
1. - .

SFX: BARUCH runs a short distance down a corridor, smart shoes squeaking, then shoves open an entrance door onto a side street. There is the hum of distant traffic.

BARUCH

Yehudit, there you — what are you doing out here, come inside. Your mother is out of control. She's tucked in Daniel's shirt three times already, and there's a strong possibility she'll move on to the Rabbi.

YEHUDIT

I'll be in in a minute, Dad.

BARUCH

Come, do you really want to see Naftali before the ceremony?

YEHUDIT

No, but —

BARUCH

I only — this is a big day for you, but it's a big day for your mother and I too, and sometimes, sometimes I can — yes — but I need you to know, Yehudit, I need you to know that — (SFX: YEHUDIT suddenly hugs him). Oh. I thought you didn't want a hug.

YEHUDIT

A girl can change her mind.

BARUCH"

Quite right. Just to make certain, are we still talking about the hug?

YEHUDIT

Dad!

BARUCH

How can you be old enough at ?

YEHUDIT

I am old enough to get married.

BARUCH

To get married, yes, but —

YEHUDIT

Well then. I am old enough to get divorced.

BARUCH

I just want to understand — (SFX: A car drives past, slows, pulls in further down the street, kills the engine.) That's his car?

YEHUDIT

Let's go inside.

BARUCH

Yehudit, please, what did he do that was so — (SFX: But YEHUDIT has already pushed open the door and stepped back into the building) Oy.

2. -

SFX: The murmur of voices. Everyone is waiting for the ceremony to begin.

ROCHEL

You'd think they'd give it a bit of a spruce up, wouldn't you, I mean you would think that, wouldn't you, it's the Bet Din. It's the law courts. That chair's only got three legs, is that even safe?

YEHUDIT"

There are plenty of chairs, Mum. Why don't you just sit down?

DAYAN

If everyone is ready? (SFX: A hush falls.) Then we will begin. Yehudit bat Rochel?

YEHUDIT"

Yes.

DAYAN"

If you will come forward. And Naftali Yitro ben Yaakov Tzvi?

NAFTALI"

Yes.

DAYAN"

If you will come, please, and stand over here, thank you. (SFX: There is a general creaking of chairs and shuffling of feet. The DAYAN clears his throat.) A marriage, in the eyes of Hakodesh Boruchoo, is a microcosm of a perfect world, a perfect unity between man and wife. But, as we all know, we do not live in a perfect world. There is certainly no such thing as a perfect marriage. And sometimes, often unavoidably, a marriage will break down. Yehudit has already obtained the Decree Nisi, but we are here today for Naftali to give Yehudit a Get, to dissolve the marriage before G-d, and to give them both the opportunity to begin anew. Naftali, you are about to give the Get to Yehudit. Can you confirm this is your signature on the Get?

NAFTALI

Yes.

DAYAN"

If you could repeat the words back to —

NAFTALI

I said yes.

DAYAN"

Very well. And you, Yehudit, are you prepared to receive the Get?

YEHUDIT"

I am.

DAYAN"

Then, Naftali, if you will begin the ceremony by placing the Get in Yehudit's hands. (SFX: NAFTALI sighs. There is the rustle of paper. A beat. And...if you would now let go.

YEHUDIT

Just listen to me, listen to — listen to

we have been over this, we —

ROCHEL

And I shall speak with Naftali's mother, she is a good woman, a sensible woman, she will see what — why are you making a face?

BARUCH"

She is his mother.

ROCHEL"

She is mother.

BARUCH

Why do we have to speak to anyone?

ROCHEL"

What on earth are you talking about?

BARUCH

BARUCH

Would you like a cup of tea, Esther? I am having one. And maybe you can take one up to Yehudit as well. She will be very glad to see you I'm sure.

ESTHER

Yeah. I'd like that.

BARUCH

Good. That will be three mugs then, Rochel.

6.

ESTHER

Got you something.

YEHUDIT

(SFX: A bag of sweets lands on the bed in front of YEHUDIT) Gummi bears??

Esther, these aren't kosher anymore!

