

PFFFFF

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Scene 1

The "Dolphin" submarine is sailing somewhere in the depths of the Persian Gulf. A small, crowded control booth. **Samion**, the submarine's technician, sits in front of the dashboard, earphones around his neck, reading a men's magazine while playing chess with **Shuki**, the submarine's cook. **Shuki** is highly concentrated on the board, deliberates his next move, then finally makes one.

Shuki: I'm out.

Samion: *(Looks at the board, moves one of the pieces)* Mate.

Shuki: What mate? *(Looks at the board)*

Samion: Grilled cheese.

(Shuki gets up and squeezes out of the control room)

Samion: *(Calls after him)* With extra cheese!

(Samion continues to flip through the magazine. Suddenly there's a beeping sound and one of the lights start to flash. It doesn't seem to bother Smaion. He fiddles around with the equipment, presses a few buttons, turns a few switches on and off, the light keeps flashing and the beep continues. He bangs the machine a couple of times and then scratches his head and stares at the machine. Shuki walks back in with the grilled cheese sandwich)

Shuki: Grilled cheese sandwich, extra cheese, no tomato, no pickles.

Samion: That's odd.

Shuki: What?

Samion: Very odd. *(Silence. He tries turning one of the switches on and off again)* Where's Tzvika?

Shuki: Doing Tai chi at the engine room.

Samion: Go get him.

Shuki: What's wrong? Is it serious?

Samion: *(Plays with the switch once more)* I have no idea.

(Shuki squeezes out, Samion looks at the switchboard confused. A few moments later in squeezes Tzvika, the submarine's first lieutenant. Shuki squeezes in right after him. The three stand pressed together in front of the switchboard)

Tzvika: What is it, **Samion**?

Samion: Listen, I know it sounds weird, but we got the "PFFFFFFF" on the assault channel.

Tzvika: PFFFFFFF? It's gotta be a glitch.

Samion: I checked. Everything's in order.

Tzvika: Did you switch the thing up and down?

Samion: Yes.

Tzvika: Did you try banging it?

Samion: A few times.

Tzvika: Let me see. *(Sits at the switchboard. Tries to fiddle with the buttons like Samion before him. Bangs the machine gently. He finally looks baffled at the arming light and scratches his head)*

Tzvika: *(To Samion)* I'm going to get Pinkus. Initiate the mayday.

(Squeezes out of the room)

Shuki: What is it? What's wrong?

Samion: *(Looks at the switchboard, turns on the siren and announces on the speaker)*

"Mayday, mayday"

(Shuki inadvertently takes the grilled cheese sandwich and eats it)

Scene 2

(3 AM. the Prime Minister's residence. The phone rings. The Prime Minister wakes up and answers it)

PM: Who is this?! *(Pause)* **Chechi...** what time is it? *(Pause)* What's going on? *(Pause)* uhhmm... *(Pause)* uh-hmmm... *(Pause)* uh-hmmm, uh-hmmm, uh-hmmm. I see. Thank you. *(Hangs up, picks the phone back up and dials)* Albert, I'm sorry about the time, meet me in seven minutes at the back entrance. *(Pause)* to HQ. Thank you. And Albert, fetch me a fruit. *(Pause)* whatever, a pear, an apple. Whatever's there. Thank you. *(Hangs up. Contemplates, whips out a cell phone and dials. Whispers).* It's me. Are you sleeping? Sweetheart... I'm headed to HQ. *(Pause)* A little thingy with some submarine, I doubt it's serious. Anyway, I have a couple of free hours, so I thought... *(Giggles)* Yes, sweetie pie... *(Pause, looks at his watch)* In two hours. At the Amsterdam Hotel, the special suite. They know. *(Giggles. Hangs up)*

Scene 3

The submarine's command room. Flashing red light and an alarm sounds. The Dolphin's commander, major Pinkus, sits in his room in almost complete silence, eating a yogurt. There's a knock at the door, and immediately after, a second knock. After a short pause the door opens and Lieutenant Tzvika peeks his head in the door)

Tzvika: Pinkus?

(Pinkus doesn't answer, he's deep in his thoughts)

Tzvika: Pinkus?

Pinkus: *(As if waking from a dream)* Yes.

Tzvika: It's a bit dark in here, isn't it?

Pinkus: Come in, Tzvika. (*Tzvika enters the room*)

Tzvika: Listen, we got PFFFFFF on the assault channel. It's most likely a glitch or maybe the naval office is trying to test our alertness (Snickers) you know, after the SS Leviathan fiasco last month. (*Pinkus is not laughing*) Anyway, I elevated the alertness level, but I suggest contacting the unit ASAP and figuring out what it's all about.

Pinkus: Sit down.

(*Tzvika sits down*)

Pinkus: You're a good officer, Tzvika, and you deserve to know.

Tzvika: Know what?

Pinkus: There comes a moment in a man's life when he can no longer stand idly by and he has to act. You may think I'm crazy... Maybe I am crazy, but I gave this a lot of thought, a lot, and I've reached a decision.

Tzvika: A decision?

(*Pause*)

Pinkus: You see, Tzvika, the energy in our system will die out. Our sun will stop burning and the earth, motionless and still will no longer be able to carry the race that disturbed its loneliness even for a moment.

Tzvika: What's that, now?

Pinkus: Man will fall into the abyss and all his thoughts will vanish. The restless consciousness, that for a brief moment in time had rampaged the universe's smug silence, will finally find peace.

Tzvika: **Pinkus**, are you feeling ok? You look a little pale.

Pinkus: Matter will no longer know itself. All those "eternal monuments", all those "immortal deeds", death itself, and love that's as strong as death, will cease to exist.

Tzvika: **Pinkus**, I'm not quite following you. (*Stands up*) Like I said before, we got a PFFFFFF at the assault channel, I really hope it's a glitch, because otherwise I don't know what could have happened for it to....

Pinkus: (*Stands up, takes out a gun*) There's no glitch, **Tzvika**.

Tzvika: What do you mean, how do you...

Pinkus: Sit down, Tzika.

(*Tzvika sits back down*)

Pinkus: The command has already been given. There's no way back. (*Takes out handcuffs*) None.

Scene 4

*The cave. A highly secure military facility located underground in Tel Aviv. In the room: Chief of staff **Chechi**, Navy Chief **Nisso** and the Defence Minister. The Prime Minister enter, holding a banana.*

PM: So what's the deal?

