

# Wall of glass

## A comic-drama by Oren Jakobi

English translation: Hadar Galron

### Characters :

Rachel – 30 , a dancer.

Viki – (50+) Rachel's mother

Netzach – (28) Rachel's younger brother

Joseph – (50+) Manager of the camps

Katia – ticket-inspector a local German train

(The actress playing Katia can play the girl in scene 1)

Contemporary

Berlin – Netanya (Israel)

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### **The Institute of Israeli Drama**

The Institute Of Israeli Drama (r.a)  
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The Israeli Playwright Association • With the support of: Municipality of Tel Aviv-Yafo  
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**Scene 1.**

Berlin – morning. Rachel leaves her bedroom and hurries towards the front-door, picks up the newspaper and looks nervous yet excitedly for the critics. Reads, then bursts into a fit of joy, and dances round her small apartment, looking for her telephone.

Netanya – (Israel). Netzach is in bed with a girl when his phone rings. As they're fondling each other he looks at the screen to see who's calling.

Nezach: Shit... I have to answer !

Girl: Now ?!

*Nezach answers.*

Rachel: Hello? Netzach?

Nezach: I've been looking for you for days !

Rachel: Cool it... is anything wrong?

Nezach: Not exactly –but we need to talk – listen –

*The girl in bed bites his shoulder and tries to get him back down...*

Nezach: Ahhhh! C'mon, Shirley –not now...

Girl: My name's Liat –you son of a bitch !

*The girl gets up dramatically and leaves.*

Rachel: What's going on? Where are you ?

Nezach: Liat !! Fuck ! I know , I know... *(into the phone)* I'll kill you !

*Rachel gets a large fancy album, and during the conversation cuts the write-up from the newspaper and sticks it in her critic and article album.*

Rachel: Me ? What did I do ?

Nezach: Later, listen. I've got to tell you something –

Rachel: Me first! Listen to this critic – it was in this morning's paper. Just a sec. I'll translate on-line... "in her solo the Israeli "tanzerin" –dancer-, Rachel Wolf, showed "beeindruckend" talents , that's good talents.

Nezach: Sababa (=cool)

Rachel: No, not good - impressive

Nezach: Sababa (=cool)

Rachel: and you're a mother-fucker

Nezach: Sababa

Rachel: Are you with me?

Nezach: What ? Sure. Ballet, solo, Israeli tangerine, impressive talents, mother-fucker. Now, are you listening?

Rachel: So you're not stoned today ... Do you know what's good about this critique ?

Nezach: Besides the fact that you have another reason to fall in love with yourself?

Rachel: No, froggie, that the show's going to run for a while and you might just move your butt and come to Berlin to see me dancing...

Nezach: I saw your ballet show in Tel-Aviv –it was more than enough for me

Rachel: For the millionth time –it was artistic nude !

Nezach: Artistic?! The sluts in the film "Fuck me Baby" don't dare dance naked the way you did . Artistic my ars... I'm your brother and I'm not supposed to see you naked! Not to mention Mum who sat next to me and changed colors like a traffic light ! When she turned green I said "GO"!

Rachel: Let's not talk about Mum (*pause*) How is she? Forget it- I don't want to know. So- when are you coming?

Nezach: I'm not. Shut up for a minute, I'm gonna to tell you something- but don't tell Mum I told you.

Rachel: I haven't spoken to her for the last two and a half years- why should I start now?

Nezach: 'cause she's by you.

Rachel: Where?

Nezach: In Berlin.

Rachel: (*cynical*) Ha-ha. What did you want to tell me?

Nezach: That's it! Mum flew to Berlin two days ago, and-

Rachel: Mum would never let her foot step on German soil.

Nezach: I'm not kidding.

Rachel: Wait.. *(pause)* just a minute.... I thought I was hallucinating, but... so it *was* her?... Last night, at my performance, I thought I saw her in the audience, but – I said to myself it can't be her –it must be someone that looks like her. Why's she here?

Nezach: She's going to fulfill Grandad's last request...

Rachel: You're kidding me? Tell me it's a joke. Come on! You're kidding.

Nezach: I'm not- If I'm lying- may Maccabi Tel-Aviv lose in The Final Four.

Rachel: O.K. So you're serious. Hold on, she did what Grandad asked her to? She cremated his body?

Nezach: Yeh

Rachel: She's sick in the head! And she brought the ashes with her? To Berlin?

Nezach: Bingo. And that's where you come into the story. I need you to help her with his will.

Rachel: To help *her*? With *the Judges* will? No way and- No way. She told you to ask me for help, right?

Nezach: Wrong! And she musn't know I told you. Look –Cheli- o.k. , so you're not speaking to her.

Rachel: Correction . She's not speaking to me.

Nezach: Whatever... and I know that you weren't very fond of Grandad.

Rachel: Couldn't stand him, you mean.

Nezach: But she needs help.

Rachel: So she can ask for help!

Nezach: You know her, she'll die before she asks you for help.

Rachel: If that's what she feels she has to do ? I won't stop her.

Nezach: fine, forget it. Forget I even asked.

Rachel: Why aren't you here? Why didn't you come to help her?

Nezach: She didn't want me in Germany as well. Cheli, maybe this is your chance to make -up with her at last?

Rachel: Only if she realizes it's her chance to say sorry for two and a half years of boycott.

Nezach: So you're not going to help her.

Rachel: No.

Nezach: Not even for me?

Rachel: No, Froggie. If she's here and hasn't tried to contact me, and was in my performance and never said a word – she can take His honor's ashes and shove them up her-

Nezach: Bye !

*He disconnects.*

## **Scene 2**

Train carriage. Viki is sitting clutching her handbag. Joseph is standing not far from her. A young, attractive ticket-inspector comes into the carriage, Joseph gives her his ticket, she then turns to Viki.

Inspector: (German) Guttentag, farcarte bite

*Viki looks for her ticket in her bag.*

Inspector: (German) Farcarte bite

Viki: Yes, yes.... one moment

*The inspector waits, Viki continues searching frantically.*

Viki: I can't... I don't remember where I put the ticket.

Inspector: (broken English) You no ticket?

Viki: I have, I have... just I... I can't find it...

*Viki continues, she's very worked up. The inspector doesn't move from her side. After a few moments.*

Viki: Maybe it fell?

Inspector: "Fall"? Come up .

Viki: What?

Inspector: Come up now. Come mitt me.

Viki: What? Where to?

Inspector: Place what is for people like you!

Viki: (*hysterical*) What? What do mean "people like me"... I have a ticket, please..

*Joseph gets closer.*

Joseph: (*in fluent English with a German accent*) Madam? Sorry for interfering, but, were you not in the camp just now? I saw you by the museum...

Viki: Yes, and I can't find my ticket...

Joseph: Slowly, slowly (*in German to the inspector:*) Miss, you could be a little more patient.

Inspector: (*in German*) Mr., you could stop disturbing me –I'm only doing my job.

Joseph: (*to Viki in English*) You're sure you have a ticket, yes? If you don't you'll have to pay a fine and leave the train at the next station.

Viki: She'll take me off at the next station?! But I have...

Joseph: Let me help-

*Joseph takes her backpack. Viki snatches it back and bursts out:*

Viki: What are you doing?! Leave it ! don't touch !!!

Joseph: O.k , o.k.

Viki: Don't touch !!

*Joseph goes back to his seat, she looks in the bag- sees everything's intact and calms down. She searches her pockets and finds the ticket. With a shaking hand she holds it out to the inspector.*

Viki: Here, here's your ticket.

*The inspector leaves. The next station is announced. The train comes to a halt. Viki rises.*

Joseph: Madam, is this your station?

Viki: I must get off the train.

Joseph: But there is nothing in this station .

Viki: But I can't breath in here!

*Viki hurriedly leaves the train.*

Joseph: Madam... I only wanted to help.

### **Scene 3**

Table at a café, by Viki's hotel. Rachel is sitting waiting and it is clear she's been waiting a while. Viki walks by on the way to her hotel, sees Rachel but carries on hoping Rachel doesn't notice her. But Rachel does.

Rachel: Viki?

Viki: Rachel, what are you doing here?

Rachel: I live here. What are you doing here ?

Viki: Me? I'm on a mission...

Rachel: His honor?

Viki: Don't call him like that. He's your Grandfather.

*Silence.*

Rachel: How are you ?

Viki: How are you?

*Silence.*

Rachel: Do you want to sit down?

Viki: No. My hotel's just here.

Rachel: What a coincidence...

Viki: Coincidence? I'll kill your little brother.... 'coincidence'. You both think I'm stupid, right?

Rachel: No. We don't both think you're stupid... (mumbles) only I do.

Viki: What ?

Rachel: since when have you been here?

Viki: two days ago...

Rachel: Could you have been at my performance last night?

