

Two Weeks in September  
or  
Not A Dream But a Nightmare  
by  
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BLACK SCREEN.

FADE IN:

CONTEXT -- THE PAST TO THE PRESENT (NOVEMBER 2002)

SEQUENCE OF SHOTS

Subtitle where appropriate to identify the event. Whenever a character is focused, his/her name should appear as a subtitle underneath.

A) Duluth, MN, lynching June 15, 1920 with burning crosses prominent. The image freezes and turns into a lynching postcard. [Note the sequence starts after WW1.]

B) A Hitler rally in which Hitler is flanked by prominent swastikas. The image freezes into a famous news photo.

A WOMAN'S VOICE reads in five languages: English with Hebrew, Syriac, Septuagint Greek, and Arabic, softer, but woven like threads into a single sound.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

The carpenter measures with a line  
and makes an outline with a marker;  
he roughs it out with chisels and  
marks it with compasses. He shapes  
it in the form of man, of man in all  
his glory, that it may dwell in a  
shrine.

C) German soldiers are herding refugees, who flee Eishyshok in 1941. One of the children (1 year old) is young MICHAEL MILGROM (MIKHAEL), who grows up to be RABBI MILGROM. Another child is his older brother ELKHANAN MILGROM (approximately 14).

ZOOM AND CLICK ON: REB TEVYE MILGROM AND GITL MILGROM, WHO CARRIES MICHAEL, AND ELKHANAN MILGROM.

Reb Tevye Milgrom is a farmer. He is traditionally dressed with a cap and vest. His ritual fringes are visible. Gitl is dressed like an Ashkenazi farm wife of this time period. (Farming was an Ashkenazi occupation in Eishyshok and environs.)

D) Israeli military unit kills villagers of Kufr Qasim in 1956. Stars of David should be prominent on a military flag.

E) White Christian racists attack civil rights activists protesting segregation. One of the attackers wears a clerical collar. One of the activists is Michael Milgrom in his 20s.

## ZOOM AND CLICK ON: MICHAEL MILGROM

## WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

He cuts down cedars, or perhaps took  
 a cypress or oak. He let it grow  
 among the trees of the forest, or  
 planted a pine, and the rain made it  
 grow. It is man's fuel for burning;  
 some of it he takes and warms himself,  
 he kindles a fire and bakes bread.  
 But he also fashions a god and  
 worships it.

E) Six day war. Israeli military unit shoots Egyptian POWs  
 in the Sinai.

## ZOOM AND CLICK ON: A YOUNGER RABBI (BENZION) MEILIKOWSKI.

He is among the shooters.

F) Anti-Vietnam War protest. Michael Milgrom and his  
 girlfriend BASYA WASSERMAN are carrying protest signs.

## ZOOM AND CLICK ON: MICHAEL MILGROM AND BASYA.

G) Falanjist killings at Sabra and Shatila under Israeli  
 supervision.

## ZOOM AND CLICK ON: A YOUNGER RABBI (BENZION) MEILIKOWSKI.

He is among the supervising Israeli soldiers. The IDF  
 soldiers and Falanjists should wear prominent religious (or  
 Zionist) symbols.

H) Ayatollah Khalkhali shows body parts of American soldiers  
 on Iranian TV.

## INSERT ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE: AYATOLLAH KHALKALI

I) Baruch Goldstein attacks the Ibrahimi Mosque.

## INSERT PICTURE: THE BARUCH GOLDSTEIN SHRINE AT KIRYAT ARBA.

J) World trade center collapses.

## INSERT - SPEECHES BY RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL LEADERS

Using God to justify conquest or attacks: JERRY FALWELL.  
 PAT ROBERTSON. RICHARD LAND. GEORGE BUSH'S "CRUSADE SPEECH."  
 USAMA BIN LADIN. MARVIN OLASKY. MOSHE LEVINGER. RABBI KAHANE.

The Bush scene should show Bush flanked by crosses just as  
 Hitler was flanked by swastikas.

INSERT PICTURES: A SYNAGOGUE, A MOSQUE, A CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

INSERT PICTURES: A CROSS, A MENORAH/STAR OF DAVID, BANNER OF MUHAMMAD.

K) A circumcision party in a Jerusalem settlement.  
Rabbi Meilikowski is the circumciser (mohel).

RABBI MEILIKOWSKI

Barukh attah Adonai asher natan  
leyisrael hayal hadash laharog  
ulehashmid et haaravim.

(God is a source of blessing, for he has given to Israel a  
new soldier to kill and to destroy the Arabs.)

ZOOM AND CLICK ON: RABBI MEILIKOWSKI.

L) MEN AND WOMEN AROUND THE WORLD: sitting, praying, bowing  
to the East, bowing to the altar, bowing to the Holy of  
Holies. The VOICE continues:

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

Half of the wood he burns in the  
fire; over it he prepares his meal,  
he roasts his meat and eats his fill.  
He also warms himself and says, "Ah!  
I am warm; I see the fire." From  
the rest he makes a god, his idol;  
he bows down to it and worships. He  
prays to it and says, "Save me; you  
are my god."

M) At Ben-Gurion airport: a female IDF soldier is  
interrogating and badgering ISLAH AKRAM.

Near her are Rabbi Milgrom and his wife Basya. Islah looks  
about to cry but suddenly is angry (the Soldier said something  
nasty about her murdered father). The dialogue is less  
important in this scene than the visual and may be left out  
entirely.

Islah defends her father and calls IDF soldiers heartless  
murderers. The soldier strikes her. Basya hits the soldier,  
and they are surrounded by soldiers pointing Uzi machine  
guns.

ZOOM AND CLICK ON: RABBI MILGROM, BASYA AND ISLAH.

N) NEWS FOOTAGE, SPEECHES, Checkpoint BEATINGS, NAZI FOOTAGE  
from Hitler's Germany. US LYNCHING POSTCARDS, GERMAN MASS  
MURDER PHOTOS, ZIONIST EXPULSION AND MIGHTY HUNTER PHOTOS,  
IRAQI TORTURE PHOTOS. All blend. There is with no sense of  
who is beating whom; the scenes are simply a wash of man's  
inhumanity to man. The footage then gives way to a universal  
SERIES OF PHOTOS OF CHILDREN, staring out at us from black &  
white POSTERS.

## WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

They know nothing, they understand nothing; their eyes are plastered over as they cannot see, and their minds closed so they cannot understand. No one stops to think, no one has the knowledge or understanding to say, "half of it I used for fuel; I even baked bread over its coals, I roasted meat and I ate. Shall I make a detestable thing from what is left? Shall I bow down to a block of wood?"

**SUPER: TODAY, November 2002**

**CLOSE ON - POSTER OF A PALESTINIAN REFUGEE**

A ten-year-old GIRL, her soulful eyes searching ours. WOMEN IN MOURNING surround her in black in the b.g.

## WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

He feeds on ashes, a deluded heart misleads him; he cannot save himself, or say, "Is not this thing in my right hand a lie?"

**CAMERA BACK TO REVEAL - POSTER**

on the front of a table at a SOLIDARITY demonstration for Palestine.

**CAMERA BACK FURTHER.**

**EXT. UCSC CAMPUS -- DAY**

**SUPER: UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA CARLA, NOVEMBER 2002**

A demonstration by Pro-Palestinian group, CAMPUS SOLIDARITY. Students gather around a makeshift stage flanked by U.S. and Palestinian FLAGS. A young woman uses a microphone to address an eclectic crowd; sweat shirts and jeans mingle with the traditional dress of Palestine. Throughout the crowd, SIGNS bob over a sea of faces. Slogans on the signs read:

**PALESTINIAN CHILDREN ARE STARVING**

**U.S.A. FUNDS RACIST COLONY**

**SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE / FUNDAMENTAL WITHOUT THE ISM**

**E PLURIBUS UNUM HERE / ONE STATE THERE**

**DIVEST NOW!**

**SHARON MURDERS WOMEN & CHILDREN SINCE 1952**

**FREE PALESTINE**

**END THE OCCUPATION**

**DON'T SUPPORT ISRAELI TERROR!**

**JEWISH STATE / WHITE STATE RACIST STATE.**

ON THE PODIUM --

-- law school freshman, ADELLE STEVENSON, 22, a slight young woman in the black HIJAB of conservative Muslim women, speaks into the microphone with a slight West Virginia Ozark accent.

ADELLE

I wear this hijab not because I am a Muslim but because I lived in Hebron last year to study Arabic. I wanted to learn exactly what the occupation is for Palestinian women. Because of my experiences, I have vowed to wear the hijab until Palestine is free.

BEHIND HER --

-- on the platform, CARLOTTA KEATS, 19, a blue-eyed blonde from Minnesota perches animatedly on the edge of her chair; next to her, RABBI MILGROM, early 60's, dignified and out of place in the traditional BUKHARIAN KIPPAH, sits next to ISLAH AKRAM, 17, a quiet beauty in drab Western clothes who strikes a peaceful pose, hands folded in her lap, looking down -- like a figure out of a Michelangelo.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STREET - AL-SAGHRA -- DAY

ISLAH AKRAM, age 15, is surrounded by WOMEN in mourning black in a funeral procession that snakes its way through the streets of Al-Saghra. With them, MEN carry a shroud-wrapped corpse past stark buildings and rubble-strewn plots that bake in the noon sun. Islah has the same quite, timeless expression on her face. She is a young girl resigned to sorrow.

BACK TO:

EXT. UCSC CAMPUS -- SAME TIME

Near the podium, students and activists man tables with petitions, pamphlets and leaflets. Interested PASSERS-BY stop to chat with them, while others with clipboards attempt to engage passers-by and urge them to sign petitions.

ACROSS THE COURTYARD --

-- another group, the STUDENTS FOR ISRAEL, approaches, marching towards the demonstration with militant precision, an echo, as well as a strong contrast, to the one we saw in Al-Saghra. The students carry U.S. and Israeli FLAGS and SIGNS with slogans that read:

**ARAFAT EQUALS BIN LADIN**

**END PALESTINIAN TERRORISM**

**U.S. AND ISRAEL / UNITED AGAINST TERRORISM**

**ANTI-SEMITISM IS UN-AMERICAN**

**CHRISTIANS FOR ISRAEL**

**NAZISM NEVER AGAIN - 9/11 NEVER AGAIN**

**JORDAN IS PALESTINE**

Each slogan is shouted out -- first by one student, and then repeated by many. As they draw nearer, their chants grow louder and louder.

ADELLE (V.O.)

When I encountered Israelis, I never spoke back. I never disobeyed an order. I did everything I was told. Yet, the settlers and the soldiers cursed me, spit on me, punched me. The men threatened to rape me and kill me. And they did not stop with women like me. It was the same with eleven and twelve year-old girls. These men are proud of their depravity. PROUD!

BACK TO SCENE - ADELLE --

-- holds up a POSTER depicting Israeli Cowboys and Palestinian Indians.

ADELLE

These posters -- from the 30's and 40's -- equate the Israeli colonists with the John Wayne American cowboy and the native Palestinian with the Native American. This 'cowboy mentality' believed that "the only good In'jin is a dead In'jin." Zionists too, then as well as now, believe "the only good Palestinian is a dead Palestinian." Anyone who claims otherwise is lying. Please...  
(MORE)

ADELLE (CONT'D)  
(Motions towards the  
tables)

Come see the posters at our tables.  
And thank you very much for hearing  
me.

She raises her arm in a clenched-fist salute.

ADELLE  
(Shouts)

For Israel, not another nickel, not  
another dime, no more money for  
Israel's crime! Now scream it so  
President Kraven can hear it in his  
office.

(Repeats)

Not another nickel, not another dime,  
no more money for Israel's crime!

The spectators join in as Adelle leads them:

**"Not another nickel, not another dime, no more money for  
Israel's crime!"**

Senior RON WHITE, 21, an African American student acting as  
M.C., steps forward. Uneasy, he looks back at the Students  
for Israel approaching in a column, their chants growing  
louder and louder, then -- back at the crowd -- he calmly  
takes the microphone and hushes their chanting.

RON  
(Into microphone)

Adelle Stevenson. Thank you, Adelle.  
Always a hard act to follow but --

(Motions behind him)

Our next speaker is Rabbi Milgrom  
from the UCSC Peace Studies Center.

The crowd breaks into enthusiastic APPLAUSE. Rabbi Milgrom  
pats Islah on the shoulder and stands. Islah smiles up at  
him as he steps forward, bows to Ron and takes the microphone.  
A man of the 60s, Rabbi Milgrom's gray beard and *kippah* form  
an interesting contrast to his Birkenstock sandals and worn  
cardigan of his bygone hippie days.

As Ron steps back, he glances again at the marchers closing  
in and jumps down from the podium to check the crowd monitors  
and confer with security.

RABBI MILGROM

When I was a college student too  
many years ago, I was walking back  
to my dorm room, and a mugger came  
up behind me. He said, "I have a  
knife; give me all your money!"

(MORE)

## RABBI MILGROM (CONT'D)

Maybe I should have, but I was tired,  
and I had had a bad day. I noticed  
a loose brick on the wall beside me.  
I grabbed it, spun around, smashed  
in the side of his head and killed  
him.

I was leading anti-Vietnam War  
rallies, and I was already an avowed  
pacifist. Do you know how I felt?

(Pause)

I felt great. I had physically and  
personally crushed someone I perceived  
as a mortal threat. It was like  
being a superhero. When I think  
back to that day, I still feel great.

NOT FAR AWAY --

-- another group, the STUDENTS FOR ISRAEL, approaches,  
marching towards the demonstration with militant precision,  
an echo, as well as a strong contrast, to the one we saw in  
Al-Saghra. The students carry U.S. and Israeli FLAGS and  
SIGNS with slogans that read:

## RABBI MILGROM (O.S.) (CONT'D)

About 6 months ago, I was waiting at  
a checkpoint with my wife in the  
occupied territories, and we watched  
an IDF soldier talking to a  
Palestinian man, who was trying to  
get through the checkpoint with his  
wife and young son. Suddenly, the  
soldier punched the man as hard as  
he could in the gut. The man fell  
over, and the soldier began kicking  
him. I tried to get through the  
line to stop him, but I couldn't. I  
did get close enough to see the smiles  
on the faces of the attacker and his  
fellow soldiers as the man groaned  
and his wife and child cringed.

INTERCUT - RABBI MILGROM WITH THE ONCOMING MARCHERS --

-- as they approach, shouting slogans:

**"Terrorist tools! America haters! Arab lovers! Disloyal,  
unpatriotic! Anti-Semites!"**

The marchers pause briefly before shouting:

**"French loving, brie-eaters!!!"**

They LAUGH at this last. Meanwhile, Rabbi Milgrom continues,  
unfazed. He's used to worse.

## RABBI MILGROM

At the Passover Seder, when we read of the deaths of the Egyptians, we spill our wine to diminish our pleasure and to be mindful that Exodus is a story of faith in God's justice as God enables the Children of Israel to escape from a tyrannical ruler.

He stops and takes a drink of water.

THE PRO-ISRAEL MARCHERS REACH THE BOUNDARY --

-- of the Campus Solidarity demonstration.

The campus police spread out to try to keep the groups separated. They are outnumbered.

The SOUND OF THE PRO-ISRAEL MARCHERS INTENSIFIES as they get closer.

## RABBI MILGROM

... and that Zionists were ever more heroic.

The *yetzer hara*, the core of darkness, feeds itself. In the mythic Apocalyptic mental framework, the Jew becomes ever nobler yet more besieged by the evil represented by Palestinians, Arabs, Muslims and the new global anti-Semitism.

Now the SHOUTS of the protesters begin to drown out some of Rabbi Milgrom's words.

## PROTESTER #1

The Land of Israel belongs to the Jews!

## PROTESTER #2

Go back to Arabia!

AT THE EDGE OF THE CROWD --

-- sophomore REBECCA KLEIN (BECCA), 19, in jeans and a simple white tee shirt moves about on the edges of the demonstration taping both the podium and the marchers with a small but technically sophisticated mini-cam.

She ZOOMS IN on RACHEL WEISS and SHELDON GROSSMAN who lead the procession, heads close. They talk in whispers like young lovers.

THROUGH THE MINI-CAM --

-- we see RACHEL and SHELDON talking, unaware that they are being filmed.

Sheldon pulls a green glass bottle of San Pelligrino from his knapsack, twists the top off and takes a long swig, then throws his free arm around Rachel and leans in low.

SHELDON  
(Whispers to her)  
Arab-loving cocksuckers.

He lingers seductively on the last word. She laughs.

SHELDON  
We gotta get 'em off this campus.

Rachel throws him an impatient glance

RACHEL  
You worry too much, Sheldon!  
(Smiles)  
Becca will get all the evidence on tape.  
(Points to his water)  
Finish that! You can toss it right there...  
(Points to Rabbi Milgrom on the podium)  
... after the riot starts.

Sheldon looks over, mildly shocked, then smiles back. He worships her. He'll do anything she says.

MEANWHILE - RON WHITE --

-- works the crowd, trying to avoid an incident the college can use to shut down Campus Solidarity.

RON  
Everyone! Keep cool. They want an incident. Let them look like jerks --

BACK TO SCENE

RABBI MILGROM  
... narcissism and Holocaust fixation.  
We can justify any act of barbarism on grounds of security, and we congratulate ourselves for not having done worse.

Suddenly the SHOUTS of a small cadre of students dressed as Muslims, wrapped in KUFFIYAHs, faces hidden from view, charge from behind the podium throwing bottles and stones at the marchers and shouting in an absurd, fake Arabic, thick with

a mid-western twang. Rachel and Sheldon, the first, duck as if on cue.

FAKE ARAB #1  
*Itbah al-Yahud!*

FAKE ARAB #2  
*Filastin bilaaduuna! Al-Yahud kalbuuna!*

ON THE PODIUM - ISLAH --

-- throws Adelle a horrified look and jumps up. Adelle pulls her down.

ADELLE  
Stay down. *Kalbuuna!*? It's...  
*Kilaabunaa!*  
(With disgust)  
Really bad Arabic!

Islah buries her face in her hands, also determined not to react, as Rabbi Milgrom continues:

RABBI MILGROM  
... that is the core of creation  
narrative of the State of Israel has  
expanded to threaten not only  
Palestinians and Arabs but the whole  
world.

The rock-throwers turn and run. On cue, Rachel, Sheldon and the rest of the Students for Israel scatter throughout the Solidarity demonstration, shouting loudly in response to the incident.

Students start shouting:

**"Terrorist Pigs! Leave us alone. It's our land. We have a right to march."**

A melee breaks out. The University POLICE jump into the fray, dragging students away. Ron White moves closer to Rabbi Milgrom in order to stop the speech.

A SAN PELLIGRINO bottle hits Rabbi Milgrom in the head. Ron White catches him so that he does not fall to the ground. Islah and Adelle rush to his side to help guide him away out of harms way.

INT. SECURITY VIDEO MONITORING STATION -- SIMULTANEOUS

A SECURITY GUARD --

-- with feet propped up on the desk is watching video MONITORS that cover the university. A football game plays on one of the monitors. Suddenly he leans forward.

ON THE MONITOR --

-- a small "army" in kuffiyahs duck into the back door of --  
of all places -- the Hillel building.

SECURITY GUARD

(Surprised, irritated)

What the fuck!

(Picks up walkie-talkie)

Echo to base!

BASE (V.O.)

(From walkie-talkie)

Go ahead!

SECURITY GUARD

Some ragheads just broke into *Hillel House*.

BASE (V.O.)

(From walkie-talkie)

Shit. They probably came from the riot. I'll send a car there.

INT. HILLEL HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

The fake Muslims are hurriedly changing their clothes in a back room. They take off the kuffiyahs and masks, change their shirts and don kippahs.

BACK TO SCENE

The Security Guard leans in closer, studying another monitor.

SECURITY GUARD

Well, I'll be...

EXT. UCSC CAMPUS - STREET -- SAME TIME

A University COP listening to a song on a CD headset, bouncing his head from side to side to the music looks up and notices the commotion across the courtyard.

He removes the headset, throws it down, and radios base on his walkie-talkie.

UNIVERSITY COP

(Surprised, irritated)

I need backup. We have a riot on the Green.