(The three exchange glances)

DM: *(Signals the COS)* **Chechi**.

Chechi: *(Holds his right cheek)* About twenty minutes ago the northern naval command unit received a transmission from the Dolphin commander, lieutenant major **Pinkus**. Since then we've lost all communication with either him or any other source in the submarine. *(To the Navy Chief)* **Nisso**.

Nisso: *(Picks up a piece of paper, clears his throat and starts reading aloud)* People of my generation! People of my generation who are either happy or miserable – what else shall I name those who wish not to know, hear or see. Oh, marvellous, care-free blindness! Beneath you burns a flame that shall burst and thunder like a volcano and bury all under ash and rivers of lava, and you wonder the earth as you always have, as if eternity is yours. You, who are unable to fathom the magnitude of this hour and what it demands – what language shall I speak to you? Approximately ten minutes ago, I initiated assault plan 'PFFFFFFF'. The abort code isn't an option since it has been swallowed. There's not a minute to waste, there's no other choice but to immediately mobilize operation "Never Again", in full scale. I'm fully aware of the consequences of my actions and I will pay my dues to the captain of history. However, I do hope that when the wrath subsides and the winds of war blow over, history will judge my deeds in their wider context. I wish us all the best of luck. Fearless.

Pinkus. *(Hands the letter over to the PM)*

PM: What's assault plan 'PFFFFFFF'?

(The MOD looks at Chechi, Chechi looks at Nisso)

Nisso: Electronic armament of the submarine's nuclear missiles, releasing the safety catches, direct advancement to the southern shores of Iran and launching the missiles to the Teheran area.

PM: You're kidding. *(Pause)* But there are at least three extra catches.

Chechi: *(Clears his throat)* According to the doctrines we've developed with the National Security Council, the Dolphin is supposed to secure our capability of a second strike. That is, in a scenario where we're massively attacked first, and lose our control centres, in order for us to retaliate with speed and certainty, the commander of the Dolphin has the authority to engage assault plan 'PFFFFFFF' without releasing the extra safety catches in the command units.

PM: But it's deterrence only plan!

Chechi: That was indeed the original purpose of the plan and according to all the data, it appears that Commander **Pinkus** has broken regulations. I alerted of the dangers of this procedure on several occasions, but the **MOD** was very persistent.

PM: *(To Nisso)* I want to talk with the submarine's commander ASAP. Put him through.

Nisso: He won't answer. We tried.

PM: How is that possible?

Nisso: We've already sent him dozens of transmissions.

PM: Where's the submarine?

Nisso: In the Persian Gulf.

PM: The Persian Gulf??! What's it doing in the Persian Gulf??

Nisso: A drill.

PM: What drill??!

Nisso: *(Nervous)* A-A...drill...

PM: What drill?!

Nisso: It...it's... doin... a...

PM: What drill all of a sudden?

MOD: As a routine part of the strategic training policy, that includes simulation of an assault on Iran, the submarine was moved through the Suez Canal and to the Persian Gulf inside a ZIM ship, adjusted specifically for that purpose, and then lowered 120 Km under the surface of Iran's territorial waters.

PM: So... How long do we have?

(Silence)

Nisso: Four hours.

PM: Four hours?!

Chechi: *(Holding the ice pack to his right cheek)* Four-ish.

PM: What the hell is that??

Chechi: Wisdom tooth complication.

PM: What? I don't understand what you're telling me here, that there's no way of stopping this?

MOD: Obviously we're trying to stop it, but we're between a rock and a hard place. The command has been issued and there's no way of contacting the submarine. We have to be level-headed and figure out our next step under these circumstances.

PM: *(Looks at the transmission again)* What does "The abort code isn't an option since it has been swallowed" mean?

Chechi: In the airforce "swallowed" is code for a plane that was detected on radar, but there's no such code in the navy. We're still looking into it.

PM: *(Takes a sip of water)* So... what kind of damage are we talking about?

Chechi: Every Dolphin submarine is armed with four Popeye nuclear missiles.

PM: Popeye, Shmopeye! What's the damage?!

(Silence. The MOD and the Chief of Staff look at Nisso)

PM: Nisso?

Nisso: Launching the sub's four nuclear missiles means almost total annihilation of Teheran and Qom, Markazi, Kazwin and Hamdan districts. And other than destroying the infrastructure, holy places and oil reserves – it also means between five to seven million lives. It's going to be a tough hit, but the thing is... *(Exchanges looks with the COS and MOD)* that 80% of their launching capabilities are deployed in the southern district – especially Fares, Bushehr and Sistan. That means that they'll have the capability, motivation, and sadly the justification to fire everything they have on us – 400 advanced Shihab and Sajil missiles, approximately half of which are armed with chemical and biological war heads. Add to that the Sajil's new models' improved precision abilities and it's more than likely that they'd hit our strategic targets like the power plant or the petrochemical factories.

Chechi: Add to that, of course, the thousands of missiles and rockets that will come from Lebanon and Gaza simultaneously and a very good chance that other Arab countries will join, like Pakistan, that has nuclear devices of its own.

MOD: They can't sit idly by while we're nuking a Muslim state and destroying dozens of Islam's holy places. Israel's chances of avoiding a catastrophic hit in such a scenario is almost nil.

Chechi: *(In pain)* Ouch! *(They all look at him)* Sorry... *(To Nisso, quietly)* It's not helping! It's just making my cheek cold!

PM: *(Browsing through the transmission)* What's "Never Again"? What does he mean by "immediately mobilize operation "Never Again"?"

MOD: We're not quite sure yet... but I have managed to find in the digital archives a mention of that combo in a government protocol from 1969. *(Puts on his glasses, reads the protocol)*

Golda: "And what if Nazer decides to close off the straits again?" Dayan: "He wouldn't dare"
Golda: "And If he does?" Hershkowitz: "I'm sorry, I have a Bat-Mitzveh to get to" Y. Alon:
"Bye, tell them I said hello" Hershkowitz: "I will". Golda: "You still haven't given me an
answer, what if he dares to close them?" Dayan: "We'll retaliate with force", Golda: "What
force? How much force?" Schultz: "Never Again". Dayan: "Shut up, you Imbecile" Golda:
"Schultz, that's not even funny". *(Puts down the paper and takes off his glasses)* That's it.

