

Pawns

A Play by Noam Gil

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Pawns is a political satire about characters who imagine themselves in positions of power. Noam, an unemployed academic scholar, gets a job working for a mysterious couple, who demand to treat them as if they were the Prime Minister and the First Lady of Israel. At first, Noam refuses to participate in this ridiculous madness. However, this game of power seduces him too when he finds himself playing a leading role in conflicts of (imagined) international proportions. As the game of politics continues, the house is swept with political crises that threaten to jeopardize the well-being of the participants. When these make-believe conflicts intensify to existential proportions, Noam finds himself immersed in a fantasy he helped to create, the same fantasy which gradually takes control over the lives of the characters.

Characters:

Kobi, *mid-forties*.

Vicky, *early-forties*.

Noam, *late-thirties*.

Maya, *mid-thirties*.

Even though Kobi identifies himself as "Middle Eastern" and his wife, Vicky, as "Russian," the actors should look as "White" as they possibly can (whatever that means). Kobi, Vicky and Maya's names are not the characters' real names, but since their real names are not disclosed until the end, they will be identified throughout as such.

Scene 1

Vicky and Kobi are standing still, staring at Noam.

Noam stands near them, trying to conceal an increasing uneasiness which surrounds this entire situation. Their skeptic and never ending stare at Noam is disturbing.

Finally, Kobi breaks the ice.

Kobi (looks at the chair): Please, Sit.

Noam sits on the chair, Kobi and Vicky sit on the sofa.

Kobi: Tell us about yourself.

Throughout his monologue Noam is gradually overcome by his own words, becoming more engrossed until losing any composure he previously had.

Noam: My name is Noam. I'm thirty-nine years old, married with three kids, two daughters, one small boy. I finished my dissertation two years ago. Since then I tried finding a place in academic institutions all around the country or even city colleges. No luck in this department. Tried to find a place in other venues. Found a job in an ad agency, some online marketing firm where... well, I thought they would put me in the creative department, but eventually found myself in an administrative position. I got fired after three weeks. Unqualified, that's what they said I was, or am. Unqualified. Since then I've been at home, doing... stuff. My wife doesn't spare any criticism I might have already figured out on my own. She thinks I'm depressed and before the depression turns clinical I've got to find something that will save my hopeless life. The "predicament", that's what's it's called at our household, the "predicament." She thinks I enjoy it, the depression, that I wallow in my "bottomless pit", another memorable phrase she invented, my wife. She doesn't understand what she's talking about, because she can't! She can't!!! I've spent the last ten years developing my skills as a scholar, only to discover that... you know what? Fuck 'em, FUCK 'EM ALL, but my wife? So yes, I expect some encouragement at home ... and then we fight. Every

morning we fight. She doesn't see me, she doesn't give a fuck about me!!. Yesterday my wife told me that you're looking for an assistant, that the hours would be hard but that you'd be fair. My wife said I should call, so ... here I am.

Kobi looks at Noam for a long time.

Kobi: Don't be nervous, relax, we don't bite. Sit straight.

Noam sits straight.

Kobi: Look at me.

Noam looks at him.

Kobi: Head up.

Noam lifts his head up.

Kobi: Let's give it another shot.

Noam: The only reason I'm here is because my wife demanded I come. I don't want to work here. Honestly I don't. You're better off without me. Take someone else, for your own good.

Kobi: Someone else?

Noam: Yes.

Kobi: And why is that?

Noam: Because of-

Kobi: Because I'm Middle Eastern?

Noam: Excuse me?

Kobi: You have issues with our "kind" of people?

Noam: God no, I don't have any... what kind are you?

Kobi: Because my wife is Russian?

Noam: No.

Kobi: You don't like Middle Easterns and Russians, right? You won't work here because you don't want to submit yourself to the demands of people like us, whose ethnicity is, as you perceive it, damaged.

Noam: God no, I was not aware of the fact that you were... what are you, Tunisian? Persian?

Kobi (ignores him): My wife's Russian heritage is a source of concern for you.

Noam: No/

Kobi: You don't want guys like us to be your employers because you don't want to work for-

Noam: I don't mind working for you guys, I mean, I do, but it's not because... I was not aware that you were... (to Vicky) and that you are Russian, are you Russian?

Kobi: You feel disenfranchised, right? Devoid of power, lamenting the glorious past when people like you ran the show.

Noam: People like me never ran any show.

Kobi: When can you start working for us?

Noam: When can I...

Kobi: I asked when can you start.

Noam: You want me/

Kobi: We do.

Noam: Why?

Kobi: You intrigue us.

Noam: But-

Kobi: You can always say no. We are offering you a job here, you don't have to take it.

Noam: And the money?

Kobi: In accordance with the contract.

Noam: What contract?

Vicky: Seven thousand a month.

Kobi: In accordance with the contract.

Noam: What's the job?

Kobi: Didn't you read the contract? Read the damn contract. Everything is specified in the contract.

Vicky: You will be required to be here and assist us.

Noam: Doing what?

Kobi: We don't lack resources, thank God. I've worked hard all my life and my background prospects were far from encouraging. I grew up in a tough neighborhood, my parents were not the normal everyday loving parents that people like you are accustomed to. Some of my siblings died prematurely, a euphemism for "killed in the streets like dogs." Some of my siblings currently reside in state penitentiaries. I promised myself a different future. I've managed to do with these two bare hands more than... and my prospects were, I don't need to tell you about my prospects, my background was far from being encouraging, a euphemism for "gruesome shit", stuff that never got public attention.

Noam: Why would the public-

Kobi: I'm not one of those who brag about their poor upbringing, the tragic circumstances of my life and all that. I could have, I would have got points for it, but I didn't. It'll probably sound naïve, but I'm one of those who prefer the work to speak for itself and the public to judge on the merits and quality of the... not to exploit my past for the benefit of the future, if you understand what I'm saying.

Noam: I'm not sure that I do.

Kobi: And the things I've been through are nothing compared to Vicky's sad predicament, the tragic consequences of her life. (to Vicky) Should we tell him?

Vicky nods.

Kobi: She was born in Russia. Have you ever been in Russia? Her life was not a bed of roses, far from it. Afterwards she came to our/

Vicky: Kobi.

Kobi: All right, my love. I won't specify. When she'll feel comfortable sharing, she will.

Noam looks at Vicky, confused. She seems embarrassed.

Kobi: We've been following you for a long time.

Noam: You have?

Kobi: As noted before, we were intrigued by you.

Silence.

Kobi: Go home, talk to your wife, reach a decision and come back tomorrow if you're interested.

Noam: I still don't know what the job is.

Kobi: You'll know everything tomorrow.

Noam: I want nine.

Kobi: Excuse me?

Noam: If I'm coming to work here, it's only for nine thousand... a month.

Silence.

Kobi: All in accordance with the contract.

Vicky: Agreed.

Scene 2

First day on the job.

Maya waits for Noam, on the other side of the stage. We are in Kobi's office.

Maya: Good morning.

Noam: Hi.

Maya approaches Noam and kisses him.

Maya: You will call me Maya.

Noam: Maya?

Maya: We will work together here. I brought a suit. Put it on.

Noam: Here?

Maya nods in agreement. Noam gradually takes off his clothes.

Maya: Our days begin at eight a.m. and end at eight p.m. We will be required to come earlier whenever it's be necessary, sometimes we will end our shift later than eight. We will be compensated for any additional overtime. You will come to work on time, wearing a suit and a tie, shaved, clean, prepared. Did you understand what I just said?

Noam: Yes.

Maya: Good. When their door opens, we are expected to stand ready.

Noam just finished dressing.

Noam: Ready for what?

The door of Kobi and Vicky's room opens. They both wear elegant suits as if they were in some sort of an official occasion.

Kobi: Good morning, Maya.

Maya: Good morning, Mr. Prime Minister.

Vicky: Good morning, Maya.

Maya: Good morning, Madam First Lady.

