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Figuring It Out: A Jewish Millennial's Journey

Emily Carey

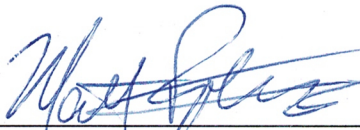
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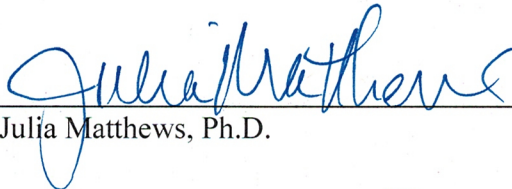
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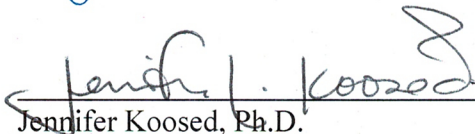
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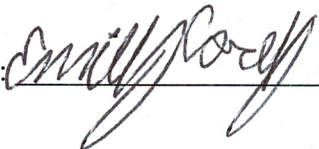
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The Process of *Figuring It Out*

Emily Carey

Intro

When I first started thinking about my thesis I knew I wanted to do something that revolved around Judaism related to theatre in some way. Both theatre and Judaism have had a major impact on my time at Albright from restarting Hillel to all the work I have done in the Theatre Department and with the Domino Players. The question was how. I started thinking about my own experiences as a young Jew and realized the most effective story I can tell is that of the Jewish millennial and how they see their Jewish identity. When approaching the issues of Jewish identity through a narrative, a play is the best way to tell the different stories and perspectives rather than a research paper or book. With a play, you get to explore inner truths through the characters in different situations in dynamic ways. Over the past two semesters I have been working on my play *Figuring It Out* which follows Margot, who is eight months pregnant, as she decides what role she wants Judaism to play in her and her unborn child's life. The play hopefully captures the struggles young Jews face in America today. The play is still in development and after my play reading in May it will continue to be worked on and workshopped. My research shows up in subtle ways throughout the play.

Research and Influences

In the 1990s there were many authors who wrote about how Judaism was dying in America and how there was no future. At first glance of a survey from the Pew Research Center in 2013, the statistics look hopeful: only 22% of the Jews surveyed were of no religion, while 78% were Jews by religion. However, like my Rabbi said, they are rather troubling. Each generation has more and more Jews who identify as having no religion, Millennials, those born

after 1980, had 32% that identified as having no religion. That is a 6% rise from Gen X who were behind many of the books written about recent Jewish history.

These statistics drew me to start considering blogs and stories from Jewish millennials more than books. The best way to write about and understand a generation is to read where they are coming from. An article “My Judaism: Millennials speak out following Pew poll” put faces to my research and helped me to start constructing my play. Each Jewish millennial’s story was unique to their own journey and dealt with their own personal experiences. Some were religious and some were about Jewish culture. One woman, Isabel Kaplan focused on her relationship with the religious aspects of American Judaism and her belief in G-d and what that meant to her in terms of her Judaism. On the other hand, Julie Bien discussed how she identified as a Jew very strongly, but in a cultural sense. Although she is not religious, Julie stated that “It’s important to me to make clear to the world (and to the pearl-clutching religious folks who are lamenting the loss of “the secular youth”): Have no doubt — I am 25 years old, and I am Jewish” (Jewish Journal). Judaism has become a culture of its own, but these stories and my own experiences have raised the question of whether this culture can exist if there is no religious connection. The belief in god and the teachings of the Torah and the Talmud almost exclusively is what has set the Jewish people apart from all other religions for thousands of years and have led to all the trials and tribulations Jews have gone through. Going to services, practicing the Jewish holidays, keeping the traditions alive is what will keep Judaism alive.

When I decided that I wanted the main portion of my play to take place during a baby shower I started doing extensive research on the Jewish views toward them. It turns out I created a very strong conflict for my play setting it during a baby shower because they are taboo in Jewish culture, which I did not know about because my mother had one. When I called her to

talk about it she was surprised I did not know and told me she was very angry and against the baby shower that was thrown for her. Traditionally a Jewish couple will not have a baby shower, not name the baby, and not set up a nursey. The celebration comes after the baby is born. A New York Times blog describes that the baby shower “is an outright invitation to the evil eye to descend upon the unborn baby in vengeance for rubbing your happiness in others’ faces and ‘counting your chickens before they hatch’” (Schultz). I turned out okay though. This tradition stems from a time when child mortality was high and I wanted to explore how such an old tradition translates today when baby showers are all the rage. Celebrating the baby before birth did not start to become widely practiced until the end of the Victorian era. Consumerism has turned the baby shower into what it is today.

Zionism and the role Israel plays in the young Jewish identity also served as a large section of my research. I wanted to look into the history of how Jews have connected with their culture in America during the last half of the 20th century and how the establishment of Israel as a state and the history Zionism tie into the culture of the last 60-70 years. The state of Israel is now almost 70 years old and for many Jews it is a reality that they have always known. Jews of all denominations can visit Israel and quite a few Synagogues and youth groups feel a strong connection with the state. Birth-right is a program that lets young Jewish adults between the ages of 18 and 26 visit Israel for free. The goal of the trip is to have Jews feel a strong connection with the nation and their faith and to continue it after the trip has ended. I looked at Facebook pages of friends from Hebrew School and United Synagogue Youth when trying to better understand the extremely deep connection many of them have with Israel. I have at least four Facebook friends who are currently living there: one joined the Israeli army. Many others went for a year or have already done Birth-right. Their stories and attitudes are largely reflected in my

play along with articles they post about their feelings on Zionism. What better way to find inspiration than at the source of where everyone spends the most time, Facebook and other social media sites. Talks that I have had with my Rabbi and other members of my synagogue in regards to Israel also largely influenced my play.

There are also many young Jews who feel a disconnect to the Jewish religion and those who don't fully understand the traditions give up or do not try as hard. Some feel humiliated and are embarrassed to ask and others do not know how. During the Passover Seder we read about the four brothers, the wise one, the evil one, the simple one, and the one that does not know how to ask. Many see the one that does not know how to ask as being a small child who is learning and doesn't know all the right questions yet. At my Rabbi's Seder this year he brought up how the one that does not know how to ask also reflects Jewish adults who are so disconnected that they don't know anything about their own religion or have forgotten. They either do not know how to learn or do not feel compelled to do so. These people are the ultimate downfall and ones who need the most help. I had already finished my play, but I realized in that moment that Margot fit into that category in many ways and this play was her path to trying to find the right questions to ask. Some of the bigger concepts I researched were used as inspiration and are not as evident as research I conducted on baby showers or the state of Israel and Palestine.

The Process

My first steps in creating my play were coming up with the main characters and writing about them. Before I could write the play, I needed to create the world and the people that inhabit it. When I first envisioned the play, I saw it as four friends going on their own separate journeys as they come to terms with what Judaism means to them. As I was creating character bios for them, I started being drawn to one character the girl that would become Margot. Her story was

becoming the most relatable and addressed the issues of intermarriage and that feeling of being disconnected from Judaism and not knowing how to return, if the desire is even there. As I started to develop Margot and her family more I realized they were the story I needed to follow. I kept some of the other character types I created in the play.

Hana, Margot's best friend, represents the Zionist in their group, who ends up moving to Israel and finding her peace in the holy land. Orin, Margot's high school crush represents the in crowd of Judaism. He's popular, charming, is an accountant and a hit with moms. Orin is the most comfortable in his faith, but out of everyone else questions it the least. David, Margot's brother, represents the floater, he appreciated his Jewish upbringing and knows a lot about the religion, but is not necessarily spiritually invested. Zoey, his fiancé, is the New York bagels and lox Jew. She's *Jewish* represents the extremely far left side especially when it comes to Israel. I wanted Hana and Zoey to be as different as possible to truly represent how polarizing different Jew's opinions are on everything. Margot's parents Rebecca and Albert, and her Grandfather, Hyman, represent the older generation, the ones writing about how Judaism was dying. Like Orin, they don't question their faith, they do what they do because it is tradition.

Each character in the play is meant to represent as many viewpoints in Judaism as possible. They couldn't all be covered because no two Jews have the same opinion, but the general categories. Including Hyman, Margot's grandfather and her parents, Rebecca and Albert, we get to see how multiple generations view the culture and religion. They want the younger generation to be involved, but there is clearly a disconnect between their generations. Through the generations we see how traditions have been passed down and adapted over the years and how more and more is lost when families get more and more Americanized in a way. This fear of becoming too assimilated to American culture is the fear that many of my sources had. Loraine

and Luke as outside observers welcomes those that are not Jewish to the piece. They also show the ignorance that so many have toward Judaism.

After developing the characters, I created the world and plot of the play. I knew I wanted Margot to be pregnant because it would force her to confront her Judaism in ways she did not have to before a child was in the picture. Children start that discussion about religion and especially get family members talking and pushing their feelings on the issue. This idea plays a large part in my play. From generation to generation, whether the child is Jewish depends on whether the mother is Jewish. Margot's child will be Jewish and she needs to decide how much of a Jewish education the child will get. This is a big decision for couples especially when they come from two different religious backgrounds which may not have been an issue in the past.

When starting the process, I broke the plot down into beginning stasis or the world of the play, the inciting incident that changes everything, the different conflicts that arise, the major conflict, the climax, the emotional climax, falling action and ending stasis. As I wrote each of those pieces kept changing, but the major conflict and eventual climax is having to make a decision about what religion Margot's baby was going to be raised. Originally the whole piece going to be the traditional kitchen sink play only taking place at the baby shower and in the home, but that didn't feel right. I kept going back to the dynamic of the role that cultural and religious Judaism play in a young Jew's identity. That is when I realized I wanted the synagogue to play a key role in the play. The play takes place over the course of 24 hours switching between a surprise baby shower and Friday night services the night before. The dual locations show Margot's cultural and religious connections to her religion. I included the scenes in the synagogue to show the importance of religion and faith in Judaism and to play with that idea of not being able to have one without the other.

I wrote the play very organically, writing different scenes as they came to me. They were not written in chronological order. I first started writing the synagogue scenes and figuring out what events happened in which locations. Some served mainly as further character development. There was a scene I wrote between Margot and her mother that fleshed out their relationships and feelings, but did not need to be in the final edit of my play. The first edit of my play was about sixty pages and had relatively shorter scenes with more transitions between the baby shower and the night before. When I sent it to my readers and when I had the closed reading, one of the bigger issues was that the stage space did not feel fleshed out and the transitions between scenes were nonexistent. The play almost had a cinematic quality to it. I had created the theoretical world of the play, but did not properly create the actual physical world. Another major note I got, was that the relationships between my characters could be stronger. After getting all my critiques I went back to the beginning of my writing process and started to discover more about all the characters in the play and the major influences they have had on one another. The relationship between Margot and her boyfriend Luke was the relationship that I revisited the most and while I initially wanted them to break up, I ended up bringing them closer together. I also sketched a basic set up of how the space would look on stage to help me come up with transitions. I ended up combining some of the scenes and cutting down on the back and forth from baby shower to synagogue. I also originally had scenes in bedrooms, cars, and the kitchen. I rewrote some scenes around to take place solely in the living room and pews of the synagogue. This makes the choices in the two location more powerful. I also made the conscious effort to put prayers from the Friday night Shabbat service into the play to explore the theatricality of it and to emphasize the importance of the religious aspect of American Jewish culture.

