

The Button

A play by Yosef Bar Yosef

Cast

Saul Eden – Doctor
 Ziva Eden – His Wife
 Rafi – A Patient

Location

A cabin in the yard outside a neglected private institution for the mentally ill and disabled, which serves Dr. Saul Eden as living quarters and also an infirmary when necessary.

Scene One:

(Rafi is cleaning up the room, turns on the stereo, lies down on the couch, Saul enters, wearing a doctor's coat).

Rafi: (Gets up) Hey.

Saul: (Simultaneously, as though expecting to find someone else) You.

Rafi: Huh...?

Saul: Nothing, everything's fine.

Rafi: Because of the music, huh? You thought it was someone else, I can't do it. You taught me, you taught me well. I put on your music, the kind you like.

Saul: Just make it a little lower, okay?

Rafi: A little lower. (Rafi lowers the music and removes Saul's coat) You were in the city yesterday, huh? You were in the city yesterday, huh?

Saul: Yes.

Rafi: I noticed right away. (Indicating the suit hanging off to the side) Your clothes, they're doctor's clothes.

Saul: (Indicating the coat) These are my doctor's clothes, Rafi.

Rafi: These are a doctor's clothes when he's working, but these are the clothes of a hospital doctor when he's not working, when he's going into town, not just any old things, they're the clothes of a hospital doctor.

Saul: Really? There are special types of clothing for a hospital doctor when he's not working and going into town?

Rafi: Of course, there's a difference, I noticed right away.

Saul: And what about a hospital professor?

Rafi: A hospital professor...?

Saul: The clothing a hospital professor wears when he's not working and he's heading into town, you would notice that right away too.

Rafi: I don't know about that.

Saul: (Laughing) That's already too much, huh? And how are you going to be able to tell in the summer, when I go into town, if I ever go, with a short-sleeved shirt? How will you be able to tell then?

Rafi: I'll know.

Saul: I'm glad. (Lies down on the couch).

- Rafi: Sure. (Brief silence) I could tell you'd been to town also by the tuna. You brought a new one, I'll open it in a second. And the cookies. You brought chocolate-covered cookies, the good ones.
- Saul: I want to rest a bit, Rafi.
- Rafi: (While setting out plates, etc) I don't like it in town. They fight, throw stones. They fight out here too, but at least there's an orchard. At night in the orchard you can hide just fine, you lie down and it's like the earth, nobody'll ever find you, only the dogs, by your smell. In town it's impossible to hide, in town there's no night altogether. It's always light. But there are good cookies in town, that's for sure. (Awaits a response, then continues) There are good cookies in town, that's for sure.
- Saul: Sure, have one.
- Rafi: Afterwards, together. These are my weekend clothes. The entire open ward got a day off today. They all left, I'm the only one who stayed. I'm gonna sleep here with you today. You remember? You said so. I'll sleep on the floor, there's enough room. (Brief silence, then) You said so... (falls silent) You want me to shut up? I can, if you'll tell me to, I can.
- Saul: It's fine. You can keep talking, just a little softer. And don't wait for a response, okay? You talk and I'm gonna rest.
- Rafi: Like last week, I talked and you fell asleep, it helped you fall asleep, right?
- Saul: Right.
- Rafi: (Brief silence) There are girls in town too, huh? There are girls in town too, huh? (Brief silence, waiting for a response that never comes, then continuing) They say music is a good thing for a girl, for a woman, to get her to put out. Not this music, music. And a private car, girls like to ride around in a private car so everyone can see. And a pipe. Once I saw a guy with a pipe and this girl who was so beautiful. And flowers, for girls like that... you know, the skinny ones. Moise says that the best thing for getting a girl to put out is to give her two slaps in the face on the spot and then drop your pants right away like in the bathroom. That's what he does, according to him. You think he really does that? (Again) Moise, that's what he says. When he meets a girl he gives her two slaps on the spot and drops his pants. You think he really does that? You think he really...?
- Saul: I don't know. I never thought about it. I'll give it some thought some other time.
- Rafi: (Brief silence) Your suicide today was a schizophrenic maniac, huh? (Again) Your suicide today...?
- Saul: I'm a general doctor, Rafi. You remember what I asked you...
- Rafi: Sure, that's enough, I'll shut up. (Brief silence) One hundred percent schizophrenic maniac.
- Saul: If you say so.
- Rafi: There's something better for a girl, to get a woman to put out, the best. I heard about it from someone serious, I can't remember his name anymore. There's a place in a woman's body, he says, a sort of button... (falls silent) (Saul stares at him).
- Rafi: You want me to continue?
- Saul: Sure, go ahead.
- Rafi: You just touch this button – she has to love you, you can be nobody, from a broken family, priors with the cops, don't know how to dance, can't sing, can't even talk nice with the ladies, even a schizophrenic maniac; but she'll be

forced to love you like a madwoman. All you have to do is touch this button. She'll give you everything, whatever you want, she'll kiss your feet. She'll cry for you. Whenever you tell her to come, she'll come. You tell her to go, she won't leave. All you have to do is touch this button.

(Saul cries, quietly).

Rafi: You don't have to go to town. You don't have to go...

Saul: Sure, you're enough for me, entirely.

(The hospital bell rings).

Rafi: It's Friday today, the Sabbath.

Saul: People commit suicide on Friday too, even on the Sabbath, no? (Exits).

(Rafi remains in the room, puts on Saul's jacket, walks around, hums to himself, arranges different things. Ziva knocks on the door, Rafi doesn't respond, so she knocks again and enters hesitantly).

Ziva: Sorry, my mistake. (Exits again hesitantly).

Rafi: Mistake!

Ziva: (Knocks and enters) Sorry...

Rafi: Yes?

Ziva: Excuse me, but where does Saul Eden live?

Rafi: Doctor Saul Eden!

Ziva: Yes, Doctor Saul Eden.

Rafi: Where does he live...?

Ziva: Where does he... where's his house... his apartment...

Rafi: Why do you need to know? New patients have to go to the office first. Today is Friday, the office is closed. This is his private place here. (Again) His private place...

Ziva: This?

Rafi: Yes this. It's nice, huh?

Ziva: Yes, very nice. (Puts her suitcases down on the floor) Do you know when he'll be back?

Rafi: What are you doing? Your suitcases, what are you...?

Ziva: I'm putting them down, they're heavy.

Rafi: Put them down in the office, not here. The office is closed altogether. You've come to get checked in – come back Sunday. Today they're only taking really urgent cases. Are you a really urgent case?

Ziva: (Laughs) Maybe, but not what you think. (Takes a turn and looks around).

Rafi: What are you doing?

Ziva: Looking around.

Rafi: Patients don't look around like that.

Ziva: I'm just looking around.

Rafi: Did he tell you to come see him privately?

Ziva: Something like that.

Rafi: (Laughing, sort of imitating her) Something like that...!

Ziva: Is that funny?

Rafi: There was a lady here once, she used to always say, 'something like that...!' (Looks her over).

Ziva: I see. (Sits down on the couch).

Rafi: What are you doing?

Ziva: I want to sit a bit in peace and quiet.

Rafi: You're on the couch.

(She makes no response. Brief silence).

