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תיאטרון תМОונע, רח' שניצינו 9 תל אביב, להזמנת כרטיסים 03-56111211

חגיגת

Hokey Pokey - 2010

A mental catastrophe devoid of faith

Written by Eyal Weiser

Translated by Natalie Fainstein

Characters:

Playwright: Dreams of being Hanoch Levin

Playwright's wife: Dreams of being an actress

Therapist: Dreams of finding meaning

Pitzy the clown: Dreams of exclusiveness

Yaffa: Dreams of having legs

Arab woman: Dreams of being a human being

Menial character: Dreams of being a meaningful character in the play

The Space:

All the actors are on stage throughout the show. It's a rehearsal room. The scenes intertwine and fade into each other. The audience can see the actors come into the scene from "backstage", as well as the reactions of the actors not participating in the scenes to whatever happens on stage.

The stage is divided into four squares, each representing a different world. On both sides of the stage, there are marks, marking the areas which signify "backstage", where the actors sit when they're not in the scene. On stage, much like in a real rehearsal room there are marks on the floor for the correct placement of the chairs, props and actors. On one end of the stage hangs a large portrait of Adolf Hitler.

1. The theatre

Soft music is playing in the background. As the audience enters the theatre, menial character guides them to their seats, and every once in a while asks the theatre staff whether the guests from the Israeli Goethe Institute have arrived for the presentation. The rest of the cast sit in a row in the center of the stage, warming up.

Menial character: Hello (Shalom). Welcome to a presentation of "Hokey Pokey". This is a presentation. We invite you to dive into our rehearsal room; we unveil our work in progress, so you could understand, like us, more or less, its purpose and its general direction in this particular point in time. I'd like to clarify a few things before we begin.

On the semiotic level of things, Pitzy and Yaffa's house is located on the left, downstage. Above it is the Playwright and his wife's house. On the right downstage is the bar and above that is the Playwright's rehearsal room. The inner square serves as the therapist's treatment room. Right now the marks are still on stage and they might stay there as part of the concept. We don't have the stage wings yet, so the actors will stay onstage throughout the show, we may keep that as well - as part of the concept. What else? Smadar Badihi, the actress playing Yaffa is sick, so she will be replaced by Daria Alexandrovna Abraham. Thanks, Dasha. There are still a few props missing, which we will buy in the future, when the money comes. If it comes and we hope it will come. Also, the whole sound business is still in the works, especially the gun shots at the end. As I just mentioned, there will be shots heard at the end of the show, so those of you who are faint of heart, be advised.

The purpose of "Hokey Pokey" is to address, without fear, the Israeli reality and identity's open wounds. We sincerely hope that the representatives of the Israeli Goethe Institute who have graced us with their presence, Danke (*claps his hands and the rest of the cast follows*) will see fit to sponsor this experimental project and will thus allow us to fly and perform several times in the prestigious "Schaubuhne" theatre in Berlin, with which our ensemble is already in extensive dialogue. Danke Schon (*claps again*).

We're starting. Before we do, I would just like to ask that whoever hasn't switched off their cellphone will do it now. Now is the time. (*He signals to the lighting operator to change the lights and to the sound operator to cue the sound*) Theatre lights. Music. (*He tries to exhaust every last second of glory*) So, we begin... (*Music's playing, the actors line up and each poses in a position that defines his or her character. The theatre lights go down, the preset lights change and the stage is lit. Menial character reappears and asks to turn the music back down*) Hello again, I will now present the characters. With your permission, I will take a moment's pause to concentrate (*He turns his back to the audience, stretches and a few seconds later turns back around as 'the storyteller'.* He presents the first character). This is the playwright. THE playwright. Once, a few years ago, he was crowned "Hanoch Levin's successor, May I? (*Asks the playwright to hand him over the laminated piece of paper he's holding on to*).

Playwright: Just be careful with it.

Menial character: (*to the playwright*) don't worry, they'll love it. (*Reads the review*) "A great leap of talent, a spectacular dive into the inner most depths of cynicism and nihilism... All this enables us to view him, the playwright, as the next generation, continuing in Hanoch Levin's footsteps while separating himself from him, for Levin was an optimist, a member of an ideological generation who believed in change whereas the playwright's play portrays with horrific precision a mental catastrophe devoid of faith."

For years now he's been yearning to be crowned again, desperately trying to find that elusive mental catastrophe devoid of faith that once crowned him the next Hanoch Levin.

(Menial character presents the poor woman sitting near the playwright) This is the Playwright's wife. She used to be a promising actress and today usually functions as the Playwright's wife. He, the Playwright, used to tell her (before the 'little one' was born) what a wasted talent she was. A really sad story. *(Menial character presents the next character)*

And this is the Therapist. The Playwright and his wife's couples' therapist. She has a successful clinic, a house in a Moshav, A hi-tech husband, a gifted daughter who one day dreams to be just like her... oh, and a secret affair... sshhhh...

And this is Pitzy the Clown (*pronounces like a commercial announcer*) "Pitzy the Clown Productions and Parties. Can't figure out what will make the 'little one' happy this birthday?"

Pitzy: oh,oh,oh, tough day. Oh, oh oh, tough day.

Menial character: "Pitzy the clown will make your life easy!"

Pitzy: Ha, ha!

Menial character: Cotton candy machines, inflatable rides, foam cannon, bubble gun, Pitzy the clown will give you a Hokey Pokey birthday!

Menial character: It's all about being happy... heh, heh (*he quickly gets it together and stop smiling while moving to the next character*) And this is "Yaffa28", "strong28" "sexypussy28" "wantyouhereandnowinbed28". She's really 33. Yaffa, Pitzy's sister, is handicapped and looking for her knight in... in anything really, anyone, whoever, just let him come, want, stay...anything.

(...and the last but not least, he present the last character) And this is an Arab Actress.

I will be a Menial Character tonight, I'll be in charge of scene change, I'll also be portraying Date Guy 1, Date Guy 2 and the bartender. So that's it. Let's start. Music (*cues the sound operator to turn the music back on. Menial Character walks to his place "backstage", but realizes he forgot something and immediately motions for the sound to go back down. He points out on Hitler's' picture*) The man in the picture is Hitler (*cues the sound operator to turn the music back up*).

2. The Playwright and his wife's house.

It's the Playwright and his wife's daughter's birthday. Pitzy the clown is helplessly trying to control the children.

Pitzy: Hi kids, Do you know who I am? I'm Pitzy the clown! I heard that it was someone special's birthday today; do you know who that is? Do you want tell me? Is it Stav's birthday? no? Maybe Chen's? Also no? How about Bar's? What? Nothing? (Silence) I heard that it was someone's birthday today and that's why I came here. (Answers one of the kids) What's with the magic now, kid? (goes back to her previous line of thought) So whose is it? Whose? (To the same annoying kid) I don't do magic!

You know what? I'll say "one, two..." (waits for the kids' reaction, but there doesn't seem to be one)...OK, I'll just play the music (presses play on the cd player) "You put your right hand in, You put your right hand out, You put your right hand in, And you shake it all about You do the Hokey Pokey And you turn yourself around That's what it's all about! You put your left hand in; you put your left hand out...." (To the annoying kid) I'm not a magician! "You put your left hand in..." Kids, don't scatter, stay here... (Stops the music) What's the deal? Are doing this on purpose? That's your thing? I mean, I'm standing right here, if you haven't noticed, hello! This whole clown thing is about "give and take". I can't go anywhere if I don't have partners. Can someone please tell whose fucking birthday this is??! (Metal utensils are thrown at her) Ha! (Now a glass vase) What's this? (...and a menorah) Who did this? Bar, was it you? You, with the birthday? You're insane! I can't believe it! There's something seriously wrong with all of you!

3. Rehearsal room

The Playwright is browsing through the Arab actress's resume. Audition.

Arab woman: What, will these hands ne'er be clean?--No more o'
that, my lord, no more o' that: you mar all with
this starting.

Here's the smell of the blood still: all the
perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little
hand. Oh, oh, oh!

Wash your hands, put on your nightgown; look not so pale.--I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried; he cannot come out on's grave.

To bed, to bed! There's knocking at the gate: come, come, come, come, give me your hand. What's done cannot be undone.--To bed, to bed, to bed!

(Silence)

Playwright: Hmm... Very interesting...interesting choice, Lady Macbeth.

(Silence)

Arab woman: When I heard that you were working on a new piece I told myself I had to work with you...

Playwright: Odd...

Arab woman: What?

Playwright: Never mind... just odd.

Arab woman: I read and saw things that you did, I really love Hanoch Levin.

Playwright: And are you available? For rehearsals? Intense rehearsals.

Arab woman: Definitely. Basically I work at the dance academy...

Playwright: You do cleaning where?

Arab woman: I beg your pardon?

Playwright: where?

Arab woman: At the dance academy. A teacher, I teach...

Playwright: Interesting...

Arab woman: Classical.. classical ballet... ten years now...my second passion after acting.

Playwright: Classical... odd...

Arab woman: What's odd?