ESTHER

These ones are.

YEHUDIT

Oh my goodness, this isn't —

ESTHER

The last bag, last ever bag, 2009 label. Before they started adding all that horrible beef gelatine.

YEHUDIT

But you were saving these for an emergency.

ESTHER

Figured this counted. I can't believe it. Who does that, who even does that? The whole community's gone mental. Everyone's on your side. They won't let it stand.

YEHUDIT"

They can't him give me a Get.

ESTHER

My Daddy said, in Yisrael, if a man refuses to give his wife a Get, they just throw him in jail until he agrees.

YEHUDIT

Yeah, but we're not in Israel. We're in North Manchester.

ESTHER

Yeah, BUT there's other things they can do, can't they? Like, they can put pressure on him and stuff. Think about it. No one's going to learn with him, no shul's going to call him to the Torah, nobody's going to until he gives you a Get. He's going to be completely ostriched.

YEHUDIT"

Ostracised.

ESTHER"

He's just gone mad. He never struck me as mad. Was he a bit mad? Was that the problem?"

"

YEHUDIT"

No, he wasn't mad.

ESTHER"

Did he have other, y'know... problems?

YEHUDIT"

No.

ESTHER

Are we talking about the same thing?

YEHUDIT"

Yes, we're talking about the same thing.

ESTHER"

Because you know James and Danielle Foxenberg? Well they were trying to make a baby for a whole year, but nothing was happening so they went to see the Rabbi, and...well I don't want to gossip about it.

ROCHEL

Clever. Up you get. Now what do you want to wear? (SFX: She opens the wardrobe door and the hangers clink as she begins to take things out of the wardrobe.)

BARUCH

Yes, that is wonderful. Everyone will be very glad to see you.

The hairbrush though, Rochel. Why are you using it?

ROCHEL "

What?

BARUCH "

Why are you brushing her hair?

SFX: ROCHEL stops.

ROCHEL

Baruch, what on earth are you talking about?

BARUCH "

Surely you must realise?

ROCHEL "

Realise what?

BARUCH

I don't want to have to—

ROCHEL

Realise

YEHUDIT

That there's no point brushing my hair, if I'm going to have to cover it.

ROCHEL "

Oh, Baruch.

BARUCH "

I'm so sorry, Yehudit.

ROCHEL "

BARUCH "

Rochel, she cannot show her hair to the world, it's not proper, it's not right, she needs to put on her sheitel, she is still — I am sorry — but she is still a married woman. And, Yehudit, you have such beautiful —

SFX: The scream is swallowed up by the sound of voices united in liturgical prayer, mournful, soaring. DANIEL and BARUCH speak in whispers.

DANIEL"
Look at him.

BARUCH"
Shhh.

DANIEL
But look at him though. Yehudit lying in bed for days on end, barely able to leave the house, and him rocking and swaying, eyes closed, as if he's the holiest man in the room. I can't believe he thinks G-d's listening. I can't believe he doesn't burst into flames.

BARUCH"
Daniel, that is enough.

DANIEL
It's not nearly enough. I should set him on fire myself.

BARUCH"
Daniel!

DANIEL"
Sorry.

BARUCH
In any case, if you are really looking, if you really look, you will see what I see, and that is a man who no one will sit next to, who people barely even acknowledge. This is not a man, it is a leper. No one can withstand that, no one.

DANIEL"
But he loves her. That's what he says anyway, that's the sick thing. And people will do anything for love, won't they.

BARUCH
That is a very simplified view of love. You are sixteen, what do you know about it? Just...give it time. He will do the right thing. It will sort.

DANIEL
You said that three months ago.

BARUCH
These things take time.

RABBI"
Shhh...come on now.

BARUCH"
Now look what you've done, you've gone and got us shushed by the Rabbi. Are you happy now? Are you finished?

SFX: The phone rings, loud and insistent. NAFTALI runs towards it.

YEHUDIT"

REB STEINBERG"

REB STEINBERG

...

YEHUDIT

He loves the cook. He loves the cleaner. He loves the person who makes his bed in the morning, and the person who picks up his clothes, and the person who goes to the shops, and the person who puts his dinner on the table. He loves that person very very much, but he doesn't love me.