Rafi: (Brief silence) What's up?
 Ziva: Excuse me?
 Rafi: What's up?
 Ziva: Everything's fine, thanks. What's up with you?
 Rafi: You know him from before, from Tel Aviv?
 Ziva: Yes.
 Rafi: You're a private patient of his?
 Ziva: I'm his wife.
 Rafi: What's your name?
 Ziva: Ziva. Ziva Eden.
 Rafi: Eden? That's the doctor's name... are you his sister?
 Ziva: I'm his wife, I just told you.
 Rafi: Are you sure that he told you to come see him?
 Ziva: Who are you, if I may ask? What do you do here?
 Rafi: Everything! I even killed the snakes. This place was once a warehouse. There were snakes in here. (He spots a kettle among her things, with a wrapper) What's this?
 Ziva: A kettle for making coffee with a wrapper, a sort of coat, a little baby coat. There was one like this at my parents' house.
 Rafi: Are you planning on taking the kettle out in the rain?
 Ziva: No, it's so the coffee stays warm.
 Rafi: There are dogs with coats like that.
 Ziva: Yeah, something like that.
 Rafi: Once I even saw a cat with a coat like that.
 Ziva: Mmm... interesting.
 Rafi: Of course it was mmm... interesting!
 Ziva: Excuse me?
 Rafi: Very interesting!
 Ziva: I get it. You're on the technical staff, or one of the janitors, something like that?
 Rafi: I'm a patient.
 Ziva: What's the matter with you?
 Rafi: Manic-depression.
 Ziva: Excuse me?
 Rafi: Manic-depression. I have certificates, documents. You, I think, are a schizophrenic.
 Ziva: What kind of institution is this hospital?
 Rafi: You don't know where you've arrived?
 Ziva: Apparently not.
 Rafi: You thought this was just some general state hospital?
 Ziva: I don't know.
 Rafi: Of course not. It's a neglected private institution. They only wash things down well when the person dies, so the Ministry of Health won't know about it. There aren't any psychiatrists either, just one, that's not alright. The doctor is alright. He's a doctor of general medicine. A good doctor. I heard what the owners once said about him, that they got lucky.
 Ziva: Lucky...?
 Rafi: Sure, with the one who came to work for them. Something must have gotten screwed up, they said, that's their luck, in the hospital, wherever he worked previously. And something else too, the fact that he's not ambishi at all.

Ziva: Ambitious.

Rafi: That's it, something like that – he's not.

(Ziva laughs).

Rafi: You think that's funny...?

Ziva: Maybe because of that he'll also end up winning something.

Rafi: What'll he win? Is he playing the lottery?

Ziva: Precisely without playing anything at all. (She gets up).

Rafi: Where are you...?

Ziva: I want to have a drink.

Rafi: You sit quietly.

Ziva: I'm thirsty.

Rafi: I'll get it for you, sit down.

(She turns to sit next to the table). Not there! That chair is broken, the doctor likes it, he brought it here special. You have to know how to sit on it. You also have to know how to open the door. He even gave me the keys so I can come in whenever I want, and I also can do whatever I want here. I can even put on the stereo. (Waits for a response) I can even put on the stereo.

Ziva: Right.

Rafi: I'm also gonna sleep here today, on the floor, there's enough room. We also talk about everything. We even talk about God. And girls... (waits for a response) We also talk about girls.

Ziva: I heard.

Rafi: (Brief silence) I want to ask you something. I heard about it from someone serious, I can't remember his name anymore. There's a place in a woman's body, a sort of button. All you have to do is touch this button and she's forced to love you like a madwoman. You can be nobody, from a broken family, priors with the cops, don't know how to dance, can't sing, don't even know how to talk nice to the ladies, even a schizophrenic maniac...

(Ziva bursts into tears).

Rafi: No big deal. Let me tell you something, but don't tell anyone else. Yesterday the doctor went to town. To Tel Aviv. I saw when he got back, I wanted to come in and then I heard someone crying inside. Today too... no, I won't tell you.

Ziva: (Takes out a cigarette, tries to light it) When is he supposed to be back?

Rafi: You smoke? My mother never smoked. The doctor's mother didn't either. He told me...

Ziva: I asked you when you think he's going to be back?

Rafi: In a little bit. He had a suicide today. Maybe there are going to be more. One commits suicide so immediately another one wants to do it too. When there are suicides – then he has a lot of work. They get everything dirty. He has to wash things down. He's a good doctor, and he washes things well too. They don't even wash things down so well in the big state hospitals.

Ziva: I want to sit in peace and quiet for a bit, okay?

Rafi: (Brief silence) What's up?

Ziva: Excuse me?

Rafi: What's up?

Ziva: Everything's fine, thanks. What's up with you?

Rafi: I want to ask you something, that thing I said to you before about that place, that button in a woman's body. You're a woman... right?

(Saul opens the door, seems very surprised. Ziva gets up, holds her suitcases absent-mindedly).

Rafi: She showed up all of a sudden, I told her new patients have to go to the office.
(Again) I told her new patients have to go to the office.

Saul: I heard, Rafi. (To Ziva) Sorry, I just... Come in...

Ziva: (Laughing) Come in...?

Saul: (Laughs) I'm sorry... of course, I'm the one still outside... (Closes the door behind him, takes a step towards her) Welcome, as they say, you know, welcome to my home... Sorry, I'm a little confused... (Joking) A little, huh?

Ziva: It's natural, it couldn't be any other way, it's a surprise, after all.

Saul: I'm glad, you don't know how glad I am.

Ziva: It's my fault. I should have called first, I just decided to jump over...

Saul: Right into the deep water, like I did yesterday.

Ziva: (Joking) Those were your words.

Saul: (Indicating the suitcases) What's that? The suitcases...

Ziva: I'm also a little confused it seems... (Joking) A little, huh?

Saul: (Reaches in the direction of the suitcases) Here, give me, I'll put them over here.

Ziva: (On the verge of handing them over to him, then stopping) You don't have to, I...

Saul: (Taking them from her hands) No, why? You carried them the whole way...

Ziva: I want to do it myself, okay?

Saul: Sure, of course, I get it, beautiful... (Hands them back to her) They're pretty heavy.

Ziva: (With the suitcases in her hands) I'm pretty strong, you forgot?

Saul: That's for sure, to make it the whole way from the front gate, and with those shoes on...

Ziva: The shoes you like, it's a heel but it's not a heel at the same time. The way here, you know, is pretty nice. With that orchard on both sides, so rich, with all the flowers and the oranges from last winter.

Saul: They just don't pick them, they let them go to rot, on purpose, so they can cut them down, and build more houses.

Ziva: Maybe it's precisely that neglect that makes it look so wonderful, so rich, so wild.

Saul: It's the spring that covers everything over.

Ziva: Where should I put them?

Saul: Sorry?

Ziva: The suitcases...

Saul: Sure, here, right here.

Rafi: (Finally recovering) I'll make you some tea with cinnamon, huh?

Saul: You have to go now, Rafi.

Rafi: What? Why? You told me I was going to sleep here today.

Saul: Another time, not today.

Rafi: Because of her? Who is she altogether? Some new patient, and claiming to be your wife, at that.

Saul: Ziva is really my wife, Rafi, she's really my wife.

Rafi: What's that supposed to mean?

Saul: My wife, my wife. You have to go now.

Rafi: You have a wife? Where has she been all this time?

Saul: (To Ziva) I'm sorry, Rafi is...