Playwright: Not only the classical's odd... I'm talking about here and now...about Lady Macbeth.

Arab woman: What about her?

Playwright: Why Lady Macbeth? I didn't get it...

Arab woman: (*Alarmed that he misunderstood her character*) Her?

Playwright: You.

Arab woman: Me?

Playwright: You as an Arab woman...an Arab actress... Is it OK for me to say that? That you're Arab?

Arab woman: Yes...

Playwright: It's a bit of a strange choice. I mean, to play Lady Macbeth, one has to think about the connection between the character and real life, and in this case, the connection is a bit odd...

Arab woman: You think so? I actually feel that...

Playwright: I hope it's OK for me to say this, but how do an Arab woman and Lady Macbeth go together?

Arab woman: I feel extremely connected to her. It's incredible how Shakespeare succeeded in writing such a complex, challenging role in his shortest tragedy, no less. That's what's so amazing about this play, about Shakespeare in general. My father, who's a professor of literature in London... he taught me everything I know about Shakespeare.

Playwright: You know what, maybe I'm wrong. Maybe you're right. Maybe you, as an Arab... an Arab actress... from your place...the Arab...The duality of it all... You can connect... I know, maybe to the strength? Like, with that duality - out of oppression comes the strength...

Arab woman: I'm not quite sure I follow...

Playwright: You're Arab, we can't argue with that, right? Working on the character, when you were thinking about your connection to Lady Macbeth, Have you thought of something...I'm trying to think about...in order to explain this strange combination

to myself, and it could actually be a very interesting interpretation...Perhaps you were thinking about her will, your will, for revenge, perhaps to revenge against the occupation? Of years of occupation and oppression that you people went through... you went through, she went through... maybe?

Arab woman: Lady Macbeth? I...eh... She wasn't oppressed, at least not in my opinion... She pushes Macbeth to murder Banquo and Duncan because she wants to be Queen. I felt a connection to her manipulation, her cool, her greediness, but oppression - no, not really.

Playwright: Sure, of course, but in your case, working on the character, I assume that when you thought about your connection to her lust for power, to her desire to rule - it came from your "Arabness", feelings of.. perhaps...revenge that rose from the humiliation, the loss of independence, your...sixty years of occupation?

Arab woman: Occupation? Lady Macbeth? What the fuck??!

Playwright: Anyway, let's work from the outside in... Through the voice, through another resonator, and if you can... a bit more...accent...

Arab woman: I'm sorry, what?

Playwright: With an accent... if that's OK.. a little more... You have a very mild accent and it's hardly noticeable, and that's what's so odd... Never mind...So a little more Arab accent, please. And text!

Arab woman: (with a slight Arab accent) What, will these hands ne'er be clean?--No more o'that, my lord, no more o' that...

Playwright: More, more, even more...

Arab woman: No more o'that!

Playwright: (emphasizes the R) More, more

Arab woman: No more o'that!

Playwright: Yes, excellent!

Arab woman: you mar all with this starting.

Playwright: More accent, and bend down a bit.

Arab woman: Excuse me?

4. At the Playwright and his wife's door

Pitzy and the Playwright's Wife stand at the door of their house. Pitzy is pressing an ice bag against a big bruise on her forehead.

Playwright's wife: Kids can be so cruel.

Overlap between the two worlds (The Playwright's house and his rehearsal room)

Playwright: Bend and accent. Bend and accent together

Pitzy: It's fine, I just want to get my money and go.

Arab woman: (with a more distinct Arab accent) Here's the smell of the blood still...

Playwright: (Demonstrates) Here, like this. Bend down like this.

Playwright's wife: Do you even know this Pitzy person?

Pitzy: I'm Pitzy!

Playwright's wife: The magician, I mean -

Arab woman: (she lies on the floor and completes the monologue with a thick Arab accent) Here's the smell of the blood still...

Playwright: Yes.

Pitzy: No... Not really.

Arab woman: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand.

Playwright: great, that's good...yes... Give me more victim - think victim.... more accent... you're being stepped on...You're in distress... real distress...weak... yes...

Arab woman: (Intensely, with a thick Arab accent) Wash your hands, put on your nightgown; look not so pale.--I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried; he cannot come out on's grave.

To bed, to bed! there's knocking at the gate:

come, come, come, come, give me your hand. What's

done cannot be undone.--To bed, to bed, to bed!!!

Playwright's wife: I thought it was a small field and that you all know each other, in the field of birthday parties...

Arab woman: I'm not quite sure I follow

Playwright's wife: I can't believe it happened

Playwright: I actually think we made some great progress.

Playwright's wife: (*Muttering to herself as she signs the check on Pitzy's back*) My husband said he would be here to help. I should have guessed. "The play, the play", always with the play. I'm sorry; this has nothing to do with you. He, my husband, is a bit spaced out, he didn't really ask: "Pitzy what? Pitzy who? Magician? Clown?" He didn't even hear the little one say she wanted this Pitzy, who's both a clown and a magician, and kids, you know, that's what they're like, they don't handle change very well... You tell them Pitzy, and they want the same Pitzy that they saw at the other birthday they went to, and if that's not the one, then all hell breaks loose, no delayed satisfaction... Pitzy, Pitzy, Pitzy...

Pitzy: (*To herself*) I'm Pitzy.

Playwright's wife:...who's also a magician and not only a clown (*silence*).

Pitzy: that's OK. I just want my money.

Playwright's wife: You have to understand that it's her birthday... She was really looking forward to it, that's the reason for all the crying.

Pitzy: It's OK...

Playwright's wife: She's usually not violent, I'm sorry...

Pitzy: It's fine, really... Just...

Playwright's wife: Also the rest of her classmates, they're generally nice, they were just so looking forward to the magician... I thought you could handle it on your own... That's why I was in the kitchen... We would have helped you... I didn't even realize that my baby was such a leader...

Pitzy: Yes...

Playwright's wife: kids... she's Pitzy, you're Pitzy... nonsense... there's enough room for everyone (*hands Pitzy the signed check*). Are you OK?

Pitzy: Yes, fine. Everything's fine.

5. The Theatre

Menial Character is explaining his new role to the audience.

Menial character: Hello again. There's a switch now. Bar sounds, please. I will now portray the character of Date Guy 1. With your permission, I will take a moment's pause to concentrate (*he warms up and rehearses Date Guy 1's opening line*). OK, Yaffa... Yes... Hi, Yaffa? Nice to meet you... Yaffa? OK, Yaffa... OK, Ok..

(*Menial Character sits down at the bar table as Date Guy 1*)

6. Bar

Yaffa rolls up in her wheel chair towards Date Guy 1's table.

Yaffa: (*Screeches her wheel chair*) Hi, nice to meet you, It's me, Yaffa, "Yaffa28"..."Whodaman32"?

Date Guy1: OK...Hi... Yaffa? Nice to meet you too (*stares at the wheel chair*).

Yaffa: (*while taking off her coat and settling next to the table*) To be honest, I'm 31, eh...33.

I went as "Yaffa28" in the chat room, but you gotta admit you can't tell. It's just that when we were chatting it was raining outside and my sister wasn't home and I felt very lonely, so I said to myself 'what's the harm of shaving off a couple of years?... I see that you already ordered. What is it? the house cocktail? Isn't it amazing? It's half price this time of night. Waiter! I have a feeling we're going to have a long night, alcohol has an awful effect over me.... Honestly, when I saw your picture on the website I wasn't blown away, but you look much better than in the picture. Much more muscular. Do you work out? it's crazy... I'm doing all the talking...I'll end up feeling awkward...

Date guy 1: No, not at all...

Yaffa: Do I have something between my teeth? (*covers her mouth embarrassingly*). I just had to stuff myself before I came here... I was starving and you know how awkward it is to eat at the first date...

Date guy 1: Yaffa? Yaffa. I'm really sorry, I got a call from work fifteen minutes ago, it's about this project we're working on, they need me and I gotta split.

Yaffa: I don't know of any emergency that couldn't wait a fifteen minute drink.

Date guy 1: I'm really sorry, it's an emergency, totally urgent, I really have to go.

Yaffa: (*Blocking his way out with the Wheelchair*) It is this?

Date guy 1: what's this?

Yaffa: This. it is this!

Date guy 1: No, what are you talking about? What does that have to do with anything?

Yaffa: It really is nothing, take a couple of seconds, breathe, we'll go with the flow... I mean you're here already, aren't you? You haven't finished your drink.

Date guy 1: I'm sorry; this is a bit over my head... By the way, they really did call me from work. (*places a couple of bills on the table*). There's enough for a tip here...

Yaffa: Aren't you at least going to wait for the change?

Date guy 1: No, that's OK (*throws another bill on the table*). Order yourself another drink.

Yaffa: (*Blocks his way again with the wheelchair*) You're missing out on me!

Date guy 1: I'm sorry (*he leaves*).

Yaffa: Walk away, go! Men... (*to herself*) Rule number 1: Always be there at least half an hour before them!