What's Next

The final part to my thesis will be conducting a staged reading of *Figuring It Out* open to the public at the beginning of May. Based on schedules and other events happening in the CFA the date is still yet to be finalized, but it will be in a matter of days. Having it open to the whole campus and the Reading community will help me see how people without a theatre background view the play. This reading will allow me to fully cast the play and hear all the characters come to life. The closed reading only had seven people in attendance and hearing from a larger audience will allow me to see how my play is on a larger scale. There will be a discussion afterward about the piece and those in attendance will be able to give their thoughts and feelings on the play. My readers have been reading my play through all its iterations, so what finally makes sense to them may not read to a fresh listener which is my target audience. In about a week, when the date is set, I will be holding auditions for my staged reading. After the staged reading, I will take all the comments made into consideration and based on what is said rework my play to fix any remaining plot or structural changes. This piece of work will still be growing and changing for the next few months until it may be ready for production. A production of the play was not my main goal when it was being created. I chose the play structure to be able to explore certain characters and situations in a way that papers and books cannot. It still needs some work before it could be produced, but hopefully that will happen one day down the road.

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FIGURING IT OUT

By

Emily Carey

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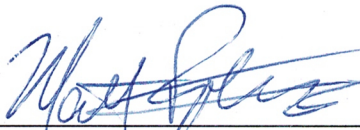
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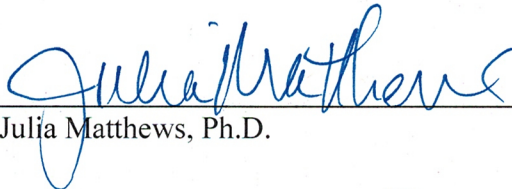
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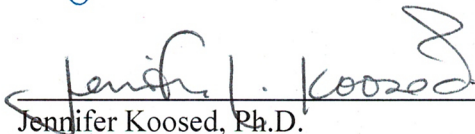
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CHARACTERS

MARGOT - 30 years old. She is eight months pregnant.

LUKE - Margot's boyfriend and the father of the baby. They live together.

REBECCA - Margot's mother. Early 60s. She comes across as the stereotypical overbearing Jewish mother.

ALBERT - Margot's father. Early 60s. He is a man of few words, except for when he wants to get his opinion across.

DAVID - Margot's younger brother, late-20s. He's the typical nice guy.

ZOEY - David's Fiancé, also late-20s. She is the typical New York Jewish American Princess

HANA - Margot's best friend. She is 30 as well. She's very spiritual and the opposite of Zoey.

LORAINNE - Luke's Mother. Mid 50s

HYMAN - Margot's grandfather, Rebecca's father, late 80s.

ORIN - Margot's old friend from USY she used to have a crush on

RABBI - The rabbi at Rebecca and Albert's Synagogue, mid 50s.

ALISON/ MARTY- Congregants at Rebecca and Albert's Synagogue. Marty is played by the same actor as the Rabbi.

A GROUP OF 6 CONGREGANTS - the chorus essentially.

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SETTING

Margot's childhood synagogue and her new home with Luke they moved into two months ago. While they have mostly unpacked there are still boxes everywhere and they haven't decorated yet. The house is a bit of a fixer upper from the 1960s. They have a sunken living room that drives MARGOT crazy and the entrances into every room are very narrow. The front door opens up to their foyer which has a staircase leading to the second floor. The foyer and staircase are located stage left. The foyer opens to a hallway leading to the kitchen which is not seen on stage and the sunken living room which you must walk down two steps to get to. Behind the sunken living room is a small dining room, up stage, which has a medium sized archway connecting the two rooms. The kitchen can also be accessed through the dining room. All the way down stage right, are four or five rows or pews that are not blocking any of the living room.

The play takes place over the course of 24 hours.

ACT 1

SCENE 1 - the living room/ foyer

SCENE 2 - the synagogue

SCENE 3 - the living room/ foyer

SCENE 4 - the synagogue

SCENE 5 - the living room/ foyer

SCENE 6 - the synagogue

SCENE 7 - the living room/ foyer

SCENE 8 - the synagogue

SCENE 9 - the living room/ foyer

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ACT 1

SCENE 1

(Saturday Morning LUKE and MARGOT's new home. LUKE and LORAINÉ are setting up for MARGOT's surprise baby shower. LORAINÉ is hanging up a banner that reads "Happy Baby Shower" over the archway leading into the di ning room. LUKE is sitting on the couch wrapping presents)

LORAINÉ

Luke honey, pass me a thumb tack.

(LUKE gets up and brings a box of tacks over)

LUKE

Are you sure this is going to stay? It seems pretty heavy.

(LORAINÉ pushes in a few thumb tacks on both sides and has LUKE help her down off the ladder. They both take a few moments to appreciate LORAINÉ's handy work)

LORAINÉ

It's perfect. I am so excited to see the look on Margot's face when she sees all this.

LUKE

She'll be surprised.

LORAINÉ

Hopefully it will lift her spirits she's seemed so on edge.

LUKE

She's just nervous about the baby and having the house ready in time.

LORAINÉ

That's why I'm here. If she wants things done in time she should let me help more.

LUKE

She just needs to get used to having you around.

LORAINÉ

I've been here a month.

LUKE

She does appreciate you being here even if she isn't showing it.

LORAINÉ

She better.

LUKE

And hopefully you'll be coming back and staying for a few more months?

LORAINÉ

Hopefully, but I can't make any promises. We'll see what happens when I go home next week. Does Margot know you want me to come back?

LUKE

No, but that's because I don't want to get her hopes up in case it doesn't work out.

LORAINÉ

You're a thoughtful boy. I raised you right.

LUKE

That you did.

LORAINÉ

This place is a mess.

LUKE

Well, mom, we're still unpacking.

(LORAINÉ starts moving around a pile of boxes)

LORAINÉ

Maybe if we stack these boxes in the corner there, we can hang up "pin the baby on the mom".

LUKE

Do we really need to play that game?

LORAINÉ

It's a Williams tradition. We had it at my baby shower, your cousin Stacy's baby shower, aunt Ashley's...

LUKE

You better put it up then, but maybe not with the boxes. We have a system you might mess up.

LORAINÉ

What is in there anyway?

(LORAINÉ starts rummaging through the boxes and comes across a menorah and some other Jewish regalia)

LUKE

Mom leave that stuff alone.

LORAINÉ

(holding up the menorah and tefillin)

What is all this? What are you going to do with this?

LUKE

Margot's grandparents gave them to her. They do Jewish stuff.

LORAINÉ

Oh.

(LORAINÉ throws the items she has taken out back in the box and haphazardly moves it to where she wants the pin the baby on the mom game to be)

LUKE

Be careful with all that.

LORAINÉ

I will. I will. What are you guys going to do with all that?

LUKE

Probably put it on display somewhere. Some of that stuff has been in her family for a while.

LORAINÉ

That's so sweet. I have your great grandfather's cross that you can hang up right next to it.

LUKE

I think they would clash.

(LUKE sits back on the couch and starts blowing up balloons. LORAINÉ starts hanging up pink and blue tinsel around the room)

LUKE

Do you think this is overkill?

LORAINÉ

Gosh no. I remember my baby shower for you. My girlfriends rented out this bingo hall and decorated it from floor to ceiling with baby everything. I was so spoiled. I thought we were just going out for lunch, but boy was I surprised. It was such a great day. If Margot is anything like me she is going to die when she sees this. We should have picked a surprise location for Margot.

LUKE

I think having it in our own home will be an even bigger surprise. Wait, what happens if she comes down and sees all this before the party starts?

LORAINÉ

She won't because you are going to distract her upstairs. I have a tray in the kitchen made up so you can bring her breakfast in bed and then you can wing it from there.

LUKE

You always have a plan mom.

LORAINÉ

Maybe you should go up now. Just in case she's starting to wake up.

LUKE

She had a pretty late night last night. She's probably still sleeping.

LORAINÉ

Well go up just in case. I can finish everything up down here.

(As LUKE is going into the kitchen through the dining room, footsteps are heard on the stairs and MARGOT starts making her way down. LUKE runs to the stairs before MARGOT can reach the bottom. He tries his hardest to block the living entrance and make her look somewhere else.)

LUKE

Good morning!

MARGOT

Good morning.

LUKE

What are you doing up so early?

MARGOT

Its 11 am. You know my mom and dad are coming in an hour to bring us all out to lunch right?

LUKE

I didn't.

MARGOT

I didn't until they reminded me last night. Its fine we all still have an hour to get ready.

LUKE

Solid.

MARGOT

Are you okay?

LUKE

I'm peachy. Why don't you head back upstairs and get ready?

MARGOT

I was going to grab some breakfast first. I also needed my cellphone charger from the living room.

LUKE

I'll bring that all up to you. You can use mine in the meantime. Go up. Relax.

MARGOT

Well, I'm already down here.

(MARGOT tries to walk into the living room and LUKE stops her)

MARGOT

Let me in the living room.

LUKE

I'm sorry I can't do that.

MARGOT

Oh, really?

LUKE

Really.

MARGOT

Well we'll see about that.

(MARGOT tickles LUKE and then runs past him into the living room)

MARGOT

What the hell is going on here?

LORAINNE

Surprise! We're throwing you a baby shower today!

LUKE

(nervously)

Surprise!

MARGOT

Wow, you did not have to do that.

LORAINÉ

Well I insisted. I wanted to say thank you for letting me stay here this month.

MARGOT

We should be the ones thanking you for helping out.

LORAINÉ

It has been my pleasure and I hope today will really show you that. I remember how much I loved my baby shower so I wanted to give it forward.

MARGOT

A card would have sufficed.

LORAINÉ

I like big gestures.

MARGOT

Clearly.

LORAINÉ

You don't seem very excited.

MARGOT

I'm still waking up. I wasn't expecting this today.

LORAINÉ

Totally understandable.

(An oven bell goes off in the direction of the kitchen)

LORAINÉ

I better go check on that.

(LORAINÉ exits through the dining room)

LUKE

You're mad.

MARGOT

I'm not mad.

LUKE

Yes, you are.

MARGOT

Why would I be mad?

LUKE

Because you told me the other day how much you didn't want a baby shower.

MARGOT

Did I?

LUKE

I'm sorry. Mom convinced me what a great idea it would be and I forgot about lunch with your parents. We have a really special day planned. I think you'll really enjoy it.

MARGOT

We don't have time for this. We still need to unpack, get the baby's room ready...