Ziva: It's fine, I get it.
 Rafi: She's your wife, right?
 (Ziva and Saul laugh).
 Rafi: She left you for someone else? She's a whore, huh? Just some whore.
 Ziva: Excuse me?
 Saul: I'm sorry, let me just... (To Rafi) You have to go now.
 Rafi: Whores always laugh a lot. We had one here, she used to take about three showers a day. We would stand downstairs and listen to the water.
 Saul: Enough, Rafi.
 Ziva: What other signs were there?
 Rafi: She had no hair, her head was shaved. It was like her head was made of iron. Not because of lice either.
 Saul: You have to go now!
 Rafi: You told me I could sleep here today. That's our plan, you told me.
 Saul: Plans change, Rafi.
 Rafi: I haven't finished cleaning up for you. (Starts cleaning).
 Ziva: It's fine, you don't have to, I'll clean up.
 Rafi: (Grabs his balls and screams) Ow!
 Saul: What happened?
 Ziva: I don't know. (To Rafi) What happened to you?
 Rafi: She's crazy, she kicked me in the nuts.
 Ziva: What...? No I didn't, what are you talking about...
 Rafi: She kicked me in the nuts, she's not ashamed of anything.
 Saul: You have to go now.
 Rafi: What? No...! She hit me in the nuts – let her leave!
 Saul: Go now!
 Rafi: (Takes the open can of tuna, brings it close to his body like it's a knife) I'm gonna kill me! I'm gonna die!
 Saul: You can't kill you with a can of tuna.
 Rafi: I'm gonna kill, you'll never see me again, you don't love me anymore!
 Saul: Come, Rafi, I'll walk with you... (Somehow takes him slowly over to the door).
 Rafi: You have good hands. When I'm trembling like this and you put your hand on me it stops me from trembling. Even in the state hospital they didn't have such good hands.
 (Saul exits with Rafi).

Scene Two:

(Afterwards. Ziva is alone in the room. The room is all cleaned up, there are cushions on the couch, a lit lamp on the table next to the couch, music, and flowers. Saul comes in with a tray of food).
 Saul: (Shocked) I can't believe it. How did you manage? And flowers too. Wow! Such huge roses, where did you get them?
 Ziva: From outside.
 Saul: They opened a flower shop in the orchard...
 Ziva: There's an endless supply.
 Saul: It's all weeds, thorns, garbage.
 Ziva: Among the weeds, the thorns.
 Saul: In the dark...?

- Ziva: I found them. (Reaches out to take the tray of food from his hands) Here, let me set the table.
- Saul: No, you're a guest. Today I... (Looks for a place to set out the food).
- Ziva: Where do you usually eat?
- Saul: In the dining room, there's a corner set aside for the staff, and when I get really hungry, then I just grab a bite by my desk.
- Ziva: I'll move my bags.
- Saul: No, wait. (Pulls over the examining bed from the corner of the room, spreads a sheet over it, laughs) Like in the movies, those long tables in the huge palaces. (Takes the tray from her hands, puts it in the middle, then places a chair at the head of the table) Here, go ahead, sit down. No, this chair is broken. (Brings another chair over) Here.
- Ziva: I should sit down?
- Saul: Yeah, at the head of the table, like they say.
(She sits down at one end and he sits down at the other).
- Saul: Bon appetit.
- Ziva: Thanks.
- Saul: Hospital food, you know? I'm sorry, I don't have any wine either.
(Chuckling) The food they serve, it's the first area they have to change in the hospitals in this country. It doesn't have to be much more expensive, they just have to put a little more thought into it, a little more creativity. Precisely because the patients aren't well, they're in pain, they're scared, cut off from their homes – why not give them some tasty food, something to wake them up. It'll help with their recovery too, don't you think?
(She makes no response. Brief silence).
- Saul: This place, I got here entirely by chance. Well not entirely. After what happened, you know... I went looking for a place outside the city. Them too, it seems they were searching for a general practitioner for two years already. Nobody wanted the job, so you see... I was curious too, you know, to see what mental illnesses were like. In the beginning it was really strange, but now they seem normal to me, almost domestic. I don't know if I really do much for them. When the body is sick – there's still something you can do, but when the mind is off, what...?
(She makes no response. Brief silence).
- Saul: I still can't believe it. Just yesterday you were so far away, beyond the hills of darkness, as it were. After you left, you know... I almost lost it. It seemed to me that even the patients could tell. There was one man there on his last legs, really bad off. Once his wife was sitting next to him and I came over. He suddenly flashed a sort of smile. You know what I was sure he wanted to say to me with that smile? I'm gonna die, sure, but my wife is by my side, and you... hah! But now you're here and we're eating and talking, and everything is so simple. Eat, you're not eating at all.
(Ziva bursts into tears).
- Saul: No! What happened? Why? You're not hungry?
- Ziva: I'm hungry, I'm starving.
- Saul: So what then? Eat.
- Ziva: I can't.
- Saul: God almighty! I must be blind, what an idiot, I... I brought so much food and... (He rises towards the tray of food) Here, let me serve you.

- Ziva: You don't have to do that. (Gets up, moves her chair along the length of the table).
- Saul: How come I didn't think of that? You know how to arrange things in the simplest way possible, the right way.
(Ziva takes something from the tray and puts it on her plate).
- Saul: That's all? Take some meatballs too, they're actually pretty good.
- Ziva: Let's eat, okay?
- Saul: In silence, huh?
- Ziva: Yes, in silence. (Immediately) Sorry.
- Saul: No, no, I'm the one who ought to apologize. It's all my fault.
- Ziva: Let me be the one who is sorry for a change, okay?
(They laugh and eat in silence).
- Saul: (While eating) You remember our first evening together?
- Ziva: What? Ah, yeah, I get it.
- Saul: You were hungry then too, and God, how you ate. So elegant, so slow, with a fork and knife, but at the same time like a wild animal in the fields, licking and tearing at the food with your lips and teeth, but it was like your entire body was doing it.
- Ziva: Not true, that's horrid.
- Saul: No, it was wonderful, just like now.
- Ziva: Stop! You're making me lose my appetite.
- Saul: (Brief silence, and then again, while eating) You had a hat on then too. Not like this hat now, but that was also... some hat!
- Ziva: Hats, my weakness.
- Saul: Why weakness? They're your strength. You wore it tilted to the side, like a model, and I was wondering the whole time how it kept from falling, like a tightrope walker.
- Ziva: There was a pin.
- Saul: That's not the point, you were the acrobat.
- Ziva: I had a whole philosophy about it. Precisely because I had no money, no house, nothing, I figured I would wear the brightest yellow hat there was, with the largest pompom, the wildest hat there was, and tilted as rakishly as possible.
(Saul laughs).
- Ziva: What now?
- Saul: After the restaurant we went for a walk. At night, in the dark, even Jaffa Street is beautiful, the part near the Old City. Suddenly you had to...
- Ziva: The old bladder.
- Saul: That's right, your bladder. You had to go, so you told me to wait a minute, and that was it, you went down the wide stairs out in the open by the old post office, and you did it right there, on the steps, you had no shame, you could give a damn about everyone else.
- Ziva: It was nighttime, there was no one in the street.
- Saul: You won't believe it, but I think that was the moment when I told myself for the first time that I want you to be my wife.
- Ziva: I don't believe it. All because of my bladder.
- Saul: Your bravery, the way you didn't give a damn about what people think, the way you had of getting out of a tight spot. With you, I thought, I won't be afraid anymore, and I won't hesitate anymore when it comes to every little

thing, yes-no, yes-no. And look, it was only once we got together that I decided to send in my application to work in a hospital.

