

# **'Till Death Unites Us**

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based on an idea by Nevo Ziv

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January 2025

**Setting:** Tel Aviv, Israel

**Time:** Present

**Characters:**

AVIGAIL (38) - a young widow

NOAM (11) - AVIGAIL and NIR's son

TOMER (40) - NIR's childhood friend

TZILA (70) - AVIGAIL's mother-in-law and NIR's mother

TAL (41) - a carpenter, divorced

BOAZ (43) - a doctor, single

TEACHER – Noam's Teacher

RABBI

VOICE OF Nir - AVIGAIL's late husband, deceased for one year

## SCENE 1 - One Year Memorial

*A cemetery. **Avigail**, dressed in summer clothes, enters carrying gear: large bag, folding chair, rake, six-pack of water. Large headphones rest around her neck. She sets down the equipment, puts on her headphones, presses play on her phone, and listens to **Nir's voice recording**.*

NIR: Vivi, the checkout line was crazy, but I'm on my way. Oh and Svetta, the cashier, just gave me an employee discount on everything – she's totally into me.

***Noam** glides by on his scooter that has an umbrella attached. He's wearing a rain jacket. Avigail listens to her headphones and doesn't notice him.*

NOAM: Mom...

NIR: Vivi, the bank is trying to reach you, so answer if you see an unknown number... Babe, tell Noam to get ready, I'll pick him up for the beach soon...

*Noam scoots across the stage again.*

NOAM: Mom...

NIR: ...Give him the swimsuit with the sleeves, and sunscreen. And don't you dare watch Episode 6 without me."

NOAM: Mom, there's no shade here at all.

NIR: ...Last night was fun. I can still smell you all over me-

NOAM: Mom!

*Avigail finally notices Noam and whips off her headphones.*

AVIGAIL: What, sweetie?

NOAM: You said there would be shade.

AVIGAIL: I thought the tree would grow. Watch out, there's a big pit over there.

NOAM: It's bad there's no shade here.

AVIGAIL: Honey, I need your help today, okay?

NOAM: I'm not taking off my jacket.

AVIGAIL: Who said anything about the jacket? I want us to make Dad's grave look nice before people arrive. Will you rake for me?

NOAM: Okay.

AVIGAIL: But first, let's take off the jacket.

*She tries to hold Noam, but he slips away from her.*

AVIGAIL: Noam, Gran is coming soon, and I promised her—

*She tries to take off his jacket, but Noam resists.*

NOAM: You'll rip it!

AVIGAIL: Then take off this stinkin' jacket already.

NOAM: It's not stinky.

AVIGAIL: It is stinky.

NOAM: You're stinky!

*The **Rabbi** approaches from behind Avigail.*

RABBI: Shalom to the dear widow and the orphan.

AVIGAIL: Hello Rabbi.

RABBI: *(to Noam)* Hello champ, are you expecting rain?

AVIGAIL: He's shielding himself from the sun... since his father...

*Noam scoots away.*

AVIGAIL: Noam!

RABBI: *(looks at the grave)* Nir, son of Amnon and Tzila... One year, eh? The first year is always the hardest.

AVIGAIL: Yeah... *(looks over at the pit)* There's a deep pit here...

RABBI: *(looking at the grave)* Yes, the hole can be deep. It takes time to fill.

AVIGAIL: No, I mean—

- RABBI: "To everything, there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven."
- AVIGAIL: I meant there's an open grave over there. Someone might fall in.
- RABBI: Oh, literally! I'll ask for a barrier.
- AVIGAIL: Thank you.
- RABBI: You know, on the one year memorial, the soul finally withdraws from earthly matters, and ascends, *'Be Ezrat Hashem'*, to the higher realm.
- AVIGAIL: Uh-huh...
- RABBI: But if, heaven forbid, your husband's soul sees that you're in despair and misery—
- AVIGAIL: Oh, no, I'm not...
- RABBI: ...It hinders his ascent.
- AVIGAIL: (*looking for Noam*) Noam?!
- RABBI: The Torah commands us, even amidst deep loss, to live with joy.
- AVIGAIL: Of course.
- RABBI: Therefore, if the widow has not yet found a "shidduch", I can add a special blessing for a new match.
- AVIGAIL: Not necessary.
- RABBI: You mustn't become a stone of sorrow.
- AVIGAIL: I'm not a stone of sorrow!
- RABBI: God willing, may you remarry soon.
- AVIGAIL: Thank you, will you take care of the barrier?
- RABBI: (*nods*) May you find comfort from the heavens.
- AVIGAIL: (*muttering*) For heavens' sake.

*The Rabbi leaves. Avigail continues arranging and cleaning the grave. Tzila arrives with flowers.*

TZILA: Oy.

AVIGAIL: Hi Tzila.

TZILA: Look at how dirty the grave is...

AVIGAIL: It's ok, I'm on it.

TZILA: I trust you. (*looking around*) Where's Noam?

AVIGAIL: Looking for shade.

TZILA: Alone?! Please tell me he's not wearing that jacket.

*Avigail ignores her and keeps cleaning.*

TZILA: I can't believe a year has passed. (*regarding the plants*) Look at the succulents.

AVIGAIL: I'll water them.

TZILA: Did you bring a watering can?

AVIGAIL: I brought a water *bottle*, a speaker, and chairs.

TZILA: You're the best. There's a pit! Did you see the pit over there?

AVIGAIL: They're bringing a barrier. It's all taken care of, Tzila.

*Noam rides by on his scooter.*

NOAM: Mom...

TZILA: Noam!

NOAM: Hi Gran! I found someone who died the same day as Dad! (*rides off*)

TZILA: Where's he going?

AVIGAIL: He's burning energy.

*Pause.*

TZILA: Did I tell you the Meyersons from downstairs are moving out?

AVIGAIL: You did.

TZILA: Four rooms, two parking spaces, for half of what you're paying. You could get rid of all your debts!

AVIGAIL: I'm handling the debts.

TZILA: Really...?

*Avigail opens a folding chair, and Tzila sits down.*

TZILA: I trust you. You brought a speaker?

AVIGAIL: Yes.

TZILA: Is it charged? Check please, play "The Wheat Grows Again"\* for me.

*AVIGAIL takes out the speaker. Tzila starts crying.*

AVIGAIL: Are you okay?

TZILA: The dream I had last night... so moving. Nir sat at the foot of my bed... First, he passed regards from Amnon, then he said he was looking forward to the memorial, told me I look good, and thin... I really did lose weight, all the bloating is gone, see?

AVIGAIL: Yes. *(fiddling with the speaker)*

TZILA: Is it not working?

AVIGAIL: Just a second...

TZILA: And then, suddenly, he gave me a key, to an apartment, and he said, "Mom, I love Netanya so much."

AVIGAIL: Tzila, can we talk about this later?

TZILA: Nir said you should move in with me. Not my idea. It's touching to know he thinks like me.

*Noam rides by on his scooter.*

NOAM: Gran, I saw a grave of someone your age!

AVIGAIL: Noam! Come help me with the speaker...

\*"The Wheat Grows Again" is a renown Israeli song about grief and mourning, famously sung by Chava Alberstien, often sung during Memorial Day events. Feel free to find a suitable alternative.

TZILA: Go after him. *(phone rings)*

AVIGAIL: In a minute. I'm trying to arrange everything, the chairs, the succulents, the barrier...

TZILA: You're the best. *(answers the phone)* Tomeriko, where are you...? Section five, block three – no, section three, block five...? Don't move, I'm coming. *(to Avigail)* He says you wrote section three, block five.

AVIGAIL: If Tomer had bothered to come to the funeral, he'd know where it is.

TZILA: He was abroad... I've missed him so much. *(hurries off)*

AVIGAIL: Don't run, you might fall...

*She watches TZILA leave, turns around, stumbles, and falls into the pit.*

AVIGAIL: Damn! Ouch! Tzila...? Tzila?!

*The speaker starts playing "The Wheat Grows Again." Tzila and **Tomer** arrive. Avigail raises her head, but then hears them talking about her and goes back down.*

TZILA: She insisted on doing everything herself- wash, clean, arrange - and nothing is ready. *(turns off the speaker)* It's a miracle her head's still attached to her shoulders.

*Tomer looks at the grave.*

TZILA: Look how she killed the succulents. How can you kill a succulent? It's a desert plant.

TOMER: I've missed you, Tzila.

TZILA: Tomeriko. *(hugs him)* What an article...

*AVIGAIL tries to climb out of the pit without being seen, unsuccessfully.*

TZILA: "The Real Estate Lawyer Who Dominated Dubai"...

TOMER: Dubai... Give me Johnny's falafel in Netanya any day.

TZILA: You darling, I always told Nir you were his best acquisition.

TOMER: Where's Avi? She's not here?

TZILA: She's probably chasing Noam.



TOMER: I tried to reach her a few times—

TZILA: She screens my calls fifteen times a day. What do you need?

TOMER: Just to give her this document.

TZILA: Related to the will?

TOMER: Bureaucratic stuff, Tzila. Missing a signature. You look amazing, you've lost weight-

TZILA: Right? All the bloating is gone. (*pause*) It drives me crazy that she doesn't let me help my grandson! His teacher tells me he's struggling, and my daughter-in-law says everything's fine. As if I didn't bury a husband?

TOMER: Well, you're a bulldozer-

TZILA: I refer clients to her for cakes, and she doesn't even respond. She barely works, hardly leaves the house, which is a mess, and she's completely let go of herself. You'll see for yourself.

TOMER: Maybe she's depressed?

TZILA: Depression can be treated!

*Noam rides by.*

NOAM: I saw the grave of a kid my age!

TZILA: Noam!! (*to Tomer*) See? The kid's falling apart...

TOMER: Let's go get him.

TZILA: Where's that document? I'll give it to her.

TOMER: Forget it... not today.

TZILA: Isn't it urgent?

TOMER: It can wait.

TZILA: You're so sweet.

*They exit. Avigail raises her head, makes sure the coast is clear, climbs out with difficulty, dusts herself off, checks that no one saw her, takes out a cigarette-*

TZILA:        (*offstage*) Avigail, there you are!

*AVIGAIL drops the cigarette.*

TZILA:        We need to begin! The rabbi has another funeral at twelve-thirty.

*AVIGAIL takes a deep breath and exits.*

**SCENE 2 - The Letter**

*Daytime. A law office. Avigail enters, but Tomer doesn't notice, as he's on a work call.*

TOMER: *(on the phone)* If he blows up the mediation, we'll go to court, no problem.