7. The Therapist's treatment room

The Playwright and his wife are seated in front of the incredibly bored therapist, in the midst of couples' therapy.

Playwright: I don't remember the exact phrasing...

Playwright's wife: (*cynically*) Yeah, right...

Therapist: Hmmm....

Playwright: But it said... something like... Actually, I think that... (*Takes out the laminated review from his pocket*) a very famous critic wrote: "A great leap of talent, a spectacular dive into the inner most depths of cynicism and nihilism..." Nationwide spread, by the way..."All this enables us to view him, the playwright.." That's me, "...as the next generation, continuing in Hanoch Levin's footsteps while separating himself from him, "Continues and separates..." So basically this critic, not me, is

talking about osculation and separation. True separation. So I thought he was dead. Truly dead...

Therapist: Who?

Playwright: Hanoch Levin is dead. That after such a review there will be some creative peace, it will finally be legitimate to write, we'd be able to be talented and not be constantly chased by this shadow, oppressed, without the third eye...

Playwright's wife: Ok, well, enough already!

Playwright: May I continue? Thank you. and he continues, the critic: "...for Levin was an optimist, a member of an ideological generation who believed in change whereas the playwright's play portrays, with horrific precision, a mental catastrophe devoid of faith." This is not only an osculation point, not at all - it's continues and separates, continues and separates into a metal catastrophe devoid of faith.

Playwright's wife: Are you done talking about yourself?

Playwright: No.

Playwright's wife: Shall I leave you two alone?

Playwright: It finally seemed like he was freeing, this bunker of a man, Hanoch Levin, freeing his ownership of catastrophes. How much can you bear? Hanoch Levin here, Hanoch Levin there. Articles, books, Festivals, packed theatres. His wife: "Thank you for this award", "thank you for that award", "Hanoch would have thanked you", "Hanoch would be like this" and "Hanoch would be like that", "Hanoch would say that...", "Excuse me, but you can't use Hanoch's work without paying me royalties!"

Playwright's wife: At least she got something out of it.

Playwright: At least indeed. Endless articles, doctorate papers, "Hair and clothes styling inspired by 'Queen of a Bathtub', "Yakish and Puptcha - name and euphony, structure and entirety in Hanoch Levin's plays" - isn't it idiotic? "You piss, I'll open wide my mouth - Shape, form texture and taste in Hanoch Levin's plays", I mean, come on! 10 years??! I guess you can pray to god from morning till night in the academy, too.

Therapist: Hmmm....

Playwright: And I was stupid enough to think that he was really dead.

Therapist: Hmmm....

Playwright: Ever since he died, the theatre has already crowned three new successors.

Therapist: Hmmm....

(Silence)

Playwright: So Boo-Boo, I need this for myself, for the both of us.

Playwright's wife: I heard it all before.

Playwright: I have to get around him somehow, it's my last chance. Continues and separates, he said it, the critic, not me. I need to dive deep into the human catastrophe...and it takes time, work. A little consideration during these hard times wouldn't hurt.

Playwright's wife: Indeed it wouldn't...

Playwright: I'm sorry, Boo-Boo, honestly. I'll make it up to her next birthday.

Therapist: Birthday?

Playwright: I forgot the little one... the little one's birthday...

Playwright's wife: He was at the theatre... It was a real nightmare.

Therapist: Hmmm....

Playwright: Boo-Boo, she forgave me.

(Silence)

Playwright: (to his wife) It's the play, isn't it?

Therapist: The play?

Playwright: (To the therapist) The new one. I started writing again. (To his wife) Boo-Boo, it's a part for an Arab woman.

Playwright's wife: You said it was a play about relationships, about us.

Playwright: We're the basis for it. I'm adding a political message.

Playwright's wife: We have all the catastrophes we need at home. I don't understand why you have to look for them in other places. I don't understand why there's no room for me in this play of his?

Playwright: Because that's not the way to extend the message, the meaning, Boo-Boo. (*to the therapist*) I figured it out during the auditions.

Therapist: Hmmm....

Playwright: As soon as you cast an Arab girl to a play about relationships, it's no longer just a play about relationships; it's a tale of two peoples.

Therapist: Hmmm....

Playwright: And that's a conflict for you. Besides, the Israeli Goethe institute loves that kind of shit, they have a lot of resources, lots of great PR (*to his wife*) and I told you, I already found one...

Playwright's wife: excuse me?

Playwright: As close as it gets to the original, we're starting rehearsals any day now.

Therapist: Hmmm....

Playwright's wife: I'm telling you, Boo-Boo, this is not going to end well.

Therapist: Hmmm....

Playwright's wife: No one, especially not an Arab, is going to play my part better than me.

Playwright: Just like you wouldn't play an Arab as well as her.

Therapist: Hmmm....

Playwright's wife: I can play anything, Boo-Boo.

Therapist: Hmmm....

Playwright: I promise you that on the little one's next birthday, I will make it up to her.

Therapist: Hmmm....

Playwright: And to you...

Therapist: Hmmm....

8. Inside the Therapist's head

The Therapist hums a little while longer, the light changes, the couple goes on spilling their frustrations to her - inaudibly. We go inside the therapist's mind and soul. Menial Character comes near the therapist's acting space, holding Hitler's portrait.

Therapist: Hhmmmmmm..... (*the light on the couple dims, the therapist's humming turns into a memorial day siren wailing and she stands still. At the end of the siren wailing, she wakes up*). Heil. What are you doing here? I'm in the middle of a session... I told you, it's over. That's it. We're breaking up. Bye bye...baby... bye bye. Everything's fine with me, everything's fine, really, I'm good. I have everything I've always dreamed of and especially the ability to recognize that I'm very lucky, that everything's fine, I'm at a place where I no longer have to worry, Sarry is all grown up, she skipped a class, she's truly gifted, the teacher says she's very mature for her age, a real genius. And everything's fine with Assafy, my husband. Only yesterday I kissed him and snuggled next to him in a fetal position and allowed myself to feel like a fetus with him, its fine being a fetus with him, is it fine to be a fetus with you? It's fine being a fetus with a Assafy. To feel safe, in that primal place, so bare. I shed a happy tear and I told him that it's amazing that after so many years, I still feel fine being a fetus next to him and he whispered in my ear how happy he was to be able to choose me again and again every morning and how amazing it is that after all our years together we still don't take anything we have for granted, both of us. So fine. The book is going well, I was invited to give a lecture at a convention in Leslie College "Success and Parenting - Being Fine as a Way of Living". And I have help at home. Mai-Lin is such a rescue. Have you ever rescued me? So fine, fine fine, fine, fine. Just fine. Fine is fine. it's fine. It's fine... it's shit. Are you coming by later?

9. The Therapist's treatment room

The lights change back, we're back at the treatment room, the couple is audible again.

Playwright: All I'm saying is that we could both use a bit of encouragement from one another.

Playwright's wife: What are you saying, is that what you're saying?

Playwright: Yes, a little bit of encouragement, what's the big deal?

10. Apartment of Pitzy and Yaffa

Yaffa is surfing several dating websites on her laptop. From time to time she giggles in response to one of her online chats. Pitzy is nervously cleaning the apartment, while talking loudly on the phone.

Pitzy: Hello, is this the Gotlieb family? Hi, this is Pitzy the clown, good evening, How's Noffary doing? I'm just looking at my calendar and I see that's Nofary's birthday is only two months away...

Yaffa: (Seeks to some quiet in order to concentrate) Pitzy, can you...

Pitzy: Shhhh! (on the phone) Hello? yes... It's very important for me to stay in touch with my regular customers, who I know were satisfied...yes... I've heard of her.

Yaffa: (To a guy on the computer) I'll believe it when I see it.

Pitzy: Amazing... OK... I'm not a big believer in spreading yourself around. There's clowning and there's magic. It actually seems a bit unprofessional to me....
I don't do magic!

Yaffa: (To a guy on the computer) And what do you do?

Pitzy: OK, OK, Happy birthday to Noffary, happy happy birthday. (Hangs up the phone)
Bitch.

Yaffa: Time will tell!

Pitzy: Who's next?

Yaffa: What?

Pitzy: Next.

Yaffa: (Reluctantly read from the list of phones placed on the table) Bitton.

Pitzy: Give it to me.

Yaffa: 054-700330

Pitzy: What's the last one?

Yaffa: (Losing patience) Pitzy, I'm in the middle of something here...

Pitzy: Come on!

Yaffa: Zero.

(The rest of the cast seated outside the acting area whispers the word “zero” repeatedly and in malice, until it becomes a roaring laughter).

Pitzy: Hello, good evening, did I reach the Bitton family? Hello. Who am I speaking with? Sappiry? Do you know who I am? Pitzy...the clown..."put your right foot in, put your right foot out"...How are you, Sappiri? You know, I'm looking at my calendar and I see that you're almost six! Wow, what a big girl! I thought you might want to tell mommy that you'd like me to come visit you on your birthday, just like last year. How fun would that be, huh?

Yaffa: *(To a guy on the computer)* Try me.