Ziva: It's funny, you were older, you were a doctor, and me, I was just a little bird with her mother on her back, just some little nurse wannabe, nursing school was still just a dream.

Saul: You were small and beautiful, and you knew the stars.

Ziva: The stars...?

Saul: The professors, all three of them – they weren't professors yet, but it was clear they were on the track. The way they used to try to find excuses to work near the station when you were on duty.

Ziva: It was because of the coffee. I used to bring it, bought it with the little money I had.

Saul: And the flower, there was always a little flower there in a cup.

Ziva: From the garden in the hospital, around the side.

Saul: But you forgot the main thing. You were there, so beautiful, beyond my horizon.

Ziva: You found the courage all the same.

Saul: (Laughing) Let me have your hands for a second, may I?

Ziva: Why?

Saul: Just for a second.

(Stretches out the palms of her hands).

Saul: (Holds her hands) Your thumbs, you see? This one is long, elegant, tall, walking on high heels, with a hat, and this other one is small, soft, a little overweight.

Ziva: Let go, that's my biggest source of shame, that thumb.

Saul: Yet it was because of it that I found the courage. It's also beautiful, sort of plucks at your heart, as it were.

Ziva: It's terrible, just plain ugly.

Saul: With you everything is beautiful. (He is still holding her hands, then seems to recover and lets go) Sorry, you're in the middle of eating. Go ahead, eat.

Ziva: I'm full just from all your compliments.

Saul: You deserve it. I never knew how to say the right thing.

Ziva: And now you want to make up for it all at once?

Saul: (Brief silence). Three days ago I couldn't fall asleep at night. It was already getting light and I still hadn't dozed off. Then I heard the birds. At first it was just one bird. Then two, three. Then it was impossible to count them all. The air filled with them, it was like someone was pouring buckets of chirping birds into the air. It was wonderful. And then I suddenly thought to myself, the sound of a bird chirping, by itself, is nothing special. They're chirping because they're hungry, or just chattering away, or gossiping. They don't know how to do anything else but chirp. But for us – how beautiful the whole thing is! Maybe with us too, all the sounds we make... you follow? Maybe the sounds we make also have some sense to them, some sort of beauty in someone else's eyes?

Ziva: (Holds his hands) Thank you.

Saul: For what?

Ziva: I don't know. For what you said, it's so beautiful. I got goose bumps. I feel good all of a sudden. I want us to live well, live fine, in peace and quiet. And to go back to work. If you only knew how much I want to go back to work.

Saul: You know why I couldn't fall asleep? I wanted to kill you. I just lay there the whole night and wanted to kill you. I didn't do a thing, I just lay there in the dark on my back, I didn't move, I didn't turn over and I just wanted to kill you, all of me, from my hair to my toes, everything wanted to kill you. And in the morning I heard the birds and it was like everything just melted away.

Ziva: You're a good man.

Saul: A good man...?

Ziva: It happened three days ago in the night, right? It passed and then you also decided to come and ask me, to talk to me, that is, at his place.

Rafi: (In the window) Were you ever in Tiberias, by the Galilee, Doctor?

Saul: Continue, we won't pay any attention to him.

Rafi: Somebody once asked me if I was ever in Tiberias, by the Galilee. I told him: No. So he said: Are you crazy or what? I said to him: Why? So he says: It's one of the most beautiful places in the world, and it's only a two hour trip. So what? Am I missing anything? (Leaves the window).
(They both laugh).

Saul: A lot of times I don't get him.

Ziva: He was talking about being satisfied with what you've got, I think.

Saul: Nice, I didn't think of that. I'm here with him all the time, and here you are just arrived and you already understand him.

Ziva: Maybe because I also see things that way, that you've got to be satisfied with what you've got.

Rafi: (At the window again) I've got everything I want.

Saul: What do you want from me, Rafi? What do you want from me?!

Rafi: A nice hard-boiled egg, a really nice hard-boiled egg, cooking on the fire all night, I'll make it right there.

Saul: Leave already, go back to the main building!

Rafi: Whose left there, janitors, weekend staff? Gabriel's still there, Aziz is still there, they're the worst, from the closed ward. They don't like anyone who stays in Friday when everyone leaves for the weekend. They don't like somebody that the Doctor gives a key to and then throws away.

Saul: I'll come with you, I'll let you in.

Rafi: You'll let me in but then you'll leave, right?

Saul: I can't help you anymore. I just can't, don't you get it?! Leave already, take my coat. You're gonna catch a cold like that in the rain. What are you waiting for? (Takes off his coat. Hands it to Rafi through the window).

Rafi: (Bites Saul's hand) Through the window! Throwing it to me! Like I'm a bird! Like I'm a dog, a dog!

Saul: (Screaming) No!

Rafi: You said you were going to eat with me. (Disappears).

Saul: (Jokingly, with a certain pleasure) See that? Just a sorry patient, almost completely naked in the rain, but he's got his pride.

Ziva: He bit you.

Rafi: (At the window once more) You ate with her on the sick bed. It's a death bed too, I saw, that's how they take 'em out of the deep freeze. (Disappears).
(Saul starts to remove the leftover food from the examination bed).

Ziva: Let me help you.

Saul: (Makes no response, finished clearing off, removes the sheet, folds it, returns the examination bed to its corner) We'll leave this place. It's nothing to me, infantile, sick. Last night I just asked that you would come back and that was

enough to make me happy. I asked you to come back at his place, right before his eyes. I didn't believe you would, but I was so happy... and now, you're here, for a trial run, sure, but you're here – I should be a thousand times happier, right? Like I told you yesterday – I forgave you, you didn't do anything wrong, you loved, and I can't live without you, I'll do anything for you.

Ziva: Stop, Saul.

Saul: Why?

Ziva: I'm here.

Saul: Your intelligence, your equilibrium, everything you say is always so on target, so why does it tear me to pieces?

(Ziva raises the sleeve of his shirt with her right hand, and touches his arm. You can hear the rain outside).

Saul: Your hand...

Ziva: You don't like it?

Saul: Don't like it...? Just your hand on my arm and I can feel your entire body against mine.

Ziva: You never said things like that to me before.

Saul: I needed this electric shock, huh?

Ziva: Which one...? (Immediately) I get it. (Raises the other sleeve of his shirt with her left hand, and touches his arm).

Saul: My God!

(The sound of the rain grows stronger).

Ziva: It's raining.

Saul: And how!

Ziva: You think he's still out there?

Saul: You're worried about him?

Ziva: I'm wondering if he's standing out there looking in the window.

Saul: I'll put out the light. It's not really a place for bringing a woman, there are no curtains. (He turns off the overhead light).

(A small, warm light remains, mainly illuminating the sofa. The ensuing conversation takes place as they approach the sofa, in fits and starts).

Saul: You smell that...?

Ziva: What...?

Saul: After I got out of the army I used to walk around the streets of Jerusalem a lot last at night. By myself, shy, afraid of the whole world. Afterwards, when I started my studies, I didn't have time anymore. I would look up at the windows where there was still light, not a lot of light, just some low light, like here now, light and dark at the same time. It seemed warm there inside, seemed nice, my heart went out, I could almost touch what was inside there, could almost smell it. (Sort of sniffs the air).

Ziva: What...?

