

I Am Not Mine

by SEVAN

Sam Barickman
ICM Partners
65 East 55th Street
New York, NY 10022
(P) 212.556.5743 | (M) 646-647-7037
sam.barickman@icmpartners.com

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Characters:

ABDUL-RAHIM - 40s/50s, Syrian rebel leader imprisoned for 13 years. Journeying home to find his children and wife.

JANAN - 20s/30s, his wife. A Eumenideic force.

MAR - 21, their son, damaged. Torn between loyalty and retribution.

QILA - 18, their daughter, aggressive and vengeful. All the conviction of an iron girder.

TIME: Years after the Syrian revolution ends.

PLACE: A walled-off city of refugees.

‘A revolution is a struggle to the death between the future and the past.’ -- *Fidel Castro*

‘Every revolution evaporates and leaves behind only the slime
of a new bureaucracy.’ -- *Franz Kafka*

A NEW SPRING

ABDUL-RAHIM stands in a shaft of yellowed-light. He is strong of frame but broken of spirit.

From the darkness we hear the echo of a voice singing "Hal Asmar El-Loun" ("My Tan Skinned Love"). JANAN comes into view and circles ABDUL-RAHIM sensually and predatorily.

JANAN

Hal asmar el-loun
Hal asmar anee
Ta3ban ya-galb 7yoo hoowak ra-manee
Yaboo 3ayoon wasaa
Hateet be'albee ooja3
Ba3teek sab3a arba3 7ayoomin 3ayn rahass malee
Yaboo galab fussnuht
Wa-3alee eesh halb3adnaht
Ba3teek tatarthi 7yoo min 3ayn rasmallee.

[Oh this tanned one
My tanned one
Oh heart, I am tired, where has your love thrown me to?
Oh you with the wide eyes
You have put pain in my heart.
I will give you 7 quarters of what I have.
Oh you with the heart of silver
What is this loathing for?
I will give from what I have just so you would be pleased.]

*JANAN stops and looks at ABDUL-RAHIM for a moment.
She closes her eyes and takes in a deep breath.*

JANAN

(smiling)

Desert and moonlight. Jasmine on the wind. Sand. You still smell like sand. Like little grains of silent earth flowing like water through the secret spaces between fingers. Like the whispered prayers of devotion in my ear. Like the heat of constellations. Like a full promise of infinity. Yes, like sand. You look sad, ya hub [my love]. You look tired. You look - old. So old. When did you get so old?

ABDUL-RAHIM creakily goes to his knees packing some clothes, books, pencil, and paper into a simple bag.

JANAN

Where is the man I remember? Have you seen him? Can you be him? Your hands. They still look the same. Strong. Leathered. Cracked. Fingers scarred like olive branches.

(She bends down to him to look into his eyes)
Ah - these are still the same. These never change. They never lie. Do they, ya roohee [my soul]?

(She stands again)
No - they never learned to lie like the rest of you.

ABDUL-RAHIM starts to get up but does so with great difficulty. His right leg is hobbled. JANAN watches him struggle.

JANAN

Thirteen years is a long time. Not long enough. They've beaten your body. Changed your face. Did you let them break you, my love?

(she offers her hand - he looks for a moment)
Don't. Don't reach out. Don't take it. Get up. Get up, Abdul-Rahim. Get up! GET UP!

He struggles.

JANAN

(sing-shouting Ibrahim Qashoush's "Get out, Bashar!" as the sounds of the protest in Tahrir Square singing the same chant echo behind her)

Yalla ir5al ya Bashar (Get out, Bashar)
Wa ya Bashar manak minneh (Bashar you are not one of us)
7ood Mahar wa ir5al 3inna (Take Mahar and leave us.)
Washar 3eetek saqtak 3inna (Your legitimacy has fallen).
Wa yalla ir5al ya Bashar (Get out Bashar!)

Get up!

Yalla ir5al ya Bashar (Get out Bashar!)

Get up! Listen to them and get up!

Wa yalla ir5al ya Bashar (Get out Bashar!)
Wa ya Bashar tuz feek (Bashar, screw you!)
Wa tuz billee behayeek (And screw those who salute you!)
Wa allah ta3banah nitla3 feek (We're tired and we will kick you out!)
Wa yalla ir5al ya Bashar (Get out Bashar!)

GET UP!

Yalla ir5al ya Bashar (Get out Bashar!)

GET UP ABDUL-RAHIM!!!

He does. Finally. He is breathless. She watches him. Then applauds slowly.

JANAN

Shall we try walking now? No? Prefer to do it in your own time? Well - too bad. You're going to walk now, ya habibi [my sweetheart]. You're going to walk far. You're going to find them. You're going to find me. Aren't you? You're going to go back and re-tie all the thousands of tiny strings you cut. I wonder what I'll look like. You owe me.
(getting in close to him)

You think you have suffered - you have not. You think you have waited - you have not. Now...take your first step. Step! Good. Step. Step. Step. Step. Step. Step.

She hums "Hal Asmar El-Loun" ("My Tan Skinned Love") as she watches him walk out.

WHISPERS ON THE WIND

The lights reveal a living space of sorts. A combination of a shack, internment camp, ghetto, loft space. It hasn't aged well and only has the basic necessities. It's not disgustingly filthy. If you didn't know any better you would think Armageddon was happening outside. And it might very well be. Curtained doorways lead off to unseen rooms.

QILA and MAR lie down together on a mat - arms to their side - just breathing in tandem for a moment.

I'm hungry.

MAR

No talking.

QILA

Tell that to my stomach.

MAR

Ignore it.

QILA

It won't shut up.

MAR

Neither will your mouth.

QILA

Just a little piece.

MAR

A little now means none later.

QILA

I won't complain then. **MAR**

Yes you will. **QILA**

Yes I will. **MAR**

I know. **QILA**

It hurts. **MAR**

QILA
The more you talk the more energy you waste the more your body needs to replace it so stop fucking talking and you won't get any hungrier.

Breathing.

You're mean. **MAR**

I know. **QILA**

Breathing. QILA reaches into her pocket and pulls out a small piece of bread, tears off a corner, and hands it to MAR. He takes it and puts it in his mouth then reaches for QILA's hand and takes it while he chews.

MAR starts to convulse. QILA shoots up. She pulls him into her arms. She starts to sing "Lamma bada Muwashah".

QILA
Aman aman aman aman
Wa'di wa ya hirati
Man lil rajim shakwait
Bil-houbbi min law'ati
Illa maleek'ul jamal
Aman aman aman aman

[aman aman aman aman
O my promise, O my perplexity,

who can answer my complaint
about love and suffering
but the beautiful one?
aman aman aman aman]

MAR quiets down. Starts to cry.