Kobi: Good morning, Noam.

Silence.

Noam: Good morning...

Maya signals Noam to continue with the necessary protocol.

Noam: ...Mr. Prime Minister.

Kobi: Good to have you with us. (To Maya) What's on today's schedule?

Maya: You have a meeting in the Parliament with the Secretary of Commerce, afterwards you will meet the Director of the General Security Services who brings his intelligence report on the recent hostile activities that were detected last night in Gaza. You are also scheduled for a reading session with young students in Jerusalem who were selected specifically to participate in-

Kobi: You'll brief me in the car.

Maya: Very well.

Kobi: What about my wife?

Maya: The First Lady has a meeting with the head curator of the National Museum for the retrospective they are planning for the Russian community in Israel. Afterwards the First Lady will head for the conference of the social workers of Israel, where you will give a speech to congratulate the social workers for their hard work. Afterwards you are scheduled for a lunch with the wife of the Belgian ambassador, Michel Perez-

Vicky: Cancel the curator. I'll dedicate my morning to Noam's training.

Maya: Very well.

Kobi: Let's go.

Maya and Kobi exit, leaving Vicky and Noam alone.

Vicky waits a bit and then approaches Noam, as if intending to share a secret.

Vicky: My husband is not well.

Noam seems confused.

Vicky: My husband is a sick man. He never was balanced, and yet recently something has happened.

Noam: What has-

Vicky: He fell into depression, unwilling to go to work, unwilling to go out of bed.

Noam: Work?

Vicky: Substitute teacher in a high school. He did his PhD but couldn't get a position, like you. He taught young students from rough neighborhoods and then secured a job in a school. A nice school. My husband was always an afflicted man, melancholic, but a few months ago the melancholy turned into depression and the depression increased to clinical proportions and from clinical proportion he moved to cognitive deficiencies

Noam: What does that mean?

Vicky: My husband was always fascinated by current affairs, reading the news, keeping a close eye on new developments, addicted to breaking news that kept popping up on television. Political scandals would infuriate him, corruption cases had an unsettling effect. He would shout at the television, engaging in a dialogue with politicians as if he were the host. Sometimes he would play the guest, talking to someone on an imaginary panel, demanding to allow him to finish his argument. The doctors said it was a cognitive dissonance caused by some sort of a brain damage but all of the tests that we took showed nothing of that sort, that the cognitive dissonance was nothing but a cognitive dissonance. He was shouting furiously at me, "our whole country suffers from a cognitive dissonance, can't you see what is happening here?"

We are falling apart". I eventually threw the television away but then he began talking about a change, not some inner change but a change on a national level, a revolution of the whole political system which governs our lives. And then he tells me that he is/

Noam: The Prime Minister.

Vicky: The Minister of Transportation. At first he assumed the post of the Minister of Transportation. And all of a sudden the energy is back, he becomes resourceful, but you know, as the Minister of Transportation. He wakes up every morning and goes off to work wearing an executive suit, holding an executive suitcase. The doctors told me these were clinical signals, symptoms of a post-traumatic psychosis.

Noam: But... what does he do?

Vicky: He promotes infrastructure plans, launches a new national space station, supervises the work on the East Side turnpike, invents some Super Bus Safety Initiative.

Noam: What's a Super Bus Safety Initiative?

Vicky: It is an initiative for safety on busses, so he goes to bus drivers, makes sure that they are safe and then goes back home happy after a good day's work. And when he comes back he is smiling, a happy man doing valuable work, making a change in the social sphere... or something. He gets mentioned by the Prime Minister as the most successful minister. The press worships him. A man destined for greatness.

Suddenly Vicky falls silent, as if the rest of the story is too hard to bear. Eventually she continues.

Vicky: And then the Prime Minister resigns.

Noam: Which Prime Minister?

Vicky: And all of a sudden we are in the midst of our party's primary.

Noam: What party?

Vicky: He says we have a winning ticket on our hands, he is Middle Eastern and I'm Russian. A leader who was born in Morocco to a family of Moroccan Jews is a

winning card in Israel and with me, his wife, a Russian wife, we'll have the Russian vote, that's what he says. But he is not from Morocco and I'm not Russian.

Noam: And then what happened?

Vicky: He won the primaries and then the election and the rest is history, the history which he imagines. We need you here, with us, an intelligent, kind human being who understands-

Noam: What?

Vicky: Diplomacy, the intricacies of policy making in governmental agencies. That's what you studied, right? Policy making?

Noam: You need a shrink, not a policy maker.

Vicky: Think of it as an internship.

Noam: No, it's crazy.

Vicky: You're telling me?

Noam: Wait a minute. What is happening now? Maya said that he has a schedule, a meeting with the head of the General Security Services and then with students, right? His schedule.

Vicky: When they leave the house Maya will get a phone call. She will tell him about the dramatic recent developments and he will come back. He'll have no other choice. That's what happens every morning.

Noam: What recent developments?

Kobi suddenly storms back in. Maya follows him, wearing an earpiece.

Kobi: Did you hear the news?

Vicky: No, what happened?

Kobi: Novershtern and Caplan, these (in exaggerated Moroccan accent) *Yakl Suliman*, calling for an impeachment.

Vicky (pretends to care): Impeachment? I can't believe it.

Kobi: Maya is already on the phone with the/

Maya (performing her part, to her cell phone): Yes, I'm here.

Kobi: I'll annihilate them. Novershtern thinks he will manipulate me to give Fadidah the Foreign Affairs committee, that son of a... what were you talking about?

Vicky: We talked about the work here.

Kobi: Got acquainted?

Vicky: Yep.

Kobi (To Noam): Did she tell you about Russia? Can you believe what she's been through? She's still in post-trauma. (To Vicky) Did you tell him about Russia? (To Noam) Did she tell you about... Isn't it the most insane story you ever heard?

Vicky: I didn't tell/

Kobi: Wait till you hear what she's been through ... tell him, go on dear.

Vicky: I prefer not to/

Kobi: Don't be shy, honey. Nothing to be ashamed of. (To Noam) She was born in Russia.

Vicky: I was born in Russia.

Noam: I/

Kobi: Wait 'till you hear this.

Vicky: To a mother who left me in the hospital.

Kobi: Took her out of her womb, got up and walked out as if nothing happened, no daughter, no responsibilities, nothing. What can you say about a thing like that?

Noam: Shocking.

Vicky: I grew up in an orphanage until I was sixteen.

Kobi: Can you imagine what it's like growing up in an orphanage in Russia, the beatings, the humiliation... Tell him about Lyudmila.

Vicky: When I was eight years old, I got tired of the beatings in the orphanage, so I went to the biggest girl around/

Kobi: Lyudmila Kavlichenko, a fat, tough, cruel, frightening girl.

Vicky: I came to her with a broken bottle and I stuck it in her neck.

Kobi: That showed them who my wife was, nobody messed with her ever since.

Vicky: Yes.

Kobi: Tell him about your nickname after the Lyudmila incident.

Vicky: Vicky the Jew.

Kobi: No, the other one.

Vicky: Oh... Vodka Vicky.

Noam: Why Vodka?

Vicky: The bottle I used to stab Lyudmila was a Vodka bottle.

Kobi: After she escaped from the orphanage she decided to come to our beautiful country. She then spent eight years in-

Vicky: All around.

Kobi: I found her in a crumbling dump outside of, you know... then I met her and the rest is history. Isn't it the most heartwarming wonderful success story you ever heard? Kobi Sa'ar, the first Prime Minister who was born in a Middle Eastern country and my wife, Vicky Horowitz, from an orphanage in Russia, to becoming the First Lady in Jerusalem. I'm telling you, this country was founded on stories such as ours, of simple people striving for a better existence, endowed with nothing more than resourcefulness, ambition, a belief in the Zionist way of life, and a dose of social pragmatism, one that won't fall for blind idealism on the one hand nor for a pernicious

opportunism on the other, people who came from everywhere, Russia, Tunisia, Poland, Yemen, Morocco, wherever... the people. Do you believe in God?

