

FOXTROT

A screenplay by Samuel Maoz

1. INTERIOR TO EXTERIOR / VIEW THROUGH A MOVING VEHICLE / EARLY EVENING

Winter. Mud and fog. An orange sun peeking from time to time through the fog. View through a side window, partly open. A stained window pane. Motor of a heavy vehicle, presumably a truck, in a monotonous, dull rattle. A long drive.

QUIET YOUNG MAN'S VOICE (VO)

Do you know why they suddenly decided to send me home?

ANOTHER MAN'S VOICE

What do I know? I'm just the driver.

We don't see them; just hear their voices against the passing gloomy landscape.

Broken sounds of a piano enter the soundtrack. Like dry tears. Like faded childhood pictures, a childhood remembered mainly in longing.

Title: FOXTROT

2. INTERIOR / STAIRWELL / EARLY MORNING

Closed view of an apartment's doorbell. A MAN's finger presses it briefly and lets go. A sticker in faded handwriting, stuck to the doorbell: Feldman Family.

3. INTERIOR / STAIRWELL TO APARTMENT / EARLY MORNING

We're facing the front door. A short silence. The click of a key turning and the door opens. DAFNA, in her forties, in her nightgown. Wearing a thrown-on dressing gown, her hair disheveled, she stares at us wide-eyed. Then blurrily. The color drains from her face, her breathing halting. She stares at us like a lost child. MICHAEL, 45, gets up from his chair deep within the living room—but remains frozen and stares at us with the same stunned look.

MAN'S VOICE:

Mrs Feldman?

A trickle of blood escapes her nose and she silently collapses.

A MILITARY OFFICER, 30, in dress uniform, and a SLIGHTLY OLDER MAN in a starched field uniform jump into both sides of the frame. The officer gets hold of her collapsing body and the man grabs her head before it hits the wall. They gently set her down on the floor. A FEMALE SOLDIER, 20, in khakis, joins them and helps steady her. They move quietly, in an automatic rhythm, without a word. The officer takes her pulse and the man, apparently a doctor, puts on a stethoscope. Dafna sways on the border of consciousness and tries to tell him something, but her pupils widen, her eyes roll back, and she starts to convulse. In an oppressive silence, the OFFICER holds her, the female soldier pulls apart the dressing gown and disinfects the naked thigh with some imbued cotton wool, while the DOCTOR fills a syringe and injects her. MICHAEL stays behind, paralyzed, and stares at the scene without being able to move or say a word. They take her out of the frame. Michael, frozen and silent, stays, standing alone in the dining area adjoining the living room, next to an empty chair, a cup of coffee, and a newspaper. We leave him in a long movement and follow the rest. A corridor. The opening to a bedroom. Dafna is already lying on a wide bed. Wintry sunlight comes in through the open window and they move silently between darkness and light, and connect her to a drip and an oxygen mask. The officer leaves the room. We follow him back to the living room. He goes to Michael, still frozen and stunned, stops in front of him, and says

OFFICER

Mr Feldman, are you listening to me?

Michael doesn't react. He briefly stares at the officer and suddenly stumbles for a split second, collapses into himself, but immediately catches himself and regains his balance.

The officer grabs him gently, and says quietly

OFFICER

Come. Sit down.

He supports Michael, who sinks down woodenly and sits. The officer examines his scattered look, and says

OFFICER

Mr Feldman, I'm sorry, there's no easy way to tell you that your son, Corporal Jonathan Feldman, was killed in action last night.

Michael doesn't react, just stares at him with a dazed look. Through the big window behind his head is a long crane cutting across a dark sky in a slow circle.

Silence.

Faraway whimpering comes into the soundtrack.

In a long movement we leave them, go back to the corridor, and pass by the opening to the bedroom. Dafna lies without moving. The soldier closes a yellowish curtain over the window. The room turns dusky. The silhouette of the doctor packing his bag on the background of the vivid splash of light through the curtain.

The whimpering is closer now. We turn and approach the closed door at the end of the corridor. A thick, opaque pane. Beyond the glass the fuzzy silhouette of a large dog jumping up and down and rubbing against the length of the door, whimpering and breaking the silence. We come closer to the glass and stop, facing the leaping shadow of the whimpering dog for a long moment.

CUT TO BLACK

Title: MICHAEL

4A. INTERIOR / MICHAEL AND DAFNA'S APARTMENT / MORNING

MICHAEL's eye fills the screen. The pupil is expanded and the eye is reddened and moist.

DOCTOR'S VOICE

Follow my finger.

The eye moves to the right and left, following the blurry movement of the finger that periodically crosses the front of the frame.

DOCTOR'S VOICE

Now open your eye wide.

The eye opens. A narrow, powerful beam of light turns on in it.

The eyelid trembles and opens wide. The pupil contracts.

4B. INTERIOR / MICHAEL AND DAFNA'S APARTMENT / MORNING
*THE ENTIRE SCENE IN CLOSE-UP OF MICHAEL. WE DON'T SEE THE MILITARY TEAM; ONLY HEAR THEM.

CU of Michael. He looks up into the beam of light. Another moment and the light goes out. He looks ahead—shocked, miserable, and lost—half listening, half disconnected.

DOCTOR'S VOICE

Your blood pressure and pulse are normal. Do you have a heart condition?

Michael shakes his head. His look is distracted, his eyes moist.

DOCTOR'S VOICE

Asthma..?

Shake of the head, same stare.

DOCTOR'S VOICE

Epilepsy? Dizziness?

Same mechanical "no" movement.

DOCTOR'S VOICE

I'm leaving you some pills. Here.

Michael turns his absent-minded gaze.

DOCTOR'S VOICE

These are tranquilizers. Take them only if you feel physical stress. Tightness of the throat, prolonged ringing in the ears, strong headache. Are you sensitive to any drugs?

Michael shakes his head.

DOCTOR'S VOICE

So take one at night. It will help you sleep.

The doctor's hand puts the pills on the table, next to the smartphone, the half-finished cup of coffee, and the newspaper with the headline: *Who Will be the Winner of Tonight's Big Brother Competition?*

The doctor's voice continues throughout

DOCTOR'S VOICE

It's very important that you drink lots of water!

Michael stares aimlessly and is silent.

DOCTOR'S VOICE

I don't expect you to be able to eat, but you must drink. Is this your cell phone?

Michael nods. His automatic small movement..

The doctor's hand picks up the phone.

OFFICER'S VOICE

Later in the day you'll be informed of the time of the funeral. You don't have to worry about anything, of course. A funeral officer will come here around midday and go over the procedure with you.

FEMALE SOLDIER'S VOICE

Here, Mr Feldman, drink this.

Her hand offers him a large glass of water. Michael accepts the glass in a shaky hand, takes a small sip, and chokes on it, coughing. The doctor's hand pats him on the back.

DOCTOR'S VOICE

Deep breath!

Michael takes a deep breath. A trickle of water drips from his chin. His eyes are teary.

OFFICER'S VOICE

Mr Feldman, would you like us to inform someone else? A brother, sister, a friend?

Michael shakes his head.

OFFICER'S VOICE

Maybe have someone come over to...help?

A shake of the head.

DOCTOR'S VOICE

I programmed your phone to beep every hour. This will remind you to drink.

The doctor's hand gives him the phone. Michael takes it and puts it in his shirt pocket. His gaze unfocused and his movements mechanical.

DOCTOR'S VOICE

Now try to finish your water.

Michael's hand trembles. The Doctor's hand helps him bring the glass to his lips.

DOCTOR'S VOICE

Slowly...

He helps him steady the glass and drink a few more sips. Michael wants to stop but the doctor doesn't give in.

DOCTOR'S VOICE
Another small effort...

His sips are small and painstaking. His lips tremble.

DOCTOR'S VOICE
It's now 8 o'clock. At 9 the phone will beep, then at 10, and so on. A glass of water every hour! Make sure of that.

OFFICER'S VOICE
I'm leaving you a note with a phone number.

His hand extends a note. Michael takes the note and stares at it in an effort to focus.

OFFICER'S VOICE
Any problem that arises, any question, or if you feel the need to talk to someone, don't hesitate to call. This line is open 24 hours a day.

DOCTOR'S VOICE
Your wife will sleep for 4 to 5 hours. I or another doctor will come and examine her when she wakes up. And don't forget to drink. Even if you're not thirsty.

OFFICER'S VOICE
So that's it, Mr Feldman, we're...going to leave now. Are you sure you don't want us to inform someone from the family? Or from work?

The same mechanical, dull shake of the head.

OFFICER'S VOICE
If you change your mind, call the number I left you. They'll help you inform people.

An almost imperceptible nod.

OFFICER'S VOICE
Our sympathies, Mr Feldman.

Michael stares and is silent. His look is detached and empty.

A few more minutes of footsteps, the entrance door closes with a quiet click. Silence... Not a sound. Just a dull silence. A disturbing, oppressive, deafening silence.

5: INTERIOR / MICHAEL AND DAFNA'S APARTMENT / MORNING

Vertical wide shot from ceiling.

MICHAEL, surrounded by his silent living room, remains seated—frozen and broken—by a round dining table. On the table lie untidily an iPhone, a laptop computer, a newspaper, reading glasses, a half empty cup of coffee, and pills that the doctor left. A long moment. Suddenly he shudders and shakes off his paralysis, stands on his feet, and in an almost automatic gesture, closes the laptop, folds the newspaper, sets the reading glasses to the left of the laptop and straightens them parallel to its side, puts the cup of coffee to its right, doesn't really know what to do with the pills, picks up the smartphone and shoves it into his shirt pocket, stares absently at the almost straight structure the objects created, sets the box of pills next to the reading glasses, and completes the symmetry.

A faraway muffled whimper. Michael's eyes focus and his movement stops.

Another broken wail. He straightens the chair against the table and strides slowly between the walls and the furniture of his apartment. We continue to watch him from the ceiling and follow him to the corridor. The confining walls stretch on either side of him. For a moment we feel that he's in a labyrinth.

He stops on front of Jonathan's room. His hand grasps the doorknob with force and he turns it with a slight, stiff tremble. A small click and the door opens a little, creaking softly. The dog rushes out through the narrow opening, into the corridor. It turns and disappears into the bedroom.

Wide view along the corridor. It seems to get longer and longer.

Michael remains standing for a moment facing the slightly open door, then closes it silently, walks slowly, and stops in front of the bedroom door. He turns and disappears into the room.

The corridor is empty. Dafna's robe still lies on the floor.

6A. INTERIOR TO EXTERIOR / ABANDONED SWIMMING POOL AND
BEDROOM / MORNING

Muffled sounds. A naïve melody, like something from a music box. Camera move. Moss and green algae climb up cracked and faded blue-tiled walls. A row of deserted shower stands, two cement benches, the iron skeleton of a diving board, and children playing soccer on the floor of an empty swimming pool. The muffled melody sharpens; an ice cream truck slows and stops by the pool's fence.

6B.

We retreat in a slow crawl.
A dropped shoulder. A window. MICHAEL's stooped silhouette standing at the window.
We move away from his silhouette into the bedroom.
DAFNA's feet on the bed.
We move along her body. She sleeps on her belly between ruffled sheets. The dog is curled up beside her, his head on her thigh. Her pale face rests on a flowered pillow. Her breathing is quiet.
The distant tumult of the children's' voices emphasizes the silence.
The sound of a few footsteps.
Michael drops into the front of the frame and his head is swallowed into his pillow with a choked moan. The dog starts to whimper and run around the bed, circling Michael, who is trying to hold back his tears, and Dafna, who continues to sleep quietly at his side.
Michael sits on the edge of the bed, holding his breath. The dog comes to him, extends a paw and touches him. Michael gives it a small, vicious kick. A kind of momentary, sharp and unexplained burst of surprising violence. The dog gives a small yelp of pain and leaves the room silently. Michael stays tensed and silent. Suddenly he slaps himself hard.

A soft, quiet sigh. Dafna stirs in her sleep. Michael looks over to her. In one small movement she pulls away the sheet that covers her. She extends a slack hand, scratches a band aid stuck to her thigh—where she was given a shot—and goes back to sleep peacefully. The bandage is left crumpled and droopy. Michael reattaches it to her thigh with a trembling hand. His finger stays for another moment, shaking, on the end of the crumpled bandage. He turns and bends forward.
Behind him the window and the gloomy sky. For a moment the sun peeks out from between the clouds. A direct, harsh morning light stains the curtain. The slit of light cuts the length of his body. One part is swallowed in the darkness of the room, the other lit up. Just a short

moment, and the sun is swallowed up in the clouds. Again the grey, gloomy light, and again the echoing distant voices of children emphasize the oppressive feeling. A long, nagging beep suddenly cuts through the silence. Michael shivers, extends a hand, pulls the phone out of his shirt pocket, and looks down. The flashing screen shows: *09:00. Drink a large glass of water.*

7A. INTERIOR / APARTMENT KITCHEN / DAY

MICHAEL's hand grabs the faucet and turns it. His wedding ring raps lightly on a glass he's holding. Water flows into it.

7B. INTERIOR / APARTMENT KITCHEN / DAY

MICHAEL sips, takes a deep breath, and makes an effort to take another sip. Tears begin to roll down his face but he doesn't make a sound. He just keeps gulping down the water—his effort is evident. A long minute of forced drinking and inaudible weeping, in a kind of obstinate inner battle to not break down. He sits by a small table in the corner of the kitchen.

His cellphone starts ringing. He gives a small start and lowers his eyes to the screen. The word *Office* flashes. He freezes and doesn't answer. After 3 or 4 rings, the phone stops.

- A short silence -

All the phones on the home line start ringing. Michael gets up with a start but remains standing helplessly for an eternity of several rings. Then silence again. He turns his gaze. A small shelf. Cups in a row. Their handles aligned, facing the right. But one is slightly off center. He straightens it in a small automatic gesture. He looks down and sees there's still some water left in his glass. He picks it up. A short beep rings out from his cellphone. He puts down the glass, grabs the phone, and looks at the screen. The words *WHERE ARE YOU?!* glare at him. He picks up the glass again and drinks the water tensely. He sits down, takes the phone, and dials. The doorbell sounds. He hangs up.

VOICE BEHIND THE DOOR

Michael, it's me.

8. INTERIOR / APARTMENT [ENTRANCE DOOR TO CORRIDOR TO BEDROOM]
/ DAY

MICHAEL opens the door. A MAN in his fifties stands in the doorway, looks at him miserably, and says

MAN

The army called me, an officer who said he came to see you. Michael, I don't know what to say.

His voice breaks, he hugs Michael and starts crying. Michael remains slack and silent; his arms hang, his eyes are dry. Now that he can cry, tears won't come anymore. View from the corridor. The man, part hugging part being supported, continues to weep. Michael turns his eyes to the bedroom. The door is partly open. Through the narrow opening, we see part of a bed. DAFNA is asleep, her breathing peaceful. We come closer to her in a slow crawl. Her face rests peacefully on the pillow. A strand of hair falls across it.

9A. INTERIOR / APARTMENT [LIVING ROOM] / DAY

MICHAEL's finger taps the screen of his smartphone. We are in the living room, facing his back. He stands facing a large, wide window. The phone is against his ear and we hear an announcement.

PHONE MESSAGE

Hi, this is Alma. I can't come to the phone right now, so either text me or I'll call you back as soon as possible. Bye.

We move away, revealing the city in the background. He hangs up. At the front of the frame we see the MAN who cried. He sits facing a round dining table, his head in his hands, staring forward for another moment, then says

MAN

We must tell people.

A short silence. Michael stays facing the window and says

MICHAEL

I don't want people here now.

Silence again.

A snail crawls up the window against the grey city. We see Michael through the window, watching the snail as it

goes up and disappears. The broken sounds of a piano are heard again, but this time it's a children's xylophone.

Gloomy skies are reflected on Michael's face and he says

MICHAEL

Suddenly I had a flashback. I'm four years old. I'm at Sarah's kindergarten. Remember Sarah? The teacher?

One day Sarah asked Mom to replace her at the kindergarten for an hour. And so it happened, quite unexpectedly, Sarah suddenly vanishes and instead I see Mom. Mom seats us down and says she's our teacher now. Can you imagine how I felt? So proud.

10. INTERIOR / KINDERGARTEN / DAY [FLASHBACK]

A group of children. A woman in her late twenties speaks to them, but we don't hear her. We just approach her in a long, slow camera move.

MICHAEL's voice continues.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

I was sure she was going to tell everyone that she was my mother, but she didn't. Nor does she look at me. I'm just like the other kids.

Now we come closer to a four year-old boy. He looks upset.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

She's talking but I no longer listen to her. I just want everyone to know that she's my mom. And then I can't hold back anymore and I burst out yelling..

9B. INTERIOR / APARTMENT [LIVING ROOM AND BALCONY] / DAY

MICHAEL's eyes fill with tears. Suddenly rain falls, flooding the window pane. The man, apparently his older BROTHER, appears and stands behind him. He lays his hand on Michael's shoulder and says

BROTHER

We must let people know, Michael.