Stop that.

QILA

I wasted the bread.

MAR

It wasn't your fault.

QILA

I wasted it!

MAR

I'll get more later. Close your eyes and get some rest.

QILA

I'll see her.

MAR

No you won't.

QILA

I always see her. I close my eyes and she appears.

MAR

She just wants to talk to you.

QILA

Then he shows up.

MAR

...

QILA

I think it's him.

MAR

...

QILA

MAR

It's the eyes. His face like stone. His hands covered in blood. He smells like - nothing. She doesn't like him being there.

QILA

He can't hurt you.

MAR

He just looks at me.

QILA

Ignore him.

MAR

He never talks. I want to hug him.

QILA

Don't.

MAR

And then the fire.

QILA

Not real.

MAR

It's so bright.

QILA

Not now.

MAR

(starts to scratch his right arm)

And it stings me.

QILA

It can't hurt you.

MAR

I can feel it.

QILA

No you can't.

MAR

Yes I can! I can feel it! Get off! Get off!

MAR gets up, tears his shirt off and starts to rail against the air, tossing around whatever is in the room. His right arm and part of his abdomen up to his neck is covered in burn scars. QILA sits there waiting for him to exhaust himself. He does and sits on the floor breathing heavily.

QILA

We might as well go get some water.

MAR

It's not time yet.

QILA

It will be by the time we get there.

MAR

Sorry.

QILA

Don't be.

MAR

I don't know why I get like that.

QILA

I'm used to it.

MAR

You shouldn't have to be.

QILA

Doesn't bother me.

MAR

I'm tired.

QILA

Yes.

MAR

So tired.

QILA

We all are.

MAR

So tired.

QILA

(putting a bucket down in front of him)

Shirt on. Bucket up. Let's go.

He complies. He walks out. QILA follows. Stops. We hear whispers and wind.

QILA

Stop telling me things I already know.

The whispers quicken.

QILA

I know what I'm doing.

The whispers anger.

QILA

(dropping her bucket and covering her ears)

Stop it!

The whispers and wind die down.

QILA - composed - picks up the bucket and walks out.

ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS

ABDUL-RAHIM enters - JANAN not far behind him. As she speaks he surveys.

JANAN

The date trees have looked better. All that swollen fruit dried up into little sour pieces. I wish the olive trees would come back. They packed up and left and never turned back. Smart trees. Dig up your brows, Abdul-Rahim. Scowling won't give you answers. Hmph. Not much but at least there's a roof.

He goes to a wall of photos - not that many - most burned in parts.

JANAN

Look at them. So sweet. So tender. Those smiles like the sun. My God - look at me. I don't remember being so fat. You should have told me to eat less bread. And rice. And look at you. Hm. Where are you? Not there. Not there. Not there. Maybe you were a part of this one. Or this one. Were you there? I don't remember seeing you.

She twirls around the room giddily.

JANAN

MMMh! Smell that air, Abdul-Rahim! The smell of freedom.

(stopping)

It smells stale. The air is dead. Come to think of it - it's very familiar. Stale. Sad. Smoke. Fear. Tears. Dirt. Blood. Fury. Anger. Fury. Anger. Fu- Hope? Hm. Maybe. It's a bit / confusing though isn't it.

QILA and MAR walk in with their buckets.

QILA

You spilled more than you got into the well.

MAR

If you stopped ordering / me around.

QILA

Who the hell are you?

They drop their buckets and pull out knives.

MAR

Who are you?

QILA

Don't talk to him.

MAR

How did you get in here?

QILA

You've come to the wrong house.

MAR

What do you want?

QILA

There's nothing here for you.

MAR

What did you touch?

QILA

Take one step - I dare you.

JANAN

Like father like daughter.

Why won't you talk? **MAR**

They don't know. **JANAN**

Tell us your name? **MAR**

Stop talking to him, Mar. **QILA**

You're talking to him! **MAR**

I'm threatening him. **QILA**

JANAN
(starts to head out - looking at her children)
Didn't think this would be easy did you, habibi? Consider your words carefully. Tsk. Look at this excuse for a garden. They've let the weeds grow wild. They'll choke out all those flowers.

She exits.

QILA
Two choices old man. You leave right now. Or we drag your body out of here.

He knows us. **MAR**

He doesn't. **QILA**

I think we know him. **MAR**

We don't. **QILA**

MAR
(moving in closer)
We're supposed to. Aren't we?

Get back. **QILA**

MAR

If he wanted to kill us he would have attacked already. Look at the way his eyes are looking at us. He knows us. What's your name, old man?

QILA

Mar!

MAR

I'm Mar. That is my sister Qila. You know our names. What is yours? Unless you like being called Old Man, old man.

ABDUL-RAHIM sweeps MAR into a hug.

QILA

MAR!

MAR

It's ok, Qila! It's just a hug. Just a hug.

ABDUL-RAHIM releases MAR then cups his son's face.

MAR

Hello.

QILA

(Getting in the middle and walking MAR back)

Get out of here. We won't hurt you. Just get the fuck out and forget you were ever here.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Ammo. [Uncle.]

QILA

What?

ABDUL-RAHIM

I'm your - ammo.

QILA

That's impossible.

MAR

That's it! Yes - he looks like us.

QILA

We all look the same here, stupid.

Ammo? **MAR**

Omar. **ABDUL-RAHIM**

Oh my god. **MAR**

Aqila. **ABDUL-RAHIM**

He knows. **MAR**

Who the fuck are you?! **QILA**

ABDUL-RAHIM sweeps QILA up.

Put me the fuck down! **QILA**

Aqila, ya habibti. Ya habibit elbi. [My sweetheart. Love of my heart]. **ABDUL-RAHIM**

Ammo. **MAR**

Put me down. **QILA**

He releases her and tries to cup her face. She pulls away and studies him.

You're really our ammo? **MAR**

Yes. **ABDUL-RAHIM**

Wow. **MAR**

You've both grown so much. **ABDUL-RAHIM**

MAR

Are you our baba-ammo or our mama-ammo.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Your father's brother. Ali.

MAR

Ammo Ali.

ABDUL-RAHIM

You live here?

MAR

Yes.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Since when?

MAR

Since always. Well not always. But most of our life.

ABDUL-RAHIM

It looks comfortable.

MAR

It's not. But it's better than most. You look so old.

ABDUL-RAHIM

I am old.

MAR

I can almost remember your face.

ABDUL-RAHIM

You didn't see me much when you were children.

MAR

Were you fighting with our father?

ABDUL-RAHIM

Not really.

MAR

Have you seen our father?

