

**From *Kigler: His Life and Death*, by Oded Lifshitz**

**8. Yellowstone Park**

John           Where are we?

Kigler          We've reached Yellowstone Park. Like on the sign. Should I take your arm?

John           No thank you.

Kigler          I'll help you.

John           There's no need. I'm not walking too badly now.

Kigler          So what are we supposed to do?

John           Let's do one of the trails.

Kigler          We've lost the momentum, John. We had death in our hand and you took it away. Why so stubborn when you've got something like that right under your nose?

John           Look, Kigler, I know that not everything came out as planned, but maybe we can be brothers anyway. It's an open suggestion.

Kigler          Brothers, John, is something that's relevant when the going's tough. I'm sorry, now go justify what we're doing.

Ruchama       I think we should walk a bit, you've both had a profound experience, you almost lost a brother, and then you lost that. I suggest that at least we all take a short walk to the waterfall and back. Come on, we won't go far here in the mountains so at least we'll be able to say you were here.

Kigler          Look, the trail isn't marked, we might get lost.

## 9. Somewhere Deep in the Forest

John           Where are we now?

Kigler          It looks like we're lost. It'll be dark soon. We've no choice. We'll wrap the food up and hang it on a tree branch like the warning signs say, so the bears won't come, and we'll sleep here tonight.

John           I'll fetch some firewood. I feel quite well now, lots of strength in my hips. Why shouldn't I lift something?

Kigler          Yes, I see.

Ruchama       It's been so many years since I last slept outdoors, since I was in the youth movement.

Kigler          Very good. The situation is that we didn't want to be here, but we have to because night's fallen. We've no choice but to talk and pass the time with one another.

John           So how's business?

Kigler          Thank God. You know...

John           Yes. Good. Very good.

Kigler          And you?

John           As usual... a bit better even.

Kigler          Thank God... nu, why not.

(Silence)

Me too, a very good time for the business. And personally too. That's how it is, after many years you reach the top of the ladder, you can finally rest a bit and watch the work being done by others.

John           Good for you, I'm happy to hear it. Your description is most impressive.

Kigler Thank you. I'm very flattered. Support is important to me...

Ruchama (To herself) Back then, in the youth movement, I wore a khaki skirt and they looked at me...

John Good for you... I hear a degree of success in your voice. But one must know, without diminishing the achievement, that every scale has degrees. What's called a mountain in Israel they call a hill in Kentucky.

Kigler That's true. That's what they say. Although you should know that in Israel, too, a mountain is sometimes a mountain... Me, for instance, I see Europe and China from my office. The criteria I work by are very high. But still, it seems to me that you meant to make an argument...

John Nothing, not at all. I'm very happy with things. Your success is mine too.

Ruchama When I wore a khaki skirt and they said, What a cut...

Kigler Thank you... It's important that brothers say everything. But it's also important to me to hear constructive criticism, if there is any... After all, for some reason I feel uncomfortable.

John No, forget it, not at all. Only support. Support. Everyone should measure according to his size. And that's why it's important to me to say that I appreciate. Even though it's clear to both sides, that there's a considerable difference between one female worker and thirty-four female workers.

Kigler A difference? What's that supposed to mean? What are you trying to tell me between the lines?

John Trying to tell you? Trying again? Nothing! How can anybody talk to you without treading on eggshells? That's how a man who's happy with his brother's lot speaks. I feel a great deal of pride in my chest. If you were in

my place, the more successful brother, wouldn't you be proud? There's nothing at all between the lines. What a brother, what a brother.

Ruchama      Back then, with the short cut skirt... You're all talking nonsense... Stop it... Enough... Please...

Kigler          I feel you're being a bit patronizing toward me, and it's not nice.

John            Of course I'm not. What an idiot! It was always impossible to talk, if I'm being patronizing, then forgive me, brother, you're a bit emotional.

Kigler          You know, John, I don't understand what we're doing here at all. There's too much healthiness in the air, which is taking us back to bad times. Let's go to sleep now, and in the morning we'll find our way home.

(They both fall asleep. Ruchama looks at Kigler and weeps)

Ruchama      This man's so hard and unpleasant when he's awake. But when he's asleep he's so beautiful, like a hatchling. The question is who's the real Kigler, awake or asleep? Asleep or awake?

(John wakes up and consoles her)

John            Never mind, Ruchama, never mind. He's been like that since we were kids. Kigler. Sometimes asleep, sometimes awake. And on the way, like a bone – is the difference. You can't expect him to be awake-asleep or asleep-awake. I mean, it's impossible to expect him to be different, that is,

something he's not, that is, me. You can't expect him to be me. That's why I'm here.

Ruchama Right. I understand it all now! You're so alike, but you're different. Your words slide into place with such refinement. You're just like Kigler, but completely different. If Kigler's a question, you're a solution. Hold my hand and say something in English.

John Of course.

Ruchama So far I've seen a blurred figure – Kigler, and now when I put my glasses on – John. Kigler-John. It's a difference of one number.

John I've never concealed the fact that I'm somewhat better, I've never concealed the fact that as a young brother I carefully followed Kigler and saw where his shoe trod in mud. I practiced, made adjustments, and developed John. If I've got to where I've got to it's thanks to the fact that I grew on Kigler's shoulders. But nobody questions success.

Ruchama John, put another log on the fire. (Moves closer to him)

John Of course.

## **10. Morning**

Kigler Good morning. It's morning. What's past is past. We can go. The trail crossing the park is far easier than we thought, it was here, right behind the bush. I'll see you, my brother John, it's time to say goodbye. We could have got a lot more out of this meeting, but in the end we got nothing. Don't worry. We'll carry on hating each other for certain, just as we've done for years. Come on, Ruchama, we're going back to the office. The

place where there are calls for me. And I've got a chair. And I've got you.  
Shake hands and say goodbye.

Ruchama Goodbye.

Kigler I meant say goodbye to my brother John, we're going, he's staying.

Ruchama I'm staying too. Last night while you were asleep, I found the right Kigler, he helped me back to myself when I was on the way to the first. I'm sorry and I'm crying for him and for me... We met at the Kigler crossroads. You were just the bridge we stood on and held hands, and now, what can I say, we're continuing to walk.

Kigler I understand, Ruchama, just let me get another word in between you before you stick together for good. The Kigler standing beside you is an imitation. The original's in front of you. He's got a few scratches here and there, and he's not lacking grazes, but with an original Kigler & Kigler stamp. Make no mistake. What you see here is a commercial version.

Ruchama I don't care. After all, we're in America.

John I'm sorry. It's what she wants. But it's important to mention that I didn't lift a finger to be slightly ahead of you again.

Kigler If that's the case, goodbye to both of you.

(They exit)