Noam: I/

Kobi: Looking at this grand project called the state of Israel and not believing in God is like not believing in... do you know I pray every morning, first thing getting up?

Noam looks at Vicky, who stands behind her husband, shaking her head as if denying what he just said.

Kobi: And I'm not one of those who run to the press to praise myself for my new found beliefs, it is a private and humbling ritual, praying to the almighty to give me strength. You know where I grew up? The South Side.

Noam: Southside of what?

Kobi (ignores Noam, continues): What would you know about life if you hadn't grown up at the South Side, watching your dad pumping himself up while your mother gets herself tipsier.

Noam: Tipsier?

Kobi: My brother, Moshe, stabbed in front of my eyes when I was fourteen, did you know that? And I'm holding him in my bare hands, Moshe, waiting for paramedics that will never come, asking God Almighty to keep my brother alive, and I'm looking at him, at Moshe, with three bullet holes in his belly, begging my brother to stay alive, to stay with me as long as he can, and he's breathing, struggling for a piece of existence in this world, like a wild cat on a wall, and Moshe looks at me, trying to speak, "get out of here, my brother" that's what comes out, "get out and build yourself a better future, because South Side is a dead end, an existential abyss which only a few managed to transcend and our beautiful country is a wonderful project that enables prosperity and salvation for those who..." that's what he... well, I was paraphrasing him but that was the spirit of his... are you smiling?

Noam (getting serious): What? No.

Kobi: You seem amused.

Noam: No, I wasn't... smiling.

Kobi: What am I doing here?

Vicky: The impeachment.

Kobi: Excuse me?

Vicky: The impeachment.

Kobi: Yes, I sometimes gravitate towards unnecessary sentimentality. There's an old saying in my home town (in an exaggerated Moroccan accent) "Akhmar Whakhal Lakhmar, Intu Teffar Akhmar El Bakhar Saflar!!"

Noam: What does that mean?

Kobi: What's wrong with you, Vicky? You look like you've seen a ghost.

Vicky: I'm concerned with the impeachment.

Kobi: Novershtern and Caplan try to intimidate us. They'll never forgive me for refusing Fadidah the chair of the Foreign Committee. Noam, I need you to write me a State of the Union speech, before the impeachment ever goes forward. We'll show them who's in control, right? Tomorrow at eight p.m. live in all the networks.

Noam: No.

Kobi: Excuse me?

Noam: I'm sorry, I just can't. It's not normal, the things that are happening here. I'm leaving, I can't stay, I'm going... I apologize, but I just can't...

Noam goes out, leaving Kobi and Vicky alone.

Scene 3

A few hours afterwards.

Noam is standing humiliated in front of Kobi and Vicky.

Noam (once more gets carried away in his monologue): So I get home and there's my wife waiting for me in the living room, and I tell her I left work and I'm not going back so she looks at me and then says, calmly, "Noam, if you walk out of that job, I'm walking out on you. I will leave you and I will take the children". These were her exact words, my wife, the mother of my children, talking to me, her husband, as if I were a piece of dirt, something you wash the floor with, a detergent, a tissue. She demanded that I return here, asking you, imploring, begging for my job back, doing whatever it takes for a second chance.

Kobi: We are not the welfare, Noam.

Noam: I am aware of that.

Kobi: We expect our employees an unreserved, diligent, tireless commitment, a full understanding of our needs and requirements.

Noam: I know.

Kobi: Lift your head up.

Noam lifts his head up.

Kobi: Look at me.

Noam complies.

Kobi: Take a deep breath.

Noam takes a deep breath.

Kobi: The decisions that are made in this office have enormous consequences that far surpass the trivial conflicts that every-day people encounter. We are not involved in

make believe scenarios, this is not the academy here or the theater. The fate of lives is determined within the confinements of these four walls that surround us, I'm talking here about the lives and deaths of millions of people. You don't know me, you don't know what I've been through in this tragic narrative we call "life", where I came from, what I've done to overcome my predicament, how I lifted myself from the sewers of/

Noam: What sewers are we talking about?

Kobi (loses control): Don't patronize me!!!

Noam: I didn't-

Kobi: You want to be here?

Noam: I do.

Kobi: Don't you ever dare patronizing me.

Noam (cries): I don't patronize anybody, people look down on me, I don't, I can't, look down on nobody!!! (barely contains himself) Look at me.

Kobi (immediately calms down): I apologize, I didn't mean to... I shouldn't have... it's just that, this damn impeachment, I'm not ashamed to admit it, I'm concerned by the impeachment. The fate of my government and the fate of the initiatives I'm trying to promote are all dependent on this impeachment process. I'm talking about endless initiatives my cabinet is dedicated to, education, transportation, environment, jobs, crime. We are on the brink of a new era, historical times in this country. No dull moment, right?

Maya comes in, approaches Kobi and whisper something in his ear.

Kobi: Need to go and sign a few documents. Don't forget, Noam, I'm counting on you.

Exit Kobi and Maya.

Vicky: How long have you been married?

Noam: Eight years.

Vicky: You love your wife?

Noam: I do.

Vicky: You go to bed together, at night?

Noam: She falls asleep before I do.

Vicky: On the couch, in front of the TV.

Noam: Yes.

Vicky: You wake her up before going to bed?

Noam: Sometimes.

Vicky: I bet you tiptoe to your bedroom, hoping she'll never hear you.

Noam: Our bed is small and/

Vicky: Your kids, they wake you up in the middle of the night.

Silence.

Vicky: Do you make love?

Noam: Not enough.

Vicky: Are there moments when you look at her and see something in her eyes?

Noam: Like what?

Vicky: Something special.

Noam: I once saw something special in her eyes, but nowadays, I don't know. Sometimes a grain of sand gets stuck in her eyes so I tell her that she has something special there... a grain of sand or/

Vicky: I've been married to my husband for seventeen years. Before the cognitive deficiencies he would come to me, after I'd fall asleep, and wake me up with the sweetest loving wet kisses, imploring me to join him in the bedroom. When we got to the bedroom I would take off his clothes and he would take off mine and we would

stand next to each other, naked. This was our ritual of love, our nighttime routine. We would look at each other in a silence which conceals nothing, by the bed, naked. He doesn't take his eyes off me and I don't take my eyes off him. And we would go to bed and keep on looking at each other. And then he would touch me, one hand caresses my soft wet vagina, the other my breasts. And I would touch him, one hand caresses his beautiful hard cock, the other his beautiful face. And the night would come and embrace us all. Sometimes he would penetrate me, sometimes I would penetrate him. It was breathtaking. And when we had woken up in the morning, we would find ourselves in each other's arms, like one undivided body. And then he got into politics. And suddenly he doesn't wake me up, when I fall asleep and when I come over to our bedroom, his back is turned to me. There's a limit. As the wife of my husband I deserve much more. I took care of him, I was a devoted wife, loving, supportive in sickness and in health. I did my part. But now, as the Prime Minister's wife, my husband sees me as a decoration, a piece of furniture. My job as the First Lady is to smile, to keep my mouth shut and smile, to shake hands, to remain silent, to smile. I've been downgraded to a supportive role. In the national sphere I've been demoted to the level of an ornament. Do you understand what I'm saying?

Noam doesn't answer. She approaches him in a threatening manner.

Vicky: These cognitive deficiencies are costing me a fortune, your nine, her seven, security officers every Tuesdays and Fridays, the everyday joe he meets on "public occasions", they all cost money, like a live performance only for real, or pretending to be real or... never mind. I won't let him humiliate me like that, even in his condition.

Noam looks at her, seems intimidated.

Vicky: We both should demand more from other people, respect. We deserve respect. Are you respected?

Noam: At home?

Vicky: In life.

Noam: Sometimes.

Vicky: We shouldn't keep up with it. You and I.