Once. A long time ago. **ABDUL-RAHIM**

Oh. He's not with you. **MAR**

...No. **ABDUL-RAHIM**

Oh. **MAR**

... **ABDUL-RAHIM**

Qila say something. **MAR**

Where? **QILA**

That's just one word. **MAR**

He knows what I mean. **QILA**

ABDUL-RAHIM
I was out of the country when everything happened. It took me forever to sneak in. And then I couldn't find anyone.

QILA
It's been 13 years. You could have walked from one border to the other a thousand times already.

ABDUL-RAHIM
It's a long story.

QILA
I'm not going anywhere.

MAR
Don't be rude, Qila. He's our guest. Our uncle. We're supposed to make him dinner, right? That's the rule - no - uh, tradition. Tradition, right? We make you dinner. We give you our roof.

Is that alright?
ABDUL-RAHIM

Of course it is.
MAR

He's not asking you.
QILA

But it's alright.
MAR

QILA walks off into a curtained room.

MAR
That means it's ok. We don't have much, so it won't be a big dinner.

ABDUL-RAHIM
I don't need much.

MAR
Want to help? You can teach me something new. She's gotten boring and just repeats things now.

ABDUL-RAHIM
Of course.

MAR
I'll go see what I can pull from the garden. Maybe the neighbour, too. He's almost blind so he won't know if something is missing.

ABDUL-RAHIM
You shouldn't do that.

MAR
Oh it's ok! It's what you do.

ABDUL-RAHIM
Wait, Mar! Wait wait. Where is your mother?

MAR
She's not here.

ABDUL-RAHIM
When will she be back? I want to surprise her.

MAR

Oh. You can't do that.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Just a little surprise.

MAR

No. She died. Forever ago. Everyone knows that. Don't go anywhere, ok? Ok? Ok!

MAR runs out. ABDUL-RAHIM is broken. The whispers start. ABDUL-RAHIM looks around. Confused. The lights blink out.

THE LAST SUPPER

A meagre dinner of wilting greens, bruised radishes, bread, and cloudy water.

ABDUL-RAHIM

I was too close to a mine when one of the other soldiers tripped it. And so now I limp.

MAR

You could have lost it.

ABDUL-RAHIM

We're made of stronger stuff.

MAR

Something like that / happened to me -

QILA

That's quite a story.

ABDUL-RAHIM

It's not a story.

QILA

All you need is a genie and a lamp to make it complete. Refugee. NGO aid. Translator. Tracker. A lot of hats you've had to wear. You're easily distracted.

ABDUL-RAHIM

War is a tricky game.

QILA

Our lives aren't a game. I suppose it was more fun since it took you so long to find us.

ABDUL-RAHIM

I thought maybe you had gone to one of the settlements.

QILA

I guess, there are only so many times you can clean up the bodies washing up on your shore. So everyone got together and came up with the best solution: Shut down the borders permanently and build this little Eden for us instead. A country within a country. A country that isn't even a country. A - safer- alternative. For them. Of course.

ABDUL-RAHIM

It wasn't meant to be like this.

QILA

I'm still not sure how you managed to sneak in now. A 2,000-metre high wall and drones that don't miss a thing. No one in. No one out. Yet - here you are.

MAR

Stop questioning him, Qila. He's our family.

QILA

So he says.

ABDUL-RAHIM

You remind me of your father.

QILA

I'm nothing like him.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Your sensitivity.

QILA

I'm not sensitive.

ABDUL-RAHIM

I didn't mean it in a bad way. To be sensitive is to have the courage of a warrior and the heart of a poet.

QILA

It's weakness.

ABDUL-RAHIM

It's strength.

QILA

That sounds like an excuse.

ABDUL-RAHIM

And now you sound like your mother.

QILA

Maybe that's why he was caught. He had no fight in him.

ABDUL-RAHIM

A soldier is more than aggression. More than anger. Fighting to uphold righteousness in society takes a strong backbone. It takes a strong person to speak the truth about morality, virtue and justice. And none of those need the strength of arms or weapons.

MAR

Did you fight in the war?

ABDUL-RAHIM

In the beginning.

QILA

Before you ran away. Hm - you're like my father, too.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Words can be powerful weapons.

QILA

They can't kill.

ABDUL-RAHIM

You would be surprised.

QILA

Action takes less time.

ABDUL-RAHIM

And can be less effective.

QILA

But it's immediate.

ABDUL-RAHIM

And after?

QILA

After?

ABDUL-RAHIM

The consequence.

It doesn't matter.

QILA

Why not?

ABDUL-RAHIM

When an opposable force is in your way do you just yell at it or do you try to move it?

QILA

You go around it

ABDUL-RAHIM

And in the meantime people die.

QILA

Sometimes.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Always.

QILA

It's worth it.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Sometimes.

QILA

Always.

ABDUL-RAHIM

QILA
'He only earns his freedom and his life who takes them every day by storm.'

ABDUL-RAHIM smiles at her. And fires the next volley.

ABDUL-RAHIM
'Freedom is never dear at any price. It is the breath of life. What would a man not pay for living?'

QILA
'Freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed.'

ABDUL-RAHIM
'Emancipation from the bondage of the soil is no freedom for the tree.'

QILA

'Most people do not really want freedom, because freedom involves responsibility, and most people are frightened of responsibility.'

ABDUL-RAHIM

Ah, now that's a clever one. But most people don't have the patience for responsibility.

QILA

And how has patience treated you after 13 years?

ABDUL-RAHIM

...

QILA

I win.

MAR

Do you remember our mother?

QILA

Mar.

MAR

It's my turn. Do you?

JANAN can be heard humming her song.

ABDUL-RAHIM

It's impossible to forget your mother.

MAR

It's hard to remember what she was like.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Patient. And full of lightning.

JANAN appears.

MAR

It scares me when I see her.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Your mother loved you very much.

MAR

She always looks angry.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Loved all of us.

MAR

Her mouth moves but I never hear her. And then he always appears.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Who?

QILA

The devil.

MAR

It's like she's yelling. Screaming. Walking through a fog.

The room hums and vibrates. If dread had a sound it would be this.

QILA

Breathe.

MAR

What is she saying?

QILA

You know what happens when you get upset.

ABDUL-RAHIM

What happens?

MAR

Wait! Wait! I can hear something. I can hear something.

ABDUL-RAHIM

What's happening?

MAR

Baba!

The past crashes into the present as JANAN grabs ABDUL-RAHIM's hand and pulls him up. Gunfire and bombs in the distance. A hazy deathlight washes over the stage as if the moon were gripped in a fever.

JANAN

You can't leave right now.

ABDUL-RAHIM
Innocent people are going to get killed.