(Silence)

PM: What do we do, folks?

(Silence)

Chechi: We don't have much choice. Either we stop the sub or we all finish like the crow.

(Silence)

The crow who sat on the crocodile.

(Silence)

The joke.

(Long silence)

Scene 5

The submarine's control room. **Samion**, in a helmet, obviously stressed, is busy with the switchboard. Enters **Shuki**, also in a helmet. **Shuki** squeezes inside.

Samion: So?

Shuki: His door is locked, I knocked, I called him. No answer.

Samion: What's that? How come he's not answering?

Shuki: He's just not.

Samion: And where's **Tzvika**?

Shuki: Gone.

Samion: What do you mean 'gone'?

Shuki: Gone.

Samion: Pizdetz. *(Puts on his earphones, fiddles with the buttons)*

Shuki: *(Stares at **Samion**, worried, takes a chocolate bar out of his pocket and eats it)* Why did we arm the missiles?

Samion: That's the order. It's procedure.

Shuki: What do you think happened?

Samion: Something very serious. Otherwise, we wouldn't have been deployed for a second strike.

Shuki: You mean... there was a... first strike?

(Pause)

What do you think happened?

(Pause)

Can you check with the unit?

Samion: We're not allowed to use the radio.

Shuki: Why?

Samion: That's the order. It's procedure.

Shuki: But we don't have an officer present. Stop it.

Samion: I can't.

Shuki: Abort it.

Samion: I don't have the code, Blatt! *(Silence. Samion continues fiddling with the equipment and making calculations)*

Shuki: *(Wipes sweat off his forehead)* Say, what's with the helmets? If we're really entering a nuclear war, what's the dumbass idea behind making us wear a helmet? *(Pause)* I think I'm taking it off. What do I care? What will they do to me? I'll take it off. Have them put me on trial. What am I? A knight if a cook? Jerks. They nuke up the missiles and then put me on trial for going AWOL. Sons of bitches, they found themselves a patsy. Fuck spending another month in this tube. The minute we surface I'm going a-wall.

(Silence. Samion listens to his earphones. Shuki takes out a different chocolate bar, unwraps it and starts nibbling on it)

What's it actually like, the atom bomb? Is there like this "Poof" and everyone disappears? *(Wonders)* Bottom line – that's better. Better than drowning, I mean. Or burning to death.

(He chows down the chocolate bar, takes off his helmet, sits down, gets up again, paces from side to side – as much as the space allows it – then suddenly stops)

Shuki: Listen. **Samion.** Listen. **Samion.** *(Samion can't hear him, he's busy with the earphones)* Listen, it's going to be ok. Don't worry. Everything will be fine. For sure. I got this. Nothing's gonna happen, to us, I mean, We're gonna be just fine. I mean, we're not gonna die. No way. Not gonna happen. We're here, it's you, it's me, how are we going to die? We've got stuff, business, it may be hard, unpleasant, but it's gonna be fine. For sure. Don't you worry. *(He puts his helmet back on, fastens the leashes)* Fine. Whatever. I don't care. Maybe it does protect a little bit. *(Takes out a third kind of chocolate bar and eats it).* What's that even about? "poof" and then nothing? There's no such thing. What's nothing?

Samion: *(Takes off his earphones)* What's that?

Shuki: Nothing.

(Silence).

Scene 6

In the submarine – the commander's room. Tzvika is cuffed to a chair. Pinkus is watering and tending to a small potted flower.

Tzvika: Listen, **Pinkus...** I've been thinking about what you said before, about the... eternity. And... infinity, right? Listen, I get you. I totally get you. Even me, when I was a kid, sometimes before falling asleep I'd think about outer space, about how it never ends, that it just goes on and on and on, more and more, and that thought sometimes really... blew me away. *(Pause)* The thing is, I understand that you've initiated PFFFFFFF on your own, and I wonder, I mean, about the connection between the subject of eternity, which is... very... nice... and the subject of PFFFFFFF, that has a certain, and I'm sure you'll agree with me... serious.. and has

many... repercussions. *(Pause)* Pinkus, if you wanted to stick it to the man – you did. Now, let's be reasonable. If we don't send the abort code right now – we're dead, they'll send us straight to hell on a rocket.

Pinkus: A rocket, Tzvika? Everybody's so afraid of the rocket. Did you wonder what we're doing here, in this tin can, in the middle of the ocean, armed with nuclear missiles?

Tvika: Yes.

Pinkus: And...?

Tzvika: And what?

Pinkus: What conclusion did you reach?

Tvika: Conclusion? I don't know, Pinkus. All I know is that if we don't abort soon, we're gonna find ourselves in shit creek.

Pinkus: Don't step in shit if you don't want to get your boots dirty.

Tzika: (Losing it) What boots?? What's with the proverbs? What are you talking about?

Pinkus: (Cool) I'm talking about the powder keg that is the "Middle East". I'm talking about the fact that it's just a matter of time before some wacko lights a match and blows the whole thing up and I'm talking about our impotent politicians that instead of doing something about it, taking some preventive measures – they're too busy being investigated and licking election money envelopes to see past the end of their own nose. They don't have the courage, the determination or the talent for a strategic perspective.

Tzvika: You're gonna drag all of us to a third world war!

Pinkus: Well, Rome wasn't built in a day either.

Tzvika: Rome, right. Rome. Sure, Rome. Rome wasn't built in a day either. That's true. Yes. It took a while.

Pinkus: I'm not the Commander in Chief, I don't have an entire army at my disposal at click of a button. All I have is this little submarine and the four missiles we sleep with. That's my little patch of heaven and it'll do the work.

Scene 7

Back at the cave. All the characters of the previous scene are huddled around a big map.

Nisso: *(Points to the map, explaining)* The American subs operate south of Saudi Arabia's eastern coast, 230 Km away from **Pinkus'** location. Even if we alert the Americans right now, they will still have no chance of stopping him. **Pinkus** had access to that intel, that's probably why he decided on a direct route, in maximum depth, from south to north.

MOD: So there's no point in calling them.

PM: What do you mean? We have to let them know. If anyone can help us in case this... this happens... It's the Americans.