REB STEINBERG

...

YEHUDIT

What?

REB STEINBERG

Yehudit —

YEHUDIT

No...

REB STEINBERG

It has only been fifteen months. Marriages are hard, they are, they are hard work, and they take time and patience to get right.

YEHUDIT"

REB STEINBERG"

And sacriA [(9949)7ET Q q 1 t2 1 Tf [((re) -0.) -57.4 (h) -0.REIhthps,ET Q q ((re) -0.(a) -0.2 (o

YEHUDIT

It's good to see you.

ESTHER

Yeah, you too.

YEHUDIT

Hey, you want to come over Shabbat afternoon? I think I have one Gummi bear left. We can split it if you like. You can have the head.

ESTHER

Sounds great.

YEHUDIT

Great!

ESTHER

It's just, I think we're out for lunch though, so...not sure what time we'll be back. Could be a late one.

YEHUDIT

Come in the evening then.

ESTHER

YEHUDIT
I know, it's fine.

ESTHER
You'll save that bear?

YEHUDIT
Yeah. Course.

14.

SFX: A key is heard turning in the front door. The door opens. YEHUDIT's footsteps are heard coming into the room.

ROCHEL
Well?

YEHUDIT
No.

BARUCH
(SFX: Getting up.) I said I should have been the one to speak with Reb Steinberg. We should never have let her do this. I'll go right now. Yehudit, don't worry, don't...we can still sort this. It will sort.

SFX: He leaves. The front door closes behind him. A moment's silence.

ROCHEL
Won't you come and sit by me?

SFX: The sofa creaks, as YEHUDIT sits.

ROCHEL
Have you eaten?

YEHUDIT
...

ROCHEL
There is some cold chicken in the fridge. Soup, I think, hm?

YEHUDIT
It's my fault.

ROCHEL
Yehudit, no, you mustn't say such a thing, you mustn't think it! You were a caring, loyal, dutiful wife to him, there is nothing you could have done to —

YEHUDIT"
That's not what I mean. I should never have married him. I wasn't...—I never...— But he had such ideas. He seemed to know so much about so many things. He was so passionate. About those things. And I thought if that passion could touch me, even for a moment...

ROCHEL"
Oh, Yehudit...

YEHUDIT"

We used to giggle about it. Me and Esther and the other girls. Before any of this, before any of us even...— About what it would be like. Those first moments. After the veil is lifted. All those laws of purity, we hadn't even touched a boy, not since we were children. It was Esther's sister who finally told us. She said it was the first touch, more than the first kiss. The first time she held his hand. That's when she knew. Like you and Dad knew. Said it was like...like something magnetic. Like magnetism. Like she didn't want to let go. You want to know what I felt, when I first held Naftali's hand?

ROCHEL

...

YEHUDIT

16.

SHOPKEEPER

Mind you watch your step. It's dark out there now. (SFX: The door opens, signified by a little bell.)
Next.

NAFTALI"

Just the milk, please.

SHOPKEEPER"

Next.

NAFTALI"

Um, sorry, it's just the milk.

SHOPKEEPER"

Sorry, we don't serve your sort in here. If you would kindly stand aside. Hello, Mrs. Blumenthal, what is it this evening?

NAFTALI"

Excuse me, sorry, you can't just — what do you mean my sort?

SHOPKEEPER"

You can leave the milk there, I'll put it back.

NAFTALI"

If you're talking about my marriage —

SHOPKEEPER

It's not a marriage, it's a kidnapping.

NAFTALI"

But where am I meant to get my milk?

SHOPKEEPER"

Buy a cow. (SFX: NAFTALI walks towards the exit. The bell sounds) Sorry, Mrs. Blumenthal, where were we —

SFX: The door shuts, cutting off the rest of their conversation. We are outside on the street. There is the rumble of traffic. NAFTALI sighs. Suddenly, there is a light thwack and he stumbles. He's been hit with an egg.