LUKE

It'll all get done. Also, now that we have the shower, less shopping for baby. Free gifts.

MARGOT

I told you I didn't want a baby shower.

LUKE

Well it's too late. And my mom really wants to show you how much she cares. She just wants to help.

MARGOT

Does more tinsel and ribbon equal more caring?

LUKE

I guess.

MARGOT

She can help by unpacking boxes, you know, actually helping. Also, when my mom gets here she is going to freak.

LUKE

Your mom will be fine.

MARGOT

She went on a twenty minute rant the other day about how baby showers bring bad juju or something. You were there.

LUKE

I thought she was joking.

MARGOT

My mother is never joking when it comes to weird Jewish traditions. Also, I would like to avoid bad juju if that's a real thing.

LUKE

This isn't going to bring bad luck. It's fun and innocent.

MARGOT

You can tell her that when she gets here.

LUKE

I will. Besides when do you care about Jewish tradition.

MARGOT

I care a lot.

LUKE

Oh ya? Like when?

MARGOT

That is beside the point.

LUKE

Those Shabbat candles, menorah and all that other stuff your grandparents gave you haven't left that box.

MARGOT

I've had other things to worry about. And maybe that was one of the things I was going to do today?

LUKE

Okay.

(LORAINNE enters again with some deviled eggs that have been decorated to look like new born babies and places them on the coffee table)

LORAINNE

Aren't they precious.

MARGOT

Wow.

LUKE

They look delicious mom.

LORAINNE

And adorable.

MARGOT

What time are people supposed to be arriving?

(LORAINNE looks at her watch)

LORAINNE

Any minute now.

MARGOT

I should go change then and call my mother.

LORAINNE

Yes, do that. I forgot to invite her. I thought because it was, Luke said, the Sabbath, your parents wouldn't be able to make it.

MARGOT

They wouldn't be at Saturday morning services. It's too long for them. They only go on Friday nights, when they go.

LORAINNE

Interesting.

(LORAINNE drops the conversation and starts tidying up. LUKE joins her and MARGOT heads

upstairs without saying another word to anyone.)

Albright College Gingrich Library

ACT 1

SCENE 2

(Margot's Childhood synagogue the night before. The synagogue is represented on stage as four rows of pews on a platform with wheels. The platform stays down stage right, except for scenes in the synagogue when it is wheeled center stage. The congregation members, chorus will stay in the pews for the rest of show. MARGOT and her parents enter stage left and take their place in the front pew, where REBECCA and ALBERT sit every week.)

REBECCA

Everyone here is very excited to see you Margot. They ask about you all the time.

MARGOT

I bet they do mom.

REBECCA

Albert, pass us some siddurs.

ALBERT

You got it.

REBECCA

I'll be right back. I need to go ask Alison something before the service starts.

MARGOT

Dad, I don't know if I'm going to make it.

ALBERT

You'll be fine. Just sit forward and focus on something. That keeps me from falling asleep. It works half the time for me. Once you relax and sit back you're in danger, but hopefully I'll catch you.

MARGOT

That's not what I'm worried about.

ALBERT

What else is there to worry about?

MARGOT

Seeing everyone and having to make awkward small talk with them. I should have brought business cards with info on what's up in my life right now.

ALBERT

They'll see what's up by looking at you.

MARGOT

Thanks, dad.

(REBECCA comes over with ALISON, one of the congregants)

ALISON

This isn't Margot is it? I haven't seen you in years. You are so grown up.

MARGOT

I am thirty.

ALISON

Thirty? I remember when you were yeh high. And now, wow. Mazel Tov! How many months?

MARGOT

Eight.

ALISON

Do you know the gender?

MARGOT

The father does, but I told him I didn't want to know. I want that element of surprise when the day comes.

ALISON

Oh. When was the wedding?

REBECCA

It was a very small wedding about a year ago.

ALISON

Small weddings are very in these days. Did Rabbi Steinman perform the wedding?

REBECCA

They used a rabbi in their area.

MARGOT

It made more sense.

ALISON

Well, Mazel Tov again! We'll catch up more after services.

(ALISON sees another congregant and goes to talk with them)

MARGOT

Mom why did you tell her I was married?

REBECCA

Its simpler.

MARGOT

Sorry my life is so complicated.

REBECCA

Apology accepted.

(MARTY, another congregant comes up to greet REBECCA and MARGOT)

REBECCA

Marty! How are you? How is Sheila doing?

MARTY

She's doing a lot better. Hey Albert.

ALBERT

Hi, how are you?

MARTY

This isn't Margot, is it?

MARGOT

It is.

MARTY

Wow you have gotten so mature. Your mother told me you were pregnant, but wow! Mazel Tov! When are you due?

REBECCA

About a month.

MARTY

That's soon. Better start looking into mohels just in case it's a boy. Do you know the gender?

REBECCA

She doesn't want to.

MARTY

While I have you here, I was wondering if you would want to open the ark with your parents, as a nice welcome back from the congregation to you.

MARGOT

I'm not sure I...

REBECCA

We would all love to.

ALBERT

Ya, sounds great.

MARTY

Perfect. I'll come get you guys when I need you to go up.

(MARTY goes off to talk with a few of the younger congregants in attendance)

MARGOT

Open the ark? Just one time I would like to sit back.

ALBERT

Sitting back is bad.

REBECCA

You're father's right.

(MARTY comes back)

MARTY

Margot, one more question, would you be interested in leading Aleinu with some of the younger congregants who are here?

REBECCA

She would love to.

MARTY

Great.

(MARTY goes off and starts talking to the two other congregants who seem to be around MARGOT's age again)

MARGOT

Mom I don't remember, like, any of my prayers.

REBECCA

I bet you remember more than you think! It's so great that they're fitting you into the service.

MARGOT

At least I won't be up there alone.

REBECCA

That's the spirit. Everyone is so happy you're back.

MARGOT

Then why do I feel like they're all silently judging me?

REBECCA

That's because they probably are. It means they care. Now shush services are starting.

(All the congregants take their seats. RABBI ABRAMSON's voice is heard off stage)

RABBI

I would like to welcome everyone tonight. We will start on page 252 with Yigdal.

(The congregation starts singing. As they sing the scene transitions back to the baby shower present day. The platform is returned to stage right and MARGOT and her parents exit. The rest of the congregation stays)

(end scene)

Albright College Gingrich Library

ACT 1

SCENE 3

(LORAINNE is rearranging everything while she and LUKE wait for guests to arrive)

LUKE

Mom stop. Everything is fine.

LORAINNE

Is it?

LUKE

Yes. Relax. Look at me. I should be telling Margot to relax not you.

LORAINNE

What is taking her so long?

LUKE

She can't pick an outfit to wear. That's all.

LORAINNE

Is that all?

LUKE

Yes.

LORAINNE

Alright.

(MARGOT comes down the stairs and enters the living room wearing a simple summer dress she wore the night before minus the cardigan.)

LORAINNE

Margot, you look beautiful.

LUKE

Ya, beautiful.

MARGOT

Thanks, Loraine. You're too kind.

LUKE

Do you need me to get you anything?

MARGOT

Loraine, could I have a glass of water?

LORAINNE

Of course.

(LORAINNE heads into the kitchen leaving LUKE and MARGOT alone)

LUKE

Are you still going to ignore me?

MARGOT

I'm just trying to show your mom that she's valued. Unlike my parents who you cancel plans with.

LUKE

I deserved that. What can I do for you to make up for it?

MARGOT

You can get this baby out of me.

LUKE

Right away.

MARGOT

On the other hand, I don't think we're prepared to get this thing out. At least not spiritually.

LUKE

Not again. This spirituality thing has come way out of left field and I just can't right now. Guests are about to arrive. This is not the time.

MARGOT

Fine. I'll just sit back and wait for you to tell me how to act and what is appropriate to say.

LUKE

Jesus, Margot.

(The doorbell rings.)

LORAINÉ

(From the kitchen)

I'll get it!

(LORAINÉ opens the door and MARGOT's friend HANA has arrived. She enters holding a really big box)

LORAINÉ

Welcome. We are so glad you could make it. I will take that. Just go have a seat in the living room.

(LORAINÉ brings the box into the dining room)

MARGOT

HANA!!

HANA

MARGOT!!

(MARGOT and HANA embrace in a long hug.)

MARGOT

I had no idea you were coming! Well I had no idea anyone was coming.

HANA

It is so good to see you. I've missed you so much.

MARGOT

Not as much as I've missed you.

LUKE

Hi Hana.

(MARGOT and HANA leave their embrace. HANA gives Luke a quick hug)

HANA

Hi Luke. It's good to see you too. You must be so excited.

LUKE

I am. Sit, sit.

(LORAINÉ re-enters the living room and the
four of them sit)

HANA

These decorations are adorable. If I ever get married and have a
kid this is what I would want my baby shower to be like.

LORAINÉ

Thank you so much Hannah.

LUKE

Margot, I thought you said baby showers were taboo.

MARGOT

I did.

HANA

That is just an old superstition. Hardly anyone follows it
anymore. I have been to at least a handful of Jewish baby
showers in the last few years. My mom had one.

LUKE

Interesting.

MARGOT

Hana, you know who I ran into last night at services?

HANA

You went to a Friday night service?

MARGOT

That's not the point. The point is that I ran into Orin Cohen.

HANA

No way. Didn't you used to have a giant crush on him.

MARGOT

I did.

HANA

Well is he super hot still?

MARGOT

Duh, but boy did I doge a bullet.

LUKE

Did you ever have the chance of dodging that bullet?

MARGOT

Anyway, Hana, his life is super boring, he a married accountant living with kids in the suburbs. Granted I'm a glorified secretary now living in the suburbs, but at least Luke and I aren't married.

LUKE

Got to keep things interesting somehow.

MARGOT

I think going to synagogue is the highlight of his week.

HANA

That's not that weird. We're all getting to that age now. Three years ago, I thought I'd be married and moving into the suburbs.

LORAINÉ

Well you sure dodged that bullet Hannah. Marriage is the downfall of mankind. Although I feel like your people would enjoy all the free gifts.

HANA

Excuse me?

LUKE

Mom.

LORAINÉ

What? I thought the Jewish people...

LUKE

Please stop.

MARGOT

Hana, how is Israel?

HANA

Amazing. After the baby comes you and Luke need to come visit.

MARGOT

If my mom lets me.

LORAINÉ

Israel, wow. That is a long trip. I hope you didn't come just for us.

HANA

I'm visiting my mom and taking care of some other business here in the states.

MARGOT

I'm surprised, once you left I never thought you'd want to come back.

HANA

I didn't, but here I am.

LORAINÉ

Israel? Is it safe to be over there right now?

HANA

As safe as any other time honestly.

MARGOT

As long as you aren't in Haifa anymore.

HANA

I'm not. Don't worry.

MARGOT

Good.

HANA

Your house is so cute! It has the homey sixties vibe to it.

LUKE

That'll hopefully change soon.

HANA

You wouldn't change all this would you?