MOD: They're not going to start a war with the entire Middle East for us. They'll let us reap what we sowed.

PM: Who sowed?? We'll explain what happened!

MOD: That's even worst. They've been terrified we'd fuck up the nuclear weapon thing since Kissinger. *(Looks at **Chechi**)* And here we are. Fucking it up.

Chechi: *(To the **MOD**)* What are you looking at me for? I'm in charge of the navy? Yes. Of course I am. Because I take responsibility. But directly responsible? No. I have indirect responsibility. *(To **Nisso**)* Why are you standing? *(**Nisso** sits down)*

PM: *(To the **MOD**)* What if we tell them that it's on purpose? That it's a well-thought out, deliberate step we're taking? And that it can also be in their interest. All they have to do is go through a couple of rough weeks with us, and that somehow, at the end, there'll be something in it for them. Influence. Oil.

MOD: That's exactly what the Russians and the Chinese will think in this case. That it's all planned. They'll never let the Americans intervene here.

(Silence)

Nisso: We can try... talking with the Iranians.

(The three look at him)

Nisso: *(Sweating)* The Iranians must have their own subs over there. If we have no other choice, we give them **Pinkus'** coordinates and have them... neutralize him.

Chechi: Have you completely lost it?? Help them destroy our own sub?!

Nisso: Would you rather millions of people and start a war you have no idea how would end? We're standing at the brink of an international all scale disaster. It cannot happen. It cannot. It doesn't matter to whom or where. For the purpose of this discussion, the Iranians are people too.

(The three look at him in shock)

For the purpose of this discussion.

(Pause)

For the purpose of this discussion.

Chechi: Ok, guys, I'm tired, my tooth hurts, we're all clever, we all have ideas, we're all bleeding hearts, but let's put the cards on the table – we're at war. We wanted it, we didn't want it, this is it. Thank god, we have a lot of tricks up our sleeve. Am I Right? Hear this: They take the blow. Atom bomb. Not too nice. It's nothing to sneeze at. But – wait for it – we don't apologize for it. Get it? All we did was do to them what they've been wanting to do to us anyway since we started this country. Am I right? Nobody play innocent now. Now let them decide – All the Arabs – they want to retaliate? Tfadal. Chemical weapons? We also got 'em. Biological? We also got 'em. The Pakis will want to step in the kitchen? The more the merrier! Just don't complain that it's too hot. After all, **Pinkus'** Dolphin is not the only one capable of lighting the fireworks. They'd rather have four Popeyes than twelve, right? That's it. Very simple. They mess with us – they get crushed. They don't mess with us – they don't

get crushed. No Americans, no Russians, no Japanese. Us and them, them and us, just like 48, just like 67, just like 73, the way it should be, the way it's always been! No fooling around! An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth! AAAAAAAH!! (*Clutches his jaw*)

MOD: Guys, let's keep it cool. (*To the PM*) I suggest we operate on multiple channels simultaneously. **Pinkus** has a wife and child. Have the General Security Services bring them over and we'll put some pressure on him. While we're doing that – yes, we can talk to the Iranians. But we don't have a direct channel of communication with them and we don't have the time to create one. I suggest we bring in **Mukuama** and have him liaison between us.

Chechi: Mukuama?? You don't seriously intend on letting a terrorist in this room!

MOD: (*To Chechi*) I seriously intend on letting in anyone who will clean up your mess.

Chechi: My mess?? My mess? And what's ZIM? Who's idea was it to send a sub inside a ZIM ship? Mine? (*To Nisso*) Why the hell are you standing again?! (*Nisso sits back down. To the PM*) Does it seem reasonable to you, letting a terrorist in here??

MOD: (*To the PM*) I don't see any other choice. As a high-level officer in Hammas' military wing, **Mukuama** is considered a trust worthy man by the Iranian government. He speaks Hebrew and Farsi and we've been in touch with him before when we tried to reach ceasefire. Under the circumstances he's the right man to establish an instant, reliable connection with Teheran.

(Everybody turns their looks to the PM. He chokes. His cell phone rings, he looks at the screen, embarrassed)

PM: Excuse me.

(Steps aside, quietly)

Hello? Sugar pie? Sweetcakes? It's going to be a little while longer... no, no, what are you talking about? I'm crazy about you... It's a national emergency... yes, an emergency, it's very very important...no, not more than you, that's not what I said... no, I didn't say that an emergency is more important than you, I just said it was important, that's all... stop it, don't cry, baby, please, you know what it does to me when you cry like that... Listen, sweetie, we have to be calculated right now, not emotional... and I have to go now... I'm sorry... I have to hang up, because it's for the nation... for the nation... sorry. (*Hangs up. Checks to see that nobody's looking and dials again*) Hello? Ezra? Listen, I'm really sorry about the hour, but I need you to hold an urgent poll. Urgent. Half hour tops. Of course, whatever you can. Of course, special price. Excellent, so run something like this – "In case there was an opportunity to eliminate the Iranian nuclear plan and several other million Iranians at the cost of severe injury to Israeli population, would you support this action, oppose it or abstain? And a second question – Supposing that the elections to the prime minister were held today, sorry, after said military action, who would you vote for? That's it. Got it? And think about phrasing it better, I trust you. Thanks, Ezra. And please – ASAP. It's really urgent. Yeah, sure, forget the receipt. Just make it fast. Thanks, Ezra, bye. (*Hangs up*)

Scene 8

Control Room. **Shuki** and **Samion**. **Samion** is wearing his earphones. **Shuki** is praying with his eyes closed.

Shuki: Please, God, make this be just a drill, don't let there be a war now, don't let anyone die, keep my family safe, keep me safe, I know I never really believed until today, but please exist, and make everything all right, and that I'll be alright, and if everything's alright I promise I'll... be glad and try to be a better person, and I'd also appreciate it if I didn't have to be a real... believer. But it's possible that I might start believing in you, who knows. Could be. The main thing is that it's going to be all right and that there's no war and it's just a drill.

(Pinkus' voice sounds in the AP system. Samion takes off his earphones)

Pinkus: (In the AP system) Soldiers. This is **Pinkus**. About an hour ago we received an order to deploy assault plan 'PFFFFFFF'. You can all imagine what might have happened for such an order to be issued. There's no doubt about it: The state of Israel is in imminent danger. I can imagine what each and every one of you must be feeling right now. We all have families, friends, acquaintances, and we wouldn't be human if we didn't think and worry about them right now. Having said that, and as difficult as it may be, we are soldiers in the Israeli defense force and it's our job to protect Israel and its civilians and to assure their safety. I salute you.