AVIGAIL: Tomer...?

TOMER: It's judge Zaks, she loves my ass.

AVIGAIL: Tomer-

TOMER: So if he wants the hotel in Dubai, he can go fuck himself-

AVIGAIL: *(standing in front of him)* Hey!

TOMER: *(startled)* Avi, hey! *(on the phone)* I'll call you back. *(removes headset)* Is everything okay? Did something happen?

AVIGAIL: If you're in the middle-

TOMER: No, no. Want something to drink? Soda? Water? Espresso?

AVIGAIL: No, thanks.

*Pause.*

TOMER: The memorial was beautiful, moving.

AVIGAIL: I understand you have something to give me.

TOMER: Tzila's so funny, I told her it wasn't urgent.

AVIGAIL: What is it? More bills?

TOMER: *(pause)* Nir sent you an email.

AVIGAIL: *(stunned)* What?

TOMER: You can schedule emails to arrive at a future date.

AVIGAIL: I don't get it. From the beginning.

TOMER: Nir wrote you an email a year ago and scheduled it to arrive now.

AVIGAIL: But I didn't receive any email.

TOMER: No, he sent it to me because he wanted me to check something with you first.

AVIGAIL: What?

TOMER: He wanted to know if you're in a serious relationship. Not that it's any of my business... Read it, you'll understand.

AVIGAIL: Did you read it?

TOMER: Of course not.

AVIGAIL: Do you know what it's about?

TOMER: In general terms... *(goes to the desk)* So, are you with someone, serious?

AVIGAIL: I had someone serious, but he's dead. *(pause)* Where's this email?

TOMER: Yes, where...? *(searching on the computer)* Should I send it to you? I can print it...

AVIGAIL: I'll read it now.

TOMER: Now?

AVIGAIL: Yes.

*She approaches the computer.*

TOMER: I'll step outside.

AVIGAIL: Why outside?

TOMER: Don't you want privacy?

AVIGAIL: I'd appreciate some privacy.

*Tomer starts to leave, but Avigail stops him.*

AVIGAIL: Tomer, can you read it to me? I can't.

TOMER: Are you sure?

*Avigail nods. Tomer goes to the computer.*

TOMER: *(reading)* “My Vivi, you’ve been without me for a year...”

AVIGAIL: Slowly.

TOMER: *(starts again)* “My Vivi, you’ve been without me for a year. I hope you’ve managed to take care of yourself. That you’ve remembered to eat and drink, that you bought yourself some clothes. That you’re not still wearing that green jumpsuit or the black-and-white striped shirt.”

*Avigail glances down at her black-and-white striped shirt.*

TOMER: *(laughs)* That Nir...

AVIGAIL: Continue.

TOMER: “I hope you’ve let others help you, that you haven’t killed my mother yet... I hope you’re not biting your nails again.”

*AVIGAIL puts her hands in her pockets.*

TOMER: “And you better not be smoking again...” Put the tobacco away, I can see it.

*Avigail laughs.*

TOMER: That part was mine.

*Avigail becomes serious.*

TOMER: That was my joke.

AVIGAIL: Got it. Keep going.

TOMER: *(continues)* “I hope you’re taking care of yourself and Noam, and that you’re allowing yourselves to grieve and rest. I hope Noam doesn’t make you do “Dumbo Dad”, and that you’ve forgiven me for leaving you... Vivi, remember we talked about what would happen if I died?”

AVIGAIL: We didn’t.

TOMER: “We had one conversation. I wanted you to find new love, and you replied, ‘Then find it for me.’”

AVIGAIL: I was joking.

TOMER: “You know I take you seriously. So, when I realized I wasn’t going to make it, I decided to help you find your next guy.”

*Avigail looks at Tomer.*

TOMER: “You know me, I made it a project. I checked several options, and finally chose three that I thought you’d really like. I know this won’t be easy for you, which is why I screened them in advance. You just need to go out with them.”

AVIGAIL: Tomer, is this a joke?

TOMER: (*continues*) “Don’t be mad—”

AVIGAIL: Don’t tell me how to react.

TOMER: That was Nir, not me. (*reads*) “Don’t be mad. They’ll probably fall in love with you, and hopefully, one of them will win your heart. Remember that I love you 360, Nir.”

AVIGAIL: That’s it?

TOMER: (*hands her an envelope*) Here are three phone numbers.

AVIGAIL: You knew about this?

TOMER: In general terms.

AVIGAIL: Why didn’t you give it to me yesterday?

TOMER: The memorial didn’t seem like the right time.

AVIGAIL: And if I hadn’t come here? When would be the right time? Because you told Tzila “it’s not urgent”!

TOMER: Avi, it’s yours. Do with it what you want.

AVIGAIL: Thank you very much.

TOMER: You don’t have to go out with them if it’s not a good time.

*Avigail exits and immediately returns.*

AVIGAIL: This is a perfect time.

TOMER: Great.

AVIGAIL: And I'm definitely not depressed.

TOMER: Glad to hear it.

AVIGAIL: I intend to go out with these men.

TOMER: Nir has good taste.

AVIGAIL: Sometimes he misses.

*She exits.*

***Transition:***

*Avigail gets ready for a date. Noam enters as she's getting ready.*

NOAM: Mom, can you not go?

AVIGAIL: Nemo... It's a birthday, it wouldn't be nice.

NOAM: But my stomach hurts.

AVIGAIL: Gran's with you.

NOAM: Mom, please, I'm scared.

AVIGAIL: You know what? I don't have to go. I don't even feel like it.

NOAM: *(thinking)* If you go, will you come back soon?

AVIGAIL: Of course. I'll just say happy birthday and come right back.

NOAM: Okay.

AVIGAIL: Do you remember how much I love you?

NOAM: 360.

*Avigail kisses Noam and leaves.*

NOAM: Mom... you look pretty like that.

**SCENE 3 - Tal**

*A bar. Tal sits at a table with a bottle of wine and two glasses. Avigail enters, spots Tal, regrets it, and turns to leave. But Tal notices her-*

TAL: Avigail?

AVIGAIL: *(turns to him)* Hey...

TAL: Nice to meet you.

*He moves in for a hug, surprising Avigail with an awkward embrace.*

AVIGAIL: Sorry, I put the wrong address in Waze—

TAL: It's all good.

AVIGAIL: *(about the wine)* Thanks for ordering.

TAL: Hope you like Pinot Grigio. Waiter's recommendation. *(pours into glasses)* Honestly, I'm excited.

AVIGAIL: Me too. Finally out of the house.

TAL: You don't get out much?

AVIGAIL: I do, but... yeah.

TAL: This is my first time going out with someone whose late husband set us up.

AVIGAIL: Can we skip the "late"?

TAL: Of course. Nir! *(raises his glass)* To his memory.

AVIGAIL: L'Chaim.

*They clink glasses and drink.*

TAL: You're prettier than the photos.

AVIGAIL: I don't know which photos Nir showed you.

TAL: Nice ones. He told me a lot about you.

AVIGAIL: He's good at marketing.



TAL: He seemed trustworthy. Except for messaging me on Tinder in your name (*laughs at his own joke*). But when we met, he told me the whole story...

AVIGAIL: The wine is good.

TAL: Light and tangy... that's what the waiter said. I'm more of a beer guy. (*pause*) So, how are you? I mean, really?

AVIGAIL: Just fine. (*her chair wobbles*) Life goes on.

TAL: I only understood that cliché after my divorce. It's different of course, but every crisis shows us how life goes on, doesn't it?

AVIGAIL: Absolutely.

TAL: Are you still in the cake business?

*Avigail nods, looking at the leg of her chair.*

TAL: And business is good?

AVIGAIL: People still celebrate birthdays...

TAL: We both work with our hands. You work with dough, I with wood-everything okay?

AVIGAIL: The chair's a bit wobbly. You're a carpenter?

TAL: A woodworker. After the divorce, I switched from high-tech to low-tech, and I friggin' love it. I also have a camping coffee kit in my car (*winking*)...

AVIGAIL: Okay...

TAL: Nir said you used to joke that your second chapter would be a handyman who likes camping and coffee.

AVIGAIL: Used to...

TAL: I meet the criteria! (*laughs*)

*Awkward pause.*

TAL: What else does this "second chapter" need to be?

*Avigail shifts in her chair. It wobbles.*

TAL:           *(about the chair legs)* Want me to...?

AVIGAIL:      No, it's fine. *(takes out a cigarette)* Can I smoke here?

TAL:            You smoke?

AVIGAIL:      I quit. It's a one-time thing.

TAL:            Wow, what a coincidence. The reminds me of... The night I sat with Nir, I was still a wreck over the divorce, convinced I was in hell... And then he tells me that his cancer's spread, that he knows he's at the end of the road-

AVIGAIL:      When was this?

TAL:            When we met? I think two weeks after they found the cancer spread.

*Avigail takes a big sip.*

TAL:            And he talked about it all with this acceptance... about needing to let go of plans, dreams, You. Anyway, that night I threw out my cigarettes, and I haven't smoked since.

AVIGAIL:      Good for you. *(puts out her cigarette)*

*The chair wobbles again.*

TAL:            Listen, if this place doesn't feel right, I have the coffee kit in the car, we can go to a scenic spot...

AVIGAIL:      No, no, it's fine here.

TAL:            After the divorce, I began to say YES to everything. Things I never imagined – workshops, retreats – I say YES to new experiences and go with the flow. Not that you should flow with something you don't want to do, of course.

AVIGAIL:      I'm not looking for new experiences. I wanted to grow old with that bastard.

TAL:            I understand. Divorce is also a kind of death. You find yourself mourning the love that died. But slowly, you rebuild your identity... You don't stay the person you were before.

AVIGAIL: I liked who I was before.

TAL: I built something stronger, not just because I'm a carpenter (*laughs at his own joke*). Today, I don't try to please. I say what I feel. I'm like, reborn.

AVIGAIL: Congratulations.

TAL: There's a term for it: "post-traumatic growth." You'll experience it too.

AVIGAIL: I already am, of course...

TAL: Yeah? How? In what way?

*Avigail's chair breaks, and she collapses into it.*

TAL: Are you okay?

AVIGAIL: (*getting up*) Yes.

TAL: Did you hurt your back?

AVIGAIL: No, it's just a little bump. Damn! My necklace broke... Where's the ring...? There was a ring on it... (*searches*)

TAL: What does it look like? (*searches with her*)

AVIGAIL: A wedding ring. If I lost it, I'll die—

TAL: (*finds the ring*) Here it is! Don't die!

