

A scene from: Behind the Door
by Ori Urian
Translated from Hebrew by Shir Freibach

Scene 3: Spikes

YOEL is asleep on the sofa, covered by a blanket.
NINA is standing over him, gazing at him sleeping.
He turns over. Opens his eyes, notices her and yelps.

YOEL. Ah!!!

NINA. Ah!!!

YOEL. Have you been standing here all night?

NINA. None of your business.

YOEL. This sofa is terrible. It must be replaced. There is this one spring here, it's like sleeping on a screwdriver.

NINA. We agreed one night only.

He gets up... and sits back down again, dizzy.

What are you doing?

YOEL. I need coffee.

NINA. Are you kidding me?

YOEL. D'you have decaf?

NINA. No.

YOEL. Espresso maker?

NINA. No.

YOEL. Capsules?

NINA. There is one kind. Either drink that, or get a coffee outside.

YOEL. Your guests must really love coming here.

NINA. I don't have guests. Sit here, I'll get it.

NINA takes the kettle and goes off to the bathroom.

YOEL. Where are you off to?

NINA. You wanted coffee.

YOEL. But that's the bathroom.

NINA. The tap in the kitchen doesn't work for almost a year now.

YOEL. So all this time you've been making coffee in the bathroom?

NINA. I don't make coffee in the bathroom. I fill up the kettle in the bathroom, because the kitchen tap doesn't work. Are you also deaf or only annoying?

She returns. They wait for the kettle to boil and stare at each other. There is a tense silence.

YOEL. Let's play a game; I'll try to guess what you do for work and you tell me if I'm right.

NINA. Hi-tech.

YOEL. That was fun... so aren't you getting ready?

NINA. I'm having a sick day.

YOEL. You don't look sick.

NINA. Are you a doctor?

YOEL. No. But the truth is I lived in LA and I had lots of friends there who...

NINA. Boi-ling!

She pours.

Did your mother not tell you that she rented out the house?

YOEL. My mother doesn't really keep me up to date on such things.

NINA. She didn't tell you that someone was living here?!

YOEL. *(Sniggering)* Are those DVDs?! The Wedding Singer, Four Weddings and a Funeral, My Best Friend's Wedding... You have lots of films about weddings.

NINA. Can you please put them back?

YOEL. Isn't it stuffy in here?

NINA. No.

YOEL. Shall we open the window a little?

NINA. No.

YOEL. *(Goes to the window)* You are very negative, you know?

NINA. Leave the window alone.

YOEL. We need air.

NINA. No!

YOEL. Why are there spikes here?

NINA. There was a pigeon invasion.

YOEL. *(Laughing)* "Pigeon invasion"!

NINA. Yes. Some idiot built them a dovecote.

YOEL. I built that!

NINA. For birds?

YOEL. For pigeons. They bring peace.

NINA. They bring diseases. When was the last time you saw a pigeon bringing peace? Trust me, they did not bring any peace over here.

YOEL. I cannot believe you ousted them. They used to come all the time, I used to feed them!

NINA. What kind of a person builds a home for pigeons?

YOEL. What kind of a person puts spikes to deter them?

NINA. Drink your coffee! I knew it. I knew I shouldn't have let you in. I should have let you freeze to death on the pavement.

YOEL. Be thankful that I'm not calling my mother right now. One word from me and she won't renew your contract.

NINA. You really are... *(stops herself)*

YOEL. What? What were you about to say?
(He receives a call and stops)
My dear mother.

NINA. Please, I have no other place to live.

YOEL. This is my family's house, why should I move?

NINA. Because I'm already here.

YOEL. Without paying rent.

NINA. You won't be able to evict me so quickly, you heard what the police said.

YOEL. We will see... *(looks at the screen)*

NINA. Can't we come to some arrangement?

YOEL. Like what?

NINA. I don't know.

YOEL. Right. *(About to answer)*

NINA. *(Not believing this is coming out of her mouth)* You can live here!

YOEL. What?

NINA. You can live here.

YOEL. With you.

NINA. Yes. Temporarily! Only until you find a flat. None of us has another place. Think about it.

YOEL. And you won't try to kill me?

NINA. No. And you won't try to evict me.

YOEL. No.

NINA. And we'll see in a couple of...

NINA. Days. / YOEL. Weeks.

NINA. Weeks? / YOEL. Days?

BOTH. A week...? *(Having no other choice)* A week.

He reaches out his arm for a handshake. She looks at him as if he had lost his mind. He lowers his arm, embarrassed.