BLACK:

EXT. RABBI MILGROM'S HOME SANTA CARLA -- EVENING

Islah knocks on the door.

Rabbi Milgrom with a bandage on his head opens.

RABBI MILGROM  
 (Motioning her in)  
*Bruchah haba'ah. Ahlan Wasahlan.*  
 Glad to see you. You can help me.

As she enters, a relieved expression is on her face. He's obviously fine.

INT. RABBI MILGROM'S SITTING ROOM SANTA CARLA - LATER

Islah sits across from Rabbi Milgrom in a sitting room. She is drinking a tea. Rabbi Milgrom is working on a speech or sermon.

RABBI MILGROM  
 (Emphatic)  
 The organized Jewish community goes apoplectic when I speak -- because they cannot dismiss me as a liar, an anti-Semite or a self-hater.

When I am in Palestine, I only see innocent people reliving the suffering my own family experienced.

ISLAH  
 Aren't you supposed to take it easy?

RABBI MILGROM  
 (Ignores the criticism)  
 Today, words like "innocent" and "peace" can be weapons of mass destruction to justify the murder of thousands.

Islah sets down her tea concerned about a man she obviously considers as a mentor.

ISLAH  
 What is the English word for *tahayyuj*?

RABBI MILGROM  
 Agitation.

ISLAH  
 Isn't this agitation?

RABBI MILGROM  
 (Reluctant to concede)  
 I have just been putting my thoughts together for my sermon this weekend.

ISLAH  
 I could take a look while you relax.

RABBI MILGROM

Let me get the draft.

Rabbi Milgrom gets the sermon from the desk. While she reads, he gets a Brita water pitcher and glasses from the kitchen. He pours her and himself some water. Islah is reading with a signature gesture for concentration (SG#1) that we see both her and her father use later in the story. In this case she could perhaps cross her right hand under her mouth in a fist as she thinks. Rabbi Milgrom gives a slightly pained look as he watches, and Islah notices.

ISLAH

Something wrong?

RABBI MILGROM

I was reminded of your father.

ISLAH

Not now. It's my turn to help you.  
(She composes herself)  
I know you miss Basya very much. I miss her, but she died of a congenital aneurysm. The protesters were not responsible.

RABBI MILGROM

(Pointing)

There is the matter of this bump on my head.

ISLAH

Only as an after the fact argument.

Look, I grant anger can be helpful. When you and Basya first brought me to the USA, I was so numb inside. Then Dr. Atzmon -- do you know her?

RABBI MILGROM

Your high school history teacher. She is infamous. She was an Israeli academic, who wrote an interesting paper in which she compared Islamic fundamentalism with ethnic fundamentalism, which in her analysis included Nazism, Zionism and certain forms of Polish nationalism. The furor over this idea drove her from Israeli academia and forced several editors to resign from the publisher.

ISLAH

Interesting -- she never said anything...

(MORE)

## ISLAH (CONT'D)

Anyway, I was studying and humming a pop Israeli song. She sat down next to me and asked me if I knew what the words meant. I didn't; she told me. I was so embarrassed, but she explained that most Palestinians really did not understand the threat to them.

She gave me an assignment to write a paper and make a presentation on the role of geography in Zionist ideology. I wrote the paper and gave the talk. Dr. Atzmon told me she was giving me an A because she was so disappointed in the perfection of analysis.

I did not understand. The next day, an Israeli classmate, Dani Feit -- he is also a student here at UCSC -- asked me if he could read the paper. I gave it to him, and a few hours later, he came back and told me that it really helped him to understand Palestinian sorrow and grievances.

Then he smiled and added, "Isn't it too bad that you will never have the power to change anything?"

I had never been so angry. I had to rethink everything. I cried for the next two hours for my mother, my father, for everyone I knew and for Palestine. I understood why I had so disappointed Dr. Atzmon.

Anger made me feel the hurt that I no longer noticed, but I am afraid your anger is way to avoid the hurt that you feel because Basya is gone.

I miss her too, but Basya would not appreciate this new Michael Milgrom, who is the voice a divine wrath toward Jewish people that do not agree with him.

## RABBI MILGROM

I thought I was the counselor.

They are both silent for a few moments.

## ISLAH

Okay. About your sermon... "Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," but...

(Reading the sermon)

Hear this, you rulers of the House of Jacob,

You chiefs of the House of Israel,

Who detest justice ... etc. etc.

Assuredly, because of you

Zion shall be plowed as a field,

And Jerusalem shall become heaps of ruins... etc. etc.

... however deserved, is really not your style. Nor are topics like this Medieval Rabbinic "core of darkness" theme. It can only alienate your audience, and I don't agree. Islamic theologians identify the origin of sin in forgetfulness, inattentiveness or miseducation.

The Exodus is not a story of national liberation from absolute tyranny. God could have freed the Children of Israel any time by decree. It is a test whether *banu Israila* remembered the straight path or could be reminded.

(Pause)

I do not like Dani, but I am sure his lack of sympathy and maliciousness toward anyone non-Jewish is not inborn. Someone -- his parents or his community -- taught him to be this way.

INSERT: ISRAEL ADVOCACY SESSION MENTIONED IN *DEVORAH'S TWO WEDDINGS*

Devorah Goren is holding an Israel Advocacy session at Congregation Kehillath Israel in Brookline at 384 Harvard St. The clip should identify Devorah and Dani Feit. Dani Feit is an unpaid summer intern at CAMERA. His name tag so identifies him. Devorah is a resident at MGH, and she works with Charles Jacobs at the David Project. This scene takes place sometime last year after the suicide attack at Sbarro (Sept. 9, 2001).

DEVORAH

As an Israel advocate, you must keep control of the frame of discussion. If your opponent brings up this.

She flashes a picture of a Palestinian handcuffed on the ground at a checkpoint and surrounded by Israeli soldiers pointing weapons.

DEVORAH

You must refocus on this.

She shows a picture of the blown-up Sbarro pizzeria in Jerusalem. She looks and a tear appears in her eye. (Her mother was killed there, and one of the bodies should be a woman of possibly the right age.)

DEVORAH

Or this.

She flashes a montage of pictures of anti-US demonstrators in Arab and Muslim countries. Each country is identified.

RETURN TO SCENE:

ISLAH

Once a person has been so thoroughly indoctrinated, seeing another point of view or even remembering that other people may have different legitimate points of view becomes practically impossible.

Verbally beating such people over the head won't change minds. Your wit and humor is a much more subtle and powerful tool. It helped me.

RABBI MILGROM

So I should be a comedian while the IDF kills innocent people?

ISLAH

No, you should just relax for about ten minutes. You have lost over fifteen kilos over the past two months.

(Pause)

I will prepare food.

Somewhat reluctantly, he gives in. He closes his eyes and leans back. She walks into the kitchen.

INT. R. MILGROM'S KITCHEN SANTA CARLA -- MOMENTS LATER

She goes to the refrigerator to get food. She does the same scene later in the film almost when she prepares breakfast

for her brother and sister. Islah is a caregiver, and she likes to nourish those she loves. She notices a CALENDAR with torah and haphtarah readings on the refrigerator. She takes it down and looks at it as she makes fatoush. As she finishes, she calls to Rabbi Milgrom.

ISLAH

I have a thought for the sermon, and  
I have the fatoush.

INT. R. MILGROM'S SITTING ROOM SANTA CARLA -- MOMENTS LATER

She places the fatoush, plates and utensils on the coffee table in front of him. She sits.

RABBI MILGROM

Yes.

ISLAH

A passage from Isaiah. I'm sure you know it. I memorized it for debates with Christian Fundamentalist Zionists. The carpenter of the passage is a metaphor for someone that carves up religion like a block of wood to justify his political agenda.

RABBI MILGROM

Good theme. Kol hannehaneh middivrei torah notel hayyav min haolam.

INSERT SUBTITLE:

**"He who profits from the words of the Torah subtracts his life from the world (to come)."**

ISLAH

What?

RABBI MILGROM

The ancient sages had some similar thoughts.

ISLAH

(Pause)

May I recite? Will you check my pronunciation?

Rabbi Milgrom nods yes as he reaches to eat some fatoush.

Islah smiles to herself and begins to speak. Her voice is the WOMAN'S VOICE we heard before -- at the beginning. She recites in Ashkenazic pronunciation (a conscious choice on her part) and not with Modern Israeli Hebrew phonology.

## ISLAH

(Hebrew; subtitle)

The carpenter measures with a line  
and makes an outline with a marker;  
he roughs it out with chisels and  
marks it with compasses. He shapes  
it in the form of man, of man in all  
his glory...

INT. UCSC ADMINISTRATION BUILDING -- AFTERNOON (NEXT DAY)

Rabbi Milgrom approaches a massive carved wooden door with RABBI MEILIKOWSKI. He is a portly man whose kippah covers his bald-spot perfectly. He should look a little like Binyamin Netanyahu. A nameplate on the door reads: JAMES KRAVEN, PRESIDENT, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT SANTA CARLA.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. UCSC PRESIDENT KRAVEN'S OFFICE -- LATER

PRESIDENT KRAVEN, Hillel Director Rabbi Meilikowski, and Rabbi Milgrom argue about the demonstration and subsequent riot. Note that Rabbi Milgrom has a bandage on his forehead for his injury.

## KRAVEN

(To Meilikowski)

Thanks for handing me a big pile of  
shit yesterday with that little riot.  
I saw the security video. Your boys  
ran into Hillel House, took off the  
towels and came out a few minutes  
later in yarmulkes!

## RABBI MEILIKOWSKI

They were just defending themselves.

## KRAVEN

They're idiots. And why do we have  
video cameras around the Hillel House?  
You made such a stink because someone  
"vandalized the building" by writing  
"Free Palestine!" in chalk on the  
sidewalk in front.

Rabbi Meilikowski sputters for words but doesn't really have a reply. Rabbi Milgrom interjects.

## RABBI MEILIKOWSKI

But...but...

## RABBI MILGROM

The University should discipline  
"Santa Carla Students for Israel."

Rabbi Meilikowski glowers and then launches into the usual.

RABBI MEILIKOWSKI  
Spoken like a true Jewish anti-Semite!

KRAVEN  
(To Rabbi Milgrom)  
I can't do that. The ADL would jump  
all over me. Jewish alumni would  
withhold their donations.  
(Pause)  
I have to be more creative. My  
headache is going to become your  
headache.

Rabbi Meilikowski smiles.

KRAVEN  
(To Rabbi Meilikowski)  
I meant both of you.

He pauses to wag a finger at them.

KRAVEN  
The two of you are going to create  
an Israel-Palestine Dialogue group.  
I do not care if you solve anything.  
I just want no more riots.

EXT. UCSC ADMINISTRATION BUILDING -- MOMENTS LATER

Rabbi Meilikowski and Rabbi Milgrom walk side-by-side down  
the brick path away from the receding building.

RABBI MEILIKOWSKI  
I call it as I see it.

RABBI MILGROM  
They faked the incident to manipulate  
the university administration. It  
is a technique associated with the  
worst political movements and the  
most dangerous ideologies.

RABBI MEILIKOWSKI  
You should be ashamed using Nazism  
and Zionism in one breath. You are  
a Jewish anti-Semite. Worse than  
the Palestinians.

Rabbi Milgrom shakes his head or rolls his eyes. It will be  
a wonderful collaboration.

RABBI MILGROM  
I was thinking of George Bush and  
the Republican Party.

## EXT. UCSC HILLEL BUILDING -- AFTERNOON (FRIDAY)

Show the outside of the building. Use the Harvard Hillel as inspiration because it is so opulent. [This Hillel should not look exactly like the Harvard Hillel because the latter Hillel will appear in *Devorah's Two Weddings*.]

Probably the movie version should change the name over the entrance from Rosovsky to Bronfman. Reisman Center should probably change to something like Sheinerman Center. Sheinerman is Ariel Sharon's real name.

The building name on the side should say Hillel House of the University of California at Santa Carla instead of Harvard Hillel. It is important to show that this building is the Hillel building.

Dim the light to twilight. The blessing for kindling candles is audible.

RACHEL (V.O.)

(Hebrew with subtitles)

*Barukh attah Adonai eloheyenu melek  
haolam asher kiddeshanu bmitzvotav  
lehadlik ner shel shabbat.*

Dim the light slowly to night.

Maybe there should be audible bits of the *Minha* (afternoon) Service, *Arvit/Maariv* (evening) Service and then the *kiddush* (sanctification/blessing) over wine as well as *hamotze*.

RABBI MEILIKOWSKI (V.O.)

(Hebrew with subtitles)

*Barukh attah Adonai eloheyenu melek  
haolam borei pri hagafen.*

(Hebrew with subtitles)

*Barukh attah Adonai eloheyenu melek  
haolam hamotze lehem min haaretz.*

It is *Shabbat*.

CUT TO:

## INT. UCSC HILLEL BUILDING -- EVENING

This scene takes place in the dining room.

*Seudat leil shabbat* (*Shabbos* Dinner) is in progress.

Head conspirator, Rachel, is sitting with her groupies, Rabbi Meilikowski, Sheldon, the fake Arabs (DANI FEIT among them) from the riot and JUDITH LERNER. Rachel dominates forcefully. There is something sexual in this domination.

The women should all be really smartly dressed. Everything about the Hillel and Sabbath dinner should say wealth and

white upper middle to upper class. No blacks. No poor W. Virginians. No NJ clam diggers.

There are several tables in addition to the table used by Rachel and her groupies. There are some kids. One kid is telling his parents what he learned in Hebrew school this week. Another more studious table is learning from books of *mishnayot* (Kohati is the author). This is the oral law that the Talmud discusses. The participants in the *Mishna* study are wearing black *kippot*.

Becca comes with her plate to sit with Rachel and the conspirators. Rabbi Meilikowski is behind her and starts to speak as Becca sits down. Judith already has a plate and a seat at Rachel's table.

RABBI MEILIKOWSKI

*Havarim, `asitem tov me'od*, but we had a setback. We have to meet with Campus Solidarity on Tuesday and then weekly for the rest of the semester.

(Mocking)

We are supposed to get to know the human face of the enemy. I will announce the dialogue before the *Birkat Hamazon*. We need at least 20.

*Birkat Hamazon* is the Grace after the Meal. Rabbi Meilikowski walks over to talk the study table for a moment.

RACHEL

We should be smashing the face of the enemy!

Rachel's groupies agree:

**"Yeah! Yeah! You're right."**

BECCA

I really don't like this type of language.

Rachel gives Becca a dirty look.

JUDITH

Becca, you have to get over that bleeding heart liberal stuff.

RACHEL

There is nothing to discuss until they give up their dreams of driving us into the sea.

Rabbi Meilikowski comes back to sit with Rachel's group.

JUDITH

Exactly!

Becca has heard the "throw us into the sea argument too many times."

BECCA

Yadda yadda yadda. Can't we just make an apology for our contribution to the riot? I rewatched the videotape I made.

(Pause)

Sheldon threw the bottle that hit Rabbi Milgrom.

RABBI MEILIKOWSKI

I didn't hear that.

Becca looks disgusted at both Rabbi Meilikowski and Sheldon.

SHELDON

(Offended)

Did not!

BECCA

Know what? I have had too much politics the last few days. I am going to go over to one of the other tables and sing *zmiros*.

Becca goes over to the table where the group is singing. Rachel wanted to chastise Becca for deviance, but Becca slipped away too fast.

RABBI MEILIKOWSKI

(Winks at Rachel)

It is too bad she won't be helping us with the planning. This dialogue provides us with an opportunity. I convinced Milgrom and Kraven to open it to the whole academic community.

RACHEL

That would be dangerous if we cannot control the direction of the discussion.

SHELDON

Couldn't we postpone the first session? The Israeli consulate could help us make a presentation to show everyone the atrocities Palestinians commit on Jews.

RABBI MEILIKOWSKI

Why bother? Who are they any way?  
A few Arabs who never say anything  
because they are totally intimidated  
by Immigration, and a bunch of anti-  
Semitic riff raff with no money or  
connections.

If we are reasonable and rational  
while they rant, we will own this  
campus.

Rachel turns to Judith.

RACHEL

Judith, we have to go over your story.

FADE TO BLACK:

EXT. UCSC CAMPUS -- DAY

Rebecca Klein (Becca) walks with Sheldon, Judith and RACHEL WEISS, a dark-haired "daddy's girl" from New York, well groomed with tasteful jewelry. As they approach the squeaky-clean newly built STUDENT CENTER, they enter an "intersection" at the center of the courtyard -- a bare spot from where paths radiate in all directions. A sign on a lamp read, "Israel-Palestine Dialogue SC110." Rachel stops and takes a deep breath.

RACHEL

(Wrinkling her nose)  
What a stench!

BECCA

Rachel!

Rachel is looking to Becca for her to say more.

BECCA

Arabs don't smell, and most of them  
aren't Arabs.

SHELDON

It's called biological accommodation.  
If you get too close to them too  
frequently, you loose the ability to  
detect the odor.

RACHEL

My sense of smell is sensitive to  
anti-Zionists.

BECCA

If *Students for Israel* would just  
apologize and admit to starting the  
(MORE)

BECCA (CONT'D)

riot, you wouldn't have to take part  
in this.

She starts up the steps into the building but Rachel grabs  
her arm and pulls her back.

RACHEL

Time for an executive session.  
(To Sheldon)  
Judy and I can handle this. Why  
don't you get some seats for us?

Dutifully, he enters the building while Rachel pulls Becca  
close.

RACHEL

I let the first time pass.  
(Pause)  
If you give them any minor victories,  
we'll lose everything.

JUDITH

Exactly!

BECCA

You're wrong, Rachel. Everyone with  
doubts about Israel isn't out for  
Jewish blood. Some stories I read  
make me... very uncomfortable.

Rachel tightens her grip.

RACHEL

Do you want us to give citizenship  
to anyone who asks for it? Cram us  
into a new ghetto?

JUDITH

No way!

BECCA

(Intimidated)  
I never said that.

RACHEL

(Raises her voice)  
For over 2000 years, we have been  
separated, deported, massacred.  
Your family -- you! -- are victims  
of the Holocaust. And now that we  
have a country -- an identity -- we  
can't lose it.

JUDITH

Right!

## EXT. UCSC CAMPUS -- DAY

More students that must take part in the dialogue are having an impromptu confrontation outside on their way to the lecture hall.

Ron White, who is an American black, and DANI FEIT (from Students for Israel -- he is FAKE ARAB #1) are ranting at each other to the appreciation of their supporters as they walk across the campus Green toward the meeting. They start on diagonally intersecting paths that join into one path.

DANI  
(Israeli accent)  
Jews have the right to their own  
state just like everyone else.

Dani's supporters shout:

**"Tell him, Dani! Right! Exactly."**

Ron's supporters hiss and jeer.

RON  
States should belong to their citizens  
not to specific ethnic groups.

Ron's supporters start shouting and then start disagreeing among themselves because some anti-Zionists do not like patriotic arguments:

**"Yeah, Ron, tell those racists! Pro-Israel is Un-American."**

Dani's supporters hiss and jeer.

The confrontation continues in this way as the groups draw closer to each other and the dialogue location.

DANI  
The majority of Israelis want to  
have a Jewish state.

RON  
After they ethnically cleanse the  
native population and steal all their  
property.

DANI  
(Pausing in front)  
What a Nazi you are!

RON  
(With extreme sarcasm)  
That's so original, Dani! Do I look  
like a Nazi? I believe in equal  
human rights. Do you?

[Ron is an American black and hardly the blond Aryan of German Nazi propaganda.]

DANI

Jews have historical rights; it was our country first.

RON

Now that's a Nazi argument. Mythological blood and soil rights. Isn't that how the Nazis claimed Poland?

DANI

Are you calling me a Nazi?

RON

Are Jews so superior to the rest of us that of all people and ethnic groups Jews cannot be Nazis?

You just believe that Jews have an absolute right to plunder and kill non-Jews.

Dani shoves him. The crowd is yelling, "Nazis, Anti-Semites, Racists, Bigots, Bastards, Fuckheads, Cuntbrains" and all the usual nasty epithets.