(End of PA announcement. Silence)

Samion: OK.

Shuki: What OK??

(Samion takes off his shirt)

What are you doing??

Samion: *(Tying a flannelette to his forehead)* Fuck all terrorists, Al Qaeda, Chechenians Blatt!
(He smears black shoe polish on his face)

Shuki: *(Takes out a peanut snack and eats it quickly)* What am I doing here? Why didn't I take the mental evaluation? Why did I draft? Why submarines? What was I thinking...?
(remembers) The blond! The little one! With the ass! She came to our high school, told us about the navy, I pictured myself with her, on some boat, at sunset, like in a movie, I didn't see myself 200 meters below sea level, trapped in a German aquarium with a Russian technician on the way to nuke Arabs!

Samion: *(His face painted black)* I'm not Russian, I'm from Belarus.

(Shuki closes his eyes and prays)

Samion: Pray hard. Because no one's listening, blatt! *(Tightens the flannelette, then speaks Russian)* SHTOV-CHOI-STYLE-SHTOBAVKY BILLY-SHTOV-MAYBLE-INAM-PLATILY! *(Translates to Shuki)* That the dick will stand tall, that we'll fuck them all, and that they'll pay us a shitload of money for it!

Scene 9

(Submarine's commander room. **Pinkus** and **Tzvika** continue on their way to the destination. **Tzvika** sits recoiled and sweaty)

Pinkus: (The gun is at his side. He sings softly) The whole world is... a very narrow bridge...a very narrow bridge... Relax, **Tzvika**, breathe, we're doing the right thing here. The-important thing is not-to-be-afraid. Think about these lyrics, **Tzvika** – it's everything a man needs to know in this life - not-to-be-afraid...

(There's a beep signalling a transmission has arrived, **Pinkus** peeks at it and ignores it)

Tzvika: Look, if it's really like you say it is and the only choice we have is 'PFFFFFF' I guess the government realizes that. Answer them, maybe they want to...cooperate.

Pinkus: Tzvika – I was made at night, it's true – but not last night. (Goes back to humming the song, **Tzvika** wipes the sweat off his forehead) Do you know the part about the great war in the book of Ezekiel?

Tzvika: I don't think so.

Pinkus: Listen, it's interesting (Opens the bible and quotes) "It will come about on that day, when Gog comes against the land of Israel," declares the Lord God, "that My fury will mount up in My anger..." (Another transmission beep sounds)

Tzvika: We'd better answer them.

Pinkus: Listen to the end, it's really interesting: "The mountains also will be thrown down, the steep pathways will collapse and every wall will fall to the ground...With pestilence and with blood I will enter into judgment with him; and I will rain on him and on his troops, and on the many peoples who are with him, a torrential rain, with hailstones, fire and brimstone."

Gog is the president and Magog is the nation he rules, which according to most analysts is Persia, meaning Iran. And according to the sages – it's going to be a short war in which no people will take part, but after which the enemy will take seven months to collect all its bodies from the mountains. (Silence. **Tzvika** is in shock) How many women did you sleep with, **Tzvika**?

Tzvika: Listen, **Pinkus**...

Pinkus: Speak up, don't be shy...

Tzvika: Three, four, something like that...

Pinkus: That's it?

Tzvika: I'm not exactly a ladies man, you know...

Pinkus: Yes, I know. I, on the other hand, have slept with a lot of women, **Tzvika**. Women are just attracted to me, I can't help it. I asked myself many times what it was that they saw in me and never found the answer. After all, there are more attractive men than me out there. Until one day it hit me: what drove them crazy, what drew them to me, what made them nuts was the simple fact that I had no passion. I was just indifferent.

Tzvika: *(Laughing)* I wish you'd taught me that in high school.

Pinkus: It wouldn't have helped.

(Another transmission beep sounds, Pinkus is pensive, Tzvika manages to get a glimpse of it)

Tzvika: **Pinkus...** it says here that your wife wants to talk to you.

(Silence)

Pinkus: Is she with them?

Tzvika: I don't know, talk to them. *(Pinkus ignores him. Another transmission arrives. Tzvika looks at it)* Now they say that if you care about your wife and kids, you'd better get on the radio this instant.

(Silence)

Pinkus: Get on the radio and explain to them that it's impossible to abort the mission.

(Tzvika nods. Pinkus releases him from his cuffs)

Tzvika: *(On the radio)* Contacting Centre M-4-B.

(There's a commotion, Nisso's voice is heard)

Nisso: Who is this? **Pinkus?**

Tzvika: This is major **Tzvika** M-4-B. **Pinkus** is... right here, next to me.

Nisso: Wait... wait a minute... *(There's a commotion)* OK... **Tzvika**, patch us through to **Pinkus** immediately. The Prime Minister wants to talk to him personally.

Tzvika: Hold on... *(To Pinkus)* Listen, the Prime Minister wants to talk to you.

Pinkus: You talk to him and tell him what I told you.

Tzvika: *(On the radio)* He won't talk to anyone. He asked me to say that there's no way of abort the mission.

PM: **Tzvika**, has assault plan 'PFFFFFF' been deployed?

Tzvika: Yes, I'm afraid so...

(Commotion)

Chechi: **Tzvika**, this is the Chief of Staff, can you hear this? *(Plays a recording of a child getting beaten, crying "daddy...daddy...")* Play this to **Pinkus**.

Tzvika: *(To Pinkus)* I guess your kid's there, he's crying.

Pinkus: *(Closes his eyes, sings)* The-impor-tant thing is not-to-be-afraid... not-to-be-afraid-at-all. *(Tzvika sees the opportunity that Pinkus has his eyes close, and jumps on him. They struggle. Tzvika manages to take the gun)*

Tzvika: Abort the mission!

Pinkus: that's impossible.

Tzvika: Where's the code? Where's the abort code?

Pinkus: Inside...

Tzvika: In the safe?

Pinkus: I swallowed it.

Tzvika: What? How did you swallow it?!!