Noam: Ok.

Vicky: Good. Because if I ever see someone fucking you up, I will fuck him back and if you see someone who fucks me.

Noam: I will surely tell him that he should not do that, fuck you I mean.

Vicky raises her hand towards Noam. He shakes her hand.

Enter Maya.

Maya: Madam First Lady?

Vicky still looks at Noam.

Vicky: Yes, Maya.

Maya: Your husband requests your presence.

Vicky: Where is he?

Maya: In his office.

Vicky: He told you to tell me to see him in his office?

Maya nods in approval.

Vicky looks at Maya suspiciously. After a few seconds of uncomfortable silence Vicky goes out, leaving Maya and Noam alone together.

Noam: Are they serious?

Maya nods.

Noam: Wait... but... everything that goes on here... and you... and them... I don't understand... because they... and you... and she...

Maya: Her majesty? Slipped on her head. No less crazy than he is. She makes his life miserable all the time I've been here, that witch, screaming at him "You fucked her and that one, and that one you fucked, we're through you son of a..." Flew over the cuckoo's nest, our First Lady.

Noam (confused): Really?

Maya: If you ask me, this whole insanity business is his way to get away from her.

Noam: So why are you/

Maya: Need the money.

Noam: There are other jobs.

Maya: Not like this one, with that salary, for women like me.

Noam: Women like you?

Maya: I have a young boy at home and a mother who takes care of him and father who doesn't pay alimony.

Noam: A single parent mom?

Maya: Yep, a single parent mom.

Noam: You told them you were a single parent mom?

Maya: And as a single parent mom I don't have the luxury of losing a job such as this, working with the Prime Minister, no less.

Noam: The Prime-

Maya: You have kids?

Noam looks at Maya, seems confused.

Maya: Kids, I asked if you have kids. I love kids. Do you like kids?

Noam doesn't answer.

Maya: Want more kids? I want more. How many kids do you have?

Noam: We have three-

Maya: You and your wife have three kids? I want three kids, two girls and one boy, that's what I want.

Noam: Two girls and a boy?

Maya: Really? You have two girls and one boy?

Noam: Yes.

Maya: My boy's name is Sean.

Noam: Ok.

Maya: Yes, Sean. I bet they're beautiful, your girls. You love your wife?

Noam: I do.

Maya: I'm not trying to flirt.

Noam: I... I know/

Maya: My son, Sean, he's my life, that adorable creature. Maybe we can meet sometimes, you, me, your kids, my Sean.

Noam: We can/

Maya: I'm not making a pass. After my husband left me and moved to America with his slut, I moved back to my mother and Sean, this adorable creature, is surrounded by women all day long and it's not good for kids to grow up without parental guidance. So maybe you and I and the kids can... you know... together...

Noam: Ok.

Maya: I'm not trying to seduce you.

Noam: I didn't think/

Maya: I'm not like them. They are out of their minds, I'm not. I'm an occupational therapist. I have a practice.

Noam: Ok.

Maya: I've been working as an occupational therapist for the last seven years. I was originally assigned from the welfare office when he went berserk but afterwards I continued to be employed independently, as an occupational therapist. I analyze and

asses the development, recovery or maintenance of the meaningful activities, or occupations of individuals, groups or communities. I am a university-educated professional. What do you think of that?

Noam: I think it is fine.

Maya: You and I, we are in this thing together.

Noam: Ok.

Maya: I need to keep this job. Do you understand what I'm saying?

Noam: Yes.

Maya: Good. She, crazy bitch number two, she wants to shut this whole operation down. Everything was ok, but now she wants to shut us down. Where do you think this impeachment came from? She devised everything, Fadidah not getting the committee, Novershtern and Caplan, it's all her doings. If there's no faith in the government or this administration, so there's no faith in her husband, the Prime Minister...

Noam: Who's not the real Prime Minister/

Maya: And then he's forced to resign.

Noam: Return home.

Maya: Exactly. And he, he's not stupid, he may be crazy, but he's not stupid, he can deal with strategic crises. This cognitive deficiency is our livelihood. That's all I'm saying.

Noam: So what am I supposed to do?

Maya: Sweetheart, you and I, we need to secure the existence and prosperity of this administration. For our Prime Minister, for the nation, for ourselves, for my Sean, for your kids. Because the last thing that we need now, the **last** thing that we need is to be impeached.

Scene 4

Kobi is about to give his State of the Union Address. Noam stands behind him, holding a microphone.

Claps are being heard (from a nearby sound system).

Vicky stands next to Noam.

Kobi (after the applause fade out, to his audience): Dear members of the Israeli Parliament and of my government, The Chairman of the Supreme Court, the Head of the Opposition, everyone who endowed us with their presence, thank you for coming. Hundred years ago, when the British Lord Balfour has made his famous Balfour declaration, the idea of a state for the Jews had turned into a viable dream about to come true. Our aspirations for national independence has suddenly become validated. Hundred years ago, General Allenby's forces have freed Jerusalem and its Jewish citizens from cruel Ottoman rule. Thirty years afterwards, seventy years ago, the State of Israel was born. I'm proud of our achievements in these short times when we've become a growing national force, our national foundations are rock solid. These are no self-evident truths, especially when looking over our secured borders, watching regimes all around us crumbling apart, losing their national and cultural unity. This is not the case in Israel, where social and cultural unity and solidarity continue to prevail. All of Israel, now and forever, are brothers and sister sharing one big dream, the dream of Zion that turned to reality in such short times. The nation of Israel has power, but we must not become addicted to our power. The state of Israel strives for peace, for a safe existence next to peaceful neighbors. We were never a war-loving nation, unlike some of our neighbors...

Kobi signals with his hand to Noam.

Kobi: We always strived for a peaceful solution that will end this never-ending conflict with our Palestinian neighbors...

Noam (holding the mic, heckles loudly): What kind of a leader are you, Mr. Prime Minister? You are burying the Zionist vision.

Kobi (signals the imaginary hecklers at the audience to calm down): I'm burying? I'm burying? Amusing words from a prominent grave digger such as yourself... What do you have to offer for our sons' and daughters' future?

Noam: You are burying our constitution, spreading hateful rhetoric which tears this country apart!!!

Kobi (to someone from the audience): How dare you, Novershtern? What do you have, members of the opposition, to offer for the citizens of this country? What do you stand for, on the name of which ideology are you speaking? A Soviet Bolshevik agenda? No thank you, Novershtern.

Noam: Our founding fathers would have been ashamed of you.

Kobi: Novershtern, Caplan, and even you Fadidah, my dear grandmother, God rests her soul, had a saying about people like you "Kassam Ladid, Teyalkhuani Gadid." If you'd spoken Moroccan you'd understand the wisdom of the East-

Noam: Is that all you got, Mr. Prime Minister? Is that what you have to offer for the Israeli people? Worn out clichés spoken in/

Kobi: Not at all, I'm offering an honest outlook on reality which strives for a change in our circumstances, this is **my** ideology, a pragmatic world view that won't fall for blind idealism on the one hand nor for a pernicious opportunism on the other-

Noam: You're a joke, Mr. Prime Minister, that is what you are, deceiving your own voters.

Kobi: Novershtern, let me be clear for the last time, I'm hopeful about our future, I believe in change because I believe in the Israeli way of life, and that is why I stand here-

Noam: What would Theodor Herzl say?

Kobi: -confident that the state of our union is strong-

Noam: What would David Ben Gurion have said?

Kobi: Thank you.

Noam: What would-

Kobi (privately): Ok, that's enough.

Noam (takes down the microphone): Ok.

Scene 5

Immediately after Kobi's speech, he and Noam enter the Oval Office.

Kobi (takes his jacket off): What did you think?

Noam: Soviet Bolshevik agenda?

Kobi: Fuck yeah, Soviet Bolshevik agenda.

Noam: What did you think of the speech?