A beep cuts through the silence. Michael pulls the phone out of his shirt pocket and looks down. The phone vibrates. The screen flashes: *10:00. Drink a large glass of water.*
11A. INTERIOR / APARTMENT [KITCHEN] / DAY

Water streams into the clear glass.

11A. INTERIOR / APARTMENT [KITCHEN] / DAY

11B. INTERIOR / APARTMENT [KITCHEN] / DAY

MICHAEL drinks up the water in one long gulp, pulls himself together and says

MICHAEL
I'm going to tell Mother...

His brother wants to say something but Michael anticipates and says

MICHAEL
You stay here and start making calls. And do me a favor. I don't want anyone here when I get back. Say that DAFNA was sedated and... I don't know, I...
(a short silence.)

His brother (quietly, into the pause)

BROTHER
Forget Mother now...

Michael interrupts him and says

MICHAEL
I need some air too, Avigdor. I'm suffocating.

Avigdor gives in and says nothing.

12. INTERIOR-EXTERIOR / TAXI IN MOTION / DAY

12A. INTERIOR + EXTERIOR

The wet window of a taxi.
MICHAEL's dull and dry gaze through long drops of rain running down the window. He sits in the back seat. The

taxi drives slowly. The gloomy grey and splotches of color of a blurry city smear the glass. The picture is liquid.

12B. INTERIOR / EXTERIOR

The song fades abruptly, replaced by the voice of the announcer from the cab's radio:

RADIO ANNOUNCER

It's 10:30 a.m. and these are the headlines from Voice of Israel.

The jingle of the news bulletin.

NEWSCASTER

Good morning.
A survey by the Dahaf Institute has concluded that Zion Golan will win tonight's *Big Brother V.I.P. Competition*. Speaking this morning with Voice of Israel, Zion Golan kept his restraint and said

ZION GOLAN'S VOICE

I'm happy about the survey but I only trust God Almighty.

NEWSCASTER

More headlines. An IDF soldier was killed last night by shots fired at our forces. His family was informed...

The cab driver turns down the radio and says

CAB DRIVER

I liked Zion until I saw he was shaving his chest hair. That episode really turned me off him. Man, you were an officer in the army! What's all this transvestite thing? And all this talk about "the modern man" who uses face cream and is self-aware? That Russian silicon bombshell, Larissa, really wants to get him into bed, and he comes out saying he needs to feel something first. And that actually raises his rating, d'you believe it?!
This country is going to hell, I'm telling you...

13A. INTERIOR / GERIATRIC HOME LOBBY / DAY

Side of an armchair; worn upholstery. MICHAEL's fingertips twiddle a strand of unraveled threads. A small, frenetic movement. He sits in a heavy, depressing lobby that's shaped like a wide corridor. Corduroy armchairs in brown and beige. Faded plastic flowers in faded plastic flowerpots. The lobby is deserted. Just one old man with a walker shuffling at the far end. A dull thud and the sound of dragging feet. A short silence, and again, a thud and the dragging. A metronome, but frighteningly slow.

He lowers his eyes. Three old magazines lie on the corner of the table. The top one is open. And old ad in the centerfold: A clean-cut, fresh-looking ice-cream girl smiles at him silently.

He looks back at the approaching old man, who keeps staring ahead. The leg of the walker thuds on the floor. A slipper drags. A bony hand. Wheezing. Strenuous breaths. Michael continues to follow him with his eyes. The old man crosses in front of a picture on the wall. Michael's gaze stops at the picture. A faded, yellowed portrait of Herzl.

A woman's voice nears. Words in Thai. A caregiver, talking on a cellphone while pushing an old woman in a wheelchair, crosses in front of Benjamin Zeev Herzl. They turn and disappear.

The old man continues to drag his feet, moving away.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Mr Feldman.

Michael's fingertips pull at the strand of upholstery threads. He starts and raises his eyes. An Ethiopian nurse and a well-groomed old woman.

He gets up. The old woman smiles with a loving look.

He kisses her. She sits down. He sits next to her.

Her bony hand strokes his face.

Michael looks at his MOTHER and says

MICHAEL

Mother, something terrible has happened.

His voice is dry and his face hard.

MICHAEL

I came to tell you that Jonathan's been killed.

She continues to smile at him lovingly.

Michael comes close to her face and tries to focus her gaze.

MICHAEL

You remember Jonathan, don't you?

She continues to smile and nods. Her smile is a little detached.

Michael doesn't give up. He takes her hand and asks her

MICHAEL

Who's Jonathan?

MOTHER

Your son. The soldier.

MICHAEL

Yes. So did you understand what I told you?

She nods.

Michael lets go of her hand for a moment and straightens the three magazines scattered on the corner of the table. His face is tight. His movement small and tense, somewhat neurotic. He gives his mother another strained look and asks with restrained anger

MICHAEL

What did you understand of I told you?

MOTHER

That Jonathan was killed.

She continues to smile and look at him lovingly. She strokes his face with a trembling hand and says

MOTHER

Avigdor...

14. INTERIOR / KINDERGARTEN / DAY [FLASHBACK]

C.U. of a BOY bursting out saying

BOY

The teacher is my mom!
(silence)

The TEACHER/MOM looks at him coldly and says

TEACHER/MOM

Go stand in the corner.

Her voice is dry. She's not even angry: For her he continues to be a stranger. He looks stunned. Giggling. The piano starts again. He goes to the corner. Hurt, he stares at the floor. A monotonous beep cuts through the notes.

- Cut -

13B. INTERIOR / GERIATRIC HOME LOBBY / DAY

View of a flashing cellphone screen:
"11:00 Drink a large glass of water"
 Wide view of the deserted lobby. Michael's mother and her Ethiopian nurse move away. Michael bends over into the front of the frame. The faucet of a water cooler comes into focus. He presses the button and drinks. Dance music from the Twenties begins to echo through the lobby. Michael turns his gaze. A wide wooden door. Two or three steps and he's in front of it. A small metal sign: *Activities Room*. He pushes the heavy door slightly and peeps in.

13C INTERIOR / ACTIVITIES ROOM IN GERIATRIC INSTITUTION / DAY

A wide, deserted, old-fashioned hall. The music echoes between gloomy walls. A playback, or an organist playing. Five elderly couples are dancing. An old man in a wheelchair watches them from the side of the room. A tired dancing instructor says monotonously

DANCE INSTRUCTOR

Forward, forward, to the right, stop.

Backward, backward, to the left,

stop. One, two, to the right, stop.

Backward, two, to the left, stop.

Her indifferent voice is dull. The old couples dance; their movements are automatic. A pyramid of simple Formica chairs in the far corner of the hall. Michael stands in the doorway of the hall and stares in for a long moment.

15. INTERIOR-EXTERIOR / MOVING TAXICAB / DAY

MICHAEL sits in the back seat. He presses the phone to his ear.

ALMA (PHONE MESSAGE)

Hi, this is Alma. I can't come to the phone right now, so either...

He hangs up. Looks out. The rain is over.
A blurry street through the window.
Long view on a row of grey buildings and suddenly, the sea.
A short moment with the sea, then cut.

16. INTERIOR / APARTMENT [ENTRANCE DOOR CORRIDOR→LIVING ROOM]
/ DAY

The door opens and MICHAEL comes in.
A WOMAN-CHILD in her thirties, head shaved, wearing rebellious jeans stands in the corridor, leaning against the wall. She raises her tearful eyes and whispers

WOMAN

Michael...

She walks to him and hugs him, presses against his body, demanding his embrace. There is something obsessive and blatant in her pressing against him. Half-heartedly he puts a hand on her shoulder. Her body shakes with silent weeping.

From the kitchen we hear AVIGDOR's quiet voice

AVIGDOR

Probably midday tomorrow...
I don't know what time yet.

Michael looks away to the part of the living room beyond the wall.

A 70 year-old MAN sits in an armchair. His hard face expressionless.

Michael tries to disengage himself gently from the woman's embrace but she presses hard against his body, somewhat forcing herself on him. The tattoo of a snake coils along the back of her neck.

Avigdor now stands at the opening of the kitchen, the phone pressed to his ear. Michael stares at him. Avigdor shrugs, as though saying "What could I do?" and says

AVIGDOR (INTO PHONE)

No, he asked that no one comes over for now.

Michael whispers to the woman

MICHAEL

Let me go to your father for a moment.

He tries once again to free himself from her clinging embrace. She keeps pressing against him. He disengages himself in a brutal gesture. Their eyes meet. Her breathing is hard. Her eyes are still teary, but her gaze is enraged.

Michael goes to the man seated in the living room. Under the man's inspection, Michael keeps silent for a moment and says

MICHAEL

Avram...

The man gets up and shakes Michael's hand. A firm but slightly trembling palm. His eyes stays dry and hard, but with forced restraint.

Michael looks away.

A SOLDIER sits on the sofa. Skullcap, tasseled vest, and second lieutenant bars. *Yeshiva* boy and officer in one package.

OFFICER (GETS UP)

Mr Feldman...

Michael nods.

OFFICER

Second Lieutenant Israel Schwartz
from the Military Rabbinate.

Extends his hand and adds

OFFICER

My sympathies.

Michael returns a limp handshake.

OFFICER

I'm the officer in charge of the
funeral arrangements.
I need to coordinate some details
with you and brief you. In private,
if possible.

MICHAEL

Wait for me in my office, this way...

Points to the spiral staircase leading to the attic.
The funeral officer nods.

17. Interior / apartment [kitchen] / day

MICHAEL stops for a moment in the kitchen doorway. The kitchen table looks like a small war room. AVIGDOR is bent over a laptop computer, talking on the phone. His back is turned to Michael and he's unaware of his presence.

AVIGDOR

(in a quiet voice and dictation RHYTHM)
 With deep sorrow and profound grief... (Listens) No, without "Blessed is the one true Judge," something simple. (Listens) And profound grief, yes. We hereby announce the passing of our beloved son Jonathan Feldman, blessed be his memory, who fell... (Listens) What? (Listens) Yes, he's a soldier, was. I mean. (Listens) Nineteen and a half. Maybe "plucked" instead of "fell?" Plucked prematurely? Or "In the prime of life?" (Listens) I see. For a soldier it's "fell"... (Listens) No, no, whatever's customary. (Listens) Yes, "fell in the line of duty," if that's what's customary... (Listens) So, then: The funeral will be held—here the date and time—at Trumpeldor Cemetery, the military plot, Salvation Gate...

Michael moves away, opens a door and steps in.

18. INTERIOR / APARTMENT [BATHROOM] / DAY

A narrow, tall toilet. A black toilet seat and a small Bauhaus-style skylight. Round, soft winter light falls on a sink and faucet attached to the wall. Elongated porcelain tiles that look like ivory bars. MICHAEL sits on the toilet lid and listens to his phone.

ALMA'S (PHONE MESSAGE)

Hi, this is Alma. I can't come to the phone right now, so either text me or I'll call you back as soon as possible. Bye.

A beep.

He wants to say something but nothing comes out. He sits speechless for a long moment, then finally hangs up.

Silence. He feels stuck. Doesn't know what to do and how to continue. Suddenly he says to himself

MICHAEL

Jonathan is dead. My son is dead.
He's dead.

He tries to cry. Makes an effort, but nothing comes out.

MICHAEL

It hurts. It hurts that my boy is
dead.

(Slaps himself hard)

It hurts.

(Another slap)

It hurts.

He turns on the faucet, puts his hand under the stream of water and turns the faucet to "warm." The water heats up and scalds his hand.

19. INTERIOR / APARTMENT [SMALL OFFICE] / DAY

A framed, faded drawing hangs on the wall. It shows a complicated, symmetrical, impressive structure. The funeral officer stands in front of it, his puzzled look trying to decipher the architectural enigma. Michael comes in, the officer nods. They sit in two armchairs like those in a magazine, near a tangled orbital drawing. Or an Escher reproduction. Now we also see a period drawing table and a computer nook next to a round Bauhaus-style window.

The OFFICER opens a notebook and says

FUNERAL OFFICER

Before we start I'd like to confirm a
few details.

Does the deceased have a middle name?

MICHAEL

No... Just Jonathan Feldman.

The funeral officer writes while saying

FUNERAL OFFICER

Staff... Sergeant... Jonathan...
Feld...

MICHAEL (INTERRUPTS HIS MUMBLING)

...He's a corporal, not a staff
sergeant.

FUNERAL OFFICER

He's been promoted after his death.
It's an privilege bestowed on all
deceased IDF soldiers.

Returns to his notebook.

FUNERAL OFFICER

Jonathan Feldman, son of... Michael
and Dafna, right?

Michael nods. The funeral officer writes

FUNERAL OFFICER

(writes)

Michael... and Daf...

MICHAEL

(Interrupts him again)

But if he was promoted he should be a
sergeant, not a staff sergeant.

FUNERAL OFFICER

(Thinks for a moment)

Maybe they want to give him a special
honor.

MICHAEL

Why?! Do you know how he died?

FUNERAL OFFICER

(suddenly stressed)

No...

(Hurriedly goes back to procedure)

So, the funeral is set for three
o'clock tomorrow. At 13:00, the
command car with the coffin will
arrive here. I take it you know that
IDF soldiers are buried in coffins?

Michael nods.

FUNERAL OFFICER

The coffin will be accompanied by an
honor guard of six soldiers...

At twenty past one the bus will
arrive to pick up whoever needs a
ride, and at one-thirty we start
moving north to the cemetery. I'll

lead the convoy with the jeep, behind me the command car with the coffin, then you, the family, in a van following the coffin. Then the civilian vehicles, and the bus bringing up the rear.

At two we arrive at the cemetery. The coffin, wrapped in the Israeli flag, will repose in the communion hall for forty minutes. At a quarter to three, latest, we'll begin the rending ceremony in which the rabbi will tear your shirt. A small tear, near the heart, as written, "And Jacob rent his clothes... and mourned his son..." when they mistakenly thought that Joseph had died. Genesis XXXVII, verse 34. That's also when you'll say your first *Kaddish*.

At three the funeral procession will go from the communion hall to the military plot. The coffin, borne by the honor guard, in the lead. If you want to bear the coffin you can join in, but I don't recommend it. It's better you support your wife...

When we reach the grave we'll start the burial ceremony, which includes the interment of the coffin. This is a very difficult moment, especially for the mother. For you, too, of course. But after all, you know, we are men.

Michael turns his gaze to the entrance to the room (next to the officer and slightly behind him), the door having been left partly open.

In the gap between the door and the frame stands the dog. Their eyes meet. Michael gestures to the dog to come in. The dog stays.

The officer raises his voice slightly in order to regain Michael's attention, and continues

We'll begin the ceremony with a three-gun salute, then we'll say "He shall enter into peace." We cover the coffin with soil, we say the *Tzidduk HaDin* prayer, you say your second *Kaddish*. Then the eulogies.

Michael again turns away from the officer and coaxes the dog to come. The dog raises a paw, opens the door in a small movement, but stays put.

In the background the officer's voice

OFFICER

(Continues)

On behalf of the IDF: the battalion commander, Jonathan's direct commander, and one of his company mates, a guy named...

(Thumbs through his notebook pages and raises his voice)

Danny Weiss. You know him?

Michael turns his eyes back to him and shakes his head.

FUNERAL OFFICER

(Mumbles)

It says here he was Jonathan's friend from high school...?

Again Michael signals to the dog to come to him. The dog takes a hesitant step forward, then stops.

The funeral officer pauses for a moment, then continues

FUNERAL OFFICER

After the eulogies we'll go on to the burial prayer, *O God Full of Mercy*, and the third *Kaddish*.

Once again Michael cajoles the dog into coming to him. Maybe he even whispers "Come..."

In the background the officer's voice

OFFICER

(Continues)

After which you may eulogize your son, if you wish. And then words from civilians: family members, teachers, friends.

The dog relents and comes nearer, but its movements are hesitant.

FUNERAL OFFICER

This is also the time...

Suddenly he sees the dog and recoils a little, staying frozen in place, tense and silent.

The dog puts its head on Michael's knees. His movements are still hesitant, yet it looks like a ritual. Like a moment from a familiar ceremony. A moment in which Michael regrets and the dog forgives. Michael lays a gentle hand on the dog's head and strokes it silently. The dog closes its eyes and surrenders to the touch.

Michael turns his eyes back to the officer. The officer shakes off his paralysis and continues. His voice is a little tense.

FUNERAL OFFICER

This is also the time to do something special, if you wish, like read a poem or tell a story about him—one that tells something about his character. Something... maybe even something a bit amusing. A little smile, you know, always helps to cope and... to go on.

Michael keeps staring at him with an impervious, unresponsive look.
The officer hurriedly concludes

FUNERAL OFFICER

Finally, we move on to the laying of wreaths. Two female soldiers will lay four wreaths: the battalion's wreath, the brigade's wreath, the wreath of his military branch, and the IDF's wreath.

