

Goren Agmon

CAFÉ ARAVA

GOREN AGMON

Plays by Goren Agmon:

Newsflash

A letter to Noa

Street Cat

Caesarea – A weekend

THE CHARACTERS

Avner –	40, Born on kibbutz, returns crippled from Yom Kippur War
Gili -	30, Nurse and physiotherapist
Miriam -	60, Gaia's grandmother, Ricki's mother (Avner's wife)
Nadav -	40, Kibbutz Secretary, childhood friend of Avner
Gaia -	12-13, Avner and Ricki's daughter
Diana -	25, Dutch volunteer, teaches music on the kibbutz, Nadav's girlfriend.
The Adult Gaia -	27

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Goren Agmon

GOREN AGMON

"OR-AM"

ACT ONE

SCENE 1

PRESENT

Gas station – Snack bar, two dilapidated pumps.

Background screen with Arava desert landscape.

Gili and the adult Gaia.

Gili: (On the phone) **We've got no eggs, vegetables...
Oil, nothing! What a success!
One bus of soldiers cleaned out
the whole place! Wait a second,
'll check exactly what's missing.**

(Exits stage. The adult Gaia limps on, stops on the path
and looks towards the gas station)

Gaia: **Anybody here?**

(No answer)

Gaia: (Raising her voice) **Anybody!!! Is there anyone here?**

Gili: (Gili returns, still talking on the phone) **Yes...
Can I help you?** (Gaia collapses)
(Into phone) **I'll get right back to you!**
(Runs to her) **What's happened...? Don't move...
Are you alright?**

Gaia: (Comes round slowly and attempts to sit up)
I'm not sure...

Gili: **Wait a second, I'll get some water.**

(Gaia succeeds in sitting up, Gili returns with a bottle of water, Gaia drinks thirstily)

Gili: **You're dehydrated...**

Gaia: **I've no idea... traveled around for about four hours, then the air conditioning died, after that the radio went kaput, then the engine went up in smoke, I pulled up opposite some hill. At least I think it was a hill, then suddenly the car started rolling, and my foot... ah my foot...**

Gili: **Come, let's go inside** (Gili takes the bag from Gaia, then folds Gaia's arm around her shoulders and helps her to walk to the station. She brings her a seat and places another under her leg) **Sit down, raise your leg up.** (Gaia emits a faint cry, Gili studies her leg and treats it)

Gili: **You found a fine place to get injured!**

Gaia: **You're right there. Where the hell am I?**

Gili: **Between Mizpe Ramon and Maaleh Akravim...**
(Looks at the wound, gently moves the ankle, Gaia cries out in pain)

Gili: **Can you move your toes?**

Gaia: **No way.**

Gili: **I'll put you on the first truck...**

Gaia: **What? Is it as bad as that?**

Gili: **Maybe a broken ankle, I don't have anything except for first aid...**

Gaia: (Looks around) **Middle of nowhere...
Wherever you look – it's all the same.**

Gili: That's right.
Gaia: What is this place? Some kind of gas station?
Didn't even see a sign...
Only noticed it by accident...

Gili: What will you have to drink?

Gaia: You should put a big sign on the main road.

Gili: And you should get to a clinic...
What will you drink?

Gaia: Whatever...
I'm dying of hunger...

Gili: That's a bit of a problem...
Wait, I'll try and find something...
Don't move that leg...

(Gili goes out, Gaia gets up and studies the place.
She notices a hat that belonged to her. She circles the
chair from the right, Gili returns, Gaia speedily seats herself)

Gili: (Serves her coffee) **The toast will be ready
in a few minutes...**

Gaia: (Looking around) **Looks like a bomb hit this place...**

Gili: **It was rented out over the last few years...
to someone who didn't care, it needs rebuilding.**

Gaia: **So make a sign - they'll see it from the road...**

Gili: (Assertively) **Lift your leg up...**
(Gaia places her leg on the chair)

Gaia: **You really know your stuff...**

Gili: **I'm a nurse... I mean I was once...**

**It's swelling... Couldn't you get injured
in a more built-up area?**

Gaia: **I was on my way from the Jordan Valley.
Trying to get to Eilat. As you can see, I didn't make it...**

(Pause, Gaia drinks)

Gaia: **So where were you then?**

Gili: **When?**

Gaia: **You said that over the
last few years you weren't...**

Gili: **In the hospital...**

Gaia: **Nursing...?**

Gili: **No, no... with... my husband.**

Gaia: **Sorry - didn't mean to be nosy.**

(Gili smells something burning)

Gili: **Shit! The toast is burning!!!**

Gaia: **No matter. A sandwich will do...**

(Gili leaves, Gaia studies the place,
goes to the hat, takes it from the wall
and holds it, Gili comes back with a red
pepper in her hand. Gaia sits down rapidly,
Gili tosses her the pepper)

Gili: **I'm sorry, that was the last toast...**
(Gaia eats) **How is it?**

Gaia: **Couldn't be better.**

Gili: **Not the leg, the pepper...**

Gaia: No change. So what are you going to build?

Gili: What?

Gaia: Before, you said you were going to rebuild...

Gili: A coffee shop.

Gaia: Cushi Rimon style eh...?

Gili: I don't know exactly what style yet.

Gaia: Think you'll have any customers from round these parts?

Gili: No. Once there were kibbutzim and moshavs...
Some went bankrupt... some just simply closed...

Gaia: I don't want to dampen your enthusiasm,
but I didn't see a soul...

Gili: But there's a special atmosphere here...
That's why you got injured right here.

Gaia: Did he suffer?

Gili: Who?

Gaia: Your husband...

Gili: (Avoiding) So are you from Eilat
Or the Jordan Valley?

Gaia: (Avoiding) Neither, I've been traveling abroad for
the last 15 years or so.

Gili: Cut off from the world...

Gaia: Absolutely...

Gili: How was it? Traveling the world...?

Gaia: Must sound a bit cynical to someone who spent several years in hospital.

Gili: **Spent is the right word!!!**

באנגלית SPENT הוא דו משמעי ואכן מתאים מאוד כאן

Gaia: Any kids?

Gili: I had a little girl...

Gaia: Had...? What happened to her?

(Howling of wolves)

Gaia: (Shivering) **Mummy!!!**

Gili: (Reacts automatically) **What?**

Gaia: Those jackals...
They don't frighten you?

Gili: Wolves. There are wolves in the Arava.
But it's OK Gaia, don't be afraid,
they don't dare come close...

(They regard each other in silence)

Gaia: I was sure you'd never recognize me...

(Sound of a car)

Gili: Here's your lift.

Gaia: If you really want me to go, then tell me
gradually...
then maybe I'll get used to the idea.

טיפה מסורבל המישפט

Gili: Find a clinic and get an X-Ray.

Gaia: Gili, don't cast me out, I know
I ruined your lives, but you ruined mine too.

Gili: I'll go home and get you something to eat.
10 minutes.

(Rises and makes to leave)

Gaia: You didn't know me, did you?

Gili: I did. From the first moment Gaia.
I knew you from the start.

(Exit snack bar, change of scenery,
Miriam leaves the house with a
pen and postcard in her hand)

SCENE 2

PAST

Patio of Avner's kibbutz home.

Passage from present to past.

Miriam: **Gaia, Gaia!!!**

(The young Gaia enters, runs straight towards a tree)

Miriam: **Where are you rushing to?
No time to say hello?**

Nadav: **Gaia, Gaia!!!**

(Nadav enters the stage, running after Gaia holding a box of worms. They play hide and seek around the tree, the young Gaia runs on and off of stage. The adult Gaia rises and joins them in movement only, looking towards the young Gaia, Nadav enters carrying a shoe box).

Miriam: **What have you got in the box?**

Nadav: **Silk worms for Gaia.**

Miriam: **That's just what she needs, worms.
Where's her father?
It's four o'clock already, I've especially
brought a cheese cake.
Have you made the coffee?**

Nadav: **I haven't had time.**

(He moves to the patio and arranges the table).

Miriam: **(To Gaia on the tree) Gaia, I want you
To write a postcard to Mummy!!!**

- Gaia:** **Soon.**
- Miriam:** **Soon, soon. How many times do you need to be asked? Have you forgotten you have a mother? Why don't you write to her?**
- Gaia:** **She stopped writing, too busy with her Jews and her Agency work, hardly sends half a postcard.**
- Miriam:** **Gaia, get down from that tree and write to your mother.**
(Gaia descends from the tree, writes and Returns to the tree)
That's all you have to say???
That's it? "Hi Mummy"?
Write and tell her that you love her and miss her, strengthen her.
Do you think she's enjoying herself over there in some foreign land among all those capitalist pigs?
- Gaia:** **So why doesn't she leave those pigs and come home?**
- Miriam:** **You are still a child, there are things that you don't understand.**
- Gaia:** **I understand that she left Daddy alone and that it's wrong.**
- Miriam:** **Don't you dare speak about your mother that way, she's my daughter. And straighten your back.**
- Gaia:** **What do you want from my back?**
- Miriam:** **I've told you a thousand times: "He that walks straight, thinks straight". Now where are you running off to?**
- Gaia:** **To the parking lot.**

Gaia: (Gaia demonstratively straightens her back)
How's that? Straight enough???

(She leaves, the adult Gaia follows her)

(Nadav sits down)

Miriam: **Where is Avner?**

Nadav: **He's around, somewhere.**

Miriam: **Have you spoken with him?**

Nadav: **It's not so easy. (Eats from the cake)**

Miriam: **I didn't say it was easy, I just wanted
you to talk to him... Since he returned
from the hospital he acts as though he's
lost his mind. You're the kibbutz
Secretary aren't you?
What are you afraid of?
It's your job. The whole kibbutz
is up in arms, there's never been
such a scandal!!!
A married man, keeping a mistress...
(Assertively)
She can't stay here, that masseuse.**

Nadav: **Physiotherapist...**

Miriam: **Even in the hospital I noticed his
לדעתי ה"כבר" נשמעת מתוך ה EVEN – אבל זה לא עקרוני לי...
eyes light up when she approached.
And that provocative laugh of hers!!!
And to bring her here as a personal nurse?
What's going on here??? Anarchy?
Everybody does as he pleases?**

Nadav: **A man returning to an empty home
after eighteen months in hospital
is not anarchy.
It's a mental state.**

- Miriam:** So he immediately brings a replacement!!!
Strolling around barefoot in her flowing
Tel Aviv dresses...
Picking flowers from the members' gardens.
- Nadav:** Calm down. It's probably only temporary.
- Miriam:** You must help me bring my daughter home.
- Nadav:** Are you sure she wants to?
- Miriam:** She will if that woman won't be here.
She's also in a mental state of her own.
- Nadav:** Pardon me, but Ricki decided to
go away long before!!!
- Miriam:** Objective you can be Nadavchik,
when you're in the United Nations...
Who are you to talk?
Going from shikse to shikse...
Do you know anything about family,
loyalty, comradeship?
I know my daughter.
She wouldn't get up and leave a
husband returning from the war
in such a state.
- (Avner enters in a wheelchair)
- Miriam:** Ah! There you are... there's cake.
- Nadav:** Where's Gili?
- Miriam:** Come, come, I specially baked a cheese cake.
Sit down for a while.
- Avner:** It's O.K. I'm used to eating standing up.
(Nadav laughs, Miriam silences him with a look)
- Nadav:** I'll make some coffee... (Enters the house)

Miriam: (Slicing the cake) **We need to talk...**

Avner: (Silent)

Miriam: **We always spoke openly...**

Avner: **I've only got half an hour...**

Miriam: (Ignores) **You know that you're like a son to me...**
(Cuts the cake, gives a slice to Avner and takes one herself)

Avner: (Silent)

Miriam: **Your parents never learned Hebrew... I raised you... You did your homework with me, searching in my encyclopedias... It was with me you consulted regarding becoming an officer.**

Avner: (Silent)

Miriam: **When a man suffers a trauma, his wife suffers also... You must understand that... You still love each other...**

Avner: (Silent)

Miriam: **Think about the child!!! You can't break up a family for no reason!!!**

Avner: **I understand that it's hard for you... But Ricki and I came to a decision... A mutual one.**

(Nadav comes out with a coffee pot and pours for everyone. He puts down the pot and seats himself)