Pinkus: With Sprite. I knew they'd try to stop me and put me through tests no man can face. That's why I swallowed the piece of paper with the code, without looking at it or copying it anywhere. I protected the assault even from myself. You can kill me, but it won't help you. It's impossible to stop the assault. It's just... impossible.

Scene 10

The four wait anxiously in the room. The intercom buzzed and the PA Answers it.

PA: Yes?

female voice: Mukuama is here.

PM: Let him in.

They quickly organize the room, turning over and covering important documents. Mukuama enters the war room. He looks around him, highly suspicious)

PM: (Officially) Thank you for agreeing to come here, and on such short notice. This is a very serious matter.

Mukuama: We will keep the temporary truce for as long as it serves the Palestinian people's interest and resume our resistance to your aggression at the time and force of our choosing.

PM: No, no, that's fine, the truce, the resistance. Everything's fine. You're fine. Would you like a drink?

Mukuama: No, thank you.

PM: Orange juice, maybe?

Mukuama: You've poisoned enough of my friends already.

PM: *(To Nisso)* Get him some orange juice. *(To Mukama)* Look, here's the thing, there's no point beating around the bush. A couple of hours ago one of our submarine commanders, a lieutenant colonel **Pinkus**, decided on his own accord... to assault Iran with a nuclear weapon.

(Silence)

Mukuama: Are you shitting me?

PM: I'm not.

Mukuama: This is another one of your tricks, I can smell it.

PM: Do I look like I'm lying?

Mukuama: No, that's why you always get away with it.

PM: I swear to you on the Wailing Wall. Let it be smashed to smithereens if I'm lying.

Mukuama: Suppose you're telling the truth. What do you want from me?

PM: Here's the thing. We contacted the submarine's commander, but he won't cooperate. It seems that something's a little off there, you know... *(Makes a 'screw loose' gesture and giggles. Mukuama's face stays blank)* Never mind. The thing is we have grounds to believe that the Iranians already have serious unconventional capabilities that may endanger the entire area. They are, after all, mean little buggers. *(To the MOD)* What's that joke about the Persian and the prostitute?

MOD: *(To Chechi)* Chechi. The joke.

Chechi: A prostitute comes up to a Persian on the street and says: "fifty shekels in the yard" so he runs over to the yard and yells: "where? Where in the yard is the fifty shekels?"

(They all laugh, Mukuama is in shock)

PM: Anyhow, we're about to contact the administration in Teheran. It's likely to assume they'll also think we're trying to trick them. I mean, there's a lot of suspicion, you know, and we have very little time. Since they and your organization are part of the same... axis, we thought...

Mukuama: In short, you want me to convince them this is a real situation.

PM: And also help us understand their reactions. So that we don't find ourselves in an... awkward situation.

Mukuama: In a nuclear war, you mean.

PM: I assure you, **Mukuama**, if you help us and things turn out well, I'll give you a lot of... tributes. A lot. And if not – you have to understand, you're also in this mess, this weapon doesn't acknowledge borders, it's like the Bedouins.

Mukuama: You're a bunch of wackos! You and your "best army in the world"! How could you let this happen?

Chechi: *(Walks over to the PM)* Excuse me, but I'm not going to sit here and listen to this terrorist talking trash about the IDF!

Mukuama: *(To Chechi)* Sit in your place, gorilla.

Chechi: Gorilla?? At least I don't have hair in my teeth!

Mukuama: Gorilla! Sit in your place! Chimp!

Chechi: You ugly, crooked eyed dog!

PM: Gentlemen...

Mukuama: You chimp! Ape! Look in the mirror! Ape!

PM: Gentlemen...

Chechi: You're the ape! Your father's an ape! Your entire family are apes!

*(The **PM** and the **MOD** separate them)*

Nisso: *(On the phone)* We have Teheran on the line.

PM: Listen, **Mukuama**... now's not the time to rehash the past. After all, we're talking about all of our futures here: Jews, Christians, Terrorists. In less than two hours we can find ourselves at the heart of an unmeasurable nuclear war. Please, **Mukuama**... come on, please... please... *(Gets down on his knees. **Mukuama** takes the phone, they all leap at the other phone and listen in)*

PM: First tell Hammudi where you are and then pass him on to me.

Mukuama: Hello, Hammudi, ahlan, ahlan vesahlan... *(**Mukuama** speaks Farsi and finally says softly to the **PM**)* I told him. He sounds upset.

PM: *(Speaks as **Mukuama** translates)* Hello? Hammudi? First of all, nice to meet you, after all, when you thinkn about it, we've never officially met.

Mukuama: *(Translates)* There are reasons for that.

PM: Naturally, naturally, and if I didn't have good reason, I wouldn't call you, and at this hour.

Mukuama: What's this about?

PM: Here's the deal: this whole thing with the nuclear capabilities that foreign sources say we have, so it turns out that about an hour ago a little glitch happened and one of our submarine commanders decided on his own to attack your country with a nuclear weapon that we supposedly have according to foreign sources. *(Pause)* Are you with me, Hammudi?

Makuame: Yes.

PM: Did you hear what I said?

Mukuama: Why are you telling me this?

PM: First of all, I want to assure you in person that this is a single person's breach and not an official decision by the state of Israel, and I want to apologize in advance for this unpleasantness.

Mukuama: One moment. I want to understand. What you're telling me is that one of your officers has decided on his own to attack our country with a nuclear weapon and all you can say about it is you're sorry?!

PM: No, no, no, of course not. Look, we're doing all we can to make the sub commander change his mind, we even beat up his kid, an 8 year old kid, cute, never did any harm to anyone. But he's stubborn and won't listen to anything.

Mukuama: Where's the nuclear missile supposed to hit?

*(Everyone looks at **Nisso**)*

Nisso: In Teheran.

*(**Mukuama** translates. They all keep the receivers away from their ears)*

PM: Hammudi, relax. I know it's a little hard to take in, but that's the way things are, there's no point in having a fit, we have to think reasonably and with restraint. Take a deep breath. *(It appears that the MOD is pleased with the last sentence)*

Mukuama: *(Translates)* How long before the missiles are supposed to hit the target?

(Everyone looks at Nisso)

Nisso: An hour and fifteen minutes.

PM: An hour and twenty minutes, give or take.