*Tal hands her the ring, unintentionally kneeling as if he's proposing. She takes it from him.*

TAL: I'll get a chair.

AVIGAIL: I'm sorry, I can't do this.

TAL: Was it something I said?

AVIGAIL: Everything you said. And by the way, divorce isn't like death. Divorce is divorce, and death is death.

TAL: You're right, bad comparison.

AVIGAIL: I wish I had "a love that died." My love is alive, and my husband is dead. And there's a word for that—"Shit."

TAL: I totally get you.

AVIGAIL: No you don't.

*She walks off in frustration.*

***Transition:***

*Avigail listens to NIR's voice messages.*

NIR: Vivi, send me a picture of the cake, I'm curious to see how it turned out... How are you feeling my love? Send proof that you checked your temperature... Vivi, did you take my headphones again?... Avi, defrost the salmon, okay? Actually, maybe I'll make lasagna. What do you feel like?... Vivi, do me a favor, call my mom, ask her how Romania was, it's important to her.

*Avigail takes off her headphones.*

**SCENE 4 - Tzila**

*Sounds of tidying up in the kitchen. Avigail enters the house.*

AVIGAIL: Hey...

*Tzila rises from behind the kitchen cabinets with a pile of plastic containers.*

TZILA: Back so soon. The birthday wasn't fun?

AVIGAIL: Tzila, you don't need to clean up.

TZILA: There are tons of containers without lids... I gave Noam some cream for his rash—that jacket is terrible for his skin... And did you know he talks to the Robo Bot thing before bed?

AVIGAIL: Robi the Bot. It helps him fall asleep.

TZILA: Helps him? Do you know what he asked it? I overheard accidentally... "What's the state of a corpse after a year in the grave?"

AVIGAIL: Robi's answer?

TZILA: Very detailed. But he was a sweetheart, he devoured my rice... I also cleaned the fridge and changed your sheets.

AVIGAIL: You changed my sheets?

TZILA: It's been nearly a month.

AVIGAIL: Ok, thank you.

*Tzila opens a kitchen cabinet door, and it comes off in her hand.*

TZILA: This door is driving me crazy.

*Avigail takes the cabinet door and puts it back in place.*

AVIGAIL: It stays on if you press.

*She presses the door and it stays.*

TZILA: Avigail, you know I don't interfere, but yesterday I ran into the Meyersons who live below me. You remember them, she's the plump redhead, he's got the oxygen tank-

AVIGAIL: Yes....

TZILA: ...and their real estate agent showed up, sweetheart of a girl, all Botoxed, but a real sweetie.

AVIGAIL: Tzila, I'm not—

TZILA: I told her our story, she cried and said we're her first priority!

AVIGAIL: But I don't want to move in with you.

TZILA: Who said *with* me? One floor down.

AVIGAIL: This is my home. I'm happy here.

TZILA: But how? The intercom's broken, the kitchen's falling apart, rent is a fortune. The apartment there is half the price, with a safe room, central AC, and they're even leaving their Ninja blender. (*holds back tears*)

AVIGAIL: Tzila...

TZILA: Earlier, I lay my head on the sofa, and Nir came to me, closely, and said, "Mom, help Avi with the debts."

AVIGAIL: Tzila, don't worry. There's a payment plan and work is starting to come in.

TZILA: When I was looking for sheets in the closet, I just happened to find these (*reveals a stack of letters*) Taxes, Insurance, Bills, IRS, last notice before foreclosure! This stuff accumulates interest, penalties—

AVIGAIL: (*angrily*) I know what accumulates and what doesn't, and I don't need help! Thank you!

TZILA: You keep saying everything's fine, but—

AVIGAIL: You make me feel like I'm not fine. You're telling people I'm depressed, a mess, I let myself go...

TZILA: I don't tell people that.

AVIGAIL: Just Tomer.

TZILA: Tomer isn't "people," and he, by the way, can help you settle the debts—

AVIGAIL: Tzila, enough! I'm asking you. Don't organize my drawers, don't clean my

fridge, don't touch my bed, stop pestering me to move next door! And don't talk to Noam's teacher!

TZILA: I'm not. (*pause*) You know that during recess, he sits inside and talks to that Robo bot? So I worry about my grandson!

AVIGAIL: He's your grandson, exactly. He lost his dad, but he doesn't have two mothers!

TZILA: Look at how you're behaving. I don't recognize you...

AVIGAIL: Nice to meet you, Tzila. I've changed. Have you heard of post-traumatic growth? I've grown, and if I have something to say, I say it. And by the way, Nir hated Netanyahu. He would never go back there.

TZILA: Nonsense.

AVIGAIL: And Noam hates yellow rice. He eats it for you because he's polite. Then I have to throw it out.

TZILA: Understood. My help isn't welcome here.

AVIGAIL: Tzila, thank you for your help, but I kindly ask it's on my terms, in my space, with my rules.

*Tzila gathers her belongings. She takes a shirt.*

AVIGAIL: What's that?

TZILA: Nir's old shirt.

AVIGAIL: I love that shirt.

TZILA: It's gathering dust.

AVIGAIL: I love it. (*takes it from Tzila*) And please bring back his surfboard, it's important to Noam.

TZILA: He doesn't even go to the beach—

AVIGAIL: You promised you'd return it.

TZILA: Thank God Nir can't see you now.

AVIGAIL: Nir would be proud of me.

*Tzila exits. Avigail, shocked by her own words, feels a rush. She looks at the cabinet,*

*takes her phone, and makes a call.*

AVIGAIL:     *(on the phone)* Hey, Tal?... I'm fine, and I wanted you to know, that thanks to you, I just told my mother-in-law everything I think about her. I'm definitely in post-traumatic growth... And also, as a carpenter... woodworker, I have a kitchen cabinet with a broken door, could you fix it...? Right now?! Oh, okay, yeah, "yes" to everything... Bye. *(hangs up)*



*The doorbell rings. Avigail gets ready. She hides the letters that Tzila took out, tosses NIR's shirt onto the balcony, and opens the door. Tal enters, carrying a toolbox.*

TAL: Nice place.

AVIGAIL: Quietly, kid's sleeping...

*Closes the door.*

TAL: (*quietly*) Nice place.

AVIGAIL: Messy.

TAL: Good vibes. (*pause*) Where's the cabinet?

AVIGAIL: It doesn't have to be done right now...

TAL: Let's get it over with!

*Avigail leads him to the kitchen cabinet, and opens it. The door stays in her hand.*

AVIGAIL: Here...

TAL: Let's see (*inspects*) Oh, it's nothing. The mechanism is loose... see here? The screws slipped out.

*He opens the toolbox, takes out an electric screwdriver, removes his shirt, revealing his tank top.*

AVIGAIL: Will it be quiet? My son's asleep...

TAL: Noam, right? Fifth grade now?

AVIGAIL: (*surprised*) I see Nir briefed you on everything.

TAL: Like I said, we had a night. (*smiling*) But we won't talk about that.

*He fixes the door while Avigail watches his back, her gaze lingering.*

TAL: How's the back?

AVIGAIL: Mine? It's fine.

TAL: Hold this for a sec.

*He gestures at the cabinet door, Avigail holds it, they're close.*

TAL: Did I make you fight with your mother-in-law?

AVIGAIL: She won't talk to me now because of you. Which isn't terrible.

TAL: *(laughs)* Glad to help... let go... That's it *(opens and closes the door that is now attached)*.

AVIGAIL: Thank you. This would have taken Nir a week...

TAL: No problem. *(packs up his tools)*

AVIGAIL: I'm sorry for... earlier.

TAL: It's all good. I understand if you're not ready yet.

*He starts to leave.*

AVIGAIL: Want something to drink? Beer?

TAL: Yeah? Sure, beer.

AVIGAIL: Mm.. There's no beer.

TAL: Then coffee.

AVIGAIL: *(searching the kitchen)* No coffee... I'm out.

TAL: I've got it covered. Remember, we say "yes" to everything?

AVIGAIL: Sure...

TAL: You got water?

AVIGAIL: I got water. *(pours water into a jug)*

TAL: I'll set up the coffee kit on the balcony.

*Tal spreads a blanket on the floor. Avigail hesitates.*

TAL: We're saying Yes!

*He unpacks the coffee kit.*

TAL: This time, if I say something out of line, tell me right away, okay?

AVIGAIL: I'll try.

TAL: So, how's Noam? How's he coping?

AVIGAIL: Less questions would help.

TAL: Then you ask me. You didn't ask me anything earlier.

AVIGAIL: I did.

TAL: What?

AVIGAIL: I asked if you're a carpenter.

*He looks at her with a smile.*

AVIGAIL: When did you get divorced?

TAL: Two years ago.

AVIGAIL: And how come you're still single?

TAL: *(smiling)* It took time to mend my heart.

AVIGAIL: Why did you divorce?

TAL: *(about the coffee)* With nutmeg or without?

AVIGAIL: Dodging the question?

TAL: We divorced because my wife fell in love with a woman. She switched teams.

AVIGAIL: *(smiling)* With nutmeg.

TAL: Juicy story, I know... took me six months to figure it out.

AVIGAIL: I just figured it out.

TAL: About what?

AVIGAIL: This whole dating operation Nir set up.

TAL: I think it's noble.

AVIGAIL: Noble? He didn't trust I could handle things on my own.

TAL: He gave you the best parting gift. Not that I'm saying I'm a gift... not that I'm saying I'm not a gift, I am a gift.

*Avigail laughs.*

TAL: Want a hit? (*takes out a joint*)

AVIGAIL: Didn't Nir get you to quit...?

TAL: Tobacco. This is clean. Is it okay?

*Avigail glances toward Noam's room.*

AVIGAIL: Yes. Just, over there. (*gestures away from Noam's room*)

TAL: (*lighting it*) You don't smoke, right?

AVIGAIL: (*hesitates for a moment*) I also don't bring men home. (*reaches for the joint, smokes, coughs a little*) Clean...

TAL: (*smiling*) This doesn't look like a widow's house...

AVIGAIL: Missing ghosts and cobwebs?

TAL: (*laughing*) No, but photos, a memorial wall...

AVIGAIL: My brain is a memorial wall.

TAL: You're strong, you'll survive this.

AVIGAIL: Is that from hallmark card?

*They laugh.*

TAL: You're afraid to look into my eyes?

AVIGAIL: I'm looking... (*Looks at him*)

TAL: You looked away.

AVIGAIL: Ok what, look for an hour?

TAL: It's hard, isn't it? I did a workshop where we had to sit in silence for ten minutes and just look into our partner's eyes.