NAFTALI"

Hey, what the — (SFX: Another egg hits him, and another, and another. The barrage increases. Some hit the wall behind him.) Stop it, ah, stop it, stop it...

SFX: Running footsteps approach.

MAN"

Oi! Jog on, yer scum. (SFX: We hear a gaggle of feet running away.) That's it, clear off!
Yer alright there, pal. Jesus, look at yer.

NAFTALI

I'm fine. Really. It's just a bit of egg.

MAN

A bit? Looks like they raided a farm. Did yer see faces?

NAFTALI

I...I haven't really —

MAN"

Should report it. Shouldn't stand for that, y'know, pal, that anti-Semitic crap. Yer and your lot, yeah, funny hats, funny ways, yer've got just as much right to be here as them, y'know what I mean.

NAFTALI"

...Right, um...

MAN"

Oh mate, no, di'nt mean nothing by that, yeah? Always respected yer lot. Big families, yeah, lot of love there. Don't know how yer manage with nine kids, mind, I struggle wi' one. But that's why yer gotta report it though, int'it. For yer family. Sometimes yer got to do the right thing, even when it's hard.

NAFTALI

...

MAN"

Yer gonna be alright getting home?

NAFTALI"

Yes.

MAN

(SFX: Walking away) Right, well, be safe, yeah? Good luck to yer.

NAFTALI

Thanks — thank you. Wait, you never told me your — what? No. But that's impossible. It can't be. Where did he — he was right [there]... Oh G-d in heaven. Is this Your work? Did You send an angel from on high to —

MAN"

Jesus bloody Christ.

NAFTALI

Ahh!

MAN

Sorry.1 /Tonh

REB STEINBERG

Is that a rhetorical question?

NAFTALI

Not if you can answer it.

REB STEINBERG"

Hmmm. And you are quite sure he was not a —

NAFTALI"

Yes, yes. I just didn't see him go, that's all.

REB STEINBERG"

But of course, a message from Hakodesh Baruchoo does not have to be flown in on the wings of angels.

NAFTALI"

No. Reb Steinberg, you are the most learned, wisest scholar I know. I have read every text, every commentary, commentaries on commentaries, even...even poetry, and psalms, but I cannot find the answers. I don't know what to do.

REB STEINBERG"

Perhaps then you have been looking in the wrong place. Forget the scripture for a moment. What does it say in your heart?

NAFTALI

That I love her.

REB STEINBERG

Yes.

NAFTALI

But that I am causing her great suffering. I know how they speak about me. How they look at me in the street. They would look at a murderer the way they look at me. A defiler.

REB STEINBERG"

No...

NAFTALI"

Yes. And what's more, . I deserve their hatred. I have become hateful.

REB STEINBERG"

Naftali...

NAFTALI"

But what I cannot understand, is that before any of this, before I did what I did, was I so hateful, so abhorrent, so repulsive a human being, that she did not even want to to make it work?

REB STEINBERG

Of course not.

NAFTALI

You think I would have denied her this after a couple of years? Eighteen months? I understand that marriages fail, I do, but ? What of value can be learned in a year? It takes twelve months minimum to appreciate a book of Gemmara.

REB STEINBERG

At least.

NAFTALI

And seven whole years to study every one.

REB STEINBERG"

It does.

NAFTALI"

Then how many lifetimes to even scratch the surface of a human being.

REB STEINBERG

Do you remember Chaim Parnovski?

NAFTALI"

No.

REB STEINBERG"

He was in your Bekius class.

NAFTALI"

Are you sure?"

"

REB STEINBERG"

Quite sure. Never more certain.

NAFTALI"

I don't remember.

REB STEINBERG"

And do you know why?

NAFTALI"

Because I was so wrapped up in my studies, I never stopped to appreciate the people around me?

REB STEINBERG"

Oh Naftali. You always were my brightest student. But no. That is not the answer. You do not remember him, because he was only in your class for seven days. It might well take twelve months minimum to appreciate a Gemarra, but it only took Chaim Parnovski a week to decide he didn't want to.

SFX: The sound of feet on approaching gravel.