Mukuama: *(Translates)* How could you let this happen? A bunch of idiots. Stupid. Dogs. Sons of the devil. Taageds *(Explains to the PM)* It's an Iranian animal that smells bad. *(Continues translating)* Child killers. Godless people. Rats...

PM: Hammudi – the only option we have is to try to take down the submarine.

Mukuama: How exactly are you thinking of taking it down?

PM: We'll give you its coordinates and any other detail you may need to destroy it with one of your submarines or battleships.

Mukuama: *(Translates)* Impossible! We can't destroy your sub!

PM: But what about all those new maritime weapons you've developed? You declared that you could destroy an entire fleet of western submarines at the push of a button!

Mukuama: *(Translates)* It's in developMent! It's in developMent!

PM: How is it still in developMent??

Mukuama: *(Translates)* You blew up twenty of our scientists so it's in developMent! We have kids who haven't graduated middle school developing it!

PM: I see. *(Silence. He looks at the rest of the party, baffled)* OK, well, in any case, I think it's good that we talked. We'll figure out what to do and we'll talk again. I estimate it'll be in the next hour.

Mukuama: He won't be available. They're fleeing Teheran. *(Listens. Puts down the receiver)* OK. That's it.

MOD: What? What did he say?

Mukuama: That we'll all meet in hell.

(Long silence)

Scene 11

In the submarine. Pinkus' hands and legs are tied, his underwear have been pulled down and there's a pot under him. Tzvika is pointing a gun at him. Samion pinches his nose and Shuki feeds him a green pie.

Pinkus: *(Sings)* The-impor-tant thing is not-to-be-afraid...

Tzvika: *(To the cook)* Why isn't anything coming out of him?

Shuki: Patience, patience... *(feeds Pinkus)* this pie has never failed.

Samion: I'll testify to that. It does wonders to the bowel movements.

Tzvika: We're almost at launch time!

Shuki: There you go!

(Pinkus struggles and moans, but finally defecates into the pot)

Tzvika: Go ahead! Check it!

Samion: *(To Shuki)* Go on! Check it!

Shuki: Why me?

Samion: I can't do it!

Shuki: Well then, I can't do it either!

Tzvika: Idiots! We're on the brink of nuclear war! *(To the cook)* Check it, that's an order!

Shuki: *(Searches through the poop)* PSHHHHH!!! This stinks!!!

Samion: It already smells like a nuclear war, blatt!

Shuki: Here... here...What's this? *(Yanks a small piece of paper out of the poop)*

Tzvika: What does it say? What's the code??

Shuki: *(Pinches his nose and tries to read)* 1 Cott... Coattge cheese...2 mil...milk?

Pinkus: It's from the practice!

Tzvika: What practice?

Pinkus: I practiced with a smaller note first. From my wife!

Shuki: Should I go get more pie?

Samion: Wait! *(Takes the gun and aims it at Pinkus)* How long after the practice did you swallow the code?!

Pinkus: Two hours.

Tzvika: We don't have two hours!

Shuki: It's hopeless!

Samion: Wait! There's still a chance... there's still a chance. *(The three look at him with hope and terror)*

Scene 12

Nisso gets an update on the computer.

Nisso: They found it. They found “Never Again”. There’s such a plan. *(He reads in silence, everyone looks at him, he chokes)* This plan was conceived during Ben Gurion’s second government. What it means is... *(Pause)*

Chechi: What??

Nisso: *(Reads off the page)* “Launch everything. All we’ve got, on all the Arab countries within range.”

PM: That’s it? On everyone? That’s Ben Gurion’s plan??

MOD: Maybe we shouldn’t rule it out so fast.

PM: *(Lashes out)* Are you out of your mind? Do you have any idea how many casualties that is?*(To Nisso)* How many casualties is it?

(Everyone looks at Nisso)

Nisso: What am I? Am atom bomb barometer?? A hundred million, two hundred million...

MOD: We’ve run out of time, we couldn’t stop the sub, before the sun even shines we’ll be up to our necks in a very messy war. Suppose we somehow get out of this – and it’s a very big suppose – think about what they’ll do to us. They’ll put us on the stake. Burn us alive. Hang us in the Hague. Think about it for a minute. On the other hand, if we go for “Never Again” we may still have a chance of getting out of this with minimal damage. They’ll never forgive us four atom bombs, but if we wipe out the entire Middle East, they might end up thanking us.

PM: But what about all the hits we’ll take? Nuclear fallout? Pakistan? What about Pakistan??

MOD: I’m not saying it’ll be smooth sailing, but what doesn’t kill you makes you stronger. This facility is completely safe and secure. In case of a nuclear hit the government will most likely have to insure the safety of the select, most essential people to the continuation of the Jewish genome. That’s us, of course, a few Nobel Prize winners, A couple of chefs, edible animals – male and female of each kind, a butcher, *(Looks at Mukuama)*, a plumber, a doctor and... all the most attractive models in the country until the age of 20, at a ratio of, let’s say, 10 models per man. It won’t be easy, I’m well aware of that. But since the great responsibility for the continuation and procreation of the Jewish race will lay on our shoulders, let us at least create the optimal circumstances for prolonged, daily stimulation that will boost natural childbirth. *(They all nod in agreement)*

Chechi: Wait, something’s not right here. *(They all look at him in fear)* what do we need the Nobel Prize winners for?

MOD: *(Ponders)* You’re absolutely right. *(They burst out laughing)*

Scene 13

*In the submarine. **Pinkus** is tied naked to the command board. **Tzvika** pins him down so he can't move. **Shuki** stands over him, holding a big kitchen knife, **Samion** is at his side with a toolbox and instruments.*

Shuki: *(To the engineer)* In cows, the intestines are located around this area, with ducks it's a little higher.

*(**Pinkus** screams in horror, **Tzvika** shuts his mouth)*

Samion: So open everything up, just be gentle.

Shuki: *(To the horrified **Pinkus**)* I'm sorry, sir. Don't think this is easy for me.

Tzvika: We're ascending!

*(The cook cuts **Pinkus** up. **Shuki** and **Samion** start searching inside him)*

Samion: Is it the purple one?

Shuki: No, that's the spleen! Look for a long, twisty one...

Samion: This one?! This?!

Shuki: Yes! Yank it out!

Samion: *(Carefully pulls the intestines out)* It never ends!