AVIGAIL: What a nightmare.

TAL: It's pretty powerful, want to try?

AVIGAIL: I didn't offer you anything. There's not much, but I have a few Kinder eggs, want some? *(gets up)*

TAL: I want you here.

AVIGAIL: *(sits back down)* Okay.

*They look at each other.*

TAL: I love your eyes.

AVIGAIL: You're... alive.

TAL: You have high standards.

AVIGAIL: Aren't we supposed to be silent?

TAL: We are.

*Avigail, without breaking eye contact, takes the joint, smokes. He laughs. Avigail leans toward him, and they kiss, just as-*

*Noam appears, wearing his jacket, watching them. Tal notices him first.*

TAL: *(startled)* Oh my god!

*He stumbles back, knocking over the burning coffee kit.*

AVIGAIL: Noam!

NOAM: Mom! Fire! There's fire!

*Tal and Avigail realize the knocked-over kit is burning the rug.*

TAL: Damn! Water!

AVIGAIL: I'll get it.

NOAM: *(following her)* Call the fire department! 102. Call 102!

*Tal tries to smother the fire with a shirt lying nearby. Avigail returns with a pot of water.*

AVIGAIL: No, that's Nir's shirt!

TAL: Damn! Sorry, sorry...

*Avigail pours the water on the fire. The fire goes out, smoke rising. Avigail picks up NIR's shirt, trying to salvage it.*

TAL: No more fire.

AVIGAIL: No fire, Noam.

NOAM: He burned Dad's shirt.

TAL: I didn't mean to, I'm sorry... *(packs up the coffee kit)*

AVIGAIL: It's okay, Noam, we'll wash it.

NOAM: He made a hole in it!

TAL: I'm really sorry.

AVIGAIL: Everything's fine, we'll fix it. Sweetie, this is Tal.

TAL: Hey.

AVIGAIL: *(to Noam)* He's a carpenter; he came to fix our kitchen cabinet... Look, it opens well now.

*She demonstrates: opens and closes the cabinet next to him.*

NOAM: Ouch!

AVIGAIL: Are you okay?

NOAM: You closed it on my finger!

AVIGAIL: Oh, no!

NOAM: I'm bleeding...

TAL: I have a first aid kit. Can I help?

NOAM: Mom, make him go!

AVIGAIL: Noam *(to Tal)* I'm sorry, he's stressed.

TAL: Do you want me to....?

AVIGAIL: I'll handle it.

TAL: Are you sure?

NOAM: Just go already!

AVIGAIL: Noam, enough!

TAL: Sorry about the shirt!

*He gathers his bag and leaves in a hurry. Avigail closes the door.*

NOAM: Who was that?

AVIGAIL: A friend. Dad knew him too. Let me see your finger.

*Noam extends his injured finger, then withdraws, looking at her.*

AVIGAIL: What?

NOAM: Your breath smells like cigarettes.

AVIGAIL: Really? Strange *(quickly sips her coffee)* Maybe because Tal smoked.

NOAM: How did his smoke get into your mouth?

AVIGAIL: Enough, Noam.

NOAM: Admit you smoked.

AVIGAIL: I didn't smoke.

NOAM: You smoked.

AVIGAIL: Maybe I had a tiny puff, but it was not a regular cigarette. It didn't have tobacco.

NOAM: What is "not a regular cigarette"?

AVIGAIL: Noam, it's late. Let's bandage your finger.

NOAM: So what was it?

AVIGAIL: Herbs people use to relax.

NOAM: Is it drugs?

AVIGAIL: Not drugs, what drugs?

NOAM: I'm going to ask Robi the Bot.

AVIGAIL: Noam, please give me the phone. Come on, give it *(takes it from him by force)* Enough, I want you in bed.

*She sits Noam down to bandage him.*

NOAM: "Smoking can cause a slow and painful death." It says so on the box.

AVIGAIL: I took two puffs. I won't die from it.

NOAM: "Smoking can cause erectile dysfunction."

AVIGAIL: Erectile dysfunction is for men.

NOAM: "Tobacco smoke can harm your children."

AVIGAIL: But I don't smoke—

NOAM: Because of you, I'll die!

AVIGAIL: No, Noam, you'll die because you'll die. Everyone dies eventually. Dad didn't drink, didn't smoke, ate healthy, exercised, and he still died. We can't know what will kill us, and it doesn't help to wear that jacket or a nun's habit or never leave the house – in the end, we all die! It's supposed to happen when we're old, but if death wants to come, it comes, and nothing, nothing can stop it. Period.

*Pause.*

NOAM: I hate you. I wish you had died instead of Dad!

*He runs to his room. Avigail, devastated, picks up NIR's burned shirt and puts on her headphones.*

## Transition



*Avigail falls asleep on the couch while listening to NIR's voice messages.*

NIR: Vivi, I sadly have to inform you... that I'm working late. Maybe you and Noam could drop by the cafe for dinner? Tell him the face omelet's on me... Vivi, Tomer and Mika had a massive fight. She found out about that thing. So, he's couch sleeping for one night, don't be mad, okay?...  
(*whispering*) Avi, I'm here at soccer practice, and the kid's not Ronaldo. Let's sign him up for surfing camp this summer... Vivi, just came from the dermatologist. All the moles are where they should be, everything's perfect, you were right.

**SCENE 6 - Tomer**

*Morning. Avigail is at home in pajamas, her hair is messy. She stressfully whips green frosting with a whisk. Next to her is a decorated cake (a 'green garden' cake with the name "Herman" and the number 90). The doorbell rings.*

AVIGAIL: Damn... just a second!

*She opens the door. It's Tomer, holding a surfboard.*

AVIGAIL: I can't believe Tzila sent you. *(takes the surfboard)* Thanks.

TOMER: She also asked me to check the cabinet door.

AVIGAIL: Tell her the door's fixed.

TOMER: Okay. Can I come in?

*He slips past her and enters.*

AVIGAIL: I'm in the middle of something.

*She goes back to the cake. Tomer looks around.*

TOMER: It's weird being here without Nir... *(noticing the cake)* Nice. Is this a forest cake?

AVIGAIL: Garden cake, and it's not finished.

TOMER: Kudos to Herman... 90. He could have lent a few years to Nir.

*Avigail focuses on the cake, while Tomer examines the living room.*

TOMER: What's this? Did something burn here?

AVIGAIL: A candle fell yesterday.

TOMER: Be careful, that's dangerous.

AVIGAIL: Did you come to return the surfboard or for a real estate evaluation?

*Tomer picks up a pocket knife from the floor and hands it to her.*

TOMER: You mean "appraisal"... This was on the floor.

AVIGAIL: *(Realizing Tal forgot it)* Damn...

TOMER: What?

AVIGAIL: Nothing.

*Tomer fiddles with one of the ingredients on the counter.*

AVIGAIL: Tomer, I need to focus. The courier is coming soon to pick up the cake, and it's not ready.

TOMER: Don't you have a proper mixer?

AVIGAIL: It broke this morning. *(moves on to sculpting fondant)*

TOMER: It's good you're working... And otherwise, everything's good?

AVIGAIL: Why? Did Tzila report that I lashed out at her yesterday?

TOMER: She described it more like a nervous breakdown.

AVIGAIL: Tzila would love it if I had a nervous breakdown so she could drag me to live in her ugly building.

TOMER: *(laughs)* It really is ugly.

AVIGAIL: Tell her I'm fine.

*She goes back to her work. Tomer realizes his time is up.*

TOMER: I also wanted to make sure we're all good... You were right. I should've given you the letter as soon as I got it. I figured you wouldn't do anything with it right away—

AVIGAIL: You were right too. Nir does have good taste.

TOMER: Oh yeah? Did you meet someone?

AVIGAIL: He left his swiss knife here.

TOMER: The carpenter?

AVIGAIL: You know who they are?!

TOMER: In general terms... Was it good?

AVIGAIL: Great. Damn, the ganache.

*Avigail turns off the stove.*

TOMER: So, we're good, yeah?

AVIGAIL: Why? Are you dying too? Should I let Noam know?

TOMER: No, no, I'm just flying.

AVIGAIL: Have a safe flight.

TOMER: This time it's one-way.

AVIGAIL: Really. Where?

TOMER: Dubai.

AVIGAIL: Is Mika into Dubai?

TOMER: Mika and I split up.

AVIGAIL: Did you cheat on her again?

TOMER: (*surprised*) The opposite actually. You know if you need anything, I'm available over there, and the office knows too—

AVIGAIL: Good luck in Dubai.

TOMER: Thanks.

*Tomer is about to leave when Avigail's phone rings.*

AVIGAIL: Damn, it's the school.

*She answers. Tomer stays.*

AVIGAIL: Hello...? Hi Yarin... What happened...? Oh, oh... Okay... Can it wait half an hour? Twenty minutes...? But I can't... Alright, alright. (*hangs up, gets ready*)

TOMER: What happened?

AVIGAIL: Noam, school issues. And the cake isn't finished. I won't make it!

TOMER: I'll finish it.

AVIGAIL: You? How will you?

TOMER: Just tell me what to do, and I'll do it. I'll give it to the courier.

*Avigail thinks.*

AVIGAIL: Fine. Sculpt another garden gnome here, exactly like these. Here's the red dough, the green dough, and for the eyes, use this. For the clothes, roll the dough, punch it, cut it, flatten it, shape it, and stick it with ganache, okay...? Then stick the gnome on the cake (*hands him the piping bag*) and finish piping the grass. Take a picture for me, put it in the box, and give it to the courier. And Tomer...?

*Tomer looks at her.*

AVIGAIL: Thank you.

*She leaves quickly. Tomer is left holding the piping bag.*

**SCENE 7 – Teacher Meeting**

*Avigail and Noam sit in the teacher's office with his Teacher. Noam wears his jacket.*

TEACHER: Avigail, thank you for coming on such short notice.

*AVIGAIL nods.*

TEACHER: You have... *(gestures to a green stain on her shirt and hands her a tissue)*

AVIGAIL: Thank you. I'm in the middle of work, I don't have much time.

TEACHER: Noam, do you want to tell your mom what happened today?

*Noam remains silent.*

TEACHER: I'll explain, alright?

*Noam nods.*

TEACHER: Today, in life skills class, Noam told the kids in his class that they, and all their families, are going to die.

NOAM: Because it's true.

AVIGAIL: Yes, sweetie, but you don't say it like that.

*Noam looks at Avigail.*

AVIGAIL: *(to the teacher)* We'll talk about it at home. It won't happen again.