- Miriam:** **What are you talking about?**
- Avner:** **The way things stand...
I think we should hasten the divorce.**
- Miriam:** **(Shocked) Hasten what??? What divorce???
Have you lost your mind?
Ricki would have told me!!!**
- Avner:** **(Quietly) I don't know.
She probably has reasons of her own.**
- Miriam:** **Reasons Avner? One reason only!!!**
- Avner:** **I understand why you prefer to brush...**
- Miriam:** **If you didn't make a mess, there would
be no need to brush anything!!!
(Enters the house)**
- Nadav:** **You could pretend to be nice.**
- Avner:** **What?**
- Nadav:** **You didn't have to bombard her.**
- Avner:** **Come on, out with it...**
- (Very short pause)**
- Nadav:** **The physiotherapist...
(Rises and turns towards the junction)
I understand that you're alone,
and that she's a real bombshell...**
- Avner:** **You like her?**
- Nadav:** **Is she moving in here?**
- Avner:** **I hope so, soon...**
- Nadav:** **And when Ricki returns?**

- Avner:** **So the old woman has roped you in too?**
- Nadav:** **What's going on Avner?**
(Takes the chair next to Avner and sits on the lawn with his chest resting on the chair back.)
- Avner:** **I have a meeting with the youth in another half hour.**
- Nadav:** **What do you mean by divorce?**
- Avner:** **Their clubhouse is closed.
Who's the idiot that closed it?**
- Nadav:** **So they'll wait on the grass,
what's happening with Ricki?**
- Avner:** (Pause) **Ricki's not coming back.
It's not working. The truth is that
most women adore a broken body,
it turns them on, excites them,
but Ricki's not one of them...
what can I do?**
- Nadav:** **I don't want to pry into your life.**
- Avner:** **So don't.**
- Nadav:** **She's like a sister to me...**
- Avner:** **There were cracks in our relationship beforehand.
If things were perfect we could cope
even with this. Divorce isn't so special.
Among cripples it's even widespread...
Maybe it's my fault...
I prefer to start afresh, with a woman
who knows me like this, like I am...
Without any memories of how it was...
Hey, push me over to the clubhouse,
The kids are waiting for me.**

- Nadav:** Listen, you might be a war hero,
but you can't assemble those kids
whenever you feel like it.
- Avner:** Why? Doesn't the Secretary approve?
- Nadav:** They're just kids.
Why force feed them politics?
I bet you read to them excerpts
from "The Moaners' Discourse"
- Avner:** "Warriors' Discourse", Stalin!!!
It wouldn't hurt you to read a little...
- Nadav:** And how does it relate to the youth?
200 pages of "Bleeding Hearts",
shooting and crying in 1976.
And just when they're about to join up!
- Avner:** "Bleeding Hearts?"
- Nadav:** Talk about yourself.
You crossed the Suez Canal,
received the Order of Merit.
Now that was an operation eh?
- Avner:** After that war and eighteen
months in hospital, I'll speak
about anything I wish.
- Nadav:** It outrages the folk here...
- Avner:** Outrages? Let them rage!!!
Deliberation strengthens.
- Nadav:** If you live in Holland or Belgium.
Not here!!!
- Avner:** (Interrupts) You'd be surprised Stalin.
They prefer to air their emotions,
even though they were taught
to deny them.

Nadav: **Avner, you bring another woman,
You poison the youth...**

Avner: **So...**

Nadav: **Lower you profile.**

Avner: **I've listened to you, now push me,
I need to go...**

Nadav: **I said I'd meet Diana here!!!**

Avner: **So wait for Diana... (Begins to leave)
And give me the clubhouse keys.**

(Nadav plays dumb. Gives him the keys)

Avner: **Idiot!**

(Avner exits, Nadav clears the table,
Gaia rushes in and climbs the tree)

Nadav: **Hey Gaia! (Watches her climbing the tree)**

Gaia: **Hi Uncle! Do you want to climb my tree?**

Nadav: **Em... (Diana enters) I'm not so sure.**

Nadav: **Hi sweetheart (they kiss and embrace)**

Gaia: **Diana, do you want to climb my tree?**

Diana: **Sure, sure. You remember we have
practice with band?**

Gaia: **Come on... You can see the whole
kibbutz from here!!!**

Nadav: (To Diana) **Honey, afraid of heights?**

Diana: **Shhhhhh... Not all need know. I come!**

(Diana climbs the front of the tree)

Diana: (Turns around and is startled) **Choot fordomah!**
Is beautiful what seeing here!!! Nadav...

Gaia: **When you're both lying on the grass...**
All the children climb the tree
and watch you...

Diana: **What rubbish you tell me? Nadav...**

Gaia: (Laughing) **That last night**
you were naked!!!

Diana: **Hey if you not help me...**
I go down... I die already.

(Laughing, Nadav lowers her from the tree,
they move away from the tree towards the
stage exit where he tries to kiss her.
She doesn't let him)

Nadav: **Come on, I've got a tractor, want**
a trip around the nasturtiums?

Diana: **You say already to Miriam**
that we want marry?

Nadav: **No, I didn't have the chance...**

Diana: **Nadav, if you not tell her,**
I not converter...

יש מצב למצוא תחליף לחרוז" אם אתה לא מספרת אני לא מגירת.?

Nadav: **I'll tell her, I'll tell...**
What are you worried about?
Bye Gaia!

(Nadav and Diana exit, Miriam enters
the patio, turns to Gaia on the tree)

Miriam: **Your Gili will come even if you're**
not up the tree, at least eat some cake.

- Gaia:** I'm crazy about Gili.
The coolest physio in the world!
- Miriam:** Cool shmool, ever since you got
friendly with her you've become insolent.
- Gaia:** What have you got against her?
You'll see, thanks to her,
Daddy will walk again.
- Miriam:** No thanks to her, he has a partial injury,
in such cases there are sometimes miracles.
- Gaia:** It's no miracle, it's treatment.
And she is the best there is.
- Miriam:** Listen Gaia, when you act foolishly
at school I smooth things over,
when you sit in the tree like a Cuckoo,
I say that you're bird-watching,
if that Gili remains here...
- Gaia:** (Curtails her) Here she is! Here she is!!!
Gili!!! (Runs off stage)

SCENE 3

TWO WEEKS LATER

(Gili arranges flowers in a vase on the patio. Avner and Nadav arrive from the pool wearing bathing robes)

Nadav: **Wow!... So many flowers!!!**

Gili: **It's like paradise here...
Wherever you look...
Flowers everywhere.
I can't control myself, the smell
drives me crazy, and the colors...
(Hugs Avner)
How many lengths?**

כמה ברכות?

באנגלית אומרים LENGTHS בד"כ אבל ניתן לאמר POOLS אם את רוצה...

Nadav: **Three.**

Gili: **Lengths or breadths?**

Avner: **Lengths, you pest... (Kisses her)
I'm going to get dressed.**

(Avner exits)

Nadav: **For your sake...**

Gili: **Pardon?**

Nadav: **Those lengths...
He makes the effort for you.**

Gili: **Does that surprise you?
Have you never made an effort
for a woman?**

השתדלת? נראה לי מתאים – גם מתחבר במשפט הקודם...

- Nadav:** Me? I collect the stars for them,
one by one, they just never seem
to notice!!!
- Gili:** I'm really happy that I can motivate...
- Nadav:** You and the way you look is
enough to motivate the hormones
of the entire kibbutz.
- Gili:** Are you flirting with me?

(Laughs embarrassedly – short pause)
- Nadav:** I'd really like to, except that
I have other problems...
- Gili:** Problems?
- Nadav:** With your business...
I mean your physiotherapy...
- Gili:** What problems are there with...
- Nadav:** (Offers her a pepper) Want some?
- Gili:** Do you always walk around
with peppers in your pocket?
- Nadav:** Listen, I'm a spicy kind of guy
גמבה (They laugh) You know that
Avner underwent a crisis when
his wife left?
...לא רואה בעיה... PEPPER = גמבה
- Gili:** (Splices the pepper and gives him half)
Ah, and how is that connected
to physiotherapy?
- Nadav:** It isn't, I mean, not the treatment...
Look Gili, I know that you ran
away from home at the age of 15,
and since then you've been living
and working in Tel HaShomer...

(They begin to eat)

Gili: **Ahaa! You've been investigating me?**

Nadav: **Look, I'm the Secretary... and...**

yes, that's the way it is here...

I need to know...

Gili: **Who these weirdoes are wandering
around the kibbutz? Of course.**

Have you come to any conclusions?

Nadav: (Laughs) **Conclusions... I know that
you rode on a motorbike with some guy,
there was an accident and you both
ended up in Tel HaShomer...**

Gili: **Bravo!**

Nadav: **He recuperated and went home,
but you remained...**

Gili: (Cynically) **Precisely. I fell in love
with the hospital, especially with
the rehabilitation department.**

Nadav: **You were only 15, why
didn't you go home?**

Gili: **I got a room in the nurses'
quarters, I did a course, and later
מילה כבדה studied physiotherapy...
Anything else?**

Nadav: **I know that you had problems at home,
violence and things.**

Gili: **So what bothers you?**

Nadav: **You married some doctor and
left him a year later.**

Gili: **What business is that of yours?**

Nadav: I'm worried, being deserted once is enough in his condition.

Gili: What has that got to do with me?

Nadav: From what I've seen you live with your bags packed next to the door... I wouldn't want to see him hurt again.

Gili: That's enough. Excuse me but my patient awaits me.

(Gives him the remnants of the pepper which he puts in his pocket. She turns to the house, Avner exits the house towards the lawn and approaches her)

Avner: The patient dressed himself. Let the torture begin.

Nadav: Do you need anything?

Avner: The laundry, if you don't mind.

(Nadav take a bundle of laundry from the house and exits)

Gili: How are you?

Avner: I miss you...

Gili: Me too.

Avner: So if we're missing each other... When will you bring your things?

Gili: What things?

Avner: I want you to come and live here.

Gili: Avner, let's get to work.

(She pushes the wheelchair.
He turns to her)

Avner: I really do miss you...

Gili: So do I, but not now.

Avner: You're right, let's go inside...
There's no reason to entertain
the gossips.

(He gives her a ride on the chair,
she jumps off while still moving)

Avner: Gili, you shouldn't jump like that,
it's really dangerous.

לקפוץ באמצע הנסיעה

Gili: (Stops him) You're spoiling my plans
to get you back on your feet...

Avner: (Pulls her back) I swear to you
that I'll run again!!! But there are
some things that can be done
sitting down.

Gili: (Pats his thighs) Did I hurt you?

Avner: I wish!!! (Pats him again in order
to encourage him to work) Ow!!!
(They laugh)

Gili: Come on.

Avner: I want you to come and live here.

Gili: Avner, let's get to work.

Avner: For you rehabilitation is a vocation...
I know... If you'll agree to live here...
I volunteer to find you patients in the
Jordan Valley as well.
How many do you need?

- Gili:** (Silent)
- Avner:** I'm talking about a life,
not a revolution...
- Gili:** To resign from Tel HaShomer
is a major revolution.
I've lived there since the age of 15.
- Avner:** Hiding, Gili, O.K. I know from what,
the bottom line is –
it's a hospital.
- Gili:** (Silent)
- Avner:** I'm offering you a home, more –
a family. I know that this is the only
place you've ever felt wanted...
- Gili:** I'm part of them... I have the chance
of managing the rehabilitation center.
- Avner:** And here you can **manage the kibbutz clinic.**
המרפאה של הקיבוץ
(They laugh) Give it a chance...
Maybe you'll feel that way here...
- Gili:** It's not just a job, it's also
a home that I love.
- Avner:** You've forgotten what a real home is.
Are you ready to try at least?
- (She sits on him)
- Gili:** I've never coped well with frameworks...
- Avner:** It's not as strict as it looks...
- Gili:** A framework is a framework...