Kobi (approaches Noam and embraces him like a proud father): Well done, Noam. I'm glad you're onboard and that we managed to establish a dialogue that will benefit me, will benefit our beautiful country and its citizens, and, God willing, benefit you too. You will be my right hand man here, helping me do important stuff for the wellbeing of our fellow citizens.

Noam seems moved by Kobi's words.

Kobi: What do you think of Maya?

Noam: Maya? She's... talented.

Kobi: Tremendously talented, smart, sharp, a feisty creature, one of those who you'd like in your own team, not in the opposing one, right?

Noam nods.

Kobi: Are you aware of her predicament as a single parent?

Noam: She told me...

Kobi: And what do you say about that? I think its admirable, being a single parent mom in this day and age. My mom was a single parent mom, the things she's been through while my father was... I have a soft spot for single parent moms. I have a soft spot for Maya. Can't explain it, every time I see Maya, I think to myself "here's a single parent mom," and then I feel like a little child in a dire need for candy, only in my case, my desperate need is a single parent mom such as our Maya.

Noam: What about your wife?

Kobi: Vicky?

Noam: If she finds out-

Kobi: She is a full-fledged Russian woman, cuts your balls off without sedation and then eats them before your eyes, the balls, raw as it were.

Noam: Russians? Really?

Kobi (ignores Noam, continues): If she discovers anything, "*Alla usmur un salla busmur.*"

Noam: So... what do you want me to-

Kobi: Do you know what I did as Prime Minister for the single parent constituents in our country?

Noam: You sleep with them?

Kobi: Don't be cynical. There's no other Prime Minister who spent more than I did for single parents, you can check the records. So if I'm supporting the single parent constituents, it would be only fair/

Noam: For the single parents to support you.

Kobi: Exactly, you understand my position/

Noam: But you can't-

Kobi: A man in my position-

Noam: And your wife-

Kobi: Don't worry about my wife. She doesn't know anything, she'll never know.

Noam: If I may, I don't believe it's a good idea right now.

Kobi: Excuse me?

Kobi: An affair with your employee, a single parent mom. You are going to do wonderful things for this country, the numerous initiatives you promote, increasing our resources, welfare, education, security. That is why the people have elected you for the post, to lead and embody the moral compass that this country so desperately requires, not for a cheap fling with a single parent mom.

Kobi: Cheap fling?

Noam: We are in the midst of a massive transition in the policy of this administration towards a pragmatic world view, a direct engagement with micro economic conflicts instead of a vast and futile disposition concerning a revolution that will never come. We don't stand for a blind idealism not for a pernicious opportunism, Mr. Prime Minister, but for a reduced inflation, a reduced unemployment, an improved educational system, capital investments in infrastructure, initiatives that will make the rest of the world jealous. We are talking here about a true Zionist dream, manifested mostly by an economy which continues to grow in a non-inflationary way. An affair with a single parent mom will only jeopardize the very fabric of this administration.

Kobi: You want her.

Noam: No.

Kobi: Yes you do. She told you about her husband and his American slut.

Noam: No, I mean yes. But I'm not-

Kobi: She told you that she is an occupation therapist.

Noam: Yes.

Kobi: She tells everyone about her occupational therapy.

Noam: She's not an occupational therapist?

Kobi smile patronizingly at Noam, who seems confused.

Kobi: Where do we stand on the impeachment?

Noam: Caplan and Novershtern caved.

Kobi: And Fadidah?

Noam: He still demands the head of the committee. He'll talk to the press if need be about the Keystone Pipeline, that's what he specifically told me to tell you.

Kobi stares ahead, tries to plan his next move.

Noam: What does that mean? What's going on in the Keystone Pipeline?

Kobi: Doesn't mean anything. He's playing us, guessing that there's a there there with the Keystone Pipeline, a shot in the dark about forged permits I may have produced.

Noam: But if it's not true, what do we care?

Kobi: Who says it's not true? He just doesn't know. He's making it up as he goes along, just to see if I flinch.

Noam: So, is it true or not?

Kobi: If I fold he'll know that there's a there there. If I don't, then he won't.

Noam: So what will we do?

Kobi: Give him what he wants.

Noam: The head of the committee?

Kobi: But before you give him the committee, tell him that we have the Parliament documents from the Alfassi hearing.

Noam: What does **that** mean?

Kobi: Made up contracts, going over budgets, a corruption on a different scale that you wouldn't believe.

Noam: Is it true?

Kobi: "In politics, a bit of fiction is always necessary," David Ben Gurion said that, the founding father of Israeli pragmatism.

Noam: Did he really say that?

Scene 6

Vicky sits still in her room, stares ahead, as if she were an inanimate statue.

Noam enters.

Vicky: You need to remember who you're working for, Noam, who signs your paycheck at the end of the day. So if I ask you to do something for me, I expect you to do the things that you've been asked to do.

Noam: I told him what you told me to say, about Novershtern and Caplan.

Vicky: I want the impeachment to pass, that was the whole point of this entire operation. That's why I got you on board, to help me terminate the Prime Minister's term. He thinks he's the Prime Minister, ok, so we'll build him a nice cabinet, bring in a secretary, a chief strategist, a speech writer, a diplomacy expert, and then, after this charade exhausts itself, we will terminate it, you and I, this administration, the coalitions, this lunacy that has swept this house. This impeachment is a necessary step for the returning of any good judgment and reason to our household. Overthrowing from a position of power the one who has no actual power, do you understand what we're doing here?

Noam doesn't respond.

Vicky: So if Fadidah doesn't want the committee, WHY THE FUCK WOULD CAPLAN AND NOVERSHTERN GIVE UP????

Silence.

Noam: If I may, yesterday, upon returning from work, I made love with my wife for the first time in three months.

Vicky: Excuse me?

Noam: My wife and I had sex yesterday for the first time in three months. I told her to come with me to the bedroom, my wife, and there we made love. She did everything I asked her to do. I was gentle, but persistent. It was very nice to make love to my wife. It usually takes me ages to come. Yesterday I came fast. She didn't take her time either, even though it wasn't too fast. When we went to sleep, she embraced me and I embraced her and then we fell asleep, in each other's arms. Our kids slept all night. You asked me if I saw anything special in her eyes lately. Yesterday I saw something there, the way she looked at me. I saw admiration. I saw excitement. She looked at me... intrigued.

Vicky seems bewildered. Noam goes on.

Noam: Your husband is passionate about his job. He feels like he's doing a good job as our Prime Minister. I agree with that assessment. What **you're** trying to do is... undemocratic.

Vicky: Undemocratic?

Noam: He was elected by the people and the people, only the people have the power to drive him out of office. Only the people. That's what he thinks. What I'm trying to say is that the impeachment which you are trying to promote might have destructive consequences. Overthrowing your husband from a position of power might jeopardize your husband's certainty of his own power as a man, as a husband, as a human being.

Vicky: Is that a refusal?

Noam: I'm just trying to help you out here.

Vicky: To prolong the administration so you can fuck your wife?

Noam: To prolong the administration in order to implement the necessary steps for a change in this shithole of a country. Because we, the citizens, are fed up with the pigsty called "the state of Israel." And then, after the initiatives, the negotiations and the legislative acts are implemented, only then, when he will go down in the pages of history as a resourceful and lovable leader, the same pages that he will write, only then can he step down.

Vicky stares as Noam continues.

Noam: And if you think that you've been stripped down to a level of a poster, an insignificant part in a drama of international proportions, then take back the leadership. Become the first lady the people expect you to be, a lovable, kind, resourceful, tough minded woman. Our Prime Minister needs you, Madam First Lady. Our country needs you. So by all mean, step up.

Noam waits for her reply. She approaches him threateningly.

Vicky: This administration will discontinue as soon as fucking possible, do you understand? I've run out of resources. This presidency is killing me. I want my husband to return to normal capacities. I need my husband back. Normal capacities. Do you understand?

Silence.

Noam: What do you want me to do?