LUKE

We just want to make it a bit more modern. Create a nice open floor plan.

HANA

Can I have a tour before you change everything?

MARGOT

Of course, what do you want to see first?

LUKE

Mom while they are doing that, do you need help in the kitchen?

LORAINNE

Oh yes. We should probably bring out the rest of the appetizers now that I think of it. Thank you for reminding me.

(As LUKE and LORAINNE head into the kitchen and MARGOT starts to bring HANA upstairs for the tour, the doorbell rings. MARGOT goes to answer the door and LORAINNE hovers behind her. It is her brother DAVID, the typical Jewish nice guy who was probably your camp counselor at sleepaway camp and his fiancé ZOEY, the stereotypical Jewish American Princess.)

MARGOT

Come in. Come in. Welcome to my new home.

DAVID

Nice digs.

MARGOT

Make sure I give you guys a tour later

ZOEY

I would love that! Hi Margot. This is for you.

(MARGOT takes ZOEY's gift which LORAINNE immediately takes from her and brings into

the dining room. MARGOT shuffles everyone into the living room)

DAVID

Keep the door unlocked. Mom and dad are parking now.

MARGOT

Mom and Dad are here?

DAVID

Grandpa Hyman too.

MARGOT

Oh, god.

LORAINNE

Are you going to introduce us?

MARGOT

Lorraine, Zoey and David. David and Zoey, Lorraine! David is my brother and Zoey is his fiancé. Lorraine is Luke's mom.

ZOEY

So, she's your mother-in-law?

MARGOT

LORAINNE

No.

Technically.

ZOEY

Well it is so nice to meet you.

(LUKE comes out of the kitchen carrying little pigs in a blanket decorated like newborn babies)

LUKE

Hey David. Hi Zoey.

DAVID

Luke, sup.

ZOEY

Lorraine that's an interesting name, where are you from?

LORAINÉ

My family is from Cleveland, but we grew up in Akron.

ZOEY

So, rustic. Margot where is your little girl's room?

MARGOT

Right up the stairs.

ZOEY

Perfect.

LORAINÉ

I hope we end up having enough chairs.

LUKE

We should be fine.

(ZOEY heads upstairs and everyone else sits
down)

MARGOT

So, you're still seeing her?

DAVID

Well, we are engaged.

MARGOT

I thought she was just a rebound after ...

DAVID

MARGOT

Hana hi!

Hana.

HANA

David! It's so good to see you.

MARGOT

I bet.

(HANA gives MARGOT a look)

DAVID

Hana, I thought you were in Israel.

HANA

I'm just back home to see my mom and celebrate Margot.

DAVID

Nice.

LORAINA

David, you and Zoey make the cutest couple.

MARGOT

Not as cute as me and Luke.

LORAINA

How did you two meet?

DAVID

We actually met at an art exhibit a few years ago in the city.

LORAINA

How metropolitan. Luke and Margot, you two lived in New York before you moved here, right?

MARGOT

We did. We miss it a lot.

LUKE

I mean we go in all the time for work.

MARGOT

Ya, but it isn't the same and we have to deal with the horrible commute.

LUKE

Our commutes were just as long, but it's the train instead of the subway.

MARGOT

That's semantics.

DAVID

Zoey and I actually just got an apartment in Philly together.

LORAINA

I have heard great things about Philadelphia.

DAVID

Are you still in Akron?

LORAINNE

For now, I may want to move here to be closer to the baby.

DAVID

That would be nice.

MARGOT

Would it?

HANA

Margot, do you know who else is supposed to be coming?

MARGOT

You'd have to ask Lorraine.

LORAINNE

Fifteen people RSVP'd on Facebook, so this is probably it.

DAVID

Well, mom and dad should be walking in the door any second.

LORAINNE

Luke, I just realized I need you to go get the cake.

LUKE

Cake? I thought we had cupcakes.

LORAINNE

Well we have a cake too and I need you to get it.

LUKE

Can you get it? I'm entertaining guests.

MARGOT

You can go. I think we'll manage without you.

LUKE

Well then I better get going.

MARGOT

Take your time.

(LORAINNE hands LUKE a piece of paper with all the info about the cake. As LUKE goes to put on his shoes in the foyer and leave, REBECCA, ALBERT and HYMAN enter.)

REBECCA

Luke! Hello! Where are you going? We have lunch.

(From the living room)

MARGOT

Oh no. I forgot to tell them.

HANA/ DAVID

Tell them what?

LUKE

I just need to run and pick something up. Bye Albert, Hyman.

(LUKE bolts out the door)

HYMAN

That boy makes me nervous.

(MARGOT runs to the foyer and tries to block their entrance into the living room)

HYMAN

Your street parking here is terrible!

MARGOT

Hi Grandpa!

REBECCA

Honey, why are there so many cars in the driveway?

MARGOT

No reason.

ALBERT

I thought we were getting lunch.

MARGOT

Well, actually I meant to call, but there has been a change in plans.

HYMAN

No food?

REBECCA

What is going on?

MARGOT

Well.

REBECCA

Honey let me into the living room I need to sit down.

MARGOT

You sat the whole car ride over. Also I should probably tell you something before you go in.

HYMAN

I need to sit down too.

(HYMAN pushes through MARGOT and the four of them enter the living room. The three of them are shocked and REBECCA becomes furious)

REBECCA

What is all this?

MARGOT

Lorraine is throwing me a baby shower.

REBECCA

Is she?

MARGOT

Yes.

LORAINNE

I thought you would all be excited.

REBECCA

I'm just surprised is all. Especially since you didn't approach me the mother of the soon to be mother to run by the plans with.

LORAIN

Well it was last minute and I thought you couldn't make it.

REBECCA

If you had shown some decency and run this by me, I would have let you know not to do this because it's bad luck in the Jewish culture to have one. I could have helped you make other plans.

LORAIN

Bad luck? That's silly.

REBECCA

It's not silly. It's our culture.

LORAIN

Well what kind of culture doesn't want to celebrate birth?

REBECCA

We do celebrate, after the baby is born.

HANA

(To David aside)

This is getting good.

DAVID

I wish we had popcorn.

HANA

At least we have baby shaped appetizers.

MARGOT

Mom calm down. Its fine. We're just doing it a month early. We can't change it.

REBECCA

I won't have it.

ALBERT

It's a bit too late.

HYMAN

Will I still get food?

LORAIN

We have lots of food for you sir.

REBECCA

We're leaving.

MARGOT

Mom stay, for me and my sanity.

REBECCA

For you.

MARGOT

Great, well why don't we all sit down.

REBECCA

David give me a hug. I didn't see you with all this commotion.

DAVID

Hi mom.

REBECCA

I thought you and Zoey were busy today.

DAVID

This is what we were busy with.

REBECCA

And you couldn't tell me.

DAVID

I thought you already knew.

REBECCA

Is Zoey here?

DAVID

She's indisposed at the moment.

HYMAN

Just say she's in the bathroom.

LORAIN

You must be Margot's grandfather.

HYMAN

I am.

LORAIN

Well it is so nice to meet you! I have heard so much...

HYMAN

I hope it was all good. Wake me up when lunch is ready.

(HYMAN sits in the recliner and closes his eyes ignoring everyone else in the living room.)

REBECCA

Dad, you're being rude.

LORAIN

He is quite a character!

MARGOT

That he is.

REBECCA

Hana you're here too. It is so nice to see you. How's your mother?

HANA

She's doing better. She going to the doctors tomorrow so we should find out the results soon. That's actually why I'm in the states right now.

REBECCA

Tell her she is in my prayers. My father had a relapse a few years back, but he's back to his old self again as you can see. Maybe you two can talk about it when he decides to socialize.

DAVID

Your mom has cancer?

HANA

She's going to be fine. The doctors aren't worried anymore.

LORAIN

Let's talk about something happy. Today is a celebration for Margot.

ALBERT

You know, sickness is a part of life and aren't we celebrating life today.

REBECCA

Don't talk about sickness. You'll jinx Margot.

ALBERT

You're the one that asked Hana about her mother's cancer.

REBECCA

We've changed the topic.

LORAIN

Speaking of celebration, I should go check on lunch!

REBECCA

Let me help.

LORAIN

Oh no. I'm fine.

REBECCA

I insist!

LORAIN

I have it all under control!

REBECCA

I would feel better if I could lend a hand!

LORAINÉ

Fine.

(LORAINÉ and REBECCA head into the kitchen.
Once LORAINÉ AND REBECCA are in the kitchen
ZOEY returns from the bathroom.)

DAVID

She sure has made herself cozy here.

MARGOT

Don't get me started.

ZOEY

What did I miss? Mr. Salzman hi. And the sleeping man must be Hyman.

DAVID

That is correct.

ALBERT

How're you doing Zoey.

ZOEY

Good. Margot your bathroom is just as quaint as the rest of the house.

MARGOT

Thanks

(to HANA on the side)

I hate her.

HANA

Me too. But I'd rather be here than in the kitchen.

MARGOT

Luke has the best spot, out of the house.

HANA

Who should we place our bets on starting a fight first?

MARGOT

There will be no drama tonight.

HANA

We'll see about that.

ALBERT

So, Hana what have you been doing with yourself?

HANA

I'm living in Israel right now.

ALBERT

Wow. What's it like being out there. Rebecca and I have always wanted to visit. We didn't get to go for free like you kids did.

HANA

It's spectacular. Sometimes I miss home, but then I remember that I am home.

ALBERT

That's beautiful. May you only be blessed with good luck.

HANA

Thanks Mr. Salzman.

ZOEY

What brought you over there?

HANA

Initially I went to stay on a kibbutz for a bit, try something different. I wanted to decompress from life. I ended up loving it and stayed.

DAVID

Zoey and I are planning to go to Israel for our honeymoon, maybe you can show us around one day.

MARGOT

That's not going to be for a while. Hana may not be there that far down the road.

DAVID

We actually just set a date the other week!

(REBECCA comes running in from the kitchen)

REBECCA

You finally set a date? Davy that is wonderful! When is the big day?

ZOEY

You go ahead honey.

DAVID

Mark your calendars for, drumroll please, June thirteenth!

MARGOT

Of this year?

ZOEY

Yes!

MARGOT

That's really soon. You guys haven't known each other for that long.

DAVID

Not all of us need to wait nine years to get married.

MARGOT

Not all of us buy into the outdated construct of marriage.

ZOEY

That's what my mom's friend Sherrell talks about all the time. She's fifty and alone.

MARGOT

How fascinating.

REBECCA

Anyway, June 13th is only a few months away. Is there anything I could do to help out?

ZOEY

We're set. My mom helped me plan most of it. I have an appointment at Kleinfelds next week.

REBECCA

Say Yes to the Dress is my favorite Sunday afternoon show. You know I have some ideas drawn up that I made for Margot's wedding, but we can just use them for yours.

MARGOT

Oh, my god.

(the congregation softly starts singing
Lecha Dodi)

ALBERT

We're all getting sidetracked. This is Margot's big day not there's.