- Avner:** So what's **the hospital then?**
Wide open meadows?
- Gili:** For me... it's a calling,
I don't see it as work...
- Avner:** This way we don't stand a chance...
There's never any time...
Three hours' drive in each direction.
And you're afraid of driving in the dark...
- Gili:** (Silent)
- Avner:** At least give it a go... for a few months...
You could always go back.
- Gili:** It doesn't work that way.
- Avner:** I need you Gili, try it just for me.
- Gili:** And Gaia?...
When will you tell her the truth?
- Avner:** When the time is right...
- Gili:** The right time? When?
After she hears it from someone else?
- Avner:** She loves you.
- Gili:** So don't lie to her.
I don't want to hurt her.
What are you waiting for?
- Avner:** To find the right words,
Gili, Divorce doesn't exist in this kibbutz!
Not till now, there's no precedent,
no prior examples...
And if she doesn't accept it?
She might fall apart...
Her mother's gone!!!
What am I doing?
Even now they call her "Crazy".

- Gili:** **If we continue to lie to her,
that's how she'll end up.**
- Avner:** **I'll tell her when I'm ready!!!
I don't know how to in the meantime...**
- Gili:** **You'll find a way,
and I'll work part-time...
so that I can spend more time here...**
- Avner:** **I'm crazy about you,
mad about you.**
(He tries to get up and hug her
but falls over with the chair)
- Gili:** (Startled) **Avner!!!**
(She tries to assist him
but he repels her attempts)
- Avner:** **I'm fine.**
- Gili:** **You're out of your mind!
You could have broken your neck!!!**
(Trying to help him get up)
- Avner:** **Calm down, nothing happened.**

(Very short pause, he gets into the chair)
- Gili:** **You frightened me... I was scared,
come, let's go inside...**
- Avner:** **No! You wanted to work, so let's work...
Straighten my legs...**
- Gili:** **No, no, let's go in and make love,
we can exercise later...**
- Avner:** **No!!! You wanted to exercise,
so let's exercise.**
- Gili:** **Leave it till later...**

Avner: **What happened Gili?
Has the cripple gone into depression?**

Gili: **Sorry?**

Avner: **(Cynically) Have I awakened your instincts?**

Gili: **Sure...**

Avner: **And you feel that you want to
protect me from all that awaits me?**

Gili: **Absolutely.**

Avner: **Then join the line, and wait patiently.**

Gili: **Go fuck yourself.**

Avner: **I tried my best if you didn't notice.**

Gili: **You prick!!!**

Avner: **True enough, but on the other hand...**

Gili: **On the other hand you're a prick as well!!!**

(Gaia can be heard shouting outside)

Gaia: **Leave me alone, leave me alone!!!**

(She runs in alarmed)

Avner: **Gaia, what's happened?**

Gaia: **They've thrown me out of the band.**

Gili: **Which band?**

Gaia: **All my class is playing for the
Shavuot ceremony.**

Gili: **So?...**

- Gaia:** Ever since Mummy left
they've been on my back.
- Avner:** And Diana?
- Gaia:** Dutch cow!
Doesn't have any control over them!!!
- Avner:** Over who? What happened?
- Gaia:** (To Gili) Shuli said that you're a whore.
That because of you Mummy ran
away to America...
- Gili:** What?
- Avner:** Did you manage shorten
Shuli's vocabulary?
- Gaia:** A little...
- Avner:** One punch or two?
- Gaia:** Just one.
Then they all locked me in the toilet.
- Avner:** (Looks at her) Come here a second.
Gaia sits on his lap)
I know that they're all on your back,
but you're strong aren't you?
(She nods) Do they tease you a lot
about Mummy? (She nods)
You don't owe answers to anyone O.K.?
(She nods) Do you count to ten before
releasing your knockout punch?
(She nods) Not enough...
Will you count to 30? (She nods)
You know that I'm crazy about
you just the way you are...
(She nods, they play officer and recruit)
And don't get upset by every idiot
that recites what he hears at home.

- Gaia:** Why should he hear it,
if it's not true?
- Avner:** I don't know.
- Gaia:** Swear that it's not true.
- Avner:** Mummy went away because she had to.
It's nothing to do with Gili.
- Gaia:** Swear!!!
- Avner:** Gaia... come here a minute,
I want to tell you something...
(Gaia approaches him)
After Mummy went away...
- Diana:** (Diana enters carrying an accordion)
Gaia forget accordion...
I sorry I send her away...
The band play nice and quiet...
Then suddenly I see Gaia give
big punch to Shuli.
She nearly kill Shuli...
- Gili:** But Shuli is still alive.
- Diana:** For now... one more punch like
this and I'm not sure...
Now the parents not want
Gaia in band at all.
- Gili:** The parents?
What's it got to do with them?
- Diana:** Don't know.
I'm volunteer.
Small mind.
- Gili:** Do you mean to expel her?
- Diana:** I can not keep her.

She explodes like barbarian.

Gili: **Of course she does!!!
They're bullying her!!!
Did you see they locked her in the toilet?**

Diana: **Sorry, very sorry, I not principal here.
I only make the band.**

...לצערי אין מקביל למחנך מלבד EDUCATOR – וזה די מסורבל לדעתי...

Gili: **Diana, let's try and be a big mind for once...
Give her a lesson here... in the house,
till things calm down...**

Diana: **Lesson in house? You crazy?
Here forbidden!!!**

Gili: **What's forbidden?
Is it a crime?
You can see she has problems.**

Diana: **If I make lesson in home...
I in big trouble.
You might be big mind, but if
I do trouble, the kibbutz send me away.
I not want to leave Nadav...
We have great love...**

Gili: **Because you're in love.
you'll neglect a young child?
(Raises her voice)
That's terror Diana,
why do you lend it a hand?**

Diana: **(Curtails her) You not shout at me!
I want marry Nadav, not troubles
with the kibbutz!!!
So not shout at me!**

Gaia: **It doesn't matter. The band.
I don't have to.**

**(Diana moves to leave then
turns around and comes back)**

Diana: (To Gili) **Fine! I make lesson in home.
You and your big mind be responsible!!!**

Gili: **Thanks Diana.**

Diana: **We begin tomorrow.**

Gili: **Great.**

Diana: **But you have all responsibility.
And Gaia not forget you practice
"Sea of Grain".**

(Diana exits)

Gili: **You see Gaia, in the end
the good always win.
Do you know "Country, city"?**

Gaia: **Sure, A...**

Gili: **Stop.**

Gaia: **M!!!**

Gili: **Morocco.**

Gaia: **Metulla.**

Gili: **Mammoth.**

Gaia: **Marzipan.**

Gili: **That's not a vegetable.**

(They exit)

(Fade out, fade in, choir singing,
Well known song from that era)

SCENE 4

MIRIAM ENTERS FOLLOWED BY NADAV AND DIANA

- Miriam:** **It's four already.
How come there's nobody here?
I especially baked cheesecakes.**
- Diana:** **I come from Holland
for your cheesecakes.**
- Nadav:** **Everybody tries to steal the recipe.**
- Miriam:** **Let them try, it's in my head.
Where is he?
Talking with the youth again?
Nadav, do you know what's going
on here or are you making a laughing
stock of me?**
- Nadav:** **What do you want?
I closed the club, he opened it,
I changed the lock,
he meets them on the lawn.
You want me to close the lawn?
He was their youth leader,
they adore him.**
- Miriam:** **And Lady Massage is still
hovering round here like
the spirit of God over the waters.**
- Nadav:** **I'm sorry Miriam, she's a guest,
I can't throw her out.
There's no such precedent.**
- Miriam:** **She's taking control of the child,
dragging her to Tel Aviv,
buying her luxuries we've never
seen before, and you're waiting**

for a precedent???
You're the Secretary!!!
Tomorrow they'll all be
living in threesomes because
there's no precedent.
Get rid of her.
And I request that he not be
allowed to enter public places
with her, that's all I need,
for them to start pitying me.

(Gili and Gaia enter the patio
carrying paper bags. Gaia
in sunglasses and a new hat)

Gaia: Belgium!!!

Gili: Berlin!!!

Gaia: Bird!!!

Gili: Broccoli!!!

Miriam: (Cuts in) (To Gaia)
How long do we have to
wait for you???
Don't you know that
four o'clock tea is sacred????!!!
Sit down, I've especially
brought cheesecake.

Gaia: (To Gili) **We'll never make it**
(To Z') **Grandma!!!**
You must see what Gili bought
for me in Tiberius.
זאת המילה לטבריה?

Miriam: **At four we drink coffee.**
Where is your father?

5ל clockהכוונה ל

(Gaia extracts a skirt and blouse

from the bag. Miriam regards the clothes in silence)

Gaia: **Just look at these!!!**

Diana: **Oh, it's beautiful,
is now the fashion...**

Miriam: (Shouting at her)
Fashion? What fashion???
**Don't you have anything to wear,
so that you have to rush to
Tiberius every week?**

Nadav: **I'll make the coffee,
come on Diana.**

(Nadav and Diana exit)

Gaia: **What have you got
against Tiberius?**

Miriam: (To Gaia) **Give her back the clothes,
she can return them.**

Gili: **Miriam, one doesn't return presents.**

Miriam: **Why on earth did you buy them?**

Gili: **They were so nice,
I felt like it.**

Miriam: (Annoyed) **Felt like it,
what, are you her mother,
her auntie???**
**Can't you restrain yourself?
Look what a mess you've got
us into.**

Gili: **What mess? Miriam,
it's only a skirt!!!**

Gaia: (Throws the bag on the grass)
**Fine, fine, I'll only wear
it on Fridays.**

הכוונה לערב שבת

Miriam: (To Gili) Since you've been
here she sleeps at home
instead of in the childrens' house.

Gaia: I can't sleep there.

Miriam: Why?

Gaia: The children bother me, they
lock me in the toilets,
put tomatoes under my pillow.

Miriam: **Act like everybody else,**

**בהיית לא אמור להיות
and they won't bother you.**

Gaia: And there's a jackal.

Miriam: What jackal?

Gaia: You can hear it's cries as
though it's in the room.

Miriam: I've lived here for 40 years
and I've never seen a jackal.

Gaia: I didn't say I see,
I said I hear!!!
Sometimes I imagine
they're in the room...

Miriam: So stop imagining!!!

Gaia: (Annoyed) I can't stop it,
I see pictures in my head!!!

- Miriam:** **Of course you see pictures,
just look at yourself!!!
A 12 year-old girl climbing trees
and playing with worms!
Stop acting like a lunatic!!!
(She takes the box of worms)**
- Gaia:** **Leave my worms alone.**
- Miriam:** **Everywhere I go I hear:
"Crazy Gaia, crazy Gaia".
Do you think I enjoy hearing that?
That's worse than a few worms!**
- Gili:** **(Shocked) What do you want from her?
Jackal or no jackal, if she wants
to sleep at home, let her
sleep at home.
So you built children's' homes, so what?
Does it suit everybody?**
- Gaia:** **(Cruelly to Miriam)
On top of that, I'm now
half an orphan, Gili can
decide for me.**
- (Gaia leaves with the box,
Miriam and Gili remain)**
- Miriam:** **You must feel quite holy...**
- Gili:** **I understand your anger,
but the child is not to blame...**
- Miriam:** **The child has a mother.**
- Gili:** **Not here...**
- Miriam:** **Nice of you to criticize!!!**
- Gili:** **I didn't send her away...**
- Miriam:** **You didn't wait for her bed**

to go cold either...

Gili: Miriam, I'm really sorry
that it causes you pain...

Miriam: You're not sorry, you took
your chance well, one moment of
weakness and you leapt in!!!
Go to the henhouse and see
what happens to a wounded
chicken... the whole flock
pecks her to death...
Tomorrow you might even
find yourself wounded...

Gili: You breaking down an open door...

Miriam: Just like you.

Gili: I'm with him because I love him.

Miriam: We hired you as a nurse,
not a mistress.

Gili: Can you pretend with someone
like Avner?! Do you know he
still listens to the news for the
height of the waves for the surfers?
He lives in a dream world!

בחלומות שלו הוא עדיין הולך

Miriam: Even those that can walk
have dreams.

Gili: And the right to choose...

Miriam: What's haunting you?
Why would a beautiful and smart
woman insist on getting stuck in
the middle of... Is it love? Ambition?
Tell me what it is.
Any man would want to be with you...

Gili: I'm sorry, I have a few limitations.
I don't leave the wounded behind.

Miriam: I also know how to recite slogans...
You're wasting your time.
You'll lose your job
at Tel HaShomer...

Gili: What I have, is here.

Miriam: What you have here
doesn't belong to you.
We're a family,
not some neighborhood.
It's a home, and we choose our guests.
You'll be forced to leave soon in any case.
I suggest you bring forward that "soon",
for the good of the child, keep away from her.
You harm her.