Scene 7

Kobi and Maya are having sex in the Prime Minister's oval office, on the table. These are the last stages of their intercourse.

Noam enters, holding some files.

Noam: Mr. Prime Minister, circumstances have...

Noam looks at the Prime Minister and Maya for the first time, seems appalled, horrified.

Kobi signals him nonchalantly that they are about to finish.

Noam turns his back to them.

Noam: I'll come back later.

Kobi: Stay!

Kobi and Maya finish having sex. Kobi stands. Maya cleans herself.

Kobi: Ok, speak.

Noam: I'm gonna' pass out.

Kobi: Nonsense. What where you/

Noam: Your zipper.

Kobi closes his pants.

Kobi: What's up?

Noam: Your wife could have come in-

Kobi: My wife isn't here.

Noam (to Maya): And you... You are/

Maya: A single parent mom? GUILTY.

Kobi: What's up, Noam?

Noam: I really do think that next time-

Kobi: We don't have time for this. Speak up.

Noam: Fadidah, he's refusing to take the committee. He says it's too late.

Kobi: We scared him.

Noam: Yes, we did. But he's ready to battle. Novershtern and Caplan as well.

Maya: Caplan and Novershtern? They told you personally?

Noam: What?

Maya approaches Noam threateningly.

Maya: Caplan and Novershtern, you talked to them.

Noam: Yes.

Maya: What did they say? What were their exact words?

Noam: They are going on with the impeachment. They assured me they have the votes. "Your days are numbered," these were their exact words. Until the count begins, they will secure the votes even from our own party, unless... unless...

Maya: Unless what?

Noam: Unless the Prime Minister fires Maya, as a first and the necessary condition for the existence of this administration.

Kobi: Maya? What she has to do with/

Maya: As a necessary condition for the existence of this administration? Fadidah and Caplan said that to you?

Noam: **Novershtern** and Caplan. They said that you were... unreliable.

Kobi: My god.

Maya: Unreliable? That's what they said?

Noam: If you understand what I, or they, meant.

Maya: Caplan and Novershtern.

Noam: They are also pursuing the Keystone Pipeline thing.

Maya: What Keystone Pipeling thing?

Noam: They are saying that there's a there there. They are calling our bluff. They have a whistle blower.

Kobi: Fadidah.

Noam: Unless we fire Maya, it will be on the six o'clock news.

Kobi: They're going all in. What about Alfassi?

Maya: Yes, what about Alfassi? (to Kobi) Who's Alfassi?

Noam: Didn't buy it.

Kobi: And what do you think?

Noam: We are facing an existential threat, Mr. Prime Minister.

Maya: What do you suggest we do? Capitulate? What are you, a fag?

Kobi: I can't capitulate, not now. But I can't sacrifice my presidency either. I just can't.

Maya: Calm down, you are not sacrificing anything yet.

Noam: Mr. Prime Minister, if I may-

Kobi: The trouble is that we have no one to rely on anymore. Nobody's picking up the phone, when I call people I get rejections, call backs, busy lines. What is going on? Am I or am I not the Prime Minister of this country? Why don't the results of our initiatives speak for themselves?

Maya: And better yet, why the impeachment? Why do they demand **my** ass? On what grounds?

Kobi: Any thoughts?

Maya: They're playing games.

Noam: I'm not sure they are.

Maya: We need to raise the stakes. Fuck 'em, Mr. Prime Minister. If they want to play ball, we'll play ball.

Kobi: The Alfassi hearings?

Maya: They threaten us with impeachment? We'll bring war of unparalleled proportions to the table. We'll see who's better at existential threats.

Kobi: War, with whom? The Palestinians?

Maya: The Iranians.

Kobi: My God.

Noam: Maya.

Maya: You're the Prime Minister of this great nation, aren't you?

Kobi: I am.

Noam: Maya?

Kobi: We'll show them who they're fucking with.

Noam: Maya???

Maya: What?

Noam: I'm not sure that we have the sufficient... resources for a global war.

Maya: Sure we do.

Noam: No, we don't. Our national budget is based on a Gross Domestic Product which will not be sustained in case of war. (To Kobi) Mr. Prime Minister, think of the initiatives that you are promoting, in education, welfare, infrastructure, these have taken our resources for a global war. We simply cannot afford it.

Maya: So the deficit will increase a little bit, so what?

Noam: It is not **our** deficit. I really think that we need to consult, Maya, with the Secretary of Treasury before we rush into decisions that we cannot implement.

Maya: It is not within The Secretary of Treasury's jurisdiction who we will go to war with. What's the point being the Prime Minister if every decision requires the Treasury's approval?

Noam: Because that's the protocol.

Maya: Fuck the protocol. We'll show them who's calling the shots.

Noam: There are no shots to call, we are out of bullets, Maya.

Kobi: Hold on, are we seriously considering going to war? A war that will prevent my impeachment? Think of the public.

Maya: It will give you the second term easily, bringing this country back to greatness, away from blind opportunism or pernicious idealism.

Noam: Blind ideal-

Maya: Whatever.

Kobi: You don't understand. I've been elected on the ticket of modern day Pragmatism, the assumption that the era of big ideologies is over and now we are facing a reality which requires a pragmatic disposition, one which will never succumb to blind idealism on the one hand nor to corrupt opportunism on the other.

Maya: Yes, that's what I said.

Kobi: It is a fierce perspective at micro financial conflicts instead of an existential overview regarding a perfect tomorrow that will never come. We are talking here about a true Zionist exceptionalism, manifested mostly by an economy which continues to grow in a non-inflationary way. That is what I promised the voter, a promise I've been committed to throughout my term.

Maya: And where do the Iranians stand in regards to your modern day pragmatism? Will they concur that the era of big ideologies is behind us? With all due respect, pragmatism is a luxury the Middle East cannot always afford.

Kobi: You are raising some important points here, and yet, we were talking about impeachment, a political struggle. Taking this nation to war with Iran to win a political fight, I don't know, even in politics, cynicism has its limits. What do you think, Noam?

Maya: Noam thinks you should bend over.

Noam: I don't-

Maya: He surrenders to his wife, what do you think he'll say about the Iranians?

Noam: What are you talking about?

Maya: You are not a man, that's what I'm talking about, a useless bureaucrat, an unimaginative clerk. I'm proposing our Prime Minister the horizon, you are offering only limits.

Noam: I can offer horizons, I will... and my wife, my wife has nothing to do with it, that was a cheap shot what you just said, about my wife, a cheap shot.

Maya: What do you have to offer, Noam? What do you stand for? What do you do? What are you? Are you a man or a loser? (Looks at Kobi) Because that man over here, he is a man, a fierce creature of a different caliber, a real man. But you, what are you?

Noam remains speechless.

Maya: My son is sitting home right now, waiting for a father that will never come, a gutless father, a spineless human being. But my son will have a different future. He'll grow up to be a real man, with or without a parental figure in his life. And you, what do you stand for? Do you want to stay and fight or run away? Are you a slinger or a crybaby? A tiger or a whiner? A firing machine or a pawn? What are you?

Noam doesn't respond.

Maya: Are you with or without us?

Noam still remains silent.

Maya: Do you speak? Words come out of your mouth?

Kobi: Maya, if I may. (To Noam) Noam, I'm counting on you here, not only as a member of my team who knows something about the rules of governing, but as someone who got to know me and what I stand for, and most crucially, a true intellectual who fully comprehends the essence as well as the quality of a governmental decision.

Maya: Exactly.

Kobi: So what say you?

Silence.

Kobi: Noam?

Noam looks for the first time in a while at his Prime Minister.

Noam: Let's wipe 'em out.

Maya: Let's wipe all of them out.

Kobi (to Maya): Notify the Chief of Staff, the Secretary of Defense and the Director of the Mossad. I expect a full intelligence report on my desk in the next half an hour.

Noam: It will take longer than that.

Kobi: Two hours. On my desk.

Noam: Very well.