NAFTALI"

I think that maybe —

DANIEL

Naftali.

NAFTALI"

Daniel.

DANIEL"

I thought I'd find you here. Good afternoon, Reb Steinberg.

REB STEINBERG

I...I don't understand, Daniel was very clear that —

YEHUDIT

Oh my [G-d] — wait there. I'm coming down.

SFX: She shuts the window.

1 . .

SFX: The car comes to a stop.

NAFTALI

Here we are. This is my house. Thank you again for the lift, uh...

DANIEL"

Menachem.

NAFTALI"

Menachem. Yes. (SFX: He opens the door.) Well like I say, it was very kind of you to —

DANIEL"

Menachem really needs to use the toilet.

NAFTALI"

Oh. Okay. You better come in.

20. .

SFX: YEHUDIT emerges from the house and slams the front door shut.

YEHUDIT

What did Daniel say?

REB STEINBERG

Uhh, I don't —

YEHUDIT

Rabbi Steinberg!

REB STEINBERG

REB STEINBERG

Yes, but —

YEHUDIT

I need you to take me there right now. (SFX: She walks to the car, rattles the handle.) Come on!
Open the door!

REB STEINBERG

Yehudit, I don't know if —

YEHUDIT

Oh for goodness — Reb Steinberg, you are seventy two years old and I am supposedly a married woman,

REB STEINBERG

But without a chaperone, people might talk.

YEHUDIT

What about Pikuach Nefesh0 sc q 1 0 0 1 57 593 cm Ba.2 (D) -0.2 0 0 s Q q 1 0 m BT 11 0 07 684

DANIEL"

Well, I think that's pretty obvious.

NAFTALI

This is not your business, Daniel.

DANIEL

She's my sister. It is my business. You're going to give her a Get, and you're going to do it today. Or Menachem's going to make it his business as well.

NAFTALI"

This isn't right. All these threats, the pizza, the eggs, the phone calls, it won't work, it's not —

DANIEL

What do you mean, phone calls, what phone calls?"

NAFTALI

The phone calls. The breathing. The threats. The

DANIEL

What are you talking about?

NAFTALI

It wasn't you.

DANIEL

Ha. You really don't know how many enemies you have, do you.

"

NAFTALI"

It doesn't matter. You cannot make me give a Get by threatening me.

DANIEL

I know. That's why we're going to hurt you.

SFX: MENACHEM forces NAFTALI into a chair.

NAFTALI

Ah! Daniel listen to me, you can't, this is not our way, a Get must be given freely —

DANIEL

 A must be That's it, end of sentence, beginning and end of discussion, every man knows that, every boy, even Shmuel knows right from wrong and he eats . So what does that make you then, Naftali, not a man, not a boy, less morally developed than a toddler, what does that make you, because it's . You're an animal. That's what you are. Nothing but an animal. And animals need to be trained.

NAFTALI"

Not like this. Please. Not like this. If I give the Get because I want to, there is a chance I might be forgiven, but if people found out that —

DANIEL"

I don't know how she stayed married to you twelve minutes, let alone twelve months. The whining would have got me after twelve seconds. She told me all about it, you know. How trapped she felt, even before you refused a divorce. How selfish you are. How useless. Do you know something, Menachem?

SFX: The kettle is getting louder and louder.

DANIEL

Naftali doesn't even know how to make a cup of tea.

NAFTALI"

I do.

DANIEL

But Yehudit always used to make your tea, didn't she? Didn't she, Naftali.

NAFTALI

...

DANIEL

So here's what we're going to do. We're going to teach you. Get the kettle, Menachem.

SFX: The kettle screams.

NAFTALI

Daniel, please...

DANIEL

Oh look you're shaking. Got to be careful of that. When you're making tea. That's how accidents happen. That's how you get boiling water all over you.

SFX: The scraping of chairs as NAFTALI struggles and is held down.

NAFTALI

Get your hands off me!

YEHUDIT

Get your hands off him.

DANIEL"

Yehudit.

NAFTALI

Yehudit!

YEHUDIT

Put that DOWN!

DANIEL

Sis —

YEHUDIT

NOW!