Michael is silent. A long silence.

FUNERAL OFFICER

If you have any questions, remarks, requests...

Michael still silently stroking the dog.

FUNERAL OFFICER

(Tries to get him to speak)
I'm here to address any of these.

Michael stays silent for a moment, then suddenly says

MICHAEL

I want to see him.

FUNERAL OFFICER

(Doesn't really understand)
Who?

MICHAEL
Jonathan. The body.

FUNERAL OFFICER
(Stressed)
Mr Feldman, that's unnecessary.

The dog senses the rising tension and leaves quickly.

MICHAEL
(Gets heated)
What do you mean? A father wants to see his son before he's buried, what's unnecessary here?!

FUNERAL OFFICER
(Stammers)
I'm sorry, but that's out of my hands.

MICHAEL
(close to exploding)
So whose hands is it in?!

FUNERAL OFFICER
(Tries to calm him down)
Mr Feldman, there are many ways of saying goodbye. You can read something, maybe something he wrote. Or perhaps have us play a song he loved. We can play it, we do have a sound system. Or organize a few of his buddies to sing it. You know how it is, there's always the friend with a guitar...

MICHAEL
Do you even have a body?

FUNERAL OFFICER
What?!

MICHAEL
I'm asking if there's anything left of him. If there'll be a body in the coffin or if you'll put some bricks in there so that I'll feel like I'm carrying something!

His cellphone beeps.

The screen flashes:

12:00 Drink a large glass of
water

20. INTERIOR / APARTMENT [KITCHEN] / DAY

Michael makes an effort to drink half a sip. Then he tries to drink a little more, but he gives up. He's exhausted.

AVIDGOR'S VOICE

You look pale.

MICHAEL

(In a low voice)

I think they don't have a body.

The FUNERAL OFFICER passes the entrance to the kitchen.

FUNERAL OFFICER

(Mumbles)

May you never again suffer such
sorrow, Mr Feldman.

He hurries out.

AVIGDOR

What did he tell you?!

MICHAEL

He refused to let me see the body.

On the soundtrack the closing of the entrance door is heard.

AVIGDOR

But he didn't tell you they don't
have a body.

Michael is silent. He sees the obituary on the laptop's screen.

The words "*Jonathan Feldman, of blessed memory*" paralyze him.

AVIGDOR

(Realizing Michael has seen this)

Don't get stuck on this, Michael.
We're atheists, what does it matter?

Michael swallows another small sip of water. His gaze remains glued to the obituary. He looks weak and disturbed.

Avigdor glances at Michael, turns his eyes to his computer screen, tries to change the subject and says

AVIGDOR

How did it go? Did she even get any of it?

MICHAEL

(Returning his glance)

She got every word and didn't understand a thing.

Avigdor seizes the opportunity and presses "Esc" but his gesture catches Michael's attention again. The obituary disappears and is replaced by a silly screen saver: a photo of Avigdor, smiling and proud, between two young boys who appear to be his sons.

AVIGDOR

(While performing his actions)

People want to come over, to give you strength.

MICHAEL

(Stifling a burst of anger)

And what will they tell me? That I have their sympathies?! They'll talk to me about what a special kid he was?! Then they'll tell each other how strong Michael is, how he manages to hang in there and function?!

AVIGDOR

(Restrains himself over the sarcasm)

Don't insist on going through this alone. This is not another one of your projects.

Silence...

MICHAEL

Why does she call me Avigdor?

Avigdor is silent.

The phone rings.

AVIGDOR

Hello?

He listens for a moment, turns to Michael, and asks

AVIGDOR

What was Jonathan's Jewish calendar
date of birth?

Michael shrugs and is silent.

AVIGDOR

Don't you have an ID card of his
somewhere here?

21. INTERIOR / APARTMENT [JONATHAN'S ROOM] / DAY

Michael opens a wide drawer.
A clutter of things. Drawing pencils and crumpled sheets
of paper. Doodlings. A dried marijuana blossom in a tin
can. At the bottom of the drawer, a faded Playboy
magazine. January 1970. A Playmate with a naïve,
seductive pose. Two black Xs censor her nipples. Michael
looks at the magazine. His gaze glued to the picture. He
is still. Just a light tremor, almost imperceptible. He
averts his eyes. An ID card rests in the corner of the
drawer. Michael looks at the picture. His eyes blur for a
moment, and the card slips from his hands. He stumbles,
grabs hold of the back of the chair, regains his
bearings, and sits down on Jonathan's bed.

Cut.

Wide view of the room.

Michael pulls out his phone and dials.

ALMA (PHONE MESSAGE)

Hi, this is Alma...

He hangs up...

His finger flutters across the list of contacts. He stops
at *Jonathan*, trembles for a moment, then presses.

JONATHAN'S VOICE

Hello, this is Jonathan. I'm at the
end of the world right now and
there's no service here. But you can
leave a message and someday I'll
return.

He dials again and listens. Tears flood his face...

The doorbell rings. He starts, turns his gaze, and sees
the ID card he dropped on the bed. Jonathan's picture.
We see him for the first time. His face is youthful, but
the man inside show through.

We come closer to the picture. The soundtrack fades out and dies. Empty silence.

The voice of a WOMAN screaming

WOMAN'S VOICE
(Screaming)
Dafna!

Michael gets on his feet with halting breath.

22. INTERIOR / APARTMENT [BEDROOM / KITCHEN / ENTRANCE-DOOR→LIVING-ROOM] / DAY

A thick, opaque pane of glass. MICHAEL's silhouette approaches on the other side. A small click and he opens the door to Jonathan's room.

Facing him, the darkened corridor. At the end of the corridor he sees the OFFICER, the DOCTOR, and the FEMALE SOLDIER. He approaches them and glances toward the bedroom. The woman is bent over at Dafna's side, shaking her. He passes Avigdor, seated at his "war room," looking stunned. An eternity of seven or eight steps and Michael stands facing the three of them.

OFFICER
(Forcing a correct distance upon himself)
Mr Feldman, there has been a terrible mistake.
The soldier who was killed was named Jonathan Feldman, but he is not your son. He's another Jonathan Feldman.

(Takes a small breath and adds)
You son is alive and well.

Michael turns his gaze to the living room. The 70 YEAR-OLD MAN cries quietly. His phone rings. On the screen flashes the word *Alma*. He turns to the living room, walks over to the large, wide window, stops in front of it, presses the phone to his ear and says

MICHAEL
Alma...

His voice is quiet, his face peaceful.

ALMA'S VOICE
Hi, Dad. You were looking for me?

The piano plays.
The sun comes out from between the clouds. It blinds him
and he closes his eyes.

23. INTERIOR / BATHROOM

A paper boat floats in a bathtub. A drop of water falls
and creates soft, spreading circles. A SMALL BOY. Facing
him, a LITTLE GIRL. Their faces in the water and their
crouching bodies immobile.

A moment of nothing. Just a random drip. Together they
pull their heads out of the water and take a long breath
that turns into rolling laughter...

24. INTERIOR / APARTMENT [LIVING ROOM] / DAY

CU of MICHAEL lying on the floor with moist, staring
eyes. The laughter echoes into silence. His head rolls to
the side. He exhales and a tear slides down his cheek.
He sees the living room from floor level. A crumpled rug
and the leg of a table.

His cellphone lies at his side and beeps.

13:00 Drink a large glass of water

The doctor bends over him. His eyes are worried. At his
side stand the OFFICER and AVIGDOR.

DOCTOR

Keep lying down and tell me if
something hurts.

Michael just stares at him with a stunned look.

DOCTOR

Move your feet, your fingers.

MICHAEL

(Stunned)
What happened..?

DOCTOR

You fainted.

Michael remains stunned for a moment, then he suddenly
jumps up and shouts

MICHAEL

Where's Jonathan?!

He tries to get on his feet, but gets dizzy.

The doctor and the officer grab him and seat him gently on the sofa.

DOCTOR

(While performing his actions)
Take it slow, Mr Feldman.
Everything's fine with Jonathan.
Come, sit on the sofa.

Michael looks confused and upset.
Avigdor picks up the cellphone from the floor and puts it on the table, opposite Michael. Michael extends a hand and straightens it along the edge of the table in a small, automatic gesture.

DAFNA'S SISTER

(Off camera from bedroom)
Get up, Dafna, Jonathan's alive.
(Her voice is excited and full of joy)
It's not he who died. It's someone else.

OFFICER

(Can't hide his smile)
Jonathan is alive, Mr Feldman. And he has no idea...

MICHAEL

(Interrupts him)
So where is he?

OFFICER

At his unit. And he has no idea of all that happened.

MICHAEL

I want to see him.

OFFICER

We'll take care of it. I'm sure that tomorrow or the next...

MICHAEL

(Gets to his feet, interrupts him, and bursts out)
I want my son returned to me now!

DOCTOR

(Stressed)
Calm down, Mr Feldman. Sit down.

Tries to make him sit.
Michael shakes him off with a forceful movement and says

MICHAEL

Don't touch me!

The doctor recoils.

AVIGDOR

What's wrong with you, Michael? Calm down.

MICHAEL

I'll calm down when they return my boy to me.

(To the officer)

You killed him. You led me to believe you didn't even have a body!

OFFICER

Who told you such a thing?

AVIGDOR

What does it matter now, Michael?

He's alive!

That's it, it's over.

Extends his hand again and tries to hug him.

MICHAEL

(Disengages from his embrace)

Why are you so sure? Because they told you? First they told me he was dead. Now they tell me he's alive. Who are they, anyway?! They can't even tell me where he is!

OFFICER

I told you, Mr Feldman. He's with his unit.

MICHAEL

I didn't ask who he's with! I asked where he is!

DOCTOR

(Slightly raises his voice)

Mr Feldman, listen to me. You're having an anxiety attack.

MICHAEL

(Cuts in)

No! You listen to me! You made a mistake!

OFFICER

(Cuts in)

The system made a mistake, Mr
Feldman. It wasn't us personally.
Your son's in the Seam Zone, holding
a supply axis. Nothing operational,
just a roadblock on some side road.

The female soldier hands Michael a glass of water and
says

FEMALE SOLDIER

Here, Mr Feldman, drink this.

Michael takes the glass in a trembling hand and sips. His
sips are erratic.

AVIGDOR (MUMBLES)

Everything's fine, Michael. Drink up.
Calm down.

Michael hurls the glass to the floor, where it shatters.

MICHAEL

(Shouts)

Will you stop telling me to calm
down! I'm calmer than you are!

Silence... Everyone freezes.

DAFNA'S VOICE

Michael.

He looks toward her.
She stands in the living room doorway, wearing her
nightgown, and mumbles

DAFNA

It's not Jonathan, it's someone else.

Her eyes are moist and her smile euphoric.
Her sister stands slightly behind her. Her father goes
over to her and hugs her.
Dafna keeps smiling and mumbles

DAFNA

They made a mistake, Dad. It's
someone else.

Avigdor puts his hand on Michael's shoulder and says

AVIDGOR

Everything's fine, Michael. You see?

Michael shrugs him off. Avigdor recoils...

Dafna frees herself from her father, goes to Michael, strokes his face, and says

DAFNA

That's it, it's over.
Our Jonathan is alive.

He looks at her; a tear rolls down his face. He appears lost and confused. She gently seats him down on the sofa. He sits. She sits next to him, strokes his face, smiles, and says

DAFNA

It's not he who died; it's someone else.

Her smile is happy.

OFFICER

(With some relief)
Your son is fine. You have no more reason to worry.

MICHAEL

(Becomes angry once again)
Where did you say he was?

OFFICER

At a roadblock in the Seam Zone, holding a supply axis there.

MICHAEL

(Still heated but controlling himself)
And this Seam Zone, where is it?

OFFICER

(Stammering a little)
Near the border. It crosses a dead area, in the northern sector.

MICHAEL

A location! Give me a location!

OFFICER

(Loses his cool for a moment)
I'm not a field officer. I'm not supposed to point out the specific location.

(Immediately pulls himself together)
But I'll immediately get things moving so that your son will come home as soon...

MICHAEL

(Interrupts him)
 You mean you haven't started dealing
 with that yet?

OFFICER
 (Restrains himself and repeats)
 Mr Feldman, your son will return home
 as soon as possible.

MICHAEL
 (Flares up)
 And when is this "As soon as
 possible"? Because your dead area and
 your Seam Zone and all your military
 mumbo-jumbo is, after all, no more
 than a few hours from here.

AVIGDOR
 But he can't just stop everything and
 bring Jonathan here immediately.

MICHAEL
 (Bursts out at him)
 Stop what?! Tell me, are you on his
 side or mine?

AVIGDOR
 (Taken aback)
 I'm with you, Michael.
 (Again puts a hesitant hand on Michael's
 shoulder)
 I just want...

MICHAEL
 (Shakes him off rudely)
 Will you stop touching me! Why are
 you touching me all the time?!

Avigdor backs off.

Again Dafna tries to stroke Michael's face, but he shakes
 her off.
 Dafna lets go but stays close.

A short silence.

Dafna's sister approaches, lays a gentle hand on
 Michael's arm and say, almost in a whisper

DAFNA'S SISTER
 You're so right, Michael...

DAFNA

(Barks at her)
Don't interfere.
(Gives her a look)

She retreats somewhat.

DOCTOR
(In a calming voice)
Mr Feldman, you're experiencing an
anxiety attack.

DAFNA'S SISTER
It doesn't mean he's not right.

DAFNA
Shut your mouth!

Avram (the father) lowers his eyes. A short embarrassed
silence.

DOCTOR
(Tries again)
Let me give you a tranquilizer shot.

MICHAEL
So you can drug me like you drugged
my wife?

(To Dafna)
You're still under the influence.
That's why you're so euphoric.

DAFNA
(Strokes him)
I know you've been through lots of
things. Even if you don't talk to me
about them.
(Whispers to him)
Don't let the demon continue,
Michael. This isn't you now. It's the
demon.

Michael grabs her arm, takes her stroking hand off him
and hisses at her in a low voice

MICHAEL
Why are you talking to me as though I
were crazy? Are you with them, too?!

DAFNA
(Almost begging)
You're always sorry in the end,
Michael...

Michael's eyes take on a dull look.

DAFNA

Don't disconnect now.

(She shakes him)

What's important now is that our
Jonathan's alive. Please, give it up
this time, for me.

He removes her hand again as she tries to touch and
stroke him, but she presses against him and says

DAFNA

Let's tell everyone to leave. We'll
stay together, alone, order in some
food, pizza, or a cheeseburger, with
champagne. Let's get drunk.

Michael shakes her off roughly and says

MICHAEL

You're drugged, Dafna. You're not
yourself. They woke you too soon.

He makes a effort to restrain his voice, turns to the
officer, and says

MICHAEL

I demand that you take responsibility
and bring back my boy. Not tomorrow.
No "We'll see what we can do." Now!
That's the least the army should do...

(Turns to the doctor)

The fact that I'm anxious doesn't
mean I'm not reasonable. For five
hours my boy was dead. Suddenly he's
alive, but you don't really know
where he is. So what's so
unreasonable about what I'm demanding
here? Tell me, what's not reasonable?

They are silent. Dead silent.

Michael looks at them for another moment, then walks to
the entrance door and mumbles

MICHAEL

Why am I wasting my time on you!

(Opens the door and says)

Get out, please.

OFFICER

I'm sorry you feel this way, but I don't judge you, not in your state.

DOCTOR

(Whispers to Avigdor on his way out)
He's in a psychotic state. Keep an eye on him.

They leave.

Michael puts the earphone onto his ear and searches through his cellphone, muttering

MICHAEL

Psychotic state, yeah, right!
Bunch of impotents. Losers. Nobodies.

Running footsteps approach from the stairwell. The door opens and Alma enters in a storm.

ALMA

(Panting)

What's happened? Dad! Why didn't you answer? I just saw soldiers. Is Jonathan okay?

(Starts crying)

Michael hugs her and says

MICHAEL

Everything's okay, Alma. I'm bringing Jonathan back. I'm bringing him back home. Now.

He presses one of the numbers on his smartphone and waits.

He continues to hug Alma as he speaks into the earpiece

MICHAEL

Eitan, it's Michael. I need a favor, urgently. You said you have a friend who's a general in the army. Shmulik-something, someone who has influence, who can solve any problem with one phone call.

(Listens)

Okay, so this morning the army announced to me that Jonathan, my son...

- Brutal cut that interrupts Michael in mid-word -

25. EXTERIOR / ROAD AND MUD / LATE AFTERNOON

A dark sky over an expanse of fog and mud. A narrow road extends across the mire: a road, no wider than a truck, that rises from the mud and is swallowed by the fog.

TWO SOLDIERS next to each other. One is sitting on the burned, melted seat of a car. The other is standing in a concrete gunner's post next to a heavy machine gun. Silence. Just a click. And another click. In metronomic rhythm, coming nearer. A skinny cow enters the frame in a monotone gait, crosses it, and leaves.