EXT. UCSC CAMPUS -- DAY

Rabbi Meilikowski and Rabbi Milgrom are walking across campus together to the building and room, where the dialogue is supposed to take place. Meilikowski is a gung-ho former IDF Rabbi, while Rabbi Milgrom is much older and still recovering from his injuries. Milgrom huffs but he refuses to ask Meilikowski to slow down. Meilikowski wants Milgrom to hurry up. Meilikowski is trying to intimidate Milgrom non-verbally while Milgrom refuses to give Meilikowski a psychological victory.

They see the confrontation.

RON

You just believe that Jews have an absolute right to plunder and kill non-Jews.

Dani shoves him.

DANI

Dirty Nazi!

The crowd is yelling, "Nazis, Anti-Semites, Racists, Bigots, Bastards, Fuckheads, Cuntbrains" and all the usual nasty epithets.

RABBI MEILIKOWSKI

(Angry)

What is this a rerun? Knock it off!

The two Rabbis separate the crowd and shepherd them towards the building.

RABBI MEILIKOWSKI

(Grabs a student)

We will walk peacefully to the conference room.

Rabbi Milgrom decides to lighten the atmosphere.

RABBI MILGROM

(Breathing less heavily)

Did you people know that you are acting out one of classical Catskills stand-up comedian stories?

The vast majority has not a clue what he means. Who knows what the Catskills are today?

RABBI MILGROM

I will explain.

(Still a bit breathless)

In a God-forsaken one-horse town in Galicia the rebbe -- that's a Hassidic rabbi for those who don't know Yiddish -- and the priest as the only intellectuals developed an intimate friendship. The rebbe is curious about the confessional. After long hesitation the Catholic cleric is ready to take the rebbe into the dark alcove so he can eavesdrop.

A woman comes: "Holy Father, I have gravely sinned. I have cheated on my husband one time."

"Yes, my daughter. That is a big sin. I will pray to the dear Lord that he forgive you. For atonement you are to say one Paternoster and give 10 guildens for the holy St. Anthony."

Another woman comes. She cheated on her husband twice.

The clergyman commands, "You will say two Paternosters and allot 20 guildens to the holy St. Anthony.

(MORE)

## RABBI MILGROM (CONT'D)

Suddenly the priest grabs himself and moans, "I do not feel well. I will come right back." The rebbe remains sitting quietly.

Again a woman comes, "Holy Father, I have sinned. I have cheated on my husband one time."

The rebbe is seized with a sudden inspiration, "My dear daughter, that is a grave sin. I will beseech the dear Lord to forgive you. For atonement you are to say three Paternosters, allot 30 guildens to the holy Saint Anthony, and you may cheat on your husband two more times.

Some giggle.

## RABBI MILGROM

Some of us apparently feel that agreeing to take part in the dialogue gives license for at least one more confrontation before it starts.

## RABBI MEILIKOWSKI

I don't like Jewish stereotype jokes.

## RABBI MILGROM

It makes you a better straight man.

(Needling)

Next time I tell it, I will have the Rebbe give the woman a discount for prepayment.

The crowd comes to Becca, Rachel and Judith outside the door.

## RACHEL

(Raises her voice)

Your family -- you! -- are victims of the Holocaust. And now that we have a country -- an identity -- we can't lose it.

## JUDITH

Right!

## RACHEL

They have twenty-one Arab countries. We have only one Israel. Corrupt Arab leaders just use the Palestinians to distract their populations.

JUDITH

They could easily resettle the  
refugees in their countries!

Rabbi Meilikowski and Rabbi Milgrom stop beside them on their  
way into the building.

BECCA

(Disgusted, resigned)  
Okay, you're right. I'm wrong.

RABBI MEILIKOWSKI

(Just in a bad mood)  
We are supposed to be dialoguing  
inside!

Becca breaks free and starts up the stairs.

RABBI MILGROM

(Tells the girls)  
He doesn't like my jokes.

Rachel and Judith catch up to Becca.

RACHEL

When you visit *Ha'Aretz* over winter  
break, you'll see the truth. We  
only do what's ab-so-lute-ly  
necessary.

INT. UCSC AMPHITHEATER -- MOMENTS LATER

Some students are already present. The girls, the rabbis  
and their group gradually enter the room, which holds about  
eighty, and collect in two groups on either side. On the  
left, some wear *kippahs*; most are expensively dressed like  
Rachel Weiss. On the right, some wear *kuffiyahs*. This is  
the threadbare jeans crowd.

A stonewall of tense silence separates the two groups who  
only talk among themselves as they throw dart-like looks and  
clenched and unintelligible insults across the room to each  
other.

Ron White, Islah, Carlotta and Adelle in her hijab are among  
the Campus Solidarity students we recognize on the right.

The situation could degenerate rapidly into another riot.  
Becca and Rachel enter last followed by Rabbi Meilikowski  
and Rabbi Milgrom, who take their seats at the front of the  
class by the blackboard. Rabbi Milgrom gestures for silence.

RABBI MEILIKOWSKI

(Out of his element)  
People! Please, let's set these  
chairs up in a circle.

Reluctantly, the students shuttle their chairs into a half-hearted circle -- two separate groups with a gap in between.

RABBI MILGROM

(Stands)

I am Rabbi Milgrom from the Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution.

This is Hillel Director, Rabbi Meilikowski. The university has decided to sponsor this Israel-Palestine dialogue. If we don't, students involved in last week's "disturbance" will be put on punitive leave. Therefore...

(Pause)

Let the dialogues begin. Please introduce yourselves before you speak. Who will go first?

Carlotta's hand shoots up.

CARLOTTA

I'm Carlotta Keats, first year law--

She breaks off, impatient and angry.

CARLOTTA

We wouldn't have disturbances if the Students for Israel did not dress like Arabs and throw bottles and stones.

RABBI MEILIKOWSKI

Tempers have gotten really hot. We're here so this type of thing doesn't happen again.

He smiles, satisfied he's quashed Carlotta's point, shifted the blame... and diverted the argument. Quick to respond, Ron jumps up.

RON

Ron White, Senior. My group, Palestine Children's Relief, can't even set up a table for food or educational aid without harassment from Hillel or Pro-Israel students.

Judith nudges Sheldon who jumps up.

SHELDON

Sheldon Gross, junior, Santa Carla Students for Israel. What do you expect with all your anti-Jewish violence and slurs?

RON

(Emphatic)

What does helping starving Palestinian children have to do with violence?

Rachel answers.

RACHEL

Rachel Weiss, junior, Santa Carla Students for Israel. Their textbooks are filled with anti-Semitism. When your "children" come out of Palestinian Schools, they hate Jews.

Islah jumps up. She is angry but controlling herself. She should use SG#2 (signature gesture #2).

ISLAH

Islah Akram, freshman, Justice for Palestine. I studied in those schools. There is practically nothing about Israel, Palestine or Jews in our curriculum. Everything I know about the history of Palestine I learned here in the USA.

Why do they hate Jews? Because in Occupied Palestine, Jews are the soldiers who terrorize and oppress us. We do not have to borrow old European fantasies to hate Zionism, Israel, or Israeli Jews.

RABBI MEILIKOWSKI

Palestinian hatred is the problem.

ISLAH

Racist Zionists stole Palestine from us -- the native population.

Judith's eyes narrow as she stands, furious.

JUDITH

Judith Lehrer, senior, Zionist Fulfillment Committee. How are we "racist"? Shouldn't we have our own country -- like everyone else? Didn't Arabs treat Jews like *inferior second-class citizens*? --

ISLAH

(Angry but controlled)

Judith, you're in Horowitz's class with me. You never talk to me, but didn't you at least pay attention to what you heard last week?

JUDITH

(Ignoring her)

-- And doesn't Zionism represent the genuine longing of the Jewish people for thousands of years after they were sent into exile by the Romans?

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. UCSC LECTURE HALL -- DAY

Judith listens as PROFESSOR HOROWITZ, 60's, with an elegant finely trimmed beard, addresses her in a class of about a hundred students. Becca and Islah, seated together near the front, turn to look at her. Sheldon and Rachel slouch beside her, flipping through their books, barely listening.

JUDITH --

-- shifts uncomfortably.

HOROWITZ

No, Judith. The conception of the Jewish people as a continuous entity thousands of years old belongs more to the realm of myth than to history. By the end of the second century, the term "Judean" lost all territorial meaning -- just like "Roman" in "Roman Catholic" -- thanks to proselytization and the development of Christian Judean religion. Before the tenth century, Judean communities practice pre-Rabbinic or pre-Karaite religions, and it does not make sense to use the term Jew.

It was not until the 19th century that Zionism began as a nationalist movement among Eastern European Ashkenazim, who constituted an indigenous autochthonous ethnic group with neither ethnic, linguistic, ancestral nor religious connection to the ancient Judeans, Galileans or Idumeans of Roman Palestine at the time of Jesus.

Zionism imitated other Central and Eastern European nationalist movements; it had little interest in Jewish Arabs, who were equal citizens of the Ottoman Empire from the middle of the nineteenth century onward. Consider the following passage from Herzl's *Altneuland*, published in 1902.

He flashes the passages onto the screen with an overhead projector. Horowitz uses a pointer and follows the text, reading in English.

SUPER: THE FOLLOWING PASSAGE IN THE ORIGINAL GERMAN:

***Kingscourt und Friedrich beeilten sich auch fortzukommen. Sie fuhren auf der schlechten Eisenbahn nach Jerusalem. Auch auf diesem Wege Bilder tiefster Verkommenheit. Das flache Land fast nur Sand und Sumpf. Die mageren Äcker wie verbrannt. Schwärzliche Dörfer von Arabern. Die Bewohner hatten ein räuberhaftes Aussehen. Die Kinder spielten nackt in Straßenstaube.***

HOROWITZ (V.O.)

(Reading in English)

Kingscourt and Friedrich hurried to get away. They traveled on the miserable railroad to Jerusalem. Even on this route scenes of the deepest depravity.

INSERT PICTURES OF PALESTINE FROM THE LATE 1890S EARLY 1900S

The pictures should colorize and move from still to motion. They belie Herzl's claims below. The scenes should be subtitled with Palestine, location, year.

HOROWITZ (V.O.)

Flat land almost only sand and swamp. The spare cultivated fields as if scorched. Colorless villages of Arabs. The inhabitants looked like robbers. The children played naked in the street dust.

"*Verkommenheit*" is something rotten, neglected, ruined; "*sand und sumpf*," an infertile land, not cultivated by "civilized" people; scorched fields and the neglected, colorless villages reminds us of a country devastated by war; the inhabitants are either second-class human beings or not human at all; they are criminals, homeless, dishonest, not trustworthy.

BACK TO SCENE --

-- he addresses the class.

HOROWITZ

*Altneuland* is racist colonialist literature, which serves the purpose of justifying the rule of colonizers  
(MORE)

HOROWITZ (CONT'D)

over savage people. The book is a legitimization narrative, whose content has little connection to the reality of early twentieth century Palestine.

STUDENT

But how is this racist? Arabs and Jews are the same race.

HOROWITZ

In the U.S., with the exception of anti-Semitism, racism is associated with color.

CLOSE ON - JUDITH

She isn't listening; she's scribbling in a notebook and passing it to Sheldon and Rachel. As Horowitz continues, they laugh, then reach over and mark their own comments in Judith's notebook.

HOROWITZ (O.S.)

For the rest of the world, racism occurs when an ethnic or national group is more privileged than others; that is: when a state belongs to a specific ethnic group, not to its citizens.

BACK TO:

INT. UCSC AMPHITHEATER -- CONTINUOUS

ISLAH

Well..., tell us what Professor Horowitz said. Nowadays, no one pays attention to me

(Quietly)

-- yet

(Normal voice)

-- when I talk about Zionism because I am an Arab.

(With controlled anger)

You are Jewish. You tell us.

Judith studies her with disdain.

JUDITH

No, I don't remember. And as far as I'm concerned, as long as Palestinians resort to terrorism, we have to defend ourselves.

RABBI MILGROM

And so the Israeli government feels justified in terrorizing Palestinians.

RABBI MEILIKOWSKI

Let Judith speak. She is a victim.

Judith speaks as if on cue. Her performance should look rehearsed.

JUDITH

Very well. Yes. It was two years ago. I was studying at Hebrew University. It was a beautiful day. The end of summer. September. I was meeting my friend, Rafi, an immigrant from Argentina, an officer in the IDF.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. HEBREW UNIVERSITY MODERN ART BUILDING -- MORNING

JUDITH (V.O.)

He had mastered Hebrew language and culture, had just finished his PhD in Political Science, and had been appointed to the embassy in Buenos Aires.

RAFI, a good-looking man of 23, walks confidently up to Judith who is waiting for him. They smile at each other.

JUDITH

(Hebrew; subtitle)

*Let's grab some falafel at the snack bar.*

RAFI

(Hebrew; subtitle)

*Let's practice English. I'm a diplomat now.*

(English)

Let's get a real meal at the cafeteria in the Frank Sinatra building. It's a better place to chat.

JUDITH

You Argentineans. When you say "real meal," I think you are in the mood for meat.

They walk across the campus close like more than just friends, hand-in-hand; then Rafi slips his arm around Judith's waist.

RAFI

What will you do when I am gone?

JUDITH

There are lots of handsome guys around here. Hardly two hours go by without some member of the wolf pack coming to my door to ask if he is bothering me.

RAFI

But you will miss the alpha.

JUDITH

(Flirtatiously)

Maybe. Don't overrate yourself.

She gives him a sexy smile.

CUT TO:

INT. HEBREW UNIVERSITY CAFETERIA -- MOMENTS LATER

Rafi and Judith sit down with their trays. Their eyes meet. Judith smiles. She is about to say something, but there is no sound. Time seems to SLOW as a suitcase bomb explodes nearby.

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

EXT. HEBREW UNIVERSITY - SINATRA BUILDING -- MOMENTS LATER

Judith staggers out, bleeding and holding her neck.

JUDITH

Rafi! Where are you? Rafi! Help me!

She staggers moaning. SIRENS blast. The EMERGENCY TEAM arrives in what seems like seconds. A MEDIC forces her to sit down.

JUDITH

Rafi! I don't see you. Rafi!

MEDICS rush up with a stretcher and put her onto it. One gives her an injection. They load her and several other victims into an ambulance, which speeds off. Sirens blare.

FLASHFORWARD TO:

INT. UCSC AMPHITHEATER -- PRESENT

JUDITH

When I woke up, no one could or would tell me about Rafi. The next day the emergency technician came in and told me he'd found Rafi -- dead.

She cries a little.

JUDITH

He died instantly.  
 (Voice rising in anger)  
 They are not human. Civilized people  
 have to do everything to stop  
 Palestinian terrorism!

RABBI MILGROM

Not every being with a human face is  
 human?

RACHEL

Finally you understand.

RABBI MILGROM --

-- looks horrified at Rachel.

RABBI MILGROM

(To Judith)  
 Does "everything" include terrorism?

JUDITH

That's not what I said.

RABBI MILGROM

The Israeli government used this  
 argument when it sent an IDF death  
 squad to murder my friend, Dr. Samir  
 Samir. His only crime was an  
 exceptional talent to explain  
 Palestinian grievances to Americans.

A little later the IDF attacked an  
 apartment building in Gaza City with  
 an F-16 to kill a Hamas leader, his  
 wife, child and twenty bystanders.

RABBI MEILIKOWSKI

After nine-eleven, how can you dare  
 excuse terrorism?

RABBI MILGROM

This pretense of morality is just an  
 excuse to keep killing.

He breaks off, shakes his head, and sits back down. Ron  
 White takes the opportunity to speak.

RON

Is all terrorism bad? All Blacks  
 and most Whites see John Brown as a  
 hero.

(MORE)

## RON (CONT'D)

But, hacking slavers to pieces with swords to keep Kansas free is surely terrorism, but slavery was something worse.

## CARLOTTA

Zionism is the same as slavery.  
Both are examples of violent, state-supported racism.

Like a prosecutor, she walks into the center of the room to confront the group.

## CARLOTTA

Slavers operated by terrorism, force, aggression and violence to steal Africans from Africa to make them slaves. Slaveholders in the USA used terrorism, force, aggression and violence to maintain slavery. Eastern Europeans stole Palestine from the native population by force, aggression and violence to make it a Zionist state. Israeli settlers maintain control over stolen Palestine by terrorism, force, aggression and violence. There is no ethical distinction between a state defined to belong to one ethnic group instead of its citizens and a state based on the enslavement of one race by another.

Who is to blame? Then as well as now? Racist colonists, slavers, Confederate nationalists, Christian racists, American Zionists, Neocons and right wing fundamentalists -- apocalyptic evangelicals. Only the names have changed. The thinking is exactly the same.

But American complicity in Zionism is even greater than it was in slavery. The Abolitionists and free-soilers elected Abraham Lincoln president, but today anti-Zionism is but a squeak while the voices that support the total destruction of the Palestinian people are a roar.

The pro-Palestinian students on the right SHOUT their approval and APPLAUD. Rabbis Milgrom and Meilikowski both jump up and shout for silence.

RABBI MILGROM  
(Together)

RABBI MEILIKOWSKI  
Silence!

Carlotta retreats, then thinks twice about it and turns back --  
like a broken toy wound tight.

CARLOTTA  
And any US citizen that supports  
Zionism and the State of Israel is a  
traitor to fundamental antiracist  
American ideals, whether he is an  
ordinary citizen or the President of  
the United States. The State of  
Israel is an offense to any human  
being with a sense of justice.

RABBI MEILIKOWSKI  
Carlotta!

She stops -- and returns to her seat. A muffled applause  
greet her. Rabbi Meilikowski turns to the other side of  
the room.

RABBI MEILIKOWSKI  
Anyone?

The Students for Israel are stunned by Carlotta's speech.  
Instead, much to Rabbi Meilikowski's displeasure, Ron stands.

RON  
I'd like to propose a hypothetical.  
What would Americans do if --

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE NEW KYOTO (FORMERLY HOUSTON) -- MORNING

American RESISTORS and TERRORISTS in Japanese defeated America  
prepare a fertilizer truck bomb.

RON (V.O.)  
-- if Japan had defeated the U.S. in  
1945, occupied the mainland, driven  
out ninety percent of the people,  
settled Japanese colonists in their  
homes, and degraded the few that  
clung to their country ...

A man in tattered preacher's black gathers a group of scruffy  
partisans. TWO REDNECK VOLUNTEERS step forward; the Preacher  
places a hand on each of them and says a blessing.

## PASTOR

My sons, there will be no shame if you turn away from this mission to continue greater struggle to survive in Nip-occupied America; but know that God will be with you and you shall be with Him in Paradise and seated at the right hand of our Savior, Jesus Christ, as we, in this veil of tears, await that glorious day when our Christian Crusaders for Freedom will finally drive the invader from our shores, return our people from exile in Mexico, Canada, and throughout the world and then restore us to our lands through the honor and glory of Christ, Jesus, our Lord. Amen.

All bow their heads and say, "**Amen.**"

The two Rednecks wrap U.S. flags around their heads like a kuffiyahs.

## REDNECK #1

I choose the lesser struggle -- to make 'em pay. They stole our country, lands, homes, raped our women, treated us with contempt and took our dignity.

## REDNECK #2

Lil' Buddy, you're not alone. We'll show 'em that Americans are not afraid to die for what is our'n.

The Pastor presents them with a carved Jesus figurine with a string to dangle it from the inside mirror.

## PASTOR

Jesus will be with you in the cab.

A man raises a U.S. Flag -- high -- and the Preacher leads them all in a faulty rendition of "God Bless America." Then the two Rednecks jump into the cab of the truck. One attaches the "Jesus" to the mirror. The other turns the key, revs the engine, and they take off. Wheels spin in the mud, and white smoke spews out of the back of the truck.

## EXT. HIGHWAY TO NEW KYOTO -- DAY

Now the song is "Onward Christian Soldiers" which continues over the scene as the truck rumbles along a rutted freeway, weeds growing up out of the potholes. A shiny new road sign that marks an exit ramp is in Japanese and, under it, the words: NEW KYOTO, TEXAS. The truck zips down the exit ramp.

JAPANESE SOLDIERS line the off-ramp and fan out, dropping into ditches, rifles aimed at the truck -- poised, ready to shoot.

As the truck approaches the checkpoint, the Redneck in the passenger seat raises a WW2 Thompson submachine gun and leans out, gunning down the soldiers at the checkpoint; then the truck speeds up and crashes through the gate to head straight for a natural gas fuel depot.