JANAN
And us?

ABDUL-RAHIM
I've taken care of that. The three of you will be safe.

JANAN
You're coming with us.

ABDUL-RAHIM
I can't, Janan.

JANAN
You can't save the entire world.

ABDUL-RAHIM
I'm saving enough of it for Omar and Aqila.

JANAN
It doesn't matter what you do anymore.

ABDUL-RAHIM
I will always matter.

JANAN
You need to stay with us. What if something happens.

ABDUL-RAHIM
I'm sending my best men with you. They will see you safe into Jordan and then you make sure you're on a boat. It doesn't matter where it goes - you get on one, understand?

A massive explosion.

JANAN
I'll lose you.

ABDUL-RAHIM
(wrapping his hands around her face)
I will find you. Nothing matters more in this world than you, Aqila, and Omar. You understand? If they live - I live.

QILA
(breaking the connection)
What a fucking joke.

ABDUL-RAHIM is breathless and unsure of what has happened. JANAN is still locked in the moment, feeling her husband's hands on her face.

MAR

QILA!

QILA

None of this matters because she's dead. So is our father. And we're the only ones left trying to eke out some kind of miserable existence just so we can get from one hour to the next day to whatever year follows. Hoping - which is something that died a hell of a long time ago - that we might actually get let out of our own country in something more than a fucking body bag. Do us a favour and leave. And take the past with you. It wasn't any good for us then and it isn't any now.

She storms out. A few moments. MAR puts his hand on ABDUL-RAHIM. He turns and MAR puts his hands around his face.

MAR

His hands were so big. Her face drowned in them. Qila and me couldn't sleep because of all the noise. She wanted him to kiss her goodnight. And I wanted to be brave just like him.

A CHINK IN THE ARMOUR

QILA stands in a bleak outdoor area - smoking. ABDUL-RAHIM approaches her.

QILA

If you're about to give me some speech how I shouldn't smoke because it's bad for me - save it.

ABDUL-RAHIM

You have good ears.

QILA

You're walking around like a drunk circus bear.

ABDUL-RAHIM

You have a way with words. Just like -

QILA

I don't care.

ABDUL-RAHIM

I don't blame you for being the way you are.

QILA

The priests were wiped out a long time ago - they're not taking new applications.

ABDUL-RAHIM

I only want to help you.

QILA

I think you're full of shit.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Good. Honesty is something tangible. I can deal with that.

QILA

You come in here like a grand storyteller and you think that is going to cure us.

ABDUL-RAHIM

I didn't realize you needed curing.

QILA

We don't. But I don't need anything disrupting our lives. No one here believes in the past anymore. It's too dangerous. And Mar has it hard enough.

ABDUL-RAHIM

How?

QILA

(smiling)

You'll figure it out.

ABDUL-RAHIM

. . . It's beautiful out here.

QILA

It's a shithole.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Depends on where your eyes are pointed.

QILA

(pointing at different locations)

Waste. Trash. Rubble. The hopeless.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Look up.

QILA

There's nothing up there anymore.

Stubborn.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Thank you.

QILA

It wasn't meant / as a -

ABDUL-RAHIM

You're wrong about her. My mother.

QILA

Oh?

ABDUL-RAHIM

She was a sad, desperate woman.

QILA

JANAN wanders onstage, dishevelled, lost, confused. She is covered in dirt. She scratches at her wrists. Sloppily singing her song.

It's not good to speak of the dead this way.

ABDUL-RAHIM

The things it took for us to get out alive. Only to be thrown back here.

QILA

You were too young to remember.

ABDUL-RAHIM

QILA
Some of us don't have the luxury of time to forget things. They crammed so many of us onto that small boat. But who cares when you're so relieved. We thought the shores were covered in garbage and an old woman made a joke about teaching the Westerners how to properly clean a house. It wasn't garbage. Rows of tents and bodies sleeping out in the open. And white men with guns just in the distance as a reminder. Mama was fine the first few years - a little sad but who wasn't. Soldier on. Make the best of things. And when someone finally gives you the chance at a home how can you say no? I suppose the old woman had done a good job though she was dead by that point so she likely didn't give a shit - lucky her. They cleaned that shore spotless. And how generous to give us our own private kasbah with electrified walls for our protection. Of course. That's when the wandering started. When she thought we'd gone to bed.

That inhuman humming begins again.

Aqila?

JANAN

QILA

I was always the one who found her. My dear older brother was in no shape to do much.

JANAN

Where are you Aqila?

QILA

So it all fell on me.

JANAN

Look what I found.

QILA

Digging up the earth.

JANAN

I have a present for you.

JANAN grabs QILA's wrist and the past interferes again.

JANAN

I brought you something.

QILA

It's just garbage, Mama.

JANAN

No no ya bint [my girl]. Look - it's ivory.

QILA

It's a dirty bone. Let's go inside and wash you.

JANAN

No! It's a gift from God. Meant just for me. He is rewarding me. Look at it, Aqila! Shoofee?
[You see?]

QILA

Just an unlucky dog or chicken.

JANAN

No - from there.

QILA

Oh God.

JANAN

I looked for hours and I found it.

QILA

Why were you there?

JANAN

Your father is supposed to meet me. He's so late. Always so late that man. I'm going to yank on his beard when I see him. Do we have any old newspapers? Let me polish this. I'll have it ready for him. He'll be so proud of me.

She wanders off into the house.

QILA

I followed the next night and saw her digging through the graves. The ones for children. Studying the faces and judging them. At first I thought she was looking for me or Mar - that she'd gone crazy. She stopped recognizing who she was speaking to - her mouth would just vomit confessions. She was looking for her baby. My baby brother. Or baby sister. No one knew she was pregnant on the shores. She lost it - got rid of it - who knows. But coming back here broke her. And I couldn't stop her. I couldn't save her. I could only watch. That's the mother I knew. I was 10 years old and taking care of my family when my father should have been here. Well fuck him. I hope he suffered. I hope he was punished. I only wish it was at my own hands so that he could feel even a tenth of what life has meant for us. We had nothing. We had no one. Only ourselves and then even that wasn't enough. So - you come in here and you unsettle all the dust that has taken years to stop moving and you're trying to make my memories better and you can't because they can't be they will never be they are all we have left to us they are ours what we can call our own we don't need you we don't need you we don't need you we don't need you we don't need need need need need need -

ABDUL-RAHIM sweeps her into his arms and just holds her.

QILA

Why weren't we good enough for him, Ammo? Why?

THE TRUTH UNBOUND

MAR sits on the floor in front of small piles of paper.

MAR

Come on Ammo! You're late. I found more of Baba's old papers. Come help me. Help help help help!