Her steps moving away.

Again we are left with the two soldiers. They are staring forward at a distant point. We don't see what they are looking at, but it's clear that they're focusing on something.

A long look, a deep silence: only the whisper of muffled wind.

Title on picture
Three days before

Suddenly the soldier sitting on the burnt car seat says

SOLDIER ON SEAT

Did you know that the foxtrot is a
dance?

Silence...

The soldier gets to his feet, stands in front of the other soldier and his heavy machine gun and says

SOLDIER

The step of the foxtrot is, look:

(Takes a step forward)

Forward...

(Takes another step forward)

Forward...

(Half a step sideways, then a quick stop)

To the right and stop.

(Demonstrates again)

Backward, backward, to the left and
stop.

Grasps his gun like he's holding a woman and starts dancing silently on the road. The soldier with the machine gun is his audience.

A long minute. A soldier dancing the foxtrot with his gun against a background of endless mud.

CUT TO BLACK

Title: Jonathan

26. EXTERIOR / MOSTLY MUD / LATE AFTERNOON

The camera slowly moves down to the mud, then floats above it. The dark sky reflects on small patches of water, like scattered pieces of a puzzle. Deep silence. Only the muffled whistling of the wind. A long, floating camera move. The mud begins to lose its viscosity. It becomes watery and thin, and more and more parts of the sky are added to the reflected picture until the swamp turns into a puddle. In the middle of the puddle we see the reflection of a strange structure. The floating movement stops.

We move up from the puddle until we face the structure that looks like a concrete cube. One of its sides is sunk in the mud and it lists diagonally in a disturbing way. There are no windows, just a rusted iron door along the leaning side.

A bit behind the structure rises a tall, narrow tower: an observation platform with a tarpaulin ceiling. The tarp is billowing in the wind like a sail, and for a moment it seems the tower is the mast of a ship in a sea of mud and the leaning structure its command bridge.

The iron door rolls sideways in a creaking of wheels. Four figures come out of the structure. They're far away, but we can recognize them as soldiers. One of them turns to the tower and the other three cross the puddle and come toward us, in the direction of the road. The mud is soft and boggy and with effort they drag themselves along.

The lone soldier arrives at the tower and climbs the steps, but we focus on the other three. The camera soars upward and we view them from above, vertically. A "godlike" view. A view that turns them into pawns on a chessboard of mud, that makes their walking directionless and our point of view detached, cold, even a bit condescending. We will stay with this point of view for the time being.

Their slog ends and after a long minute the three soldiers reach the road.

The soldier in a concrete gunner's post dismantles the machine gun. Above him is a ragged, striped beach umbrella: faded blue and stained white. Another soldier comes out from the carcass of an ice cream truck. The

picture of a laughing ice cream girl under layers of rust and green scum. We can now see metal barrels, rolls of razor ribbon and a spike strip on the road. A weird roadblock in the middle of the muddy wilderness.

The soldiers who reached the road split up. One relieves the soldier with the machine gun. The other two soldiers on duty are also relieved. Their movements are mechanical and we observe from above the silent changing of the guard.

The soldiers who were replaced leave. From above we observe the three replacements. These soldiers, along with the one in the tower, make up section 1. Section 2, the one that was relieved, isn't really important to us and will exist only in the background.

The commander of section 1 (COMMANDER) stands by the ice cream truck, raises a pair of binoculars to his eyes, and scans the mud spread out beyond the other side of the road.

Amikam, the one at the gun post, also lifts binoculars to his eyes and scans around. Jonathan goes to a utility pole, opens the control box and lifts the switch. The light goes on. A muddy, flickery light. A misty halo of condensation flickers in the air. He sits down on the burnt car seat and, like his two comrades, presses a pair of binoculars to his face.

A long movement toward what they're looking at. No hills, just a flat plain of endless mud, a film of fog in the air, and the huge concrete and iron remains of an enclosed, abandoned industrial area. Torn tin vats, shattered smokestacks, and broken hangars, that, from our viewpoint, resemble a gigantic ship, a moment before its final drowning. Its stern sunk and its bow bursting out from the heart of the mud.

Evening slips onto the mud.

Cut.

27. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK + DESERTED SITE / NIGHT

Nagging rain.

A pair of army boots in a small puddle by the side of the road. Clinging mud oozes down the boot. A shabby plastic sheet wrapped around a huddled figure. The drops run down it. Through it we see stained army pants with knees drawn together, a worn notebook held between unraveling woolen gloves, and fingers grasping a fountain pen. Huddled on the burnt car seat, JONATHAN is writing maybe doodling. He's 18 and his face is boyish, but the man in him is beginning to bud.

He raises his eyes and looks at the silhouette of the deserted site that lies dark and silent amid the mud spreading before him. He searches for something unknown and then returns to his notebook.

Suddenly his gaze sharpens. He registers a blurry movement.

For a moment the deserted site lies dark and silent, when suddenly appears the short glimmer of a flashlight from one of the sides of the complex.

He raises his binoculars and sees the dim silhouette of a cavernous hangar.

AMIKAM tenses and embraces the machine gun.

COMMANDER comes in from the darkness and all three silently observe the deserted site.

The sound of an electrical buzz in the air and suddenly a bright, round circle of light falls on the three of them like a spotlight on a theater stage. It darts to the far end of the mud, smears over the hangar wall and wanders between smashed windows and darkened rooms. A short flash from one of the rooms. The spotlight darts to the window and floods the room with bright light. A wall, stained with damp and scum. A rotting leather armchair, and a standing lamp with a crumbling canvas lampshade.

A radio-like voice suddenly echoes in the air

VOICE

You have entered a military zone.
Please stop before the roadblock.

28. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK / NIGHT

Wide view. The circle of light (somewhat theatrical) now accompanies a grey private car. It drives on the narrow road, nears the roadblock, slows down, and stops. The message still echoes.

29. EXTERIOR (INTERIOR) / TOWER / NIGHT

A cassette stops playing.

A switch marked PLAY releases and the message is cut off. A hand grasps a heavy handle and pushes. It budes.

A faint creak.

The figure of RAPHAEL against the huge light that continues to blind us. A moment later it then fades and goes out. We can now see a pair of enormous loudspeakers atop the tower.

30. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK / NIGHT

The headlights of the car go off, as does the motor.

JONATHAN turns on a flashlight and lights up the windshield.

A MAN in his fifties: suit, balding head, well-groomed mustache.

He's dazzled and submissively lowers his eyes a bit.

At his side sits a woman of his age, presumably his wife. Her eyes are already lowered.

A well-groomed middle-class couple.

The COMMANDER goes to the driver's door. The window opens and the man hands him documents. The commander looks at the man's picture, directs the flashlight to his face, and compares the two. Then he looks at the woman's picture: She looks at least fifteen years younger there. He lights her face and studies her profile. Her skin is already a little wrinkled, her gaze submissive and still. A long look, then he turns, gets into the ice cream truck, and disappears.

Jonathan goes to the back of the car and checks the trunk.

A spare tire, a safety triangle, a toolbox, a used blanket, and a jerry can.

What you'd expect to find in the trunk of a car.

31. EXTERIOR-INTERIOR / INSIDE ICE CREAM TRUCK / NIGHT

A worn keyboard. Fingers type. Their movement is clumsy. The face of the driver on a stained, square screen that flickers in saturated color.

The ceiling drips. The COMMANDER sits on a threadbare chair, bends over the sales counter across from an ancient monitor, and types.

He's 21 years old, his moist face is tired but his look focused.

A prickly beard, worn horn-rimmed glasses, dripping hair. On the moist, rusty tin sheet behind him rest the remains of a painted image: an ice cream cone with two flavors, punch and banana.

At his side, on a disintegrating ice cream freezer, sits a massive radio. Its side panel has been removed and a tangle of wires gush out.

The radio murmurs. A disturbing electromagnetic buzz and the wavering whine of shortwave frequencies.

MAN'S VOICE FROM RADIO

(Quietly, almost whispering)

Infrared and other special measures indicated north of the rear battery.

32A. EXTERIOR {*INTERIOR} / TOWER / NIGHT

A metallic ticking sound.
The hand of a massive iron clock closes on the hour
10:00.
A rusty bell rings briefly and sprays tiny water
droplets.
Damp flares are strewn across the wet wooden-planked
floor.
Raphael's hands grip a dripping flare and slide it into a
rifle-based launcher.
A shot.

33A. EXTERIOR / MUD / NIGHT

The flare soars and belches out intermittent sparks,
starts to whirl and dive, and falls into the mud in a
phosphoric glow, twitches convulsively like a burned
jellyfish, hisses, dies away and a cloud of smoke
disperses around it. It lies in the mud, sooty,
blackened—like a burnt can of food.

32B. EXTERIOR {*INTERIOR} / TOWER / NIGHT

RAPHAEL's hands pull up another soaked flare and slide it
into the launcher. We see his silhouette against the dark
sky. He cocks the launcher and shoots.

33B. EXTERIOR / MUD/ NIGHT

The flare soars, its trail steady. A dull boom. The flare
ignites and a tiny parachute opens. A flickering beacon
lights up the area, like a sparkler on a birthday cake.

34. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK / NIGHT

The light shines on the faces of the couple in the
Mercedes.
The DRIVER steals a quick glance. The WOMAN's eyes stay
down.
The COMMANDER hands the paperwork back to the driver.
The Mercedes starts and then moves away. The light
flickers on the wet road.

35. INTERIOR TO EXTERIOR / ICE CREAM TRUCK AND ROADBLOCK
/ NIGHT

The COMMANDER bends over the half-dismantled radio and
pokes around in its bowels. He turns a screw with a
gentle movement and tunes to a radio station.

He lights a cigarette, smokes, and listens.
 A song, or rather a monologue with notes of music. A
 strange, kitschy, romantic tune.
 A long movement. The camera leaves the commander, exits
 the ice cream truck and moves away, turns and passes
 alongside the gunner's post that is lit by the dim
 flickering glow of the fog light. Amikam and Jonathan are
 withdrawn into themselves, listening to music. They are
 silent.
 A skinny cow walks on the road and calmly crosses the
 roadblock. They stare at it silently. The cow disappears
 into the darkness. We face the deserted site. The song
 still rings out when suddenly a flashing appears from the
 room in the deserted complex.

36. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK / NIGHT

JONATHAN raises his binoculars and peers.
 The room is dark for a moment. Then, suddenly, another
 flash and a trail of movement.

37A. EXTERIOR {*INTERIOR} / TOWER + DESERTED SITE / NIGHT

The sound of Gothic Rock from Raphael's earphones. He
 turns a heavy switch on a control box affixed next to
 him.
 A creak and an electric buzz, and the giant light behind
 him trembles, ignites, and lights up.
 The light floods the room in the deserted site. The room
 is empty, just a small puff of dust.
 Raphael turns the switch back and the light fades and
 goes out with a dull hiss. Its fan still turns for
 fifteen seconds, then dies into silence.
 Something attracts his attention. A faraway dot of light,
 moving strangely.
 He puts a speaker to his lips, pushes the button, waits
 for a small grating feedback to end and says

RAPHAEL

The runner is approaching, repeat,
 the runner is approaching.

His voice echoes from the speakers.

37. INSERT / EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK / NIGHT

Jonathan gets up from the car seat, walks over to the
 concertina wire that blocks the road, moves it aside,
 goes back to his place, and sits.
 Silence.

The noise of a faraway motor, coming closer.
 A huge motorcycle emerges from the darkness, crosses the roadblock like a intercontinental rocket, leaving behind it black smoke and flying shreds of plastic.
 Jonathan gets up and moves the concerted wire back into place.

37B. EXTERIOR {*INTERIOR} / TOWER + DESERTED SITE / NIGHT.

The iron clock in the tower ticks: half a minute to midnight.
 A glass with a little coffee moves in a rhythmic shiver. The coffee shakes.
 The flares also shake on the wet wooden floor.
 The sound of footsteps on the iron stairs. Small vibrations shake the tower.
 Raphael gets to his feet. His face is pale but his gaze is hot and sharp.
 A replacing soldier comes in and Raphael passes him, nods, and leaves.
 The clock closes on midnight. A short ring of a bell.
 The replacement soldier grabs a dripping flare and arms the launcher.

38. EXTERIOR / MUD / NIGHT

The COMMANDER, AMIKAM and RAPHAEL plod along in the boggy mud on their way from the road to the structure. The sound of a shot and the dull "boom" of the flare. The light begins to play on the walls of the leaning structure, and on their exhausted eyes.

AMIKAM
 (While they walk)
 Don't you think the room is a bit
 more crooked than it was yesterday?

No one responds. Just panting and concentration on their efforts.

39. INTERIOR / LEANING STRUCTURE - DRINKING FOUNTAIN / NIGHT

A long tin drinking fountain: four taps over a deep trough. A hand opens a tap. A rusted butterfly handle turns with a creak. The tin pipes shiver and the fountain shakes. The tap begins to rattle and whine. It vibrates and spews air and frozen blobs of water. A long quarter-minute of creaky shaking until the stream stabilizes and

the fountain calms down. The three remaining taps open and four pairs of filthy hands are washed. Brown water mixed with soap flows into the trough.

40. INTERIOR / LEANING STRUCTURE [INSERTS] / NIGHT

A can opener runs around the top of a can and opens it. A lump of tinned meat. A thin layer of ice over the fat. A burner lights up under a row of four cans. Fat runs down the side of the first can and drips onto the flame. A long, broken "tssss..."

41. INTERIOR / LEANING STRUCTURE - ROOM / NIGHT

Camera moves from one CU to another. Each soldier is deep in his own thoughts and they eat the meat in silence. AMIKAM, at the end of the line, eats with a thoughtful gaze and mumbles, partly to his comrades, partly to himself

AMIKAM

We could check it...

Wide view of the space.

A row of four folding field cots, a Spartan table, and a heap of cans of meat. No windows; just a muddy, flickering fluorescent lamp, buzzing softly. The walls leak and the ceiling drips, the floor is crooked, and everything leans to one side in a disturbing slant. Amikam goes to the heap of meat cans, picks one and goes with it to the slightly higher corner. He sets the can down on its side, glances at his watch and releases his grasp. The can rolls across the floor until it hits the lower corner of the structure.

AMIKAM

Eight seconds. If tomorrow it takes less time, we'll know the room is getting more crooked.

No one reacts. They continue to eat in silence.

A long silence.

The COMMANDER glances at the screen of a plastic-clad tablet and says

COMMANDER

Our next shift begins at eight.

Looks at RAPHAEL and says

COMMANDER
Raphael, roadblock.

Raphael nods.
Turns to JONATHAN

COMMANDER
Jonathan, gun.

Jonathan nods.
Looks at Amikam

COMMANDER
And you're in the tower.

AMIKAM
The tower, sir.

COMMANDER
Good night.

No answer. He doesn't expect one.

42. INTERIOR / LEANING STRUCTURE - ROOM / NIGHT

Wide view from the ceiling. The camera moves from cot to cot.

The sound of a video game: explosions and gunfire. The COMMANDER is on his cot, leaning against the wall, bent over the screen of his tablet, and lost in his game. Now we continue and pass over Amikam, who says

AMIKAM
If we're leaning, then in the end we'll flip over and sink. When that happens, it'll happen in a split second. I don't know if I'll have time to say, "I told you so," so I'm saying it now.

Silence.

Raphael rests staring at the ceiling, smoking. Sounds of Heavy Metal music comes out of his earphones. He has a pillow patterned with splashes of blood, lots of it. Like after a bullet to the head.

JONATHAN lies at the end of the row, bent over his notebook, and writes. His pillow has a spiral printed on it.

He hears a faint creak and directs his flashlight to the floor by his cot. Muffled bubbling sounds. A trickle of murky water bubbles up from the floor.

43. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK / DAY

A puddle. Hard rain whips down on it for a moment, then suddenly lets up and stops.

A few last drops, and we can already recognize the reflection of RAPHAEL.

The rain has melted the tattoo of the sea nymph with the amputated fin and it is running down his neck. Long beads of water stream down and turn from transparent to purple. He looks out into the room in the deserted site. The room is empty. Dripping. The floor is muddy. Small puddles...

44. EXTERIOR {*INTERIOR} / TOWER AND ROADBLOCK / DAY

View of the top of the tower. Two loudspeakers against the somber sky. The message rings out.

You have entered a military zone.
Please stop in front of the
roadblock.

AMIKAM stands in the tower, observing.
A small van nears the roadblock, slows and stops.

45. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK / DAY

View of the driver's photograph. Around sixty.
The COMMANDER raises his eyes, looks at the driver and disappears under the sunshade.
RAPHAEL opens the rear door. Boxes of various toys packed tightly one on the other fill the van. He pulls out a box. A robot-like soldier made of cheap plastic. It looks like a cyborg from a sci-fi B-movie.