Pitzy: What do you say? *(Disappointed with the answer)* What do you mean only Pitzy the magician? Sappiry, I don't have to tell you that there are clowns and there are magicians - and they're two things that don't mesh well. It could really screw up your birthday, I mean mess up... fuck it up so much that you won't be able to show your face in school after. You won't be able to start first grade because you won't have any friends! Boycott! Boycott! Everyone will laugh at you: "Here's the girl who fucked up her birthday with that bitch magician" - Do you get it? Do you want to have no friends? Huh? Boycott? Is that what you want? Whatever. Don't go get your mom, enjoy your birthday with Pitzy the magician. I'll see you in puberty, asshole. Bye! *(To Yaffa)* Who's next? Give it to me... *(No reaction)* give it to me.

Yaffa: Oh, seriously... *(Browsing through the journal only to find out that they went through all the names)* It's over.

Pitzy: What's over?

Yaffa: Your phonebook, that was the last name *(goes back to her computer)* So, what do you say, Hose-Man, it's a date? What do you mean “date?” Is it a date?

Pitzy: *(Looking at the phonebook, shocked)* Flyers “Pitzy - Productions and Occasions” Website - “Pitzy - Productions and Occasions”, CD - “It's not a birthday without Pitzy” Soap bubbles' gun - Pitzy, inflatable rides, parachute, candy machine, hot dog machine, sound system, a 1,000\$ neck-mike. Hokey Pokey's not good enough for the little brats anymore? Huh? Candy machines aren't the latest thing? Looking for more of a thrill? *(Shuts Yaffa's laptop)*.

Yaffa: Pitzy... I was in the middle...look what you did!

Pitzy: Looking for some asshole to saw them in half? Some idiot that after the cake and balloons would pull scarf after scarf after scarf out of her mouth with a surprised look on her face? What bullshit! I mean, come on!

Yaffa: Hose-Man, are you still here?

Pitzy: After all the time it took me to get that foam cannon, she goes around using my name - Pitzy. What was she thinking? “Hmmm... I wonder what it would be like to ruin someone’s years of work. I have a great idea, let’s be both a clown *and* a magician, start-up!”

Yaffa: Pitzy...I’m here, too.

Pitzy: I’m doing this for both of us, you dense dimwit. That’s what I am, a dense dimwit - dimwit!

And I don’t get how from six birthdays on a slow weekend I go to Nada! One phone call, and even that’s a stretch...

Yaffa: It’s a date.

Pitzy: And I’m tormenting myself - You’re not professional enough, you don’t have it, you lost your touch, that’s the end of her!

Yaffa: I want some silence!

Pitzy: And I want it clean around here! There you go, you’re more than welcome
(Pitzy suddenly hands over the mop to her disable sister and it falls on the floor)

11. The Playwright and his wife’s house

The Playwright enters his house, dead tired after a bad day of rehearsals at the theatre.

Playwright: Boo-Boo, is the little one back from her class?

Playwright's wife: She’s back, (she then realizes she can say it with a better accent, emphasizing the ‘B’ in “back”) back from class, YA ZALAME (=Arabic for “friend, dude”).

Playwright: She’s not here...

Playwright's wife: Shhh... I let her spend the night at her friend’s house. So you’ll have some “**e**ace” and quiet after rehearsals..“**Hab**y”?

Playwright: Is there anything to eat? I am starving.

Playwright's wife: (With an Arab accent) Shwaye, shwaye (=slowly, slowly in Arabic). The foods in the oven, I made you some “Beacan Bie”... How did the rehearsals go?

Playwright: (Looks at her, she's dressed like a belly dancer). What is this, Boo-Boo? Come on, stop it, Boo-Boo, I'm so tired.

Playwright's wife: Shhh... YA HABIBI (Arabic for “close friend”), everything’s going to be alright... sit down, relax, rest yourself, YA ZALAME...

Playwright: Is everything OK?

Playwright's wife: (Caresses him) everything’s going to be just fine, INSHALLA. The food will soon be on the table, here, maybe this will calm you down (gives him a cup of tea and some baklava). TFADAL...Shhh...YA HABIBI (rubs his back. He gives in for a moment). See, this wife of yours can play anything.

Playwright: (Snaps back to himself) this again?

Playwright's wife: (without the accent) I don't see what's your problem!

Playwright: This is Arab to you? This is as far as you can go? Tea with baklava and “YA ZALAME”?

Playwright's wife: I know what you need.

Playwright: I have a headache, Boo-Boo, just give me a break.

(The wife turns on the CD player. It's playing Arab music and she breaks into a sensual belly dance).

Playwright's wife: (While dancing) don't I deserve a chance? I can play anything, Boo-Boo, anything...

Playwright: Oh, Come on, Boo-Boo (he laughs as she tickles him, but refuses to give in) you're going crazy (laughs) Boo-Boo (more aggressive) Belly dancing? Come on now..., Boo-Boo, that's enough!!! (He gets up and turns off the music).

(Silence)

Playwright's wife: I hate you!

Playwright: You made this happen - you! This is not community theatre in some lame provincial town. Working on a character doesn't mean using a stereotype. You have to ask questions: who am I? What am I? Where am I? What do I want? Why do I want it? How can I fulfill my goal? What's holding me back? It's a lot of work. You're not in a place where you have to prove anything to anyone. We shouldn't work together, Boo-Boo, and that's that. I told you, I already have a real one. I have a lot of work to do with her, but she's still closer than you'll ever be... and I mean that in the best possible way...

(The humiliated wife picks up the CD player and the rest of her props and leaves the room).

Playwright: Can you leave the baklava?

12. Rehearsal Room

As the previous scene took place, the Arab actress entered the stage. She stretches and warms up before a classic ballet class she's giving at the dance academy.

13. The Therapist's treatment room

The couple is in the middle of another therapy session with the Therapist.

Playwright's wife: Three years of acting school, five scholarships, he never for a moment stopped telling me what a waste of talent I was before the child came along...

Playwright: Boo-Boo....

Playwright's wife: Boo-boo my ass!

Playwright: The audience's not stupid; He can tell when something's authentic and when it's not.

Playwright's wife: I'm as authentic as it gets! No one told me that after I got married the only part I'll be playing is that of 'the muse'. A muse doesn't cook, a muse doesn't take the kid to school, a muse doesn't sing and feed twenty kids on a birthday you organized and forgot to attend and...Then has to separate them apart because someone here booked a clown instead of a magician! And a muse, FYI, from now on is not about to spread her legs open every time Boo-Boo feels horny. The muse is nobody's whore from now on! How's that for ya?

Therapist: Hmmm....

Playwright's wife: A plain Jew isn't good enough for you anymore? Huh, "YA ZALAME?" oh, I forgot, "ZALAME" isn't Arab enough. There are deprived Jews as well, you know. What, Jews are passé? Too 'late thirties'?

Therapist: Hmmm....

Playwright's wife: What has she done that a Jew can't do? What monologue did she play for you? The victim? After all, that's what you're looking for, right? A victim? Which monologue?

Playwright: What's the difference?

Playwright's wife: Which one?

Playwright: Lady Macbeth.

Playwright's wife: Lady Macbeth?!?

Playwright: It surprised me too.

Playwright's wife: Lady Macbeth? How does that fit into the victim slot? Miserable, miserable, women, but they have no problem taking all our parts - and now Shakespeare, too. (*With an Arab accent*) "Fatimah - I heard they were holding auditions for Romeo and Juliet at Habima (=Israel's national theatre); Romeo's a Jew and Juliet is from the conquered territories, excellent - It talk about the conflict, YALLAH, TAAL, the audition is ours. Nasserine - They're looking for Katherine in Taming of the Shrew in the Cameri theatre, (*to the therapist, without the accent*) Katherine is the shrew (*back to doing the accent*) I bet the director will want to use it as a platform for social criticism, Yallah, this could be ours as well, Aziza, how about Desdemona? She can make a hell of an Arab victim. Yallah, Aziza, come on Nasserine, Fatimah, lead the way, Yallah , Gihad!

Playwright: Jihad!

(Silence)

Playwright's wife: What's next? Shylock??!

Therapist: Shylock?

Playwright and Playwright's wife: Shakespeare!

Therapist: Hmmm....

Playwright's wife: Mine. mine, mine, all of them - so greedy! and him, Shylock, is a crook, a greedy Jewish merchant.

Therapist: Hmmm....

Playwright's wife: Sluts, each and every one of them!

Playwright: Oh, come on, Boo-Boo, Enough with that, I already found someone, someone authentic...

Therapist: Hmmm....

Playwright: She was a big part of the reason I decided to go for it.

Therapist: Hmmm....

Playwright's wife: I can play anything, Boo-Boo, anything.

Therapist: Hmmm....

Playwright's wife: Especially a play about us!

Therapist: Hmmm....

Playwright's wife: Don't push me to the corner!

Therapist: Hmmm....

Playwright's wife: You have to start believing in me,

Therapist: Hmmm....

Playwright's wife: Believing in me!

Therapist: Hmmmmmmmmmm....