Viki: What performance?

Rachel: (*cynical*) "When Himler met Hitler- the musical"... What performance?! My ballet!

Viki: No. I wasn't there.

*Silence.*

Viki: Bye.

Rachel: Bye.

*Viki starts walking towards her hotel.*

Rachel: Did you do it? Fulfill the Judges final request?

Viki: No.

Rachel: Because it's sick?

Viki: No, because in the camps they didn't permit it.

Rachel: Do you want me to help you with it? He was my Grandfather after all..

Viki: Oh, you remember? Where've you been?

Rachel: I have a life you know.

Viki: And it's so important you couldn't make it to your Grandfather's funeral?

Rachel: Cremating a body isn't a funeral.

Viki: That's what he wanted. You wouldn't exactly have come if it was a normal funeral, would you?

Rachel: You didn't exactly miss me there, did you?

*Silence.*

Viki: You said you could help me.

Rachel: Sit down.

Viki: I don't sit in cafés here.

Rachel: As opposed to me.

Viki: We could go up to my room- that's my hotel.

Rachel: I've already ordered. Have you eaten?

Viki: I brought canned food with me from Israel. I don't intend leaving one euro more than necessary to those bastards. How can you help me?

Rachel: You were at the camp... who did you speak to?

Viki: The secretary of the manager of the museum at the camp.

Rachel: Why not the manager himself? Shame you didn't come to me before you went.

Viki: You think they would have permitted you to do it?

Rachel: I live here, I know how to speak to them.

Viki: I'm not that helpless.

Rachel: She probably spoke to you in German and paralyzed you.

Viki: That's quite enough. I'll be in the hotel until the evening, if you have any bright ideas , call me.

Rachel: Why until the evening?

Viki: I'm flying back tonight.

Rachel: so you really intended going home, without even trying to see me?

Viki: Why? What's new?

*Silence.*

Rachel: Nothing. You're right. Nothing's new.

V.O. Announcement : Rachel Wolf. Rachel Wolf.

Viki: (*tense*) What's that ?

Rachel: (*cynical*) My transfer's leaving. Calm down – it's only my hamburger

Viki: Hamburger? Since when do you eat hamburgers? Aren't you vegetarian anymore?

Rachel: you're right. I'll just chuck it away.

Viki: Hamburger... have you forgotten what it does to the thighs ?

Rachel: Viki!

Viki: And since when are you not Rachel (*pronounces with a ch as in German ich as opposed to English ch as in chain*) Why ? Rachel is too Jewish for you?

Rachel: No. Rachel and Rachel are the same name.

Viki: Grandad chose your name! He called you after his sister, Rachel

Rachel: Who died in the camps... I don't give a shit... have a safe journey home.

*Rachel gets up, straightens her bag, means to go, Viki examines her.*

Viki: Hold on a minute. Look at me.

*Silence. Viki looks from Rachel's face to her stomach.*

Rachel: What ?

Viki: You're pregnant.

Rachel: No. (*pause*) How do you know?

Viki: Mother's always know. How did it happen?

Rachel: Generally, when a guy and a girl love each other, then at night they hug really tight and-

Viki: Spare me your wisecracks.

Rachel: OK

VO announcement (*German*) : Rachel Wolf- Rachel Wolf- your hamburger is ready

Rachel: They're very organized here.

Viki: Wait! What month are you ?

Rachel: Oh, it's nothing, just the beginning...

Viki: And when did you intend telling me all this? After the birth? Was there a wedding I don't know about either?

Rachel: How do you feel? Are you nauseous? How does you combine it with your dancing?

Viki: Is he local? I mean... from here? Is he... German?

Rachel: O.k. , decide whether you want my help or not.

Viki: What's his name ?

Rachel: Because if you do, I have some time before my performance, and we can go to the camp now.

Viki: It's closed now. Who's your boyfriend?

Rachel: So tomorrow. I have a free day .

Viki: I'm flying back tonight . What's his name?!

Rachel: So postpone your flight.

Viki: I can't. I need to clear the room.

Rachel: You can sleep over by me and tomorrow we could go there and get rid of it.

Viki: "IT"?! "get rid of it "? Do you have any idea what it is for me to part from my father like this?

Rachel: I didn't mean it to sound like that. Tomorrow morning we'll go there and... and... "close the carma", is that better? We'll provide you and Grandad with the inner peace you've been looking for and-

Viki: Can't you hear what I'm saying? It's impossible!!

Rachel: Oh, God, why do I even try, why?! Why am I fighting your wars ?

Viki: You're fighting – because you love fighting. You fight anything and everything just for the sake of it .

Rachel: Fine. You're Right. Do you want to go back home with Grandad's ashes and put them on display in your glass cabinet? Have fun. Oh' and a lovely trip home.

Viki: Wait a minute. Are you... do you intend having the baby here?

Rachel: Yes, I'll have the baby here.

Viki: Do you want me to be with you at the birth ?

Rachel: No.

*Rachel leaves. Viki stays glued to the spot .*

**Scene 4:**

Rachel, in her apartment, is packing a bag for her performance, whilst on the phone to Nezach. Nezach is in an Israeli Street, in a "chicken costume" distributing pamphlets for a fast-food restaurant.

Nezach: Why? Why are you behaving like a semi-trailer ?

Rachel: Sorry?!

Nezach: Cool it, why're you getting pissed off ?

Rachel: Oh, it's a compliment .Who doesn't dream of being compared to a semi-trailer?

Nezach: C'mon! You drove straight, ignored her and ran right over her.

Rachel: I ignored her ?

Nezach: 'Cheli, did you stop to think what it's like for her to be in Germany?

Rachel: It has nothing to do with Germany. I just don't count for her.

Nezach: You're such nit-wits. Both of you. And who eats all your shit? Me.

Rachel: What's this got to do with you ?

Nezach: I'm fed up of being stuck between you and Mum. You bite my head off on one side –she bites off the other side. Can't you see there's an opportunity here that mustn't be missed? And not only for your own sake.

Rachel: For whose then? Yours?

Nezach: Why the heck mine. For the sake of your baby.

Rachel: Tell me, d'you think I'm Viki ? D'you think your sentimental manipulations work on me?

Nezach: It's not a manipulation! How can I explain so that it'll make it's way into your knocker (head)?...O.K. ... you're in the most important basketball match of the season, it's a home-match and the player guarding you has lost his confidence. And you, instead of nonchalantly throwing the ball into the basket, you're playing around with the ball and losing points!

*Silence.*

Rachel: What do you want from me ? What are you talking about?

Nezach: Forget it – I'll give you a ballet-example. You're in an important show, in Germany- the dancer opposite you's lost confidence and you... you... instead of.... nonchalantly throwing the ball into the basket, you're pirouetting and losing points!

Rachel: Is that it ? You finished? Good, because I've got a performance tonight!

Nezach: Right, and your fucking performance is more important than anything else.

*Doorbell rings in Rachel's apartment.*

Rachel: Just a sec. Someone's ringing.

*She opens, Viki's standing there with a suitcase.*

Rachel: Viki ? what are you doing here?

Nezach: What, she's by you ? O.k., remember what I said : pirouette, then aim for the basket and-

Rachel: I'm going into the tunnel-

*She disconnects the call.*

Nezach: Rachel!

*Black on Nezach.*

Viki: (still standing at the door) You'll come with me tomorrow morning to the camp and we'll speak to the manager?

Rachel: Sure. What about your flight?

Viki: I postponed it. For a couple of days. So is it o.k. if I stay ?

Rachel: Yeh. Yes. No problem. The kitchen's there, the bathroom, and there's the bedroom. Take the bed, I'll sleep on the sofa in the lounge.

Viki: The sofa's good enough for me. Thank-you.

Rachel: But –

Viki: Thank-you.

Rachel: ...welcome. I'm leaving now, I have a performance, but feel at home.

*Viki sizes up the apartment .*

Rachel: O.K. o.k. –let's make it short. You have thirty seconds to criticize my apartment.

Viki: I have nothing to criticize.

Rachel: C'mon, I know you want to. Let's finish with it now. What? Too small? Too big? Too noisy? Too quiet? Too messy? Too designed? Too dark? Too light? Not Fang Shuish enough? What ?

Viki: It's all right the apartment. It's fine.

Rachel: But.

Viki: No but.

Rachel: No?

Viki: No.

*Silence.*

Viki: Maybe just-

Rachel: You almost managed!

Viki: There are a lot of photos of you with friends, but no family pictures.

Rachel: There's a picture of Dad here and some photos of me with Nezach...

Viki: Pictures of me? Of your grandfather?

Rachel: Coffee?

Viki: Tea.

Rachel: Two sugars ?

Viki: Saccharine.

Rachel: Since when?

Viki: A year or so

Rachel: Diet ?

Viki: Health.

Rachel: O.K.