(An accordion can be heard from the house)

Miriam: (Listening) What's that?

Gili: I asked Diana to give her
a lesson at home.

Miriam: Initiative is a characteristic to be blessed...

Gili: Thanks.

Miriam: But not here!!! (Towards the house)
Diana!!! The lesson's over!!!
(The music stops)
The child is not sick,
She can **study** with the other children.

הכוונה, לתרגל

Gili: It's impossible. They tease her.

Miriam: She'll get over it!!!
And if you stop intervening
and dragging her to Tiberius,

she'll overcome it easier.

(Gaia peeks outside,
Miriam sees her)

Gili: **In my limited experience with people,
it's advisable to ease up...
once in a while.**

Miriam: **Limited indeed, she has enough mentors.
And she has no ear for music...**

(Doesn't notice Gaia)

Gaia: **Thanks a lot!**

Miriam: **Why are you insulted?
You're like grandpa Menachem,
he always sang off key.
(Gaia goes inside)
And Mistress Gili, here we
don't go round picking flowers
from the members' gardens.
Goodbye!!!**

(Diana creeps out of the house)

Diana: **She leaves?**

Gaia: **At last.**

Diana: **Accordion nearly fall on my foot,
I so scared.**

Gili: **Gaia, tell your father that
I've gone back to Tel HaShomer.**

Gaia: **Aren't you going to say goodbye?**

Gili: **We'll speak on the phone.**

Diana: **Gili, you not run away because**

**how Miriam speaks, she is like this,
manages kibbutz like a factory.**

Gaia: I'm coming with you.

Gili: I'll be gone for a few days.

Gaia: I don't care.

**Gili: You have rehearsals for the
Shavuot ceremony, and you'll
play the best...**

**Gaia: (Sees that Gili is about to disappear)
I will if you'll be there.**

**Gili: Do you think I'd miss your concert?
(Hugs Gaia)**

**Diana: And Gili not worry.
I continue lessons in home.
Big mind, like you say.**

Gili: (To Gaia) Listen to Diana.

Gaia: Sure, B'...

Gili: Bolivia...

Gaia: Binyamina...

Gili: Buffalo...

Gaia: Bread...

Gili: That's not a vegetable.

(Musical passage – Shavuot Holiday melody)

SCENE 5

GAIA STANDS IN THE SHADE OF THE TREE WITH AN ACCORDION, TRIES TO PLAY, AVNER COMES OUT AND APPROACHES HER

- Avner:** Are you excited my little one?
- Gaia:** Will Gili come to the ceremony?
- Avner:** She's on her way.
- Gaia:** Really? She's been away for a few days.
- Avner:** Gaia, she's on her way.
- Gaia:** And is she doesn't come?
- Avner:** Why shouldn't she come?
- Gaia:** Didn't you hear?
Last week they punctured her tires.
- Avner:** What! Why didn't you tell me?
- Gaia:** She asked me not to.
But don't worry, Nadav fixed it for her.
They even took the car for a drive to see that it was O.K...
- Avner:** A drive? Where to?
- Gaia:** Just a drive, I didn't see...
What, do you think that Nadav **fancies** Gili?
אולי מיילה יותר של ילדים...?
Yo... poor Diana.
- Avner:** Of course not, is there anything else you haven't told me?

- Gaia:** **They sent her a letter,
"Take care you whore,
we'll kill you"
It was under the wiper.
(She gives him the letter)**
- Avner:** **Did she ask you not to
tell me about this as well?**
- Gaia:** **I took it before she could
see it.**
- Avner:** (Takes the letter from her)
**Congratulations on the initiative.
Now run off to the ceremony,
before Diana starts panicking.**
- Gaia:** **Are you sure she's coming?**
- Gili:** (Rushes in, wearing white)
**I told you I wouldn't
miss your concert!!!
(She hugs her)**
- Gaia:** **K'!!!**
- Gili:** **Not now, off you go!**
- (Gaia leaves carrying the accordion,
 Gili hugs Avner)
- Avner:** **Wow, what a bombshell...**
- Gili:** **Tel Aviv style,
do you think they'll give
an entry permit?**
- Avner:** **Enough... (She sits on him. They hug)
I was worried.
You didn't even call.**
- Gili:** **There was a road accident,**

**a little girl with a neck injury.
I worked around the clock.**

Avner: **And there was no phone there?**

Gili: **You know how it is in the hospital.**

Avner: **Sure, never mind.
The main thing is that you're here.**

(Very short pause)

Avner: **Why didn't you tell me what
happened to your car tires?**

Gili: **I managed, Nadav fixed it for me.**

Avner: **I heard, you also took a trip to**

אריד?

check out the tires...

(Looks at her)

Where did you go?

To smell the nasturtiums?

Gili: **What nasturtiums?**

Avner: **He takes all his girls there.**

Gili: **What's come over you?
I approached him because
he's the Secretary,
who else could I turn to?**

Avner: **To me...**

Gili: **But... (looks at his legs)**

Avner: **I know. I also heard about
the incident with Miriam...**

Gili: **Leave it, it's all behind me.**

- Avner:** I'll take care of it, let's just get through this ceremony, it won't happen again...
- Gili:** (Stops) I don't want to live here!!!
- Avner:** Gili, do me a favor...
- Gili:** Why not? We could build our life together anywhere.
- Avner:** What are you talking about? Do you grasp what you're suggesting?
- Gili:** Yes, to take the little one and get the hell out of here...
- Avner:** To give up the Kinneret, the greenhouses, and my home for the sake of some prison made of blocks!!!
- Gili:** I've met many happy folk in such a prisons.
- Avner:** I'm no poet, I can't find the right words... I understand your problem, but I could never live in another place...
- Gili:** You've never tried...
- Avner:** You don't have to try everything to know where you belong...
- Gili:** I also belong!!! To the streets, shops, coffee houses, cinemas, police sirens and garbage trucks. I belong, but nevertheless I'm here.
- Avner:** And what would I do in in a new place? Start again??? How? The first day you arrived you said this was paradise...

- Gili:** So I thought...
- Avner:** So what if the family doesn't greet you with flowers...
(Short pause)
If you come to live here, they'll get used to it, all of them.
Gaia will come to herself, they'll stop bothering her...
It won't work if you ignore our lifestyle and keep running back to Tel HaShomer.
- Gili:** Your lifestyle ignores me.
- Avner:** Because some idiot vandalized your car?
- Gili:** And left dead pigeons on **the patio**,
מרפסת. זה לא פטיו
and you lie to your daughter because this socialist hole of yours has never heard of divorce?!!!
There was more light in the Dark Ages!!!
- Avner:** Maybe, but you promised to give it a try...
- Gili:** This is becoming unbearable.
- Avner:** How will you acclimatize, if you won't even come with me to the dining room, or the clubhouse?...
Anywhere!!!
- Gili:** It's unpleasant going in there.
- Avner:** Going there together means a lot to me.
- Gili:** The dining room of all places?

- Avner:** Yes, sitting with you there
is like saying to them all...
- Gili:** What?
Avner: Like what it means to your parents
when you bring a girl home.
Tell me, why are you with me?
What do you gain from it?
Financial security?
Makes you feel good, worth something?
You failed with other guys.
You're young and attractive,
what glues you to crippled 40
year-old kibbutznik without
a penny to his name?
- Gili:** (Silent)
- Avner:** What do you want?
To be with me?
To fuck with me?
To comfort me?
- Gili:** All three.
- Avner:** So make an effort,
it's my family.
- Gili:** And you have a need to say to them:
"They took away my legs,
but I've got myself a nice piece from
Tel Aviv...
and in case you're interested,
yes, I can screw, and I do
it much better than you".
- (Pause, Avner is stunned)
- Avner:** That was below the belt.
- Gili:** I know, I'm sorry...

- Avner:** **But quite accurate,
I'd love them to watch you and me.
For them to understand that
no-one will stop me living
the way I wish.**
(She looks at him, he regards her)
**You have it in you Gili,
I saw you in Tel HaShomer,
getting people on their feet
that hadn't wanted to get
out of bed for weeks.
Those that were on hunger strike
fed from the palm of your hand.
It won't be easy...
But they're not bad people,
they can be generous and giving...
and at night you can stroll around
the orchards and pretend to be
Scarlet O'Hara.**
- Gili:** **O.K.**
- Avner:** **What?**
- Gili:** **I'll try and pretend to be
Scarlet O'Hara for you,
and you'll tell Gaia the truth for me.
Today...**
- Avner:** **And Gili, (Smiles)
stop picking flowers...
From the members' gardens...**
- Gili:** **What's with these flowers?
It's socialism isn't it?
"Each to his needs".**
- Narrator:** **(Sound): (Music: "Wheat in the Field" or
"Sea of Grain") I ask the audience to be seated...
We wish to commence with the ceremony.**

SCENE 6

(GILI AND AVNER STAND READY TO LEAVE WHEN NADAV SURPRISES THEM)

Nadav: Hang on Avner, there's a problem with the ceremony...
Miriam will be there...
Along with the whole family...

Avner: So?

Nadav: You two appearing together is a provocation.

Avner: What kind of provocation?

Nadav: Avner, you're not divorced yet...

Avner: Come clean Nadav, what do you want?

Nadav: Are you stupid or what?
It's hurtful...
She's your daughter's grandmother...

Avner: So what are you asking exactly?

Nadav: Try and conceal your affair...
In the meantime...

Avner: Conceal? How exactly?

Nadav: Don't go to public places together.

Avner: My daughter's playing the accordion, at a great cost to all concerned, so stop pissing around... I'm late already.

Nadav: Don't you get what I'm saying?

Avner: Get it... and don't give a fuck!!!

Nadav: Avner, I asked you to
Lower your profile...

Avner: (Points to his legs)
Where to?

Nadav: You're doing this on purpose.

Avner: Of course. I love her and
live with her. Do you want
me to hide her under the bed?
We tried that.
She couldn't breathe.

Nadav: Provocation creates **animosity**.

אולי מילה יותר מדוברת?

Avner: Is that a threat?

Nadav: You know Miriam,
she's already organizing
a coalition against her.

Avner: What coalition?
Can you speak slower?

Nadav: And if I speak slowly
will you understand
any quicker?
The two of you at the
ceremony is antagonistic...
She's an old woman,
give her time to digest it...

Gili: **I'm here!!!**

well'im? צריך להתחיל

Are you going to
call the police?
Load me up on a truck
with the chickens???

Nadav: You're an outsider, and you're filling the shoes of a well-loved woman from a respected family... They'll slaughter you... You don't have to listen to me, enjoy the slaughterhouse.

Gili: Do you any constructive suggestions?

Nadav: I told you. Try to conceal it. What's so complicated?

Avner: (Interrupts) How? Not go to **the ceremony**???

המילה הזאת לא מתאימה להגיגה

Today of all days?
When my daughter's appearing
and waiting for us to **hear her!!!**

הכוונה להעריך את ההישג שלה

Who sent you here
with these baseless requests?

Narrator: I invite the kindergarten
(Sound): children to open **the ceremony**

צריך מילה אחרת, באנגלית זה כאילו טקס אשכבה

with the **Dance of the Doves.**

(Music)

Gili: At Shavuot you open your gates to all and sundry, the whole valley comes to the ceremony... Thousands of people!!! In the dining room you're reading from the Book of Ruth... Do you get the point?
(Raises her arms in despair)

**Go to hell Nadav!!!
Go and sit in your dreary office,
and stuff **your ceremony!!!****

(Gili enters the house)

Avner: **Gili!!!** (Grabs Nadav by the shirt
and throws him to the ground)
**Listen you son of a bitch!!!
That woman took me off a
stretcher when I looked
like a piece of dough.
She washed me, dressed me,
forced me to move my toes
on the very first day...
She'll stay here as long as
she wishes to, with or without
any consensus!!!**

Nadav: **So take care of her!!!
You were born here,
we've both seen what happens
to unwanted folk...**

Avner: **We both saw it Nadav, a young
Ghetto kid running like a **drunken****
זה לא שיכרות
**rat through the fields with a bunch
of kids chasing you like a pack of wolves,
tearing your clothes off, undressing you
to see if you'd been chopped or not,
if you'd been circumcised...**

Nadav: **Shut your mouth!!!**

Avner: **Why should I?
I stood alone against them all,
on my own I dragged you
from beneath them,
I protected you, took their blows...
I gave you chocolate, and taught**

you how to fight back!!!