Saul: Your smell. It's the greatest thing in the world, there's nothing else like it. Not what was, not what will be, there are no insults, no calculations, there's just that, it's the only thing that counts, it's the only thing that's true, you, woman, now, alive, here with me, my woman.

Ziva: Take me.

Saul: (Begins to undo the buttons on her blouse) Isn't it all too quick?

Ziva: No, it's fine.

Saul: You always said that...

Ziva: Not now, it'll be fine, like when you used to get back late after one of your patients died.

Saul: (Sort of laughing) You heard what he said about the examination bed that we ate on? (Recovering, no longer laughing) Oh no! Come! (Draws her over to the sofa).

Ziva: (Stops now) Do you have a sheet?

Saul: Why?

Ziva: To spread over the couch. So it'll be white, smooth, that is.
(He brings over a sheet. They spread it out together over the sofa, and remain standing).

Saul: It's strange. Ten years, right? And it's like it's the first time, even more than the actual first time, if there is such a thing.
(Rafi throws a stone at the window and the glass breaks).

Rafi: (Through the broken window) Whore!

Saul: (Delicately) Come in, Rafi.
(Rafi is shocked and makes no response).

Saul: Come in, what are you waiting for?

Rafi: She's not your wife, she's just a new patient.

Saul: Come in.

Rafi: (Enters, cautiously) You said I could sleep by you today. You said so.

Saul: Sure.

Rafi: I'll make you your tea with cinnamon.

Saul: We'll also eat the tuna with the chocolate-covered cookies.

Rafi: And I'll also take your boots off for you...

Saul: Sure, of course, you...

Rafi: You talk to me about everything, right?

Saul: Yes...

Rafi: The way things were, it was good, we had everything we needed...

Saul: Great! (Hits him) You like throwing stones, huh? You like breaking windows, huh? Huh? Huh?

Ziva: (Steps between, trying to separate them) No, stop, you don't have to...!

Rafi: (Slipping from Saul's hands) Gabriel hits me harder than you do. (Exits, at a run).

Saul: (Laughing a sort of laugh) Hear that? "Gabriel hits me harder than you do...!"
What can you do to someone who already gets hit harder by Gabriel, huh?

Ziva: I don't follow.

Saul: On the one hand he's just mentally ill or simply infantile, and on the other hand he comes out with these sayings that just drive you nuts, that turn all your efforts, your learning, your medicine, your advances, all your culture, into some tiny, little, wretched, broken-down thing... (Suddenly) Are you afraid of me now?

Ziva: Excuse me?

Saul: When I think about it... then, when you went to him, you weren't afraid at all. That's why I didn't touch you. Anyone who isn't afraid certainly didn't do anything wrong.

Ziva: I don't get it. What's the idea?

Saul: The last night before you went to him, I didn't sleep the entire night, every second I was getting out of bed to piss. Then you woke up, and you wanted to calm me down, you took my hand, you caressed it, and you started to tell me how much you love him, how beautiful it was, that I just had to understand.

- Ziva: I was blinded.
- Saul: You were beautiful, you were brave. I told you I understood, and you thanked me. I wanted to get down on my knees and say: Good luck! Hope you find love! I felt so small, so primitive. Like some sort of baby that just knows how to piss. (Laughs a sort of laugh) I understood, just my bladder didn't get it. You remember how I kept running back and forth? Where did all that urine come from in a single night? That's the question! Now you're starting to get afraid, huh?
- Ziva: No, why? You're fine.
- Saul: I'm not all that fine. A woman who leaves her husband is fine. It's modern. Having a lover is also modern, sure, it's just the husband – that's what's not modern, that's what's primitive, not alright, no. My father was a small-time peddler on the edge of the market, he was a peddler and he was always short-tempered too.
- Ziva: I don't get it.
- Saul: I don't get it either, that's the whole thing. What do you mean you've come back for a trial period?! What are we dealing with here, pickles? You taste one first before you buy? What do you mean you're back for a trial period?
- Ziva: It was your idea.
(The hospital bell rings).
- Saul: What do you mean? Answer me!
- Ziva: What's the matter with you? Don't you hear the bell?
- Saul: The bell, sure, at least he's giving me an answer.
- Ziva: Why is it ringing like that?
- Saul: You want to know?
- Ziva: Sure, of course, it's not stopping.
- Saul: They're calling me. Somebody probably committed suicide over there. With an old razor blade, filthy. The problem is the pus, not the knife. (Exits).
(The bell continues ringing another moment, then stops. Ziva starts to pack up her suitcases. Rafi looks in at the window, sees her, and enters. Ziva sees him, and stops packing).
- Rafi: You want me to help you? (No response, so he repeats himself) You want me to help you?
- Ziva: Leave me alone, okay? I don't have the nerves for you right now.
- Rafi: Yes you do.
- Ziva: Now you're also gonna start telling me what I do and don't have, huh?
- Rafi: You're nervous, right? They say anyone whose nervous has nerves.
- Ziva: Now you're also gonna teach me how to talk, huh?
- Rafi: You're doing the right thing. This isn't the place for you. You saw yourself, he goes nuts sometimes! You have to know how to deal with him. I don't have nerves at all, just muscles, look. Pretty good, huh?
(Ziva looks).
- Rafi: Just muscles, no nerves. That's why even though I'm strong I never hit anyone. Pretty good, huh?
(Ziva turns aside).
- Rafi: You're leaving, aren't you? You're leaving, right? Aren't you?
- Ziva: Why do you keep bothering me all the time? Why are you trying to ruin everything? What do you want from me?
- Rafi: What do *you* want from me?!
- Ziva: I'm his wife, don't you get it?

Rafi: (Speaking simultaneously) You're just some new patient!

Ziva: I'm his wife. You know this!

Rafi: (Speaking simultaneously again) I was with him first, before you, I was with him first, before you.

Ziva: (Stares at him, brief silence) I'm gonna go crazy here with the two of you (returns to her suitcases).

Rafi: I'll help you find a place. Somebody probably killed himself, you can sleep in his bed. Maybe there'll be some other beds too.

Ziva: (Stops tending to the suitcases and sits down) I'm having a hard time, Rafi, things aren't going so well.

Rafi: Why? You're a girl, aren't you?

Ziva: A girl can't have a hard time?

Rafi: No, why should she? A girl's got everything, she's got it all right on her, everything...

Ziva: What's everything?

Rafi: Everything, her tits...

Ziva: If you've got tits things are smooth, easy?

Rafi: Of course. She's got them whenever she wants, even when she's sleeping, even when she's sick, all the time.

Ziva: And what does she do with them, in your opinion? What does she do with them all the time, whenever she wants, even when she's sleeping, even when she's sick?

Rafi: What do you mean? She... she... it's like they're made out of chocolate.

Ziva: Then what? She eats them? She eats herself?

Rafi: No, what are you talking about, she has them on her, right up in her face, as if she already ate them... I think, I don't know exactly.
(Ziva laughs a sort of laugh).

Rafi: You're laughing?

Ziva: No, I'm crying.

Rafi: I knew a girl once, she actually had a good heart.

Ziva: You don't know any girls, just whores.

Rafi: Sure, my mom.

Ziva: I'm tired, Rafi.