Viki: I don't need a diet!

Rachel: I never said you... Forget it. Eh, I don't have any saccharine.

Viki: It's o.k. , I have.

*Rachel leaves to make tea, Viki opens her suitcase and begins to pile things on the table; canned food, instant meals, and boxes of food from home. Tens of boxes. She finds the saccharine and goes to look at the photo's again. Rachel enters with tea, surprised to see the moundain of food on the table.*

Rachel: You weren't kidding when you said you brought food from home... Well, I have to get going to the performance. If you're looking for something to read meanwhile, there are critics and articles written about me in this album. Some crazy fan collected them all and stuck them for me.

Viki: *(points at a picture of Rachel's friends)* Is this him?

Rachel: Who? Ah, No.

Viki: This one?

Rachel: No.

Viki: This one? This one? Or – this one?

Rachel: No, no and – show me that one...no.

Viki: So just tell me if he's Jewish or not?

Rachel: What difference does it make? What kind of Jews are we? When was the last time we did something "jewish" in our lives- besides Yom-Kippur.

Viki: Being Jewish is much more than Yom-Kippur. Especially here. So I understand he's not Jewish.

Rachel: Maybe he is , maybe he isn't. That's not the question.

Viki: So what's the question?

Rachel: Ask if I'm happy.

Viki: Are you happy?

Rachel: Very.

*Subconsciously, Rachel pushes her hair behind her ear. Viki examines her carefully, smiles.*

Rachel: What?

Viki: Your hair...

Rachel: What about it?

Viki: When you lie you touch your hair, ever since you were a child.

Rachel: You're wrong. I'm happy!

*Without noticing she touches her hair again. Viki looks at her, then Rachel realizes.*

Rachel: That doesn't mean anything! It's just...! Anyway, I must fly. I'll be back after 11:00

Viki: And when's 'he' supposed to be back?

Rachel: Who? Ah' no, it's nothing like that. We're not together. I mean, anymore.

Viki: Ah. But he... he's still in the picture regarding the pregnancy ?

Rachel: No.

Viki: But you're going to tell him?

Rachel: I haven't decided yet. Anyway, we're not going to get back together again.

Viki: He left you.

Rachel: Why are you so sure it's him that left?

Viki: Because I know that look of yours.

Rachel: The "I've been chucked" look ?!

Viki: I never said "chucked".

Rachel: I need you to say something nice to me.

Viki: So stupid...

Rachel: Something nice Viki!

Viki: So stupid of him to give you up ! He's a real idiot.

Rachel: You think so? Yeh, he is an idiot. But for a few months he was my idiot. I'll be going.

*Rachel opens the front door. Just before she leaves.*

Rachel: Do you want to come and see the performance? I could get you a ticket in a good seat.

Viki: I'm tired.

Rachel: You sure?

Viki: *(without noticing touches her hair)* Yes, I've got this horrendous headache from the minute I arrived...

*Rachel sees her mother's hand and wants to say something .*

Viki: What ?

Rachel: Your hair .

*Rachel leaves.*

### **Scene 5**

Night. Viki is covered in a blanket on the sofa (that opens into a bed). She's looking through a pile of papers and documents, editing them. Rachel enters.

Rachel: Hi, good thing you didn't come to the performance... I got 3 standing ovations but it wasn't amazing tonight... Why are you still awake? What, did you wait up for me?

Viki: Of course not. The university wants to publish a book about my father. "The court rulings that changed the face of human rights". I chose the title.

Rachel: Great title. Sexy. No. 1 in Amazon for sure.

Viki: And next year I hope to raise money for a scholarship in his name, and maybe to open a Law library in his commemoration.

Rachel: And when are you going to publish the book "Harry Potter and He Whose Name must not be uttered: Grandfather Yaakov".

Viki: What's wrong?

Rachel: Nothing's wrong I just thought that now that he's... gone up to the "penthouse"... you might start living a bit.

*Viki goes back to her papers.*

Rachel: Tomorrow morning I'm going to show you around.

Viki: I don't want to go 'around'. We'll go straight to the camp.

Rachel: O.k., but on the way we'll stop at an amazing store, and I'll get you a wicked coat at half price. The saleslady is a fan of mine...

Viki: I didn't come here for shopping.

Rachel: They say it's going to be cold tomorrow.

Viki: I'm not going to freeze to death –I have everything I need.

Rachel: Literally half-price, I'm telling you.

*Rachel sits by her mother on the blanket. She feels she sat on something and moves the blanket... She's shocked to find out that she sat on pitcher containing her Grandfather's ashes. She jumps up.*

Rachel: Ahhhh! Viki! Get it off!

Viki: What are you shouting for?!

Rachel: Get Grandad out of the bed!!!

Viki: Don't speak to him like that !

Rachel: You're crazy ! You sleep with him?

Viki: No...

Rachel: Viki!!

Viki: I said no! Only in the hotel. I was afraid someone would come into the room and –

Rachel: And what ? And say to himself: there's a purse full of money here, but leave it, Wow! What an amazing pitcher- maybe there's a gene inside?!

*Silence.*

Rachel: I'm going to bed.

Viki: Wait a minute Rachel. Are you going to bring him up here?

Rachel: Why 'him' ?

Viki: What?

Rachel: Why him and not her ?

Viki: I meant the... the... the fetus

Rachel: You meant "him", the son, your grandson, the male.

Viki: Do you know what it is already?

Rachel: Yup. I'm week 16, there's no doubt what it is.

Viki: Is it a boy?

Rachel: Yes. Happy now?

Viki: Very. It's just a pity Grandad won't get to know his great-grandson.

Rachel: 'What a pity'. And yes, I'll bring him up here.

*Viki bites her lips not to say anything.*

Rachel: What?

Viki: You know what he would think of it.

Rachel: I don't care what He would think of it!

Viki: What is it between you two? For once and for all tell me what you have against him? He did everything for you ! everything!

Rachel: Sure!

Viki: Ever since your father died, he brought you up as if –

Rachel: so the war's not over yet.

Viki: No.

Rachel: So now we're in his court being accused of –

Viki: O.k., so he was a bit of a..

Rachel: Dictator? Harsh man? Mean?

Viki: He was stubborn.

Rachel: If never having something nice to say, endlessly punishing and forbidding, and forever saying "no" to everything I wanted is ,in your terms, 'stubborn' – then-

Viki: He gave us money, he took care of you when I was at work, he bought you stuff.

Rachel: What about love? Loving his granddaughter? His daughter?

Viki: My Father loved me, and if because life was hard on him, he couldn't show me his feelings, so what?

Rachel: So stop wasting your life trying to please him!

Viki: A father is a father! And a mother – is a mother!

*Silence.*

Rachel: It's a girl. I've got a girl.

Viki: Then why did you tell me it was a-

Rachel: I don't know. And I'm not naming her after any martyrs like you named me, or after any dead people at all, or any battle, or state, or memory, or hope, or mercy or-

Viki: You can call her whatever you like.

*Silence.*

Viki: So you'll have a daughter?

Rachel: Happy?

Viki: Even more so.

*Silence. They don't know how to be happy next to each other.*

Rachel: Alright so...

Viki: What? Ah, yes...

Rachel: So...

Viki: So let's get some sleep?

Rachel: Yeh.

Viki: Good-night **Cheli**.

Rachel: Cheli?! Good night **Mum**

Viki: Cheli?... This album, you say, has all the write-ups about you ?

Rachel: Yeh, but it's in German... the forbidden language...

Viki: Oh, then never mind.

*Rachel disappears into her room, Viki makes sure she's alone in the lounge, puts her glasses*

*back on and opens the album. Rachel peeks in, sees her Mother looking through the album and smiles.*

## **Scene 6**

Morning. Street. Viki is walking quickly, almost running. Rachel is just behind her.

Rachel: Hang on a minute! Are you crazy or what?

Viki: I told you I didn't want to go into that shop-

Rachel: They know me there! Why did you have to push the poor girl?!

Viki: I didn't push her-

Rachel: You did! She's a saleswoman –it's her duty to help you try on the coat-

Viki: I didn't push her! I bumped into her on the way out!

Rachel: Not every blond saleswoman with a straight nose is the granddaughter of an S.S. officer you know.

Viki: No I don't know. And you don't know either.

Rachel: You're out of your mind !!!

Viki: You'll never understand. Where to now?

Rachel: *(lifts her right arm)* Right !

*Viki begins walking right.*

Rachel: Stop! Left! *(Viki, surprised by the tone, stops)* No, that way, then we can pass by the park.

Viki: What park now?! What have I lost in the park?

Rachel: It's beautiful, there's a huge square there that now, for the Weihnachten – that's Christmas –

Viki: I know what Weihnachten is. Is it shorter that way?