14. Inside the Therapist's head

The Therapist hums a few more understanding hums, the light changes, the couple continues to share its frustrations with her inaudibly, and we again enter her mind and soul. Menial Character comes near the therapist's acting space, holding Hitler's portrait.

Therapist: Hmmm.... (*The hum turns into the wailing of a siren, the Therapist passionately stand up at attention*) Hmmm.... (*She opens her eyes, satisfied*) Oh, my knight in shining armour! (*Goes back to delighting the wail of the siren, stands at attention and hums*)...Hmmm.... (*Opens her eyes*) yes, yes, yes. Hmmm... no, no, no, no, no, it's going down, it's going down on me... (*The siren fades away*) No, no, no, it's going down, it's going down.. Fuck, fuck, it's gone. It's gone. (*To Hitler*) I need you. I can't taste, I don't really see, don't really hear, can't feel anything, completely numb, I want meaning Fuhrer, I want to learn to appreciate. Everything's so fine I want to die. My daughter, Sarry, the gifted one, came to me with the grade she got on her history test; you're very popular around here. She said, "Look mom, I got a 100" and it does nothing for me. I told her "That's great, Sarry, now go do something in your room". "I also made you a love songs compilation CD for mother's day", "That's great,

Sarrytush, wow, amazing!”, “I love you more than anything, mom”, “That’s great, Sarryly”, “Even when you’re sad”, “Sarah, do you actually think anyone’s buying all this fake bullshit? How do you even know that you’re good? Huh? How? Was anything ever bad for you? Huh? Sarah? A fake, a fake, that’s what you are!” We both know just what would help me. (To Hitler) So, what do you want? A note from the doctor? a referral? “Diagnosis, colon: the patient is suffering from dysthymia, possible acute depression, boarder-line personality disorder...masochism...” Fuck it! I need Holocaust. That’s it, I said it. A real Holocaust, something that I could feel! Something that will make me open my eyes and fucking appreciate life! Something after which the patient would love to finally take a vacation. Her husband, Assaffy, keeps telling her that that’s just what she needs, she’ll buy a plane ticket to Anatolia, and bathe in the warm sun on one of the turquoise beaches of the Turkish Riviera, all-included, without an ounce of scruples about how fine she’s doing and tell her family that there’s nothing like family and how they should give thanks every morning for being together and alive and healthy and how lucky they are that everything’s fine. Because she knows how bad things could get, she’s been through the Holocaust. Because she was this close to be victim number sixth million and one.

15. The Therapist’s treatment room

The light changes, we’re back in the treatment room, the couple is audible again.

Playwright:...When you write a play, you’ll decide who’ll be in it, Make it a Thai, a Romanian, a Philippine, a Somali, an Arab works for me!

Playwright's wife: Bring her to me; I'll give a lesson in occupation and discrimination.

Playwright: Boo-Boo, let it go!

Playwright's wife: It's a play about me, about us.

16. The theatre

Menial character: Hello again. We’re doing another switch now. Bar sound, please. I’m now going to portray Date Guy 2, a completely different character than Date Guy 1. With your permission, I’ll take a moment to concentrate.

17. Bar

Yaffa is seated in front of a guy at her usual table at the bar. On each side of her is a winter coat. The two of them are a bit tipsy and in the midst of an arm-wrestling match.

Yaffa: I told you it was strong.

Menial character as Date guy 2: Yeah, strong as hell, super strong...

Yaffa: Strong is my thing. “Strong28”, I didn’t lie about the strong part.

Date guy2: What do you mean lie? What did you lie about?

Yaffa: On the 28, a little.

Date guy 2: Really? It doesn’t seem that way; you look a lot younger...

Yaffa: Well, a little white lie. Do you know a lot of 31 old single women, eh, 33 year olds who would admit they were 31? eh...33...

Date guy 2: (Laughs) To tell the truth, no, not really... You’re pretty stressed out at that age, aren’t you?

Yaffa: How about you?

Date guy 2: What about me?

Yaffa: You’re not exactly muscular, at least not like in the photo...

Date guy 2: (Stretches his arm to her so she can check out his muscles) Why say that? I work out...

Yaffa: And as for “Hose-Man21”, the night’s still young, we’ll wait and see. I have every intention of looking into it (laughs).

Date guy 2: (Amused) you’re quite a tease, aren’t you?

Yaffa: Wow, that cocktail has gone straight to my head

Date guy 2: You don’t say...

Yaffa: You’re nice to be around; I haven’t felt this real in a long time.

Date guy 2: me too, actually

Yaffa: Can you excuse me for a minute? I’ve been holding it in all night...

(Yaffa moves her wheel chair back, Date guy 2 notices it for the first time).

(Silence)

Date guy 2: What?

Yaffa: You have to go too, don't you? I bet you that no matter how drunk I am, I'll still beat you to the toilets.

Date guy 2: Wait, this... what is this? I... I didn't know.... You only put a face photo on the website... I didn't know, why'd you do that? Why didn't you say anything?

Yaffa: It's nothing, really...

Date guy: To you, maybe. And I keep asking myself what's with the two coats - it's such a hot day today. What an idiot I am... This is wrong. This is plain wrong....

Yaffa: If you had known, you wouldn't have showed up.

Date guy 2: What did you think? That you could choose for me? Maybe I would have been cool with the whole thing if you had just said something about it before... what did you think? That I wouldn't notice?

Yaffa: (*Trying to minimize the drama and go back to the light-hearted atmosphere they had before*) Stop it, is it because I made fun of your hose?

18. Rehearsal room

The playwright and the Arab actress are having the first read of the new play's text.

Playwright: What?

Overlap between the two worlds (the bar and the rehearsal room)

Date guy 2: Waiter!

Arab woman: Nothing.

Playwright: What 'nothing'? what's wrong with you?

Date guy 2: (*Takes out some money from his pocket*) I don't need change, I left enough (*he leaves*).

Arab woman: Everyone has to make their own choices.

Yaffa: We had such a nice time...

Playwright: Is that a threat?

Arab woman: It's OK, you don't have to, really. No need whatsoever. I have no expectations anymore. So I won't be an actress in your theatre. Forget about me, I tell myself, but the kid. You should have seen her face.

Playwright: How could I have known?

Arab woman: forget it...

Playwright: I'm tired, Boo-Boo, I'm going to sleep, I'm sorry...

Arab woman: I can also say I'm sorry every time I want to go to sleep. "I was at the theatre, I'm so sorry I forgot my own daughter's birthday, I'm sorry." I'm sorry I can't offer you a part, I just don't think you fit into the broader message I'm trying to convey, I'm sorry." "I'm sorry, I'm in the middle of a rehearsal, can you call later? I'm sorry..." "Sorry, I'm fu..." what, what does it say here?

Playwright: fucking. Continue.

Arab woman: "fucking the actress I'm working with"? I beg your pardon?

Playwright: Not good!

Arab woman: Excuse me?

Playwright: It's terribly delivered.

Arab woman: It's a first read.

Playwright: No, it's deeper than that. I'm talking about the connection level.

Arab woman: Well, obviously, I haven't started working on a character, her will, her obstacle, the conflict. This is just the beginning.

Playwright: That's not it either, it's deeper, these are all just words, text. We'll throw them out tomorrow, I am writing as we go along. It's just not there. You don't have a real connection to the victim's pain.

Arab woman: Let's read it again...

Playwright: I think your problem comes from somewhere deeper, to truly understand her catastrophe you have to dive deep inside your own catastrophe.

Arab woman: Of course.

Playwright: Yours, I mean YOURS. Your people's.

Arab woman: My people?

Playwright: Remember our first meeting? During the audition you told me about teaching classical ballet at the dance academy, you told me about your English professor dad in London, you chose to present a strong character, Lady Macbeth... I had a feeling even back then that you won't hit the spot. I need you to connect to your real place, somewhere weak.

Arab woman: I have strong places and weak places too... I...

Playwright: When I say "weak" I mean a weak place. For real. No bullshit. Only then will you realize what it's like to be married to this man, to be a true victim.

Arab woman: I actually really empathize with her... it really touched me.

Playwright: But it's nowhere near you, it doesn't sit well on you - the victim.

Arab woman: Don't I have any imagination? Don't I have a heart? How humiliated she feels? How he never listens to her pain? How he has no faith in her abilities? How painful it is to have everything blow up in your face? That love is dead? It's terrible!

Playwright: It is terrible.

Arab woman: All I have to do is read it and I get goose-bumps all over. My eyes tear up. (*The Playwright tries to touch her, to calm her down, but she pushes him away*) You try to take me to places that you think touch me, but they don't! Your people, your people, your people, what's the deal? I'm not sure I understand the connection between my people and the kid's birthday party? What's the connection between my people and the fact that he booked a clown instead of a magician? What's the connection between my people and their fucking couples' therapy? (*The Playwright starts to clap*) what's the connection between the fact that he stopped loving her years ago and lost all faith in her acting abilities and my people? What's the connection? I don't see how it connects! How?

(Silence, the Playwright continues to clap).