Rafi: My girl... I'll take her bag, like this. (Takes one of Ziva's bags in one hand) And in the other hand I'll take her hand. (Puts his hand out. Ziva takes it). And I'll go walking with her in the street, in the neighborhood, so that everyone'll see, so their eyes'll pop out of their heads. They'll stop laughing and they'll just stare. All the blood'll leave their faces from all that staring. It'll be silent and all the blood'll leave their faces. (Stops suddenly) Don't tell him!

Ziva: I won't tell.
(Rafi exits. A moment later Saul appears in the window, at a little distance).

Ziva: (Spots him, thinks it is Rafi). I won't tell, I promise.

Saul: (Chuckling) You're already sharing secrets with him.

Ziva: Saul...

Saul: I was just kidding. I actually liked that. You have real compassion.

Ziva: I also grew up in harsh places.

Saul: That doesn't always breed compassion, sometimes it works just the opposite. The truth is, you have something even more important, the way you manage

with people, with everyone, something I don't know how to do, if you only knew how much I...

Ziva: Come, come inside already, not like that in the window...

Saul: (With a sort of laugh) I've gotten to be like him, huh?

Ziva: Come, come inside. (Opens the door).

Saul: (Enters at the door, and then in a rush, grabbing her) I'm sorry, you have to forgive me...!

Ziva: (Scared, retreats) What...? No...!

Saul: I left there right in the middle of the treatment just to tell you that we're gonna leave this place! Let 'em stink up the joint here! That's what they want, with all their pride. They even kill themselves out of pride just to show that they're still alive. Let it be a trial period! That's the only way I'll learn to get over my own pride. That's the only way that I'll learn to live with your love. What love! Marrying me, a year – five – ten – and still in love with him...! It's the most beautiful thing there could ever be. To understand that, to understand you – that's what it means to be alive, to understand, not to commit suicide, not tuna and cookies with all the fat. You wouldn't believe it, but I actually enjoy it...

Ziva: Enough already!

Saul: Once I thought that a doctor didn't have to talk. Let the patients talk. Let my father talk. And there you go: he's a doctor, he's not a doctor, there's a wife, there's love, there's Yechiel Shumcher, so the doctor also turns into a patient, turns small, starts talking. (His laughter turns to tears, and with a shout) Ziva! Ziva!

Ziva: Yes...? What happened? Tell me, I'm right here...!

Saul: I don't know. I'm embarrassed, crying like a baby, what you must think of me.

Ziva: (Hugging him) No, on the contrary, this is the way I love you best.

Saul: What am I missing? You're here, right? Why am I doing this to you?

Ziva: You're a beautiful man. Yes, no matter how hard it was with you. We're so alike. The world didn't spoil you, or me for that matter. We have to be together. I'm not a little girl anymore, how old are we? Did you ever think about that? Me too...

Saul: How can we get out of this? Is there any way out? You're strong, you know. (The sound of the rain can be heard).

Ziva: The rain... I want you.

Saul: Me too.

Ziva: Come. (She begins to undo the buttons on his shirt, but has trouble). I'm not able to unbutton it, my hands are trembling.

Saul: I've got a question, no big deal...

Ziva: Go ahead.

Saul: When was the first time? The two of you, the first time, you know...?

Ziva: Forget about it right now.

Saul: Just tell me that one thing, when was it? It doesn't matter, I'm just in a sort of fog, I need something to hold on to in order to get out of it, that's all I need...!

Ziva: It was Friday night, you were on duty, I went to help him, he had guests, and then...

Saul: How did it happen?

Ziva: Suddenly, I don't know, you know how it is, like slipping on a banana peel, all of a sudden.

Saul: How exactly? Did he start? You? Both of you? The two of you slipped on the peel together? What did you say? Did you do it with the light on? Did you strip down naked? How was it? Was it the same like when he had been your man, your boyfriend that is, before we'd ever met?

Ziva: (Hugs him) Enough Saul! There's no need to talk. Just like that, you're wonderful, the way you're all soaked, you smell like the rain!
(His hands fall away from her, and her hands fall away too).

Saul: I'm not soaked, right when I went out the rain stopped, why did you say that?

Ziva: Do you always know why you say what you say?

Saul: Did you use to embrace him when he would come home soaked?

Ziva: He never did.

Saul: So who then?

Ziva: This is idiotic. Don't you think?

Saul: Maybe Rafi? He's outside now, in the rain, in the mud.

Ziva: And you're not in the rain and mud right now? And me, where am I? What's this if it's not rain and mud? I'm strong, sure. And I'm a girl, a woman. I've got it all the time, even when I'm sick, even when I'm sleeping, I've got it all, right on my body, and made out of chocolate no less. It gets heavy, you know, carrying all this chocolate around.

Saul: I don't get it.

Ziva: No? Rafi never taught you what a girl's got?

Saul: I don't get it.

Ziva: Me neither. You take all the lack of understanding for yourself and leave me nothing, is that it?

Saul: It's this place, these walls, this whole past half a year, with Rafi who infects you like a leper. They managed till now without me, they'll manage when I'm gone too. We'll leave in the morning. Let him run around out there all soaked, he loves it!

Ziva: I have a surprise for you. (Opens the door or the window) Rafi!
(Rafi enters, hesitantly, looks back and forth at Saul and Ziva. Saul also looks back and forth at Rafi and Ziva).

Ziva: Let's have a coffee, okay? We could all use one. (She prepares the coffee in her pot, puts three cups out on some stool, with sugar and spoons, and sits down).
(Rafi and Saul stand facing each other).

Ziva: (To Saul) You don't feel like coffee?
(Saul sits down and Rafi follows suit, hesitantly).

Ziva: (Pouring coffee) Here, add as much sugar as you guys want. (To Rafi) Take as much sugar as you want.
(Rafi watches the hot water heater inside its cover).

Ziva: What...? Right. (Stops pouring, brings Saul his jacket, addresses him) It's alright if I do, right? (To Rafi) Here, take this, you're soaked, it's cold.

Rafi: It's not cold.

Ziva: You're completely soaked.

Rafi: I'm not cold.

Ziva: Whatever you want. (Sits down, finishes pouring) Here... What would you guys be talking about? (To Rafi) You told me that you guys used to talk about everything. You talked about girls too, right? (Brief silence) Rafi has an idea. There's this sort of button on a woman's body, and if someone touches this

button – she just has to love him. Somebody told him about it – somebody serious.

Saul: What do you think about it, this button?

Ziva: It's cute, there's something to it. It's every man's dream, you just have to touch some button, and that's it.

Saul: That's not it?

Ziva: You have to nurture love, build it up, don't you? You have to make an effort. Why aren't you drinking your coffee?

Rafi: I'll prepare the tea with cinnamon for you, coffee's no good for your stomach. (Goes over to the cooking corner).

Saul: When did he ever make such an effort? Or is it that only one person has to make the effort?

Rafi: I'm gonna put the sugar in the tea for you already, first thing, with me you don't have to lift a finger.

Saul: (To Ziva) I asked you a question.

Ziva: He made an effort, he trembled, he cried like a baby when he chased after me, without any shame. I felt like a queen, I was flying, it's like I was drunk.

Saul: No! Him...?!

Ziva: Yes. You too, it was the same yesterday when you came to ask me...

Saul: So anyone who trembles before you, or cries, can get you to leave your husband and become his mistress?

Ziva: I'm here now.

Saul: Not just a mistress, you ran to him to help him with his guests, with his kids. Sure, his wife died. My wife died too. Worse, she was alive, but living with someone else, that's even worse than dying, right?