Rachel: Well –for the Weihnachten they made it into an ice-rink and there's an amazing food and beer market –and from there we can take the train.

Viki: So left?

*Rachel nods. Viki begins walking in the other direction.*

Rachel: Stop! Right ! Maybe we should go tRight –then on our way we could peek into the galleries and-

Viki: Rachel! Where is the nearest train?

Rachel: Take a moment, look around you. Stand still and see what a wonderful city this is. Young people from all over the world are here, there's amazing architecture, stores you can live in, culture... admit this isn't at all how you imagined Berlin.

Viki: You're right -it isn't the way I imagined it. People live here as if nothing. Work, shop, eat, drink –

Rachel: Precisely! Youngsters that aren't chained to the past, to what happened to their Grandparents-

Viki: To what happened to their Grandparents or to what their Grandparents did to yours...? Don't you feel like yelling at them?

Rachel: No.

Viki: Don't you feel like grabbing the people here by the neck and telling them that in these streets they marched your Grandfather and his little sister, and his Mother, in this city –this cursed city-

Rachel: This isn't Grandad's Berlin-it's my Berlin.

Viki: Berlin is Berlin.

*Silence.*

Rachel: You know what ? You want to shout ? Shout. Stand here and let it out! If that can help you, if that can release whatever's suffocating you... they're German, they won't say anything. Stand and shout your guts out. I'll shout with you- whatever you want, as long and as loud as you want. Come on – let's shout together, three, two, one , go-

Viki: (*quietly*) But why? Why, of all places, Germany. Why?

Rachel: We went through all this two and a half years ago. This is THE place! To be an artist here.. a dancer... it's... the artistic scene here is... I can't even put it into words..

Viki: That's a load of Rubbish!

Rachel: What's a load of rubbish? My career? Or maybe my success is a load of rubbish to you?

Viki: No, but there are enough places in the world to develop a career. You came here to ruin our relationship.

Rachel: That's what ruined our relationship? And before that we lived happily ever after? I did us a favor, it's better for us both when we're far from each other.

Viki: Do you think I enjoy not speaking to you?

Rachel: Yeh.

Viki: You really and truly believe that?

Rachel: It's about time to say so, don't you think? You and me in one room for over three minutes and we both lose it. Look at me now. I'm free, relaxed... I've begun a new life here – a good life.

Viki: When I feel bad you automatically feel good.

Rachel: I don't need you to feel bad. That's not why I moved here. I did it for me. Not against you but for me.

Viki: Living in Germany isn't against me? It's not slapping me in the face and mocking everything I believe in? You can go on and on about your new life and wrap it up in pretty words. But we both know the truth. All of it is just against me. Now, where to ? Left or right?

Rachel points left, Viki walks hurriedly to the left, Rachel in her footsteps.

### **Scene 7**

On a gravel stone path, outside the camp. Rachel is now walking in front of Viki, and the sound of her footsteps on the gravel gives Viki the creeps. She sits on a bench near the entrance to the camp.

Viki: I can't any more.

Rachel: We're almost there.

Viki: The gravel here... the smell.

Rachel: There's no smell here.

Viki: You think I'm having you on? I can't go in there again.

Rachel: I'll deal with this then, o.k.? So where are the camp-offices? There?

*Viki nods. Rachel goes through the gate into the camp. Within a few seconds Joseph goes by- he speaks immaculate English with a German accent.*

Joseph: Gutte Morgen, how are you today?

Viki: Sorry, do I know you ?

Joseph: Didn't we met in the train yesterday?... I'm the man you shouted at...

Viki: Right, I'm so sorry, really.

Joseph: It's alright. I saw you here yesterday in the camp, too. Searching for your roots?

Viki: Pardon?

Joseph: Father? Mother? Who was at our camp? Your father of mother?

Viki: Father.

Joseph: Father... it must be very difficult for you to be here.

Viki: Very.

Joseph: Maybe you would like to tell me about him? About your father? I love hearing stories about the victims.

Viki: Love?!?

Joseph: No, not "love", sorry, my English isn't good enough... I work here and I'm always looking for stories to tell to my groups.

Viki: Here? You'll tell his story here? To your groups? All your groups?

Joseph: "All" my groups? Unfortunately there aren't many. Although we have everything : Crematorium, museum, mound of ashes, but people don't know about us. We're not very popular.

Viki: Not "popular"?

Joseph: Yes, most our victims were communists.

Viki: There were Jews as well.

Joseph: Not enough! No, no, not "not enough". A few... how do you say... in compared?

Viki: In comparison?

Joseph: Comparison, yes. In comparison to other camps, sorry, my English... but we are launching a big campaign now.

Viki: Campaign? Sorry, but I find all the "popular" and "campaign" side of this very disturbing, after all-

Joseph: Sorry but business is business, you know. In Israel you call the holocaust "Shoa", right? *(Viki nods. In attempt to amuse her)* Well *–(hint to the tune of 'there's no business like show business')*"there's no business like shoa business" ... *(Viki is not amused)* What I mean is - it's an industry. There's PR, souvenir shops, salesmen, a lot of money... millions of Euro have been put down in this camp –millions! So, you see ... the 'shoa' must go on... *(Viki turns away. Muttered)*. I'm sorry. My English isn't good enough...

*Silence.*

Joseph: I'm sorry. I'm just wasting your time. Sorry. Have a good day (pause) under the circumstances, of course.

*Joseph gets up and turns towards the camp.*

Joseph: Maybe you would like to join my next group?

Viki: What group is it ? Israelis ? Survivors?

Joseph: Japanese.

Viki: Japanese?!

Joseph: You'll join us?

Viki: No, I can't go in there again. But thank-you, I appreciate it.

Joseph: What a shame.

*Joseph turns to go.*

Viki: He was 14. My father, Yaakov, when they brought him here.

Joseph: Young.

Viki: I don't know much about what happened to him here... he never spoke about it.

Joseph: One can't blame him.

Viki: Of course not. What I DO know is that they lived in Berlin with forged documents, they meaning; Him , his sister and his Mother. One day an SS officer checked their papers and began to suspect, so he gave his little sister chocolate and she told them they were Jews. Actually, because of her they were put into the camp and...

*Rachel exits the camp and comes to join them*

Viki: That much he did tell me – that she was to blame for them being put into-

Rachel: "to blame" ?! She was seven years old!

Viki: Don't interrupt! In the end my father managed to escape but his sister and Mother didn't survive.

Rachel: *(to Viki)* His secretary doesn't know where he is, but said he should have been here by now, so... *(to Joseph)* Hi.

Viki: My daughter, Rachel. And I'm Viki . This is- you didn't tell me your name –

Joseph: Joseph *(pronounced : Yozeff)*, pleased to meet you, you look very familiar...

Rachel: I'm Rachel Wolf, the prima ballerina of

Joseph: The Berlin Opera! What a pleasure it is. I'm a great fan of the ballet and- of you too.

Rachel: It's always nice to meet fans.

Viki: *(to Rachel)* Do you mind?

Joseph: *(to Viki:)* you must be very proud of her.

Viki: *(to Rachel)* Joseph works here.

Joseph: I'm the manager.

Viki: you didn't tell me you were the manager.

Joseph: You didn't ask.

Rachel: Then you're just the person we're looking for.

Joseph: How can I be of assistance to you ?

Viki: Eh.. well... Yesterday I spoke to your secretary.. about my father-

- Joseph: Oh, that was you? She told me that a woman came and requested to bury her father here...
- Viki: Not to bury, to add his ashes to your mound of ashes.
- Joseph: I don't understand.
- Rachel: Let me. His asked us to cremate his body and add the ashes to the camps' mound of ashes.
- Joseph: Ah, I see... please sit. You are aware that the ashes here are of those who were in this camp.
- Viki: He was in this camp.
- Joseph: Right, but he died after the war, and not in Germany, correct? In this mound of ashes there are only-
- Rachel: We know precisely who's in those ashes: his mother, his sister, his two grandmothers.
- Joseph: Not for sure.
- Rachel: What do you mean?
- Joseph: Not everyone who died here was cremated here. For example, there, in the woods some mass graves were found, the barbed wire was right here and many prisoners found their death right here and didn't make it to the crematorium.
- Viki: It was his last request...
- Joseph: I'm sorry madam, I cannot permit it, please understand.
- Viki: I understand... yes, of course I understand. Sorry for troubling you. Sorry.
- Rachel: I can't believe you !! Excuse me, sir, wait a minute-
- Rachel takes the pitcher out of her mothers' bag, goes after Joseph, and opens it.*
- Rachel: Look how little is left of him!
- Joseph: I see, but-
- Rachel: It won't make any difference to the pile ... a few more ashes to add to your moundain.
- Viki: Rachel, stop it ! What do you think you're doing?