Nadav: I'm a bad student, sorry,
I'm not tough like you,
I can't stand alone against them
as you can!!! If she's important
to you, then give me time
to get organized.

Avner: (Interrupts) Organize what?
Learn just once how to say no!!!
It's a characteristic worth developing.
Fait accompli.
That's the only rule in this place.
The strong screw and the
weak get screwed...

Nadav: What have I asked you for
you fart? The moon?
What did I ask?
Gili will survive even
without this **ceremony!!!**

Avner: Be careful Nadav!!!
Only dead fish go with the flow!!!

Narrator: Let's hear it for the workers
(Sound) of the henhouse and the cowshed!!!

(Applause and music)

Nadav: (Runs off)

Avner: (Shouting into the house)
Gili, come on, my flowers from
the greenhouse will soon be on stage,
I want to see them...

Gili: Go, I'll wait in the house.

Avner: You're coming with me.

Gili: Avner, go to the **ceremony**.

- Avner:** **Not without you...**
- Gili:** **Your child is playing!!!**
- Avner:** **We can't give up.**
It's a witch hunt!!!
- Narrator:** **Let's hear it for first factory products,**
(Sound) **the aromatic blooms of the flower**
nurseries... and the brave fishermen
who sail at dawn on the lake...
- Gili:** **Hurry, it'll be finished in 10 minutes...**
Go!!! (Pushes his chair)
Tell her that I didn't feel well,
I'll hear it on the loudspeaker...
- Avner:** **I know them...**
If you show them any weakness...
- Narrator:** **I invite the children's**
(Sound) **band to accompany**
(Musical **the first fruits of**
background) **the earth.**
- Gili:** **Don't be obsessive,**
she needs you, go!!!

גילי נכנסת פנימה, אבנר מתחיל ללכת, ואז מסתובב ונכנס פנימה אחריה
(He starts to leave then returns to her)

Avner: **(Pulls Gili towards him)**

לא קים

Won't go without you...
Won't go... won't go...
won't go...
(They kiss, not noticing Gaia
who rushes in)

Gaia: **Why aren't you coming
to the ceremony???**

.היא נכסת לתוך הבית אחרי שתי שניות יוצאת בריצה, המומה, הם יוצאים בעקבותיה.

(Sound of band and applause)

Gaia: **Whore!!!**
(Swiftly climbs the ladder up the tree)
**I defend you, fight for you,
and you force my mother away!!!
You're just like Grandma Miriam
said, a home-wrecking filthy city girl.
And you, except for you, everybody's
talking about it, even in class,
you thought I didn't know...**

Avner: **Listen to your heart,
not to the gossip!!!**

Gili: **A heart doesn't speak!!!
I hate those stupid sayings of yours.
Since you got back from
hospital, all you do is talk...**

Avner: **I'm sorry, **it's hard for me to dance.****

I cant dance

Gaia: **I'm not bowing down to you anymore,
or to your Suez Canal crossing,
or your order of merit, and I'm not
coming down from this tree
till the day I die!!!**

(Gaia climbs higher in the tree.
They remain silent a while, Gili
enters the house and comes out
carrying a bag)

Gili: **Why didn't you tell her?
Why didn't you tell her?**
(She re-enters the house, Avner follows,

she exits. Avner watches
her through the window)

Narrator: **So ends the Shavuot ceremony.**
(Sound) **The public is invited refreshments
at the stalls.**

Nadav: (Arrives and sees her from the **patio**)

מירפסת היצונית

**Gili... I apologise...
I had no alternative...**

(Diana enters, sees Nadav speaking
With Gili, stops behind the tree)

Gili: (Silent)

Nadav: **I ruined the **ceremony** for everybody...
I'm really sorry.**

Gili: (Doesn't answer)

Nadav: (Approaches her)
Do you want me to take you home?

Gili: **Home?**

Nadav: **You're frightened of driving
in the dark, and I...**

Gili: **Thanks Nadav, but
I'm not going anywhere.**

(She goes to the house door and enters)

Nadav: **I really apologize... really.**

ACT TWO

SCENE 7

(GAIA ON THE TREE.
AVNER ON THE PATIO.
NADAV ENTERS ON AVNER'S BICYCLE)

- Avner:** (Looks at the bicycle)
Ah, so you've got it...
- Nadav:** **What?**
- Avner:** **You've done it up nicely...
Changed the tires...**
- Nadav:** **It was lying here doing nothing,
started to rust...
I forgot to tell you.**
- Avner:** **You understand it's
only temporary,
I've got my eyes on the
Tour de France...**
- Nadav:** **Diana said you were looking for me...**
- Avner:** **I asked for them to assign
Gili to the nurseries,
haven't heard a word for three days,
do I have to beg for them
to employ her?**
- Nadav:** **It takes time.**
- Avner:** **There is no time,
she resigned from Tel HaShomer.**
- Nadav:** **And you promised her a job
in the nurseries...**

- Avner:** **Why not???**
She likes flowers.
- Nadav:** **And I like birds!!!**
- Avner:** **If it's a non-starter in the**
nurseries, then fix her up
in the clinic.
She's an excellent nurse.
- Nadav:** **(Silent)**
- Avner:** **Nadav, I need help, I can**
feel my legs... I can stand
on one of them...
She's the only one who ever
believed in my legs, from the
first moment in the hospital,
as opposed to all of those professors!!!
She comes each morning and
returns at night so as not to
hurt Gaia... It's inhuman to
treat her like that.
If she'll have a job, it will
advance her candidacy
as a member. If the kibbutz
will accept her, Gaia will get
over it, she deserves a chance.
- Nadav:** **I tried!!! I spoke with Berger,**
with Gronich, I wander around
like a spinning top, from house
to house, speaking, shouting,
asking and begging...
all in order to make you happy,
to no avail!!!
- Avner:** **Nadavy, if she doesn't get work...**
It's called "protection"...
It's the same vitamin I gave you
that made you the Secretary.

- Nadav:** I would have managed without the protection.
- Avner:** Tell me Polack, when will you grow up?
Everything's protection!!!
There isn't a tree here that didn't have protection before it could be planted!!!
Give them an order to put her to work and that's it!!!
If you really wanted to...
- Nadav:** Avner, I've told you.
It's nothing personal!!!
- Avner:** No? From the first day you've been holding her back, investigating her, scaring her, threatening her...
What's your problem Nadavy?
What have you got against Gili?
- Nadav:** Against Gili?
- Avner:** Or for her maybe?
"Hormone motivator".
Do you think I didn't notice the way you looked at her when you came to visit me in the hospital?
- Nadav:** That's enough,
your paranoia is wearying.
- Avner:** Sure, you wanted Ricki as well...
- Nadav:** I was 12...
- Avner:** 18.
- Nadav:** O.K. 18... you didn't love her,
you never loved her...!!!

Avner: **So now you're getting even? Now?**

Nadav: **You don't need me to get
Gili a job, you accomplish more
from a wheelchair than I do
on two legs, and "fait accompli" ...
that's your area.**

(Short pause)

Avner: **We never betrayed one another.**

Nadav: **Are you sure?
I'll bring that before the committee.
(Leaves on the bicycle)**

Avner: **(Turns to Gaia on the tree)
So Gaia, how much longer are
you going to stay in the tree?**

Gaia: **Until either she leaves, or I die.**

Avner: **I've got news for you, she's
not leaving and you're not
going to die, so stop your
demonstrations, they won't help you.
If you want to starve yourself,
then be my guest, as far as
I'm concerned you can build
a nest up there.**

(Miriam enters)

Miriam: **So Avner, how do you feel about
The entire kibbutz talking about
a little girl sitting in a tree
starving herself?**

Avner: **I ask myself, are you the
Grandmother, or maybe the wolf?**

(Avner goes inside and
Miriam approaches the tree)

- Miriam:** **Aren't you fed up yet?**
I don't like her either,
but that's no reason to turn
into a bird, the opposite.
Let her sit in the tree.
You have a postcard from Mummy.
(Offers her the postcard)
- Gaia:** (Takes it) **I have no mother!!!**
- Miriam:** **You've started rambling?**
Of course, you're not eating...
Come down, I have good news.
(Waits for Gaia to come down,
Gaia remains in the tree)
If you won't come down,
I'll come up.
(Begins to climb the ladder)
- Gaia:** **First tell me the good news!!!**
- Miriam:** (Descends the ladder)
I thought about the whole situation,
as long as that woman lives
here with your father,
Mummy won't even come for a visit...
You suffer, your mother suffers...
(Changes the tone)
Will you come down from that tree???
I'm not prepared to have the whole
kibbutz participating in our dramas.
- Gaia:** **O.K. Fine...** (Leaps down)
- Miriam:** **Thank you very much.**
- Gaia:** **So go on, I suffer,**
Mummy suffers...
- Miriam:** **I've decided it's best if we**
send you to America for a while...
- Gaia:** **To America?**

Miriam: You're in need of a different atmosphere.

Gaia: Not on your life.
I've just requested to be put
in charge of the sty.

Miriam: Pay attention!!!
Mummy has more time now...
You could spend time together,
walking round beautiful streets...

Gaia: I'm not going!!!
(Returns the postcard after
reading it)

Miriam: You could go to museums,
concerts in the park...

Gaia: And in the meantime
Gili will take control of the house.

Miriam: What are you talking about???
You'll go, Daddy will find it hard,
and he'll come to his senses...

Gaia: And if not?

Miriam: Don't start now with your nonsense!!!
He'll come round, Gili will too,
do you think it's easy being with
a man in his condition?
Diana will go back to Holland,
and Nadav will come to his senses,
they all will. O.K. we don't have time
to waste, I still have to convince the
committee to allow me to buy
you a ticket.

Gaia: But you are the committee!!!

Miriam: So what? It's an expensive ticket,
we can't afford it, we refused
reparations from Germany,

may they burn in hell.

Gaia: **O.K. O.K.**
Leave the Germans out of it.
And if the committee won't
give you the money?

Miriam: **I have a little put away.**

Gaia: **And if the plane will crash?**

Miriam: **Good Lord, what will be**
the end with you?

Gaia: **A casket below the cypress trees**
on the hill. Do you never imagine
your own death?

Miriam: **I try to reduce thoughts in that direction.**
You asked to manage the sty?

Gaia: **I asked, but they don't want me.**

Miriam: **They will!!!... Straighten your back,**
come on, let's sort out this sty
business and then we'll got to
Tiberius and organize your passport.

Gaia: (Stops a moment) **Grandma...**
If I go... to America, will
it hurt Daddy?

Miriam: **Nobody ever died of yearning,**
just suffered a bit.

(Fade out, fade in – music or choir)

SCENE 8

AVNER'S PATIO.
(AVNER COMES OUT ON CRUTCHES,
GILI WALKS NEXT TO HIM, DIANA AND NADAV FLANK THEM
FROM BOTH SIDES)
(GAIA OBSERVES FROM A DISTANCE)

Gili: (Walks tensely by his side)
Avner, slower!!!

Avner: **On the day you become a member,
I won't even need these.** (Smiles)

Gili: (Smiling) **Where to?**

Avner: **Wherever you wish.**

(Diana brings his chair, he seats himself to the
applause of the others, they open champagne)

Diana: **I know you will succeed walk...**

Nadav: **O.K. for football on Saturday?**

Diana: **You strong character, maybe you go
back to nursery...**

הכוונה לחממות פרחים

Nadav: **Come, Diana.**

Diana: **All what you dream you succeed.**

(Nadav and Diana go back to set
the table, Gili approaches Gaia)

Gili: **Hi Gaia! We're having a Dutch
picnic in honor of your father...
Glad you came...**

Gaia: **I'm having an Israeli picnic in the sty,
glad I left...**

- Gili:** Ehm... maybe a friend could stand in for you.
- Gaia:** I'd ask a friend if I had any...
(Avner listens from a distance)
- He's really walking...
Well done, you did it!!!
- Gili:** Go to him, say something to him...
- Gaia:** That's it, it's over, no need for any more physiotherapy...
- Gili:** Why don't you say something nice to him?
- Gaia:** You can go back to Tel HaShomer...
- Gili:** I want you to go and talk to him, it will make him really happy.
- Gaia:** I don't want to make him happy...
- Gili:** Where does this malice come from?
- Gaia:** **You don't like it?**
- אולי הפוך? dont you...
- Gili:** No.
- Gaia:** (Cynically) I tell you what, send me into the forest with bread and water, then send the gamekeeper to kill me...
- Gili:** Great idea, but nobody's volunteering.
- (Very short pause)
- (Regards her)

You remember we were friends once...