Rafi: (Serving Saul his tea) Here, drink, you're not drinking.

Ziva: I'll taste it (Drinks from the tea) It's really good. How do you make it? Do you boil the cinnamon?

Rafi: (Passes the cup to Saul) It's yours.

Ziva: Before, when we were alone, you talked differently to me.

Rafi: (To Saul) It's your tea.

Saul: (To Ziva) Here, drink it.

Ziva: I didn't run to him. You sent me to him to help him. And not just once, but day after day, for a whole week.

Saul: And if I were to tell you to jump off the roof – would you jump? I wanted to test you. Didn't you get that? To test you...!

Ziva: (Laughing) Of course I got it.

Saul: What's so funny?

Ziva: There was once a sick man with a tumor. He was young, he didn't stand a chance. His wife would come with him to the treatments, sometimes she would bring their kid along too. She knew about the tumor even before they got married. She told me about it. One day he cut off his curls, he wanted to test her to see if she would love him even without the curls. She didn't leave him, even though she wanted to, but she didn't love him anymore.

Saul: So he was right.

Ziva: That's called being right? He had to test her to see if she would love him without curls after she married him with a tumor like that in his brain? After she had had a child with him and taken care of him all those years, after all that?! That's called being right?!

Saul: Plain as day.

Ziva: It wasn't because of the hair – it was because he tested her.

Saul: How do you know why?

Rafi: Drink, you're not drinking at all.
(Saul takes a sip).

Rafi: It's good, right?

Saul: (To Ziva) What tumor did I have when you married me?

Ziva: You're absolutely crazy.

Saul: That's it, huh?

Ziva: Why did you ask me to come back altogether?

Saul: I tricked you, huh? Go shout it in the streets: my husband tricked me, he took me away from my lover. Whose the trickster?! Why did you marry me altogether to begin with? That's the question! You loved him, so why did you marry me? Just because he left you? You were left all alone?
(Ziva gets up, packs her suitcases).

Saul: The trial period is over, huh? The lady tasted a bit of the pickle, spit it out and left. What else is there to say? What can a pickle say after somebody bites a piece out of it? Thank God, at least she bit off a little bit!

Rafi: I'll put the eggs on the fire, you'll see, there'll be excellent hard-boiled eggs in the morning. (Goes over to the cooking corner).

Saul: Ah, to be like you, Rafi...! You've got everything you need, all you want is a good hard-boiled egg. The main thing is, no wife. Why should a man want a wife? To escape with her from the world, from all the noise, the shame, the wars, the trials. To run away to her, to hide inside her body, inside her soul, to build a house just for you. But there you've got your wife and your house and it's even colder than before. And you're even more alone than before, you don't even have yourself. And there are wars and trials. And there's shame. And Yechiel Shumcher is there too. Like the world has prepared a trap for you, you ran away from it into her arms, but there it is, where she is, inside her body. She's the whole world.
(Ziva turns to go).

Saul: The world is leaving. It's gone.
(Ziva returns).

Saul: What happened? The world returned?

Ziva: I can't go back to him. It's over between us. It's just over. We don't love each other anymore. No, that's not the whole truth. We both stopped loving each other, but he stopped first. When you're married you can keep living with each other without any great love, but like this... why bother? It's ridiculous, isn't it?

Saul: (Absent-mindedly) What?

Ziva: It's idiotic.

Saul: Right.

Ziva: He didn't want me anymore. He'd had enough of me. Whatever I said, whatever I wore, everything I am, it all just pissed him off. My laugh, my pains. I stopped talking altogether. He began to hate coffee just because I love it. He couldn't stand my thumbs, with their two different sizes. What could I do? Cut off one of my thumbs? (Crying) I'm sorry. The serious lady... she knows how to get by, huh? She comes back for a trial period and in the end she can't stop crying. Instead of falling into your arms yesterday, embracing you and saying: wait, I'm coming! I just messed with your head saying maybe, a trial period. I've got my pride too, right?

Saul: What?
 Ziva: Pride.
 Saul: Right.
 Ziva: I don't know why I loved him altogether. Maybe because he cried in the beginning. We cry too, but at the end. What a difference.
 Saul: Yeah.
 Ziva: Excuse me...?
 Saul: Yeah.
 Ziva: I miss work so much. You know...? There are wounded people who forget their real situation in the mornings. They open their eyes and immediately stretch out their arms and their legs to get out of bed and go for a walk, everything normal, just like before. And suddenly... there's no arm, no leg, just pain. But you know what? It repeats itself every morning all over again. I don't know why I just mentioned that.
 Saul: Would you come back to me on your own, without my asking?
 Ziva: Why do you ask?
 Saul: He didn't want you, right?
 Ziva: Is that so important?
 Saul: Answer me.
 Ziva: I don't think so. Not like this, not so quickly. I would start working first. I started looking for work, essentially, put out some feelers.
 Saul: Why didn't you keep going? Looking? Putting out feelers?
 Ziva: I don't follow.
 Saul: Why did you marry me altogether? That's the question! You loved him, didn't you? Just because he dumped you?
 Ziva: You knew that I loved him. I warned you.
 Saul: And right away you swept me off to sleep with you, after pissing on the stairs by the old post office on Jaffa Street.
 Ziva: That was after you told me that it didn't bother you, that you could give a damn. You were the greatest man in the world at that point. I was sure that you would manage to make me forget him. (Taking a different tone) Why are you doing this Saul? Forgive me now, come on...! I want you to want me, I need it now...!
 Saul: Again the same thing?! Like a blind beggar, taking whatever they toss him, and with a thank you, no less! Is that what I wanted? Is that what I dreamt of?! Again?! The same damn thing?!
 Ziva: I'm tired, I'm going to sleep. (Lies down on the sofa and covers herself).
 Rafi: She's sleeping on your bed.
 Saul: I also want to go to sleep. (Lies down on the examination bed and covers himself).
 Rafi: (Arranges a mattress for himself in the corner) I'm gonna sleep well tonight. It's been a while since I slept well. You said it. You don't just say things. (Puts out the light, lies down and covers himself).

Scene Three

(Afterwards, in the dark. There is only the low flame from the cooking corner).