REDNECK #1

For America!

REDNECK #2

Jesus Saves!

He presses a switch and the truck EXPLODES, taking the fuel depot and a large part of the city up in flames.

Another SONG, "When the World's On Fire," can be heard as a fierce mushroom-shaped cloud rises up from the city.

SINGING (V.O.)

Oh, my loving mother, when the world's on fire, don't you want God's bosom to be your pillow. Hide me over in the rock of ages. Rock of Ages cleft for me...

BACK TO:

INT. UCSC AMPHITHEATER -- PRESENT

CLOSE ON - ISLAH --

-- as she watches Judith.

JUDITH (V.O.)

Nothing makes it okay! I refuse to condone it -- not in Israel, Kansas, Oklahoma, or some *imaginary* New Kyoto.

My friend died. The shrapnel was two millimeters from my artery and killing me!

Islah knits her brows together in a signature gesture (SG#2) that she shares with her father when she is extremely angry and struggling to control herself.

ISLAH

(Getting angry)

I know your friend had a mother who loved him, and I am a sorry that he died and you were hurt.

(MORE)

ISLAH (CONT'D)

(Pause)

Do Palestinian deaths register at all to you? President Bush makes it clear every few months how little he cares when the IDF kills Palestinians almost every day.

She collects herself and calms down.

ISLAH

My story starts before I was born in 1947 -- or maybe it starts in the 1890s --

RABBI MEILIKOWSKI

(Breaking in)

Do we have to listen to this all over again?

RABBI MILGROM

We listened to Judith's story. Let Islah speak. You cannot suppress the Palestinian narrative forever.

ISLAH

(Smiles)

Thank you, Rabbi Milgrom.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF AL-KHAYRIYYA -- MORNING

A battle rages with loud gunfire. Out-gunned and out-manned Palestinian defenders are being massacred by fanatic Haganah terrorists. HASAN AKRAM, Islah's great-grandfather, retreats to his home firing an old Ottoman rifle to defend his family.

ISLAH (V.O.)

The U.N. General Assembly had just accepted the partition proposal in November 1947. All our leaders were in exile or in jail. The Zionists had been planning to drive us out of our homes and country for over fifty years. The plan put thirty percent of Palestinians under Zionist rule -- and gave most of the country to the European settler colonists even though we were the majority and owned practically all the land.

INTERCUT - THE SOUND OF STUDENTS HECKLING

The pro-Israel students let everyone know their opinions:

**"Here it comes. Lies! Hey, pass me that magazine..."**

RABBI MILGROM (V.O.)

Enough. Quiet!

ISLAH (V.O.)

(Continues)

How could our leaders agree to such an outrageous proposal that put so many at the mercy of those who, after the Nazi murders, hated all non-Jews and wanted revenge?

Some Arab unions declared strikes. My great-grandfather and some other men that had served in World War I got rifles to defend the village, but the Haganah terrorists were professional soldiers. They attacked and defeated us, then gave us an ultimatum to leave. My great-grandfather tried to defend our house.

Hasan Akram stands in front of his house and shouts at the Haganah terrorists.

HASSAN AKRAM

(Arabic; subtitle)

*I will never leave my home and my land.*

He turns to his wife and children in the house.

HASSAN AKRAM

*Stay there. If we leave, they will never let us return.*

They retaliate, shooting him -- dead. The bullets fly into him in SLOW MOTION and the blood pours out.

Then the Haganah TERRORIST LEADER strides up to the house. An older woman, AMAL AKRAM, appears in the door and lets out a loud WAIL as she rushes to the side of her dead husband, brushing the man aside. He follows her and drags her off the body of her husband, throwing her roughly aside.

TERRORIST LEADER

(Broken Arabic; subtitle)

*Worthless old woman! Get your family! Get out now or we shoot you too!*

The family comes out of the house, terrified, and begins their trek -- into exile.

TERRORIST LEADER

(Hebrew; subtitle)

*Stupid Arabush. He made us waste bullets.*

He pisses on Hasan Akram's dead body as the family flees. Hasan's wife, Amal, turns for one last look at their home and her husband and curses the soldiers, yelling back at them.

AMAL AKRAM

(Arabic; subtitle)

*Laugh now, murderers! Our hate will become the blade that hacks you all to death in revenge! Steal our land, our legacy, and you will be cursed till the end of days.*

INSERT - STOCK SHOTS - FLEEING PALESTINIANS FROM NEWSREELS

ISLAH (V.O.)

And so my family became refugees in December 1947 at the beginning of our *shataat*.

I saw Ingrid Bergman play Golda Meir at the Hillel Film Series in October.

INSERT - INGRID BERGMAN IN A VIDEOCLIP FROM *GOLDA* addressing the U.N. General Assembly.

GOLDA MEIR

I am sure some Palestinian Arabs fled because they were frightened, but many left because their leaders told them to, promising that after we were driven into the sea, they would come back and take over our property. But we were not driven into the sea and they became, like us, homeless. None of the Arab countries would give them a home; only two would let them in and they confined them to refugee camps. They are the only people in history to remain refugees after thirty years.

BACK TO SCENE

INT. UCSC AMPHITHEATER -- PRESENT

Rabbi Meilikowski squirms uncomfortably. A few students on the left call out, heckling. Rabbi Milgrom is quick to react.

RABBI MILGROM

If we cannot talk, we'll all be exiled -- from this campus!

The students quiet down. Islah continues.

ISLAH

I would not have imagined such arrogance and deception if I had not watched it. No wonder Americans have such distorted ideas about the Middle East. They learn them at the movies. At least after thirty years, people have started to question the lie that our leaders told us to flee.

She says in the movie, "[Palestinians] are the only people in history to remain refugees after thirty years."

She looks directly at Judith.

ISLAH

Is not your mythology based on the idea that you were refugees from Greco-Roman Palestine for 2000 years!?

RACHEL

How dare you --

ISLAH

(Over, heated)

Three quarters of ancient Jews lived outside Palestine by choice before Roman rule. The Romans expelled no one. Ancient Palestinian Jews were Christianized, then Islamized like everyone in the Middle East. They are my ancestors, not yours.

Judith and Rachel jump up.

RACHEL

How dare you, you dirty little raghead bitch.

Rabbi Milgrom jumps up.

RABBI MILGROM

Enough! We'll have none of that here.

Rabbi Meilikowski rises too. He grips the back of his chair as if to ground himself. He has to compensate for Rachel's racist comment. However racist he may be, Rabbi Meilikowski cannot permit the Students for Israel to engage in overt displays of anti-Arab anti-Palestinian racism.

RABBI MEILIKOWSKI

Please, Rachel. If we can't talk here, we can't talk anywhere.

(Nods to Islah)

Please, continue, Islah.

ISLAH

We Palestinians are the descendants  
of the Jews of Greco-Roman Palestine.

RACHEL

(To Rabbi Meilikowski)  
How can you let her say that... shit!

DANI

(To Islah)  
You are delusional!

ISLAH

Then tell me when the Jews of Greco-  
Roman Palestine left.

SHELDON

Easy! In 70 CE when the Romans  
destroyed the Temple.

ISLAH

Wasn't Bar Kokhba Jewish? Didn't he  
lead a rebellion in 135?

JUDITH

She meant the Romans drove the Jews  
out after they defeated Bar Kokhba.

ISLAH

Then who redacted the Mishna in  
Palestine after the rebellion? Who  
compiled the Tosefta and the  
Palestinian Talmud for the next 100-  
200 years? Why was there a Jewish  
patriarch in Palestine until the 4th  
century when Constantine eliminated  
the office? Who created the Masoretic  
text of the Bible? Can you point to  
any archeological, textual, linguistic  
or onomastic evidence to support the  
belief that Palestinian Jews left  
Palestine and migrated into Eastern  
Europe?

Islah waits and no one answers. Rachel looks about to say something (probably she intends to bring up the Hammer Oppenheim Zionist racial pseudoscience studies). She opens her mouth as if to speak. Her eyes lock with Islah's. Rachel changes her mind. She worries that Islah may have a reply to whatever she is about to say.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PALESTINIAN VILLAGE -- DAY (1948)

Palestinian REFUGEES flee. If stock shots are not available, these sequences could be recreated in studio.

## ISLAH (V.O.)

Not only did Eastern European Jews steal our country in 1948, they were so ashamed of their history that they stole our history; they destroyed homes and villages that were hundreds or thousands of years old -- so that nothing would remain to contradict Zionist mythology.

IDF (ISRAELI DEFENSE FORCE) bulldozers destroy a street lined with Palestinian homes.

## ISLAH (V.O.)

Why would anyone with even half a brain believe that Polish Jews have any more ancestral connection to ancient Palestine than Polish Christians have?

## SEQUENCE OF SHOTS

A) Ariel Sharon and IDF Soldiers shoot unarmed women in 1952. The soldiers wear IDF military uniforms, are equipped with IDF gear, and carry normal IDF military weaponry of the 1950s.

## ISLAH (V.O.)

If Zionists were not so murderous, they would be pitiable.

B) Ariel Sharon and IDF Soldiers murder women and children in their homes in QIBYA.

INSERT: ARIEL SHARON'S ORDERS WITH **MAXIMUM CASUALTIES** UNDERLINED.

## ISLAH (V.O.)

Zionist killings and murders continued straight through the fifties and sixties.

INSERT - FOOTAGE OF 1967 WAR AND FLIGHT OF REFUGEES

## ISLAH (V.O.)

Maybe in fifteen years journalists will be brave enough to report that the threat in 1967 was just as much a propaganda lie as the so-called "orders" from Arab leaders in 1948 for Palestinians to flee. Israel simply waged a war of naked aggression according to practically all historians outside the USA and Israel.

FLASHFOWARD TO:

## EXT. STREET - AL-SAGHRA -- AFTERNOON (SEPTEMBER, 2000)

A SIREN goes off. It is the start of curfew. IDF Soldiers drive Palestinians of the occupied territories into their homes at the start of curfew.

ISLAH (V.O.)

But I did not know any of this when I lived with my family in al-Saghra refugee camp. No, I learned it here in California in Middle East and Jewish history classes. At home, my parents were just silently sad. I was so used to the sadness I almost stopped seeing it.

BLACK:

## INT. AKRAM HOME - AL-SAGHRA -- EVENING

A somewhat younger Islah is working hard on her high school homework at the table in her family's house in the al-Saghra refugee camp in the Occupied Territories.

ISLAH (V.O.)

I was working very hard in school.  
I was studying to be a chemist.

The room shows Arab domesticity. There are Arabic rugs on floors and walls. The home is tiny yet cozy. LAILA, 10, is playing with her brother, MUGHIRA AKRAM, 3, smiling but wan, tired. ISLAH, at 15, is studying at the table. Their mother, MARYAM AKRAM, early 30's and exceptionally beautiful, enters the visual field from the cooking area. She is anxiously wiping her hands on her apron.

MARYAM

Laila, can't you see your brother's tired? Shouldn't you be at the table with your sister working on your homework?

She bends down and kisses Mughira.

MARYAM

My little Mughira! Time for a nap.

The door opens and MUHAMMAD, her husband and Islah's father, enters the house. Mughira reaches up and spreads his arms for a hug.

MUHAMMAD AKRAM should be roughly 38-39, lean but muscular, approximately 5'10". He works hard as a laborer in the construction industry. His hair should be graying. He is handsome but very Arab-looking. He is under stress.

MUGHIRA

Baba!

Laila runs over to embrace her father. Islah is concentrating on her books.

MUHAMMAD

No greeting, Islah?

Islah uses the thoughtful gesture (SG#1) that she shares with her father.

ISLAH

I'm thinking -- two minutes, baba.

Maryam embraces him and they talk quietly so that the children don't hear.

MARYAM

(Under her breath)

Any work today?

MUHAMMAD

(Under his breath)

A small job, not much.

MARYAM

(Under her breath)

Mughira is becoming sicker.

MUHAMMAD

(Under his breath)

God watches over us.

Islah comes over.

ISLAH

Don't I get my share?

Muhammad hugs her.

INT. AKRAM HOME - AL-SAGHRA -- LATER

The family is eating dinner Arabic-style. The children argue and laugh. Maryam glances at Mughira and almost cries. For Muhammad notices and looks down with his hand over his eyes. For him watching Maryam express her fears is almost too painful to see.

ISLAH (V.O.)

My parents were desperate. With Oslo and the checkpoints, getting jobs had become harder and harder. With the start of the al-Aqsa *intifada*, the closures and the curfews, there was no work.

(MORE)

## ISLAH (V.O.) (CONT'D)

But my father used all his contacts -- including his cousin Rif`at who had Israeli citizenship. Rif`at promised to talk with his boss.

## INT. PASKUDNYAKOV HOME OFFICE - TEL-AVIV

The walls are lined with books and movie posters -- mostly porno movies. Seductive woman, naked breasts. Artistic but graphic. Some books are piled on the floor.

In the middle of the "art" -- and clutter -- sits IVAN PASKUDNYAKOV, 50's, like a fat, sleazy lecherous Santa, reading documents at his desk. Paskudnyakov has pasty, unhealthy skin, is always eating doughnuts, drinking Coca-Cola and smoking.

One wall shows recent construction. Paskudnyakov's business is quite successful, and he is adding a library that opens off of his home office.

RIF`AT AKRAM, Muhammad's cousin, is a plain looking workmen. He has a pot belly. He has grey hair and is balding.

He is perhaps inappropriately working on the door between the office and the library. He could have chosen to work further away where he would not distract Paskudnyakov at work. He is trying to make conversation so that he can bring up the subject of possible work for Muhammad.

## RIF`AT

(In Arabic; subtitle)

*I understand why you need to add a library. So many books. Russian, Persian, Arabic, German, French, Hebrew and Turkish books. Philosophy, theology, commentaries, poetry, novels, plays.*

## PASKUDNYAKOV

(Fluent Arabic; subtitle)

*You should also see Syriac, Aramaic, Greek and Latin. They are remnants of a previous life with which I have been unable to part. Occasionally, I find material in them for my art.*

Rif`at Akram smiles a little. Paskudnyakov was half-joking. He decides to switch to English. Rif`at stops working and walks over to the desk.

## RIF`AT

(English)

You use these to write porno films?

PASKUDNYAKOV  
 (Fluent English)  
 My audience needs to expand its  
 intellectual horizons.

Rif`at works while Paskudnyakov puffs on a cigarette and  
 types out a new scene on his laptop computer for a porno  
 flick.

RIF`AT  
 There is a lot of work. Do you  
 remember my cousin Muhammad? He is  
 an excellent carpenter.

You once met him and his family on  
 the beach when they were visiting my  
 family.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. TEL AVIV BEECH (SUMMER) -- DAY (ABOUT 4 YEARS AGO)

Paskudnyakov remembers (without audio). Rif`at, Muhammad,  
 Maryam, 8 year old Islah and 6 year old Laila are in beach  
 clothes. RIF`AT'S WIFE and TWO SONS are present. Rif`at's  
 wife must be very plain in comparison with Maryam. Rif`at is  
 introducing Muhammad and Maryam to Paskudnyakov. Paskudnyakov  
 checks out Maryam.

PASKUDNYAKOV (V.O.)  
 (Dubiously)  
 I remember them.

RETURN TO PREVIOUS SCENE:

INT. PASKUDNYAKOV HOME OFFICE - TEL-AVIV

He is frowning because he has realized that Rif`at is about  
 to make some sort of request for help or charity.

PASKUDNYAKOV  
 They live in the Occupied Territories.  
 How would he get here?

RIF`AT  
 You have all sorts of connections  
 through your business.

PASKUDNYAKOV  
 Do I look like a social worker?  
 Using my connections costs me.

Rif`at moves closer.

RIF`AT  
 You are always straight with me --  
 more than any other Israeli.

It is time for Paskudnyakov to leave. He stands. This sort of compliment makes him uncomfortable. He assumes it will be followed by a request for something. He takes the opportunity to make a speech about his suffering in order to discourage begging for favors.

PASKUDNYAKOV

(Emphatic)

Don't call me Israeli! "My heart is in New York/and I am at the edge of the East." I am a Russian that should be a New Yorker. I hate Israel and Zionism.

During Soviet times, emigrants were able to get asylum in the USA until those AIPAC motherfuckers convinced the US government to deny entry to Soviets with visas for Israel.

I arrived in Vienna the day the policy changed.

(Becomes vehement)

One flight earlier. Just one fucking flight earlier and I could be writing, directing and producing quality films in the USA.

Rif`at ignores Paskudnyakov's speech.

RIF`AT

But do you have a job for Muhammad?

PASKUDNYAKOV

However much I may be a source of moral corruption within the Zionist entity, I really do not have the ability to help Palestinians.

RIF`AT

(Pleading)

Muhammad and Maryam's son Mughira is very sick. They cannot afford the medical treatment he needs.

PASKUDNYAKOV

(Grimaces)

You would use the sick child argument.

Paskudnyakov gathers up a script and other production related papers into his briefcase. He starts going out the door while eating a doughnut.

RIF`AT

Do you have work for him?

PASKUDNYAKOV

I will think about it.

Rif`at assumes this response is equivalent to "Yes."

RIF`AT

(Smiles gratefully)

Let me give you Muhammad's phone number.

Rif`at writes out the phone number on a piece of paper and gives it to Paskudnyakov. Now Rif`at makes some small talk because simply returning to work would be too crass.

RIF`AT

Pretty girls today?

PASKUDNYAKOV

Unfortunately not. Today is a touching homosexual love story.

(Thinks a moment)

At least it's more interesting than the lesbian bed death theme.

(Closes his laptop)

Later.

He puts on a JACKET and exits the room. Rif`at returns to work. He frowns. He has no idea what lesbian bed death means.

BLACK:

INT. TRUE LOVE STUDIOS -- EARLY EVENING

Paskudnyakov and crew are finishing up the movie in the production area. They are filming the last scene. The cameramen are ready to film. Other production staff is around Paskudnyakov who is giving the actors their "motivation."

PASKUDNYAKOV

One last scene for today. It is fraught with emotion. The relationship between Francesco and Robert is failing, and Robert is spending far too many nights supposedly working at the office.

The actors take their places on the set to do a scene within the scene.

PASKUDNYAKOV

Lights! Camera! Action!!!

The filming of the scene within the scene starts.

BEGIN ACTING:

## INT. BEACON HILL APARTMENT MOVIE SET -- EARLY EVENING

This is a scene of shooting a film within the film.  
Paskudnyakov's crew is filming this scene from his new  
pornographic film, "The Boston Breakup."

FRANCESCO OTTOLENGHI a handsome thin slightly effeminate  
homosexual is wearing a Japanese style kimono bathrobe. He  
showered and then started to make dinner for his lover ROBERT  
MACINTYRE. Francesco, the receiver, is a Harvard Divinity  
School grad student. Robert, the pusher, works on fund  
management for Fidelity. Robert is a bigger more masculine  
homosexual, but basically a normal guy. He is not the muscle  
beach type.

FRANCESCO

(Slightly petulant)

Do you really have to go back to  
work?

ROBERT

Unavoidable. We have set up for  
some E. Asian transactions. They  
can only be done during the day  
Japanese time. I have to supervise.

Francesco slips his arm around Robert.

FRANCESCO

Please, eat just a little before you  
go.

Robert inhales deeply. The seafood Fra Diabolo smells really  
good.

Robert is seduced by the aroma and sits to have some of the  
dinner. While he eats, Francesco massages his back. Robert  
is gradually becoming aroused. He turns toward Francesco  
who kisses him and gradually moves his hands toward the  
crotch, which he starts to unzip.

ROBERT

Wait.

He goes to the bathroom to get a lubricant, takes out his  
penis, rubs it, lifts Francesco up onto the table, penetrates  
him and they make love. They should ad-lib:

**"Francesco, I love you!"**

**"Oh Robert, deeper! Deeper!"**

Robert strains; Francesco goes into bliss. When they finish  
Robert gently lifts Francesco off the table onto the chair,  
gives him a last kiss.

ROBERT

I have to go.

FRANCESCO

No!

ROBERT

I have to earn money. I'll come back in the early morning.

FRANCESCO

You will tell me everything.