Shuki: *(Helps pull the intestines out, to **Tzvika**)* Give us a hand!

*(**Tzvika** joins the two and they all pull the intestines like a never ending rope, they finally rest it on the command board instead of **Pinkus**)*

Samion: *(Holding a small screw and tweezers)* Piz-dietz! What is this monster, blatt?!

Shuki: That's the intenstines!!

Tzvika: *(To **Samion**)* You said you'd know how to pull out the note!

Samion: I thought it was a normal size! Like a carburettor!

Tzvika: We're about to launch!

Shuki: Look for it!

Samion: *(To **Shuki**)* Give me some light!

Shuki: How much time do we have??

Tzvika: We don't!

Samion: *(Drops the tools)* Look for it! Just look for it!

(The three go through the intestines with their bare hands – cutting, tearing, shifting, get all entangled in it)

Scene 14

*At the cave. Alcohol, balloons. Animal voices are heard from the next room. Everyone drinks and blow up more balloons. **Chechi** enters excitedly)*

Chechi: That's it. They helicoptered in the last one. Her name is Anna. She's 16.

MOD: A MODel?

Chechi: *(takes out a men's magazine cover photo)* They pulled her out of the pool in the middle of a swimsuit shoot.

PM: *(Alarmed, to the MOD)* Did we take any towels?

MOD: I don't know, I can't be in charge of everything, did you take any towels?

PM: Me? No.

MOD: So no towels. What we didn't take won't be anymore.

Chechi: Stop it, stop fighting, we'll get by. Worst case scenario we'll wipe ourselves down with one of the animals.

MOD: That's out of line, **Chechi**.

*(Enters **Nisso**, carrying a stack of board games: Chess, Checkers, Monopoly, backgammon The Clue)*

Nisso: I couldn't find Taki, so I brought regular playing cards.

*(**Chechi** picks up a water ball and starts bouncing it on his leg. The **PM** looks at everybody, exhilarated. His phone rings)*

PM: Excuse me! *(The music stops, he answers it)* Hello? Yes... yes... my sweetie pie, my dumpling, listen, I'm not gonna make it tonight. It's this emergency thing. I'm really sorry... *(checks out Anna's photo)* No, don't cry, baby... *(Suddenly an idea pops into his head)* Ummm.. I just remembered... *(Smiles mysteriously to the others)* You're gonna die. Yes. Die. In less than an hour! *(They all look at him with horror mixed with excitement)* Why did you stop crying, sweetheart? It's oh, so very sad! You're gonna turn into dust! Into nothing! I gotta go, babe. Best of luck. *(Hangs up. Silence – then they all laugh hysterically)*

Chechi: Quiet! Quiet! *(Dials)* Hello? Patch me through to the district attorney ASAP. *(Waits)* Hello? Aharon? It's **Chechi**. I have new information about that underage girl scandal at the Hilton in 2002. It was me. *(They all look at him in shock)* Me. Yes. M-E! And it wasn't consensual! No consent! There was no consent there! *(Laughs)* Why am I telling you? Because it's true! The truth! What do we have in life other than the truth?! Nothing!! *(Hangs up. They all laugh wildly and drunkenly. The MOD puts flowers under his shirt, Chechi leaps at him)* Stephanie? Nice to meet you! *(in an American accent)* ST-EPH-ANIE... ST-EPH-ANIE... You to have big boobies!! *(To Mukuama)* And who are you?? Inga? Hello Inga! Auf wiedersehen! Achtung, achtung, **zwei obbote von norden**!! *(To Nisso)* Simba!! You are Simba?? *(Nisso is nervous)* Want to dance with me some uga buga Simba?!! *(Claps his hands, jumps at Nisso)*

Nisso: *(Dances with Chechi on top of him)* I am Simba!! *(Stops)* Careful! The bomb! *(They panic for a moment. Nisso raises his hands and approaches them slowly)* It's coming closer...

*(they're all scared and excited, back away from **Nisso** who comes near **Chechi**) It wants to eat you... (**Chechi** runs away. **Nisso** approaches **Mukuama**) It wants to eat you...! (**Mukuama** runs away. **Nisso** approaches the **PM**) It wants to eat you...! (**Grabs the PM**, who screams in panic, and lifts him in the air)*

MOD: *(Barges in. Climbs on the table and dances to the tune of "The Godfather" as he pulls down his pants) What right do I have to wear underwear? What right do I have to wear underwear? What right? What right? What right do I have to wear underwear!! (Everyone joins him, pulling down their own pants. The **PM** passes around champagne glasses)*

PM: Fellas, fellas! *(Clinks his glass. Everyone is quiet)* Fellas, this isn't an easy moment, for any of us. But I want us to raise our glasses, for our country, for the future. The Jewish people has known many hardships throughout history and time after time, like a phoenix, or that doll, you know, the rubber thingy, Bobo doll, that thing knows how to bounce back, to rise from the wrecks, from darkness to light, to pick up the pieces, and at the end of the day, it's all for the best. Lechayim!

Everyone: Lechayim!

The phone rings.

MOD: *(Answers) Hello?? (After a few seconds of listening to the other side, he turns pale. He finally puts down the phone, all choked up) There's not going to be a launch. There's no bomb.*

Chechi: How come??! *(To the phone) How come??*

MOD: Someone activated the abort code at the last minute.

Long pause. They're in complete shock.

PM: *(Miserably) That's... great. We're saved. (The song "Self Respect" starts playing)*

Scene 15 – Epilogue

In the submarine.

Tzvika: *(On the PA system, festively) Friends, we are nearing Stella Maris. Prepare for ascension.*

Samion and Shuki are thrilled. **Samion** sits down at the command computer.

Shuki: *(Takes out a chocolate bar and nibbles it)* Do you think we'll get a citation?

Samion: I don't know.

Shuki: We saved the world.

Samion: We sure did. But you're still a cook.

Shuki: I sure am.

Tzvika: *(On the PA)* Starting Ascension.

Samion *presses a few buttons.*

Samion: 60 meters.

Shuki: It suddenly seems strange that there's air out there, sun, land.

Samion: 50 meters.

Shuki: What if they're not there?

Samion: 40 meters...

Shuki: Just imagine they're not there...

Samion: 30 meters... 20 meters... 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5...

The light fades during the countdown.

The End.