DANIEL"

Sis, we're doing this for you —

YEHUDIT

I said put it DOWN. (SFX: _____ The kettle is placed down on the table.) Now get out.

DANIEL

YEHUDIT"

Thought you might. (SFX: Daniel traipses out and shuts the door behind him. A moment's silence.)
You want a hand up?

NAFTALI"

Thanks. (SFX: YEHUDIT helps NAFTALI to his feet.) Sorry. Sweaty palms.

YEHUDIT"

Are you hurt?

NAFTALI"

Just a little shaken.

YEHUDIT"

Here, sit down.

SFX: They sit.

NAFTALI

You saved me, Yehudit.

YEHUDIT

Because I love Daniel.

NAFTALI"

Your thug brother? The one who kidnapped me? Assaulted me? Boiled ? The police would
throw away the key.

YEHUDIT"

I know.

NAFTALI"

I could call them.

YEHUDIT"

I know.

NAFTALI

I should — I .

YEHUDIT"

I know. Which is why if you don't I'll come back.

NAFTALI

You'd do that?

YEHUDIT"

I don't think anyone's given me a choice. I don't think they ever did.

NAFTALI

But if you had a choice...?

YEHUDIT

It doesn't matter anymore.

NAFTALI

What?

YEHUDIT"

What?

NAFTALI"

What did you just say? Just now, just then. What did you... because you said —

YEHUDIT"

Sometimes you have to do the right thing.

NAFTALI

Even when it's hard.

SFX: NAFTALI suddenly gets to his feet.

YEHUDIT

What? (SFX: He rips off a piece of kitchen roll and returns to the table. He begins to write.) What are you doing?"

"

NAFTALI"

What does it look like I'm doing? I'm giving you a Get.

YEHUDIT"

That's a piece of kitchen roll.

NAFTALI"

22.

SFX: There is a general hubbub of voices as people mingle in a corridor, waiting to go into the chamber.

BARUCH"

Yes, she does. But in ten minutes time you will no longer be related to her. That was a joke.
You are allowed to laugh.

NAFTALI"

It's alright. I hurt her daughter in an unimaginable way. It is no less than what I deserve.

BARUCH

But you have also made amends. And that should not be forgotten either. Reb Steinberg was most insistent. He is a good boy, he said. An honourable boy. I am glad that that is true once more.

NAFTALI

I just wanted to do the right thing.

BARUCH

Well that is good to hear. Because if I'd had to, I would also have done the right thing.

NAFTALI

What do you mean?

BARUCH

You know what I mean. What we spoke about. You and I. On the phone.

NAFTALI

...

BARUCH

Ten minutes. Don't be late.

SFX: BARUCH walks off. NAFTALI exhales slowly.

YEHUDIT

Naftali?

SFX: NAFTALI gives a startled yell and drops a book on the floor.

YEHUDIT

Sorry —

NAFTALI

Sorry —

YEHUDIT

I didn't mean to — I'll get it.

NAFTALI

Oh, um. Right. So...this book —

YEHUDIT

You're reading 'The Lonely Man of Faith'?

NAFTALI

No. Well, yes. I mean I read some. Not all. Not because it wasn't good. Just because I think it's quite rude to read someone else's present.

YEHUDIT"

You...bought this for me?

NAFTALI

Well you always seemed to be reading something by Solveitchik when we — when you and I were — and I know you've read this one, but it's a new edition and it's got all these extra notes and commentaries and things and I know you don't like to take things at face value so I thought maybe —

YEHUDIT

I love it.

NAFTALI

Oh. Well that's — and I really I should have wrapped it, I know, and I did try but I kept sellotaping my fingers to the wrapping paper, and then I thought if people see me walking round with a present they might start wondering who it's for and —

YEHUDIT"

It's okay, I get it. Thank you.

NAFTALI"

I'm sorry. I'm just a bit nervous.

Not nervous enough to —

YEHUDIT

I know. Don't worry.

NAFTALI"

So, um...what happens now then? Shall I follow you in? Or you can go in first, if you like, and then I can —