TEACHER: This isn't the first time Noam has expressed distress at school, but this morning he came in particularly agitated. Noam, do you want to share why you were so upset this morning?

AVIGAIL: Last night we...

TEACHER: I'd prefer to hear from Noam.

*Noam doesn't respond.*

TEACHER: Noam, your mom and I want to help you.

*Pause.*

AVIGAIL: Ok, so—

TEACHER: How about we play “The Feelings Safari”?

*Noam nods. The Teacher takes out cards and deals them to all three of them. Avigail’s phone rings, and she silences it.*

TEACHER: It’s a classic card game, but every time you play a card...

*Avigail glances at her phone. The teacher waits until she refocuses.*

TEACHER: ... we all answer the question the animal asks. Let’s all be fully present.

AVIGAIL: Sorry, it’s work.

*Avigail puts down the phone and picks up her cards.*

TEACHER: Noam, would you like to start?

NOAM: *(picks a card and reads)* Jackie the Jaguar asks, “What’s your favorite word?”

*Noam thinks.*

TEACHER: I’ll go first: “Hug.”

AVIGAIL: My turn? “Chocolate.”

*They both look at Noam. Pause.*

NOAM: “Dumbo Dad.”

TEACHER: “Dumbo Dad?”

NOAM: It’s like a TV show that Dad and I made up, where Dad does a bunch of silly things.

AVIGAIL: It even had a set intro – “Duuuumbo Daaaaad!”

NOAM: *(murmurs)* That’s not how you do it.

TEACHER: So how do you do it?

NOAM: Doesn’t matter.

TEACHER: *(plays a card)* “Mikey the Monkey wants to know what you loved doing as a kid.” Hmm... sleeping over at my grandparents.

AVIGAIL: My turn again? Putting glue on my hands, letting it dry, peeling it off, and making a bracelet out of it.

NOAM: Going to the market with Dad.

*The Teacher signals Avigail, a glance full of meaning.*

NOAM: Mom, it's your turn.

*Avigail plays a card.*

AVIGAIL: "Ziggy the Zebra wants to know what's really important to have at home." Hmm... chocolate? *(laughs, no one else laughs)*

TEACHER: Love.

NOAM: Mom wants to replace Dad.

AVIGAIL: That's not true.

NOAM: She kissed a stranger last night.

AVIGAIL: I didn't—

NOAM: They kissed, smoked drugs, and burned Dad's shirt on the balcony.

AVIGAIL: He's a carpenter who came to fix the door, he—

TEACHER: Noam, what your mom does in her private time is her business.

NOAM: I have a dad. I don't want a new dad.

TEACHER: Do you talk about Dad at home?

AVIGAIL: Yes. NOAM: No.

AVIGAIL: Why are you saying that?

NOAM: Because you're lying!

TEACHER: Okay! I want you both to close your eyes and imagine a drawer.

*Avigail peeks at her phone.*

TEACHER: Eyes Closed. A big drawer with a sign on it that says "Feelings Drawer."



Inside, there are all kinds of feelings—love, joy, sadness, fear, jealousy, longing, anger (*glances at Avigail and notices she's on her phone*) Shame...

*Avigail puts down the phone.*

TEACHER: Sometimes, when we lock one feeling inside because it hurts, we actually lock up all the feelings. Noam, I want you to open the drawer now and take out the first feeling that—

*Avigail's phone rings again.*

AVIGAIL: Excuse me, I have to take this. (*answers*) Hello...? What? Golden Cake?! Not Garden Cake...?? Are you sure...?! Ok, Golden. When do you need it? Okay, yes, fine! I'll handle it. (*hangs up, to the teacher*) Anything else, Yaron?

TEACHER: Yarin.

AVIGAIL: Yarin, I have to run—

TEACHER: Fine, but Noam will go with you.

AVIGAIL: What? Why?

TEACHER: I think he's had enough for today. Right, Noam?

*Noam nods eagerly.*

AVIGAIL: (*to Noam*) You're coming with me on errands.

*Noam exits. The Teacher stops Avigail.*

TEACHER: Avigail, Naom is really struggling. He's socially isolated and he's been bullied over his jacket. I'm sure he's told you, or his grandmother-

AVIGAIL: (*lying*) Certainly.

TEACHER: It's important that the home be a stable place.

AVIGAIL: Absolutely.

TEACHER: It's natural that, after a loss, you have intimacy needs—

AVIGAIL: Oh, no, I—

TEACHER: Just be careful not to confuse Noam right now with casual relationships. Remember, he needs stability, an Anchor—

AVIGAIL: And I need privacy and to manage my own life. From now on, please communicate with me and not with my mother-in-law. You can put her number in that “Feelings drawer,” lock it and throw away the key. (*exits*)

*Avigail's home. Tomer places a fancy new mixer on the counter. He's on the phone with an earpiece.*

TOMER: Sorry, I had a family issue... No, everything's fine... I'll talk to Judge Solomon—

*Noam enters, sees Tomer's back, and yelps. Tomer turns around, yelps as well.*

TOMER: Whoa! *(on the phone)* I'll call you back. *(hangs up)* Noam, you scared me.

NOAM: What are you doing here?

TOMER: I returned dad's surfboard and surprised your mom... *(gestures to the mixer)* Where is your mom?

NOAM: I don't know and I don't care.

*He goes to the laundry pile in the living room, opens his bag, takes out books, and stuffs it with clothes.*

TOMER: Want to tell me what happened?

NOAM: Can you drive me to Grandma's?

TOMER: To Netanya?

*NOAM nods.*

TOMER: You should ask your mom.

*Noam sighs and sits down.*

NOAM: Never mind.

TOMER: I'll wait with you.

NOAM: No need.

*Awkward silence.*

TOMER: Are you hungry? *(goes to the kitchen, opens cabinets)* There's nothing here... *(opens a pot)* Grandma's yellow rice! I can't believe it.

NOAM: It's gross.

TOMER: *(laughs)* It's an acquired taste. *(eats it with a spoon)* I grew up on this rice.

*Noam sneaks a smile.*

TOMER: So what do you want to do?

NOAM: Run away.

TOMER: I get it. You know how to run away without running away? *(takes the surfboard)* You go to the sea, and you're in a different world... Your dad and I camped out in the water for days. What about you? Are you learning?

*Noam shakes his head no.*

TOMER: Want to start? You always start on dry land anyway. Here, hold this *(Arranges cushions on the floor, takes surfboard from Noam and places it on the cushions)* You need some height... so the fins don't break. See?

NOAM: I know what fins are.

TOMER: Do you know how to lie down on the board?

NOAM: Duhhh.

TOMER: I'll believe you when I see it.

*Noam doesn't move.*

NOAM: Dad promised he'd teach me to surf.

*Pause.*

TOMER: He promised me a surfing trip to Sri Lanka... he stood us up.

*Tomer puts the pot of rice back in the kitchen. He takes the coffee table and sets it up like a surfboard.*

TOMER: Noam, you're going to be an amazing surfer, and Dad will watch you from above and send you the best waves. *(pause)* Come on, paddle with me.

*Tomer lies on the coffee table, Noam lies next to him on the surfboard. Tomer demonstrates. Noam imitates him.*

TOMER: Hand like a spoon, send it over your head as far as you can, then bring it back as close as possible to the board, down to the thigh. (*paddles*) Like that. Nice. Paddle Race? It'll be tough in that jacket, I'll leave you in the dust...

*Noam ignores him, keeping the jacket on. Tomer takes off his own shirt.*

TOMER: Ready? Three, two, go!

*They paddle quickly.*

TOMER: Noam, wait for me, wait! Do you have fins for legs, or a jet pack? (*getting tired*) You won! Now sit up. Hands by your ribs... push with your hands, lift yourself up, and pull your legs forward...

*Noam does it.*

TOMER: A professional!

NOAM: Now we wait for a wave.

TOMER: Yes... I hate waiting. Your dad taught me to enjoy it... there's nothing like surfing with a good friend.

NOAM: And if you don't have one?

TOMER: You know what Dad always said about the sea?

NOAM: That the sea is your friend.

TOMER: Exactly. So, you've got one friend for sure. Here comes a wave! Paddle, paddle, paddle! Good! Hands under the ribs, push up, and... jump to your feet!

*He demonstrates on the table, and Noam does it too.*

TOMER: Feet along the center, weight on your right foot, relax your knees, look forward... ("*surfing*") Champ! You're surfing!

*Noam, excited by the "surfing," takes off his jacket. Tomer watches him. They surf together.*

NOAM: Do you think about Dad a lot?

TOMER: Every day.

NOAM: Mom stopped loving him.

TOMER: Not a chance. If anything, she loves him too much. She's trying to shrink her heart so that it hurts less.

NOAM: How do you know?

TOMER: From experience, buddy. Next week, we'll do a lesson in the water...

NOAM: Maybe we can do it like a class, once a week?

TOMER: Bit of a problem...

NOAM: Why?

*Avigail enters, holding the cake box.*

AVIGAIL: What are you doing here?

TOMER: I waited with Noam. We had a surfing lesson...

NOAM: And we'll do another in the sea next week.

*Avigail looks at Tomer and Noam, noticing Noam without his jacket.*

AVIGAIL: (to Tomer) The courier came a while ago, didn't he?

TOMER: Yeah, but I got you a little surprise.

*He gestures to the mixer.*

TOMER: You said yours broke.

AVIGAIL: You bought me a mixer?

NOAM: You mean "Thank you"?

AVIGAIL: Thank you.

TOMER: Just wanted to help.

AVIGAIL: Noam, go to your room for a bit.

NOAM: You mean...?

AVIGAIL: Please!

*Noam exits.*

AVIGAIL: How did he take off the jacket?

TOMER: Have you tried paddling in a jacket? Do you take him sometimes to the beach? I think surfing would be good for him.

AVIGAIL: (*whispering to Tomer*) What are you doing? (*puts the cushions back*) Suddenly you pop up after more than a year, only to disappear again? Noam needs stability, an Anchor, not casual relationships!

TOMER: Can't win with you, can I?

AVIGAIL: Excuse me?

TOMER: Never mind.

AVIGAIL: There you go, running off again.

TOMER: Me?

AVIGAIL: Where have you been this past year?

TOMER: Do you remember how you treated me during the Shiva?

AVIGAIL: You brought me an album of Nir with his ex-girlfriends.

TOMER: They were photos you'd never seen, I thought that—

AVIGAIL: And you vanished long before the Shiva.