ABDUL-RAHIM

(offstage)

Have patience, ya ibni!

MAR

'The great liability of youth is not impatience but inexperience!'

ABDUL-RAHIM

(appearing from one of the curtained rooms)

You've been studying.

MAR

Not bad for only a week huh?

ABDUL-RAHIM

But you have it backwards.

MAR

NOOO!

QILA

(appearing from another room)

Stop yelling.

MAR

(whispering)

Nooooooo! Where are you going?

QILA

The garden.

MAR

Why?

QILA

For some peace and quiet.

MAR

Everything is dead in there.

QILA

Not everything.

MAR

You don't have a green thumb.

QILA

I'm learning.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Don't listen to your brother. You're doing a great job.

QILA

(kissing him on the head)

Thank you, ammo. Good luck with this one. A brick wall has more sense.

She exits.

MAR

Can you tell her to stop being mean to me?

ABDUL-RAHIM

Sorry is the person who gets in between warring siblings.

MAR

Yeah but I'm older so she needs to respect me as her elder. That's how it goes person after person down the line. Whoever is on top is respected by the person underneath and she's under me so she respects me. Logic dictates this.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Sometimes respect must be earned.

MAR

Or commanded.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Brute force wouldn't help you get anywhere.

MAR

So then why fight?

ABDUL-RAHIM

Sometimes people lose power over their words and have nothing left but their hands. When pushed between a rock and a hard place you must push back a little to regain the space you lost. But what matters is how you achieve that.

MAR

To keep your respect.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Or your freedom.

MAR

Is that what Baba did?

ABDUL-RAHIM

Your Baba was an idealist.

MAR

What's the difference?

ABDUL-RAHIM

He thought hands would never be stronger than a mouth. You could move mountains with a breath. Make kings cry with verbs and adjectives. The oceans could part under the weight of commas and periods and semi-colons. It's even possible to make God jealous with the right combination.

MAR

That's beautiful.

ABDUL-RAHIM

I suppose. Once.

MAR

You sound just like him.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Oh?

MAR

At least I think so. He wrote these so it's like he's speaking to us. And sometimes you say things like he did. Qila, too. But she learned to read using these papers. That's weird. Isn't it. Who takes papers when they escape?

ABDUL-RAHIM

The worth of something depends on the value you look at it with.

MAR

I used to be really smart, too. But I'm getting better at reading now that you're here.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Why do you always do that?

MAR

Hm?

ABDUL-RAHIM

Scratch your arm.

MAR

Because it itches. Come on, ammo, ask me harder questions.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Let me see.

No! **MAR**

ABDUL-RAHIM
It's ok, Omar. I'm not going to hurt you.

MAR
I don't like people staring at me.

ABDUL-RAHIM
You're a handsome boy.

MAR
I'm crazy.

ABDUL-RAHIM
No you're not.

MAR
I'm broken.

ABDUL-RAHIM
Definitely not.

MAR
How do you know?

ABDUL-RAHIM
A feeling.

MAR
That's not concrete evidence.

ABDUL-RAHIM
Good.

MAR smiles. Then inches closer. Turns his head away and rolls up his sleeve.

ABDUL-RAHIM tries not to react.

MAR
Disgusting isn't it.

ABDUL-RAHIM
No.

MAR takes off his shirt.

MAR

Now?

ABDUL-RAHIM

(reaching out to touch his son's scars)

Never.

MAR

Sometimes it speaks to me. Like coals. I can smell it at night - like burnt meat. I fell. I was pushed? I danced with flames but they were too fast for me. Kept picking and poking. I saw Mama's face, but I couldn't hear her. She was just staring at - nothing. Me? Qila grabbed my foot - but she was so small. She pulled. I screamed. She pulled. I screamed more. She pulled harder. And then the light went out. I don't remember anything else. Mama tried to hide me. I would sneak out but no one wanted me around. No one needs a reminder. I was like a bad ghost for people. Sometimes I pretend this is special armour. But no one is allowed to see it except for me. Everyone has to have a secret. How else would we know we're different from anyone else, right?

ABDUL-RAHIM

...

MAR

Can you fix me?

ABDUL-RAHIM

I wish I had that power.

MAR

Use your words. Speak to my body. Make it fix this. Make it take it away.

ABDUL-RAHIM

If they could / I would -

MAR

Make me normal again. Put me together. I want her to stop looking at me. I want his eyes to go away.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Please breathe, ya ibni.

MAR

Make it so I don't hurt, ammo. Give me your words. I don't want to be Mar. Make me Omar again. I want to be Omar!

MAR starts to convulse. ABDUL-RAHIM catches him in his arms

ABDUL-RAHIM

Omar? Omar! Aqila! Shhh, ya ibni. Calm. Find peace. Find peace.

QILA

(running in)

What's wrong - oh my god. Give him.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Let me do this.

QILA

I know how to / help him.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Just let me try, please. I have to try. Shhh, ya ibni.

He strokes MAR's face and kisses his head.

QILA

That won't work. Give him / to me.

He starts to sing "Lamma bada Muwashah". MAR starts to quiet down and relax.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Aman aman aman aman
Wa'di wa ya hirati
Man lil rajim shakwait
Bil-houbbi min law'ati
Illa maleek'ul jamal
Aman aman -

[aman aman aman aman
O my promise, O my perplexity,
who can answer my complaint
about love and suffering
but the beautiful one?
aman aman -]

QILA backs away horrified.

QILA

Oh God...Baba?

THE FURIES UNLEASHED

QILA and ABDUL-RAHIM stand at opposite ends of the room. MAR is gone. An unhealthy and strained silence.

QILA

I guess we can add liar to the list of offenses.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Aqila.

QILA

Shut up.

ABDUL-RAHIM

I only want / to say that -

QILA

I don't give a shit about what you want.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Don't speak to your father like that.

QILA

(heartily laughing)

I thought you were the long lost uncle come to find his poor niece and nephew. Did we even have an uncle?

ABDUL-RAHIM

Yes.

QILA

Let me guess. Dead?

ABDUL-RAHIM

...

QILA

I'm sure you had something to do with that as well.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Your uncle died while he / was trying to -

QILA

I don't care.

ABDUL-RAHIM
You have no respect for family.

QILA
Say that to me again. Out of that mouth. Say it again.

ABDUL-RAHIM
I know you've been hurt.

QILA
Abandoned.

ABDUL-RAHIM
I know you want to hurt me.

QILA
Worse.

ABDUL-RAHIM
So go ahead. Say what you want.

QILA
I'm not giving you any satisfaction.

ABDUL-RAHIM
We will get over this - one way or another.