Gaia: **Once upon a time. If you stay here,
I'm going to America...
Grandma arranged a passport for me.**

(Avner approaches on his chair)

Avner: **Grandma arranged what?**

Gaia: **I want you to leave, so my life
can return to normal. Like everybody else...
I want to be like everybody.
You want to be a heroine, the woman
that saved the cripple, to show
them that you're the best, better
than my mother, my grandma,
that you're special...**

Gaia: **Gaia, we've heard you,
that's enough!!!**

Gaia: **Enough of what?
Can't you see that no kids
ever come to visit me?
Not even to climb my tree...**

Avner: **Let them die of jealousy!!!**

Gaia: **Why should they die exactly?**

Avner: **Because you have such a
wonderful friend like her.**

Gaia: **She's no friend, she's a mistress.
No kid has a mistress at home!!!**

Diana: (Interrupts)
**You are evil Gaia!!!
Like you old grandma...
You not like everybody,**

**you never like everybody,
only Gili loves you even though
you cuckoo, she protect you,
you have luck she come here,
big luck, you stupid like all
people here...**

Nadav: Diana!!! Is this your business???
What's it got to do with you?

**Diana: I want speak, and you not
close my mouth.**

**Gaia: They'll never give her
membership anyway.
She's a whore,
they don't accept whores.**

(Gaia flees)

**Diana: If child speak this way in
Holland, she receive four
slaps on the face.**

Nadav: Diana!!!

(Nadav and Diana enter the house)

**Avner: (Approaches Gili)
Gili, she doesn't understand
what she's saying...**

**Gili: You don't have to protect
her at any price!**

**Avner: I assure you, she's just
quoting others.**

**Gili: So she's quoting, if you're
unable to set limits for her,
at least back me up.**

Avner: Gili, she's a child.

**What should I do?
Hit her? She gets that
from others with interest.
Gili: You're right, let's sit at the table.**

Avner: Gili...

**Gili: Let's sit down and pretend
that nothing happened.**

(He looks at her for a moment,
leaves in his chair.
Nadav approaches Gili)
Avner enters, Nadav approaches
him and helps him get to the table.
Gili enters with additional items
for the table)

זאת טעות..מה שכתבתי זה הנכון.
גילי ואבנר יושבים משני צידי השולחן,נדב מצטרף,שותקים,נדב מנסה ליצור אוירה טובה
(בכוח)

Nadav: Hey, you're really walking.

**Avner: So why have you got
such a sour face?**

**Nadav: I swear, when I saw you on
crutches, I had tears in my eyes,
and that comes from one who
only cries at Indian movies.**

**Avner: Save your tears for the Indians,
and fix up Gili with a job,
she's climbing the walls.**

Nadav: I'm firing in all directions.

**Avner: Use your tongue instead,
you never were much
good in battle.**

Nadav: I never even tried.

Avner: **Was there a committee meeting last night?**

(They sit down. Diana enters and serves pancakes. Silence)

Diana: **Shame, you not eating... I made poppercees specially for you...**

Nadav: **Some other time Diana... Thanks.**

Diana: **Just taste... it's like your pancakes, but smaller...**

Avner: **So was there or wasn't there a meeting? Did you discuss Gili?**

Nadav: (Tastes)

Diana: **What, eh? The poppercees...?**

Nadav: **Ahhh... terrific!!!**

Diana: (Annoyed)
That's all you have to say? Maybe we discuss national security? That's a good conversation, I'm nearly a year here, and haven't seen a war yet...

(They laugh)

Diana: (Adds food to his plate)
After you eat this, you new man who want visit Holland.

(Very short pause)

(Pressing further)

You only taste... Before it is cold.

Nadav: (Outburst) **Diana, Leave it out!!!**
Poppercees, shmoppercees...
I don't want any, O.K.?

Avner: **Spit it out!!!**
(Short pause)

(זה נמחק)

Nadav: **She won't receive membership.**
And she can't stay here.

Avner: **Unanimously?**

Nadav: **Majority.**

(Short pause)

Gili: **But why? Nobody met with me...**
And you... where were you?

Nadav: **I admit it.**
I didn't lie on the fence for you!!!

Avner: **Thanks a lot.**
I want you to arrange a meeting
with the committee for me.

Nadav: **It's a non-starter.**
I don't have any control over
passions and emotions.
I've been sending you signals
for a few months now, squirming
like a worm between the different
committees, (erupts)
find some other way!!!!
She doesn't have to live here...

Gili: **What other way?**
If a frog had wings,
it wouldn't have to strain
it's legs hopping!!!

Nadav: Run away while you still can.

Gili: What are you saying?

Nadav: The man wasn't born that
beat the kibbutz!!!

(She looks at him)

Nadav: It's nothing personal.
Folk identify with Miriam...
Tomorrow it could happen to them.
She founded this place with her
own bare hands...

Gili: That was 40 years ago...

Nadav: And still stands to her credit today!!!
Ten youth groups passed through
this kibbutz, she took care of them all...
alone. She built the children's' village.
Who'll vote against her...
When she's fighting for her daughter?

Gili: Against me!!! Not for her daughter,
so do me a favor, save the shmaltz
for someone else and find a solution.

Nadav: Listen, what do you know about me???
What do you know about her???

Gili: I thought we were friends,
it appears I was mistaken.

יוצא החוצה

Nadav: I arrived here as a five year-old
refugee. Couldn't speak!!!
Not a word!!! For two weeks...
I hid under Miriam's couch...
She would crawl under it and
sit next to me for hours...
we'd count ants together,

**that way I learned to count,
and then to speak, she raised
me and Ricki like brother and
sister... now I'm all she has left,
so you do me a favor, justice is divine,
don't expect to find it here.**

Avner: **Thanks a lot, I want you to convene
an extraordinary meeting, this time
I'll do the talking, without any prior
discussion, after that I want an open
vote, it's time to get rid of all these
corrupt bastards and clean out the
stables, and you will organize it.**

Nadav: **Voting for membership is always
confidential.**

Avner: **So this time it will be open,
I want to count the hands.
Set a date for the meeting
and make sure that those with
any sense will be in my favor.
And you, go now before I start
to despise you.**

(Nadav rises)

Nadav: **Come on Diana. (Goes inside)**

Diana: **Excuse me, I all the time intervene...
You must leave from here, here
is place that not understand love,
only work, work, work.
Land is not holy, also not your
nursery, or even Kinneret.**

(Diana enters the house)

Avner: **(Quietly to Gili)
Maybe it's some mental aberration...
I can't imagine myself living**

anywhere else...
I 'm like some kind of snail,
and the child... can't just uproot her...
I don't believe that they'll...
It's a crude manipulation...
I also know how to build a coalition...
You'll see at this meeting,
they'll all be there, those that I
taught in the youth movement,
guys from my regiment,
representatives from the Ministry
of Defense, the rehabilitation
department, **hand and heart,**

אני חושבת ש"יד ושם" זה שם של המוסד, אולי ככה זה צריך להישאר

**heart in hand, if needs be I'll get
the Army's rabbinical choir
to sing there.**

(Avner leaves in chair, Gili follows)

(Diana and Nadav come out of the
house to the patio, they are in the
throes of an argument)

Nadav: (Hugging her)
What's the matter?
Insulted 'cause I wouldn't eat?
Sorry, I'm on edge...
Come home, I swear, tomorrow
I'll eat 100 poppercees...

Diana: **It no matter right now.**
You are friend to Avner,
your best friend...

Nadav: (Indicates with his hand that
the others can hear)
Mammy, speak quietly.

Diana: **There be no quiet till you**
make peace between the kibbutz,
Avner and Gili...

- Nadav:** Diana, do me a favor...
- Diana:** How does your heart not hurt, how?
- Nadav:** Of course it hurts!!!
Taking a woman and
dropping her into an alien environment...
- Diana:** Like Miriam not want Gili now,
she also not want you to come to
Holland with me...
- Nadav:** Who's going to Holland?
Where does Holland come into it?
- Diana:** We talk about it a lot.
- Nadav:** Talking is one thing,
going is another...
Come on, let's go...
- Diana:** But we speak Nadav, about
Holland, we say that...
you go to university there and
live with me **and brother Dan.**

דן האת הכוונה לעיר האג

- Nadav:** Dreams Diana, we're allowed to dream,
come home, we'll go to bed,
when we get up you can make
poppercees and we'll continue
to dream about Holland.
- Diana:** Miriam not let us marry,
I hear what she say about me...
In the laundry...
Sleeping with a shikse is forbidden...
And to marry?
It is not permitted!!!

הפוך, לשכב עם שיקסה זה לא פסול(טריפה)זה מושג יהודי חזיר זה טריפה, ולהתחתן זה לא כשר.
בקיצור לשכב עם שיקסה מותר, להתחתן זה לא כשר.

Nadav: (Laughing) **It's a joke,
Diana, just a joke...
You didn't get it.**

Diana: (Looks at him)
Nobody was laughing there.

Nadav: **Who laughs in the laundry?
The steam in your face,
the piles of rags, endless piles...
no wonder people talk rubbish,
so... are coming home or what?**

Diana: **First you make the peace for
Avner with...**

Nadav: (Stops her) **Diana. This is Israel!!!
Here we don't make peace so quickly!!!
Are you coming?**

Diana: **You are politician Nadav,
You want everything that
Avner has, even his wheelchair
you want, I also want how you
look at Gili...**

Nadav: **What are blabbering about?**

Diana: **If you want, you take her also.
I no more your chess game,
not want convert,
not want kibbutz,
I go back to Holland,
and is better that you not come
with me...**

(She leaves. A children's choir
Appears on the screen)

Nadav: **What did you say?**
 Who am I taking???
 Wait a minute,
 for fuck's sake, wait!!!
 (Follows her)

SCENE 9

AVNER ON THE PATIO.
READING NEWSPAPER OR
EXERCISING LEGS WITH WEIGHTS

Miriam: (Enters) I'll get straight to the point,
you don't have to live with Ricki
if you don't want to, but you can't
stop her from seeing her daughter,
estranged parents also have rights.

Avner: As far as the law is concerned,
I'm her sole guardian,
you might not like it,
but only I make any decisions
regarding Gaia.

Miriam: Why take things so far?

Avner: **If you arrange a passport**

אפשר להגיד יותר ישיר? לארגן פספורט מאחורי הגב, בלי פניה ישירה אליה...?
behind my back and buy
a ticket, that's taking things far.
What were you thinking of?
Kidnapping? The child is here.
Her mother can come and visit,
just like estranged couples do.
She's not going to America.

Miriam: She can't come here.

Avner: Who's bothering her,
except for you?

Miriam: Me?

Avner: Tell me Miriam, how many
affairs did you have?

Miriam: Avner, how dare you?

- Avner:** How many times did you sneak...
- Miriam:** (Stops him) I never sneaked anywhere,
and stop trying to change the subject.
- Avner:** I was a regular guest in your home...
Remember?
- Miriam:** So what if you were???
It was different then.
- Avner:** Sure it was different,
all for one and one for all,
- האם זה אומר שכולם מזדיינים עם כולם? כי זאת הכוונה**
like rabbits,
only you never talk about it.
- Miriam:** Whatever, I always
protected his honor.
I never embarrassed him in public...
I want you to allow Gaia to travel
to America and meet her mother.
It's unethical.
- Avner:** And poison pen letters,
that's ethical, and dead pigeons...?
Original, ethical and aesthetic.
Miriam, you must understand
that you can't control people.
You don't accept reality, if you
don't recognize people's needs,
this place won't survive.
Next week there'll be a meeting,
and if this whole kibbutz, unanimously,
will vote against Gili, I will leave.
With the child.
- Miriam:** Leave? You?
Where will you go?
Here you have our support...
Anywhere else, no-one will

**look in your direction.
She's cheating on you,**

היא לא תישאר איתך

**the whole kibbutz is talking about it,
we know where she came from,
Nadav conducted a thorough research.**

**Avner: Your manipulations are transparent,
unfortunately, we're family, either
we hang on to each other, or we'll
hang next to one another...
Not everything is in your hands.
Let's wait for the meeting.**

(Nadav enters, pushing a bicycle)

Miriam: There won't be any meeting!!!