46. EXTERIOR-INTERIOR / INSIDE ICE CREAM TRUCK / DAY

CU of the keyboard, the aging monitor behind it.
The commander's hand sets down a cup containing the remains of coffee. It sits between him and the monitor.
Through the smeared glass of the monitor we see his fingers typing. The driver's face is on the screen.
The radio murmurs. A panel light flickers. Obscure military verbiage in low volume, almost whispering. A man's voice says

MAN'S VOICE
(From radio)

Fire control and topographical data
processing across the peripheral
axis.

47. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK / DAY

Jonathan is bent over, drawing, by the machine gun.
He suddenly senses something, raises his eyes and sees
the van's driver staring at him, a direct and intense
look. An unnerving look.
A moment of locked eyes, in an effort to be direct with
the driver.
The commander returns the documents to the driver.
The driver takes his documents, one more look at
Jonathan, then he starts the van and drives away.

RAPHAEL'S hand sets the toy robot soldier on the road.
The toy soldier marches in place, raises his gun, and
shoots at the back of the van. A red light flashes from
the barrel. A moment later he shoots again, and again,
time after time, marches in place, and shoots in a
continuous loop.

48. EXTERIOR-INTERIOR / INSIDE ICE CREAM TRUCK / DAY

The COMMANDER is bent over the half-dismantled radio and
rummages around in its entrails. He turns a screw gently,
and then listens.
Under the electronic murmur we hear classical music.
He fine-tunes to it. Mahler's fifth symphony. He lights a
cigarette, smokes, and listens.
A long camera move leaves him.
Tracks of rain weave between the knobs of the half-
disassembled radio. A small puddle forms under it. A moth
gets caught on the surface, among grease stains and
flecks of rust. The sounds of the symphony swell. The
moth floats; its wings tremble.

49. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK / DAY

A small grating sound of feedback and AMIKAM's voice from
the loudspeakers

AMIKAM

The runner is approaching.
Repeat, the runner is approaching.

Raphael moves aside the concerted wire blocking the road.
The symphony is at its climax. Now, in the light of day,
we recognize the military BMW (or some other massive

motorcycle) roaring across the roadblock. The cyclist, or "runner," bent over. A tight-fitting military jacket with a furry collar and an opaque helmet.

Screams.

Jonathan lowers the binoculars and looks up to the sky. A flight of gulls crosses above the mud, over the deserted site.

He stares at the gulls for a long moment.

54. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK / DAY

The van with the toys comes back from the opposite direction.

The message sounds again.

55. EXTERIOR {*INTERIOR} / TOWER AND ROADBLOCK / DAY

The cassette rewinds and stops. A button releases.

56. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK / DAY

RAPHAEL opens the back door of the van. The space that had been packed tight with toys is now empty. Just one forgotten Barbie doll lies on the floor.

57. INTERIOR / LEANING STRUCTURE / DAY

The Barbie doll is bent over. Her elbows leaning on RAPHAEL'S muddy boot.

The robot soldier is pressed against her from behind, marching on the spot and shooting. Barbie is pushed slightly forward and it looks like he is fucking her and shooting, fucking and shooting.

A can of meat crosses them and rolls down the slanting floor.

We slide over the rolling can and it hits the wall in the lower corner of the room.

A rivulet of cloudy water starts forming in the corner.

AMIKAM

(Glances at his watch and announces worriedly)

Seven seconds.

(Turns his eyes to his comrades)

One second less than yesterday.

Wide view. They eat in silence. Just the sound of the toy soldier, fucking and shooting.

CUT

With his pen JONATHAN draws a new "tattoo" on RAPHAEL'S neck. The Gothic Metal continues to murmur from Raphael's earphones. Amikam holds a stained shaving mirror to his profile and shows it to him. This time it's a screaming baby.

AMIKAM

(Drones on in his monotonous voice, while holding the mirror)

Nice tattoo. Artistic. Full of meaning. And message.

(Is silent for a moment.)

Tomorrow the rain will erase it. And the day after tomorrow the sun will melt the icebergs on the Pole, and the sea will flood the world. And then you can say goodbye to meaning. And to the message. No more message...

COMMANDER

(from his bed, without raising his eyes from his tablet)

It'll take a little more than two days for the sea to flood us, Amikam.

AMIKAM

I mean, from a cosmic point of view, sir. A point of view that brings up questions.

COMMANDER

What questions are bothering you, Amikam?

AMIKAM

Philosophical ones, sir. What are we fighting for here? For what purpose?

COMMANDER

I hadn't noticed you fighting here, Amikam.

AMIKAM

Fighting a psychological war, sir. Fighting the unknown.

COMMANDER

And who is this unknown that you're fighting?

AMIKAM

If I knew who it was I wouldn't call
it "unknown."

A dull creaking sound. A folding cot lurches. They look
at each other in silence.

AMIKAM

We're sinking.

The COMMANDER glances at his tablet and says

COMMANDER

Our next shift starts at midnight.

Looks at AMIKAM and says

COMMANDER

You're with me at the roadblock,
Amikam.

AMIKAM

I'm with you till the last bullet,
sir.

Raphael moves his pelvis like an ass-kisser.

COMMANDER

(To Raphael)

Gun.

Amikam sprays Raphael with an imaginary machine gun.
Raphael throws himself on his cot and takes the bullets,
convulsing and writhing. Jonathan smiles.

COMMANDER

(To Jonathan)

Tower.

He starts his video game and says

COMMANDER

Good night.

58. INTERIOR / LEANING STRUCTURE / DAY

High view from the ceiling. Camera moves from bed to bed.
The COMMANDER is deep in his game. AMIKAM AND RAPHAEL are
staring at the ceiling. Silence. Just the pounding murmur
from Raphael's earphones.

The camera stops over Jonathan's cot, at the end of the
row. He is bent over his notebook.

AMIKAM

(To Jonathan)

Toss us a bone about what you're scribbling there. Give us a taste.

Jonathan pulls himself together, smiles and starts:

JONATHAN

On the night before I went to the army, my father came into my room and told me a story. He said that officially I'm no longer a kid, and that this was his last bedtime story. He told me about his mother, my grandmother, who was a child when the Nazis killed her father, in Auschwitz, in the Holocaust. And a moment before they took him from her, he managed to give her a rare old Torah / Jewish bible book, that had been passed on in the family for some ten generations. He gave her the book and said that when the time came she should give it to her son, when he became a soldier. "And never, never ever," he told her, "never sell it!" That was his last sentence.

And so thirty years passed. My father was thirteen, and the book that survived the Holocaust along with my grandmother lay on a small platform in the middle of her Polish glass case, amongst her bottles of perfume and her jewelry. And my father knew very well what the story of this Torah was; that it was antique and sacred and rare, how she had received it from her father and that it was the most important, precious thing in the family, "And we'll never, never ever sell it!". "When you grow up and you're a soldier," she would say to him ever since he was little, "I'll give you the book and you will give it to your son, that is, me.

Then my father tells me, since the day has come for to become a soldier, that the day has come for him to give me the book, but...

Here we see waves on the picture that take us back in time.

JONATHAN

One day, when my father was on the way home from school he saw a new bookstore. "Journals" it was called. A secondhand bookstore with books and magazines from all over the world. Back then there weren't that many of those yet, and my father, all turned on, goes in, browses around the shelves, and among the magazines about film stars, comics and books, he suddenly sees a red magazine with the title "Playboy," with the picture of a blonde, naked girl on the cover. The January 1970 Playmate. She had Xs over her nipples, but it astounded him. He'd never seen such a thing. Didn't know it existed. She smiled at him, so he reached out to her, like he was hypnotized, and opened it right at the centerfold where you can see her on a double page, and... get this:

(Smiles)

No Xs over her nipples. He saw her for a split second, then the shop owner pops in suddenly out of nowhere, snatches away the magazine and says, "No leafing through, kid! 75 Lirot! Either you buy it, or you leave right now."

At the time 75 Lirot was a fortune for a kid. He had barely five saved up. So he left, but he couldn't shake it. Just couldn't get it out of his head. He didn't eat, didn't drink, couldn't think about anything. He just jerked off all day like a junkie and fantasized about his Playboy girl, this January 1970 Playmate that he'd seen for a split second, on Allenby street in Tel Aviv.

He barely slept at night, and during the short times he fell asleep momentarily he dreamed how she was climbing into his bed, how he peels the Xs off her nipples, X after X, until he'd get to that point. At that point he'd have come. It went

downhill – well beyond the sex thing.
He was in love.

In the morning he waited till his mother left the house, and found himself in front of her glass case, pulling out the Torah. He knew he was doing something terrible, but he couldn't help himself. He couldn't control it.

He felt himself being dragged to Allenby Street, into the store, like a zombie. Saw how his hand offered the Torah and heard himself ask to exchange it for the red Playboy magazine.

And just like it took him a split second to glance at the Playboy magazine and fall in love, so did it take the bookstore owner a split second to look at the Torah and say: "Take your Playboy magazine and beat it."

So my father took the magazine and gave it to his friends, to circulate among them, which made him king of his class for a day. At the end of the day the magazine got back to him but its pages were stuck together and there was no saving it. It was ruined. lost...

And then, get this: My father suddenly offers me a Playboy magazine from January 1970, the original magazine that he'd ordered for me over the Internet, with the January Playmate and the Xs in her nipples. And he says: "Son! Keep this magazine and give it to your son when he becomes a soldier."

And most importantly," he said to me, "Never, never ever, come on the pages when you jerk off."

They laugh.

JONATHAN

I think he was a bit stoned. I think he and my mother smoke joints from time to time.

A short silence.

JONATHAN

That night I heard them fuck like I never did before.

AMIKAM

What happened with your grandmother when she found out?

JONATHAN

I never asked.

AMIKAM

Why not?

JONATHAN

This was the last bedtime story he told me. I didn't want to spoil it. If he wanted to end the story like that, then that's how the story ends.

59.(NEW) INTERIOR / TOWER/ NIGHT

Jonathan is asleep. His head slightly drooping to one side. In the background, the giant light is turned off and silent.

60.(NEW) INTERIOR / TOWER / NIGHT

Raphael at the gun post. His head nods back and forth with the beat pounding from his earphones. Amikam leans over next to him and speaks. In the background the ice cream truck with the laughing ice cream girl painted on its side.

AMIKAM

(in his monotonous voice)
Don't you get the conspiracy? How they stick to your back like leeches. They read what you're thinking, write down what you say...

He is quiet for a moment. He looks at Raphael who continues to nod his head, and asks

AMIKAM

Can you even hear me?

Raphael nods.

It's not clear whether it's a "Yes" or nodding to the beat from his earphones.

AMIKAM

(continues)

They're everywhere. Even here.
Watching us. Following us.

(lowers his voice a little)

You and I, for example, are being
photographed right now. Yes, Yes!

(Nods)

You heard me.

Raphael doesn't react, but this doesn't faze Amikam, and he continues and says

AMIKAM

We're being photographed and
recorded, and if you didn't know it
until now, you should wake up, man.
Because everything you see around
here, it's all an illusion.
Even you're an illusion, Raphael. And
I'm actually talking to an illusion
here, get it? A fucking fata morgana!
Couldn't you be some blonde, like,
say, Larissa from "Big Brother?" Or
Jessica Rabbit? That Roger must have
had a serious tool. Otherwise how can
you explain this super-piece marrying
a rabbit..?

An American car emerges suddenly from the fog, slides into the frame and stops. Amikam and Raphael jump up in alarm. Raphael cocks the machine gun.

COMMANDER'S VOICE

(yelling)

Amikam, get away from that car!

61.(NEW) INTERIOR / TOWER / NIGHT

Jonathan sleeps.

COMMANDER'S FARAWAY VOICE

(Yelling)

Jonathan!

Jonathan wakes up in alarm and turns on the spotlight.

62. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK / NIGHT

The spotlight switches on. A circle of light around the car.

The woman beside the driver begins to whimper.

COMMANDER'S VOICE

(Yells)

Raphael, get down!

Raphael crouches and disappears into the gunner's post.

COMMANDER'S VOICE

(Echoes through the megaphone)

Driver! Get out of the car!

The door opens hesitantly. A man in a dinner jacket gets out with his hands in the air and yells

DRIVER

(yells)

Don't shoot at us! We didn't do anything!

COMMANDER'S VOICE

Close your door, slowly.

The driver shuts the door slowly.

COMMANDER'S VOICE

Stand next to the door!

A hesitant step forward.

COMMANDER'S VOICE

Against the car!

He presses himself against the car.

COMMANDER'S VOICE

Put your hands on the roof.

He obeys and puts his hands on the roof.

COMMANDER'S VOICE

Now the woman. Get out of the car, slowly.

She doesn't move; only whimpers and sits, frozen.

DRIVER

(Shouts)

Get out of the car, Marianne!

The door opens and a fat woman starts to get out of the car.

COMMANDER'S VOICE

With the bag! Pick up your bag! But slowly.

She whimpers but obeys and gets out of the car with her bag.

COMMANDER'S VOICE

(Still off-camera, through the shrill megaphone)

Now empty all the contents of the bag onto the road.

Whimpering, she empties the bag with trembling hands. Makeup, a small mirror, a key ring, and some other everyday items fall between trembling high heels. An ID card in a small puddle. The smiling photo of the woman under the murky water. Thunder crashes, the sky opens, and rain whips across the puddle. The woman's hairdo falls apart, her makeup runs down her face, and the evening dress she is wearing becomes translucent and clings to her folds of fat. Her husband looks at her, defeated and humiliated.

63. EXTERIOR / INSIDE ICE CREAM TRUCK / NIGHT

High view over the commander. He types. The rain whips the leaking roof.

From the radio a quiet male voice says

RADIO VOICE

Explosives were blasted at average point of height from rear cover post.

64. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK + DESERTED SITE / NIGHT

The COMMANDER gives the documents back to the driver and says

COMMANDER

I apologize for the mistake. Go.

The car crosses in front of his face and drives away. He keeps standing on the side of the road and looks at the deserted site. A short dark moment and again the long, defiant flickering. Behind him, deep in the muddy frame, the tower. The spotlight turns on. He lifts his arms in an X. The spotlight fades off.

He scans the dark site through his night vision binoculars.

COMMANDER

(To Amikam standing next to him)
 Tomorrow first thing, we won't go to sleep before we check out that goddamn place.

65. EXTERIOR / MOSTLY IN THE MUD / DAY

A foggy morning. A cloud has settled on the muddy expanse.

The commander leads his three soldiers inside this screen of fog. They make their way into the heart of the viscous mud, with marked effort.

An exhausting minute of Sisyphean walking.

The mud softens and becomes boggy, then gives way to a gigantic puddle.

They advance with difficulty across the puddle and reach a broken, disintegrating fence. On the fence is a sign, like a road sign with a generic symbol [e.g., a hand like a stop sign, an exclamation mark, and a large X, or perhaps a skull] to indicate danger, or no entry.

They cross the fence and go in.

66. EXTERIOR / HANGAR / DAY

[The structure that is in the front part of the site, from which we saw most of the flashes]

They stand facing the breached hangar. They look small and meaningless compared to its immense height and enormous space within.

COMMANDER

(After a long moment)
 We'll comb this structure, then cross the area in a straight line to the other end.

He looks at them. They're exhausted. His gaze is tired.

A quiet voice from the portable radio (that TATTOO is carrying on his back)

RADIO VOICE

Decimetric fire from front line posts to depth of mined ridge.

In silence they enter the mouth of the monstrous structure.

67. INTERIOR / HANGAR / DAY

The gigantic space is empty and deserted.
 Mostly puddles and ruins.
 They climb up iron stairs leading to the upper level.

68. INTERIOR / CORRIDOR / DAY

A desolate corridor and empty rooms.
 They walk in single file. The COMMANDER leads, with
 JONATHAN as rearguard.
 They split up.
 We stay with Jonathan, who turns and enters one of the
 rooms.

69. INTERIOR / ABANDONED ROOM / DAY

A wall. The remains of wet, rotting felt wallpaper. A
 disintegrating leather armchair in a small puddle. Beside
 it a shaky floor lamp. The same room he saw through his
 binoculars (Scene 71b). Jonathan sits in the armchair and
 presses the switch of the lamp. A dry click; the bulb
 lights up but the room darkens. Jonathan shifts his eyes.
 A window, partly broken. Remnants of a flapping curtain.
 Outside, darkness. Suddenly night has fallen.
 He approaches the window, stands in front of it and peers
 out into the dark.
 The glass is broken. Its crack along his face,
 lengthwise. Part of his face is exposed, the other seen
 through the cracked pane.
 He pulls out his flashlight, aims it at the opaque
 darkness before him, and turns it on and off. A short
 single flash.
 A moment of nothing.
 A huge spotlight lights up from deep in the darkness and
 floods him with a blinding, powerful blaze. He freezes
 momentarily in the aura of light that seemingly tries to
 swallow him. He moves to the side in a half turn, his
 back now against the wall, and sees himself asleep in the
 armchair.