QILA
Congratulations. It's been a long time since someone managed to fool me like that. I should have listened to my instincts.

ABDUL-RAHIM
Hope is not dead in your after all.

QILA
I applaud you Mr. Abdul-Rahim - great martyr of the revolution. The voice of thousands. The backbone of a new nation. A tired, old, weak man with nothing left but his empty name.

ABDUL-RAHIM
I'm sorry.

QILA
That's it?

ABDUL-RAHIM
I'm very sorry.

QILA

You don't get it.

ABDUL-RAHIM

I have no other words but 'I'm sorry.'

QILA

You think that's good enough.

ABDUL-RAHIM

It's what is true.

QILA

You think that's going to make-up for all the years we lost.

ABDUL-RAHIM

I lost them as well.

QILA

Right, yes, I forgot. Let me see if I've completely lost my touch, shall we? I'm going to go with prison. Interrogation. Which explains the leg then. Maybe you gave up a name or two. And you made yourself feel better about that by saying it would bring you to us sooner. And then they sort of forget about you once they corralled all of us to this new Eden. Who needs the shepherd once the lambs have all been slaughtered? Then one day they open the door and throw you in with the rest of us for no other reason than you're completely useless to them. How did I do?

ABDUL-RAHIM tightly smiles at her.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Your mother taught you well.

QILA

Until she killed herself.

ABDUL-RAHIM

...

QILA

Surprise.

ABDUL-RAHIM

...

QILA

Though I supposed there's a lesson there as well.

ABDUL-RAHIM

I'm sorry.

QILA

Fuck your 'sorry'! Your wife slid into a warm bath while Mar and I were stealing food to survive and let her veins drain out. Because you weren't there.

ABDUL-RAHIM

I couldn't be.

QILA

No - you decided not to. You made the choice to abandon us. For what?

ABDUL-RAHIM

For freedom.

QILA

Freedom.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Yes. I wanted to make a better world for you, your brother, / your mother.

QILA

LOOK AT US! This is not a better world. You failed. You could have come with us. But you stayed for some pathetic attempt 'to make the world a better place.'

ABDUL-RAHIM

Yes.

QILA

And look at what your quest for freedom got us.

ABDUL-RAHIM

It was important. You were too young. You don't remember what it was like. Our people - your people - were dying. All of them - men, women, children. Every day I was burying someone new. I couldn't let thousands of years of civilization burn away to nothing.

QILA

Bullshit. You fought for autonomy and legitimacy in a place where neither can exist. You tried to overthrow a regime that wouldn't bend to your desires.

ABDUL-RAHIM

So that means we should have just sat there and taken it?

QILA

You know what the problem is with you people? / You spent all those years fighting for a stable and peaceful democracy and forgot that it wasn't possible after thousands of years of hiding behind the Qoran. Your precious new Spring was doomed to begin with. It's been 13 years - 13 - and nothing has changed. The wars haven't stopped. Tunisia, Libya, Yemen, Lebanon - still struggling. A chaotic experiment with democracy in Egypt has led to half the country buried in ashes. And our country - our home is still drowning in blood. And do you know why?

ABDUL-RAHIM

You people? What do you mean you people? You are one of those people as well.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Why don't you tell me?

QILA

Because you were not ready to change. Your people have never been democratic. Religion can't accommodate democracy. So people just decay into anarchy. Everyone else knows this but us. Why do you think they didn't gladly invite us into their countries and welcome us to their dinner tables? They didn't want us infecting their pretty little democratic lives with our senseless squabbling. They locked us in this refuge so we could slowly implode.

ABDUL-RAHIM

You hide behind your big words and your theories and you think you understand what it means to live that kind of life daily. You are at a safe distance from history thinking you are above us seeing things so much more clearly.

QILA

I have the benefit of perspective.

ABDUL-RAHIM

You have the benefit of hindsight.

QILA

You're making my case for me.

ABDUL-RAHIM

You don't understand.

QILA

Was it worth it?

ABDUL-RAHIM

Yes! The real revolution was not on the streets. It was not in the violence. It was an awakening. It was a revolution of the mind. To make people think for themselves again.

We were a people divided for years upon years upon years. And then we were pulled to one another. Our faces blending. Our souls uniting. Becoming one.

QILA

How many people have been killed because of that?

ABDUL-RAHIM

Bloodshed is an unfortunate necessity.

QILA

So mother dying was necessary.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Your mother would have understood.

QILA

And that's why she killed herself.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Don't be disrespectful.

QILA

And that's why she killed herself.

ABDUL-RAHIM

You don't know what was in her head.

QILA

And that's why she killed herself. Say it. Say that it was ok because of your grand scheme of freedom.

ABDUL-RAHIM

She was a soldier like the rest of us!

AQILA

And when she made the choice to take off her clothes / and let the soldiers - no you're going to hear this - when she let them fuck her - one by one - abusing her and forcing themselves into her over and over and over -

ABDUL-RAHIM

I don't want to hear this. Stop speaking of this Aqila. Do no disrespect her memory. She is your mother. Enough of this. Aqila. Bekefee! [It's enough!]. Aqila! AQILA!

He slaps her. A moment. She opens her mouth to scream but it is JANAN's voice wailing as she is forcefully pushed from one of the rooms.

A masked soldier emerges - a gun in one hand.

JANAN

Please - don't hurt us! Don't kill us!

A child screams "Mama!" and the soldier turns around.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Your mind is making up stories to make sense of what happened.

JANAN

No! No look at me! Me! Leave my children. Aqila stay away. Stay there! Stay with Omar.

QILA

(laughing)

Mar says the same thing.

Another child screams as he dances with flames.

JANAN

Omar!

QILA

And I wish it were true.

The soldier backhands her with the gun. She falls to the ground.. He undoes his trousers and climbs on top of her.

QILA

I wish I didn't remember. But I do. I'm the only one who can hear her. She never lets me stop hearing her.

JANAN

I beg you - my children.

The soldier violently rapes her. JANAN just whispers her husband's name over and over. It becomes a cacophony of echoed names.

QILA

But you know what I remember the most. That she gave in like everyone else. The death of the revolution was on her face. Those things are bad and these things are good - so you revolt. It's a terrible way to actually see the world, but a great way to misunderstand it.

The soldier rises. Spits on JANAN. And pushes her aside with his foot before walking out of the house. She eventually crawls back into the room she emerges from.

ABDUL-RAHIM

She was trying to protect you.

QILA

You're all a bunch of pathetic failed martyrs who will never understand that the world is complacent, lazy, and uncomfortable with change. You may cut off the head of the snake, dear dad, but you're still left with the wriggling body.