- Rachel: You have thousands here, what difference will another one make? Please...
- Joseph: Miss, you must understand, there are laws and orders here! Those cremated here are part of our Mound of ashes, those that died in Israel must be buried in Israel.
- Rachel: What is it you want? Money?
- Joseph: Excuse me?
- Rachel: How much?
- Viki: Rachel !!
- Rachel: O.k. – until now I've been polite, but do you have any idea what connections I have? I'll bring journalists here, I'll write letters to the right politicians, I'll do anything and you'll see – we'll not only add my Grandfathers' asher to your fucking moundain–
- Viki: Rachel!!!
- Rachel: I'll make sure you won't work here any more.
- Joseph: Miss Wolf, I do really understand your anger.
- Rachel: Yeh. " You understand" ?! How German of you.
- Viki: Stop with it immediately. (to the manager) I apologize . Truly.
- Joseph: The fact that you love your grandfather is very good. If you want to use your connections –please do, it might even help. I cannot permit it. Madam

*Joseph nods his head towards Viki who nods her head in reply.*

Joseph: (to Rachel) Miss...

*He now nods his head towards Rachel. She clicks her heels, like a Nazi soldier. Joseph takes a deep breath and leaves.*

- Rachel: Stinking Nazi!
- Viki: Tell me, have you gone mad? I've never been so ashamed in my life! What do mean behaving like that? Threatening him like that ?
- Rachel: At least I didn't suck up to him.
- Viki: I didn't 'suck up'! I did everything I could, I tried everything without being barbaric like you –

Rachel: That you call "trying"? You stood there and apologized for being alive, like some poor little petrified Jew, in the ghetto!

### **Scene 8**

Rachel's apartment. Viki's finishing packing her suitcase. Rachel enters with a take-away box.

Rachel: I bought us some restaurant food... don't worry it's a Jewish restaurant...  
What are you doing?

Viki: It was a mistake coming here in the first place .

Rachel: Coming to Germany or coming to me ?

Viki: I'm going back to the hotel. I'll never forgive you for what you said to me at the camp.

Rachel: You're leaving, right? So there's no point in spilling it all out now.

Viki: Don't you even realize how awful what you said to me is? To say that I'm...  
I'm a – what you said... is... I, that all ,my life I-

Rachel: Ok. Just spare me you clichés now.

Viki: Clichés?

Rachel: Yes. The second generation clichés. That's what you are.

Viki: You will not tell me that I'm a cliché !

Rachel: If it walks like a duck, looks like a duck and-

Viki: My life is not a cliché, and my pain is not a cliché! It's real and it's mine and only mine!

Rachel: Right, you're not a cliché, Grandad loved you, and his request isn't crazy at all.

Viki: His request isn't crazy at all. He was completely lucid when he requested it. Despite the Alzheimer. As clear and coherent as can be. I was giving him a bath when I suddenly felt how he... how his body go stiff, I asked him 'what's wrong?' and he looked at me... his eyes so clever, so brown, so sad... and he

said to me : A daughter shouldn't be giving her father a bath. He began to cry . My father never cried. I told him that I'm happy giving him a bath, really happy, but he put his hands on his.. he doubled over and asked for a towel.

Then he asked to get dressed alone. Insisted. You know how stubborn he was, but I needed to put his diaper, I had to, really Rachel, I had no choice. So... I told him I'd close my eyes. And I put on the diaper. Then he said to me: "Will you do something for me?", anything Daddy, and he said in a strong clear voice: Take me back home. I was perplexed, I didn't understand, then he said he wanted me to add his ashes to the ashes at the camp. Then he went to sleep, his usual 'Shlafstuder', and when he woke up he was back to... he was a shell again, an empty shell without my Daddy inside.

Rachel: You never told me.

Viki: You never asked.

Rachel: So what do we do with his will now?

Viki: I don't know, I just know that that's what he wanted.

Rachel: You know what I think? That you don't really want to part from him. You want to keep him by you, at home.

Viki: You think so?

Rachel: Yeah, otherwise why all this obsession with his commemoration? The book, the scholarship, the library...

Viki: He's an important man.

Rachel: He was a harsh man.

Viki: He's a respected Judge and a renowned publicist and-

Rachel: And he's dead.

Viki: I know he's dead!

Rachel: Then let him go!

Viki: I can't. You know, when the doctor said "Alzheimer" I thought to myself that at long last he wouldn't be so in control, and begin talking. I thought I might hear the stories he hid from me all these years . I prayed he'd go back to be a child- that happens sometimes to Alzheimer patients...they go back and their memories become their reality...but even when he went back to his

childhood –he remained silent. I still don't know what happened to him and I can't part from him until I know who he was.

Rachel: But you'll never know who he was, so you're never going to part from him?

*There's a loud knock on the door.*

Nezach: (v.o. from outside- in German) Yudden ! Rouse! (= Jews out)

*Rachel and Viki are scared for a second, until Nezach walks in.*

Nezach: Now let's have a big round of applause for tonight's star... Nezach!!! Give us a hug you potato!

Rachel: Oh, shut up Froggie!

Nezach: Great to see you too... (looks at her stomach) Are you kidding me? Your belly's as flat as a doormat!

*Rachel and Nezach hug each other.*

Viki: What are you doing here?

Nezach: All my family's having a good time in Berlin and I'm gonna stay at home?

Viki: "Good time"?

Nezach: Good cry. All my family's having a good cry in Berlin and I'm stuck at home... Mum, you're not really angry about me coming to Germany?

Viki: No.

Nezach: And that I used your credit-card to pay for the ticket?

Viki: No.

Nezach: I also had a little accident with your car yesterday. The bumper bar is

Viki: Never mind angel...

Rachel: I feel sick...

Nezach: So... what's with Grandad?

Viki: I didn't do it?

Nezach: 'coz it was too hard?

- Rachel: They didn't allow us . We spoke to the manager of the camp but he wouldn't permit it.
- Viki: We didn't "speak to him". Your sister opened her big mouth and gave him such lip- he'll never allow us to do it... unless, maybe you try to persuade him?
- Rachel: Why do you think he'll manage to persuade him?
- Viki: You know your brother- people fall in love with him in seconds- he's a charmer, not like you and me.
- Rachel: I'm also a charmer!
- Viki: Yes, of course, you also have charm. That's what I meant.
- Nezach: No, Cheli- you have nothing. You're unloveable. Just a body that takes oxygen from it's surroundings...
- Viki: Come on, Nezzi, you're a brilliant boy, concentrate and think up something for us!
- Nezach: Ok, ok, ok.... First of all we don't need a permit, we don't need to talk at all. We'll do it the IKEA way!
- Rachel: Put Grandad back together with nuts and bolts?
- Nezach: Almost... Do It Yourself- let's take a tour around the camp and when we get to the Mound of ashes, you keep the watchman busy –do your "artistic dance" or something, I'll set Grandad free. And you say Kaddish (=mourning prayer said at burials). Sababa?
- Rachel: A woman can't say Kaddish.
- Nezzach: That's your problem- you're too square.
- Rachel: And I thought my problem was that I have a brilliant brother...
- Viki: It's a good idea.
- Rachel: Surprise- surprise (*Viki looks at her*) ... You worship every burp of his...
- Viki: But I don't think I'll come with you to the camp. I can't go back there again.
- Nezach: So Cheli and I will go.
- Viki: Rachel?

Rachel: Fine. But now.

Nezzach: Why now? Let me rest, wash my face... I want to talk to Mum... Mum, I'm starving!

Viki: Of course darling, do you want me to make you pancakes in shapes?

Nezach: Sababa! With butter and maple syrup?

Viki: *(to Rachel)* Do you have Maple syrup?

Rachel: Oh! We're just out of maple...

Viki: I'll go and buy some.

Rachel: No Jewish people have shops around here ...

Viki: What do I need Jewish people for now?

Rachel: All of a sudden it makes no difference ?

Viki: Why? Why did I forget the maple syrup at home?

Nezach: Mum, the pancakes aren't gonna fry themselves...

Viki: Sure, sure love, coming right up. Who would have believed that here of all places we'd have a family reunion. You tell me if it's not pure revenge.

Nezach: Mother-fucker revenge.

Viki: Mother fucker revenge for sure...

Rachel: Mother-fucker for sure.

### **Scene 9**

Train carriage. Rachel and Nezach are on their way from the city to the camp.

Nezach: So after we scatter Grandad's ashes in the camp, and now that you've made up with Mum-

Rachel: I haven't made up with her . It's just a cease fire.

Nezach: Sababa. Cease fire. What now? Are you coming home? Or staying here?

Rachel: Why should I come home?

Nezach: 'coz your daughter might fancy growing up with Grandma Viki and Uncle Froggie by her side?

Rachel: Ah... I don't know. I mean, I never thought of that .

Nezach: Well think of it now.

Rachel: Don't push!