REBECCA

You're right. I've just been looking forward to a wedding for years.

ZOEY

Margot, have you and Luke set a date yet?

MARGOT

For the last time, we aren't getting married.

(There is a blackout on the living room
as the congregation gets louder and is
wheeled down stage center again.)

Albright College Girard Library

ACT 1

SCENE 4

(The congregation has concluded with Lecha Dodi and MARGOT, ALBERT and REBECCA walk to their seats in the pews like they had come from closing the ark)

REBECCA

See that wasn't so bad.

MARGOT

I guess not. Also, there aren't many 'young people' as Marty described them to sing Aleinu with.

REBECCA

Orin is here. Didn't you used to have a crush on him?

MARGOT

Don't remind me. This isn't as bad as I remember it being.

REBECCA

I told you. You should start coming more now that you're back in the area. They do family Shabbat once a month still. You remember that, right?

MARGOT

I don't.

REBECCA

Well you and your brother were very young.

MARGOT

I don't know if Luke and I would be interested in that.

REBECCA

Well you can bring the kid yourself.

ALBERT

You two be quiet or go to the bathroom.

REBECCA

Since when do you care?

ALBERT

I'm not in the mood to hear you gossiping.

REBECCA

We're not gossiping we're talking about Rebecca's future.

ALBERT

This isn't the place.

MARGOT

It really isn't.

REBECCA

Well what else am I supposed to do?

MARGOT

Pray?

REBECCA

The two of you are going to send me to an early grave. Margot don't look now, but I think Orin is looking at you.

MARGOT

What?

(MARGOT turns around to look at ORIN who is sitting two rows behind them.)

REBECCA

Margot, I said don't look.

(ORIN gets up and starts to walk to their row)

MARGOT

Great. Now he's coming over... Thanks mom.

REBECCA

Don't thank me. You're the one that made eye contact with him.

(ORIN sneaks in next to MARGOT)

ORIN

I thought that was you, but it's been so long I wasn't sure.

MARGOT

Oh my gosh. Orin. How are you? What are you doing here?

ORIN

I'd ask you the same question. When was the last time you stepped in a synagogue?

MARGOT

I come for the High Holydays sometimes.

REBECCA

Hi Orin.

ORIN

Hi Rebecca.

ORIN

Margot, I heard you were joining a few of us for Aleinu.

MARGOT

I am, but if you don't want me to go up, I...

ORIN

We totally do. We love getting all the young people together up there. It makes the older crowd happy.

MARGOT

We aren't that young.

ORIN

We're the future of this congregation.

MARGOT

You are.

ORIN

You too.

MARGOT

Probably not. I thought you were living in Seattle?

ORIN

I got transferred to New York City a year or two ago.

MARGOT

And you decided to live here?

ORIN

Melanie thinks the suburbs are a much better place for the kids than the city.

MARGOT

You guys got married?

ORIN

Four years ago and the twins will be two next month. Don't you ever check facebook?

MARGOT

No not really. I've tried to stay away from social media as much as I can.

ORIN

I see you got hitched yourself. When are you due?

MARGOT

Next month. Maybe our kids will share the same birthday.

ORIN

Maybe. Who's the lucky guy?

MARGOT

His name is Luke.

ORIN

That's not a very Jewish name.

MARGOT

It's not. Also, contrary to popular belief we aren't married.

ORIN

Very cutting edge.

MARGOT

Sure. We also moved back to the area. Luke had the same train of thought as Melanie.

ORIN

I'm sure your parents are just as thrilled as mine.

REBECCA

We are.

MARGOT

Mom.

ORIN

You know, Melanie runs the family Shabbat once a month. You should totally come once you have the baby. There is also a group of young parents that gets together.

REBECCA

I was just telling her about that.

MARGOT

And I told her and will now tell you, I'm good.

ORIN

It is nice to have a group of people going through the same things that I you are! Being a new mom and balancing religion can be tough.

MARGOT

Can it?

ORIN

I love the group, it feels like an extension of USY.

MARGOT

Well now I definitely don't want to do it. I had no friends in USY. So, I'll have no friends now?

ORIN

What? No.

MARGOT

Is this the only reason you came over to talk to me?

ORIN

I also wanted to talk about Aleinu see if you wanted to go over it

MARGOT

I think I remember how to sing Aleinu. I need to get back to praying now.

ORIN

See you up there I guess.

(ORIN returns to his seat)

REBECCA

You know he volunteers at the Hebrew school and helps out with sisterhood sometimes. He has grown into quite the gentleman.

MARGOT

That's nice.

REBECCA

You should join that group. You too can get to know each other again.

MARGOT

He's married and has two children.

REBECCA

Exactly, his life is much more together than Luke's who is running a co-op. There's no money in that. Orin is an accountant. He's making good money.

RABBI

(Off-stage voice)

All rise for the Amidah. We will begin on page 375.

(Everyone in the congregation rises and starts singing. Margot stands and stares blankly in her book. As the congregation sings the scene transitions back to the baby shower)

ACT 1

SCENE 5

(Back to the awkward baby shower. ZOEY is showing REBECCA wedding dress ideas. A few moments later MARGOT, DAVID and HANA have returned from the tour MARGOT was giving them)

MARGOT

Mom, does Loraine still need help in the kitchen?

REBECCA

Right. Sorry. Next time you see me I'll have food.

(Hyman wakes up)

HYMAN

There's food?

REBECCA

That is what you woke up for?

HYMAN

I've had years and years of practice developing selective listening with your mother.

REBECCA

The food isn't ready Dad, but it will be soon. Don't go back to sleep. Mingle.

MARGOT

Dad, are Ethel and Ivan coming?

ALBERT

No, they went to cousin Sophie's daughter's Bat Mitzvah in Upstate New York.

REBECCA

That was today wasn't it. Did we remember to send a card?

ALBERT

How should I know?

REBECCA

You're useless. I am going back into the kitchen now! Holler if you need anything.

MARGOT

Why didn't you guys go?

REBECCA

We had lunch plans.

(As REBECCA is heading toward the kitchen she knocks down the baby shower banner and gets tangled in it. She rips it apart and mutters to herself as she enters the kitchen. Everyone just sits and watches this transpire)

DAVID

Highlight of my day.

ALBERT

So, Hana, what are you doing in Israel?

DAVID

Are you still on the kibbutz?

HANA

That's why I went over initially. I just got a job in the engineering department for Soda Steam. I started that a few weeks ago actually. And they were so accommodating letting me come back to see my mom.

ZOEN

Isn't Soda Stream the company that laid off those poor Palestinians?

HANA

I don't know if poor Palestinians is the right phrase.

HYMAN

Your right. Disadvantaged, mistreated are some better words.

ALBERT

Hyman, I don't think that paints a clear picture of what's happening there.

HYMAN

The Israelis took the Palestinian's land, gave them a shitty consolation and are constantly attacking them and settling on their land. They just want a two-state solution and the Israelis are just attacking and attacking and attacking and won't let it happen.

HANA

WHAT! The Israeli government is trying to take down Hamas who rules the Gaza strip and wants all Jews and Israelis dead. Hamas believing in a two-state solution, best joke I've heard tonight.

MARGOT

Can we please not get into this. Remember this is a baby-shower. This is not the time to talk about Israel and Palestine.

HYMAN

The Palestinians have nowhere to seek refuge!

HANA

Maybe because no one else in the Middle East wants them!

MARGOT

Grandpa, Hana take this outside!

ZOEY

The Israeli army bomb schools and hospitals! They kill innocent people.

DAVID

Margot just give up!

ALBERT

I mean that's what Hamas does. They hide their weapons and put their bases there specifically to make the Israelis look bad!

ZOEY

That still doesn't excuse the death of little children! Imagine if Margot was in the hospital giving birth and she was killed by a bomb.

ALBERT

Bite your tongue!

MARGOT

Don't bring me into this!

HANA

I think emotion is taking you away from the facts. Also, how can you be Jewish and not support the Jewish state and a two-state solution? How can you be honeymooning in Israel?

ZOEY

It's not that I don't support the Jewish state, it's that I don't support what the state is doing to the Palestinians.

HYMAN

That land is sacred to other groups too, why should it just be the Jews? Land of Milk and Honey? More like land with no oil and too much war!

MARGOT

The Christians have America and Europe and the Muslims have most of Asia. Why can't the Jews have this small sliver? Jerusalem is shared by all three major religions!

ALBERT

You Margot, most don't see it that way. I just took a class on Israel with the Rabbi and you know you know a lot more Jews aren't Zionists than we think. At the beginning of the Zionist movement a large percent of Jews were opposed, but most came around when the state was created! The Jewish people did a lot to help Israel. The Palestinians didn't take very good care of it, but...

ZOEY

Aren't you a wealth of facts.

DAVID

Honey, don't talk to my dad like that.

HANA

She can't help it. People are seeing how dumb she is.

ALBERT

David, it's okay. Zoey, Hyman I have some of the reading material in the car still if you want to look at it. It all gets broken down, every side. I learned quite a bit. I'll be happy to share some of the reading material with you all. This whole topic is so sensitive and we all got a bit heated at times. The Rabbi even yelled at a congregant.

DAVID

Dad you sound like a really boring textbook.

HYMAN

We all say this sitting in this cushy living room back in America, but none of us are there on the West Bank experiencing what these people are going through.

HANA

As someone who lived closeish to the Gaza Strip, it's easy to take this Holier than thou humanitarian approach to this topic, but it's so much more than that and it is so deeply rooted in Anti-Semitism.

HYMAN

Semitic is a term that refers to the whole middle-east. So being Anti-Semitic is being hateful toward all those of middle-eastern decent, including the Palestinians.

MARGOT

Grandpa, that may be the original reference, but I think we are all aware of what the term Anti-Semitism has been used for in history!

(ZOEY tries to chime in with her opinion when LORAIN AND REBECCA come out from the kitchen.)

LORAIN

Now, the main course isn't ready yet, but here are some more appetizers. I also think it is time to play so party games.

REBECCA

What happened in here?

HYMAN

This isn't kosher.

LORAINA

Kosher?

REBECCA

I know dad I tried to explain it all to Loraine, but she didn't get it.

LORAINA

I'd never heard the word.

ALBERT

Margot, you hadn't informed her?

MARGOT

It never came up.

HYMAN

To make a long story short, people in the Jewish faith who keep kosher, can't eat pork, shell fish, mix meat and dairy. The meat that we do eat needs to be properly killed, drained of blood, then blessed by a rabbi.

LORAINA

Rebecca told me. I called Luke and he's picking up a veggie platter. Why do you do it, keep kosher?

HYMAN

How should I know. It's just tradition.

DAVID

Actually grandpa, there is a reason behind almost everything we do except for one thing.

HYMAN

Excuse me Mr. smarty pants.

REBECCA

Where is Luke?

LORAINA

Picking up the cake.

LORAINÉ

(trying to break the tension in the room).