19. Yaffa and Pitzy's apartment

Yaffa is reluctantly placed in the middle of the apartment by Pitzy. Both are wearing ridiculous magician hats. Pitzy determinedly cuts through the room to the sound of dramatic magicians' music.

Pitzy: Do we have a volunteer? I need a volunteer from the audience.

Overlap between the two worlds (the rehearsal room and Yaffa and Pitzy's apartment)

Playwright: Are you done?

Arab woman: Yes.

Pitzy: Come on... (to the reluctant Yaffa) by now you should have already raised your hand, some kid will definitely raise his hand, let's pretend that you did (*she raises Yaffa's hand*).

Playwright: You see this? this is the door, hello!

Pitzy: How lovely! We have a volunteer. What's your name? What's your name?

Playwright: I'm the director here.

Pitzy: I'm calling you!

Playwright: I'm the di.... (*Signals for her to complete the word*)

Yaffa: Yaffa.

Arab woman: ...rector.

Pitzy: (To an imaginary group of children) Yaffa... Wow...wowy. What a beautiful name. So so beautiful. amazing, groovy, great name.

Yaffa: Come on, Pitzy, please, I've had a really tough day.

Pitzy: Let me do this once from beginning to end. "Oh, tough day, tough day, that's a shame, tough day". Kids, what do we do when we have a tough day? We say the magic word - Abra Kadabra. When I say "Abra" you shout "Kadabra". Ready? "Abra"... "Kadabra"... let's pretend you answered back. And now we're going to have some magic... wow... Yaffa, please show everyone the red sack. Come on already! (Yaffa reluctantly shows a red sack) Great! Now Yaffa will put the red handkerchief inside the red sack (*Pitzy hands Yaffa a red handkerchief*) Now, Yaffa, give us the magic word – "Hocus Pocus"... come on!!

Yaffa: "Hocus Pocus".

Pitzy: Wow, kids, pay very close attention. Now Yaffa will show us what happened to the handkerchief (*Yaffa reluctantly shows the imaginary kids that the handkerchief has*

disappeared). Wow, what a great magic trick! Now, Yaffa, give us another Hocus Pocus. Come on!!

Yaffa: Hocus Pocus.

Pitzy: (*Pitzy takes the red handkerchief back out from inside the red sack*) Wow! A round of applause for Yaffa. Wow, now we're going to have some real magic. (*Pitzy claps once, Yaffa suddenly falls asleep*) What happened to Yaffa? What happened to Yaffa? Are you dead? Is Yaffa dead? Oh, no, it's so scary...Brrrr.... (*Scares the children*), I'm just messing with you, that's so funny. (*Pitzy gestures bewitchingly over Yaffa's right hand. It rises*). Pay close attention... Wow... the hand is coming up... There's nothing underneath it... (*Pitzy claps again and Yaffa's arm falls back down*) ... OK, we're finished with this side. Let's go, kids, we're having do much fun, party on! Now let's see what happens on this side (*as she moves over to Yaffa's left side she gestures bewitchingly over Yaffa's left hand*). Hop..Hop... Stay with me... (*Yaffa won't raise her hand*). Come on!

Yaffa: (*cuts the rehearsal*) This is pathetic, I'm going to sleep...

Pitzy: Why must you always be so negative?

Yaffa: Why do I have to be part of this?

Pitzy: It's for both of us!

Yaffa: That's bullshit. I don't need any favors from anyone. I can do just fine on my own.

Pitzy: Yeah, right. (*Pulls herself back together*) Yaffa, the market's changed. They want magicians now. Think about it, "Yaffa, the magician sisters", "the magical Pitzy and Yaffa". It's hysterical! It's genius. I'm sure we'll be a million times better than the whore, Pitzy the magician... I'd like to see her then... (*Mimicking pulling out a string of handkerchiefs from her mouth*). Stupid idiot. What do you say?

Yaffa: I say I'm going to sleep (*she's about to leave the room*)

(Silence)

Pitzy: Just in the beginning...Just till I get going... once or twice, that's it.

Yaffa: I'm tired, Pitzy... I had a tough day.

Pitzy: Oh, tough day, tough day, that's a shame, a tough day.

Yaffa: Pitzy, please.

Pitzy: This is not a discussion, Yaffa. You're doing it.

Yaffa: Seriously, I'm tired. I'm not doing it.

Pitzy: What do you mean you're not doing it? You live here.

Yaffa: I'm not doing it!!!

(Silence)

Pitzy: Just so you know, Yaffa, your legs aren't the only thing that's crippled. Not at all.

Yaffa: Wow! What incredible insights, forget about the magic, you should be a shrink!

Pitzy: I just might do that.

Yaffa: Who the hell are you, Pitzy? Who are you? Who are you to criticize me about how I should deal with my life? Because I live here? You're just as crippled. All the time “They stole from me, they ate from me, they drank from me...”

Pitzy: Oh, shut the fuck up.

Yaffa: Look at what you're obsessing about, so there's someone with your name who's also a clown and happens to be a magician as well. So call yourself another name! Tzitz, Scmitzy, Flitz, Flitz actually is a good fit for you.

Pitzy: You ungrateful bitch.

Yaffa: Some profession you chose for yourself...

Pitzy: At least I have a profession.

Yaffa: Barely a clown, and even that's a stretch.

Pitzy: You were leaving, weren't you?

Yaffa: You've hated kids for years now, you take one look at them and you think about mass murder. So being a magician is the solution? Having me as your side-kick is what's gonna make you filthy rich? Bring you freedom? Fulfillment? Security? Love? Compassion? You know what, let's try it: “Abra Kadabra, Hocus Pocus, Bilibilobucus”

Pitzy: Shut up!!!

Yaffa: Amazing how that works, amazing, isn't it? Why not take it a step forward? Hi kids, as soon as I say the magic words “Abra Kadabra, Hocus Pocus” You'll witness Yaffa, a cripple in a wheel chair, walking for the first time in two years. “Abra Kadabra, Hocus Pocus” (*Yaffa rises from the chair and falls down to the floor, laughing and crying simultaneously*). Abra Kadabra, huh? Hocus Pocus? huh, Pitzy, amazing how

that works, huh? This is what's gonna make you love those little creeps? huh? do you like them better now? "You put your right foot in, you put your right foot out, you put your right foot in and you shake it all about", nothing! "you do the hokey pokey and you turn around, that's what it's all about..." isn't it, Pitzy? Isn't it?

20. The Playwright and his wife's house

During Yaffa's meltdown, the Playwright's Wife walk into her living room, spreads a prayer mat and kneels down to pray. She knows her husband is due back from rehearsal any minute now. She's about to prove to him what good an actress she really is. Every once in a while she glances over to the door to see if he's back. He comes in. She's startled and immediately bows down to pray like a true Muslim.

Playwright: Boo-Boo, is there anything to eat?

Playwright's wife: We shall dine when the fast is over.

Playwright: Do you honestly believe that if you fast during the Ramadan I'll be convinced? I have plenty on my plate with one Arab and that's just in the rehearsal room. So are you making dinner or not? (*When he realizes his wife is not about to stop her praying, he storms out of the room angrily and says between his teeth*) I'm at the theatre.

(The Playwright's Wife is shattered. She watches him walk away, picks up the mat and exits the room).

21. Yaffa and Pitzy's apartment

Pitzy is dialing the other Pitzy. She slightly changes the tone of her voice.

Pitzy: Hello, is this Pitzy Magic & clowning, Inc. ?Hello... I'll make it quick, Pitzy, I work at the local newspaper... yes...we've heard a lot about you, Pitzy, and your success around here. "The unmistakable birthday queen" they call you...yes, that's what they say... Let me tell you, we, here at the paper, thought that the unmistakable queen of birthdays deserves a delicious cover story...If you're happy, I'm happy....I thought it could be great if we met as soon as possible.... It can't wait... I just have one detail missing from the research... no, it can't wait! I mean, of course I understand you're on your way out to an occasion, it's just I have a deadline... There's another Pitzy around, right?....not in your league? I see.... unprofessional?... OK, it's

just that with the same name and occupation, I wouldn't want my readers to be confused... as far as I'm concerned there's only one Pitzy. OK, so when can I meet you? ...today, obviously today, this can't wait. Address? Bitton family? Yes, I know the street. What time?... excellent...I'll see you there...

22. Inside the Therapist's head

Menial Character comes near the therapist's acting space, holding Hitler's portrait. The therapist sits in her clinic, wearing only her panties and a tank-top with a yellow patch. She's in the midst of a psychodrama exercise.

Therapist: (*Singing in Yiddish to her daughter, Sarry*) "Shloch sheze mier sheine Sara'le mein sheiner, die ingellech sie schwartzinke mach zu a yingale, wus hat sheine ala Tzeindelech muznach sie mamme ay li lu.."