Nezach: I'm not pushing. I'm asking.

Rachel: Look... I don't intend giving up what I have here. I haven't told you yet but I got a really tempting offer after the last write up in the paper.

Nezach: What offer?

Rachel: Dachau!

Nezach: Dachau?!

Rachel: To dance in Dachau.

Nezach: Yeah... what Jew wouldn't want to dance in Dachau?

Rachel: Retard. In the city Dachau. They offered me to open my own dance troupe and be the solo dancer...

Nezach: So what d'ya mean "I don't know"? You're staying. Cheli, I came here to do everything I could to help you and Mum make up so you could come home. I need you to take over. I also wanna do something with my life. I'm gonna be 30 and I'm fucking fed up of dressing up as a chicken and giving out pamphlets. I need to start my life sometime...

Rachel: Just do it.

Nezach: What about her? Every Friday she'll sit alone by the table? What if something happens to her and she needs help?

Rachel: So that's the story you're telling yourself? That she needs you? You're stuck Froggie, not because she needs you but because you need her. You're still Mummy's baby- (puts her hand to her lower lip) Wipe the milk!

Nezach: What? (for a split second begins to wipe his lips then realizes) I'm not Mummy's baby! You know what? Forget it, forget what I said.

*The ticket inspector enters their carriage. As she gets close Nezach notices her Arian beauty.*

Inspector: (in German) Fercarten Bite

*Rachel gives her the ticket. Nezach looks for his ticket in his Jacket pockets.*

Rachel: You put in your back pocket.

Nezach: (whispers to Rachel) shut up .

Inspector: (German) Ticket please.

*Nezah stands and walks up to the ticket-inspector, lifting his arms slowly like a child who gives in.*

Nezah: (English) I don't know where I put it, maybe you can help me find it.

*For a moment it's not clear whether she's going to slap him or smile. She smiles. Nezach smiles back. Rachel takes the ticket out of his back pocket and hands it to the inspector.*

Inspector: (broken English) I sink ve haf made you vife mad

Nezach: Her ? My wife? No way. She's my sister, very sad story. She has mental problems, I'm taking care of her. Actually I prefer blondes with a heartbreaking smile. Do you happen to know one?  
(introduces himself) Nezach, you can call me Nezzi.

Inspector: Nazi?!

Nezach: No. No. No. Ne-zach.

Inspector: (thinks she's correcting him) Gut Nacht.

Nezach: Let's go for Justin.

Inspector: Go? To where?

Rachel: Justin ? Where did you get that one?

Nezach: Shut up! (to Katia) Justin. Just Justin.

Inspector: (gives him back his ticket) Gutte, 'just Justin' (turns to go)

Nezach: You forgot something... you didn't give me your number.

*The Inspector smiles, tarries a moment then takes out a pen and walks back to Nezach. He holds out his ticket, she takes his hand –intending to write her number on his Palm.*

Nezach: No, here it's no good, it'll rub off with the sweat. Better here...

*He gives her his arm, by his watch, there she writes her phone number. (in precisely the*

*place holocaust survivors have their 'numbers' imprinted). Rachel is shocked, the inspector smiles and leaves.*

Rachel: Are you sick in the head?

Nezach: Why? What's wrong?

Rachel: *(grabs his arm wand exposes the number)* This is what's wrong!

Nezach: Cool it !

Rachel: Cool what!? You've been here less than two hours and you're already dating a German.

Nezach : You don't get my tactics. I, 'just Justin' , mother-fucker charmer, am going to knock out those German chicks one by one. A drop of beer, a few pangs of collective conscience- and hey! I'm gonna fuck 'em so hard, they're gonna be sorry for what their Grandfathers did to our Grandfather...

Rachel: Can you leave Grandad out of your sex fantasies?

Nezach: Who do you think taught me everything I know?

Rachel: Grandad? Bullshit! He spoke to you about things like that? He must have loved you the son-of-a-bitch, eh? Do you miss him?

Nezach: Yeah. A lot.

*Silence.*

Nezach: Ok, Cheli, we had a laugh, had a cry, had some fun, what's the next stop?

Rachel: I don't get it .

Nezach: Do I look like someone who's gonna begin his first trip to Germany in an extermination camp?!

Rachel: You prick.

Nezach: You go there, see what you can do...

Rachel: And you?

Nezach: Me? I'm going to call *(looks at the number on his arm)* Katia ...

Rachel: Very funny, no way .

Nezach: C'mon, if I get off at the next station, what's there to see? What can I do in the area?

Rachel: I'm not answering!

Nezach: C'mon!

Rachel: Not answering you!

Nezach: I'll embarrass you !

*Rachel pays no attention and Nezach sits on her knees and starts bouncing up and down.*

Nezach: What's in this area ?! What's in this area?!

Rachel: Ow! ! Get off me !

Nezach: What's in this area ?! What's in this area?! What's in this area ?!

Rachel: People don't behave like that here !

Nezach: What's in this area ?! What's in this area?! What's –

Rachel: Ahhhhhhhh....! (she doubles over in pain and holds her stomach) You're crushing the baby –

Nezach: Sorry, sorry, Cheli are you ok? ... Rachel! I'll come to the camp with you, just tell me you're ok...

*Rachel begins laughing, he realizes she tricked him*

Nezach: .... Crazy...

Rachel: I'm glad you're here.

Nezach: 'coz you can't breathe without me?

Rachel: Because tomorrow I have a performance, and you'll come and see me .

Nezach: OOF! You love yourself so much...

Rachel: Someone has to...

## **Scene 10**

Outside the camp. Rachel and Nezach leave the camp, distraught Nezach is hugging the pitcher with the ashes.

Nezach: A glass wall. How didn't I even imagine that they'd put it behind a glass wall?

Rachel: I feel sick.

Nezach: Of course they keep the ashes behind glass What fools we are.

Rachel: Do you realize that if this is all that's left of Grandpa (*demonstrates a handful with her hands*) and there there's (*holds her arms out wide*)

Nezach: You've been in Berlin for two and a half years, d'you mean to tell me it's the first time you've-

Rachel: Yeh.

Nezach: How comes?

Rachel: If you'd live here, you'd understand. That's not Berlin. It's really not Berlin.

*Silence.*

Rachel: So what do we do now?

Nezach: Go back.

Rachel: No. That's no good, she'll continue dedicating him her whole life.

*Rachel takes the pitcher and opens it.*

Nezach: What are you doing?

Rachel: Setting Grandad free...

Nezach: What?! Here?!

Rachel: What difference does it make where? This whole camp is a Mound of Jewish ashes!

Nezach: Have you lost it, or what? Can you hear yourself?

Rachel: I have no choice!

Nezach: (*takes back the pitcher*) You can't decide something like that alone! What will Mum say? Or d'you want to lie to her?

Rachel: Yeh!

Nezach: I don't intend lying to her!

Rachel: It's for her own sake.

Nezach: Bulls. It's for you.

Rachel: We've got to free her of him! I'm going to have a little girl Froggi, and if I don't patch up my relationship with Mum now, if even now she's blind to me because of him-

Nezach: Because of Grandad ?

Rachel: Yes, because of Grandad-

*Joseph comes running out of the camp with a carton file*

Joseph: Hello, I saw you entering the camp from the window of my office.

Rachel: This is my brother, Nezach. This is Joseph the manager here.

Nezach: Ah, the manager... (*shakes his hand*) pleased to meet you.

Joseph: Your mother is here too, yes ?

Rachel: No.

Joseph: What a pity... it's just that... after you both left , I felt I may not have been sensitive enough to your situation, so I looked in our archive for material concerning your family

Nezach: Our family ?

Rachel: Did you find anything?

Joseph: Yes, a few things. I thought your Mother was here with you so I brought the material.. I would be glad if she comes in tomorrow morning and-

Rachel: But she's going back tomorrow.

Joseph: Oh, what a pity

Rachel: But we can tell her. Will you show us please?

Joseph: Of course, of course... (*opens the file and takes out a single document*) this is a copy of the transform form, here... Yaakov Stern... your grandfather, and... Sarah Stern.?

Rachel: His mother.

Joseph: and Rachel Stern.

Rachel: His little sister.