Kobi: What do we have on Iran?

Maya: Imagery satellite intelligence.

Kobi: What about Hezbollah?

Maya: Imagery satellite intelligence.

Kobi: What about Syria?

Maya: Imagery satellite intelligence.

Kobi: Arrange an address to the public from my Office.

Maya: Right away.

Kobi storms out dramatically from the office.

Noam: Mr. Prime Minister?

Kobi stops. He looks at Noam.

Noam: You should know one more thing.

Kobi: What's that?

Noam: It concerns your wife.

Scene 8

Kobi sits behind his desk, seems anxious. Noam, Maya and Vicky are standing behind him. Kobi stares ahead as if looking at a camera.

The Prime Minister's Address is about to begin.

Kobi: My fellow citizens, at this hour Israel's armed forces are in the early stages of a military operation to defend our country from a great danger. On my orders, our forces have begun attacking selective targets of military importance, to undermine Iran's ability to wage war. To all the men and women in our armed forces, the peace of a troubled world now depends on you. The enemies you'll confront will come to know your skills and bravery. Israel is facing an enemy that has no regard for basic decency or for rules of morality. As you can see from the presentation that we have prepared, Iranian officials have armed hostile forces with nuclear capabilities that pose an existential threat to our democracy and way of life. It is, we believe, a first step in a hostile confrontation which will put Israelis' lives in jeopardy. Noam, can you please show us the evidence?

Noam presses a button on a remote control he is holding. A satellite's faded picture with a headline "Lebanon" is shown.

Kobi: Here, in this remote village at the outskirts of Beirut, in Lebanon, we can see dozens of warehouses. In these warehouses scientists work on manufacturing pure plutonium for the arming of weapons, mostly missiles, with nuclear capabilities. These weaponry missiles cover the entire Israeli territories. Noam.

Noam presses a button on the remote. A picture of dozens of trucks is shown.

Kobi: From these warehouses, dozens of truck go to distribute the nuclear weapons to hostile forces in Syria and Lebanon with the specific protection of Iranian officials.
Noam.

Noam presses the button. We see a picture of discs.

Kobi: We have this information on discs. Noam.

Picture of cameras.

Kobi: And on film. Noam.

Pictures of portfolios.

Kobi: And in Portfolios.

Picture of friends of different nationalities.

Kobi: We shared this information with our allies around the world. The war that we are heading does not concern only the wellbeing of the Israeli people but of the entire global community. We have no ambition in Iran except to remove a threat and restore control of that country to its own people. We will pass this time of peril, we will defend our freedom and bring freedom to others. We will prevail. May God defend our country and those who defend us. Thank you.

Scene 9

The Prime Minister's office, immediately after the Prime Minister's Address.

Kobi enters, Vicky is immediately after him.

Noam and Maya are behind them.

Vicky seems furious.

Kobi: Not now, Vicky, there's a war going on.

Vicky: And your sources are reliable.

Kobi: The head of the Mossad supplied irrefutable evidence concerning-

Vicky: The head of the Mossad?

Kobi: Yes, the head of the Mossad.

Vicky (looks at Noam and Maya): The head of the Mossad.

Kobi: The head of the Mossad/

Vicky: Gave you irrefutable evidence.

Kobi: Gave Noam.

Vicky looks at Noam.

Kobi: And Maya.

Vicky: Noam and Maya.

Kobi: Yes. Noam and Maya.

Maya: I talked to him, with the head of the Mossad, the Secretary of Defense, all of them. (Speaks to Vicky threateningly) We are fully aware of those who are with us and those who are not, our allies and our foes... Lebanon, for example, if you understand what I mean, Madam First Lady. We are currently striking a blow of unparalleled proportion that our enemies will never forget.

Vicky: May I see this irrefutable evidence?

Maya: No, you may not. It is classified.

Vicky: You've seen them?

Maya: We all have.

Vicky: And I don't have the clearance.

Maya: Right.

Vicky (to Noam and Maya): Do you realize what you've done? It doesn't concern only the administration now ... (Kobi looks at Vicky, she improvises) we are talking about the existence of our country, a devastation of biblical proportions (points at Kobi), and he will carry the blame for the rest of his life, a curse that will haunt him forever.

Maya: Your husband is a strong, courageous leader who doesn't hesitate to reach unpleasant conclusions that will improve the fate of the entire world.

Vicky: What about the impeachment?

Maya: Who cares about a stupid impeachment? This is no time for party politics, we are going to war with the Iranians.

Vicky: And what do you have to say for yourself, Noam?

Maya: He says that you should carefully consider your next move.

Vicky: Excuse me?

Maya: We have pictures of you with Caplan and Novershtern conniving behind the Prime Minister's back. (To Noam) Show her.

Noam takes out from his briefcase a brown envelope. He gives it to Vicky. She opens the envelope and takes out a series of photographs.

Maya (point at the first photograph): This is you, and this is Novershtern.

Vicky looks at the second photo.

Maya: This is you, and this is Caplan.

Vicky looks at the third photo.

Maya: And this is you and Caplan and Novershtern... and here is Fadidah.

Kobi: How could you, Vicky? To join hands with our worst enemies?

Vicky: The Iranians?

Kobi: Caplan and Novershtern.

Maya: And Fadidah.

Kobi: You're my wife, my right hand woman, my back, my soul, my everything...

Vicky shows them the photos in question.

Vicky (the first photo): This is me and our superintendent, Gordon.

Shows them the second photo.

Vicky: This is me and our mailman, Benny. (Looks at the third photo) this is me at the pharmacy, the guy's name at the counter is Joseph, I think, Benny happened to be there. Gordon is nowhere to be found.

She approaches her husband.

Vicky: They are manipulating you against me.

Maya: You instigated the impeachment, no way around that.

Vicky: I've been your wife, your mother and your nurse for over a year now. I made all of this happen, your term, your administration. It's all me. I gave you the throne, and now they want to use you to/

Maya: That's not true.

Vicky: Listen to me, my love. You are not the Prime Minister, and she... she's an actress.

Maya: Don't listen to her.

Vicky: You're a sick man.

Maya: An outstanding leader.

Vicky: You have cognitive dissonances.

Maya: A Sharp perception and a courageous disposition which enables you to confront head on conflicts of international magnitude.

Vicky: This entire impeachment, and the war and the well-being of your cabinet, the initiatives, they don't really exist, they are made up, a fantasy that **I** created. You are not the Prime Minister, I'm not the First Lady, she is not a single parent mom and he... he is not your chief strategist. Let's go back to our normal life, my love. Come with me, be with me. Everything that goes on here, it's all a show, a figment of your deranged imagination.

Kobi gets up, embraces his wife.

Kobi: My love, you need to relax. You are the First Lady, I'm the Prime Minister and now we are in the midst of an attack of one of the strongest nations in the world. So enjoy the drama, sweetie. We are doing the good deed here.

Vicky: It's not a game.

The Prime Minister's red phone is ringing.

Kobi: I need to get that.

Vicky: Who's that?

The phone goes on ringing. Kobi approaches it. Vicky stands in his way.

Vicky: Don't.

Kobi goes around her and picks up the phone.

Kobi (to the phone): Yes, Mr. President, thank you for calling me back... I completely understand the political implications even though I can't fully accept your conclusion... What I'm saying is that we will have to take matters into our own hands... I'm afraid you leave me no other choice, Mr. President, I'm the Prime Minister of my country and I will do whatever it takes to secure the prosperity and well-being of my people... Yes, that is true, with or without your cooperation...

Vicky (to Noam): Who is he talking to?

Noam doesn't answer.

Kobi: Well, it's not only a question of short term goals but long term strategy... Yes, of course... Very well, send my love to your beautiful wife and may God help us... Take care, Mr. President.

Kobi hangs up the phone.

Vicky: Who was that?

Kobi: The President of the United States.

Vicky: Who was that really?

Kobi: The President.

Vicky: Who was that??????