(From Yiddish: *Sleep, my daughter. Close your eyes, Sleep, oh sleep, oh Sarah'le of mine. The girl who started teething can't fall asleep without her ay, li lu*)

Wake up, Sarah'le, wake up my Meidalle, it's time... Don't you cry, Sarah'le, Don't let them see you cry, be strong.... (*The therapist climbs an imaginary train and it starts moving... after a little while she whispers to Sarah*) Sarah'le, no questions, on three, we jump! Ein, Zwei, Drei (*jumps off the imaginary train*). Ay! Sarah'le, are you alright? Who's a mamma's big hero? Now, run, my daughter, run...to freedom... to the woods... (*She stops abruptly*). Wait.. there's someone there.... Partisans? (*The rest of the cast, seated around the acting area, starts barking*) Oy vey Zmier, the dogs... run, Sarah'le.... run fast so the dogs don't catch you... (*the barking stops, the therapist raises her hands in surrender*)... don't shoot! Don't shoot! We weren't running away... Sarah'le... Bang! Bang! Bang! (*She falls to the grave, dead. After a few moments...*) Fuck! (*She repeats the steps again, like a choreographed dance bit*). Shloch sha, don't cry, ein, zwei, drei, ay!, run, partisans? (*the cast barks a single bark*) oy vey zmier the dogs... (*Gets up again and stands over the same imaginary mass grave*)... don't shoot! Don't shoot! We weren't running away... Sarah'le... Bang! Bang, Bang! Sarah'le (*simulates a volley of gunfire - falls to the grave. This time she also simulates a gunshot at Sarah'le*) Bang! S-A-R-A-H-L-E....

(*The therapist convulses and dies*).

Oh please, it's pretend, a cheap imitation, it's fake! So is Sarah'le... she's at school, the little genius. Have you no compassion? A Nazi will stay a Nazi... I need pain! Satisfaction! It doesn't work alone! You can see that I want to hurt, so you leave me unsatisfied on purpose? The Holocaust was your idea, you forced it into my genetic charge, so what am I asking for? a little bit of realization? He who starts a Mitzvah,

they tell him finish, asshole! Give me a lonely inn, really. An old man, a mother, a girl with braids, give me the children, the children! Let me be that baby whose fingers search for her mother's nipple while she is blue and cold. Let me quietly go through Himmel Strasse, let me cry in pain on my way to the gallows, "Mamme", "Tatte", help! Let my death command life, so that I can truly understand how to live.

23. Rehearsal room

The Playwright and the Arab actress are in the middle of another rehearsal, the Playwright is holding one of the chairs of the rehearsal room as a weapon.

Playwright: Wakf wal, ana Battuha! (From Arabic: Stop or I'll shoot!) Everybody on the floor, you scumbags! (He pins the so-called weapon to the actress's head).

Arab woman: (Laughs embarrassingly).

Playwright: This is an improvisation, don't judge! I'm warning you, don't judge!

Arab woman: How can I not judge?

Playwright: If you want to fight, and I get the feeling that you do want to fight, work it into the scene, OK?

Arab woman: eh...

Playwright: it's an improvisation, just an improvisation, god damn it! (the Arab woman places her hands over her head and sits down in a submissive pose).

Playwright: Where are you hiding them, huh? where?

(The Arab woman feels awkward and stands up)

Arab woman: I...

Playwright: On the floor! You stinking Arab, hands over your head!

Arab woman: This isn't working.

Playwright: (As himself, in a fatherly tone) Where do you think you can break the barrier if not here? Give into it already! (The Arab woman tries to reconnect with the character the playwright's forces on her)

Playwright: Where is he? huh? You Arab bitch, we're going to teach you what happens when you keep weapons at home! Where is he, huh? Where is he, huh? Where?

Arab woman: Who? who?

Playwright: Where's your father? Where's your father?

Arab woman: (*stands up again and breaks the improvisation*) A professor in a London university, that's where!

Playwright: Shut up, don't get smart with me, I'll show you what we do with filth like you (*he misinterprets her reaction. He unbuttons his pants as if he's about to rape her*)

Arab woman: (*Laughs*) Hey, hey, hey, what do you think you're doing?

Playwright: (*Breaks off the improvisation*) It's not working, it just doesn't do it for me, I'm about to give up.

Arab woman: I'm supposed to explain to my daughter why her daddy forgot her birthday, c'est tout! Why must we be in Gaza for it?

Playwright: Because deep inside, in its subtext it's a much, much bigger play.

Arab woman: It's a relationship play! Man, woman, conflict. Gaza?

Playwright: You know what? No more politically correct! I'm breaking the rules! You want the truth? You'll get it! You can direct a relationship play and you can direct a relationship play plus an Arab actress!

Arab woman: I'm sorry?

Playwright: You heard it! Casting is just as important as the text; casting is what makes poetry into a smash hit. You, you have a lot, a lot, a lot more to learn about Arabs. We're going on with this improvisation right now. Are you an actress or aren't you? (*Waits for a response*) Are you an actress or aren't you? Are you an actress or aren't you? Yalla, let's connect with the truth.

Arab woman: What truth?

Playwright: There's Plie, Releve, Pas de Bourree in the classical ballet classes in the dance academy and there's the convenient life you and you London university professor dad have, but there's also life in Gaza, Ya habibty. Is it my fault that you're the closest thing I found to Gaza? Start working, you spoiled brat, now I have to fight your people's fights as well!

(*The Arab woman starts crying*)

Playwright: OK, OK, now we're getting somewhere, sweetheart, let's use this frustration... (*Turns around as a soldier looking for weapons*) Look, I'm just doing my job... You can help me out and tell me where the weapons are... (*The Arab actress is*

still, the playwright - pretending to be a solder - is whispering behind her) Afterwards you people say that we're hurting you for no reason... that you're innocent... Where's daddy, huh? You slut (*the Playwright tries to kiss her*).

Arab woman: (*Erupts. As this monologue progresses, her accent becomes thicker and thicker*) Don't you dare touch me, you hear me? You think you own my pain? Who are you, you piece of shit Jew, to think you can even get what I feel? Bringing me into your theatre to clean your own conscience. You want to change reality? Go do something, go to the fence, vote BALAD. Don't cast an Arab actress just to show everyone she's so miserable and you're such a good man for giving her misery a stage. You won't tell me how to behave, where to go, what to think, as you have some ownership over me. In a minute you'll shove a knife in my hand for me to cut you, just so tomorrow morning there'll be a headline in the papers: "Something snapped inside her, stabbed her director... That's what it's like with their Arab genes!! You want to cut yourself, just do it, Yalla, cut yourself, cut! Just leave me alone, you stupid Jew, you stupid fucking Jew, YINAL ABU ABU ABUK, YA KALB IBEN KALB!!!

Playwright: Where have you been till now? Huh? Where have you been all through the rehearsals? That's perfect, fixate that feeling (*tries to hug her*), my sweet.

Arab woman: Yitbah El Yahud! (*The Arab woman spits on the Playwright and storms out of the rehearsal room, slamming the door behind her*)

24. The Playwright's Wife is at her house, putting on a bomb belt.

25. The theatre

Menial character explains his new role to the audience.

Menial character: Hello again, I will now play the part of the Bartender. It's an entirely different character than those of Date Guy 1 and Date 2. Bar sound, please. With your permission, I will now take a moment to concentrate.

26. Bar

The Playwright is sitting on a bar stool, completely drunk. It's the same bar where Yaffa usually meets her dates.

Menial character/Bartender: (Consoles the Playwright)... I know exactly what you're talking about, it's always like that.

Playwright: You don't get it... I need inspiration, a real catastrophe, a real disaster. I'm desperate, everything is so fake. (*Menial character/Bartender points to the place where Yaffa sits, drunk and lost*).

Menial character/Bartender: Catastrophe at two o'clock.

(*The Playwright approaches Yaffa*)

Playwright: Hi.

27. The Playwright and his wife's house

Playwright's wife: (Wrapping the bomb belt around her, determined and excited to read her speech in a thick Arabic accent) You played this game too long, Boo-Boo, too damn long. When it comes to pain, WALLACK, you're too greedy, buddy. Nothing's ever enough for you. Well, I've had enough. Enough. You wanted an Arab, you got one. It doesn't get more Arab than me. I told you no one could play my part better than me. This is not some lame provincial town, Boo-Boo, no way! This is character work. As good as character work gets. "Those who believe, and suffer exile and strive with might and main, in Allah's cause, with their goods and their persons, have the highest rank in the sight of Allah: They are the people who will achieve salvation." That's the voice of oppression, Boo-Boo. The voice of the innocent, Boo-Boo. The voice of despair fighting for a breath of freedom, Boo-Boo. The voice of discrimination seeking meaning beyond the here and now, Boo-Boo. The voice of blood revenge, a voice calling for a hellish war, a Jihad! There's no way back now, Boo-Boo. What can I tell you, my man... You've succeeded in distilling the pain into poetry.

28. Bar

The Playwright and Yaffa sit next to each other at the bar table.

Playwright: (Drunk, quotes the review) "...for Levin was an optimist, a member of an ideological generation who believed in change..."

Overlap between the two worlds (the Playwright and his wife's house and the bar)

Playwright's wife: Wallack, my man, bravo!