ROBERT

But you do not understand anything about my work.

FRANCESCO

I just need to hear your voice.

Robert guides Francesco to the front room and gives him one last long kiss before he leaves. Francesco blissed out sits and then lies on the couch in ecstasy. Music like Bacharach's "I'll never fall in love again" is playing in the background.

END ACTING:

INT. TRUE LOVE STUDIOS -- CONTINUOUS

PASKUDNYAKOV

Cut! Perfect! Great acting! Let's wrap it up for today.

The crew begins packing up. The actors go to the dressing room to get out of costume. Paskudnyakov starts walking toward his office. He motions for his partner DR. ODENHEIM to come talk with him.

PASKUDNYAKOV

Did you do the research?

Dr. Odenheim is an elegantly dressed older man with gray hair and a stylish beard.

ODENHEIM

Some of our most successful films have focused on nuns or Hassidic women. But "The Rape of Bosnia," whose plot focused on the rape of religious Muslim women, bombed.

PASKUDNYAKOV

Too tasteless even for our clientele. The acting had no authenticity, and Israeli perverts want to see Arabs not Slavic Muslims.

ODENHEIM

I agree.

PASKUDNYAKOV

Then you will go along with my proposal.

ODENHEIM

If the Akrams are as suitable as you claim. Potentially high risk, but potentially even higher return. Go for it.

PASKUDNYAKOV

Doc, who ever said you have no heart?

INT. PASKUDNYAKOV HOME OFFICE - TEL-AVIV

Paskudnyakov enters his office.

He sits down at his desk, pensive. He takes out the paper with the phone number that Rif at gave him. He dials. The SOUND OF RINGING from his phone seems to fill the room.

INT. AKRAM HOME - KITCHEN - AL-SAGHRA -- SAME TIME

Kids put to bed, Maryam is cleaning up the kitchen. Muhammad sits at the small table calculating expenses and frowning. The phone rings. Muhammad answers; when he realizes who it is, he motions for Maryam to pay attention. She comes over and stands beside him. She is hopeful. Throughout the conversation, Muhammad repeats selected parts so that she can follow.

MUHAMMAD

Hello. Yes, speaking. Paskudnyakov. You spoke with Rif at. You have a job that might help us out. For both of us?

He is puzzled and listens for a while. His eyes widen. He speaks louder, and then his voice becomes angry.

MUHAMMAD

How can you suggest such a thing?

MARYAM

Why are you getting angry?

MUHAMMAD

Mr. Paskudnyakov, one moment!

He covers the phone. When he gets to the word "porno," he lowers and then raises his voice.

MUHAMMAD

He wants us to star in one of his...  
(Lowering his voice)  
... porno films.

MARYAM

Is this Rif'at's idea of help?

He thinks for a moment and as a consequence cools down somewhat.

MUHAMMAD

Maybe indirectly. We knew Paskudnyakov was a sleaze.  
(Uncovers phone)  
Mr. Paskudnyakov, we can't possibly do such work. Don't you need a carpenter?

PASKUDNYAKOV (O.S.)

(Sighs, disappointed)  
I can only pay the usual.

MUHAMMAD

It will be enough.

PASKUDNYAKOV (O.S.)

I cannot imagine how you could possibly do enough carpentry jobs to pay the medical expenses.

MUHAMMAD

Don't worry! When I die, I will have lots of time to make up for lost sleep.

PASKUDNYAKOV (O.S.)

Tomorrow morning.

MUHAMMAD

I'll be there.  
(Hangs up)  
I have work.

Maryam hugs him.

EXT. CHECKPOINT #1 -- MORNING

Traffic jams the roadway -- a long line of cars, buses and jitneys (many-passenger taxicabs). There has been a delay and the checkpoint soldiers are making all the Palestinians undress. A young Palestinian WOMAN argues with an Israeli FEMALE SOLDIER because she has ordered her elderly parents to undress. Palestinians go through this sort of thing all the time. The actors can add lib.

Muhammad checks watch as he and the other passengers exit the bus.

INSERT - MUHAMMAD'S WATCH: 6:50 AM

BACK TO SCENE

IDF SOLDIER #1

(Gruff)

In a line, papers ready.

One-by-one, the passengers show their papers. The soldier looks up the passenger in an on-line database, and then makes each one undress.

IDF SOLDIER #1

(To Muhammad)

These clothes are too nice. You must be receiving money from Saddam Hussein.

He rubs them in the mud. Muhammad controls his temper and says nothing.

IDF SOLDIER #1

Mad?

Muhammad still says nothing.

IDF SOLDIER #1

(Pointing his rifle)

A smart guy. On the ground!

(To IDF SOLDIER #2)

Check him carefully.

Muhammad lies on the ground while other soldiers point their rifles at him.

IDF SOLDIER #2

Nah, he's clean. We've detained enough.

IDF SOLDIER #1

(To Muhammad)

Get up. You can pass.

IDF SOLDIER #1 returns the now thoroughly dirty clothes to Muhammad.

INT. AKRAM HOME - AL-SAGHRA

Maryam brings a bottle to Mughira. When she comes to the crib, she finds him unconscious. He is not breathing. Fear crosses her face, but she has dealt with this before. She gets a medical kit and prepares an intracardial injection, grimaces and gives it to Mughira. She begins resuscitation, and he starts to breath. But she is not done.

He needs a series of medications, and she needs a paramedic to come examine him.

She pulls the crib over to the phone and makes a call.

MARYAM

Hello, Widad? Maryam. I need you.  
It's Mughira. Thank you so much.

She hangs up and looks at her watch.

INSERT - MARYAM'S WATCH: 10:12 AM

BACK TO SCENE

Now she dials the Palestinian Red Cross.

MARYAM

Please come as quickly as possible.  
Al-Saghra, Eastern Division, between  
the school and the field, two houses  
from Sheikh Omar's Mosque. My son  
has had a heart seizure. I gave him  
the injection and am administering  
the medications. I am very frightened  
for him.

EXT. CHECKPOINT #2 -- AFTERNOON

Muhammad and the other Palestinian workers are standing in a group. Several ISRAELI DEFENSE FORCE (IDF) soldiers have weapons pointed at them. A soldier slings his rifle over his back and pisses at Muhammad's feet. Worried, Muhammad ignores the man, checking his watch.

INSERT - MUHAMMAD'S WATCH: 1:07 PM

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CHECKPOINT #2 -- LATER

Muhammad and the other Palestinian workers are standing in a line. The lighting has changed because the sun has moved considerably in the sky. Again, Muhammad checks his watch.

INSERT - MUHAMMAD'S WATCH: 3:18 PM

BACK TO SCENE

IDF SOLDIER #3

Get going!

The Palestinian workers get back into their buses.

## INT. AKRAM HOME - AL-SAGHRA

Maryam administers medication to Mughira, now semiconscious. She finishes and puts her head in her hands, distraught. Her sister-in-law, WIDAD AKRAM, early 40's, stands beside her, holding a cup of tea.

WIDAD

Please, at least have some tea and something to eat.

MARYAM

(Focused on Mughira)  
I can't. Where is the ambulance?

Widad sets the tea aside, steps forward and wipes the sweat from Maryam's forehead. Maryam looks at her watch.

INSERT - MARYAM'S WATCH: 3:37 PM

EXT. CHECKPOINT #3 -- LATE AFTERNOON

An IDF soldier is beating up a Palestinian MAN in front of his SON, 7, who cries and clings to his mother.

A National Religious soldier wearing a SKULLCAP with RITUAL FRINGES interrogates Muhammad. He scans the printout about him.

NATIONAL RELIGIOUS SOLDIER

(To another Soldier)

Hmmmm. Muhammad Akram. Wife, Maryam. Three children, Islah, Laila, Mughira. A hothead during the first intifada. Spent some time in jail, but a smart guy, learned to read, write and speak Hebrew.

(To Muhammad)

You are weak. We were strong. It's our land now.

Muhammad is knitting his brows together in anger as he tries to control himself. This is a signature gesture (SG#2) that he shares with his daughter. The National Religious Soldier writes on a piece of paper. He hands it to Muhammad

NATIONAL RELIGIOUS SOLDIER

Read this -- loud!

Muhammad looks it over. The soldier leans in and points to the page.

MUHAMMAD

(In Hebrew; subtitle)

*"I thank God the Jews returned to rule the land..."*

NATIONAL RELIGIOUS SOLDIER

Louder!

The soldier points at the paper.

MUHAMMAD

(Points to page again)

"*Without the Jews, we would be savages...*"

Muhammad stops.

MUHAMMAD

(In his face)

Read it!

Muhammad crumbles the paper and throws it down.

NATIONAL RELIGIOUS SOLDIER

I knew it. Do you think I would let a ticking bomb terrorist coward pass?

(Arabic, sarcastic; subtitle)

*Women are your tillage.*

(Hebrew; subtitle)

*This land is ours. You cannot save your women and children. You are extinct but just too dumb to know it...*

Muhammad turns back to the bus for the long drive back to al-Saghra.

INT. AKRAM HOME - AL-SAGHRA -- NIGHT

The room is dim. Maryam is dozing with Mughira's head on her lap. Muhammad enters and turns on a light. Maryam and Mughira wake up. Mughira holds his hands out to his father.

MUGHIRA

Baba!

Muhammad picks him up and holds him close. Maryam rises and starts for the kitchen.

MARYAM

You must be hungry!

IN THE KITCHEN --

-- she begins cutting a carrot. She is cheerful and assumes he's had a day of work.

MARYAM

I didn't know when you'd get back so I'll prepare something quick now.

(MORE)

MARYAM (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, but I have no peppers.  
Maybe --

MUHAMMAD

(Interrupting)  
I did not make it to work.

Maryam continues to chop even as she starts crying.

MARYAM

I don't know what to do. I have no  
peppers.

Then she breaks down. Muhammad comes over and puts his arms  
around her.

MUHAMMAD

(Concerned)  
Maryam, what's happened?

MARYAM

Mughira. He is okay now, but the  
medic told me he will die without  
the operation.

I asked him about medical aid outside  
Palestine. He explained triage to  
me. Our son is going to die!

MUHAMMAD

(Sudden resolve)  
No, he won't. I will call  
Paskudnyakov.

MARYAM

But you could not even get to work.

MUHAMMAD

This time we will. He said he would  
send a car. His partner is a doctor.

It takes a moment for the implication to register.

MARYAM

Muhammad, no!

Reluctant, Muhammad picks up the phone. He hesitates. Maryam  
stares at him with alarm, but Muhammad will not back down  
whatever his qualms. He remembers the National Religious  
Soldier:

## NATIONAL RELIGIOUS SOLDIER (V.O.)

(In Hebrew; subtitle  
over Muhammad with  
phone)

*This land is ours. You cannot save  
your women and children. You are  
extinct but too dumb to know it...*

Muhammad removes a crumpled slip of paper from his pocket  
and dials the number.

## MUHAMMAD

(Into phone)

Mr. Paskudnyakov. Muhammad here. I  
was stopped at the checkpoints. We  
would like to know more about the  
film.

(Takes notes)

Yes, we will come.

(To Maryam)

He wants us to come and just read  
the script.

(Back into phone)

Ilyas the Accursed. Here. Tomorrow  
early. We will bring Mughira.

## MARYAM

Ilyas the Accursed?

## MUHAMMAD

He appears to be real.

## MARYAM

(Upset)

I don't like this.

## MUHAMMAD

Maybe I should have barked like a  
dog for the soldiers at the  
checkpoints. Call Xenia.

## MARYAM

You told me not talk to her.

Muhammad considers Xenia a slut.

## MUHAMMAD

She is *munhallat adib*, but the Natasha  
of Nablus knows more about this type  
of work than we do. And she helped  
when your sister Nahda went into  
labor.

They both remember the incident.

FLASHBACK TO:

## EXT. CHECKPOINT - NABLUS -- DAY (1999)

Hundreds of cars wait in a line. IDF armored vehicles patrol the area. Soldiers wave machine guns, intimidating several men and a young boy in the background. A few men have been forced to the ground where soldiers are pointing guns at them. Are these Nazis intimidating Jews? It's difficult to tell.

ANWAR DARWISH, driving, sits in a long line of cars. In the back seat, XENIA comforts his very pregnant wife, NAHDA DARWISH. A Russian IDF soldier is checking their ID papers at the window of their car.

RUSSIAN IDF SOLDIER  
(Poor Russian-Hebrew)  
*No travel. Orders.*

ANWAR  
(Tries English)  
What? The baby comes out right now!

RUSSIAN IDF SOLDIER  
(Poor Russian-Hebrew)  
*Orders. No travel.*

Nahda groans in pain.

NAHDA  
(Arabic; subtitle)  
*I don't feel well.*

XENIA  
(Arabic; subtitle)  
*Shit. I'm not a very good negotiator.*

Even so, she climbs out of the car and faces down the Russian IDF SOLDIER who has pointed his machine gun at her.

RUSSIAN IDF SOLDIER  
(Arabic, subtitle)  
*In car.*

XENIA  
(In Russian; subtitle)  
*I'm a Russian citizen and an international. You can't just shoot me. Are you a stupid Russian IDF soldier that just obeys stupid orders? You think she has a bomb in her belly?*

Other soldiers move toward them. Xenia shouts to them.

XENIA  
(In Hebrew; subtitle)  
*This is between him and me.*

The Russian IDF Soldier nods that it's okay and waves them back.

XENIA

(In Russian; subtitle)

*Do you shove a grenade up your ass because your commander orders you? She's pregnant. She has to go to the hospital.*

(English)

You are a cow-fucking coward.

The soldier is impassive. An exceptionally tall woman, she moves closer to intimidate him.

XENIA

You could not even hit me. You coward. You couldn't put me in the hospital. You stupid Russian IDF soldier that obeys stupid orders put my friend and her child in danger. A coward like you would not dare to hurt someone that could hurt you back.

(Switching to Russian)

*Coward, hit me! Show me you have even the least little tiny pieces of balls! Hit me! Put me in the hospital!*

He slugs her in the jaw and knocks her down. Anwar is still in the car.

RUSSIAN IDF SOLDIER

(Bad English, to Anwar)

You. Take her to hospital. I write order.

(To Xenia in Georgian)

*I don't want to hurt anyone. I don't know why I'm here.*

Xenia is rubbing her jaw.

XENIA

(In Georgian, wryly)

*Thanks for not wanting to hurt me. I didn't need that.*

Anwar helps her to the car.

ANWAR

You are braver than I am.

XENIA

**Anwar, if you had done what I did, you'd be dead.** He was an idiot.

(MORE)

XENIA (CONT'D)

Or he knew what I wanted. Either way we get to the hospital. Of course, he could just have let us pass. Stupid Russians.

She rubs her jaw some more. She tries to smile.

XENIA

(Half in Russian)

*Moi dobrii padruzi*, I hope we won't be doing this again for a few years.

FLASHFORWARD TO:

INT. AKRAM HOME - KITCHEN - AL-SAGHRA -- SEPTEMBER 2000

Maryam starts to clean up the kitchen.

MARYAM

What are we going to do?

She starts to weep. Muhammad moves to her and runs his hand through her hair.

MUHAMMAD

Call Xenia. I will clean.

Arab men sometimes use silent stares to get their wives to do what they have been told.

Muhammad takes over and Maryam sits down at the table and puts her head in her hands. As Muhammad works, he turns and watches her, turning back from time to time, staring for long periods. Finally Maryam meets his gaze.

MARYAM

Couldn't you talk with her?

MUHAMMAD

I've never spoken with her.

MARYAM

What should I say?

MUHAMMAD

Find out about this work!

Maryam lapses again into silence and, again, Muhammad returns to staring at her. Finally, Maryam reaches for the phone, a pencil and note pad and calls Xenia. When Xenia answers, she begins taking notes. Occasionally she says "yes," "oh," "really," etc.

MARYAM

Do you know what people do in a pornographic film?

MUHAMMAD

People do stuff they do at night in bed.

MARYAM

Xenia told me about a movie in which a man was naked on roller skates, and his girlfriend dragged him around the room by sucking on his dick.

Muhammad looks shocked.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PALESTINIAN HOME - JENIN -- SEPTEMBER 2000

The SCENE begins in SILENCE and SLOW MOTION, and then speeds up with the intensity of the action. Over a domestic scene, Islah continues her narration.

ISLAH (V.O.)

That evening the Shin Bet assassinated Dr. Samir Samir, who was an important political leader with good American contacts.

MRS. SAMIR reads an Arabic Harry Potter book to two small children. DR. SAMIR works at his desk. The door bursts open and SOLDIERS rush in and grab Dr. Samir, punch him, kick him to the floor, then shoot him several times in the head and upper body; they kick the corpse, then slap Mrs. Samir around before leaving while she weeps and the two Samir children cry in fear.

ISLAH (V.O.)

The Israelis imposed an external closure on all the roads of the occupied territories but did not curfew us. So Laila and I were able to attend school.

BACK TO:

INT. AKRAM HOME - AL-SAGHRA -- EARLY MORNING

SEQUENCE OF SHOTS

(A) Maryam prepares breakfast.

(B) The kids wash and get dressed.

(C) Laila and Islah put on head coverings and say morning prayers.

The activities are reminiscent of 1950s America in "Father Knows Best" or "Leave it to Beaver." I do not mean the silly stuff but as the ideal nuclear family (*'usra*).

Muhammad and Maryam, perfect parents, send Laila and Islah off to school. Then Maryam starts to get Mughira ready to travel.

MARYAM

(To Muhammad)

I told your mother you had a job with a doctor who could examine Mughira and we might not get back until late. She will come around 3:00. I'm leaving a note for Islah.

They hear the sound of a car driving up. They hear a KNOCK at the door. Reluctantly, they answer. It's a Russian IDF noncom, ILYA, disguised as a Palestinian.

ILYA

(Russianized English)

I'm Ilya. Arabs call me Ilyas the Accursed. Do you speak English?

Muhammad shakes his head, yes.

MARYAM

Not well.

Ilya switches to a credible Arabic.

ILYA

(Arabic; subtitle)

*Mine could be better, too; unfortunately, it's better than my Arabic, but Soviet military training was not so bad.*

(Smiles, English now)

We will speak both.

(Bows, at your service)

Paskudnyakov Limousine Service.  
This way please.

He motions to an ordinary car with Palestinian plates, which he drives to avoid attracting attention.

ILYA

Paskudnyakov has arranged everything.

INT. CAR - BETWEEN AL-SAGHRA AND TEL-AVIV -- MOMENTS LATER

Ilya and Muhammad sit in the front. Maryam and Mughira are in the rear of the car. Ilya plays WAGNER on his car radio and "conducts" as he drives. Maryam tries to block out the sound; to her it is ominous and only heightens her sense of danger as she looks out on the passing countryside that is broken by barbed wire. She sees rubble and demolished homes.

As Islah's narration continues, the car passes broken shops on broken roads, dead trees; destruction everywhere.

ISLAH (V.O.)

I know my mom had only Mughira on her mind, but what was my father thinking as they drove through our beautiful land ravaged by tanks and tractors?

INSERT - THE CENTER OF JENIN

Israeli military forces and tanks invade and destroy the center of Jenin, second most ancient city in Palestine.

BACK TO:

INT. CAR - BETWEEN AL-SAGHRA AND TEL-AVIV -- CONTINUOUS

Ilya plays the RIDE OF THE VALKYRIES as they drive, and then turns to Muhammad to make conversation. He should give the impression that he is telling a whitewashed or highly edited version of events.

ILYA

I just came from the Ariel settlement. A guy there was bootlegging DVD's of some of Paskudnyakov's films. I had to explain to him the consequences of his ethical oversight.

He was so grateful to be able to make atonement -- it is the Jewish New Year, and they are supposed to ask forgiveness from God and make amends.

Besides paying for films and graciously offering a gratuity as compensation, he begged me to partake of the holiday food that his wife had prepared with her own hands.

The package they wrapped for me is right there beside your feet. Russian food is different, but this is not bad. I tried some at the settlement.

He points to a parcel on the floor of the car.

ILYA

Gefilte fish, tsimmes and noodle kugel. Take!

Muhammad does not know what Ilya has offered him. Gefilte fish is dagim memule'im in Modern Israeli Hebrew.

Muhammad is surprised. He did not expect breakfast.