VOICE OF THE COMMANDER

We're moving on.

He wakes up. The lamp beside him is turned off.
 The commander stands in the doorway, stares at him for
 another moment, then leaves.
 Jonathan turns his eyes to the window. There is no
 window. Just a sealed, moist wall.

70. EXTERIOR / DESERTED SITE / DAY

The fog is unstable: at moments it thickens, then it thins out. A sense of lightheadedness and loss of direction.

COMMANDER

(To Amikam)

Make sure we're on course. I want to get to the other side, to see what's going on there, then head back.

They look small and vulnerable as they walk between abandoned, violated buildings. The Commander in the lead with AMIKAM close behind him, mostly looking at his compass. RAPHAEL and JONATHAN in the rear.

Here and there they stop and look for a moment. A huge plastic sheet whirling in the wind. A crow hopping along in the mud, trying to fly, fluttering in the air, then falling. A skinny cow standing and staring at them from the within fog.

A few long minutes of walking in the inanimate world of ruins and murky water.

We can already see the far end, where stands a gigantic hangar, broken open, identical to the one they combed at the entrance to the site.

71. EXTERIOR / HANGAR / DAY

They stand at the edge of the hangar's roof and observe through binoculars.

A long, static moment.

COMMANDER

(Without taking the binoculars off his eyes)

We got off course and came back.

AMIKAM lowers his gaze to his compass and says

AMIKAM

Not according to the compass.

Continues to observe.

A long silence.

RAPHAEL

What's he doing there?

View through their binoculars.

They see the roadblock and on the road a soldier dancing the foxtrot.

COMMANDER

We'll turn around and go back.
I'm not leaving here without seeing
the other side.

72. INTERIOR / DESERTED SITE / DAY

They go back to where they came from, glued to the
compass and the few landmarks there are.
The same crow trying to fly and falling, the same
whirling plastic sheet, and the same skinny cow staring
at them with its empty gaze.
From the thinning fog, the other end suddenly appears.
Again the same huge hangar. The same starting point.
They stand facing the hangar and the endless mud.

COMMANDER

(Looking through binoculars in the
direction of the roadblock.)

We must have gotten vertigo. We think
we're going straight, but we're
walking in circles.

AMIKAM

According to the compass, we walked
in a straight line.

A short silence.

RAPHAEL

So the fucking compass is broken!

They look crushed and exhausted. They move away into the
mud and are swallowed in the fog.
A quiet male voice comes from the portable radio

VOICE FROM RADIO

Chemical waste disposal unit on its
way to casualty collection point.

74. EXTERIOR / MUD / NIGHT

A shot.
The soaring flare is reflected in a puddle.
The flash starts and stops and the flare whirls, flickers
for another moment, and dives into the puddle.

73B. EXTERIOR {*INTERIOR} / TOWER / NIGHT

Another shot. Another flare is launched, it opens, lights
up the tower with a flickering light. Raphael stands in

the front of the tower and looks at the flare. His silhouette appears then vanishes between darkness and light.

75. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK + DESERTED SITE / NIGHT

JONATHAN shrinks in the gunner's post, under the beach umbrella that flaps wildly in the wind, threatening to collapse. He is drawing in his notebook.

Boom.

The flare opens and its light flickers on Jonathan's face.

His gaze is tired. His eyes begin to close. His head droops and he nods off for a short moment, then wakes up with a start.

76. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK + DESERTED SITE / NIGHT

A flicker. And another. Jonathan cocks the machine gun. Again a flicker, a long one, and he shoots a single bullet into the darkness before him.

Barking and whining.

The spotlight turns on and begins to dart about the muddy expanse, in a long frantic search, until it stops on a filthy, bleeding dog. Barking, whining, barking.

JONATHAN stares at it, shocked.

The dog suddenly collapses and falls over, tries to get up, and falls again.

Jonathan wakes up again, gasping. His eyes are moist; perhaps a long tear.

AMIKAM'S VOICE

You killed him.

Jonathan looks up at him questioningly.

JONATHAN

Who..?

AMIKAM

Your dog.

Jonathan directs a frightened look to the muddy expanse, which we see from his point of view. A vague, faraway sound sharpens and becomes a siren. A large sheet of plastic bursts out from the dark, whirls in the wind, and flies toward him.

He opens his eyes and awakens from the nightmare in a panic. A heavy semi-trailer carrying a tank crosses the roadblock, sounding its horn continuously.

Now he really wakes up, scared and glistening with sweat. The rain whips across the road.

The sunshade threatens to fall over.

77. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK / NIGHT

The announcement rings out again

ANNOUNCEMENT

You have entered a military zone...

A shining Mercedes slows, then stops. The headlights go out.

AMIKAM turns on the flashlight. The beam of light smears across the windshield.

At the steering wheel a BOY. At his side a GIRL. We see them alternately. One moment the rain blurs their image. The next moment a wiper shifts the water and exposes their faces.

The COMMANDER approaches. An electric window lowers and opens.

Now we can see another boy and girl in the back seat. They're seventeen at most. Kids of good families, all scrubbed and shining. Gelled hair, makeup; you can actually smell the perfumes.

The commander studies them at length. The rain whips on his face.

78. EXTERIOR-INTERIOR / ROADBLOCK / INSIDE ICE CREAM TRUCK / NIGHT

Very close view of the commander's fingers typing; lines of black dirt under his fingernails. The face of the girl who sat beside the driver now appears on the screen. The grainy image blurs for a moment and a big drop of water slides down the screen, like a tear on the girl's face.

A quiet male voice from the radio

VOICE FROM RADIO

Sterile crushing point between seam
line and regional access axis.

79A. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK [BEHIND MERCEDES] / NIGHT

AMIKAM checks the trunk.

Spare tire, toolbox, and a large gift box.

80A. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK [MACHINE GUN POST] / NIGHT

JONATHAN bends over the side of the gun and looks at the profile of the girl sitting in the front passenger seat. Her neck is delicate.

79B. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK [BEHIND MERCEDES] / NIGHT

AMIKAM looks suspiciously at the gift box, bends over it, and listens.

81A. EXTERIOR (INTERIOR) / TOWER / NIGHT

The hand of the massive clock ticks. A quarter of a minute to 9:00.

80B. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK [MACHINE GUN POST] / NIGHT

The GIRL looks out the window and crosses JONATHAN'S gaze.

The window is wet, and the ensuing blurring gives her a mysterious air.

A moment of meeting of eyes.

Her friends steal snickering looks at him. Her smile, which earlier felt sincere, suddenly seems amused at his embarrassed reaction.

81B. EXTERIOR (INTERIOR) / TOWER / NIGHT

The hand of the clock jumps to 9:00.
Ringing.

79D. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK [BEHIND MERCEDES] / NIGHT

AMIKAM places a hesitant hand on the lid of the gift box. Debates whether to pull the ribbon and open it.

81C. EXTERIOR (INTERIOR) / TOWER / NIGHT

RAPHAEL'S hands pick up a flare.

82A. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK [BY DRIVER'S WINDOW] / NIGHT

The COMMANDER hands the driver the documents. The driver takes them and one slips out of his hand, drops onto the commander's shoe and falls under the car.

79E. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK [BEHIND MERCEDES] / NIGHT

Amikam gives the wrapping ribbon a little pull...
hesitates... and decides not to open the box.
His fingers relax their grip on the ribbon and his palm
lets go.

82B. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK [BY DRIVER'S WINDOW] / NIGHT

The Commander bends down and as he picks up the document,
sees the hem of the girl's dress caught in the closed car
door.

COMMANDER

(to driver)

Her dress is caught in the door.

He gives back the documents.

COMMANDER

Go.

81D. EXTERIOR (INTERIOR) / TOWER / NIGHT

Raphael fires.

83. EXTERIOR / SKY / NIGHT

The flare soars upward and spits out an intermittent
stream of sparks, starts to whirl around, and then dives
down.

84. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK / NIGHT

The car starts to move forward, the girl bends down and
opens the door a crack. She pulls in her dress.
The failed flare falls on the road near the slightly open
door. It rolls. Amikam closes the trunk and sees the half
open door and the rolling flare.
From his viewpoint this looks bad and he shouts,
terrified

AMIKAM

Grenade!

JONATHAN raises his eyes with a hysterical look. For a
moment he sees the girl's hand slip into the closing door
and something rolling on the road. He squeezes the
trigger of the machine gun.

View from high above, we're above the car. JONATHAN shoots continuously.
The car caves into itself, a jumble of metal and glass shards.

A last bullet echoes into a dull silence. Everyone freezes. In the background the ice cream truck and the laughter of the fresh-looking ice cream girl painted on it. It seems she is looking at the bullet-ridden Mercedes through stains of rust.
The rain washes the blood from the road.

85A. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK / NIGHT

Wide view (maybe from the tower) of the roadblock, the muddy expanse, and the road.
Orange flashing lights get brighter in the corner of the screen.
In the soundtrack we hear the COMMANDER's voice talking on the radio.

COMMANDER'S VOICE

Cornelia from Foxtrot, we blocked the axis all along the sector. The road is sterile, I repeat, the road is sterile, over.

AUTHORITATIVE VOICE

Foxtrot from Cornelia, Rhino on it's way to you, stand by...

The flashing lights color the corner of the screen.
A huge trailer truck carrying a heavy bulldozer comes into the frame and slowly crawls along the road.

COMMANDER'S VOICE

Rhino is entering the puddle.

The truck slows laboriously, then stops. A dull creaking of brakes. The lights go off and the motor falls silent.

85B. EXTERIOR-INTERIOR / INSIDE ICE CREAM TRUCK / NIGHT

COMMANDER

(Holding the radio's microphone)
Rhino in the puddle, this is Foxtrot.
I repeat, Rhino is in the puddle.

86. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK + MUD / NIGHT

The bulldozer trembles, then starts up. A blob of black smoke, a grating noise.

The monotonous sound of warning beeps. The flashing lights on the bulldozer. The monster heavily comes down from the back of the truck, drives deep into the muddy expanse, and stops.

In the tower the spotlight switches on. A circle of light around the bulldozer and the mud. The gigantic blade stabs into the mud and the bulldozer begins to dig. A long minute with the digging bulldozer, The pit is already deep. The bulldozer backs away, turns, and returns to the roadblock, loads the bullet-riddled car onto its blade, returns with it to the mud and, throws it into the pit.

It falls with a dull thud. The bulldozer starts to cover it with mud.

The mud falls onto the roof of the car and flows down around it, swallowing it more and more, until the car disappears into the mud. The bulldozer continues to fill the hole for another long moment.

The bulldozer packs the mud flat, turns, and leaves the frame. Its tracks remain.

Rain begins to fall, blurring the tracks. The tracks disappear. Only mud.

87. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK / DAY

A grey morning. A gloomy sky. A supply truck is parked on the side of the road. The driver is unloading an impressive amount of canned meat and flares.

The noise of a helicopter. Plastic sheets fly around, wind hits the road and a military helicopter lands. A high-ranking OFFICER comes out of the helicopter energetically, stops for a moment in front of the mud and looks at his polished shoes. A moment of hesitation, then a step into the mud.

88. INTERIOR / LEANING STRUCTURE / DAY

The room is now very crooked, truly diagonal. The officer stands in the center. His shoes are filthy. The commander and his three soldiers sit facing him.

OFFICER

As I understand it, you acted according to the rules. But in war as in war, and we're in a war here! Have no doubt about it!

In war... shit happens. So whatever happened, happened, and I don't want to go into the details, because if we start digging into them, all of you here will pay the price!

He falls silent and drags out the moment, creating an aftereffect to what he said.

OFFICER

So, as I see it, this file is closed before it was opened. And if anyone here has a problem with that, let him speak up here and now.

A long, thick silence. You could cut into it. The officer's cell phone starts ringing. He presses it to his ear and says

OFFICER

(into phone)

Hey, Shmulik, what's up?

Listens for a moment then says

Got it. Tell his father he's on his way home.

Raises his eyes and asks

OFFICER

Which one of you is Jonathan Feldman?

JONATHAN (who shot at the car) raises a hesitant hand.

OFFICER

(cont.)

Get on the supply truck outside, you're going home.

Jonathan looks at the officer, wants to say something, but changes his mind and remains silent.

89. EXTERIOR / ROADBLOCK / DAY

The helicopter takes off and disappears. Jonathan drags himself across the viscous mud, away from the very crooked structure. Amikam at his side, slightly behind him.

AMIKAM

(Babbling and panting)

Don't take it to heart. It happened. And tomorrow, as they say, the sun will shine, and the fields will fill with honey. See what I mean, Jonathan?

JONATHAN

You mean, from a cosmic point of view, Amikam?

AMIKAM

Cosmic only. All the rest is an illusion...

They arrive at the ice cream truck and stop beside it.

JONATHAN

Why don't you go bullshit someone else, Amikam. If you hadn't yelled "Grenade!" to me, I wouldn't have fired.

AMIKAM

(Shaking his head pityingly)
The universe is indifferent, Jonathan. It doesn't settle accounts with you. In ten years you'll be floating in a pool on the roof of your penthouse and thinking to yourself: "Amikam was right. My life isn't so bad. And what did I do, anyway? He's the one who yelled 'Grenade!' Maybe he's the one who fired, too."

JONATHAN

You're fucked up, Amikam.
(Smiles a little)
But it's not your fault that you are.

AMIKAM

(Smiles)
Hug?

Jonathan takes his time to agree.

AMIKAM

Come on, don't play hard to get.

Jonathan relents. They hug.

AMIKAM

(While hugging)
We're modern men, Jonathan. Men who like women but aren't embarrassed to hug each other.

RAPHAEL

(Shouting from the doorway of the leaning structure)

Faggots!

Amikam gives him the finger.

VOICE FROM THE RADIO
 (inside the ice cream truck)
 Sterile smashing point between seam
 line and regional access axis.

Jonathan climbs into the supply truck.

Wide perspective view. The road crosses the mud and is
 swallowed by the fog.

The truck moves away and fades into the fog.

The soldier who opened the sequence begins to dance his
 foxtrot on the road. Silence. Just his breathing and the
 tapping of his feet on the asphalt.

He turns to us and takes a little bow.

CUT.

90. INTERIOR-EXTERIOR / VIEW FROM A MOVING VEHICLE /
 EARLY EVENING

View through a side window of the truck. The dirty pane
 is partly open. Mud and fog. The same shot as the opening
 shot (scene 1) A long drive.

Camera move. We move back until we see Jonathan's
 profile. He looks ahead. His gaze is dull, opaque.
 Perhaps cold, perhaps lost.

JONATHAN
 (After a long silence)
 Do you know why they suddenly decided
 to send me home?

DRIVER'S VOICE (VO)
 What do I know? I'm just the driver.

Jonathan looks ahead. A narrow road and a thick cloud of
 fog. His notebook of drawings is on his lap, wrapped in
 translucent plastic. His hands open the notebook. First
 page. A comic book title drawn in fountain pen:

TITLE: LAST BEDTIME STORY
 We come closer. Now the drawing fills the frame.

91. TRANSITION SCENE: [A SHORT STILL CLIP]

Changing graphic drawings that tell the story that Jonathan told about his father [The antique Torah book and the Playboy magazine, scene 70].

Simple animation based on a static drawing that does a repetitive movement. Jumpy loop of a clumsy movement, but stylized and conscious of its clumsiness.

DRAWING 1: CLOSE-UP

The dejected face of a boy in early puberty.

JONATHAN'S VOICE

(V.O.)

Michael did something terrible!

The boy (Michael) blinks sadly.

DRAWING 2: CLOSE-UP

The face of a woman (Michael's mother from the kindergarten scene.) Her look is opaque and empty.

JONATHAN'S VOICE

(V.O.)

Because of him his mother had a nervous breakdown.

DRAWING 3: WIDE VIEW

JONATHAN'S VOICE

(Continues)

...And she was committed.

Now we see the boy (Michael) standing opposite his mother's bed in a cold, bright, fluorescent-lit room. His mother is in a straitjacket, and stares vacantly at him.

DRAWING 4

The sound of fermentation. The boy leans forward a bit. Something catches his eye.

DRAWING 5

The blue number of a concentration camp survivor tattooed onto his mother's arm melts away and drips. A drop of ink drips. Tssss... Sparkles, smoke, and flashes.

DRAWING 6

Magic effect: The boy's mother has become the cover girl. She screams in pain. Her arms unfurl to her sides and she tears off the strait-jacket. Her breasts are exposed. She has two black Xs on her nipples.

DRAWING 7

An erect nipple bursts from the center of the X. The boy's lips attach themselves around it.

DRAWING 8

The boy is attached to the breast, suckling. The X detaches from the breast, sticks to the boy's face, twists around his head and covers his eyes. The cover girl's scream cuts off. Silence. Just the sucking sounds of the boy. A drop of ink drips from his lips.

DRAWING 9

A high school graduation class photo. Zoom in to the picture of a boy with an X on his face, like duct tape that covers his eyes and was absorbed into his flesh.