While we wait let's play some games. Now the first one is called pin the baby on the mom. It's like pin the tail on the donkey, but baby themed.

HANA

Now the picture of Margot on those boxes makes sense.

ZOEY

That is so cute! Can I go first?

DAVID

Should we have Margot go first?

MARGOT

Zoey you can go.

(ZOEY gets up and is blindfolded by LORAINÉ. She's then spun around 3 times and sent in the direction of the boxes. ZOEY trips on her way there and ends up knocking over the boxes and crushing what was inside of them. HANA starts maniacally laughing)

HANA

Good thing it wasn't you Margot.

DAVID

Baby are you okay?

MARGOT

I think Grandma's menorah was in one of those boxes?

HYMAN

Hilda's?

REBECCA

Oh no.

LORAINÉ

I guess we should play another game.

(DAVID helps ZOEY up and brings her to the couch to lie down.)

ZOEY

Can I get a glass of water?

REBECCA

Are you okay?

ZOEY

I will be.

MARGOT

Oh geez.

REBECCA

Margot, show some respect, Zoey got hurt.

MARGOT

She's fine. It's what's in those boxes that I'm worried about.

HYMAN

That menorah is an heirloom. It survived Auschwitz. It better have survived a taboo baby shower.

LORAINÉ

I guess we should play another game. Margot and Hyman, you can worry about those boxes later. They aren't going anywhere.

HYMAN

You're all going to ignore me? Okay.

MARGOT

Maybe we should just stop and grandpa's right.

ZOEY

No, no, don't stop the fun on my account.

HANA

You aren't the reason we're stopping the fun.

LORAINÉ

We'll play a game we can all do sitting down. This one is called Mommy and Daddy's Secrets.

MARGOT

How does it work Loraine?

LORAINÉ

Well theoretically we need Luke here, but who knows when he's getting back. So, the way the game works is over my time here I have collected the answers to twenty questions from Luke and Margot about the baby. If we had both, they would sit in the middle of the room and I would ask them what they think the other's answer is to a question and then we see if you guys think it's right or not.

REBECCA

That sounds fun.

MARGOT

That sounds bad.

(Luke returns with the cake and a veggie platter somewhat relieving the tension for a bit)

LUKE

Did everyone miss me? Jeez, did someone die?

LORAINÉ

Oh, Luke you are just in time. We are about to play Mommy and Daddy's Secrets.

LUKE

That doesn't sound fun.

LORAINÉ

It's based on those questions I asked you.

(LORAINÉ sets up two chairs in the middle of the room as LUKE places the cake in the dining room)

LORAINÉ

Now Luke and Margot, sit.

(MARGOT and LUKE reluctantly sit in the two chairs. No one seems to be in the mood for this except LORAINÉ and ZOÉY)

LORAINÉ

First question and remember you say what you think the other is thinking. If you could have it your way what would you want your child to be when he or she grows up?"

LUKE

I think Margot would say whatever the kid wants to be.

MARGOT

I think Luke would say happy.

LUKE

You know me so well babe.

LORAINÉ

Second Question.

HYMAN

Are we positive it's not time to eat? Also, this game is stupid.

LORAINÉ

It's not time yet. We are having fun. Second question, what religion do you want the baby to be?

ALBERT

What kind of question is that?

REBECCA

That's a serious question.

LUKE

We were looking for something more light hearted like whether we wanted it to be a girl or a boy. Or we could have played a better game like Baby Sketch Artists.

MARGOT

We don't have to answer that question do we? Why didn't you just ask us that in private?

LORAINÉ

Because you keep dodging it and after this afternoon I'm very curious. The answer should be obvious for both of you though.

REBECCA

Should it? Well let's hear it then from you Loraine.

(the lights fade on the baby shower and we
transition back to the pews)

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ACT 1

SCENE 6

(The congregation is singing the Amidah picking up from where they left off as the transition occurs. The pews do not move back center stage. Instead MARGOT goes downstage center holding her siddur)

RABBI

It is now time for the silent Amidah. Turn back to page 375 and continue silently until the end.

(MARGOT looks around to see everyone deep in prayer. She stares blankly at her book.)

MARGOT

(Spoken out loud, but it is an inner monologue between her and god)

This is awkward. Sorry that I haven't been here for a while. I really have no excuse and I didn't feel bad about it until now. Honestly, I haven't thought about you or this place for a while. Don't tell my mom. I think the last time I was here was right after I graduated college. I told you I was going to be a better Jew and come to services more, but that clearly didn't happen. Also now that I'm here I'm remembering why I don't come. Too much fake enthusiasm. Not once have I felt like anyone is genuinely interesting in hearing about my life. To them I'm doing everything wrong at this point. I'm not married and the father of the baby I'm about to pop out isn't Jewish, he's a Christian atheist. But I don't feel like we're doing anything wrong or are in a bad place until people make me think we are. I do hate the suburbs though. The prodigal child has returned I guess. I don't want to lie and tell you I'm going to try harder because I'm probably not going to. I'm here to appease my mother, but so far nothing has made me want to come back. Well maybe some things. I've always loved the prayers. Even if I don't fully understand them I feel like I'm part of something bigger when we all sing them together. They connect me to thousands of years of history. Our lives are radically different, but like them we come together as a community in good and dark times. It's beautiful. My mom is probably right and has

helped make me who I am. If only I felt a connection with the people I was with. Maybe if I came back more I would feel that connection. Then, I would officially become my mother. That's terrifying, never mind. Besides Luke would hate it. He's against all organized religion, not just Christianity. What am I even doing? I'm pretty sure you're not real, but you're still a better listener than everyone else so here we are. Is it crazy if a small part of me wants to try and start coming to services? You are god of course you'll tell me I'm not crazy. I'm pretty lost on most things that have to do with Judaism. I still always get asked questions about it because I'm the only Jew people know. But for real though, thinking about growing up here I think it would be nice for my baby. I don't know! Let me know what you think! I'll be waiting for a sign from you so don't think I'll forget! Thanks, bye!

(there is a blackout on MARGOT and the lights come back up on the baby shower.)

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ACT 1

SCENE 7

(A very awkward lunch has ended and it is time to cut the cake. Everyone is sitting upstage in the dining room.)

LORAINÉ

I don't think I could eat another bite!

REBECCA

Then don't. Should we cut the cake now?

LORAINÉ

Maybe we should wait a few minutes. Let everyone digest their food.

REBECCA

I'm feeling pretty digested.

LORAINÉ

Well, is the guest of honor ready?

MARGOT

The guest of honor is always ready for cake!

HANA

Looks like we are eating cake.

LORAINÉ

We also have cupcakes. They're very cute. Inside one of them is a plastic baby and whoever gets that is the next to get pregnant. I'll go grab them and everyone else head into the living room.

(Everyone lethargically gets up and heads into the living room. LORAINÉ is not far behind with the cupcakes.)

LORAINÉ

Everyone take one.

(ZOEY picks her up and immediately bites into it, not waiting for anyone else. As she eats she comes across the toy baby.

ZOEY

I got the plastic baby! David isn't this exciting.

DAVID

We haven't even had the wedding yet.

ZOEY

Obviously, the baby will come after that. Sorry Luke and Margot.

MARGOT

Let's cut the cake.

ZOEY

Can I have the corner piece?

HANA

They have to cut the cake first, Zoey.

MARGOT

Luke, knife!

LUKE

Here you go!

(Luke hands MARGOT the knife and she cuts the cake. As she cuts it, the inside is revealed to be blue revealing the gender of the baby is a boy. Everyone in the room screams with excitement except for Margot. LORAINNE opens a box and lets out blue balloons. All the tension from previous conversations seem to be gone)

HANA

You better start looking for a mohel.

LUKE

Mohel?

ALBERT

For the bris! Congrats you two!

ALBERT

This guy at my shul can do it for you!

LUKE

What is a mohel?

MARGOT

They perform the circumcision at the bris! Remember that Seinfeld episode?

REBECCA

Haven't you two talked about it?

MARGOT

No

LORAIN

Bris? That doesn't sound hygienic. Now Luke and Margot we are going to have to start figuring out the baptism.

REBECCA

So a circumcision isn't safe, but dunking a baby in water is?

LORAIN

Yes! A baby doesn't just get dunked into the water! It's very important.

ALBERT

So is a bris! If the baby doesn't get circumcised how is it supposed to enter its covenant with G-d?

MARGOT

Dad you don't care about that stuff.

ALBERT

I do too! I didn't let you and your brother grow up as heathens, did I?

REBECCA

Albert what are you even saying?

ALBERT

I'm just getting anxious with all this yelling!

HYMAN

You weren't earlier.

HANA

Why don't we let Margot say...

ZOEY

David I hope we have a girl.

LORIANE

We can just circumcise the baby in the hospital and then baptize him if you all care so much about that.

REBECCA

There will be no baptism. I think my husband pointed out that a bris is more than just that!

LORAINÉ

Are you saying you want the child to be Jewish?

REBECCA

Are you just getting this! Also someone is Jewish through the mother so the baby will be Jewish whether you like it or not.

LORAINÉ

Bite your tongue!

REBECCA

Excuse me?

LORAINÉ

My grandson is not going to be raised that way!

MARGOT

JESUS CHRIST! WILL YOU TWO CUT IT OUT! WILL ALL OF YOU CUT IT OUT!

LORAINÉ/ REBECCA

LANGUAGE!

REBECCA

I think you have a very warped view of the Jewish religion and what it stands for.

HYMAN

As long as she doesn't start denying the holocaust.

DAVID

You know Rebecca and Luke could raise the baby in both religions. A lot of my friends are doing that now a days. There is this blog that I follow about a couple who is Mormon and Hindu...

REBECCA

David, honey. That won't work. It's just going to confuse the kid.

LORAIN

I agree with you.

LUKE

I don't see why the baby needs either religion.

HYMAN

Exactly, why must we force a religion on a baby?

ZOEY

It can't make its own decisions

HYMAN

Exactly!

ZOEY

A baby can't decide. So should we just not feed it if it doesn't know what it wants for dinner? No, we need to feed it what we think is health.

HANA

Zoey shut up! Do you understand the words that come out of your mouth?

MARGOT

This isn't any of your decisions! It's mine and Luke's!

ALBERT

So, what have you two decided?

MARGOT

We haven't.

LUKE

Yes, we have!

MARGOT

No, we haven't!

LUKE

Margot?

MARGOT

We'll let you know when what our decision is eventually!

HYMAN

You better figure it out fast. Time is ticking!

MARGOT

Time is ticking!

LUKE

We made this decision months ago!

MARGOT

Well I've been telling you recently that I wanted to reconsider our decision.

LUKE

Well now isn't the time. This is a celebration.

MARGOT

Too much has happened for this to still be a celebration.

ALBERT

I don't know Margot. This is still less drama than if we had gone to cousin Stacy's daughter's Bat Mitzvah.

MARGOT

Then let's celebrate the baby shower I specifically told you not to throw me and that my mother will hold over me until she dies!

