZARFATI: In the middle of the Champs-Élysées?

TZFIRA: A perfect beginning to a perfect life with the perfect parents. (hugs him) Take my suitcase.

TZFIRA exits. TZARFATI gets up, having a hard time putting his big wallet into his pocket. He takes his bag and the two suitcases.

Enter SHALOM, with full army gear. He points his gun to TZARFATI.

TZARFATI: (puts his hands up) Hello there.

SHALOM: That's not funny.

TZARFATI: What are you doing?

SHALOM: What are you doing?

TZARFATI: What are you doing?

SHALOM: What are you doing?

TZFIRA: (calls from offstage) Tzarfati, come on.

TZARFATI: (calls to her) Just a minute.

TZFIRA: (calls from offstage) I'm beginning to walk. Bring me some cake.

SHALOM: I understand exactly what's going on here.

TZARFATI: What's going on?

SHALOM: You. Tzfira. You've gone away together, or are planning to go away together.

TZARFATI: (laughs) You think that Tzfira and I are going away together?

SHALOM: Yes.

TZARFATI: And who's paying for it? She? I?

SHALOM: I'm paying for it. (gets closer to TZARFATI and takes out his wallet) you're taking money from the company.

TZARFATI: Our company is broke, Shalom. I fired half of our employees over the past weekend.

SHALOM: Bullshit. Our company is getting bigger and bigger. I read the emails. I saw the figures.

TZARFATI: Emails? Figures? It's a mirage.

SHALOM: Why weren't you home this weekend?

TZARFATI: You called me? You know it jeopardizes our plan.

SHALOM: I read the emails. I saw the figures.

TZARFATI: That's alright, completely understandable, even, I don't have any...

SHALOM: So why weren't you home?

TZARFATI: I fired so many employees, I told you. I didn't want to stay home afterwards.

SHALOM: You don't say.

TZARFATI: It was horrible. They were crying over the phone, paying me surprise visits, suggesting I'll take them as freelancers just for a couple of months, until the market stabilizes a little bit. One of them started to cry after I fired him. His mother showed up in my office half an hour later, sobbing like a mad woman. I had to disappear. Take the gun down.

SHALOM: And Tzfira? Why wasn't Tzfira home?

- TZARFATI:** Don't tell me you tried to contact her as well. That's really stupid.
- SHALOM:** They let us come home this weekend. What was I supposed to do?
- TZARFATI:** They let you come home?
- SHALOM:** Yes. Because we trained really hard.
- TZARFATI:** You really joined the army?
- SHALOM:** Yes.
- TZARFATI:** And you joined the war?
- SHALOM:** Yes.
- TZARFATI:** Against Syria?
- SHALOM:** Yes.
- TZARFATI:** Can something bad happen to you?
- SHALOM:** Yes. But I don't care. I stopped feeling guilty, at last. I can sleep at night. This country is on fire, Tzarfati.
- TZARFATI:** On fire?
- SHALOM:** The kind that burns things. And we are dealing with hi tech and shit. There's only thing worth of doing these days: fuck all the arabs up.
- TZARFATI:** So... they let you come home and you went to Tzfira's house?
- SHALOM:** I just stood in the street and looked at her window. Her beautiful, wonderful window. Did you know that you can almost see the ocean from this window, if you take a chair and stand on the tips of your toes? The

new tower stands in the way. One day, Tzarfati, when all the wars will be over, I'll bring all the guys from my platoon and we'll put up a cement wall in front of Tzfira's window. And afterwards we'll tape a giant sea wallpaper on it. So Tzfira and the baby boy, or girl, will be able to see the ocean whenever they feel like it.

TZARFATI: I can tell you where Tzfira was.

SHALOM: Tell me.

TZARFATI: It will hurt you.

SHALOM: Hurt me.

TZARFATI: Let's sit down.

They sit down.

TZARFATI: She went to a hotel.

SHALOM: Which hotel?

TZARFATI: A boutique... hotel.