MUHAMMAD

Shukran!

He takes a little and tries to eat it.

MUHAMMAD

Interesting, but I have already had breakfast.

(Pause)

Maryam only had a coffee. She is probably very hungry.

He passes the parcel back to Maryam, who makes a face at him because the odor has filled the car.

MARYAM

What is that smell?

ILYA

The gefilte fish. Try it.

MUHAMMAD

You are Russian?

Maryam is trying to figure out what to do with the food. She tries to give some to little Mughira, who pushes it away.

ILYA

Could it be more obvious?

MUHAMMAD

I mean Russian Russian not Russian Jewish.

Maryam is wrapping and stuffing the despised food in her bag. When Ilya or Muhammad looks back she is pretending to eat and to enjoy it.

ILYA

Yes, I am *Russki*.

(Points at the rubble)

Courtesy of US tax dollars and the IDF.

MARYAM

Aren't you a soldier, too?

ILYA

I prefer to consider myself a liaison between Paskudnyakov and those elements of the IDF that want to profit from honest graft and corruption and not from robbing and killing poor Palestinians.

Ilya swerves to avoid a goat that wanders into the road

ILYA

I also swerve for Palestinians.

He correctly implies that most IDF soldiers do not.

MUHAMMAD

I don't understand how you are here.

ILYA

I had a silly disagreement with my commander in Chechnya. I had to leave Russia fast. Because my wife's mother's mother was Jewish, the Israeli embassy was happy to help us escape out imminent persecution as Jews.

(Groan)

If I had wanted to murder or brutalize people that never bothered me, I would have obeyed his orders.

(Shrugs)

I'm just cursed.

On the other hand, I am now several thousand miles from my mother-in-law even if everyone where we live deflavors chicken just the way she does.

(Turning to Maryam)

How's that food?

MARYAM

I've never had anything like it.

EXT. CHECKPOINT #1 -- CONTINUOUS

They drive up to the checkpoint and stop. Tanks have damaged the road. There is an amazing line of cars but instead of waiting their turn, Ilya drives to the head of the line.

OUTSIDE THE CAR WINDOW --

-- they watch an IDF soldier beating a Palestinian; three other Palestinians kneel with sacks over their heads while an IDF soldier pisses on them.

BACK TO:

INT. CAR - BETWEEN AL-SAGHRA AND TEL-AVIV -- CONTINUOUS

Ilya points to the group.

ILYA

I guess someone didn't get laid last night. Imagine what they'd be doing if Hamas or Islamic Jihad had made an attack last night.

A checkpoint SOLDIER leans into the window.

BRIBABLE SOLDIER  
From Paskudnyakov?

ILYA  
Yep!

He reaches under the seat, removes an envelope and passes it to the soldier.

ILYA  
Enjoy!

BRIBABLE SOLDIER  
(Big smile)  
It will be ecstasy!

He waves them through.

EXT. CAR - BETWEEN AL-SAGHRA AND TEL-AVIV -- MOMENTS LATER

The car pulls over and stops. Ilya gets out and changes plates, putting Israeli license plates on. He then opens the trunk of the car and changes his clothes, switching from Palestinian to Israeli civilian.

INT. CAR - BETWEEN AL-SAGHRA AND TEL-AVIV -- DAY

Ilya turns onto a "Jews Only" road.

MUHAMMAD  
I've never driven on a Jews only road.

ILYA  
Nice, isn't it. U.S. tax dollars at work. Even the US Civil War leader, Jim Crow, had nothing like this.

They pass a SHARONVILLE - a tent city for people whose houses have been destroyed. Ilya fumbles in his pocket, takes out a cell phone and flips it open.

ILYA  
(Pointing outside)  
IDF destroy their homes.  
(Into phone; Russian, subtitle)  
*Yo, Ivan! We'll be there. About thirty minutes.*

Next they pass a destroyed OLIVE FIELD.

ILYA  
(Pointing outside)  
Settlers want the land.

He swings the wheel, hard left, and exits the bypass road. The car starts down a pre-1967 Israel road where a horde of military vehicles pass them, headed in the other direction -- a massive block of tanks, like something from a Soviet block or fascist police state.

ILYA

(To Muhammad, shrugs)

From the number of them, I'd say about five Palestinians will be killed today.

In the other direction, the buildings are new or at least undamaged.

OFF IN THE DISTANCE --

-- the rubble of a village is barely discernable.

BACK TO SCENE --

-- Muhammad points to the distant fields and rubble.

MUHAMMAD

Our fields and village were there.

Ilya quiets down.

They drive some more.

EXT. TRUE LOVE STUDIOS -- LATER

The car pulls up to True Love Studios. The motto beside the door reads, "All You Need is Love, but Money doesn't Hurt."

Ilya, Muhammad, Maryam and Mughira get out and walk to the back door, which enters into the production area. Ilya opens the door.

ILYA

Yo! Paskudnyakov, we're here!

INT. TRUE LOVE STUDIOS -- CONTINUOUS

Paskudnyakov ambles over with DR. ODENHEIM, an elderly gentleman with elegant beard, moustache and a full head of hair. The two men are followed by SHIFRA (Mary D'Ares), wearing too much makeup, but rather attractive and with a great butt. Naomi, a drab female ASSISTANT brings up the rear.

Ilya gets into his IDF jacket and uniform.

ILYA

Back to work!

He exits and Paskudnyakov turns to Muhammad and Maryam.

PASKUDNYAKOV

Stras'vuit'ya.

(To Maryam)

You must be Maryam and, more important, this must be Mughira.

(To both)

I am Ivan Abramovich Paskudnyakov. This is my partner, Dr. Odenheim and one of our leading actresses, Mary D'Ares.

Shifra half-curtseys.

SHIFRA

I'm the best actress. And my real name is Shifrah.

PASKUDNYAKOV

Of course each is the best at what she does. Shifrah is my callipygian -- she of the beautiful buttocks.

Shifra steps on his foot.

PASKUDNYAKOV

Ouch!

(To Shifra)

Save it for the camera!

Muhammad looks around. As his eyes grow accustomed to the darkness, he see SEX TOYS, SEX POSTERS and in the b.g., nude men and women hanging out, talking.

Maryam only has eyes for Mughira. She holds him tight. It is a protective gesture in this very alien, very disturbing environment.

DR. ODENHEIM

I am an obstetrician-gynecologist but I have lots of experience in pediatrics. I was with the Soviet Army in Egypt and so I speak some Arabic. We'll examine your son in the day care room.

SHIFRA

(Chewing gum)

I don't speak Arabic, but I'll help. I was a pediatric nurse before I became an actress. The doctors were always grabbing my ass. At least, here I get paid for that, and the money's a lot better.

(Sarcastically)

Too bad I'm too old to attract Dr. Odenheim.

Shifrah cannot be older than 27, and she really does have a great ass.

DR. ODENHEIM

Shifrah, I can squeeze your ass any time you want.

SHIFRA

But, Doc, I know you. Your heart wouldn't be in it.

As they exit with Mughira, Dr. Odenheim makes a show of grabbing at her ass.

PASKUDNYAKOV

(To Muhammad)

It's just a routine. When he was ten or fifteen years younger, he had a problem with teenage girls. But he was so good the hospital tried to retain him. He was too indiscreet. They had to pull his license.

Here, the women know how to deal with him. Anyway he seems to have outgrown it since he passed sixty.

(Pause)

Old age is good for something.

(Hands them scripts)

For you. Doughnuts? Coffee?

(To Dvorah)

Would you show them to the dressing room?

(To Muhammad and Maryam)

You can read there.

(As they leave)

It is just acting; it isn't real.

Maryam and Muhammad reject the doughnuts but take the coffee the assistant offers. It is a noxious brew in Styrofoam cups.

NAOMI

This way please.

INT. TRUE LOVE STUDIOS -- MORNING

They are reading at the dressing table. Maryam is itemizing the sex acts on a note pad. Muhammad reads with his thoughtful signature gesture (SG#1) that he shares with Islah.

Paskudnyakov knocks, opens the door and steps in.

PASKUDNYAKOV

We're getting really close to being ready for shooting.

(MORE)

## PASKUDNYAKOV (CONT'D)

If Maryam is too shy, we could substitute Shifra and do a voice-over later.

He then hurries back out to work with the crew. Maryam stares at Muhammad as if daggers could shoot out of her eyes.

## MUHAMMAD

(Shaking his head no)

We either do this together or not at all.

Maryam visibly relaxes and lets out her breath audibly.

## MARYAM

I am completely confused. This is excellent Arabic. Paskudnyakov could have been a poet.

## MUHAMMAD

It is pornography.

## MARYAM

But it was written as an epic love poem and then reworked.

## MUHAMMAD

Can we do it?

## MARYAM

I don't want to do --  
(Motions to note pad)  
-- these things.

Muhammad looks into her eyes.

## MUHAMMAD

I know. We can't.

For a few moments they look relieved. Then Maryam looks into space.

## MARYAM

Giving birth to Mughira was very hard. If he had been stillborn, it would not have hurt more, but I would have suffered more. Now a doctor is examining Mughira, but we are going to watch him die.

She closes her eyes. Muhammad closes his. He remembers the National Religious Soldier.

## NATIONAL RELIGIOUS SOLDIER (V.O.)

(Hebrew; subtitle)

*This land is ours. You cannot save  
your women and children. You are  
extinct but just too dumb to know  
it...*

Maryam composes herself and they look at each other.

MUHAMMAD

(Together)

MARYAM

We have to do this.

Maryam tries a brave but weak smile.

MUHAMMAD

Give me all your notes. Go check on  
Mughira. I will negotiate.

Maryam gets up to go when there is a knock at the door and  
Paskudnyakov enters. Muhammad is going over the notes.

PASKUDNYAKOV

We have to talk money.

Maryam is trembling in her chair.

MUHAMMAD

(To Maryam)

Go!

(To Paskudnyakov)

Here is the itemization for the  
"stunts" and the on-camera charge.

He hands him the note pad with the list of sex acts.

MUHAMMAD

A Natasha told me you should pay a  
premium because Israeli lechers obsess  
on Arabs.

PASKUDNYAKOV

Your Natasha knows my clientele.  
But you are novices. This pay scale  
would apply to professional actors  
and actresses. I will knock off  
twenty percent.

Muhammad looks really unhappy. Paskudnyakov worries that  
the Akrams will back out.

PASKUDNYAKOV

Muhammad, I am your friend. I told  
you I would take care of your son.

(MORE)

PASKUDNYAKOV (CONT'D)

After the shoot I will poll the staff.  
If your performance is good, I will  
add back eighteen percent; and as  
incentive, I will pay another two  
percent of gross not net  
(Dramatic pause)  
... for one year.

Muhammad's eyes widen. Paskudnyakov leans back and smiles.

PASKUDNYAKOV

Quarterly payments!

He scribbles it all down on the note pad.

PASKUDNYAKOV

(Signs with a flourish)

One year.

Muhammad studies him. All he sees is a wily fat man, but he  
has no choice but to accept the offer.

MUHAMMAD

It will do.

He hands Muhammad the signed document.

PASKUDNYAKOV

My signature is my bond, Mr. Akram.  
Let's get your wife.

INT. TRUE LOVE STUDIOS -- SIMULTANEOUSLY

This scene takes place simultaneously with the previous scene.

Dr. Odenheim and Shifrah are playing with Mughira Akram in  
the day care room.

Maryam enters.

SHIFRA

(To Maryam)

Mughira and Dr. Odenheim are teaching  
me to count.

She sings an Arabic counting song with Mughira.

Dr. Odenheim employs his best Marcus Welby, MD, persona.

DR. ODENHEIM

(Arabic, to Maryam)

Mughira is an excellent patient and  
a very brave little man.

(MORE)

DR. ODENHEIM (CONT'D)

Auscultation of the heart and numerous visible signs indicate that he may have a congenital heart defect that can be corrected with surgery and a year of rehabilitation, rest and medication with anilopril.

We will confirm this diagnosis via MRI. If it is true, I know the perfect surgeon. After the filming, I will discuss Mughira's case with Ivan.

Dr. Odenheim looks wistfully at Shifrah and Mughira Akram.

DR. ODENHEIM

You have a beautiful son.

MARYAM

(Almost inaudibly)

*-Maa sha'aa-llahu.*

Maryam smiles at the compliment to her son.

MARYAM

(Audibly)

*Shukran.*

DR. ODENHEIM

You and your husband are very brave.

MARYAM

This seems wrong.

DR. ODENHEIM

I used to have a wife and a family.

(Pause)

Now that I realize what I lost, I would do anything to have saved my family.

There may be an element of altruism, but Dr. Odenheim is also seducing Maryam.

DR. ODENHEIM

Work with us. We can help your son. Just keep him in mind during the filming. Everything else is insignificant.

Paskudnyakov and Muhammad enter.

PASKUDNYAKOV

(Upraised fists)

We have a deal.

(Pause)

Let's get back to the set. You have to get into your costumes and make-up, and reread the scene.

Maryam kisses his son on the top of his head and starts out.

PASKUDNYAKOV

You don't have to memorize. We have cue cards.

Shifrah makes a funny face and Mughira LAUGHS. Dr. Odenheim joins them in play as Maryam walks out.

INT. TRUE LOVE STUDIOS - SET -- MORNING

The STAFF is busy setting up for the shoot as Paskudnyakov strides onto the set.

PASKUDNYAKOV

Listen up, folks! Ya`aqov and Ilanah, help Mr. and Mrs. Akram with make-up and costumes. Dov and Eli, set up the office of our hero, Doctor Qasim Marwan. I'll work with Tamar on camera angles.

Muhammad, Maryam, Ya`aqov and Ilanah exit to the dressing rooms. DOV and ELI begin setting up the props for a university professor's office. Bir Zeit University.

INT. TRUE LOVE STUDIOS - DRESSING ROOM

Maryam tears off the hijab.

MARYAM

(Disgusted)

I play a religious girl, who is ruined by her teacher. I am even supposed to wear a hijab during the scene!

(Very angry)

Too much!

Ilanah acquiesces, stepping back to avoid her rage. YA'AQOV sticks his head out from behind a screen.

YA'AQOV

A star is born.

He laughs.

## INT. TRUE LOVE STUDIOS - SET -- LATER

Maryam and Muhammad stand on the set. Paskudnyakov stands at the side by the camera. Muhammad is no longer a day laborer. He is Dr. Qasim Marwan -- a sophisticated elegant university professor. Maryam is the beautiful Zulaykhaa.

PASKUDNYAKOV

Here's the motivation. Maryam, you are torn between your attraction to the modern world and the old world you know: religious, safe, restricted. You both attract and repel each other, for each is "forbidden fruit" to the other.

In this scene you need to find out: are you real people or mere symbols to each other? It is a seduction. Or is it? And who is seducing whom? That is the eternal question, my friends, is it not?

He motions to the crewman to turn on the spotlights, then to the cameraman, then to Muhammad and Maryam.

PASKUDNYAKOV

Lights! Camera! Action!

Maryam and Muhammad, intrigued by Paskudnyakov's fantasy, are drawn into a world that is far more attractive than their own. Indeed, who is seducing whom?

CUT TO:

BEGIN ACTING.

MARYAM

Dr. Marwan, I don't understand this comment on my paper.

She draws near. He scans her paper.

MUHAMMAD

The Kadizadeli movement was an example of the need for reform and the need to modernize by *stripping away* Medievalism. While such reformist ideas were present in the Ottoman intellectual environment of the seventeenth century, there is no evidence of a direct connection in the eighteenth century to Ibn Wahhab and his ...

His thoughts trail off as he begins noticing her.

MARYAM

Was there really an order like the  
Bektashi and were their practices  
really so --  
(Shy about saying the  
word)  
-- erotic?

He realizes how close her face is. He tries to look into her eyes but she looks away, then moves closer as he reaches for her. He attempts a kiss her, but she turns her head away. Reaching her, he kisses her and she gives in.

MUHAMMAD

Zulaykhaa...

MARYAM

Qasim...

She shakes her head and her hair falls loose, wild like a shampoo commercial on American TV. She begins to unbutton his shirt.

Paskudnyakov and his production crew stare wide-eyed at the Akrams. They are either not acting, or they are very good.

Throughout the lovemaking we catch glimpses of THIGHS, naked BREASTS, Muhammad's taut MUSCULAR build. We also hear the sounds of sexual passion for a long time.

The CREW watches, mouths agape. Paskudnyakov motions frantically for the soundman to bring up the music to heighten the fantasy. The MUSIC SWELLS.

MARYAM

(Whispers low)  
This is a bad dream. You are the  
only reality.

MUHAMMAD

(Whispers)  
For me only you are here.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SACRED MOUNTAIN TOP -- DAY (DREAM SEQUENCE)

The lighting changes as the story moves from the sordid reality of True Love Studios to a choreographed dream/fantasy that expresses both Maryam's love for Muhammad and the return to life of Palestine. In it, Maryam and Muhammad are transported beyond the moment to a high place, like a sacred grove in European mythology.

They are no longer in make-up and costumes for Paskudnyakov's film. BALLET DANCERS (BODY DOUBLES) play out the scene.

Muhammad, in a purple robes, is seated on a throne framed by an Oak with a Golden Bough. Maryam wears a long, flowing white dress as she expresses her love and devotion to her husband. She carries him a CORNUCOPIA of fruit and places it at his feet.

Then she begins to dance -- a sort of belly-dance associated with the *istiqbal* among Palestinian women; gradually she switches to the Western version of the dance -- a symbolic portrayal of the reality that Arabs are drenched in modern Western culture and ideas.

First, she dances before us and then around Muhammad. Then she draws Muhammad into her dance, which becomes an erotic Western dance, a tango. He lifts her high above his head. As the scene intensifies, the MUSIC does too.

Then Muhammad lowers her and releases the dress, which falls to the ground. We see it fall around her legs only. We do not see her naked. Then he carries her to the throne, lays her down and disrobes, then lies down beside her.

We have entered the realm of primal mythology. Maryam, the White Goddess, is also Queen Mother/Mother of Heaven.

Muhammad makes love to her. Afterwards -- after the White Goddess has been inseminated -- the primal myth requires Muhammad to die so that he may be reborn. In this way, the son of the goddess represents the suffering of Palestinians in a lifeless winter, and their struggle for liberation and rebirth represents the green of spring. Love, sacrifice and rebirth are the theme.

After this, Maryam will give birth to Mughira.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. PALESTINIAN HOSPITAL DELIVERY ROOM -- DAY (1997)

Maryam is in labor giving birth to Mughira. DOCTORS and NURSES are dressed in green surgical clothes and assist in the delivery. Muhammad stands nearby. The entire scene is in Arabic, subtitled.

DOCTOR

*Push, Maryam, push.*

*(Pause)*

*But don't forget to breathe.*

Maryam CRIES OUT in pain.

DOCTOR

*He's coming! He's coming! Yes!*

*You're doing it. You're doing it.*

A last GASP, and Mughira is born.

DOCTOR

*You've done it. Nurse! Scissors  
and gauze!*

A LOUD SLAP and Baby Mughira CRIES at the top of his lungs.

DOCTOR

*Maryam, here is your son!*

She is tired, but she has an expression of pure joy. She and Muhammad have wanted a son for a long time.

MARYAM

(Exhausted)  
*My little boy, Mughira, I have been  
dreaming about you so long.*

EXT. AKRAM HOME - AL-SAGHRA -- DAY (1997)

The whole AKRAM FAMILY is having a party for the new son. Many NEIGHBORS attend. There is MUSIC, dancing, a slaughtered SHEEP -- a tremendous feast even though they are very poor.

Laila is with her Aunt Widad. CHILDREN play games in the background.

LAILA

(Shouting)  
I see it! I see the taxi!

WIDAD

We all see it. Save your voice for  
the feast.

The cab arrives. Muhammad gets out and hurries to help Maryam and baby Mughira out the other side. He pays the cab driver. His older brother, AHMAD, a huge man with a bushy, well groomed mustache -- obviously the patriarch of the family -- rushes up to greet them. He puts an arm around Muhammad as they walk toward the party.

AHMAD

(Hugs him close)  
I knew you could do it -- that you  
would not be a father of daughters  
forever.

MUHAMMAD

Maryam did some of the work.