LUKE

Babe! Calm down! This is the pregnancy hormones talking!

MARGOT

I think that is the tooliest thing you could have said ever? I didn't know you were capable of saying that! Everyone else has been yelling today so, why can't I? I've been quite and polite and just taking everything you have all been saying all day. All the jabs about not being married. Loraine and my mother trying to push their respective religions down my throat. That one has been happening since I got pregnant.

REBECCA

Judaism is your religion too. It shaped you into becoming a good person.

MARGOT

Enough mom! I'm just tired of it. Guys our baby doesn't need religion to have structure and be a good person. That comes for the parents, me and Luke. Sometimes though I do think it would be nice to give my kid a Jewish upbringing, just so it feels that connection to its past like I get to. Sometimes I also think it would be nice to get married and have a wedding.

LUKE

Really? You're going to bring that up now?

MARGOT

Yes I am!

(MARGOT storms upstairs. LUKE follows after her, but stops at the bottom of the stairs)

LUKE

Marriage is a bullshit social construct! We talked about this!

DAVID

Well shit.

ZOEY

Do I still get to eat cake?

(LUKE walks back in)

LUKE

Sorry about that everyone. I guess Margot needs some time. We can enjoy this cake while we wait for her to come back down.

HANA

Shouldn't you go talk to her?

REBECCA

That'll just make things worse. I'll go talk to her.

(The lights fade on the baby shower and come up on the pews which are positioned stage right.)

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ACT 1

SCENE 8

(The services have ended and Margot is sitting in the pews talking with the RABBI, who is played by the same actor that played MARTY)

RABBI

You did a better job tonight than you thought you did.

MARGOT

Thanks.

RABBI

It's scary getting up there when it's been so long, but I bet it felt right.

MARGOT

It didn't feel right, but I don't know if right would be the right word.

RABBI

You wouldn't have come at all tonight if it was right.

MARGOT

Sure.

RABBI

You don't agree? Why did you come then?

MARGOT

My mother.

RABBI

It's more than that. Your mother has been nagging you for years and you didn't say yes until today, why?

MARGOT

I should go find my mom.

RABBI

Stop running and answer this question for yourself.

MARGOT

Fine. I guess I came back because I'm really scared about having this baby and coming here gives me comfort. At least, I thought it would bring me comfort.

RABBI

It hasn't?

MARGOT

No. I think I feel worse and more confused now.

RABBI

How so?

MARGOT

Luke and I aren't the biggest fans of organized religion and we don't want to force religion on our kid ya know, but now...

RABBI

But now?

MARGOT

But now I don't know. Imposing would be the same as not imposing. The kid will be Jewish by blood so they may as well learn about their heritage.

RABBI

That isn't the kind of attitude I want you to have, but if it gets you back in the door.

MARGOT

I'm not so sure I want to come back in the door though. I'm the worst person to teach this kid about Judaism. I know nothing. I forgot everything I learned in Hebrew school and my mom and dad did a terrible job reinforcing it in the house. You may not know this, but we've never kept kosher, except for Passover. We don't keep shomer shabbos or do a million other things. I come once a year for the High Holy Days and that's it.

RABBI

I was aware of all those things. The fact that those are the things you worry about not doing puts you on a much different

level from Jews who don't fully understand what being shomer Shabbos is. You are much more connected to your Judaism than you think. And while it seems hard to get back in to it isn't. Start coming back more and it will start feeling like home.

MARGOT

Maybe. I'm just afraid of turning into my mother.

RABBI

May that be the worst thing that happens to you.

MARGOT

I probably won't have a lot of time to come to things with the baby and all.

RABBI

You know you can always bring the baby with you.

MARGOT

It's such a hassle.

RABBI

Your whole life in about a month or two is going to be a hassle.

MARGOT

That's what I hear from the grape vine!

RABBI

We really would enjoy seeing you here more, even if you don't see it. It's also nice to have a familiar place to go when everything is changing. There are a lot of people your age coming back.

MARGOT

I can see!

RABBI

They don't come to everything, but we don't expect them to.

MARGOT

I just don't know if it's for me! I can't even hold a basic conversation about the Torah, or Israel for that matter. I have great blanket statements I can throw out.

RABBI

More reason to come and learn. The doors are always open!

MARGOT

Good to know!

(REBECCA enters looking for MARGOT)

REBECCA

There you are. I hope you and Rabbi have been having a good chat. Have you convinced her to come back?

RABBI

That is ultimately her decision. I should probably go into the Kiddush room and start benching before everyone leaves.

REBECCA

Sounds good everyone is starting to sneak away.

RABBI

Margot, think about it.

MARGOT

I will.

(The RABBI exits)

REBECCA

You two had a nice talk.

MARGOT

We did. It was a bit awkward.

REBECCA

You think every conversation you have is. What's on your mind? Talk to me.

MARGOT

Part of me thinks it wouldn't be so bad if I came back here. Tonight, wasn't the best, but memories from my childhood have been flooding back all night and the good have been winning.

REBECCA

That's so good to hear.

MARGOT

I don't think I'll come back though.

REBECCA

Why not?

MARGOT

Because I don't want to become you, the one thing in life I didn't want to be. Moving back to the area, becoming a stay at home mom, those were all things I did not want to do because I see how unhappy they've made you. Coming back here would just add insult to injury.

REBECCA

Don't blame me for your life choices. You didn't have to move back here. You don't need to quit your job when this baby came. And don't use me to pull yourself away from your religion.

MARGOT

You kept telling me not to raise a family in the city.

REBECCA

I was telling you I wouldn't do that. I am not you.

MARGOT

Fine. Who is going to take care of the kid I go to work?

REBECCA

Your father and I could, Luke could quit his job. Loraine, I can't believe I'm saying this, could even move in with you guys. No she couldn't what am I saying.

REBECCA

You have already far removed yourself from any of the mistakes I've made in my life. Don't mistake contentment and finally settling down with failure. Now a day you can climb that corporate ladder and have a family. You'll still face sexism and double standards, but while you do, you'll have parents and a great boyfriend that love you and support you.

MARGOT

That is the rousing after school special pep talk. It still isn't that easy.

REBECCA

Talk to Luke and make him understand how important this is to you then. If he really doesn't care and you care a little bit, you'll win.

MARGOT

Mom it isn't about winning. I don't even know how much I really want my kid to have a Jewish upbringing.

REBECCA

You wouldn't be thinking about it if you didn't want it. Your father and I grappled with the same thing. He was like Luke and sort of resented religion and I didn't have a synagogue that I grew up in. We belonged to a temple for a year. When I started going to services with your father I felt distant and out of place and I didn't want you and your brother to feel that way. I'm sorry if you ever have and you think it's my fault.

MARGOT

Well it didn't work.

REBECCA

That's on you. I tried my hardest.

MARGOT

Thanks, mom, but your hardest just wasn't good enough.

REBECCA

I only take credit where credit is due.

MARGOT

You're the worst.

(ALBERT enters from stage right)

ALBERT

There you two are. I've been looking all over for you. The Rabbi made me bench and I couldn't leave because one of you has the keys.

REBECCA

That is our cue to go.

MARGOT

I've been ready.

(As they all go to leave, MARGOT looks around the space and takes it all in and for the first time sees clarity in the situation)

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ACT 1

SCENE 9

(The living room after the baby shower. LUKE and HANA are cleaning up after the party. Everyone else has left. MARGOT eventually comes back down in her pajamas, when she comes down depends on how long it takes the actress to change and get to the other side of the stage. LUKE goes into the kitchen when he sees MARGOT.)

MARGOT

Hana you're still here.

HANA

Of course, I am. I couldn't leave without saying goodbye.

MARGOT

I'm going to miss you so much. We didn't get to catch up at all.

HANA

You can thank your family for that one.

MARGOT

I wish you were in the area for an extra day.

HANA

I have to drive down to Maryland and see my mom tomorrow.

MARGOT

That's not that important.

HANA

Not at all. It's going to be okay. You and Luke are going to work it all out. This baby, while you may not see it right now is going to come into such a warm and loving home.

MARGOT

You're going to make me barf.

HANA

Let me finish. I don't ever get to say these things in person.

MARGOT

And you never will again.

HANA

Talk to him. I think you guys are on the same page and you don't even realize it.

MARGOT

Only because you said so.

(They hug goodbye)

HANA

Come visit me. I'm serious.

MARGOT

I'm seriously considering it.

HANA

We'll facetime when I get back.

MARGOT

It's a date.

HANA

Bye Luke!

(from the kitchen)

LUKE

Bye Hana, it was nice seeing you!

(HANA and MARGOT hug one more time and then she leaves, leaving MARGOT in the living room alone. She sighs and Luke comes in.)

LUKE

The menorah is fine.

MARGOT

What?

LUKE

The one Zoey fell on earlier. It's okay and so was everything else in the box. Hyman made sure to check before he left.

MARGOT

That's good to know. Thanks for telling me.

LUKE

I'm sorry.

MARGOT

No. I'm sorry. I shouldn't have yelled. I was just mad at the situation.

LUKE

I was also being an insensitive dick.

MARGOT

Ya.

LUKE

Religion has just never come up before in the eight years we've been together.

MARGOT

We never had a baby to think about.

LUKE

Let's talk now.

MARGOT

Maybe another time. It's been a long day. We should think about things and then come to the table with our ideas.

LUKE

Hey.

MARGOT

What?

LUKE

I just didn't realize how important Judaism was to you.

MARGOT

Honestly? Neither did I until very, very recently.

LUKE

Well then I feel way better because I thought I had been missing signs for a while.

MARGOT

There are other signs and hints you've been missing.

LUKE

Like?

MARGOT

Your mother.

LUKE

I think she'd be helpful.

MARGOT

My parents are enough to deal with. Let your mom be the fun grandma they get to visit on holidays.

MARGOT

I know how much you hate holidays and all that though.

LUKE

Well, we never had a kid to think about. I hate it, but it doesn't mean we can't give it a try. If this is that important to you.

MARGOT

Really?

LUKE

I can't believe I'm saying this, but really. I'm not saying our son will be Bar Mitzvahed, but he should learn about his heritage. I only ever went to those Hillel dinners and services you dragged me to in college. This is probably different.

MARGOT

There is more of an age range.

LUKE

Exactly. We hate people our age.

MARGOT

You aren't just saying any of this?

LUKE

Of course, not. Although, be warned that my mom may try and bring a priest in next time she visits.

MARGOT

My mother will smite her.

LUKE

I know.

MARGOT

I built it up in my head that you would be so against it.

LUKE

Well you built it up right and I'm probably going to regret all of this.

MARGOT

I'll pretend you didn't say that.

LUKE

We're becoming our parents.

MARGOT

Not until we get married.

LUKE

Which will never happen.

MARGOT

Never say never. If only for healthcare and mortgage reasons. My mom was making some good points last night.

LUKE

We can't give your mother everything.

MARGOT

It would be for us, not her.