*Joseph looks at Rachel.*

- Rachel: Yes, I was honored to be named after her... My grandfather loved me so much, that he wanted to name me after his 'guilty' little sister..
- Joseph: That's very touching. They arrived at the camp on the 10<sup>th</sup> of August, 1944 – *(takes out a new document)* his Mother worked in one of the factories of the camp, his little sister too. It was a factory of weapons and little girls-they have little fingers that can easily clean the bullet cases of the guns.
- Rachel: That's awful!
- Joseph: Yes, it is. *(a new document)* on the 18<sup>th</sup> of December... the factory was demolished... and all those who worked in it , including his mother and... little sister ... were sent to the gas chambers.
- Nezach: Do you get it ? It was less than half a year to the end of the war...
- Joseph: Yes.. *(deeply examining a document)*
- Rachel: What's that?
- Joseph: The crematorium stopped working in December that same year, from there they took most of the ashes for our 'mound of ashes'.. it may well be, although I cannot be 100 percent sure, that the ashes of your family are really amongst our ashes.
- Rachel: So.. we were right. They're here. Now you can let us add Grandad's ashes...
- Joseph: No. I'm sorry.
- Rachel: Well, anyway, thank-you. Mum will be glad to hear more information about her family.
- Nezach: Is there anything else?
- Joseph: No, these are only internal books from our archive, there are the names of all those who requested to find out more about their relatives. There are also the dates in which your Grandfather himself visited our archive and the details he requested to find out.
- Nezach: What ?! what are you talking about?
- Rachel: It must be a mistake. There were no "dates our Grandfather visited your archive" .
- Joseph: Here it is written. "to the request of....." Oh! sorry. We are well organized but also make mistakes.

- Rachel: For sure, because our Grandfather never came back here after the war.
- Joseph: Yes, it was someone else who asked for the material. Not your Grandfather. Someone named (reads from the paper) Yaakov Cnaan. The judge Yaakov Cnaan? How is he connected to your family?
- Nezach: Yaakov Cnaan is our Grandfather. He changed his name from Stern to Cnaan when he emigrated to Isarel.
- Rachel: Are you sure? He was here , in Berlin?! When?
- Joseph: *(looks at the document)* In 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007... always in the same week of August. I knew him actually. What a figure. Maybe the only celebrity-survivor from our camp. I also met your Grandmother, a lovely couple.
- Rachel: Just a minute , he was here, you say, in 2004 with our "Grandmother"?
- Joseph: Yes. Also in 2005, 2006 and-
- Rachel: Our Grandmother died in 1998.

### **Scene 11**

Rachel's apartment.

- Rachel: Can you believe it ?! Do you understand your Holy Judge ?! say something.
- Viki: What do you want me to say? It must be a mistake.
- Rachel: We saw his name.
- Viki: It could be a different Yaakov Cnaan. There are a few , you know.
- Rachel: Who asked to see information about our family? Mum, Joseph remembers him, he told us that every year, in the summer, when Grandad arrived at-
- Viki: Every summer Grandad went to a law conference in Belgium.
- Rachel: That's what he told you. He was here in Berlin. Joseph would take him out to restaurants, cafes, the opera, the ballet! Grandad saw ballets here in Berlin!
- Viki: My father would never have come back here. I know him .

Rachel: all of a sudden you know him? I'm telling her

Nezach: Don't you dare!

Rachel: You know -he even had a mistress here.

Nezach: Shut up!

Rachel: Some German whore!

Nezach: What do you think you're doing?!

Rachel: He introduced her as his wife, your mother, our Grandmother!

Nezach: He never said that he introduced her as a Grandmother, Joseph just gathered it, but he didn't say that-

Rachel: Who's side are you on ?

Nezach: What is it with you? Everything in this family becomes war? We have to take sides?

Rachel: Chicken! *(to Viki)* Don't you see he ran a double life! Wake up!

Viki: Tell your sister to calm down please. And if possible to be less pleased with herself and the rubbish she's saying.

Rachel: Even now you won't admit that I was right, that all my life I was right. He was a hypocritical bastard and a liar.

Viki: *(to Nezach)* See what I mean? All she wants is for me to say she was right.

Rachel: where are you going?

Viki: I need to pack. I have a flight tomorrow morning. *(to Nezach)* I suggest you pack too, because we're going home.

Rachel: The glass wall isn't in the camp, it's right here. Between me and her, and it's also impossible to break.

Viki: Nezach please go and pack.

Rachel: He's not packing because he knows you're acting crazy.

Viki: *(to Nezach)* You're not getting up? Are you staying here with her?

Rachel: Yeh, he's staying with me, so for once in your life you can see how it feels when the whole family turns their back on you-

- Viki: Nezach, if you don't get up right now, I'm not-
- Nezach: Enouououough!!! Both of you stop throwing your shit on me. I don't want to be stuck in the middle any more, enough! I've been stuck there all my life. You – Cheli isn't lying. (*puts Joseph's card on the table*) This is Joseph's card, speak to him yourself. And you- a little, tiny bit of sensitivity, tact, stop thinking of how right you are and think of the what she's going through now.
- Viki: Where are you going?
- Nezach: I'm such a fool for thinking that if I came here... you two... hopeless. Nothing's gonna save this family.
- Rachel: Where to ?
- Nezach: Far away from both of you!
- Viki: You don't know anything here ! You'll get lost...!
- Nezach: I wanna get lost ! Don't wait up.
- Viki: Nezach!
- He leaves slamming the door .*
- Viki: Look what you've done?
- Rachel: Me?
- Viki: If you turn him against me, I'll never forgive you, never.
- Rachel: You'll never forgive me?! You? You're the one who should be apologizing to me, especially now that you know Grandad came back here-
- Viki: I don't know any-
- Rachel: You do know! Even now you can't look me in the eye and say sorry for two and a half years of silence? No, not for two and a half years, for a life time of not seeing me... not loving me because of Grandpa.
- Viki: I don't love you ? Because of him? You can't hear what you're saying.
- Rachel: Grandpa never loved me because I wasn't good enough for him, wasn't successful enough or clever enough or God knows what. And instead of standing up to him and protecting me, instead of loving me twice as much to make up for it, and make up for Dad dying, you joined his party, tried to gain

another few points on my back. Because it was more important for you to be a "good daughter" than a "good mother"!

'Nothing will come out of you if you carry on with that dancing of yours'... Look at me now Mum, nothing came out of me? I'm the fucking solo dancer of the Deutsch Opera of Berlin! And even now when you know that he poisoned you against me all my life, that he was a miserable man and a liar, even now you just can't say sorry, to tell me for the first time in your life that you're proud of me, that you love me.

*Silence.*

Viki: Have you finished? I need to pack.

*Viki goes to the room to pack.*

Rachel: Is that all you have to say to me?

Viki: What do you expect me to say? You're dealing with words. They're only words.

Rachel: They're not only words!

Viki: You had a warm home, you had everything you needed, I took two jobs simultaneously to make sure you had everything you wanted, I paid for your ballet lessons, drove you to rehearsals, bought you new ballet shoes every three months- that's love. Not words. That's the way to love.

Rachel: That's not the way to love.

Viki: That's how I was loved and that's the only way I know how to love!

*Silence.*

*Rachel puts on her coat and takes her bag.*

Rachel: I'm leaving now, I'll be back in an hour, please don't be here when I return. Go back to your hotel, sleep on the floor of the airport for all I care, just be gone.

*Rachel leaves, Viki picks up Joseph's card.*

**Scene 12**

Nezach is sitting on a bench outside the camp. There are two empty beer cans by his feet and he's drinking a third. Katia enters – her English is very bad, and she finds it difficult to follow.

Katia: Here you 'Just Justin' ... I be looking for you in all places.

Nezach: Katia! Dankenshein... Frankenstein... Danka – thanks. Thanks for coming to get me.

Katia: Why is you want I should bring you from here.

Nezach: Why did I ask you to pick me up from here? Because I got lost, and this is the only place I know in this fucking city.

Katia: Come up we go from here. This place is scare me.

Nezach: Being on this side of the fence scares you? Do you know what it's like on the other of the fence?

Katia: I not understand...

Nezach: Do you know what's on the other side of this fence?

Katia: Yes, it voz communist prison.

Nezach: Communist prison? *(to himself)* Grandad, what've you sent me? A reincarnation of Anna Frank? *(to Katia)* My Grandfather was there.

Katia: So? Your Grandfader is communist?

Nezach: He was better than a communist – he was a Jew! You know he was my best friend and he never told me that he came to Berlin every year, toured, celebrated, had fun, even had a German girlfriend.

Katia: You haf Deutsch girlfriend?

Nezach: My grandfather! Aren't you listening? *(to himself)* So pretty – so dumb *(to Katia)* and now my sister and Mother are arguing who he fucked up most...

Katia: He fuck your Mutter und Schwester?!?

Nezach: Yeh. NO!!! 'coz he didn't tell them his secret they're arguing who got it worse...

Katia: But secrets not tell...

Nezach: Yeh, but living with a secret like that all his life... I pity him.

Katia: Vy?

Nezach: Why what?

Katia: Vot?

Nezach: What vot? Why do you say what?! What're all these questions? Are you from the Gestapo?

Katia: Gestapo I understand! Bye.

Nezach: No, Katia, you don't understand. (*lies:*) In Hebrew when we want to say someone is really beautiful, we say she's 'gistapo'. GIS-TA-PO . You're very very beautiful!