TOMER: I didn't vanish—you shut me out.

AVIGAIL: Oh, I "shut you out." It's my fault...

TOMER: Ever since Nir got sick, nothing I did was good enough for you.

AVIGAIL: Sorry I didn't want you to take him drinking when he wasn't supposed to, or shove him your cannabis oil that knocked him out for a week, or go surfing when he could barely breathe.

TOMER: He begged me to take him surfing.

AVIGAIL: He almost drowned!

TOMER: But he didn't die from surfing, did he? (*pause*) For the record, he said it was his happiest moment since getting sick.

*Pause.*

AVIGAIL: Do you know why you didn't tell me about Nir's dating plan?

TOMER: Because it's not my place?

AVIGAIL: Because you wanted to keep it your little secret with Nir. To be his number one. And you won. Congratulations. So don't lecture me about "shutting you out."

NOAM: (*from his room*) Mom, stop!

AVIGAIL: Noam, stay out of it.

TOMER: You didn't even let me say goodbye to him.

AVIGAIL: You were abroad.

TOMER: You should have told me to come back—

AVIGAIL: Who leaves the country when his best friend is dying? Who disappears like that? Nir is ashamed of you.

*Noam enters.*

NOAM: Mom, Tomer's right.

AVIGAIL: Noam, this is none of your business.

NOAM: He says you're trying to shrink your heart so it'll hurt less that Dad died. Is that true?

*AVIGAIL is embarrassed.*

TOMER: Bye champ.

NOAM: Bye! (*returns to his room*)

AVIGAIL: (*to Tomer*) Go on, go to Dubai...

TOMER: It wouldn't hurt to put up one picture of Nir...

*Tomer exits.*

**SCENE 9 - Boaz**



A bar. **Boaz** arrives with two shots of liquor. He hands one to Avigail.

BOAZ: They ran out of vodka, so I got Arak.

*They drink in one gulp. Avigail is already quite drunk.*

BOAZ: You sure know how to drink.

AVIGAIL: Did Nir also find you on Tinder?

BOAZ: No. Why, did he find someone else for you on Tinder?

AVIGAIL: Did you think you were the only one?

BOAZ: Perish the thought. How many candidates are there?

AVIGAIL: Hundreds.

*Boaz laughs.*

BOAZ: We met at his cafe. My clinic's nearby.

AVIGAIL: (*Guessing*) You're a psychologist.

BOAZ: A doctor.

AVIGAIL: A doctor?! (*connecting the dots*) Oh, no... you're the breast surgeon.

BOAZ: Guilty as charged.

AVIGAIL: I can't believe Nir set me up with a breast surgeon...

BOAZ: It's okay, I don't work outside the clinic.

AVIGAIL: Did Nir consult you about his cancer?

BOAZ: Here and there.

AVIGAIL: Yea, 'cause you're probably an expert...

BOAZ: Certain types, yes.

AVIGAIL: Did he tell you, for example, that he wanted to continue with the biological treatment, against protocol?

*Boaz nods.*

AVIGAIL: And what did you say?

BOAZ: I told him I trusted his oncologist.

AVIGAIL: Too bad. The oncologist decided to stop the treatment, and two weeks later, they found that the cancer spread to Nir's lungs.

BOAZ: Yeah... Another shot?

AVIGAIL: Yes (*drinks*) Do you think if Nir had continued the biological treatment, he'd still be alive today?

BOAZ: I can't know.

AVIGAIL: What do you estimate?

BOAZ: I'd rather not discuss things that aren't my expertise...

AVIGAIL: Off the record.

BOAZ: I think we're on a date, not a medical consultation.

AVIGAIL: Sorry. You said you're a breast surgeon... I apologize. Forget it. (*raises her glass*) Cheers!

BOAZ: Listen, if you're not in the mood for a date, that's fine.

AVIGAIL: Cheers, I said!

BOAZ: Cheers. (*they clink glasses*)

AVIGAIL: Because I met someone who did continue biological treatment, against his protocol, so why even have protocols if you can go against the protocol? And why did the first doctor tell us that Nir would be at Noam's wedding? He passed away a year later, when Noam was nine. Even in Masai tribes, they don't marry at nine... It took me so long to realize that you doctors have no idea what you're doing, that you're playing chess against an enemy a thousand times smarter than you- Sorry, I really wanted a normal date.

BOAZ: You should know that Nir spoke very highly of you when we met.

AVIGAIL: Yeah?

BOAZ: He said you took incredible care of him. He also said you're optimistic and

that everything is more fun with you.

AVIGAIL: He wouldn't recognize me now.

BOAZ: There's fun hiding in there. Right there, in the corner of your eye. I'm sure you'll be okay... Are you okay?

AVIGAIL: I'm going to use the restroom for a moment.

*She leaves, takes a moment, then returns with purpose.*

AVIGAIL: Do you want to sleep together?

BOAZ: What?

AVIGAIL: Sex, do you want to have sex, want intercourse?

BOAZ: *(laughs awkwardly)* I like your directness.

AVIGAIL: I'm a widow. I'm exempt from filters.

BOAZ: True.

AVIGAIL: And I'm also fun. Let's pay.

BOAZ: Aren't we going to finish the drink?

AVIGAIL: My mother-in-law is watching my son. I don't have much time.

BOAZ: And have you already had... since...

AVIGAIL: Of course! Plenty... actually, no, nothing.

BOAZ: I'm the first?

AVIGAIL: Too much responsibility?

BOAZ: Not if you're sure that you—

AVIGAIL: Let's go before I change my mind. *(leads him out)*

## **SCENE 10 – Lost Ring**

*Avigail's home. Tzila is dozing on the couch. Avigail enters with messy hair, looking disheveled. She's searching for something in a drawer, trying to be quiet but failing. Tzila wakes up.*

TZILA: What's going on? What happened?

AVIGAIL: I had a flat tire, changed it myself.

TZILA: By yourself? Good for you... We had a great time; I brought rice, red this time, Noam devoured it... I changed his bandage, and we looked at albums. You asked me not to tidy up, so I didn't.

AVIGAIL: Great, thank you for coming, Tzila.

TZILA: If Noam asks, I come.

AVIGAIL: Really, thank you. I'm going to shower.

TZILA: Alright, I'll head out.

*Tzila gathers her things. She looks at Avigail, who keeps searching for something.*

TZILA: Where's the necklace?

AVIGAIL: It broke. Don't ask...

TZILA: And the ring? Do you have it?

AVIGAIL: Yes, no... I need to find it. I dropped it.

TZILA: Where did it fall?

AVIGAIL: At the breast surgeon's.

TZILA: Weren't you meeting a client?

AVIGAIL: A meeting, and then the surgeon.

TZILA: Why, is something wrong?

AVIGAIL: No, routine checkup.

TZILA: Good, so the checkup was fine?

AVIGAIL: It's fine.

TZILA: Are you sure?

AVIGAIL: Yes, Tzila. I'd tell you if it wasn't.

TZILA: Why are you searching here if it's at the clinic?

AVIGAIL: Because yesterday the clasp opened, I didn't have time to fix it properly, so maybe the ring fell here after all...

TZILA: Let me help you...

AVIGAIL: It's okay, I can manage.

TZILA: It's your wedding ring. Tell me where to look.

AVIGAIL: Look in the drawers here. (*She searches elsewhere.*)

TZILA: Try to remember when you last saw it.

AVIGAIL: I'm pretty sure I saw it today when I was getting ready, but I'm not sure; maybe last night when I was sitting on the sofa. I'm going to turn the house upside down until I find it. It has to be here somewhere... (*Lifts the sofa cushions, searches frantically*) I keep the ring on the necklace all the time, I never take it off. It's been on me since I came back from the hospice... No, it's not here! Ugh! I'm such an idiot.

TZILA: You're not an idiot.

AVIGAIL: I am an idiot. I just slept with someone else, that's what I was doing. And I took off the necklace and put it aside so it wouldn't break, and I guess the ring flew off during... that.

TZILA: I see. So you didn't go to a breast surgeon?

AVIGAIL: I was *with* a breast surgeon. We did it in his car. And then I looked for the ring in the parking lot, on the road, in trash bins, in the car's engine... (*Pause*) Say what you're thinking, Tzila. How can I sleep with men, how can I even go out with them when my child is falling apart...

*Pause.*

TZILA: Is this the first time you've slept with someone?

*Avigail nods.*

TZILA: After Amnon, I had a sexual reawakening.

*AVIGAIL looks at Tzila.*

TZILA: All that death... I was burning from within... with desire. There were all kinds... There was Zvika, right after the shiva, then Yitzhak, and Raul the Argentine... Tomas too, there were many. It's good for your health.

*Avigail laughs in despair.*

TZILA: At least you enjoyed it?

AVIGAIL: Not worth the ring. I lose everything, Tzila. I can't keep anything, not the ring, not Nir.

TZILA: Nir's my fault.

AVIGAIL: No way.

TZILA: It's me. I should've pressured the doctors to continue the biological treatment, just like he wanted.

AVIGAIL: And I should have gone with him to every appointment, chosen all the doctors, fought for him like he was my child.

TZILA: He is my child...

AVIGAIL: I didn't mean—

TZILA: He didn't want me to intervene, I should've insisted.

AVIGAIL: You did insist.

TZILA: So he'd think I was the biggest nag in the world, but he'd be alive.

*Pause.*

TZILA: I read on Google that melanoma is linked to childhood sun exposure... he used to surf for hours... but what did we know then? One time, he came back all red and blistered... I smeared him with yogurt. I can't stop beating myself up. How could I not save my child? How can I be alive after him?

*Pause.*

TZILA: Noam and you are all that's left of Nir. Everything. So we'll do it on your

terms, but let me be part of it. (*Puts her hand on Avigail*) He loved you so much...

AVIGAIL: I have to find the ring.

TZILA: Worst case, have it remade. It's a piece of jewelry, it's not a person, it can be remade.

AVIGAIL: Do you remember where Nir bought it for me?

TZILA: No... but I remember he bought it with Tomer. Ask him. If you find it—great, if not, go buy a new one. It's a gift from me, and I don't want to hear about it.

AVIGAIL: Thank you, Tzila.

TZILA: Give me a hug already, you Stingy.

*They hug.*

TZILA: May God help me, how am I going to drive back to Netanya now?

AVIGAIL: Do you want some coffee?

TZILA: At night? Better to fall asleep at the wheel.

AVIGAIL: (*not meaning it*) So stay here...

TZILA: No... I'll just have a glass of water.

AVIGAIL: I'll get you water.