MAR emerges from his room.

MAR

Qila?

QILA

(turning into the mother)

Feeling better?

MAR

She woke me up again. I heard yelling. Why is ammo, crying? Why are you crying, ammo? Qila what did you do?

QILA

He's not anyone's uncle.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Please, Qila.

QILA

We're a millions miles away from 'please'. Look at his eyes, Mar. Look at them. You see them?

MAR

Yes.

QILA

Go to him - go hug him - go hug your father.

MAR doesn't move.

QILA

Listen father - listen to the sound of another heart breaking. Such beautiful music.

MAR walks to ABDUL-RAHIM slowly. Then quickly throws his arms around him and hugs him.

MAR

Baba.

NO!

QILA

She pulls them apart.

QILA

This is him! The one who killed mama! We talked about this. He's not our father. He's the man who ruined our lives. He's the reason we can't sleep. Why our dreams are complete and utter shit.

MAR

(pushing her back)

He's our Baba. We have a Baba, Qila! We have a Baba.

QILA

Stop calling him that!

She lunges herself at him and attacks.

ABDUL-RAHIM

(pulling her off him)

Enough! No more!

QILA

(scratching his face and shoving him)

You don't know what you've done. You don't know how angry she's going to be. You don't understand!

She storms out of the house.

THE BLOOD OATH

QILA paces. Muttering angrily.

QILA

Mama? Mama? Mama!

Nothing. She takes out her knife, puts it in her hand and cuts herself. She drops to her knees rubbing her hands in the blood and prays silently.

The whispers begin.

JANAN walks on, but something is different about her this time. Wild, disturbed, a fallen angel.

JANAN

Always such a restless and angry child. No toy would quiet you. A little terror running around the house pinching your brother and kicking dogs.

QILA

Sorry, Mama.

JANAN

DON'T BE WEAK!

QILA

...

JANAN

I can still hear you.

QILA

Give me strength.

JANAN

I have none left.

QILA

Give me hope.

JANAN

She is stillborn.

QILA

Give me vengeance.

JANAN

I can't do everything for you.

QILA

...

JANAN

I'm not going anywhere, daughter. You can't pray me away. You want this to stop? I've already told you what to do.

The whispers get louder. The wind starts to howl. AQILA tries to block out the noise and gets into the fetal position.

JANAN

You want it to go away. Don't lie to me. I hear you praying for it to stop. No one will answer your prayers. No one can hear you anymore. There is only you. There is only me. I am here forever, Aqila! Forever!

Everything drops into silence. QILA whimpers. JANAN walks around her. Then kneels down and cradles her.

JANAN

My love is only for you. You've earned it - so far. You don't want to lose it do you? Do you, Aqila? You want hope - then let me give you hope.

She whispers to her daughter. QILA silences and looks at her mother who only smiles at her with malevolent joy. She gets up and walks away.

JANAN

Don't take too long, Aqila. Time is not a patient woman. She gets bored quickly.

ERINYES REX

MAR sits on the floor reading from a piece of aper - struggling - but making his way through.

QILA enters and looks around cautiously.

Mar.

QILA

...

MAR

Mar!

QILA

I'm ignoring you.

MAR

Is he -

QILA

Went to try and find you. Are you done being angry?

MAR

I need you.

QILA

Why are you standing there? Come in. **MAR**

Is anyone else - **QILA**

Anyone else what? **MAR**

Nothing - nothing. **QILA**

You're being weird. **MAR**

We have to kill him. **QILA**
(running to him)

MAR just looks at her.

You have to kill him. **QILA**

You've hit your head. **MAR**

You're going to kill him, Mar. Say it. **QILA**

I won't. I'm not. **MAR**

We held each other in bed after mama killed herself and we planned what we would do if he ever came back into our lives. **QILA**

It's different now. We have a real Baba. **MAR**

Don't let him fool you. **QILA**

Someone to care for us. **MAR**

We've done fine on our own. **QILA**

But we don't have to be alone. **MAR**

What did he say to you? **QILA**

Nothing. **MAR**

He apologise? Did he get on his knees and beg your forgiveness? **QILA**

No. **MAR**

Don't lie to me, Mar. **QILA**

You're not my mother, Qila. **MAR**

No. I just have to do all the things you won't. As always. **QILA**

That's not true. **MAR**

Be a man, Mar. Do what is right. **QILA**

A moment. MAR breaks away and leaves.

You've heard her. **QILA**

He stops. We hear JANAN singing her song in the distance.

You know she's angry. **QILA**

JANAN enters with a bucket and over the following she slowly removes her clothing and begins to bathe herself in blood.

QILA

You've finally heard her voice. Don't like to me. I watch you when you sleep. You've never spoken to her before. I heard you. Baba can't protect you. He couldn't protect her. Remember how I pulled you from the fire. And I held you. And you cried. And I tasted your tears and they were sour. I'm the one who held you. Who covered your eyes. I watched her. And he never came. He didn't rescue us. And when we found her the night she killed herself you I held you again. And I lifted her body from the water myself. I cleaned her. Wrapped her in fresh white cloth. Bathed her in a thousand rose petals. Oiled her hair until it shined like the sun. And you sat there in the corner. Listen. Listen to her.

They listen to her sing. That inhuman buzzing begins to creep in again.

MAR

No. No it's not real.

QILA

She needs us.

JANAN

I cannot help but suffer, when my own loss is the price of my own living.

QILA

She's not going to go away.

JANAN

(holding out the sponge)

Mar, ya ibni. Help me? Come on. Don't be afraid.

MAR

Mama?

QILA

She wants us to do this.

JANAN

Have mercy my son. Have mercy on your mother.

MAR

Mama?

He makes his way over to JANAN.

JANAN

It's alright, Mar.

Tell him, mama.	QILA
Mama?	MAR
Do you love me?	JANAN
Do you love her Mar?	QILA
Yes.	MAR
You love me don't you?	JANAN
Yes. Yes.	MAR
Good.	JANAN (smiling at him)
I love you, mama.	MAR
Good.	JANAN
Do this for me.	QILA & JANAN
Ok.	MAR
Do this for her.	QILA & JANAN
Ok.	MAR
Good boy.	JANAN

She opens her mouth wide and the whispers and wind come flying out - the harassing buzzing of flies joining in for the first time drowning all other noises out.

AT THE FEET OF THE ORACLE

ABDUL-RAHIM walks. His eyes to the ground. The sounds of the world muffled. He tries to scream in rage but he does not know how to. A dog barks somewhere. A couple argues. A baby cries. The moon sighs. A cricket tries pathetically to make a song. His leg aches and he stops to massage it.