Avner: Of course there will.

Miriam: One word from me, and there'll

הכוונה, סמוך על המילה שלי

**be no meeting... and the child
will go to the States to see
her mother. Even if we have to
take it to the High Court.**

**Avner: I'd like you to leave now.
(Miriam, shocked, doesn't move)**

**Nadav: How dare you speak
to her that way?**

**Miriam: (To Nadav) You, you'd better
explain it to him.**

**Avner: (Calls to Nadav)
Where've you been you bastard?
Why didn't you say there
was a problem with the meeting?**

Nadav: I wanted to talk to you about it...

Avner: What happened?
A few morons took their
heads out of the sand?

Nadav: A few morons...?
The whole kibbutz
has boycotted you.

Avner: So cut corners, get stuck into them,
pulverize them, why did I
make you secretary?

Nadav: I wanted to talk to you
about that as well...
Avner, it's over.

Avner: What?

Nadav: I resign.
I thank you for fighting for me,
for the chocolate, and the essays
you wrote for me...
you never said that I'd spend
the rest of my life paying you back...
can't do it anymore, cutting corners
and pulverizing people for you,
find yourself another soldier to
fight your battles.

(Nadav exits with the bicycle)

Gili: (Exits the house, gives him the
crutches, leads him)
I heard. Forget about the meeting.

Avner: There's no other way.

Gili: Are you blind?
Nobody's spoken with you for a month!!!

Come on...

(He advances on the crutches)

Avner: **Doesn't bother me!**

Gili: **I don't want this bunch of
farmers to present me with my identity.
Miriam is right, I'm just a megalomaniac...
looking to prove...
For you it's home...
For me... just another place.
Give it up.**

Avner: **Never.**

Gili: **It doesn't matter anymore
what they decide.
Come on Avner.
(He progresses)**

Avner: **So what are we talking about?**

Gili: **Men and women can be substituted.
Children can't...**

Avner: **Gili, you're breaking down an
open door, the child's confused,
they're prejudicing her...**

Gili: **She's not confused!!!
She has a mother and the
right to see her.
Come on, move it...**

Avner: **So what are you suggesting then?
What heavenly plan have you devised?**

Gili: **It's a lost cause.**

Avner: **Rubbish. Children get used to anything.**

Gili: **Not in a closed environment,
and I'm tired of playing**

the role of the enemy.

Avner: (Angrily)
You're looking for a way out!!!

Gili: **I don't need a way out!!!**

Avner: **You're trying to retreat...**

Gili: **What from?**

Avner: **From me...**

Gili: **I wanted you,
nobody forced me...**

Avner: **You don't want to live here.**

Gili: **But I did try.
How long can I bang my
head against a brick wall?
Let's go, come...
(He progresses)**

Avner: **Gili, we'll prevail,
they'll vote for you...
you'll see...**

Gili: (Interrupts him)
**Their vote doesn't interest me anymore...
Look at me, I was never
so unhappy and discontented,
I'm not staying in this place
for another single day.
And if you can't grasp that, then
I don't know what you can.**

Avner: **What do you mean by "not staying"?**

Gili: **I'm leaving.**

(Short pause, Avner is quite stunned)

Avner: **You're what?**

Gili: (Silent)

Avner: **You're leaving me?**

(Fills with anger)

Avner: **So you've decided...
And what about me?
Don't give up, at the meeting,
they won't dare, I grew up here,
I know them...damn it,
Gili... don't go...
I never asked for anything before,
don't leave me...**

Gili: (Silent)

Avner: **There's somebody else...!!!**

Gili: **You've completely lost your mind!!!**

Avner: **Of course, how come I never
thought of it before?!!!**

Gili: **Avner, calm down!!!**

Avner: **Calm down... how?
I'm not so sexy, don't smell nasturtiums,
calm down from what?**

Gili: **Do you enjoy hurting yourself?**

Avner: **I'm trying to hurt you.
Are you seeing someone else?**

Gili: **Stop it!!! Do you hear???**
Stop it right now!!!

Avner: **Who is it?
Someone from here?
An old flame from Tel Aviv?**

(She moves to distance herself from him,
He grabs her)

Avner: **Who is it, Gili?**
 Who are you seeing?

Gili: **Everybody, Avner. All of them!!!**
 The whole damn kibbutz!!!

Avner: **I appreciate your candor.**
 Do you love him?

Gili: (Loses control) **Lots.**

Avner: **For how long has**
 it been going on?

Gili: **Ever since I've been here.**

Avner: **How do you do it with him?**
 Lying down?

Gili: **Standing up!!!**

Avner: **What else does he give you that**
 I don't?

Gili: (Tries to distance herself)

Avner: **Answer me, what else does he**
 do that I can't?

Gili: **Avner, that's enough,**
 I'm begging you, enough!!!

Avner: (He discards the crutch
 and grabs her by the throat)
 Enough ah? I'm a hard man,
 intolerable at times...
 so you need someone to make
 you laugh...

**It could be Nadav...
He's got sick jokes from the Holocaust!!!**

Gili: **I won't come down to your level!!!**

Avner: (He grabs her violently, she struggles.
A violent struggle)
**Down to my level?
Who do you go down on?**

Gili: **Leave me alone... now!!!**

Avner: **Why? Disgusts you?
What does he do that I don't?**

Gili: **Take your hands off me!!!**

Avner: (Violently) **Answer me,
what does he do that I don't???**

(She pushes him, he falls on the lawn)

Gili: **Don't dare raise a hand to me!
Do you hear???**
I've already seen that movie.

(Leaves infuriated)

(Music, Avner crawls to the table,
succeeds in slowly raising himself.
Weeps on the table, takes his crutches
with his last remaining energy,
succeeds in seating himself, stands
with the aid of the crutches).

Fade out, fade in, music on background
of the valley. Morning breaks.

SCENE 10

AVNER PACKS AND LEAVES.
NADAV AND DIANA HELP AVNER TO
TAKE HIS BAG AND LUGGAGE OUT.
NADAV TRIES TO CONVERSE,
AVNER DOESN'T ANSWER.
GAIA SITS ON THE TREE.

Fade out, fade in, music on
The background of the valley.
Morning breaks.

Avner: **Gaia, get down from the tree,
we're leaving in 10 minutes.**

Nadav: **Where is it, the gas station?**

Diana: (Avner remains silent, Diana
answers in his stead)
**Between Mizpe Armon and
Maaleh Akravim.**

Nadav: **Not so bad, our father Abraham
started out there, look on it as a
kind of journey into your roots...
from the Ministry of Defense?**

(Avner remains silent)

Nadav: **You see, cripples also
have some advantages.**

Diana: **Sure, that's why he got wounded...**

Avner: **Gaia, pack your things.**

Gaia: **I'm not going with you.**

Avner: **I promise you, you'll love the place...**

Gaia: **What will I love?
The sand burning my feet?**

- Avner:** **We'll have a sty of our own!!!
Not just goats, we'll get rabbits,
chickens... we'll plant cactus,
sunflowers... we'll have a ranch
like Scarlet O'Hara, and you'll
be in charge. No children's house,
no nanny.**
- Diana:** **(To Avner) I organize things for her.**
- (Miriam arrives, sees the goings on.
All through the monolog, Avner continues
to move items)
- Miriam:** **What are you doing Avner?
You're acting like a child.
So we don't always see eye to eye,
is that a reason to sever the cord?
One doesn't leave a home,
not you.**
- Diana:** **Also chair and tables go in the car?**
- Avner:** **Thanks, I'll take care of it.**
- Miriam:** **I admit that I ruined the meeting
for you... it was necessary,
for your own good and that
of the kibbutz.**
- Nadav:** **Miriam, would you like to sit down?**
- Miriam:** **(Ignores Nadav) We won't let you go,
even if you flee to the ends of the earth,
we won't give up on you...**
- Nadav:** **Miriam, sit down... (She sits)**
- Miriam:** **Tell him Nadav, how much
I wanted him for my Ricki,
I didn't let any man near her,
not even you...**

Nadav: **Miriam, it's not important anymore...**

Avner: (Impatient) **Gaia, get down from the tree.**

Miriam: **Leave the child alone,
she's going to her mother.**

Gaia: (Descends the tree)

Avner: **Gaia, get in the car now,
I've no patience for melodramas.**
(Takes the folded chair and begins to
fold the remaining chair and table,
piles the chairs on the folded table)

Gaia: **I don't want to go with you...**

Avner: **I swear, you'll love it there...**

Gaia: **What will I love?
The sand burning my feet?**

Avner: **We'll have a sty of our own!!!
Not just goats, we'll get rabbits,
chickens... we'll plant cactus,
sunflowers... we'll have a ranch
like Scarlet O'Hara, and you'll
be in charge.**
(Diana goes towards the car
carrying two cases)
**No children's house,
no nanny.**

Diana: (On the path) **I organize things for her.
Miriam, is everything alright?**

(Pause. All look at Miriam,
Diana turns slowly and leaves,
Nadav follows moving furniture,
Gaia descends the tree and runs
on the path in order to stop Avner)

- Avner:** **Gaia, move it, I don't have all day.**
- Gaia:** **Daddy, I don't want to live with Gili in the Arava. Because of her, Mummy ran away and won't come back, She destroyed our family!!! My whole life!!!**
- Avner:** **She didn't destroy anything, you've been poisoned!!!**
- Gaia:** **You can't force me to live with a woman I hate.**
- Avner:** **You don't hate her. Here, they wouldn't let her live here, (Diana comes out of the house with the accordion case and the hat from Tiberius, she walks to Gaia) neither of you... In the Arava you'll get along fine, She loves you, you love her, you'll get along...**
- Diana:** (Stops to the left of Gaia, gives her the hat, coaxes her gently)
Don't worry, Gaia, the accordion also travel with you to Arava...
(Exits)
- Gaia:** **Grandma, tell him...**

(Miriam rises and approaches Avner)
- Avner:** (Turns to Miriam, stops her)
Miriam, I'm asking you!!!
(Miriam turns slowly and leaves, Nadav enters and takes the last chair)
- Nadav:** **Avner, everything's ready, we can go.**

Avner: **Soon.** (Nadav exits, Avner regards Gaia)
My little one, you're all I have,
and I don't intend giving you up.

Gaia: **Yes you do.**
If Gili comes to the station,
You most definitely give up on me...

Avner: **I need Gili, and she needs me,**
she's not taking your place.
(They approach each other)

Gaia: **Of course she is.**

Avner: **One day when you grow up,**
you'll also have someone
that loves you...

Gaia: **I don't need anyone to love me.**

Avner: **Gaia, please... it's a long journey.**

Gaia: **If Gili's coming to the Arava,**
I want to go to my mother.

Avner: **Is that really what you want?**

Gaia: **Yes, really.**

(Pause)

Avner: **Alright.**

Gaia: **Alright what?**

Avner: **If that's how you feel,**
I don't have the right to stop you,
go to America.

Gaia: **What???**

Avner: **In two weeks it's the summer vacation. It really is your right to see you mother, I should have let you long ago.
Go for two or three weeks, in the meantime I'll prepare you a room with the colors you like, have fun with Mummy, then come to us in the Arava and we'll start afresh.**

Gaia: **Can't you understand that we won't start afresh?!**

Avner: **Gaia... (outstretches his hands)**

Gaia: **If Gili comes to the Arava, I'm going and never coming back, you'll never see me again.
Do you hear?
Never!!!**

(She throws the hat on the lawn
And runs off)

Avner: **(Roaring) Gaia!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

(Avner begins to walk, the adult Gaia enters opposite him, stops on the path and looks at him)

SCENE 11

PRESENT

GAS STATION

(FADE IN EVENING, GAS STATION,
NADAV ARRANGES THE COFFEE SHOP,
UNLOADS PRODUCTS, ORGANIZES BOXES,
THE ADULT GAIA ENTERS)

Nadav: (Stands at the counter with his
back to the customers.
Calls inside) **Gili!**

Gaia: **Hi!**

Nadav: **Hi!**

Gaia: **The toilets are flooded.**

Nadav: **Do you need gas?**

Gaia: **No, my car broke down,
a little accident.**

Nadav: **Are you O.K?**

Gaia: **Yes.**

Nadav: (To the inside) **Gili!!!**

Gaia: **She'll be right back.
Went home for a minute
to bring something to eat.**

Nadav: **Shame, I told her I was bringing food...**

Gaia: **Uncle???**
Have I changed that much?!