Kobi: The President of America.

Maya: What did he say?

Kobi: That our fate is in our own hands.

Kobi looks at Noam.

Kobi: Do you believe in God, Noam?

Noam: I do.

Kobi: And you Maya? Do **you** believe in God?

Maya: I absolutely do.

Vicky: What the fuck is going on?

Maya: Shhh...

Kobi (ignores her): Tonight we'll see if God believes in us.

Lights out.

Scene 10

A war is taking place outside, sounds of airplanes approaching, followed by heavy bombardments, citizens panicking and screaming, bombs that go off.

It seems like doom's day approaching.

Kobi stands in the middle of his improvised war room, next to Maya and Noam. He seems frightened, trying to maintain his composure.

Kobi: Any news from the generals?

Maya: The pilots are about to notify us any second now. Tehran has suffered heavy blows, main roads have been wiped out, power plants are all destroyed, the Iranian government is surrounded by our planes. The Iranian citizens are out in the streets, calling for the resignation of the Iranian government.

Kobi: Very good, what about us?

Maya: A few thousands casualties, that's all. We are still counting the dead.

Kobi: My God, thousands? Did you say thousands?

Maya: We were attacked mainly in the big cities. First responders are already on ground.

Kobi: What have we done? What have I done?

Maya: We are talking about a few thousands in our side, and hundreds of thousands in theirs. The equation is outstanding.

Kobi: A few thousands? We are talking about human life here. You'd tell me we would lose one percent of casualties I wouldn't have initiated the attack.

Maya: It's just the beginning of the operation/

Kobi: You know what it will do to the public discourse, knowing that the first Middle Eastern Prime Minister is responsible for a devastation of this magnitude?

Maya: Mr. Prime Minister, if I may, before coming to the war room I said my goodbyes to my son, Tom (corrects herself), Sean, my son Sean. Sean asked me where I'm going, I told him in tearing eyes that I'm going to the war room to work alongside the first Middle Eastern Prime Minister of Israel. Sean asked me if our Prime Minister is strong like Captain America and I told him that he is, that you are, the strongest leader we could have imagined, just like Captain America, only in Israel, and then he asked me, Sean asked me, if you are stronger than his dad, and I told him that his dad is no longer in-

Noam: Maya.

Maya sobers up from her moving monologue.

Kobi: Where's my wife?

Noam: Waiting for you in the Prime Minister's bedroom.

Kobi: Bring her back.

Maya: Mr. Prime Minister, your wife doesn't have any clearance.

Noam: Bring her here, Maya.

Maya looks surprised at Noam. She gets up and walks out, leaving Noam and Kobi alone.

Kobi: We didn't want kids, my wife and I. We didn't have time, with my career and this unstoppable race we call "life". She regrets our decision, my wife. I know that. I can see it in her eyes, the longing... for kids, for someone around. She thinks that I don't care, but I do. I know that she wished she was a mother. What can you do? My priorities always required me to put our nation first. I wanted to be a history teacher, can you believe that? Funny how things go.

Noam doesn't respond.

Kobi: We tried several times to conceive. God had other plans for us.

Kobi stares ahead, seems like he is about to break down in tears.

Noam: Mr. Prime Minister, as far as the war and its outcome are concerned, we are now at the mercy of a higher power and our pilots. As far as your administration is concerned, you did what you had to do. As far as my life is concerned, if I may, it is crucial for you to know that it has been an honor serving under your leadership in these troubling times. You are a great man, a great leader, an outstanding Prime Minister. This nation is worthy of your command. Nobody will understand what will be the place of your short term in the chronicles of this great nation and in the chronicles of my own life.

Vicky enters, followed by Maya. Vicky looks around her, at the "war room".

Kobi: My love.

Vicky: Why are we here?

Maya: The GSS demanded we stay put, the roads are blocked and intelligence reports suggest a potential attack on the Prime Minister's residence.

Noam: We arranged here the war room.

Vicky: In the basement?

Noam: The neighbors appro-

Maya: The GSS approved. The Chief of Staff and the Secretary of Defense are on the ground, we are in a direct contact with them.

Kobi: What have I done?

Vicky: Let's get back home, Jonathan.

Kobi: There's no turning back.

Vicky: Of course there is.

Kobi: People were hurt.

Vicky: They'll forgive.

Kobi: Entire nation in flames because of a foolish whim.

Vicky: This entire nation can go fuck itself.

Vicky kisses Kobi/Jonathan.

Maya (reads from her phone): Mr. Prime Minister, it is now confirmed, the parliament in Tehran is now in flames, the Iranian government wants to surrender.

Noam: Sonia.

Maya: Mr. Prime Minister, we will prevail, the citizens of this nation are counting on your leadership. You can't stop now.

Noam: Sonia, it's over. The war is over.

Maya: Nothing is over, Mr. Prime Minister, we can destroy them, the Iranians, Novershtern, Caplan and even Fadidah. We will wipe 'em all out.

Kobi and Vicky exit the "war room", leaving Maya and Noam together alone. The sounds of remote helicopters and heavy machinery are still heard all over.

Maya (shouts to the Prime Minister): We will prevail. The Secretary of Defense has assured me...

Noam: Enough!!! It's all over, Please...

Maya: Don't give up on us, Mr. Prime Minister, we will prevail!!!

The sounds of the war outside are still heard, getting louder and louder. The dramatic sound effects surround the entire stage.

Noam goes to speaker nearby and presses a button. The sounds suddenly stop, all is quiet now.

Noam approaches Maya.

Noam: The world will remain the same. Our nation will go on, and we, everyday people, we'll go on living, despite of wars and conflicts that we might face, we will go on, providing a better future for our kids, **our** kids.

Noam continues to approach Maya.

Noam: I believe in the things that we are doing, in this whole operation we call life. And even if it might seem strange to others, we still were a part of something bigger, something that meant... something. It's not the money or even the job, what we did here, but the power, the power to change the minds and hearts of others. You know, power comes in many forms, sometimes it comes in the form of destruction, of annihilation, of war.

Noam stands now close to Maya.

Noam: But power might also be a matter of love, of friendship, of a family, of understanding and people, they don't understand, the people, my wife, for example, my wife doesn't understand the implications of real power, of the power of love making, the fact that I too have feelings, and that I count, my existence counts for something... I'm also a man, he's not the only... I'm also a man, I exist, I desire, I have a place, I have power. Power. But my wife doesn't understand (to Maya/Sonia), you don't understand, you don't understand!!!! You don't understand, Sonia. (on the verge of breaking down) It's not a game we're playing here, it's not a show, it's you and I, you and I... and we have kids. We have our own kids. And that is the most powerful thing there is.

Maya: Everybody has kids, and you and I is not enough.

Noam: It's all there is.

Maya: We're pawns.

Noam: No we're not.

Maya: Yes, we are.

Noam: The ocean might be murky, and the sea might overflow, and the dams, they can't keep up with the current of shit that keeps piling up but we are not going to give up. We are not pawns. We have power. So we'll take control, we'll assume command, restore power and we will secure the safety and prosperity of our house.

Maya (confused): **Our** house?

Noam (gets carried away): So I will lead, and I will chart the course, and I will move this ship back to safe waters and Novershtern and Caplan, they'll be sorry for even thinking of messing with me/

Maya: You?

Noam: The day that they chose to confront us, and also Fadidah.

Maya: Fadidah?

Noam: I will tear them to shreds/

Maya: Who?

Noam: I will break their bones, I will massacre them so they'll been wishing they hadn't, you know, messed with... you know... because what they... yes... you know... because **we** have the power, yes, and because this term, and this administration and the initiatives that we implemented, I promise you... yes, I promise all of you, this administration, and **that** I promise, that this administration will get its second term. And the power, the power will be given back to the people. **TO THE MOTEHR FUCKING PEOPLE. US.**

Noam grabs Maya by her arms and kisses her aggressively.

Lights out.

The End