TZILA: Fine, I'll sleep here. Just this once. I'm wiped.

*Tzila exits*

***Transition:***

*Avigail listens to NIR's messages:*

NIR: Hello Avigail, it's Dumbo Dad speaking, I'm here with my assistant. When you get back, please bring a pack of Mentos and a bottle of Coke for a groundbreaking scientific experiment. Thanks!... Avi, I can't reach you. Any chance you took the car keys? Call me back soon, I need to head out... Vi, Dr. Shechter promised I'd be discharged tomorrow. I miss you, and I'm dying to come home already. Love you 360.

**SCENE 11 - Rage Room**



*Night, Tomer's office. Tomer is asleep on the couch. Avigail enters, agitated, with headphones around her neck.*

AVIGAIL: Tomer, Tomer...?! (*realizes he's asleep on the couch*) Tomer.

*Tomer wakes up startled.*

AVIGAIL: Mika said you'd probably be sleeping here, so...

TOMER: You talked to Mika?

AVIGAIL: You went with Nir to pick out the wedding ring, right?

TOMER: What? Yeah. I'm staying here until my flight—

AVIGAIL: Do you remember where it was? The place's name?

TOMER: I don't remember.

AVIGAIL: Isn't it written down somewhere??

TOMER: Wait, Avi, hold on. What happened?

AVIGAIL: I lost the ring. I need to order a new one.

TOMER: And it's urgent now?

AVIGAIL: If it weren't urgent, would I be here? (*turns to leave*)

TOMER: Wait. Give me a second. (*checks his phone*) What year did you get married?

AVIGAIL: Uh...

TOMER: 2013. I've changed phones since then, but let me see... (*finds it*) "Golden Ring." (*checks his phone*) In Neve Tzedek. Opens tomorrow at ten.

AVIGAIL: Great, thanks. (*She looks at Tomer.*) Sorry for waking you.

*She turns to leave.*

TOMER: When I came over, it wasn't to argue. The opposite. I wanted to settle things before I leave.

AVIGAIL: To settle things, and to blame me for your not saying goodbye to Nir.

TOMER: I blame myself enough, I promise.

AVIGAIL: Right...

TOMER: You know how badly I wanted to make it to the funeral? As soon as I heard, I booked a flight, but then the shit show started here again, and the flight was canceled—

AVIGAIL: It's fine.

TOMER: There was a delay, I sat in Tbilisi Airport like an idiot.

AVIGAIL: Tomer, you couldn't handle it because you're a coward.

TOMER: (*pause*) Not everyone is as strong as you. You took care of him, you were there the whole time. I couldn't do it, okay? The moment he started getting worse, I couldn't be there... I couldn't watch my best friend dying, and then gone, leaving you and Noam alone...

AVIGAIL: If you couldn't bear to watch it, imagine what it's like to live it.

*Pause.*

TOMER: This is a classic moment where Nir would know what to say... he always knew how to turn feelings into words.

AVIGAIL: He was brilliant at that.

TOMER: Why do you think I stuck with him since we were nine? Do you know how many times he saved me from a beating?

AVIGAIL: I feel like beating something.

TOMER: Yeah, right?

AVIGAIL: I want to hit something.

TOMER: I get it—

AVIGAIL: Break apart this fucked up world.

*Tomer goes to a box and takes out a fragile object, along with a baseball bat, which Avigail doesn't notice.*

AVIGAIL: I'm so angry, all the time. Isn't the anger stage supposed to end? (*she*

*turns to leave) Nevermind.*

*Tomer smashes the object with the bat.*

AVIGAIL: Whoa! I didn't mean actually break stuff..

*Tomer keeps smashing.*

AVIGAIL: Careful Tomer...

TOMER: I miss him. (*hits again*) I'm sick of having no one to run with... (*smashes again*) or surf with... (*smashes*) Of having no one to talk to... (*smashes*) I miss his voice! (*smashes*) His long pause before answering a question... (*smashes*) Top of the morning! Wow! This is liberating! You've got to try it.

AVIGAIL: No way.

TOMER: Here, hold this.

*He gives her the bat and searches in the boxes. He pulls out a helmet and puts it on Avigail, taking her headphones from around her neck and placing them on his.*

AVIGAIL: What's this? You didn't wear one.

TOMER: I don't want to piss off Nir.

AVIGAIL: Fine, bring me something to break.

*Tomer takes a picture from the box, setting it up for Avigail to smash.*

TOMER: Go on, hit it.

AVIGAIL: It feels wrong to break a picture.

TOMER: It's okay, it was a gift from Mika. She tried to make me appreciate art.

AVIGAIL: Move aside.

TOMER: I recommend dedicating each hit-

AVIGAIL: This one's for the fucking cancer that killed Nir! (*hits*) I broke it!

*Tomer places an alarm clock on one of the boxes.*

TOMER: Not done. Mika bought me this clock because she was annoyed I kept

hitting snooze on my phone.

AVIGAIL: This is for Noam not having a dad! (*hits*) This is for the debts! (*hits*) For being stuck with Tzila!! (*hits*)

*Tomer pulls out a blender.*

TOMER: She bought this when she decided that, instead of alcohol, I should drink green shakes.

*Avigail charges and smashes it.*

AVIGAIL: (*continues*) This is for the dermatologist who misdiagnosed the mole. (*hits*) For all the men who aren't Nir! (*hits*) For all the married couples who grow old together! (*hits*) For everyone who recovered from cancer!!

TOMER: Go on, no mercy.

AVIGAIL: This is for the hole in my heart! (*hits*) For all the things we didn't get to do!... for our second child!... for all the words I never said!... for everything that was... and will never be... again! Ever!! (*screams*)

*Avigail collapses to the floor, removes the helmet, and cries.*

TOMER: Sorry, bad idea.

AVIGAIL: It's amazing.

TOMER: Right?

AVIGAIL: (*crying and laughing*) Sorry... I think my 'feelings drawer' has opened.

TOMER: Your what?

AVIGAIL: It's this stupid thing... from Noam's teacher...

TOMER: Let's smash the "feelings drawer" too.

AVIGAIL: Absolutely. (*she looks around*) What a mess...

TOMER: Nir would've gone crazy with the Dyson here.

AVIGAIL: Mika's going to kill me when you get back together, and she finds out I broke everything that was supposed to fix you.

TOMER: Don't worry, we're not getting back together.

*Pause.*

AVIGAIL: That's why Dubai?

TOMER: Yeah, a fresh start I guess. What's with the "words you never said"? You took a swing for "words you never said".

AVIGAIL: You think you're the only one who didn't say goodbye to Nir? Why didn't I call you to say goodbye to him... I couldn't do it myself. I kept telling him we'd win this, that we were strong, and "think positive", "mind over matter," all the cliches. No wonder he didn't tell me about the dating plan. At least with you, he felt he had someone to talk to. I left him alone with the terror of death... instead of crying with him and being terrified together... and thanking him. Telling him I love him. Just loving and thanking and loving- By the time I was ready to tell him, he wasn't conscious anymore.

*Pause.*

TOMER: Don't go there. It's a bottomless pit.

AVIGAIL: I don't know how to keep going.

TOMER: You are going; that's a fact.

AVIGAIL: Do you know what the best moment of the year was? At Nir's memorial, I fell into an open grave.

TOMER: What?

AVIGAIL: I lay there quietly, and for a moment, I was dead. I didn't have to cope, or fight, overcome... adapt, endure or persist... run everywhere with weights on my feet. Sometimes I want to give in, and just die for a moment.

*She lies down as if dead. Tomer leans toward her. She's surprised but gives in to the kiss. Tomer stops.*

TOMER: Sorry, I—

AVIGAIL: No, me too.

TOMER: I got confused, sorry.

AVIGAIL: A mistake.

TOMER: Completely.

AVIGAIL: I'm going.

TOMER: Right.

AVIGAIL: Where are my headphones? (*searches*)

*Tomer realizes they're on his neck and hands them over.*

AVIGAIL: Sorry if I made you think—

TOMER: No, no, my mistake.

AVIGAIL: It was... nice.

TOMER: ...Very.

AVIGAIL: And very inappropriate.

TOMER: Definitely.

AVIGAIL: So let's forget it. It never happened.

TOMER: What happened?

AVIGAIL: When's your flight?

TOMER: Next Wednesday.

AVIGAIL: Good luck.

TOMER: Same. And good luck with the ring.

## **SCENE 12 – Camping**

*The living room is set up like a camping site, complete with a tent. Noam and Avigail are in their pajamas.*

NOAM:       *(checking with Avigail)* Mat?

AVIGAIL:    Check.

NOAM:       Plates?

AVIGAIL:    Check.

NOAM:       Marshmallows and skewers?

AVIGAIL:    Of course. *(whispering)* Nemo, thanks for chipping in, we'll each make a small effort, and have fun house camping.

*Tal emerges from the tent.*

TAL:         Noam, good you're checking everything. I hung a little surprise for you.

NOAM:       *(peeking into the tent)* A fan!

AVIGAIL:    Tal thought of everything too.

*TAL and Avigail exchange a smile.*

NOAM:       Flashlights, check?

AVIGAIL:    *(to Tal)* Flashlights check? One second! *(exits)*

*Tal is left with Noam, feeling slightly awkward.*

TAL:         *(referring to the tent)* Uh-oh, the knob came out of this loop. It's important to fix it so the tent stays stable.

NOAM:       How did you meet my dad?

TAL:         Um... we met through Facebook. Your dad was awesome... I mean, he *is* awesome.

NOAM:       You know there's only bones left of him? Everything else has dissolved into the ground.

TAL:         Okay... *(gesturing to the mat)* Let's spread this out together.

NOAM: Do you have kids?  
TAL: Two, knock on wood.  
NOAM: Do you do “Dumbo Dad” for them?  
TAL: What’s “Dumbo Dad”?  
NOAM: It’s like a TV show where the dad does goofy stuff.  
TAL: I don’t really know kids' TV shows...  
NOAM: It’s pretend. Like, “Dumbo Dad” would put the mat on his head.  
TAL: Funny...

*Avigail returns with a flashlight on her head and two more in her hands.*

AVIGAIL: Here you go. *(hands them to Tal and Noam)*

NOAM: Mom, turn on the darkness.

TAL: I love that—“turn on the darkness.”

AVIGAIL: Ready?

*She turns off the light. Glow-in-the-dark star stickers shine on the wall.*

TAL: Wow...

AVIGAIL: Pretty, huh, Noam?