- Nadav:** **Uncle??? Changed???**
(He turns round, looks at her
and recognizes her) **Gaia!!!?**
- (She nods, they laugh uneasily,
they approach each other)
- Nadav:** **I hardly recognized you...**
- Gaia:** **Me too, your hair – you know...**
(Nadav strokes his head)
- Nadav:** **When did you arrive?**
- Gaia:** **Straight to my father's funeral,
you didn't recognize me there either.**
- Nadav:** **You were there?**
- Gaia:** **I was, and I saw you,
how are you?
What are you doing here?**
- Nadav:** (Embarrassed) **You saw, didn't you?
Manual work...**
(Laughs in embarrassment)
**She didn't tell you we're
building a coffee shop?**
- Gaia:** (Offers her a chair, she sits and
places her bag to the left of her.
Holds the hat)
**Coffee shop... sure...
Didn't you want to study?**
- Nadav:** **I left the kibbutz...
a little after you did....
So I never got round to it.**
- Gaia:** **And since then you've been here?**
- Nadav:** **More or less. Want a drink?**
(Throws her the bottle of water)

- Gaia:** **I drank already.**
(Throws the bottle back)
You left?
You were actually quite popular.
- Nadav:** **You think? On the whole**
I never really felt "in".
- Gaia:** **So all of your life in the**
Jordan Valley, you were
actually dreaming about
a gas station in the Arava...
- Nadav:** **Smart ah? You haven't changed.**
- Gaia:** **You have. For the better.**
- (Nadav takes a pepper out of the carton and shows her.
Splices it into two and gives her the smaller portion, they eat)
- Gaia:** **Were you with him...?**
In his last months?
- Nadav:** **As much as I could be...**
- Gaia:** **Did he speak of me?**
What did he say?
- Nadav:** **He really missed you...**
- Gaia:** **But what did he say?**
- Nadav:** **Gaia, Avner was never a big talker...**
It didn't change after you left,
the opposite.
- Gaia:** **Sure, it was forbidden to mention me...**
- Nadav:** **Leave it out Gaia.**
- Gaia:** **I broke him...**

- Nadav:** **Broke him?... I don't know...**
- Gaia:** **What don't you know...?**
I went for two weeks and
disappeared for 15 years,
but it's nice of you to protect me...
(Gili enters with a sandwich)
- Gili:** **Hi!**
- Nadav:** **I hardly recognized you...**
- Gili:** **There's Bulgarian cheese, cucumber,**
and pineapple... naw... pepper...
- Nadav:** **I brought vegetables, bread, eggs,**
see if anything's missing...
I have to go back to Eilat to
meet with the canopy guy.
Inside a fortnight we'll
have a new coffee shop.
(Takes the keys from the counter,
presses Gaia's hand)
See you, I hope we'll meet again.
B'! Baboon.... Banana... Biscuit...
(Points to a different person with
every word, giggles and goes to Gili,
takes the sandwich and turns to Gaia.
Still hungry?
(Gaia holds up the pepper)
Thanks! I'm starving.
The toilets are flooded,
I'll fix it when I get back.
(Kisses her and exits)
- Gaia:** **So you're together...**
- Gili:** **He helps me.**
- Gaia:** **Great, did Daddy know?**
- Gili:** **Gaia, we're close friends.**

- Gaia:** You deserve a life.
- Gili:** Thanks a lot!
- Gaia:** 15 years with Avner was probably a long haul...
- Gili:** It wasn't that easy.
- Gaia:** (Teasing) So what did you do then? Fuel the cars?
- Gili:** Nadav and Daddy took care of the cars, I ran the snack bar, the finances, a gas station is a business. How is it?
- Gaia:** The pepper or the leg?
- Gili:** The leg.
- Gaia:** Same. (Places the pepper on the table, rises holding the hat and approaches Gili)
What did he die of?
- Gili:** Cripples are more vulnerable than others.
- Gaia:** Nevertheless...
- Gili:** It began with pneumonia, after that all the systems failed, when the immune system fails...
- Gaia:** And the only daughter runs away...
- Gili:** Also... but there's no reason to bring up the past... you were only 12.

- Gaia:** Initially, then I grew...
(Approaches)
Who brought my hat here?
- Gili:** Daddy. (Pause) I remember when...
It was after New York, when we went
especially to see you but didn't
succeed in seeing you even once.
- Gaia:** Yes... New York.
I had it rough – big time,
I went to meet my mother
only to find her with some
cheap Jew from Brooklyn,
I couldn't stand him, and he hated me.
- Gili:** So why didn't you come home?
- Gaia:** I wanted to...
Every day I decided that
I'd leave the next day...
At the last minute
I'd always panic.
So he hung up the hat...
- Gili:** Yes, after that he became really
introverted and hardly spoke.
- Gaia:** That's why you cheated on him?
- Gili:** Beg you pardon?
- Gaia:** (Thinks) Hard man, 15 years...
When did the affair with
Nadav begin?
- Gili:** It bothers you...
- Gaia:** Not at all. I mean, yes,
it does a bit...

- Gili:** Nadav was always here.
He built the station,
the living quarters...
sorry to disappoint you,
it's not exactly a love story,
but he was always there.
(Pause) If it was so bad in
New York... why didn't
you come home?
- Gaia:** Where to?!!!
- Gili:** To us here in the Arava...
Why not here?
- Gaia:** The Arava?
Who was waiting for me?
- Gili:** Your father, me, every day,
a letter, a phone call,
some sign of life...
- Gaia:** He wanted me to go,
I came between you.
- Gili:** That's what you remember???
- Gaia:** (Not blaming) Gili,
He preferred you to me...
- Gili:** (Looks at her in disbelief)
You're carrying that
around with you for 15 years?
- Gaia:** Yes... after you both betrayed me,
and managed without me...
it destroyed me..
but when I came home,
this is what was waiting for me...
(Goes to bag and extracts letter)
- Gili:** What's that?

Gaia: (Reading) "My little one,
the longing for you only grows,
every day is harder than
the previous one.
Sometimes I feel I'm losing
my mind...mainly because of
the questions that I fail to answer...
what did I miss, where did I lose you...
where did you lose us...
but what pains me the most is
your anger towards Gili,
I failed to connect between you,
when I brought one of you closer,
I hurt the other, I'm a course hard man,
and have never found the middle road..."

Gili: Very course and hard.
The station wasn't profitable,
the artificial inseminations
didn't take... we went broke...
he hated the city and didn't
want to return to the kibbutz...
life became a nightmare.
But I loved him...
And you – what did you do?

Gaia: I tried to study, and failed,
playing music failed too...
I didn't connect with anyone
so they sent me for treatment,
two psychologists, then three,
in the end I went to Holland,
I worked in a tulip nursery.

Gili: And there you managed?

Gaia: No... then I went to
Japan and sold posters,
studied Shiatzu...

Gili: (Softer) **What do you want to do with yourself?
To sell the station? Travel?
Go back to the kibbutz...?**

Gaia: **There's nothing to go back to.
The kibbutz isn't a home anymore...
I don't have anybody there.**
(Reads)
**"Today is especially hard, today
you are 25, what do you look like?
Gaia? What do you think of?
What do you feel?
Are you celebrating your
birthday with someone?
On your birthdays Gili and
I go to visit Grandma,
Gili forced us to make up.
Today Grandma blew out
25 candles.**
(Miriam enters, walks up the path
bent over with her hands in her
pockets and climbs the tree)
**We pray that you'll phone...
At least for her sake, the kibbutz
has changed, privatization, all the
old folk wander around like lost souls,
their work has no value...
neither have their lives...
Grandma Miriam, like a Fellini film
wanders at night in a daze,
sometimes she sits in your tree..."**

(Gili turns to the grass step to the
right of the stage and Gaia walks
on the path top the left of the tree)

Miriam: (Singing in the tree)
**"From the pains of wild fortune/
Troubles from a life of sorrow/
From yesterday unknown/
And a visionless tomorrow..."**

Gaia: **Grandma, what are you doing in the tree?**

Miriam: **Looking at the Kinneret.**

Gaia: **Come down Grandma,
you might fall!!!**

Miriam: **Soon they'll be opening
the dining room.**

Gaia: **They're not opening anything
Grandma, they're destroying it.**

Miriam: **They won't as long as
I'm in the tree!**

Gaia: **Grandma, you must eat!!!**

Miriam: **I eat only in the dining room.**

Gaia: **Who do you think you are?
Samson? Are you going to
stop the bulldozers?**

Miriam: **Which Samson are you talking about?
He died years ago...**

Gaia: **Grandma, it won't help you,
You'll die of hunger!!!**

Miriam: **You too? I told your father
not to make a breach,
that it's fraught with danger!!!
Did I or didn't I say that?
Here you have it...
A man's soul he said,
what did we deprive the soul of,
tell me, of what did we deprive it?**

Gaia: **O.K. Fine, if you're not getting
down from the tree,
I'm coming up!**

- Miriam:** I won't budge from here...
Like we stood against the Syrians,
the Jordanians, and the Egyptians...
in that war, a quarter of the fallen
were ours, Gaia... a quarter of the
fallen... we raised fine people...
the best...
- Gaia:** Grandma, you're frightening me...
Come down from the tree...
- Miriam:** There's nothing to fear,
Everybody will come to eat...
I can hear the sound of the children...
It's forbidden to abandon one's post...
- Gaia:** Please Grandma, give me your
hand and we'll go down.
- Miriam:** I need no hand. (She descends slowly)
- Gaia:** I can't leave you like this...
I have to go...
- Miriam:** So go and return later...
I'll wait for you in the dining room...

(Miriam exits)
- Gaia:** She has no relevance anymore,
to anyone.
- Gili:** That's the style, the strong screw,
and the weak get screwed...
(Looks at Miriam, Gaia advances,
and Gili descends the podium after her)
- Gaia:** One of Daddy's sayings...
Wait I haven't finished
reading the letter.
(Reads)
"I watch Gili from the side,
and can't stand her pain..."

**She writes you a letter every day,
and they all return...
She loves you Gaia,
like the child she never had,
just as you loved her,
don't know when you'll be back,
and if we'll meet, whatever
happens, I ask you to go down
to the Arava she's waiting for you..."**

**...It took me years to grasp that
we were on the same side...**

Gili: **And you paid the price.**

(Short pause, she looks at her)

Gaia: **The two of us...
A coffee house is passé today...
We need to build a spa, mud,
massages, tea-house, that's what
is in now... (Gili enters the station)
A spa will attract people, it could
be a kind of Health Center...
A magnet for the weary
of the Middle east,
you – physiotherapy,
me- Shiatzu...
You know that thanks to you
I became a clinic... (Don't understand)**

Gili: (Takes the hat from the chair,
wallows in memories, puts it
on the table and sits down)
I'm not sure I have the energy.

Gaia: **And the child, you said
that you had...**

Gili: **That's how I felt.**

- Gaia:** **Gili, think about it, a spa
in the desert... the two of
us together, piece of cake...
give it a chance...**
- Gili:** **I'll think about it.**
(Looks at her leg)
**So before those weary folk
begin to assault our spa center,
get yourself a ride and find
a clinic...**
- Gaia:** **Terrific. I'll have the leg X-rayed,
then I'll go to the kibbutz to make
some arrangements, then I'll return...**
- Gili:** (Half laughing) **This time it'll
take you less than 15 years?**
- Gaia:** **I'm optimistic.**
- (Both stand looking at the horizon,
A car is heard)
- Gili:** **Here's your ride...**
(Tries to whistle but doesn't succeed)
Shit...
- Gaia:** **C'...**
- Gili:** **Cambodia**
- Gaia:** **Coventry**
- Gili:** **Cheetah**
- Gaia:** **Cactus...**

THE END