JANAN

(stepping into the light)

Where do you think you're going? Besides nowhere.

ABDUL-RAHIM

(muttering almost to himself)

Go away.

JANAN

Your words lost their power years ago, habibi. We are in the age of the lost. You look upset. Hurt. Betrayed. I hope remorse is somewhere in there. What little good is does you now. I mean you DID abandon them. And me. And lied to them. And me. Include yourself in the list for good measure.

ABDUL-RAHIM

(muttering)

Leave me alone.

JANAN

There will be no drop to slake the thirst of the weary traveller. Neither you - nor your kin. What is left of them. We lost the right to live. Most of your life wasted away in hopeless waiting. Aren't you tired?

ABDUL-RAHIM

Yes.

JANAN

So tired.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Yes.

JANAN

Time is meaningless. What's a few more seconds, days, months, years? Our children need you, Abdul-Rahim. Do I need to get angry with you again? Go make things right. Do what you're good at. And do it grandly.

ALL DEBTS PAID

Back in the house. QILA hands MAR his knife.

I sharpened it - be careful. **QILA**

He'll fight back. **MAR**

He won't know what's happening. **QILA**

Where will you be? **MAR**

Fighting with you. **QILA**

Don't cut me. **MAR**

Don't struggle too much and I won't. **QILA**

She'll stop after this right? **MAR**

Yes. **QILA**

Can we leave this place after? **MAR**

I don't know. **QILA**

I don't want to be here anymore. **MAR**

I know. **QILA**

I don't want to see his eyes. **MAR**

From behind like I taught you. Between the 4th and 5th rib. Here and here. You feel it? **QILA**

Yes. **MAR**

Right there. Then twist. Then silence. Forever. Don't think - don't hesitate - just as / I taught - **QILA**

ABDUL-RAHIM enters. QILA pulls MAR in close and puts the knife to his throat.

Either you come with me or I'll leave you behind forever. **QILA**

What is happening here? **ABDUL-RAHIM**

Don't tell me what to do! **MAR**

Aqila put that down! **ABDUL-RAHIM**

This is all your fault! **QILA**

Please don't hurt him. **ABDUL-RAHIM**

Choose your side now, Mar. **QILA**

No. **MAR**

Choose! **QILA**

ABDUL-RAHIM

Stop this!

QILA

You stay back, old man! Make a choice or else. NOW!

MAR

I'll stay! I'll stay!

She releases MAR who slowly makes his way to and behind ABDUL-RAHIM.

ABDUL-RAHIM

What the hell is going on!

QILA

No more room at the inn, Old Man.

JANAN enters, a black veil over her face, humming "Lamma bada Muwashah" softly.

ABDUL-RAHIM

You've lost your mind.

QILA

I'm taking back control of our world. There is no absolution here for you. We're fresh out. Go somewhere else.

ABDUL-RAHIM

What did she say to / you, ya ibni?

QILA

I know what's good for him. I've always known. You are nothing. NOTHING.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Don't do this. Don't leave me.

QILA

So disgusting.

ABDUL-RAHIM

I will make this all right.

QILA

To see you like this.

I can fix all of this. **ABDUL-RAHIM**

The people's pathetic hero. **QILA**

Let me fix this for you. Please. I have to. **ABDUL-RAHIM**

Now, Mar. **QILA**

What - **ABDUL-RAHIM**

NOW! **QILA**

What are you - **ABDUL-RAHIM**

DO IT NOW! **QILA**

MAR
NOOO!

The wind howls as if its soul were ripped out. QILA and ABDUL-RAHMAN are thrown to the ground. JANAN stands frozen in place.

MAR
(almost possessed - almost reborn)
No more. No more death. No more dying. No more longing. No more yearning. No more loss. No more dreams. No more eyes. No more hurt. No more heart. No more this. No more you. No more me. No more here. No more there. No more then. No more now. No more them. No more us. No more mother. No more father. No more daughter. No more sun. No more moon. No more country. No more walls. No more screams. No more smoke. No more guns. No more soldiers. No more tanks. No more fighting. No more fighting. No more fighting! NO MORE FIGHTING!

Just as pathetic. **QILA**

No more. **MAR**

I should have left you in that fire. **QILA**

No more. **MAR**

Around my neck like a dead weight all these years. **QILA**

No more. **MAR**

The sacrifices I made. **QILA**

No more. **MAR**

All the things I could have done. **QILA**

No more. **MAR**

All the things I wanted. **QILA**

No more. **MAR**

Lost forever. **QILA**

No more. **MAR**

For this. For nothing. **QILA**

Now you understand me. **ABDUL-RAHIM**

QILA stares at her father for a second then launches at him, knife in hand.

Baba!

MAR

MAR twists himself into the line of fire and is stabbed through.

No!

ABDUL-RAHIM

QILA pulls out, sees what she has done, drops the knife, backs up.

Baba?

MAR

You're ok. Sh. You're ok.

ABDUL-RAHIM

Baba where are you?

MAR

I'm right here, habibi. Ya ibni.

ABDUL-RAHIM

They both slide to the floor into a pietà.

Isma³. Listen, Baba. Listen. There is nothing there. Nothing. So beautiful.

MAR

He starts to sing "Lamma bada Muwashah" - but does not finish.

ABDUL-RAHIM shakes his son, rubbing his face trying to bring warmth to him, whimpering and unable to speak. He lifts his head and opens his mouth but it is JANAN's voice we hear screaming - echoed and cacophonous as if all the Angels still left in heaven also mourn. Her veil falls away and she is crying tears of blood, her mouth sown shut.

A pregnant pause hangs in the air.

Congratulations.

QILA

ABDUL-RAHIM just rocks his son muttering something. A prayer? An apology? A song? A promise? The whispers start to creep in.

No no no. It's not my fault.

QILA

JANAN turns to QILA.

You promised, Mama. You promised me.

QILA

The whispers grow. JANAN raises an arm to her daughter. Inviting and accusing.

QILA looks at her mother. Then her father. She walks up behind him. The wind joins in.

She crouches down and puts her arms around her brother and her father. She kisses ABDUL-RAHIM on the head.

In a flash she pulls the knife from her brother's pocket and slices ABDUL-RAHIM's throat. He bleeds. He doesn't look surprised. Or shocked. Or scared. He is peaceful. Serene. He falls slowly over his son. JANAN drops to the ground.

QILA stands there, bloodied knife in hand, staring out. The winds starts to whip violently. The whispers grow louder and louder. The house falls down around her. She screams into the night but her voice can't be heard over the din. Then: Silence. A void. Nothingness. And she is scared.

A VOICE

(whispered)

More.

BLACKOUT.

END OF PLAY.