SHALOM: She went to the... the "Pelican Bay"?

TZARFATI: Yes.

SHALOM: "Where you'll be pampered in each and every way"?

TZARFATI: Yes. We can continue this on another time, if it's too hard.

SHALOM: Let's continue now.

TZARFATI: She had a small crisis. She couldn't function. She was just sitting at home, thinking of you and crying. I suggested her to go away for the weekend, to clear her

head. We said we'd meet here when she returned.

SHALOM: And what are the two suitcases for?

TZARFATI: That's clear, Shalom. She wanted to feel as if she was going away with someone. And not just any someone – you. She insisted on going to your flat in order to take one of your suitcases and some clothes. Luckily, I was able to stop her. If I hadn't, our plan would have crashed and burned. We agreed she'd take one of my suitcases with some of my clothes. And if I angered you, accept my sincerest apologies.

SHALOM: You really are the best.

An alarm is heard. TZARFATI gets up. SHALOM crawls on the floor.

TZARFATI: What are you doing?

SHALOM: I belong to the army and therefore have to protect myself.

TZFIRA enters running. She hugs TZARFATI.

TZFIRA: (breathes heavily) Where were you? I was looking for you up and down the street and...

SHALOM: Tzfira?

TZFIRA: Shalom?

TZARFATI: Tzfira?

SHALOM: Tzarfati? (gets up and points his gun to TZARFATI)

explain. (TZARFATI doesn't answer) You went away together?

TZFIRA: Yes.

SHALOM: To the "Pelican Bay"?

TZFIRA: No. To Paris.

SHALOM: You traitor. (to TZFIRA) And you, how could you do it while I was in captivity?

TZFIRA: You were in captivity?

SHALOM: Yes.

TZARFATI: Captivity... when were you in captivity? How come we didn't hear anything about it? Why didn't the newspapers write about it? Why didn't anyone talk about it in the "News Channel"? Did they debrief you? Do you have any nightmares?

SHALOM: We underwent an expedited "Captivity Week" that lasted two days. So we know what to expect in case we lost the "Great Battle on the Ramps".

TZFIRA: The "Great Battle on the Ramps"....

SHALOM: You should have seen me there, liberating one ramp after the other and then another one... I liberated so many ramps the colonel told me I could do whatever I wanted. And I wanted to see you, Tzfira. You....

TZFIRA: I'm... you... the uniform... really suits you.

SHALOM: Thanks. The colonel also said that. He convinced me to sign up for life.

- TZFIRA:** You signed up for life?
- TZARFATI:** You signed up for life?
- SHALOM:** For life. I'm planning to fight and fight until peace breaks out.
- TZFIRA:** What a vision!
- SHALOM:** That's nothing. You should see the five years plan I prepared. I got an A+ on it in the course "Five Years Plans for Soldiers". And you know what's the first step in my plan? Our marriage. Yes, you're going to be a soldier's wife. We'll move from one base to another. Raise our children between the tanks and the airplanes. What do you say?

TZFIRA and SHALOM have a moment. TZARFATI laughs a short laugh.

- TZARFATI:** (seriously) What do you say?
- TZFIRA:** (to SHALOM) Why did you sign up for life?
- SHALOM:** Because I realized I already committed myself for life (puts his hand on TZFIRA's belly) eight months ago, my dearest Tzfira. I wanted you to fall in love with me because of my magnificent militarism, so we can be the perfect parents together. And what happened was that I fell in love with my magnificent militarism. I feel it's the most real thing I ever had in my life. It took me forty years to find it, but I did.
- TZFIRA:** Such honesty! I never heard you talk like that.

SHALOM: Honesty is the most important value for every soldier.

TZARFATI: (puts SHALOM's gun down) I better explain something to you, Rambo. (hugs TZFIRA) We are a couple. We've just returned from a weekend full of pleasures. Sweet luxury with a "trés grande" bed. We had sex at least once, and there was probably another occasion that I don't remember at the moment because of all the remarkable French champagne we drank, that was flown especially for us from the region of Bordeaux. And all this pampering will prepare us to raising the baby boy, or girl.