TAL: *(to Noam)* Want to organize the stuff in the tent?

*Noam nods and enters the tent.*

TAL: Turn on the fan.

*TAL approaches Avigail for a quiet conversation.*

TAL: That headlamp suits you.

AVIGAIL: You think so?

TAL: Radiant. *(hugs her)*



AVIGAIL: He's warming up to you. Better than last time...

TAL: Lucky me.

*Tal kisses Avigail. Noam emerges from the tent.*

NOAM: I'm hungry.

TAL: Should I get the Poike?

NOAM: What's a Poike?

TAL: Delicious camping food. *(heads to the kitchen)*

AVIGAIL: Tal made it.

*There's a knock at the door.*

NOAM: Who is it, Mom?

AVIGAIL: I don't know.

*Avigail (still wearing the headlamp) opens the door. Tomer stands there with a bouquet of flowers.*

AVIGAIL: Tomer!

TOMER: I just had to see you. *(offers the flowers)*

NOAM: Tomer!!

TOMER: Power outage?

AVIGAIL: No, we're house camping.

*She turns on the light.*

TAL: Nice to meet you, Tal.

AVIGAIL: Tomer is a friend of Nir's...

NOAM: His best friend.

*Tal glances at the flowers.*

TOMER: Tzila sent these for you. *(hands them to Noam)*

NOAM: Why did Grandma send us flowers? (*hands them to Avigail*)

TOMER: For the camping. To add nature. Enjoy! (*about to leave*)

NOAM: Can you stay?

TOMER: No, buddy, I have to run.

NOAM: At least look at the tent.

*Noam pulls Tomer toward the tent. Tomer glances at Avigail.*

TAL: The Poike is ready.

*Everyone looks at Avigail.*

AVIGAIL: (*about the bouquet*) I'll put these in water.

*She heads to the kitchen and sets the bouquet on the counter.*

TOMER: (*to Noam*) Cool tent.

NOAM: And check this out. (*turns off the light*)

*TOMER looks at the glow-in-the-dark stars.*

TOMER: Nice...

AVIGAIL: (*turns the light back on*) We eat in the light.

NOAM: Real camping is in the dark. (*turns the light off*)

AVIGAIL: Indoor camping is in the light. (*turns the light on*)

TAL: In Europe, it stays light until 10 PM in the summer...

NOAM: Tomer, want to eat?

AVIGAIL: Tomer has to leave.

TOMER: (*pauses*) I can stay a few minutes.

NOAM: Yes!

TAL: Beer?

TOMER: No, thanks.

*Tal serves plates to Noam first, then to Avigail.*

AVIGAIL: The Poike looks delicious.

TAL: Yes!

TOMER: (to Tal) So, you're the carpenter?

TAL: I work with wood. Did Avigail tell you about me?

TOMER: Nir. I helped him pick the final three.

NOAM: What does that mean?

AVIGAIL: Nothing. Eat, it's delicious.

NOAM: I don't like it.

AVIGAIL: Noam, that's not nice. Tal worked hard.

TAL: I'm not a great cook, but I'm good with Poike.

NOAM: Tomer, do you know "Dumbo Dad"?

TOMER: The best show on TV!

TAL: There's salt here if anyone wants some.

TOMER: "Dumbo Dad" would have a blast with this tent.

NOAM: Right! Do "Dumbo Dad"!

TOMER: Me? I don't know...

AVIGAIL: Noam, leave him alone.

NOAM: Please, Tomer.

TAL: There's tahini too, everyone. It goes well with the Poike.

TOMER: (to Noam) Hand me the flashlight.

*Noam gives it to him. Tomer puts it on upside down. Noam laughs.*

TOMER: How does Dad do it?

*Noam demonstrates, and Tomer joins in.*

TOMER & NOAM: "Dummmbo Daaad!!"

TOMER: Dad would probably do something like, "Today on *Dumbo Dad*, we're learning *How to Enter the Tent!* To Enter the Tent, you'll need Intent! Ready, set, don't you fret—let's get in the Tent!" *(tries to enter through the window)* "Oh, no, that's not it, maybe here?"

TAL: Be careful...

*Tomer does slapstick comedy, attempting to enter the tent from above, below, and the sides, bending and stretching the tent in the process. He finally manages to get inside and flails around. Noam laughs.*

TAL: *(irritated)* You're messing up the...

TOMER: *(finishing, lying under the tent)* "Next time on *Dumbo Dad*, we'll have a Blast- Learning to put out a fire with gas!"

NOAM: Awesome!!

TOMER: Dad was much better...

TAL: You've bent the tent.

TOMER: It was already bent.

TAL: *(checking)* You broke the knob.

TOMER: Let me fix it.

TAL: Forget it, the knob is broken.

TOMER: I'll buy you a new knob.

TAL: It's a knob that comes with the tent. It's part of a set.

AVIGAIL: Let's roast marshmallows!

*A knock is heard at the door.*

NOAM: Who is it?

AVIGAIL: I don't know.

*She opens the door to find Boaz.*

AVIGAIL: Hey...

*Everyone looks at him.*

BOAZ: Bad timing?

*Avigail is embarrassed.*

BOAZ: I wanted to surprise you. Look what I found. *(pulls out a ring)*

AVIGAIL: Amazing! Where was it?

NOAM: Mom, who's that?

AVIGAIL: This is Boaz... my doctor.

TAL: Very personalized care...

TOMER: You're the doctor. Are you one of the—?

BOAZ: *(nodding)* Are you one of the-?

TAL: I'm one of the—

NOAM: One of what??

AVIGAIL: *(to BOAZ)* Thanks for the ring.

*Boaz pulls her aside for a quiet conversation.*

BOAZ: I wanted to apologize for not calling after that night—

AVIGAIL: *(leads him toward the door)* It's fine.

*Noam turns the light on and off repeatedly.*

AVIGAIL: Noam...

*Noam turns on the light.*

BOAZ: It seemed like you wanted to forget, after what happened with the ring...

NOAM: *(continuing to flicker the light)*

BOAZ: If it's still relevant, I'd like to make it up to you—

AVIGAIL: NOAM!

*The light flickers and then goes out completely.*

AVIGAIL: *(annoyed)* Great! *(tries to turn it on, it stays dark)* Thanks, Noam.

TAL: The bulb burned out.

TOMER: *(to Avigail)* Do you have a spare?

AVIGAIL: I'll check. *(exits)*

*The men stare at the lamp.*

BOAZ: It's probably the breaker.

TOMER: It's the connections.

TAL: The bulb burned out.

TOMER: I'll grab a ladder.

BOAZ: No need.

*He climbs onto the table. As the men bicker, Avigail returns with a lantern.*

TAL: *(to Boaz)* Let me, I know what I'm doing.

TOMER: So do I.

BOAZ: I'm already up here.

TAL: Guys, I think there are too many people here...

TOMER: You speak as if it's your house.

TAL: I'm the only one who was invited.

TOMER: If Avigail doesn't want us here, she can tell us herself.

TAL: I think she already told the doctor.

BOAZ: I'm sure she's happy I returned her—

TOMER: How did her ring end up with you?

BOAZ: None of your business. You're not even one of the—

TAL: Let's act like adults.

TOMER: Says the guy who cried because his knob broke.

TAL: Have you no shame?

BOAZ: Chill out everyone, there's a child here...

TAL: Whose mom just wanted to house camp—

TOMER: Maybe you should ask his mom what she wants?

AVIGAIL: Enough!!

*Everyone falls silent, looking at her.*

AVIGAIL: I'll deal with the lightbulb. I'd appreciate it if you all just leave.

TAL: Yes, we're asking—

AVIGAIL: You too, Tal. I'm sorry. I want to be alone with my son.

*Boaz leaves. Tal collects his things. Tomer hesitates but follows after Avigail hands Tal his pot. Avigail sits at the entrance to the tent. Noam joins her.*

NOAM: It's best when it's just us.

AVIGAIL: "Dumbo Dad" really made me miss your dad. I'm not as good at goofing around.

NOAM: You're not great at bedtime stories either.

AVIGAIL: I'm terrible at it.

NOAM: You can practice.

AVIGAIL: I will, if you tell me what's going on at school...

NOAM: I will, if you put Dad's pictures back on the fridge. And on the door.

AVIGAIL: (nods) What else?

NOAM: Tell me what song you listen to in your headphones that makes you cry?

AVIGAIL: (laughs) It's not a song. Want to hear?

*Noam nods. Avigail plays him voice messages from NIR on her phone. Noam rests his head on her lap, and she strokes his hair.*

NIR: (whispering) Good morning, beautiful. There are crazy waves today, so I left early. I'll be back to wake Noam... Vivi, Sveta the cashier just asked if I'm single. I think you need to spend more time at the supermarket... Avi, the Superman costume is lost in space. Call me when you get this to solve the crisis!

*Avigail closes her eyes as she hears the messages, taking a deep breath.*

AVIGAIL: Nemo, I'll try not to shrink my heart. If it hurts, it hurts. But we'll get through it slowly, together, right, Nemo...? Noam?

*Noam has fallen asleep. Avigail lays him down gently in the tent. A knock at the door.*

AVIGAIL: (sighs, looking at the tent) Oh, his tent...

*She opens the door to find Tomer standing there.*

TOMER: You know what the problem is?

AVIGAIL: (quietly) Shhh, Noam's asleep.

TOMER: (softly) You're ruining my exit plan. I haven't stopped thinking about you since that night. It's been five days—

AVIGAIL: Six.

TOMER: I know you're moving forward with your dates—

AVIGAIL: And there's one more I haven't called yet—

TOMER: The widower? He's engaged.

AVIGAIL: How do you know?

TOMER: Looking out for my own interests.



AVIGAIL: Nir was the love of my life.

TOMER: I have no intention of replacing him.

AVIGAIL: I don't know if I'm ready.

TOMER: I'm willing to wait.

*They share a lingering kiss. The lantern in her hand bumps against his back, and Tomer takes it and turns it off. They look at the glowing stars on the wall.*

**SCENE 13: Epilogue**

*Cemetery. Avigail stands in front of Nir' grave.*

AVIGAIL: Hello my love. I went to the supermarket, and Sveta the cashier left. She probably couldn't get over losing you. Can't blame her. So, you thought I couldn't handle things on my own? You were right. Look what your dating show led to... I hope you're not mad at me and Tomer... but it feels right. And Noam finally took off the stinky jacket. Even your mom's calmed down a little. Can you believe it? But the more things settle, the more I miss you. I wish you'd come to me in a dream, too. I love you, 360.

The End