- Rafi: Are you asleep, Doctor? (No response, so he repeats himself) Are you asleep, Doctor?
- Saul: Quiet, I'm sleeping!
- Rafi: Me too.
- Saul: (Brief silence, then addressing Ziva) Why did I ask you to come back, huh? Just to tell you how much I hate you! That's why, yeah. How much I hate you!
- Rafi: She went to sleep without her pajamas. She's got pajamas, I saw them in her suitcase.
- Saul: My very hairs hate you.
- Rafi: I wore pajamas for the first time when they put me in the state hospital.
- Saul: My very clothes hate you.
(Silence. Sound of the water boiling).
- Rafi: You hear the water, Doctor? It's not rainwater, it's the sound of water boiling eggs over a low flame, you hear the water?
- Saul: You ruined my life. You and my pride both.
- Rafi: It's nice, right? It's nice, right?
- Saul: Very nice. (To Ziva) For this alone it was all worth it, just to tell you how much I hate you.
- Rafi: (Brief silence) You think she's really sleeping?
- Saul: Either way – I hate you.
- Ziva: (Gets up, addresses Saul) What were you missing, you pig? Even when I didn't love you – then it was worse – I did everything so you would have it good. I made you a warm house, made it happy, as much as that's possible with you. And all the years I worked until you finished your exams and your internship... till you finished! I worked the most menial jobs around for you. For him I wouldn't do a tenth of what I did for you. Yes, because I loved him! Not you! I felt guilty, what an idiot! I became your maidservant because I loved him. A sort of maidservant without any love, as it were. Enough already! I'm going to sleep! (Lies down, covers herself).
- Rafi: Did you ever dream of a naked woman, Doctor?
- Saul: I'm sleeping now Rafi.
- Rafi: It's not the same as a naked woman not in a dream. I'm sure of it. I dreamt of chocolate once, it's not the same thing in a dream. Just last night I dreamt of a naked woman. Just ask me and I'll tell you what it was like. Ask me and I'll tell you.
- Saul: I'm asking.
- Rafi: Ask me what it was like, ask me what she was like.
- Saul: What was she like?
- Rafi: It's impossible to tell. She was so...! I thought I was gonna die.
(Silence).
- Rafi: Are you asleep, Doctor? (Again) Are you asleep, Doctor?
(There is no response, Rafi approaches Saul cautiously, and Saul pretends to be sleeping. Rafi turns away and approaches Ziva, and Saul follows him with his eyes).
- Ziva: (Rises up a bit) Yes...?
- Rafi: Nothing.
- Ziva: I'm trying to sleep.
- Rafi: You're not sleeping.
- Ziva: You won't let me.

- Rafi: I want to ask you something. (Ziva makes no response) I want to ask you something.
- Ziva: That's it though, the last thing.
- Rafi: You're from the city, from Tel Aviv, right?
- Ziva: Is that what you wanted to ask?
- Rafi: In the city, in Tel Aviv, they do all sorts of things, they know.
- Ziva: I'm from the city, from Tel Aviv, but I'm tired.
- Rafi: When we were kids, on Fridays – Friday nights – we also never fell asleep right away. We would wait... my mother and father, you know, like that... we would wait, and my brother Moses would cut a Star of David into his skin with a razor. He knew how to carve delicately even in the dark, no blood would come out, just the design. His entire skin was full of the Star of David. And my father would wait too, for us to fall asleep...
- Ziva: That's a beautiful story, but that's enough now, go to sleep.
- Rafi: I didn't finish yet. In the end he couldn't resist anymore. He would scream: assholes! Then we would hear everything, and my brother Moses would cut himself badly and blood would come out. He was crazy but they never locked him away. He told me once that the prostitute in our neighborhood – when she would get naked at night, she was even more beautiful than our mother. In the dark, naked – he said – mom's not important, nothing is important, just beauty, just nudity, that's all that counts. Do you think that's true?
- Ziva: I don't think about it, I don't know.
- Rafi: That button... I wanted to ask you, you're a woman, you're from Tel Aviv. If somebody touches that button – you think that's enough, it's burnt up, nobody can touch it anymore? What do you think?
- Ziva: I don't know, I don't think about it.
- Rafi: I thought the same thing. The button's gotta give everyone a chance all the time. I thought of that myself, got to it on my own. The Doctor didn't tell me.
- Ziva: I guess so, but that's enough now...
(Saul gets up, turns on the light).
- Rafi: (To Saul) I just got up to see the hard-boiled eggs on the fire. I've been sleeping the entire time, really.
- Saul: Yeah?
- Rafi: Sure.
- Saul: Some conversation!
- Rafi: It wasn't me.
- Saul: No?
- Rafi: Of course not.
- Saul: Did you ever get a chance?
- Rafi: I'm asleep.
- Saul: I asked you: Did you ever get a chance? Did you ever try it? Did you ever touch a girl, a woman?
- Rafi: I don't know.
- Saul: You don't know a thing like that?
- Rafi: I dreamt of a naked woman, I dreamt of her a lot of times, I told you already.
- Saul: (To Ziva) Hear that? I ask him if he ever touched a woman and he says to me: yeah, in a dream. Would you believe it? Nowadays, in our time? You realize what it would mean to him? What a chance it would be? He'll break down in tears, he'll tremble even more than Yechiel.
- Ziva: (Approaches Rafi) Come. The Doctor said so, you hear?

- Rafi: I hear the water now, it's really nice.
- Saul: Forget the water.
- Ziva: Come, it's alright.
- Rafi: What...?
- Ziva: What do you do with a woman?
- Rafi: No, she's your wife...!
- Saul: First she was a whore, first she was just a patient, now she's my wife?!
- Ziva: Come, it's what he wants.
- Rafi: I don't know anything at all. I don't know anything at all.
(Ziva opens her dress. Rafi approaches her, puts out a finger, as though wanting to touch her. Saul approaches them. Ziva cries quietly).
- Rafi: (Retreats slowly) It's her! It's the two of you...! I didn't do a thing.
- Saul: No, huh? (Silence, then to Ziva, quietly) I dreamt of you. I came to this sort of room on the roof. It was in Jerusalem, I think. It was like I was looking for something there, I don't know what it was. The room was completely empty, even ugly. Yeah, it was empty and ugly. And it was cold and filthy. Even the window was filthy, so filthy, you could barely tell it was a window. Suddenly it was like I knew what I had to do. I wiped off the window with my hand, and then I saw your name written on the glass: Ziva. I had once written it there with my finger, you know how: in the winter, in the steam, like little kids. And then I noticed, through those letters, the letters of your name, the little alleyway down below. There was a streetlamp lit there, and a sort of little procession of nurses from the French hospice was passing through. You remember? The hospice for the terminally ill. They had those hats. And you were there, in the middle, it was like they had brought you with them. They walked slowly and led you along until you all disappeared around the corner. You looked beautiful, and I suddenly felt a sense of repose, like that was it, I didn't need anything anymore, I had found what I wanted. I had never been so at peace, you were so beautiful.
- Ziva: Thank you. I feel happy. I see now, this place, it makes you dream. You don't want me, you never really wanted me, not like this, and not any other way either.
- Saul: I don't hate you anymore, I don't hate you anymore at all.
(Ziva takes her bags).
- Saul: Let me take you.
- Ziva: I'll manage. (Turns to go, comes back) I'm not going anywhere anymore. You're my husband, you didn't want to give me a divorce in the beginning, so there you go. You asked me to come back, so now you'll get what you asked for. I don't have the strength to start everything over again. The two of you together finished me off with all this "I love you – I don't love you" back and forth. I ruined my life with all this "whom do I love?" I don't want any love anymore, no dreams, no tears. I want to work. I want to start to live finally. I'm finished, I'm old, I'm done, I want to start to live.
(Brief silence. She takes her bags, leaves, the hospital bell rings, over and over. Saul snaps the wire in the bell and the ringing stops).
- Saul: Not today. Tomorrow.
- Rafi: (Stares at the wire) They're probably still ringing over there, they don't know that you cut it off. Let them keep ringing, what do you care? (Covers Saul) It's like you got lost, right? They're ringing and you're not responding. It's nice to get lost... once, when I was a kid, I got lost all day and couldn't even

get out of it into the night. My Mom and Dad looked for me like mad. The whole neighborhood went looking for me. They even brought the police. I got lost, I sat at the bottom of a pit and they were up above shouting the entire time: Rafi! Rafi! The whole neighborhood could hear them calling my name. It was nice, it was really nice. Afterwards, when they found me, they nearly beat me to death. So what? When you don't get lost they don't beat the living daylights out of you?