Katia: Ah, I not know dis. Just Justin you very very Gistapo ...

Nezach: Thanks baby, thanks.

Katia: We come up to me is gut?

*Katia gets up but Nezach remains seated, troubled.*

Katia: Let's cut dis bull first ya? Why you are pity him? He come every year, had fun, tour , girlfriend. Why you pity him?

Nezach: I'll tell you why. 'coz... 'coz... fuck! That son-of-a-bitch! He knew how to live! He took hold of life by the balls and lived! Get it ?

Katia: Yes!! (*pause*) No... We go.

Nezach: Yeh, sure...

*Nezach grabs her hand and pulls her in one direction.*

Nezach: Grandpa! (*points at Katia*) –this one's for you...

Katia: But train is there!

Nezach: Me and my people have had enough of your trains, thanks...let's go here, to the woods...

Katia: No! Woods no good! Too much people dead dere.

Nezach: That's ok, I see dead people all the time... it's time we give them a reason to live, don't you think? C'mon my little gistapo, c'mon...

*They leave.*

**Scene 13**

Viki and Joseph are sitting in a restaurant. Viki is reading the file Joseph brought with him.

Viki: Here, this I can't comprehend, I've been wandering around here for four days, every breath of German air has stabbed me because he taught me that Hell remains Hell- even if Sony and Mitte have been built in it. And here, he's been here, and enjoyed himself. He did enjoy himself didn't he?

Joseph: He loved Berlin very much. We toured around a lot, in cafes, restaurants and he specially loved this place, said the food here reminds him of his childhood... look Viki, your father, he was –

Viki: *(interrupts)* He was. And is no longer. Gone. Now he's an ashtray.

*Silence.*

Viki: And the woman?

Joseph: What about her?

Viki: The woman he was with, did he smile at her? Hug her? Touch her? Kiss her?

Joseph: I think so...

Viki: You know I can't remember him ever kissing my Mother? He loved her, I'm not saying he didn't. But –

Joseph: Look, he was a very warm man. Very romantic. That you must know.

Viki: I don't. All I know is that he let me live a lie, all my life I missed so much for his sake, even my own daughter I missed because of him, and in the end what? He walks around here like Valentino De-La-Shmatte, bloody liar.

Joseph: My father was a liar too. He told me he was simply a soldier but it turns out he was much more than that. And I hated him for it... I tried to run away, I emigrated to Israel, volunteered on a kibbutz, became Jewish, married an Israeli woman, I tried to be more Israeli than Israelis... for ten years. I failed. You know why? Because deep inside I so missed being a German and I was ashamed of myself and my longings. And please don't misunderstand me,

but : Once a German - always a German. (*pause*) I think that is precisely what happened to your father.

*Viki smiles to herself.*

Viki: I said to Rachel this morning that I couldn't part from him until I knew who he was... I think I'm just beginning to get the picture. Thanks Joseph. Thank-you very much. You've really helped me. And if one day the rules at the camp change and I can add his ashes - then -

Joseph: I know the Germans. They don't change rules so quickly. But if I did learn something in Israel –it's that the Jewish mind can find a way to bend everything - even the German laws and rules...

#### **Scene 14**

Rachel arrives at the bench outside the camp. A few seconds later Nezach arrives.

Rachel: Oh- did Mum text you too, to get to the camp a.s.a.p?

Nezach: (*cynical*) No, I just love coming to extermination camps in the middle of the night...

Rachel: Do you have any idea what she wants?

Nezach: No, I just know she disturbed me taking Grandpa's revenge...

Rachel: What?

Nezach: Never mind...

*Rachel notices the empty beer cans that Nezach left there earlier.*

Rachel: Look... they don't have the tiniest bit of respect for what happened here.

Nezach: Disgusting... I'll throw them away.

Rachel: No, don't touch them-

Nezach: Why not?

Rachel: Let people see. Inside there are monuments of what the Germans did here 80 years ago- this is a monument of what the Germans did here this evening. Disgusting.

Nezach: Disgusting.

*Viki enters.*

Nezach: What's going on?

Viki: Joseph will help us.

Nezach: What does that mean?

Viki: Later...Where's Grandad?

*Rachel takes the pitcher out of her bag and gives it to Nezach.*

Rachel: Good luck, bye .

Nezach: Where are you off to?

Rachel: Home

Viki: Wait

*Rachel stops. Viki doesn't know where to begin.*

Viki: You danced really nicely.

Rachel: What?

Viki: I *was* at your show two days ago, and you danced really well.

Rachel: Is that your way of apologizing?

Viki: Yes. (*pause*) and telling you that I'm really proud of you.

Rachel: That's about as much as I'll get, eh?

Viki: I'm too old to change. That's my way.

*Silence.*

Rachel: He's not German- the father of my child.

Nezach: But you said his name was Jan.

Rachel: Yeh, Yan. Yan Show Yung. He's a Chinese dancer.

Nezach: *(jokingly)* The father of your daughter fries noodles? You're gonna give birth to a masseur?!

Viki: Nezach, speak nicely to your sister!

Nezach: Whoa...

*Joseph enters*

Joseph: Come, I've organized everything.

Nezach: Operation Grandpa begins....

*Rachel pinches her brother. Viki leaves first, Joseph, Rachel and Nezach right behind her.*

### **Scene 15**

Beside the large glass wall in front of the ashes- Joseph enters first, Viki behind him and Rachel and Nezach follow.

Viki: Wow... I feel awful.

Rachel: What a stink.

Joseph: That's why we put the glass wall. Look, in order to reach the ashes beyond the glass wall, you need to go that way. And don't touch anything... If you want, Nezach, I have here the Kaddish... I'll wait for you by the gate.

Viki: Thank-you, Joseph.

Joseph: My pleasure. Good luck.

*Joseph leaves.*

Rachel: Shall we...?

*Nezach and Rachel begin walking in, Viki stops them.*

Viki: Wait a minute.

Rachel: Mum? This is what you wanted, no?

- Viki: It's what he wanted.
- Rachel: Yeh, but you. What do you want ?
- Viki: Me? I want to tell him everything you told me. Everything I didn't have the courage to demand of him. I want to know why it was more important for him to be a here, with his mother than in a place where his daughter can come to him, to understand why it was more important for him to be a good son than a good father.
- Nezach: Mum?
- Viki: And now he's going to be part of this moundain of ashes. What does that mean? That he thought his life was over when he was a child? That everything that happened since meant nothing to him? Where does that leave me? And you? And my Mother? Does it mean he didn't love us?
- Nezach: Mum, let's go in.
- Rachel: Wait. Do you want us to do this?
- Viki: I want him to have a grave. With a gravestone. And his name. I want a place Where I can to talk to him or yell at him. Here, I can't yell at him.
- Rachel: So let's not do it.
- Nezach: What is it with you both?! This is what he wanted.
- Rachel: But he's dead and now Mum wants something else.
- Nezach: Oh, give me a break!
- Viki: Look, Nezach, the people here are nameless, you Grandfather had a name, he had a family. We'll put a gravestone up with his name, and we'll come once a year to put little stones on his grave, and people will know, they'll see that Yaakov Cnaan Stern had a life after the holocaust. He had a family. He had a daughter, and two grandchildren and he'll have a greatgranddaughter. Life goes on. We're going home.
- Nezach: But Grandad insisted, he said that-
- Viki: Now I'm saying. He's not the only stubborn one in the family.
- Nezach and Rachel don't move.*
- Viki: We're going home.

Rachel: But... where's home?

Viki: Wherever you choose.

*Rachel gives her mother the pitcher, but Viki doesn't manage to grasp it , and it slips from her hands and breaks to pieces on the floor. A strong wind blows the ashes . The cloud of ashes disperses in the wind. The whole family begins laughing and crying.*

Rachel: So stubborn Grandad, so stubborn...

*Rachel hugs Viki, Nezach takes the mourning-prayer scroll and a kippa (yarmulke) out of his pocket and begins saying "Kaddish"\*.*

Nezach: "Yitkadal V'yitkadash Shmey Raba" (trans. Extolled and hallowed be His great name in the world)

Rachel and Viki: Amen

*Nezach begins to cry and cannot continue. Viki takes the scroll and continues.*

Viki: "Be'alma Di Bera Kir'uta veyamlich Malchutey Bechayechon Uveyom Echon Be'agala uvizman kariv ve'imru Amen" (trans. =He has created according to His will; and may His sovereignty be extended in the days of your lives, as in those of all the houses of Israel, soon, at a time that is at hand; and you say : Amen)

Amen

*Fade to black.*

END

*\* Kaddish- the Jewish mourning prayer written in the ancient Aramaic language. On stage it can be read as the original prayer or in a mixture of Aramaic. and English because the content of the prayer is relevant to the content of the play.*