SHALOM: But it's my baby boy. Or girl.

TZARFATI: Not anymore. It was and poof – it's not.

SHALOM: Tzfira? Is that true?

TZFIRA: Everything is true. Paris... sex... champagne.

SHALOM: And the baby boy? Or girl?

TZFIRA: You see, Tzarfati is very reliable.

SHALOM: And you love him? Do you really love Tzarfati?

TZFIRA: I...

SHALOM and TZFIRA have another moment.

SHALOM: (to Tzarfati) When are you selling the company?

TZARFATI: I'm closing everything with the board of directors tomorrow and sell the company in the multidisciplinary convention in Paris. Tzfira and I will

move to the Champs- Élysées by the weekend.

SHALOM: (to TZFIRA) You didn't answer me.

I joined the war for you.

TZFIRA: For me?

SHALOM: (points to her belly) and for him. Or her.

TZARFATI: But it doesn't matter, since you lost. You can spend the rest of your life as a lonely soldier boy. (laughs)

SHALOM: Did I lose? (TZFIRA doesn't answer) I lost. Like every soldier, I know when I'm fighting a losing battle. I tried, Tzfira. But I lost. Both you and the baby boy. Or girl. There'll be a mourning period. No doubt. And after that – a very slow recovery. Slow and profound. This crisis will only turn me into a better father to my soldiers.

TZFIRA: (hugs him) I've never heard you talking like that!

SHALOM: I talked like that many times. In company talks, mostly. And I talk like that now before we go to battle. At last I understand what I was talking about all those times.

TZARFATI: Tzfira, we have to get going.

SHALOM: Know that I have loved thee, Tzfira.

TZFIRA: You've become a poet.

SHALOM: The fruit of our love growth in thy belly.

TZARFATI: Tzfira!

TZFIRA: Shut up.

- TZARFATI:** Shut up?
- TZFIRA:** Yes, shut up already.
- TZARFATI:** But I don't talk that much.
- TZFIRA:** That's right, and that what makes you so boring. And after all he's done for me, I kinda miss this chatterbox, who became such a tough manly hero all of a sudden.
- TZARFATI:** But I planned this royal betrayal! I did! I had an idea, I developed it and executed it! Doesn't it make me seem also like a tough manly hero?
- TZFIRA:** Maybe. I'll go home and think about it. I'll let you know about my decision until the weekend.
- TZARFATI:** We're supposed to be in Paris this weekend. The selling of the company can't be stopped!
- TZFIRA:** Wonderful. Shalom will wait for me here. Tell your colonel it's a case of emergency postponing all wars. You will wait for me in Paris, after you sell the company. The same day and the same hour. Whomever I come to will be the winner.
- SHALOM:** Fair enough.
- TZARFATI:** Not fair at all. An hour ago you were sure we were going away to live in Paris. What kind of game is this?
- TZFIRA:** You can forfeit if you don't like it.
- TZARFATI:** Forfeit? I'll fly to Paris in two days, sell the company for billions and use the money to buy a penthouse filled with diapers and toys in the Champs-

Élysées.

TZFIRA: I love men with self confidence.

TZARFATI: Thank you.

TZFIRA: If you're so confident, you can be the first one to leave.

TZARFATI: I'm leaving. (does not move)
Are you coming?

TZFIRA: In a while.

TZARFATI takes the two suitcases and exits as slowly as he can.

TZFIRA and SHALOM get closer. TZARFATI returns.

TZARFATI: Tzfira, the missile was intercepted over the sea. No casualties, no damage.

TZFIRA: Thank you, Tzarfati.

TZARFATI: I know how you like to always be...

TZFIRA: Thank you, Tzarfati.

TZARFATI: Updated.

TZARFATI exits slowly.

TZFIRA and SHALOM look at each other.