MARYAM

Just some?

MUHAMMAD

A lot?

MARYAM

Try most!

AHMAD

Women!

(To Muhammad)

You have brought the Akram family a new son -- a new fighter. We are stronger. We all thank you.

Rif`at Akram walks over with a SHEIKH OMAR, a family friend and Islamic religious scholar, he wears robes and a Fez and has a dignified white beard.

RIF`AT

(To Maryam and Muhammad)

Congratulations! We've been waiting for your son for too long.

SHEIKH OMAR

A blessing not only for parents and family, but all of us.

Maryam, holding the baby, sits among the women, who are all admiring Mughira. The whole family gathers around them.

AHMAD

Sami, come here! Greet your new cousin, Mughira!

SAMI AKRAM extends his finger to Mughira. Mughira tries to grasp Sami's finger.

SAMI

(To Ahmad)

Baba! He is holding my finger.

AHMAD

He already understands. Our family binds itself together like a bundle of sticks.

Laila pops into the group.

LAILA

He is so funny looking. Can I play with him?

MARYAM

(Sternly)

He is a baby not a toy!

Islah is right behind her.

\*

ISLAH

He is not funny looking. He is beautiful. Y'amma, Baba! Thank you so much. Now our family is perfect. I love Mughira. I love you both so much.

And she gives Muhammad a big hug.

The MUSIC grows louder. Some men begin to SING. Maryam's mother begins to serve the food. She should ad-lib to encourage people to eat as she walks around the party.

FLASHFORWARD TO:

INT. TRUE LOVE STUDIOS -- SEPTEMBER 2000

Maryam and Muhammad finish making love as Zulaikhaa and Qasim. But this time they are in a large bed. Time has passed. The story has ended.

WEDDING RINGS sparkle on their hands.

PASKUDNYAKOV

Cut! Oh, what a scene! And after eight hours of shooting. That was simply amazing. Pure pornography! Pure art!

The Crew now comes to them like acolytes with robes to help them off the set.

INT. TRUE LOVE STUDIOS - DRESSING ROOM

Maryam and Muhammad, exhausted physically, emotionally and sexually, are changing out of their costumes. Paskudnyakov paces. He is ebullient. Shifrah approaches Maryam, drops to her knees, and kisses her hand as if in acknowledgment of Maryam's rank as the Supreme Goddess, who is the Mother and Queen of Heaven.

SHIFRAH

(Eyes wide, to Maryam)  
I was watching after Mughira fell asleep. You're my hero! If I could act like you, I would be world famous even outside of Israel!

Maryam smiles somewhat puzzled, surprised and embarrassed.

MARYAM

(Exhausted)  
Was I really acting?

Dr. Odenheim enters carrying Mughira. Ilya has arrived to take them home. He is still dressed as a soldier.

PASKUDNYAKOV

(Jubilant, sings)

There's no business like show  
business.

He exits singing and then returns with a check.

PASKUDNYAKOV

This filming has been an epiphany.

(With some discomfort)

I'm not even certain it is  
pornography.

(Pause)

I don't have to poll the crew. A  
check with the full bonus.

He hands Maryam the check.

MARYAM

(Tired and groggy)

*Shukran.*

PASKUDNYAKOV

(Big smile)

*`Afwan.* Your performance went above  
and beyond the call of duty. I thank  
you, and the multitudes of monkey  
slappers in the State of Israel thank  
you.

EXT. TRUE LOVE STUDIOS -- NIGHT (MOMENTS LATER)

Ilya is getting into the driver's seat of his car, which he  
parked in the lot beside True Love Studios. Paskudnyakov  
hands both Maryam and Muhammad his business card.

PASKUDNYAKOV

Take my card. You can reach me any  
time any place. If you ever want to  
make another movie, we're ready when  
you are.

Paskudnyakov realizes just how tired they are; he might be a  
greedy pornographer, but he is sensitive to other people

PASKUDNYAKOV

I sent some of the crew to get two  
weeks of groceries.

(To his crew)

Guys, get with the program, load it  
up. Help Shifrah with Mughira.  
Help the Akrams. They're tired  
than anyone I have ever seen.

(Smirking a little)

And with good reason. You should  
all learn from them. They know how  
to act.

The crew and Ilya load up the car with groceries and guide Muhammad and Maryam into the vehicle. Dr. Odenheim hands Mughira to Maryam. Paskudnyakov finds a blanket to wrap around Mughira. Dr. Odenheim steps up and speaks to him, low.

DR. ODENHEIM

Don't forget about the boy! He needs an MRI.

PASKUDNYAKOV

Ah! We'll be in touch about the MRI.

INT. CAR - BETWEEN AL-SAGHRA AND TEL-AVIV -- NIGHT

Maryam and Mughira sleep most of the way home. Muhammad dozes from time to time but mostly he stares out the window at the world he can't have.

ISLAH (V.O.)

Ilya drove my parents and Mughira home. My grandmother was worried when they came home so late and with Ilya, but they explained that work ran late, that Ilya also worked for the doctor, and that the doctor had him drive them home as a favor. With all the groceries grandma forgot her concerns.

INT. AKRAM HOME - AL-SAGHRA -- MORNING

The ALARM wakes up Islah in the children's room. Puzzled, she looks around; she does not hear her parents. She checks the living and kitchen area. Nobody is there. Muhammad is not getting ready to go to work. Maryam is not preparing breakfast. A worried look crosses her face.

ISLAH (V.O.)

I woke up that morning and heard silence.

Islah looks around the house and calls out to her parents.

ISLAH

(Puzzled)  
Mama, Baba?

She goes to the door to her parents' room; it is cracked. She peers inside to SEE her parents, asleep on the bed in an embrace.

ISLAH

Y'amma, Baba! I cannot imagine what work that doctor made you do that  
(MORE)

ISLAH (CONT'D)  
 you are so tired today. I hope he  
 paid you a lot of money.

Maryam and Muhammad, groggy, try to get up.

ISLAH  
 I'll do breakfast and get the kids  
 ready.

She is trying to show her parents how good a wife she will  
 be when she marries.

She returns to the children's room and gets Laila up.

LAILA  
 Where's Mama?

ISLAH  
 She's too tired, but you have no  
 excuse. We can go to school today.  
 Prayer's better than sleep.

LAILA  
 What a goody-goody!

#### SEQUENCE OF SHOTS

(A) Islah prepares breakfast while Laila washes and dresses.

(B) Islah prepares breakfast for her parents and sets it on  
 the other side of their door.

(C) Islah goes through the morning prayers with Laila.

At last she and Laila start out the front door, hand-in-hand,  
 on their way to school. *Heart and Soul* might be appropriate  
 music.

#### INT. AKRAM HOME - BEDROOM - AL-SAGHRA -- CONTINUOUS

The Akrams are tired but awake for they have been lying there  
 listening proudly to Islah taking care of things.

MUHAMMAD  
 She's such a good daughter. She  
 must get it from your side of the  
 family.

MARYAM  
 Nah, she gets it all from her father's  
 genes.

They embrace. This family has a lot of love. *Heart and  
 Soul* plays but slowed down and romantic.

## EXT. GAZA -- NIGHT

An F-16 swoops down to attack an apartment building in Gaza.

ISLAH (V.O.)

That night the IDF used an F-16 to attack a Hamas leader in a Gaza City apartment building and killed approximately twenty bystanders in addition to his family.

## EXT. TOWN CENTER - AL-SAGHRA -- DAY

IDF jeeps, personnel carriers, tanks and soldiers are patrolling everywhere and smashing things.

ISLAH (V.O.)

A few days later, Islamic Jihad retaliated by attacking Hebrew University. The curfew was tighter than ever before. The IDF was patrolling everywhere; the soldiers were enraged, but we had food.

## EXT. POOL - PASKUDNYAKOV HOME - TEL-AVIV -- LATER

Paskudnyakov lies on an inflated rubber TURTLE raft in an incredibly blue pool. A gin and tonic sits in a drink holder in the turtle raft. Paskudnyakov is talking on his cell phone and sipping from his drink as he talks. AD LIB deals, deals, deals...

ISLAH (V.O.)

Meanwhile, Paskudnyakov had released their video. It sold out practically immediately in Israel. Paskudnyakov advertised on the Internet. He began to get orders from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Iran and the Emirates. He was ecstatic -- and rolling in money.

## INT. DR. SARAH ODENHEIM'S OFFICE - HOSPITAL -- DAY

Dr. Odenheim confers with his daughter, SARAH, another physician, and a surgeon at a hospital.

ISLAH (V.O.)

A week passed. Dr. Odenheim arranged for Mughira to check into a hospital where his daughter was an attending physician. Mughira would have an MRI, and if the surgeon Dr. Odenheim selected concurred, Mughira would have the surgery the next day.

(MORE)

ISLAH (V.O.) (CONT'D)

This time Paskudnyakov arranged for Ilya to bring Dr. Odenheim to our house to pick up Mughira in an IDF Medevac unit. Paskudnyakov came too because he wanted to make sure nothing went wrong.

(Somewhat ruefully)

My parents were now his two most important actors.

EXT. TRUE LOVE STUDIOS -- MORNING

Paskudnyakov's crew loads the IDF medevac with more groceries.

ISLAH (V.O.)

They also brought more than two weeks of groceries.

INT. IDF MEDEVAC VEHICLE -- DAY

Ilya drives slowly through the al-Saghra refugee camp. They see IDF jeeps and troop carriers and IDF soldiers everywhere. Ahead of them an IDF officer, ARI BEN CANAAN, is going ape-shit on a resident of Al-Saghra, IBRAHIM JABR. Other IDF soldiers stand to one side, enjoying the show.

ILYA

(Pointing)

Welcome to Hell. That piece of shit is Major Ari Ben Canaan, a real straight-arrow psycho Kibbutz type and a legend in his own mind -- a total idiot that hates Arabs with gusto and brutality. Even in Chechnya I never saw a sadist so enjoy smashing someone's face, and there were some real bad-asses in my spetsnaz unit.

DR. ODENHEIM

We have to do something.

PASKUDNYAKOV

When did you become a humanitarian?

DR. ODENHEIM

I may be a burnt-out old lech, but I can't watch him beat that guy to death.

PASKUDNYAKOV

Do I look more like James Bond or Arnold Schwarzenegger to you?

ILYA

I will take care of it. I have wanted to do this bastard for a long time.

PASKUDNYAKOV

Wait. Getting you out of military prison costs me.

DR. ODENHEIM

(To Ilya)

I am beginning to understand why Arabs call you Ilyas the Accursed. Having a moral sense and a compulsion to act upon it is a curse -- especially here.

(To Paskudnyakov)

Nu, what do we do?

PASKUDNYAKOV

Quiet! I am creating. Here is the scene.

We are in a medical vehicle. You are a doctor. You are going to scare Ben Canaan out of here with a contagious disease.

I will get a general to send out a medical alert fax to us about an outbreak of Ethiopian kuru.

ILYA

(Smirking)

If that moron knew what kuru was, he would certainly believe that Ethiopians ate each other.

Ilya drives closer. Dr. Odenheim gets out.

PASKUDNYAKOV

(Grumbling)

This is going to cost me, but I am making more money than God.

(To Ilya)

If this goes bad, we switch to your plan.

ILYA

(Smiles)

It would make my day.

Paskudnyakov dials his cell phone and comments in disgust.

PASKUDNYAKOV

I am becoming a social worker. I hate Israel.

## EXT. STREET - AL-SAGHRA -- CONTINUOUS

The medevac vehicle is not far from the Akram home. Ari Ben Canaan continues to beat the Palestinian. IDF soldiers, laughing and giggling, enjoy the show. Dr. Odenheim gets out of the medevac and walks over to face the Zionist "Darth Vader."

DR. ODENHEIM

What did he do?

CURFEW SOLDIER

Stupid fucking Arab broke curfew.

DR. ODENHEIM

I need to check him out.

BEN CANAAN

I'm anaesthetizing him.

DR. ODENHEIM

I'd prefer him conscious, and you should avoid blood.

Ari Ben Canaan realizes Odenheim is a doctor and stops.

BEN CANAAN

What? Why are you here?

IBRAHIM JABR

(Opens eyes and groans)

Uuh....

DR. ODENHEIM

The military asked me to investigate a report of Ethiopian kuru in al-Saghra. I need to speak with possible contacts.

BEN CANAAN

What does Ethiopian kudzu do to you?

DR. ODENHEIM

Kuru. The effect is a gradual dissolution of the brain.

BEN CANAAN

(Nervous)

How to catch it?

DR. ODENHEIM

We aren't sure. We do not fully understand prion caused diseases. We think blood.

Ben Canaan looks at his bloody hands and becomes more nervous.

BEN CANAAN

Is there a test I can get?

DR. ODENHEIM

No. We look for a collection of symptoms. In final stages we can see the damage on CAT scans or MRI. I have to examine this man because the reports indicate that the disease is only contagious from someone that is symptomatic.

BEN CANAAN

(Near panic)

What should I do?

Paskudnyakov approaches with medical alert FAX.

DR. ODENHEIM

I recommend you take your men back to the base and avoid al-Saghra refugee camp for a few days. You should all shower with the strongest medical soap. Get it from the infirmary. Avoid causing a panic. Mention exposure to influenza. There will be no bulletins unless we discover more cases. Just ask over the next few days about reports of rare diseases in the occupied territories. Ah, here's the medical alert.

BEN CANAAN

Don't bother!

Ben Canaan gets away from them as quickly as possible. He gestures to his men and orders them to withdraw.

IBRAHIM JABR

I think you saved my life. Are you soldiers?

PASKUDNYAKOV

Perish the thought. Friends of the Akrams. Let's get him inside.

They help him.

DR. ODENHEIM

What is your name?

IBRAHIM JABR

Ibrahim Jabr. I just live down the block. I just needed to find food for my children.

PASKUDNYAKOV  
 (Under his breath)  
 Starving children. I hate the State  
 of Israel.

They help Ibrahim Jabr get to the Akrams' house.

DR. ODENHEIM  
 Careful, he has a broken rib. I  
 have to look for internal injuries.

INT. AKRAM HOME - AL-SAGHRA -- MOMENTS LATER

They lay Ibrahim Jabr down on some cushions while Dr. Odenheim examines him. Ilya starts bringing in groceries. The Akrams surround them. Islah, Laila and Mughira are watching.

MUHAMMAD  
 (Thankful)  
 You saved Ibrahim.

MARYAM  
 You are good men.

She is somewhat surprised at what she is saying.

MARYAM  
 Please, may I get you something to  
 drink or eat? I made *zalabiyaat*.  
 They are like doughnuts.

PASKUDNYAKOV  
 We are stupid men. Palestinians  
 know more than anyone else that no  
 good deed goes unpunished especially  
 here.

While he speaks, Maryam offers, and Paskudnyakov takes, a coffee in Turkish coffee cups on tray and some *zalabiyas*. He pops one his mouth. A look of unabashed pleasure appears on his face.

PASKUDNYAKOV  
 Except when Mrs. Akram offers  
*zalabiyaat*.

He drinks the coffee. He does the old TV commercial.

PASKUDNYAKOV  
 Now that's coffee!

The Akrams look at him quizzically.

PASKUDNYAKOV  
 I guess you never saw the commercial.  
 (Deadpan)  
 I've been eating the wrong food.

He says this line as if it is a surprising discovery.

PASKUDNYAKOV

(To Ilya)

Save some groceries for the Jabrs.  
We will take both Mughira and Mr.  
Jabr to the hospital.

Ilya and Dr. Odenheim helps Ibrahim Jabr out the door.  
Paskudnyakov carries Mughira.

EXT. AKRAM HOME - AL-SAGHRA -- DAY (TWO DAYS LATER)

The weather in al-Saghra is beautiful. People are just happy to get out after the curfew and the closure. There is a crowd on the street. Kids are playing in the sinister presence of IDF soldiers and military vehicles.

ISLAH (V.O.)

The IDF lifted the curfew a few days later, but the camp remained closed. My parents could not visit the hospital because of travel restrictions. The operation took place the next day. Up to the operation my parents were very worried, but everything went well. While Dr. Odenheim could not take part, he was present during the operation courtesy of his daughter Sarah, who was attending in the surgical theater. Dr. Odenheim kept us updated, and Shifrah visited Mughira every day. Mughira began to get better. My parents were happy for the first time in almost two years. My mother actually started to sing again. She sometimes seemed to glow with happiness. But it did not last. My parents were outside relaxing in the summer warmth of September. I was studying inside while Laila was watching TV. Then uncle Ahmad stormed toward the house.

He was carrying that evil video.

OUTSIDE IN THE YARD --

-- Ahmad, towering over his younger brother, stands over Maryam and Muhammad.

AHMAD

(Boiling angry)

What have you done?

He flings the videotape at Muhammad.

AHMAD

How could you shame our family like this?

ISLAH (V.O.)

(Narrating)

We never found out how uncle Ahmad learned that my parents made that video. Maybe one of Paskudnyakov's people blabbed, or maybe people became curious after the rescue of Mr. Jabr. Or maybe the video simply sold too well. Laila and I heard the commotion. We came to the door. Except for soldiers we had never seen anyone so angry or threatening. We had no idea what could cause such rage.

LAILA AND ISLAH --

-- are at the door. Laila, nervous, holds and squeezes Islah's hand.

AHMAD

Are you animals in a barnyard that you fuck in the public for people to watch?

ISLAH

(To herself)

No, they couldn't.

AHMAD

(To Muhammad)

Maybe we should put you in an Israeli zoo, in the Palestinian house, where the Jews can come to watch Palestinians fuck!

ISLAH

(To herself)

They wouldn't.

He hits Muhammad, who does not defend himself.

AHMAD

Why did you do it?

MARYAM

(Quietly)

Mughira was sick. We had no money. Nobody we knew had any money. He would have died.

AHMAD

And now he will die of shame. Better  
he'd died of disease.

MARYAM

(Suddenly)  
Not my son!

Maryam hits Ahmad. He is surprised. He backhands her to the ground. Muhammad becomes angry and hits Ahmad. A crowd gathers. The neighbors come out. The Israeli soldiers are pointing, laughing and smiling. For them, this fight is great entertainment.

SHEIKH OMAR --

-- is walking by, notices and draws near.

ISLAH --

-- comes to a sudden understanding of the last two weeks, and she whimpers.

ISLAH

(To herself)  
They really did.

She pulls away from Laila and runs inside. Laila, confused, follows.

MARYAM'S NOSE --

-- is bleeding. When Muhammad saw, he became enraged. Muhammad and Ahmad are having a knock down, drag out fight. Maryam is beating on Ahmad too. Together, they are almost winning but Ahmad is too much for both of them.

SHEIK OMAR --

-- rushes toward the fight.

SHEIKH OMAR

(Angry)  
You are doing the soldiers job for  
them and giving them a show as well?

LAILA --

-- runs out of the house, screaming.

LAILA

Y'amma! Baba! Islah cut her wrists.  
She is bleeding all over the floor.  
Help!

She starts crying.

## AT THE FIGHT --

-- everyone stops. Maryam, Muhammad, Sheikh Omar run inside as Ahmad sinks to the ground in despair. A neighbor rushes over to help him.

## INT. AKRAM HOME - AL-SAGHRA -- CONTINUOUS

Maryam, wild-looking and bloody, clothes torn rushes up to Islah who lies unconscious on the floor, her forearms slit, blood pooling about her.

MUHAMMAD  
(To Sheikh Omar)  
Can you help?

SHEIKH OMAR  
Get me some cloth. We have to get her to a hospital immediately.

MARYAM  
The checkpoints!

MUHAMMAD  
(Upset, but clearheaded)  
We need Ilya! Call Paskudnyakov!

She does. He grabs the cell phone.

## INT. TRUE LOVE STUDIOS -- CONTINUOUS

Paskudnyakov is filming a musical homosexual porn video -- a circle jerk dance and song scene. The scene plays in odd juxtaposition to the distress in the occupied zone. The theme song from the musical *Carousel* is playing.

A cell phone RINGS and Paskudnyakov whips it out of his pocket to answer, eyes still on his scene.

## INTERCUT - PASKUDNYAKOV AND MUHAMMAD

MUHAMMAD  
Ivan, Islah cut her wrists!