JONATHAN'S VOICE

(V.O.)

In spite of Michael's abnormal look he was popular among his classmates.

DRAWING 10

The shadow of a beard is added to the face of the boy with the X. He is wearing a beret, and he salutes.

JONATHAN'S VOICE

(V.O.)

And became a combat officer.

DRAWING 11

The X stays on the face, but the beret and the officer's insignia are replaced with academic mortar board cap and gown.

JONATHAN'S VOICE

(V.O.)

...and a star student.

DRAWING 12

The boy with the X sits across from a girl in a café. In the background an ad for ice cream (the laughing ice cream girl painted on the ice cream truck).

JONATHAN'S VOICE

(V.O. continuing

...who impressed a young philosophy student.

A text bubble pops up above the boy. Zoom in to the words (+ V.O. of Michael):

JONATHAN'S VOICE
(V.O.)
Einstein said that coincidence is
God's way of staying anonymous...

The girl melts and becomes a puddle in the shape of a heart.

DRAWING 13

An orchestra in a romantic climax. The silhouette of a lovers couple kissing against the background of palm trees and a sunset.

JONATHAN'S VOICE
(V.O.)
...And fell in love with her.

Downward camera move. We are behind the boy and girl, in front of the end of a movie.

TITLE
The end.

DRAWING 14:

A rabbi holds a wine glass. A photographer shoots pictures. The boy, with an X on his face, stands beside the girl, under a bridal canopy. The girl is very pregnant.

JONATHAN'S VOICE
(V.O.)
They married...

The groom's foot rises and breaks the glass.

DRAWINGS 15 + 16:

An office tower. Strong zoom into one of its windows. The boy has turned into a man in a suit but the X is still on his face. He sits on a manager's chair and speaks into a phone.

JONATHAN'S VOICE
(V.O.)

Michael became a successful
architect..

A framed picture stands on his desk. Strong zoom into the picture. In it, he (with the X), his wife, his son, his daughter and the dog.

JONATHAN'S VOICE

(V.O.)

And had a family.

He gives the dog a little kick. The dog yelps and gets out of the family photo.

DRAWING 17:

The man, with the X on his face, stands naked in front of a mirror.

JONATHAN'S VOICE

(V.O.)

When he stood in front of the mirror
he saw a handsome man.

The image of Apollo in the mirror.

JONATHAN'S VOICE

(V.O.)

He saw a strong man.

Apollo is replaced by a muscle man, glistening with oil.

JONATHAN'S VOICE

(V.O.)

He got himself a hard on...

His penis becomes erect and he begins to masturbate and to spurt little Xs in all directions. One of the Xs sticks to the camera lens and blocks the front of the frame.

JONATHAN'S VOICE

(V.O.)

And thought no one could see his X.

DRAWING 18:

A close view of the man's face. He is asleep. His head rests on a pillow. The boy (little Michael from the beginning of the scene) walks over the X that covers his face.

JONATHAN'S VOICE

(V.O.)

Only late at night, when he's fast asleep, Michael the boy would come along and help him shed a tear...

The boy pulls the end of the X and peels it off. The eye is revealed. A blink, then a tear. A real tear drops onto the drawing. Now we see Michael's hands holding the notebook. It is stained. A little sooty.
CUT.

92. INTERIOR / [JONATHAN'S ROOM] / EARLY EVENING

Closed CU.

We don't see the room yet; just Michael's eyes staring at the drawing. Silence. His face is motionless. Just a tiny smile and teary eyes.

The distant sound of children playing enters the soundtrack.

Wide view. Now we see the whole room.

A single bed, a naked mattress, a rolled-up rug. MICHAEL sits on the corner of the bed, facing a wardrobe whose doors are open. It is empty. A desk covered with a plastic sheet. No books, no things. Just the notebook in Michael's hands. The tumult of the children's distant voices emphasizes the silence.

93A. INTERIOR / KITCHEN / EARLY EVENING

A birthday cake. Layers of cream and chocolate with lots of whipped cream on top. Twenty candied cherries form the number 20. Close view. Dafna's fingers stick sparklers into the cherries. They look like thin, black candles. Her movement is stiff. Her nails, bitten.

CUT TO BLACK

Title: Dafna

93B. INTERIOR / APARTMENT [KITCHEN] / EARLY EVENING

A sink, hot water, a rough scrubby, and a close view of DAFNA's hands washing dishes. Flecks of flour and eggshells, the whisks of a mixer with remains of sticky chocolate.

Things for making the cake.

CU of her face. It is hard; pinched. Splotches of exhaustion under her bitter, angry gaze.

She finishes the dishes, but continues to rub the scrubby on her knuckles, opening wounds that begin to bleed. She looks at her hands for a moment and immediately throws the scrubby into the sink. Until now she wasn't aware. Only when she sees her hand does she understand and feel.

94. INTERIOR / APARTMENT [CORRIDOR AND JONATHAN'S ROOM] / EARLY EVENING

We see the corridor from the doorway of Jonathan's room. Dafna comes out of the kitchen at the end of the corridor, approaches the doorway of the room while wiping her hands on a kitchen towel, comes into CU, and says

DAFNA

We agreed you'd call! That you wouldn't come here unannounced anymore!

Her look is disturbed, but her voice makes an effort to stay restrained and dry. Michael sits on the corner of the bed, on the bare mattress, surrounded by Jonathan's empty room, and is silent. Silence.

DAFNA

(Choking down her mounting anger)
Why are you doing this to me?! Did you think I'm over it? Or that I'm lonely?

He remains quiet and looks at her. A moment of locked eyes.

MICHAEL

(In a quiet voice)
I thought that, today...

DAFNA

(Cuts in with her cold voice)
Today, of all days, I didn't want to see you.

A frozen silence. Michael lowers his eyes to her hands. With the small towel she quickly hides the wounds on her finger joints. Small bloodstains on the towel. She hides the stains with her palm.

MICHAEL

(Raises his head, almost in a whisper)

Either you hate me, or you're
fighting against what you still feel
for me.

DAFNA

(Bursts out)

Want to know what I feel? I feel
nothing! That's what I feel.

(Loses herself for a moment)

I'm bursting with emptiness.

(Takes a breath, restrains her outburst)

Don't come here anymore. Don't do
this to me.

She opens a side door and disappears with a slam.
Silence. Just the faraway murmur of playing children.

95. INTERIOR / APARTMENT [BATHROOM] / EARLY EVENING

A small bottle of alcohol. A bloody cotton swab immersed
in the clear liquid. The blood dissolves into a dark
cloud that disperses like pink silk threads.

DAFNA's hand grasps the moist Q-tip and places it onto
one of her knuckles. She looks at the stinging wound and
sighs quietly. Perhaps just a breath: part pain, part
relief. Maybe this physical pain calms her, defuses the
rage pent up inside her. Something inside her gives in
and gives up and the hard look in her eyes weakens and
relaxes.

A quiet knock on the door and MICHAEL's voice on the
other side

MICHAEL'S VOICE

I'm leaving now, Dafna. I'm sorry. I
thought... maybe, you know, today we'd
do something. Together.

Dafna's face is flooded with tears.

MICHAEL'S VOICE

I just had to sit in Jonathan's room
for a while. And see you.

Again a flood of tears and silent weeping.
A long moment of silence.

MICHAEL'S VOICE

Just tell me you're okay in there.

With effort she controls her weeping and says

DAFNA

Sorry I threw away the things in
Jonathan's room.

(Her lips tremble silently, only the tears
flow)

It's because of his smell.

(continues while weeping noiselessly)

I can't bear the way things lose the
smell of my boy.

Wide view.

She sits on the toilet lid and cries softly..

96. INTERIOR / APARTMENT [CORRIDOR AND BEDROOM] / EARLY
EVENING

Michael stands pressed against the bathroom door.

CU of MICHAEL.

His face is pressed against the closed door and his eyes
are moist. Maybe a tear rolls down his unshaven cheek. In
the soundtrack we hear the muffled sounds of a faraway
television, the murmur of a laughing audience.

DAFNA'S CRACKED VOICE

(Through the door)

What did you want to do together?

Michael wants to say something, but changes his mind and
remains still.

DAFNA'S VOICE

(After a long moment)

Don't go.

Wide view over the corridor. For a moment Michael stands
facing the closed door. He then takes 2-3 steps and
passes the bedroom. Its door is partly open. He turns and
stops.

97. INTERIOR / APARTMENT [BEDROOM] / EARLY EVENING

The room is shuttered and dusky. The TV is on, the sound
is turned down. Blue light dances on slept-in sheets. The
murmur of a laughing audience. Michael is still stuck for
a moment in front of the partly open door, then comes in,
stands before the bed and looks. Pills. A half eaten
candy bar. Chocolate crumbs. An open packet of tissues. A
few more used ones.

MICHAEL looks down.

Dafna's nightgown lies on the floor. He hesitates for a moment, but then bends over, picks up the nightgown and lays it onto the corner of the bed. He puts the tissues and pills on the night stand by the bed. Wraps the chocolate bar and lays it beside them. Gathers up the chocolate crumbs and balled up tissues, picks up the remote control. Straightens up, and turns off the TV. The murmur cuts off to silence.

97/98. INTERIOR/ APARTMENT [KITCHEN + CORRIDOR / EARLY EVENING

The lid of a garbage bin is raised and opened. Compressed garbage, almost overflowing. Michael's hand pushes in the balled up tissues and crumbs. He washes his hands thoroughly. Takes a wrinkled towel lying thrown on the marble top by the sink, wipes off his hands, hangs it up on the hook and straightens it with a small stretching movement.

Something catches his eye. Four cups on a shelf. he changes the placement of the cups and turns the handles to the same direction, like soldiers on parade. We leave him with a long camera move and exit the kitchen to the corridor. At the end of the corridor we now see Jonathan's empty room through the wide open door. The dog is lying in the doorway. He's still waiting.

98A. INTERIOR / APARTMENT [KITCHEN] / EARLY EVENING TO NIGHT

* End of day light enters from the window. it's the only one lighting the kitchen and Michael and Dafna.

DAFNA's hands grasp a bottle of whisky. There are Band-Aids on her knuckles. She pours. MICHAEL looks at the bandages.

DAFNA
(While performing her actions)
Don't say anything about this.

Finishes pouring, raises her glass in a small movement

DAFNA
Or about this.

Drinks deeply.

DAFNA
I know I look like a cliché.

She is silent for a moment, then says

DAFNA

Anyway, life is hopeless, so instead of fighting it and making the effort to go on, I've decided to invest in my decline. To foster it. If there's anything left that can infuse some life into me, it's my urge for self-destruction.

They sit at the table. He at the narrow end, she next to him, wearing a simple nightgown and sweater, her hair damp, her eyes softening. On the counter at the far end of the kitchen sits a birthday cake. A long silence. Suddenly she realizes something, sniffs, and says

DAFNA

You're smoking again?!

MICHAEL

No...

But a small childish smile betrays him. Also in her the trace of a smile is noticeable. She sips whisky and says

DAFNA

Okay, so give me a cigarette.

He pulls out a pack. One cigarette for her, one for him. They smoke together, close, in silence. A long, intimate, and quiet minute.

98. INSERT EXTERIOR / SKY VIEW THROUGH THE WINDOW / DAY

A piece of sky through a double window with a worn wooden frame and a turbid pane. A kite dances in the air. Appears momentarily then vanishes, hidden by the window frame and the peeling wall.

98 INSERT-2 INTERIOR / VIEW THROUGH THE WINDOW / DAY

The eyes of young DAFNA through the glass, following the kite with small movements, and hidden occasionally behind the window frame. A duet between DAFNA'S look and the kite.

DAFNA

(V.O. over the picture)

I liked our roof apartment best, the one overlooking the sea. Remember how we talked all night about the films we'd seen; how we wanted to travel the world, study, do things?

(Drinks deeply)

The smell of the sea. And the taste of salt...in the air.

The window opens to the right and the left. A seagull flies in front of the open window. A girl's hair whips in the wind. Sea. A small sailboat.

It was an ordinary day, but I remember that...I felt exalted. A feeling that anything was possible.

CUT

98B. INTERIOR / APARTMENT [KITCHEN] / EARLY EVENING TO NIGHT

End-of-day light enters from the window. It is the only source of light that lights the kitchen and Michael and Dafna. The light will fade gradually throughout the scene, evening will fall and the kitchen will darken.

The four mugs that MICHAEL straightened on the shelf. Camera movement from one mug to the next. On the first mug the name "Michael" under the picture of a rhinoceros's head. On the next one, "Dafna," under an iguana. The third, "Alma," under a black cat. And "Jonathan" with a dolphin.

DAFNA

(V.O. continues)

It didn't last more than a few minutes, but I felt it in every cell in my body. And I remember thinking to myself that... this moment is the beginning of a great and real happiness about to enter my life. That I'm going to be happy, that I'm only at the beginning...

Dafna and Michael next to each other, at both corners of the table.

We approach them in a long, slow movement.

DAFNA
(V.O. continues)

A week later I discovered I was pregnant. I felt my life had been stolen from me. I wanted an abortion but you wouldn't let me. You said that our love couldn't triumph over that. And that you'd leave me...

(Takes another sip)

I even made an appointment for an abortion. I remember sitting, trembling, in front of a doctor who explained to me that it was too late. That now it would be murder.

After Jonathan was born not a day passed without me thinking that he's here thanks to you, and that I...

(Wants to drink more but sees that the glass is empty and gives up)

...am undeserving. We never talked about it, but it was always...floating in the air, my feeling of guilt.

(Pours herself another glass and says, while performing her actions)

Because of this guilt feeling I loved him even more!
More than I was capable of containing inside me.
Because there's a kind of intensity, almost violent, in love that's infused with guilt.

(A direct look)

And I loved him more than Alma. This is a terrible thing I'm saying, I know that. Lately I'm being plagued by terrible thoughts.

(a long sip)

I loved him because he had me in him. Because he had in him all the things I had in me before he was born. The

things that made you fall in love with me. The things you forced me to relinquish; and I did give them up when I gave birth to Jonathan. For you...

(A bitter laugh)

Any shrink would probably have a field day with me now.

(Already a little drunk)

The approaching movement comes to a stop. An intimate frame of the two.

DAFNA empties her glass, pours herself another and takes a long gulp. She sinks into herself, is silent for a moment, and says

DAFNA

Sometimes I'm sorry I didn't have the abortion.

(Again a small pause)

Because the joy of having a child is easily taken for granted. You don't walk around feeling this continuous high. But the pain of not having him anymore is a daily one. It's intolerable.

(Sighs)

MICHAEL extends a hand, picks up a salt cellar, puts it back into its rack beside the pepper and straightens the rack until it's in line with the wall.

DAFNA reacts immediately, shifts the rack, pulls out the salt cellar, and lays it on its side. Grains of salt scatter on the table. She moves her glass and spills a little whisky by the salt cellar.

She takes a last pull on her cigarette and puts it out in the small puddle of whisky.

(Pours more into her glass even though it's not empty and mutters to herself)

Why couldn't he die when they announced it to us? A normal death.

(Sips)

Legitimate.

(Continues quietly, but with an inner trembling that creeps into her voice)

DAFNA

Why is it like a punishment, or someone's revenge, maybe it's God getting even with us; with you. I mean, I didn't mean to take away your credit, you know.

And the fact that I understand that you didn't mean to kill your child doesn't help me to be able to sleep in one bed with you, to live with you. Only six months have passed and I don't...

(another long sip)

Never mind.

DAFNA

But I'm also to blame here. There's no doubt. By my passivity. By not snatching the phone away from you. By not sticking my nails in you. By not biting you. I lived alongside your (psychological) damage. Pretending not to see in order not to embarrass you. Leaning on you in order to make you strong, so you don't notice that I see, see that you are weak, that you have a secret, that you are ashamed of yourself. And that your life, meaning your office, us, the car, and this "You can rely on me" that you try hard to scatter around you - it's all there just to hide this secret, this weakness.

You are weak, Michael.

I saw it. Alma sees it. And Jonathan saw it, and Max... Max feels it between his ribs. He has a chronic bruise there, did you know that? From your kicks.

He lowers his eyes. A long, oppressive silence. The tension that broke for a moment builds up again. Dim, thin light still enters through the window. The kitchen darkens; night falls. She raises her eyes. A simple clock on the wall above the kitchen doorway: it's almost six o'clock. Michael tries to say something but she gets up, moves away to the corner of the kitchen.

She stands in front of the cake and stares out of the window. The last light of the day embraces her silhouette.

Her CU

The soft light caresses her face. She looks out silently.

DAFNA

(After a long pause, in a quiet voice)
Want to see something? Come on.

Night falls by the moment. The kitchen is dusky; almost completely dark.

Michael approaches from the dark, comes into the last light that enters from the window, and stands at her side, a little behind her, looking out over her shoulder.