TZFIRA: What's your rank?

SHALOM: Captain.

TZFIRA: That's it?

SHALOM: I have a lot of room for progress. I'm on the fast route

to becoming a colonel.

TZFIRA: And when you're a colonel?

SHALOM: I'll get into the fast route to becoming a Major General.

TZFIRA: Any chance you'll be the Lieutenant General?

SHALOM: A very promising chance.

(gets closer to her) I'll do anything for the baby boy.

TZFIRA: Or girl.

SHALOM: We'll know soon.

TZFIRA: I already know.

SHALOM: You do?

TZFIRA: I do.

SHALOM: I thought you wanted to leave things open, not to get fixated on anything...

TZFIRA: I couldn't help myself.

SHALOM: Will you tell me?

TZFIRA: It would be unfair to Tzarfati.

SHALOM: But it's my baby boy. Or girl? Will you tell me already?

TZFIRA: I want to give birth in the middle of the Champs-Élysées.

SHALOM: The middle of the Champs-Élysées?

TZFIRA: Yes. Such a perfect way to start a life.

SHALOM: And what will be about the rest of this life, without the presence of the biological father?

- TZFIRA:** We'll tell him, or her, that Tzarfati is its dad. You resemble each other as it is.
- SHALOM:** (looks at himself) No we don't.
- TZFIRA:** You won't have any nightmares?
- SHALOM:** No. The colonel said that he envies my mental toughness.
Let me take you to the Champs-Élysées.
- TZFIRA:** Aren't you in the middle of fighting a war?
- SHALOM:** We'll be winning this war in a day or two.
- TZFIRA:** Really?
- SHALOM:** That's the intelligence assessment. And even if we don't, there's an ambulance-chopper pilot who owes me one. We'll land in the Champs-Élysées, you'll give birth – in a secure manner – and we'll get home immediately.
- TZFIRA:** And then what? I'll be a single mom?
- SHALOM:** They let me come back home almost every weekend.
- TZFIRA:** I won't raise my children with all those alarms.
- SHALOM:** I'll restore peace and quiet and terminate all the alarms in a few weeks. We can all go to the beach.
- TZFIRA:** I can go to the beach in Paris as well.
- SHALOM:** It's not the same beach.
- TZFIRA:** Here you can barely see it.
- SHALOM:** But it's there. You know that somewhere, even if it's very far away – it's there. And you can dream about

serving in a base that's close to the beach and go there for your morning runs.

TZFIRA: And then they build a high tower right in front of your face and no more beach for you.

SHALOM: But you can still smell it. Ha, to smell the ocean first thing in the morning!

TZFIRA: My nose is always stuffy in the mornings.

SHALOM: Just say the word and I'll have a medic come in.

TZFIRA: I must go.

SHALOM: Tzfira, I'm about to go to a secret operation.

TZFIRA: I must go.

TZFIRA exits.

SCENE 8

Enter SHALOM in full army gear. He sits next to the round table in the cafe.

Enter TZARFATI, who sits near a table packed with bottles of mineral water, in a Parisian cafe.

They wait for a few moments.

TZARFATI: The selling of the company went better than expected.

SHALOM: The colonel made me a colonel. No one deserves it more than you do, he said.

TZARFATI: She'll come to be with me in Paris. There can be no other ending to this story.

- SHALOM:** When Tzfira comes and sees my new ranks she'll be so thrilled.
- TZARFATI:** Although the possibility she won't come does exist.
- SHALOM:** And what will happen to the Syrian front in that case?
- TZARFATI:** Enough, Tzarfati. Enough. She really loved you for four days. Loved me. So why shouldn't she love me for the next forty years?
- SHALOM:** Pull yourself together, Shalom! She'll cough in a moment. And then she'll show up. You'll laugh. You'll hug. Tzarfati will become a former player. You'll be together, together, together.
- TZARFATI:** She'll cough and show up in a moment. A fresh start.

A cough is heard. Both of them turn their heads with expectation.