PASKUDNYAKOV  
What?  
(To the actors)  
Cut, stop!  
(To Muhammad)  
Slowly, I don't understand. Oh...

He drops his doughnut.

PASKUDNYAKOV  
Ilya will be there within minutes.

He hangs up and calls to the actors and crew in a somewhat frantic state.

PASKUDNYAKOV  
 Emergency. We resume tomorrow.  
 (He hangs up and calls)  
 Ilya! The Akrams need us. Go now.  
 Islah could be dying. Take them to  
 a hospital, and stay with them!  
 (Irritated)  
 I will take care of your commander.  
 (Hangs up, pensive)  
 What to do?

He has an idea. He looks up a phone number in the phone book. He dials it.

PASKUDNYAKOV  
 Rabbi Milgrom, I saw you on TV last  
 week with Avigdor Liberman. You did  
 good. You can help me.

INT. RABBI MILGROM'S HOME - JERUSALEM -- SAME

Rabbi Milgrom, Islah's soon-to-be friend and mentor is on the phone trying to make sense of what this man is saying.

INTERCUT - PASKUDNYAKOV AND RABBI MILGROM

RABBI MILGROM  
 A suicide at al-Saghra Refugee Camp?  
 What's your connection?  
 (He listens)  
 I know Sheikh Omar. Let me call and  
 get back to you.

INT. PALESTINIAN HOSPITAL - WAITING ROOM

Ilya is dozing. Maryam is tearing up a newspaper unconsciously, while Muhammad is pacing with worry. A Palestinian NURSE enters.

NURSE  
 (In Arabic; subtitle)  
 You can see her now, but she is very  
 upset even with the tranquilizer.  
 She is restrained.

INT. PALESTINIAN HOSPITAL - WARD -- MOMENTS LATER

Islah is crying and very upset. Maryam and Muhammad enter. Maryam is crying too. When she sees her parents she struggles in the restraints.

ISLAH

(To her parents)

They humiliate us. You made a video.  
I hate you. You should have let me  
die.

MARYAM

(Even more upset)

It was the only way to save Mughira.

Islah says the worst possible thing she could say to her  
mother.

ISLAH

When Mughira understands, he will  
hate you.

Maryam begins to faint and Muhammad catches her. Islah is  
weeping hard now. He carries Maryam to the door where Ilya  
is waiting on the other side.

MUHAMMAD

Get her to a chair.

Muhammad turns back to Islah who continues to weep. There  
is some anger in his voice as he addresses her.

MUHAMMAD

I make the decisions.

ISLAH

Ugh!

(Weeps some more)

I respected you so much.

She turns away. He draws closer and puts her hand on her  
forehead.

She turns toward him.

MUHAMMAD

Your mother would have died if we  
could not save Mughira.

ISLAH

(Intently staring)

I am so ashamed!

MUHAMMAD

I need her to raise you and Laila.

(Quotes scripture;  
subtitle)

*By the sky that thunders, by the  
earth that splits. This is a word  
once and for all not meant lightly.*

(MORE)

MUHAMMAD (CONT'D)

*Cunningly they plot their design;  
with cunning I plot mine...*

You have no right to throw your life  
away.

She turns away and stops crying; pensive, she has something to think about. We see the controlled anger in the knitting of her brows together. It is the signature gesture (SG#2) that she shares with her father.

Ilya approaches and takes Muhammad by the arm.

ILYA

(Low)

We have to go. Paskudnyakov has  
arranged a meeting at Sheikh Omar's  
house.

EXT. SHEIKH OMAR'S HOME - AL-SAGHRA -- DAY

Sheikh Omar is talking in front of the house with Rabbi Milgrom. It is a very beautiful September Day. Sheikh Omar puts his arm around Rabbi Milgrom.

SHEIKH OMAR

I saw you on TV. You made Liberman  
look like an idiot.

A car pulls up and Paskudnyakov gets out and approaches. Sheikh Omar looks him up and down, wondering if he knows this man. Paskudnyakov has a familiar look to him, like a face from his past. But how can he have known the man they call the Porno King?

RABBI MILGROM

(With humility)

Making him look stupid is not  
particularly hard.

(To Paskudnyakov)

Paskudnyakov?

PASKUDNYAKOV

Yeah.

RABBI MILGROM

So, you're the culprit.

PASKUDNYAKOV

"Culprit"?

Ilya drives up with the Akrams.

RABBI MILGROM  
 (To Paskudnyakov)  
 Sheikh Omar has told me what you  
 left out.

Ilya drives off as the Akrams walk up to the group.

PASKUDNYAKOV  
 Someone has to be the sleaze. Without  
 me, you or Sheikh Omar might have  
 been the sleaze. You should thank  
 me.

RABBI MILGROM  
 (With sarcasm)  
 Thank you so very much, sir!

PASKUDNYAKOV  
 You don't understand my politics.

RABBI MILGROM  
 Excuse me?

Sheikh Omar interrupts as the Ilya and the Akrams come close.  
 BASYA MILGROM and Sheikh Omar's wife come out of the house.  
 Basya is wearing the sort of hippie Arabic clothing that has  
 become popular in Greenwich Village lately. It is very  
 similar to the dress that Maryam is wearing.

SHEIKH OMAR  
 Let's adjourn to my sitting room.

BASYA  
 (To Maryam and Muhammad)  
 Hi, I'm Rebbitsn Milgrom -- Basya.  
 That is my husband Rabbi Milgrom --  
 Michael.

She looks at Maryam's dress and then down at hers.

BASYA  
 (To Maryam)  
 You have excellent taste in fashion.

Maryam smiles, and Basya kisses her on cheek in an Arab style  
 greeting.

INT. SHEIKH OMAR'S HOME - SITTING ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

The room is a westernized Arabic room with chairs, cushions  
 and rugs. There is a picture of Sheikh Yasin on the wall.  
 Not having slept last night, the Akrams visibly distraught  
 are not in the mood to say much. They just listen as the  
 SHEIKH'S WIFE dutifully brings tea and cakes, then sits down  
 near the table to listen.

Sheikh Omar continues to study Paskudnyakov.

Rabbi Milgrom is about to say one thing but switches to another question.

RABBI MILGROM

What kind of name is Paskudnyakov?  
You must have changed it. I've known  
Russian Jews with names like  
Paskalnik, but never Paskudnyak.

Paskudnyakov leans back with an air of discomfort at the suggestion of the name change.

PASKUDNYAKOV

(Correcting him)

Paskudnyakov.

Israel made me Paskudnyakov the  
Loathsome Man.

RABBI MILGROM

You don't want to live here.

He waves his hands as he launches into a lecture, like a college professor -- a strange departure for a pornographer.

PASKUDNYAKOV

Zionism privileges a settler  
population over the native population.  
That idea is colonialist racism.  
There are pogroms against the native  
population. Zionists send death  
squad to murder the best and  
brightest Palestinians -- in  
territories under their control and  
throughout the world.

The Palestinians never did anything  
wrong to me, but the Zionist  
leadership has made me a pawn in its  
dirty demographic war. They have  
polluted me. I pollute Israel.

RABBI MILGROM

How do the Akrams fit into your lofty  
strategy?

PASKUDNYAKOV

They needed money. I could give  
them a job. Who else could? Family?  
The PA? Don't make me laugh. Hamas  
or Islamic Jihad? They want too  
much in return. Lao Tzu tells us,  
"Give a man a fish and you feed him  
one day. Teach him to fish, and you  
feed him for the rest of his life."  
Besides, I made a lot of money.

RABBI MILGROM

Humanitarianism is never so rewarding  
as when it is profitable?

PASKUDNYAKOV

Exactly!

Sheikh Omar is amused by the repartee until this point, for Paskudnyakov is something of a clown.

SHEIKH OMAR

Exactly wrong! Gospodin Paskudnyakov is no doubt aware of Dr. Ivan Paskalnikov's analysis of the reaction of Arab Muslim communities of the Levant to modernization. He carefully identified situations like this movie in which the community could react to the stress of modernity by reinforcing the stress in a destructive form of social resonance.

Paskudnyakov stares him straight in the eye.

PASKUDNYAKOV

Dr. Ivan Abramovich Paskalnikov died when he was forced on that plane to Tel-Aviv.

RABBI MILGROM

Not an excuse. Did you even consider what it would mean to Palestinians to turn them into fodder for your sex industry?

PASKUDNYAKOV

But I love everything Arabic and Islamic.

He pauses, looks at the Akrams and deflates a bit.

PASKUDNYAKOV

No, I did not intend to destroy the morality of the oppressed.

Maryam hesitates.

MARYAM

(To Sheikh Omar)

Are you saying that we are bad people?

SHEIKH OMAR

You are a valiant woman. Rabbi Milgrom would call you an *ewishet hayil*.

(MORE)

SHEIKH OMAR (CONT'D)

Your husband was courageous in an impossible situation. But doing pornographic movies cannot be a good thing.

PASKUDNYAKOV

(To the Akrams)

I did not mean for you to become collateral damage in my own private war against Zionism.

MUHAMMAD

This war is not yours alone.

MARYAM

And you saved our son.

PASKUDNYAKOV

I could have done that anyway. I was stupid.

MUHAMMAD

(Interrupts him)

You were not alone.

PASKUDNYAKOV

(With some pain)

I was greedy, and I took advantage. I will pull the film from distribution.

SHEIKH OMAR

It does not undo the deed.

They all think. Sheikh Omar has an idea.

SHEIKH OMAR

(To Paskudnyakov)

I watched *Schindler's List*. The story was moving, but the ending when the Schindler Jews march into a Jerusalem devoid of Arabs was sinister. The movie used a tragedy of genocide as cover or incitement for another genocide.

Could you use the same cover-up technique to turn this story...

PASKUDNYAKOV

(Together)

SHEIKH OMAR

...into something that could only happen in the movies?

PASKUDNYAKOV

(Russian, subtitle)

*You were one of my more creative students.*

(English)

An intriguing idea, but movies have to make money.

RABBI MILGROM

Why shouldn't there be a market for Palestinian point of view films?

PASKUDNYAKOV

Another revenue source never hurts.

RABBI MILGROM

**Americans learn their politics and history from film.**

You can wage your war against Zionism more effectively with a dramatic feature film than with pornography.

Paskudnyakov strokes his chin with interest.

Muhammad raises his hand tentatively, reluctant to make an unsolicited comment among people who are so above him in terms of education; for it has turned out that even Paskudnyakov is not merely a pornographer but was once a academic of some renown.

Then he places his hand on his chin in the signature gesture (SG#1) that he shares with his daughter Islah.

MUHAMMAD

American movies are empty. Silly love stories with silly people, action-adventure films where everything blows up, and they always have a happy ending.

How could you create a film with an ending to please Americans when we are being worn down a little more each day? We don't have happy endings in Palestine.

PASKUDNYAKOV

(To Muhammad)

AIPAC has been manipulating them for years. I can do it better.

RABBI MILGROM

(To Muhammad)

I disagree about the happy ending.  
(MORE)

## RABBI MILGROM (CONT'D)

I have been offered a fellowship at Santa Carla University for the next three years. They have a program for precollege students from war zones and troubled parts of the world.

(To Maryam and Muhammad)

Islah could study there. My wife and I could keep an eye on her for you.

## MARYAM

But it's so far away.

## MUHAMMAD

Maryam, it is her destiny.

Basya touches Maryam on the shoulder and nods her head.

## BASYA

(Just to Maryam)

It will be okay.

## RABBI MILGROM

We should be able to arrange a scholarship.

## PASKUDNYAKOV

Forget useless Americans. My studio has lots of money now. I'll pledge some to scholarships for the children of al-Saghra.

All look at him in surprise. Sheikh Omar speaks first.

## SHEIKH OMAR

Can we accept money earned from the corruption of Zionist society?

## PASKUDNYAKOV

I will request a fatwa from Sheikh Tantawi the next time I meet with him at al-Azhar.

A silent beat as all look from one to the other. All LAUGH. Rabbi Milgrom rises and offers his hand.

## RABBI MILGROM

(Subtitle)

Aval kol shemaasav merubbin mehakhmato, lamah hu domeh? Le'ilan sheanafav mu`atin veshorshim merubbin...

**"But each one whose acts are greater than his learning, to what is he compared? To a tree, whose leaves are few, but his roots are many."**

PASKUDNYAKOV  
 (To Rabbi Milgrom)  
 Sometimes, I regret not having a  
 genuine traditional education in  
 Talmud, but you can't find that here.

Sheikh Omar rises to embrace Paskudnyakov.

SHEIKH OMAR  
 (In Russian; subtitle)  
*I always wondered where you went.*

He pats Paskudnyakov on the belly.

SHEIKH OMAR  
 (In Russian; subtitle)  
*In Lvov you were thin.*

PASKUDNYAKOV  
 (In Arabic; subtitle)  
*Living under the Zionist regime is  
 bad for the health.*

SHEIKH OMAR  
*I wish I only had to worry about  
 obesity.*

RABBI MILGROM  
 (To Paskudnyakov)  
 This could be beginning of a beautiful  
 friendship.

Again, all LAUGH.

EXT. PLAYGROUND - AL-SAGHRA -- SAME DAY

Maryam and Muhammad are walking home from Sheikh Omar's house,  
 passing the playground.

Sami, Ahmad's son and their nephew, is playing with other  
 ten year-old KIDS, kicking a soccer ball. The playing field  
 is broken down and there are visible signs of the occupation.

An open A.P.C. rumbles toward the kids with a DRIVER and  
 four heavily armed IDF SOLDIERS. The Soldiers watch, joking  
 among themselves. AD LIB comments about turkey shooting or  
 shooting fish in a barrel. They pull out and prepare their  
 weapons, then start taunting the children.

The Arabic of the IDF Soldiers in this scene is badly  
 pronounced with a strong Israeli accent.

IDF SOLDIER #4  
 (Bad Arabic; subtitle)  
*Hey, Muhammad. I wanted to fuck  
 your sister, but my dog got her first.*

The Kids stop playing.

SAMI  
 (Arabic to himself)  
*What?*  
 (To the other kids)  
*What did that asshole say?*

OTHER KID  
 (Arabic; subtitle)  
*Who cares? Stone `em!*

IDF SOLDIER #5  
 (Bad Arabic; subtitle)  
*Hey Muhammad, when your mother saw,  
 she got down on all fours so the dog  
 could do her. He sniffed her cunt,  
 got disgusted and ran away to find a  
 better smelling bitch.*

The kids grab stones to throw at the soldiers.

CLOSE ON - MUHAMMAD

He and Maryam watch horrified.

MUHAMMAD  
 I have to stop this.

Maryam puts an arm out to stop him.

MARYAM  
 No!  
 (Calling to Sami)  
 Sami, stop it!

Muhammad pulls away.

MUHAMMAD  
 Should I let him lose an eye because  
 his father punched me in anger?

MARYAM  
 Muhammad, be careful.

Muhammad walks forward, arms upraised in order to appear harmless, at the same time, scolding Sami.

MUHAMMAD  
 (In Arabic; subtitle)  
*No. No. Are you stupid?*

IDF SOLDIER #4 gets ready to shoot Muhammad down as Muhammad takes Sami's arm to pull him away.

IDF SOLDIER #4  
 (Hebrew; subtitle)  
*He's spoiling our target practice.*

He pops out the rubber bullet cartridge and puts in a dum dum cartridge.

IDF SOLDIER #5  
 (Hebrew; subtitle)  
*Dumdum bullets?*

IDF SOLDIER #4  
 (Hebrew; subtitle)  
*We can't let him get away with this sort of behavior.*

He shoots.

Muhammad falls -- SLOW MOTION - as his head explodes. Maryam moves to him. She is screaming. IDF SOLDIER #4 continues to aim but then lowers the machine gun.

IDF SOLDIER #5  
 (Hebrew; subtitle)  
*Aren't you going to do her?*

IDF SOLDIER #4  
 (Hebrew; subtitle)  
*I'll leave her for later.*  
 (Laughs)

IDF SOLDIER #4 calls his commanding officer on his walkie-talkie.

IDF SOLDIER #4  
 (Hebrew; subtitle)  
*Shot an armed terrorist attacking us. Send more soldiers and an ambulance for the body.*

Maryam falls beside Muhammad. She is screaming and crying. She caresses his forehead.

MARYAM  
 Oh, Muhammad, no! No! No!

She weeps as she holds her murdered husband. It is the scene from the dream-dance of the goddess and the sacred, sacrificed King of ancient myth -- the Madonna and the crucified Christ.

INT. UCSC CLASSROOM -- RETURN TO PRESENT

CLOSE ON - ISLAH. Tears fill her eyes.

All around her, the room has grown silent.

ISLAH  
I never even got to tell my Baba  
that I understood.

Now she breaks down completely. Becca is holding back tears. Rachel, completely unmoved by Islah's story, scowls, shifts in her seat, then stands, worried about losing her followers.

RACHEL  
What a load of anti-Semitic crap!

BECCA  
Give it a rest, Rachel!

Becca moves toward Islah and puts an arm around her. Rabbi Meilikowski motions for Rachel to can the tirade.

RABBI MEILIKOWSKI  
Rachel! This isn't the time.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. STREET - AL-SAGHRA -- DAY (SEPTEMBER 2000)

A Palestinian funeral procession. We see the people we've seen before: Maryam's mother, Sheikh Omar, Rabbi Milgrom, Ibrahim Jabr, Paskudnyakov, Dr. Odenheim, Shifrah, Ahmad and his wife, Widad, Sami Akram, Rif'at, Xenia, Ilya, Nahda Darwish, Anwar Darwish and other al-Saghra residents all take part in the procession. Xenia and Ilya are chatting with each other.

EXT. PALESTINIAN CEMETERY - GRAVESIDE -- SAME

Maryam and Islah pause at the grave.

ISLAH  
Mama, I'm so sorry what I said.

MARYAM  
We are so besieged.

ISLAH  
I miss Baba so much.

She bends down and kisses Islah on the top of the head, like the White Goddess anointing Artemis, her younger, virginal, martial self.

She breaks down.

Islah embraces and comforts her. As she assumes her mission to America, she is brave and does not cry.

## EXT. PALESTINIAN CEMETERY -- EVENING

It is twilight. The scene may be shot in black and white. There are no people. Weeds around the grave indicate the passage of time. The CAMERA PANS TO THE MANY GRAVES of others, martyrs, sacrificed to the times.

## SEQUENCE OF SHOTS

SUPER:

**Mughira recovered from his surgery after a year. He is now in kindergarten.**

A) Mughira is playing with the other kids.

SUPER:

**Ilya and Xenia have teamed up and are using their Soviet espionage training to track money pocketed by powerful Israelis from U.S. aid to Israel. The money comes back to the U.S. via family and business connections to fill the campaign chests for national elections. The former spies released their research anonymously as a book entitled *US Foreign Aid at Work*. It became an immediate bestseller, caused a major political scandal, and is in line for a Pulitzer.**

B) Ilya and Xenia break into a safe in the Israeli Ministry of Finance. They shine a flashlight on the money and take out a ledger and open it to a list. They look at each other and smile.

SUPER:

**Paskudnyakov has developed a new self-destructive habit. He stands in front of Israeli bulldozers to prevent Palestinian homes from being destroyed. No driver can possibly claim not to see him.**

C) Paskudnyakov faces down an armored tractor.

SUPER:

**Nine months after Muhammad and Maryam made the video, Maryam gave birth to a son. She named him Muhammad.**

**Dr. Odenheim's daughter, Sarah, was the attending physician.**

D) In the maternity ward a SARAH ODENHEIM hands Maryam young MUHAMMAD. Maryam proudly shows him to Laila, Islah, Mughira, Ahmad, Widad and Sami who are gathered around the bed. Ahmad holds out his arms to be given the young Muhammad. He holds him and then kisses him.

AHMAD  
My nephew, Muhammad!

There are tears in his eyes.

AHMAD

(In Arabic; subtitle)

*Praise be to God who will bring the  
Palestinian people together from  
dispersion.*

The Palestinian national anthem, *Bilaadi, Bilaadi* plays...

According to Lane, the OED of Arabic to English dictionaries,  
the phrase is: *Al-hamdu lillaahi alladhii sa-yajma`u al-qauma  
al-falastiniyya min shattin.*

FADE TO BLACK.