99. EXTERIOR / ABANDONED SWIMMING POOL/ EVENING

Last light of day on the abandoned swimming pool. The walls have darkened to black, but the sky is indigo. A thin, bent man walks along the edge of the pool, lengthwise. A bucket and squeegee. Steady steps. He looks like a maintenance man. He disappears behind a concrete column that demarcates the corner of the frame.

A moment of nothing happening.

A light flickers and turns on. A round spotlight falls on the floor of the empty pool.

The maintenance man enters the frame and walks back along the length of the pool. His silhouette stretches across the wall. He is whistling clearly. *Somewhere over the Rainbow* or something similar.

100. INTERIOR / APARTMENT [KITCHEN] / NIGHT

The camera floats backward in a slow crawl. We are now behind Dafna's shoulder. Michael is dimly reflected in the window. He blends with the painting of the baby. Dafna turns her gaze backward and says

DAFNA

I didn't mean it. I'm sorry.
(Smiles, slightly drunkenly)

Come on...

He is smiling again now. She picks up the cake. He pours more whisky onto the glasses and they sit down again on either side of the cake.

The kitchen is now dark.

Dafna's dim silhouette takes a long sip.

DAFNA

Let's devote ourselves to the grief.

She strikes a match that lights her eyes.

DAFNA

Indulge in it.

She lights one of the sparklers she'd stuck into the cake. A flash of light runs along the string of sparklers, and everything becomes one big flickering light shaped like the number 20. Dafna smiles. Michael looks at her and she looks at the cake. Her smile is childish and captivating. The light dances on their faces for a long moment, until it fades and goes out.

Darkness.

Silence...

Michael's voice, after a long silence, from within the darkness

MICHAEL'S VOICE

I just saw the smile that made me
fall in love with you.

Another short silence.

DAFNA'S VOICE

(From the darkness)

What smile?

MICHAEL'S VOICE

(From the darkness)

The smile of a child.

A creak. Footsteps receding. A click. Michael turns on the light. Dafna's chair is empty. Now, with the light on, he sees a small picture on the wall at the kitchen entrance. A crumpled page from a notebook, smoothed out. A plain frame. A drawing in ink, a ship sinking in endless mud. Its stern sunken, its bow bursting out of the mud, a moment before the final immersion. The landscape is desolate and foggy. The light gloomy and the sky threatening.

We come closer to the drawing and enter it.

The soundtrack fades and dies; an empty silence.

Dafna sets a small tin box on the table in a sudden movement. Michael starts in fright, momentarily embarrassed by his weakness, but she just looks at him with the smile of a child who did something naughty and says

DAFNA

I found this among his things... In a
drawer.

A tin lid with the faded picture of a mermaid. A pair of soft breasts and a fish's tail. Michael opens the lid. A

dried marijuana blossom, a used packet of rolling papers and filters.

DAFNA

Still remember how to roll?

He smiles and starts rolling.

Now Dafna is looking at the drawing. She is quiet for a long moment, then says

DAFNA

The ship won't make it. It will sink.

MICHAEL

I don't think it's sinking; it's stuck. But it won't make it; I agree with you on that.

[he is quiet for a moment]

Maybe it's better that it sinks.

Silence.

Dafna watches Michael's fingers as he rolls with surprising skill.

DAFNA

[Impressed]

Such a pro!

MICHAEL

Some things you don't forget.

DAFNA

Like swimming; or riding a bicycle.
Like the salty smell of the sea in our rooftop apartment.

He lights the joint. She smokes, is silent for a moment, then says

DAFNA

Like my son's birthday.

A long camera move leaves them.

A gentle breeze creeps into the soundtrack. We come closer to the drawing and enter into it.

101. SIMPLE ANIMATION:

The ship sounds its muffled siren, starts sinking into the mud. A muffled "bloop" and the mud swallows it. A bubble of air bursts, a last wisp of smoke. The title THE

END rises from the horizon and goes out of the body of the frame.

102. INTERIOR / KITCHEN / NIGHT

We come close to Michael. He stares at the drawing and smiles like a fascinated child.

DAFNA'S VOICE

Remember what the rabbi said at the funeral?

Michael detaches himself from the drawing and looks toward her. Her look becomes veiled, her smile relaxed.

DAFNA

(Continues while taking off her sweater.
She is hot)

"Any IDF soldier who's killed automatically becomes an angel."

(Chuckles)

A cute angel that the fairies fight over.

(Laughs softly)

He's probably partying now. He's having a...spiritual multi orgasm.

Laughter. Their laughter is quiet but relaxed. Suddenly Dafna gets up, goes to the refrigerator, removes an envelope stuck on with a magnet, and continues

DAFNA

(During her action)

Which reminds me, we're invited to a ceremony at the Ministry of Defense. They engraved his name on some memorial wall along with all the other..."fallen," that's how they call them. It covers up the blood on their suits.

(Chuckles to herself)

There's no mud there, that's for sure. But there's no shortage of blood.

She takes the invitation out of the envelope and starts reading out loud, interspersed with giggles.

DAFNA

You are hereby invited to attend the unveiling ceremony of the name of your son, sergeant Jonathan Feldman of blessed memory, who fell during the fulfillment of his duty. See, he fell. He didn't die, or was killed. God forbid. Fell... barely got a scratch.

(Goes back to reading)

On the program: Words from a representative of the Ministry of Defense. A minute's silence. The unveiling. The national anthem - couldn't do without that! And, please note: coffee and cake!

She sits down, stares at the cake and says

DAFNA

Speaking of cake...

She cuts the cake into slices. One for him, one for her. They eat in silence.

DAFNA

(While eating)

Young men don't fall. Someone pushes them.

The sound of a key in the door.

ALMA'S VOICE

(Off-cam)

You won't believe who sent me a WhatsApp just now. Ariel. Yep. Wait a second.

(Raises her voice)

Mom, I'm in a terrible hurry. Make me a sandwich with something...

(Returns to her phone call)

Thinks he's, like, cool, the Man...

Crosses the entrance to the kitchen, her eyes glued to the cellphone's screen, enters-leaves the frame and talks into her headset.

ALMA

"Hi, Alma, I'm here at Nanochka, any chance of you coming over?"

She stops abruptly. A short silence.

ALMA

I'll call you right back. Bye.

She returns to the kitchen's entrance, smiles and says

ALMA

Hi, Dad.

Michael smiles. Now his face softens completely. She disarms him. They have a moment of eye contact. She looks at Dafna questioningly. Dafna smiles and shrugs. Alma continues to smile and says

ALMA

You're smoking again.

They deny with a smile. They're in a cloud of smoke. Her smile widens.

ALMA

You've been smoking pot.

They eat the cake and smile.

ALMA

You've been smoking and now you're having the munchies.

DAFNA

Want some?

Offers her a slice of cake.
Alma takes the cake and sits down on the free chair at the table.
They eat in smiling silence for a long moment.
Dafna sees they're enjoying it. It makes her happy.
The dog Max appears suddenly, stops next to Dafna with a begging look. She gives him a slice and he wolfs it down from her palm.
A beep. Alma lowers her eyes momentarily to her cellphone, gets up and says

ALMA

Got to run.

She pours herself a third of a glass of water, raises it with a small gesture, says

ALMA

To Jonathan!

and downs it in one gulp. She turns to leave, stops for a moment in the entrance and says

ALMA

You are beautiful when you're
together.

(Smiles and disappears behind the door
frame)

Bye...

The door closes. Silence.

DAFNA

(After a long silence)

I keep having the same dream.

Dinner on a weekday: me, you, Alma,
and Jonathan.

104A. INTERIOR / DINING AREA / NIGHT

A round dining table. MICHAEL, DAFNA, JONATHAN, AND ALMA
eat.

Jonathan with his back to us, Dafna and Alma to either
side, and Michael opposite him. We approach the table in
a long, slow movement, lose Alma and Michael from the
frame, and stay with Jonathan and Dafna. Dafna's smile is
almost imperceptible, but something shines out of her. We
see her over Jonathan's shoulder while he eats.

Dafna's voice enters the soundtrack

DAFNA'S VOICE

(VO continues)

Nothing really happens there.

Jonathan eats. Alma passes him the

salt. Things like that, normal

things. But I'm happy and don't

understand why. I even ask myself,

"Why do I suddenly feel so good?" And

then I wake up, and...

Cut

105A. INTERIOR / KITCHEN / NIGHT

DAFNA is silent for a moment, then says

DAFNA

And lately when I dream about this
meal, I'm aware that I'm in a dream,
and instead of asking myself
questions I simply try to enjoy it.

104B. INTERIOR / DINING AREA / NIGHT

The camera moves closer to DAFNA and leaves JONATHAN's back out of the frame.

DAFNA'S VOICE

(VO cont.)

But the more I accept that this is a dream, the more distant Jonathan becomes. Not physically, I mean— he's sitting beside me and I can almost touch him. But there's this sense of endless distance, a sense that he's unattainable.

105B. INTERIOR / KITCHEN / NIGHT

DAFNA looks down at the table.
Her hand is near MICHAEL's. Almost touching it.
She says

DAFNA

That's why I never try to touch him.
I don't want to do anything that
might make me wake up.

106. INTERIOR / KITCHEN / NIGHT

A long silence.
Suddenly she starts crying, but not dramatically. A small cry. Quiet. A moment shared with her crying.
Michael smiles at her. His smile is small and soft.
She smiles back at him but the tears fall.
His smile widens.
She laughs a little but also cries a little. Wipes the tears on the sleeve of her sweater.

DAFNA

Your confession for mine?

Michael continues to smile, and says nothing.

DAFNA

(Spontaneously)

When I was sixteen I fell in love
with my father. I fantasized I was
sleeping with him, and it shocked me.

(Smiles)

Your turn!

MICHAEL

I didn't say I agreed.

DAFNA

You did without saying it.
Your turn.

Michael takes a match out of the matchbox, punches a hole with it in the middle of the matchbox, sticks the other end into the pack of cigarettes and joins the two boxes.

DAFNA

(smiling)

And in the finals of puzzle-solving the winner is... Michael Feldman, 11 years old, who completed a 5,000 piece puzzle of Jerusalem in the record time of...

(turns questioning eyes to him)

MICHAEL

Six hours.

Michael pulls out another match and sticks it into the filter of a cigarette.

MICHAEL

...and one second.
(Smiles)

DAFNA

(Laughs a little)

Six hours, ladies and gentlemen. The Temple Mount is in our hands.

MICHAEL

...and one second.

He joins the cigarette to the cigarette pack, and within half a minute of impressive handiwork a small tank sits on the table, between crumbs of cake, whisky and an ashtray filled with butts. The pack is the body, the matchbox, the turret, and the cigarette, the cannon. DAFNA smiles. Her hand picks up the tank and her fingers turn the turret (the matchbox attached to the cigarette pack with the pivot made of a match.)

DAFNA

(During her actions)

Wow...

(with admiration mixed with irony)

Whenever you do anything, you can be relied on that it will work.

DAFNA sets down the tank between herself and Michael, grasps the turret and turns it quickly. The turret

completes two and some turns and stops with the cannon
(the cigarette) aimed at Michael.

DAFNA

Truth or dare?

MICHAEL

(After smiling hesitation)

Dare.

DAFNA

Of course. Okay... I dare you, next
time to say "Truth."

She turns the turret, It spins, and the cannon stops
almost opposite Michael. She turns it a little to aim at
Michael. Smiles...
Michael smiles, too and says nothing. Just smiles.
Silence.

107A. INTERIOR / KITCHEN / NIGHT

MICHAEL begins to speak. From time to time a frozen image
fills the screen, like a short, distant memory fragment.

MICHAEL

On the first day of the Lebanon War
we drove on some dirt road. My tank
was on the right and another tank,
Yigal's tank, was on the left.

He picks up his smartphone and sets it to the left of the
tank he built.

I was the company commander.

(turns the cannon of his tank to the
front)

Yigal was under my command.

After a few minutes the road split
into two paths. I was to take the one
on the right, and Yigal's tank was
supposed to take the one on the left.
The route was planned, and we each
knew where we were and which way
turn.

But what happened was that just
before the split I slowed down and
signaled Yigal to cut in front of me
and take my path. I can still
remember seeing him through the dust.

107.INSERT 1

Frozen image of Yigal's gaze through the dust.

MICHAEL'S VOICE
(VO over the picture)
I could see in his face that he
didn't understand what I was doing.

Back to the kitchen.

Michael's hand grasps the tank and moves it. The tank
turns and overtakes the smartphone lying next to it.

MICHAEL'S VOICE
(during these actions)
But I was the officer in charge, his
commander. So I cut in front of him
and got onto his path, and he got
onto mine. To this day I don't know
why I made that move.
A few seconds later he hit a booby
trap and was blown up.
Everyone there was screaming that
they were burning up. I didn't have
the courage to come nearer. I just
watched.

108. INTERIOR / KINDERGARTEN / DAY [FLASHBACK]

MICHAEL THE CHILD stands in the corner.
He is facing the wall, his back to the other children in
the kindergarten.
His face shows that he's offended, hurt, and angry.
In the soundtrack we hear children's giggles.

MICHAEL'S VOICE
(VO cont.)
They screamed for a few minutes, and
I just wanted them to die already. I
couldn't stand the screaming anymore.

The child looks down and sees a snail crawling across the
floor. He covers it with his foot and slowly crushes it.

107B. INTERIOR / KITCHEN / NIGHT

Back to Michael's CU

MICHAEL
Finally they died.

Silence...

Images (over the silence)

- A bunch of cheap plastic flowers
- Pictures of the Baba Sali and other "righteous men"
- A woman, beaten and bent, seated on a stool in a narrow, crowded kitchen
- A hospital bed in a small, poor living room

We come closer to a young man with burns on his face, staring straight into the camera. His gaze is direct and quiet.

MICHAEL'S VOICE

(Over the shot of the young man)

Only the gunner managed to pull himself out, but he was burned all over. A year later I went to visit him. Now he lives with his mother in an apartment block. He asked me what happened to Yigal outside the turret. Why he suddenly turned into your path, that's what he said to me. "Yours."

Back to Michael in the kitchen

I told him what I told Yigal's parents. that I didn't know. That he cut in front of me. That it happened quickly. Just like I said at the inquiry after the war. And to anyone else who asked...

MICHAEL

(After a long moment)

But the question haunted me, Dafna. It was my first thought when I woke up every morning, my last thought before I went to sleep. Why did I do this?! Why did I turn into his path and send him to mine, to die in my place? And then, suddenly, you got pregnant. It was like a sign that... I don't know, that God is forgiving me. That it's over. That my nightmare is over.

And I couldn't let you give up on Jonathan.

DAFNA looks at him tenderly. Her eyes glitter.

MICHAEL

But you were wrong, too, Dafna. When you opened that window and were flooded with the scent of the sea and thought you are going to be happy, that you you're just at the beginning. Because that little moment wasn't the beginning of a big, true happiness that was about to enter into your life; it was the happiness itself. A tiny moment; that's all.

109. INTERIOR / KITCHEN / NIGHT

DAFNA

Lately I've been listening to the cassette full of love songs. Remember that tape that you made for me when you fell in love with me and didn't know how to say it?

He smiles, his eyes moist.
She bends over slightly, pushes the button on a cassette player that sits on the corner of the table.
Joe Cocker's "You are so beautiful," in poor quality.

110A. INTERIOR-EXTERIOR / VIEW FROM A MOVING VEHICLE / EARLY EVENING

The song plays on.
View through the cab of the truck. A narrow road and a thick veil of fog.
A long drive.
A skinny cow suddenly appears from the fog, standing on the road, staring at the truck hurtling towards her.

104B. EXTERIOR / ROAD, MUD AND FOG / EARLY EVENING

Thick fog. Slow motion. The truck brakes with a screech, skids, comes off the road and overturns. We don't hear the noises of the crash, just the song. The truck rolls until it stops in the corner of the screen: battered and still.
The cow is left standing on the road in the same spot, with the same indifferent look.

The song continues.
A dim orange sun peeks out from the fog.

111. INTERIOR / KITCHEN / NIGHT

The song is in its last quarter.
 Michael and Dafna stand facing each other in the middle
 of the kitchen, close against each other, barely moving.
 Just breathing each other in, and embracing, She strokes
 his head and he shrinks into her embrace.

The song ends. They stay close together in an embrace.
 A long, silent moment.

MICHAEL

(In a whisper)

There's a dance that goes like this,
 look.

Takes one step forward and says

MICHAEL

Forward.

Another step.

MICHAEL

Forward.

Half a step sideways and a quick close.

MICHAEL

To the right, and stop.

Now the same but the opposite:
 backward, backward, to the left and
 stop.

It's simple, you see. No matter where
 you go, you'll always end up exactly
 where you started out.

One, two, to the right, and stop.

Back, two, to the left, and stop.

They start dancing with endearing clumsiness. Michael
 whispers the beat for a few more moments, then is still.
 They dance the foxtrot in silence.

CUT to black.

End