Playwright: "... whereas the playwright's play portrays with horrific precision a mental catastrophe devoid of faith."

Playwright's wife: This is true pain, isn't it? This is a mental catastrophe, right?

Playwright: (*To everyone at the bar*) Me - Hanoch Levin. Me - Hanoch Levin. Hanoch Levin - Me.

Playwright's wife: Explain this to the little one, tell her you left me no choice.

Yaffa: Hanoch Levin, wow...

Playwright's wife: That her mother never found redemption in life, and that she might find it after her death.

Playwright: No wow....In the three years since this review came out I've had nothing but failures.

Playwright's wife: And that her mother will finally find some peace in heaven.

Playwright: And the expectations, my god, the expectations.

Playwright's wife: Because here with you, Boo-Boo, YA HABIBI, I admit it - it's been hell.

Playwright: I'm so castrated.

Playwright's wife: Judgment day is here, Boo-Boo. On this day, even the mercy of Allah will not be of any help to you.

Yaffa: Can I have the house cocktail, please?

Playwright: (*To the Bartender*) The house cocktail for the girl in the chair! (*He falls off his chair and the Bartender help him up*).

Playwright: And you, have you any catastrophes to offer me?

(*Long pause*)

Yaffa: I... I... I... I hate my age.

Playwright: (*Laughs*) That is indeed a catastrophe. How old are you?

Yaffa: 31...33... I always shave off a couple of years.

Playwright: And is this pain authentic?

Yaffa: Yes.

Playwright: real? From the gutters?

Yaffa: Yes.

Playwright: A misery worthy enough to write about? to perform?

Yaffa: Yes, yes.

Playwright: Something worth putting in the theatre and that could compete with Hanoch Levin?

Yaffa: Yes, yes.

Playwright: How miserable are you? Cause my standards are very high...

Yaffa: I'll be anything, anything you want. As long as I'm something.

29. The other Pitzy's birthday event

Pitzy infiltrates the other Pitzy's party. She's holding a gun.

Pitzy: I want everyone to shut up!

Overlap between the two worlds (the bar and the Pitzy party)

Playwright: Inspiration. Such a rare commodity these days.

Pitzy: Nobody move!

Playwright: Finally, being able to feel, finally.

Pitzy: Hello, nice to meet you, I'm the reporter from the local paper... How do you do?

Playwright: (Accidentally touches Yaffa's hand) No need to be alarmed

Pitzy: How are you, Pitzy?

Playwright: What happened? Just a little inspiration, nothing more.

Pitzy: My name's Pitzy, too. Must be a coincidence.

Playwright: So you laugh with embarrassment or rather pleasure from my hand resting on yours, and it's not an accident anymore, perhaps you're somewhat alarmed...

Pitzy: It's just that before I was a reporter with a gun I used to be a clown and even almost a magician... Small world, right?

Playwright: What's the matter? Inspiration, just a bit of inspiration.

Pitzy: Be quiet, kids, am I clear?

Playwright: I'm married, you have nothing to worry about, what's wrong?

Pitzy: What a fascinating thing the gun is, don't you think? Far more interesting than a clown who's also a magician.

Playwright: I see that your nipples are erect... is it because of the drink? huh? it's strong, isn't it?

Pitzy: It's nothing personal, Pitzy.

Playwright: It's inspiration. It's poetry. Understand? it's Hanoch Levin.

Pitzy: It's just that when it was only me in the world, with my clowning, everything was beautiful.

Playwright: So what do you say, slut?

Pitzy: Everything was perfect.

Playwright: You can't wait for someone to screw you, can you?

Pitzy: Even when you entered the market, it didn't bother me. I said to myself that I shouldn't worry about it. I have enough experience to deal with any pathetic, two-bit fake copycat out there. I can take you with my eyes closed... Do you honestly think I need the Bitton family? Cheapskates didn't even leave a tip. I have my loyal customers and if I want to upgrade, I'll upgrade your mama's pussy and I become a clown who's also a magician, who also upgrades your mama's pussy, is that clear? I don't fuck around for the small stuff. I have my sister as an assistant.... Do you know what kind of magic you can pull with cripples? Forget about it. You compare that with pulling handkerchiefs out of your mouth? Fucking idiot. But she refused, my crippled sister, so now you're going to pay. Wow... Some production you set up here, huh? So many kids, They love you, the kids, don't they? That one, standing next to his mother, terrified - you think he likes you? (Aims the gun at him, a gunshot is heard) I don't think

so. I don't like his mother, either (*another gunshot is heard*). And that little girl, with the braids, I bet she adores you. What's wrong, sweetie? Tough day? Tough day? (two gunshots) Where are you running? Where are you running? Dora's doll is not that big (*a volley of gunfire*) I wonder whose idea you stole with the inflatable dolls (*a volley of gunfire*) Oops! no more doll... (*a volley of gunfire*) You see, everything's falling apart. I don't know about you, but all this blood everywhere makes me want to dance. Come on, kids, here she is! "You put your right foot in... you put your right foot out... you put your right foot in and..." (*a volley of gunfire*) If you don't have a foot then you can skip the shake... go straight to hokey pokey... "that's what it's all about", isn't it, Pitzy? Let's go. (*A volley of gunfire*) Quiet, I said... be quiet! Don't move! Tough day, oh no, Tough day (*Pitzy shoots all around*).

30. Bar toilets

Yaffa is jerking off the Playwright in the bar's handicaps' toilet booth.

Playwright: (*Sexually aroused*) The nothingness of being, loneliness, the pursuit of meaning, cynicism and nihilism, oh! It's cynicism and nihilism, ow! you're scratching me, you idiot! Continues and separates, continues and separates.

Location: handicaps' toilet. Characters: A desperate crippled woman... there's no need for too much writing, just put it on stage as it is.... Hanoch Levin, it's Hanoch Levin! The moment of redemption in your life's play, right?

Yaffa: Yes...

Playwright: Continue! Do you think anyone will stay for the encore? or rather your little bow with your head? Your neck muscles still work, don't they?

Yaffa: Yes.

Playwright: Hey, hey, hey, no fingernails, you stupid cripple! I understand it's been a while since you've seen one of these... but relax, OK, you stupid cripple? Answer me, you stupid cripple.

Yaffa: Yes.

Playwright: Repeat after me - “I’m a stupid cripple”

Yaffa: I’m a cripple.

Playwright: What about the “Stupid”? I didn’t hear that.

Yaffa: I’m a stupid cripple.

Playwright: Beautiful, that’s Hanoch Levin. louder!

Yaffa: I’m a cripple, I’m a cripple...

Playwright: Louder! louder! This is truth! This is worthy misery! Hanoch Levin, I’m Hanoch Levin, I’m Hanoch Levin! (*He cumns, puts his pants on, wipes the leftover semen on Yaffa and leaves*).

31. Epilogue - Menial character

Menial character: Hello, hello again. So as it turns out, there’s no catharsis. Not really. Catharsis, resolution, cleansing. Whatever you want to call it. It’s true, we still have a lot of work ahead of us in the visual sense. We really should get some stage wings so that the actors don’t have to stay on stage between scenes. Although we might decide to keep it as part of the concept. But as far as the content is concerned, no, there’s no catharsis, none. That’s already part of the concept. Some stage wings may arrive soon, but there will be no catharsis arriving with them. Part of the whole thing is to make you feel uneasy, to hit you straight in the face, to evoke you to action, maybe. We realized that the German audience has a great thirst for absorbing blunt, kick-ass, provocative, doesn’t-give-a-shit Israeli art. Here in Israel it’s harder, art in general, Israelis don’t like to feel like suckers, so we turn to Germany. It’s no big deal, so there’s no catharsis, there’s no need to be petty. You don’t always get what you want in this life. Smadar Badihi wanted to come down with pneumonia precisely on the day of the presentation? No, not at all, with all due respect, Dasha. And me, you think I wanted such a small part? A menial character’s part? Did it help me that I didn’t? I said over and over again that Menial character is not really a serious role, that I doubt anyone will come up to me after the show and say: “We felt you were so precise, specific, connected, during the switches. We truly saw a serious actor working.” “When you read from the page in the beginning, I totally teared up”,

"Wow... that bit you did with Date Guy 1 was so complete, and Date Guy 2 as well, and the Bartender really touched me, man...."

Playwright: (Cuts him off) OK.

Menial character: What do you say, Goethe institute people? Do you think they'll like it in Germany? Are we off to the Schaubuhne? We have Arabs, Jews, Nazis, we even organized a Russian cripple for you, it's just that Badihi got sick at the last minute and a Moroccan clown...what are you? Iraqi? an Iraqi clown? that makes it a bit more local...

Playwright: That's enough... It's been great! We're going now.

Menial character: Can I have just one more minute?

Playwright: Whatever. (Cues the music to turn up).

(The Playwright returns to his place on the side of the stage, menial character stays in his plays a minute longer, the song 'Love is in the Air' starts playing, menial character looks down and as the song progresses, he lets himself go more and more until his dance is completely uninhibited).

THE END

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