LUKE

You already won one battle tonight. Don't push it.

MARGOT

David, my younger brother is already engaged. Most of our friends are married.

LUKE

And are they happy?

MARGOT

What kind of question is that? Let's go up.

LUKE

There is a 50 percent divorce rate in this country. The system is so outdated. It was used to make a woman a man's property. In the bible women were traded for cattle. Do you want to become my property? I didn't think so. Which actually brings me back to why you would want to go back to a religion that doesn't consider women as equal. Maybe in your synagogue, but look at the orthodox.

(MARGOT and LUKE start to head upstairs while LUKE begins his big rant, which MARGOT seems to be used to. As the lights fade on the living room they come back up on the pews where the congregants have returned along with REBECCA, ALBERT, HYMAN, HANA, DAVID, ZOEY, and the RABBI. Together they all sing Aleinu as the play ends. Blackout)

The Prayers that are sung in transliteration
and their English translation. (Yigdal and Aleinu source:
jewishvirtuallibrary.org, Lecha Dodi source:
zemirotdatabase.org, Amidah source:.

Yigdal:

Transliteration: Yigdal Elokim chai v'yishtabach nimtza v'ein et
el m'tziuto. Echad v'ein yachid k'yichudo ne'lam v'gam ein sof
l'achduto. Ein lo d'mut haguf v'eino guf lo na'aroch elav
k'dushato. Kadmon l'chal davar asher nivra rishon v'ein reishit
l'reishito. Hino adon olam l'chal notzar yoreh g'dulato
umalchuto. Shefa n'vuato n'tano el anshei s'gulato v'tifarto. Lo
kam b'Yisrael k'Moshe od navi umabit et t'munato. Torat emet
natan l'amo el al yad n'vio ne'eman beito. Lo yachalif haEl v'lo
yamir dato l'olamim l'zulato. Tzofeh v'yode'a s'tareinu mabit
l'sof davar b'kadmato. Gomeil l'ish chesed k'mifalo noten
l'rasha ra k'rishato. Yishlach l'ketz hayamim m'shichenu lifdot
m'chakei ketz y'shuato. Meytim y'chaiyeh el b'rov chasdo Baruch
adei ad shem t'hilato.

Translation: Exalted be the Living G-d and praised, He exists -
unbounded by time in His existence. He is One - and there is no
unity like His Oneness. Inscrutable and infinite is His Oneness.
He has no semblance of a body nor is He corporeal; nor has His
holiness any comparison. He preceded every being that was
created - the First, and nothing preceded His precedence.
Behold! He is Master of the universe to every creature, He
demonstrates His greatness and His sovereignty. He granted His
flow of prophecy to His treasured splendid people. In Yisrael
none like Moshe arose again - a prophet who perceived His vision
clearly. G-d gave His people a Torah of truth, by means of His
prophet, the most trusted of His household. G-d will never amend
nor exchange His law for any other one, for all eternity. He
scrutinizes and knows our hiddenmost secrets; He perceives a
matter's outcome at its inception. He recompenses man with
kindness according to his deed; He places evil on the wicked
according to his wickedness. By the End of Days He will send our
Mashiach, to redeem those longing for His final salvation. G-d
will revive the dead in His abundant kindness - Blessed forever
is His praised Name.

Lecha Dodi:

Lecha dodi likrat kala, p'nei Shabbat n'kabelah!

Shamor v'zachor b'dibur echad,
Hishmi'anu el ha'meyuchad.
Adonai echad u'shmo echad;
L'shem ul'tiferet v'l'tehila.
Lecha dodi likrat kala, p'nei Shabbat n'kabelah!

Likrat Shabbat l'chu v'nelcha,
Ki hi m'kor ha'bracha.
Me'rosh mi'kedem n'sucha;
Sof ma'aseh b'mach'shava t'chila.
Lecha dodi likrat kala, p'nei Shabbat n'kabelah!

Mikdash melech, ir m'lucha,
Kumi, tze'i mi'toch ha'hafecha.
Rav lach shevet b'emek ha'bacha;
V'hu yachmol alai'yich chemla.
Lecha dodi likrat kala, p'nei Shabbat n'kabelah!

Hitna'ari me'afar kumi,
Livshi bigdei tifartech ami.
Al yad ben Yishai beit haLachmi;
Karva el nafshi g'ala.
Lecha dodi likrat kala, p'nei Shabbat n'kabelah!

Hit'oreri, hit'oreri,
Ki va orech, kumi uri.
Uri, uri, shir daberu;
K'vod Adonai alai'yich nigla.
Lecha dodi likrat kala, p'nei Shabbat n'kabelah!

Lo tevoshi v'lo tikalmi,
Mah tishtochachi uma tehemu.
Bach yechesu ani'yei ami;
V'niv'neta ir al tila.
Lecha dodi likrat kala, p'nei Shabbat n'kabelah!

V'hayu lim'shisa sosai'yich,
V'rachaku kol m'valai'yich.
Yasis alai'yich Elohai'yich;
Kimsos chatan al kala.

Lecha dodi likrat kala, p'nei Shabbat n'kabelah!

Yamin u'smol tifrotzi,
V'et Adonai ta'aritz.
Al yad ish ben Partzi;
V'nism'cha v'nagila!
Rise, and face the rear of the shul.
Lecha dodi likrat kala, p'nei Shabbat n'kabelah!

Bo'i v'shalom, ateret ba'ala,
Gam b'simcha uv' tzhala.
Toch emunei am segula; Bo'i chala, bo'i chala.
Lecha dodi likrat kala, p'nei Shabbat n'kabelah!

Translation: Come, my friend, the Bride to meet,
The holy Shabbat let us now greet.

"Keep" and "Remember" in one Divine word.
Our people at Sinai His command heard.
Our God is one; and One is His name,
His is the glory, His is the fame!

To greet Shabbat now let us go!
Source of blessing, it has ever been so.
Conceived before life on earth began,
Last in God's work, first in His plan.

Yerushalayim, Shrine of our King,
Arise from your ruins, arise and sing.
Enough have you dwelled in the vale of tears,
Your God will mercifully dispel your fears.

Shake off your dust, arise from the mire;
Dress, my people, in your proudest attire.
Through a descendant of David, the poet-King,
Redemption and freedom God will bring

Arise, arise, for your light has come,
The dawn has broken, the night is gone.
Awake, awake, and joyously sing;
Heavenly glory to you He did bring.

Be not ashamed, be not distressed,

No longer bowed down like a city oppressed.
In you shall your childrens hopes be fulfilled;
Out of your ashes you will again be rebuilt.

They who despoiled you will themselves be despoiled,
Your foes will be routed, their plots will be foiled.
In you will your God find joy and pride,
Loving you as a bridegroom loves his bride.

In every way may you prosper and grow;
Reverence for God may you ever know.
May you see the redemption that He will bring;
Songs of thanksgiving to Him may your sing.

Come now, Shabbat, the day divine,
Come in joy, let your brightness shine.
Come to the people which greets you with pride,
Come in peace, Shabbat Bride.

The beginning of the Amidah:

Transliteration: Adonai, se-fa-tai' tif-tach', u-fi ya-gid' te-hi-la-te'-cha.

Ba-ruch' A-tah', Adonai E-lo-hei'-nu ve-lo-hei'
a-vo-tei'-nu ve-i-mo-tei'-nu, E-lo-hei' av-ra-ham',
E-lo-hei' yits-chak', ve-lo-hei' ya-a-kov' E-lo-hei' sa-rah',
E-lo-hei' riv-kah', E-lo-hei' le-ah', ve-lo-hei' ra-chel'
ha-el' ha-ga-dol', ha-gi-bor' ve-ha-no-ra',
El el-yon'. Go-mel' cha-sa-dim' to-vim',
ve-ko-neh' ha-kol' ve-zo-cher' chas-dei' a-vot'
ve-i-ma-hot' u-me-vi' ge-u-lah' li-ve-nei' ve-nei-hem'
le-ma'-an she-mo', be-a-ha-vah'.
Me'-lech o-zer' u-mo-shi'-a u-ma-gen'. Ba-ruch' A-tah'
Adonai, Ma-gen' av-ra-ham' ve-ez-rat' sa-rah'.

A-tah' gi-bor' le-o-lam', Adonai, me-cha-yeh' ha-kol'
A-tah', rav le-ho-shi'-a. Me-chal-kel' 17 chai-yim'
be-che'-sed, me-chai-yeh' ha-kol' be-ra-cha-mim' ra-bim'.
So-mech' nof-lim', ve-ro-feh' cho-lim', u-ma-tir'
a-su-rim', u-me-ka-yem' e-mu-na-to' li'-she-nei' a-far'.
Mi cha-mo'-cha, ba'-al ge-vu-rot', u-mi' do'-meh
lach, me'-lech me-mit' u-me-cha-yeh'
u-mats-mi'-ach ye-shu-ah'

Translation: Blessed are You, Lord our God and God of our fathers, God of Abraham,
God of Isaac and God of Jacob, the great, mighty and awesome God, exalted God, who

bestows bountiful kindness, who creates all things, who remembers the piety of the Patriarchs, and who, in love, brings a redeemer to their children's children, for the sake of His Name.

O King, (You are) a helper, a savior and a shield. Blessed are You L-rd, Shield of Abraham.

You are mighty forever, my L-rd; You resurrect the dead; You are powerful to save.

Aleinu:

Transliteration: Aleinu le'shabeiach la'adon hakol,
lateit gedulah leyotzeir bereshit,
she'lo asanu ke'goyei ha'aratzot,
ve'lo samanu ke'mishpechot ha'adamah,
she'lo sam chelkeinu kahem,
ve'goraleinu ke'chol hamonam.
Va'anachnu korim, u'mishtachavim, u'modim,
lifnei melech, malchei ham'lachim,
hakadosh baruch Hu.
She'hu noteh shamayim, ve'yoseid aretz,
u'moshav yikaro bashamayim mi-ma'al,
u'sh'chinat u-zo be'gavhei me'romim.
Hu Eloheinu, ein od. Emet malkeinu, efes zulato.
Kakatuv be'torato, ve'yadata hayom, ve'hashevota Eil le'vavecha.
Ki Adonai, Hu ha-Elohim, bashamayim mi-ma'al,
ve'al ha'aretz mi-tachat. Ein od.
Kakatuv be'toratecha: "Adonai yimloch le'olam va'ed."
Ve'ne'emar: "Ve'haya Adonai le'melech al kol ha'aretz,
bayom hahu yihiyeh Adonai echad, u'shemo echad."

Translation: It is our duty to praise the Master of all, to acclaim the greatness of the One who forms all creation. For God did not make us like the nations of other lands, and did not make us the same as other families of the Earth. God did not place us in the same situations as others, and our destiny is not the same as anyone else's. And we bend our knees, and bow down, and give thanks, before the Ruler, the Ruler of Rulers, the Holy One, Blessed is God. The One who spread out the heavens, and made the foundations of the Earth, and whose precious dwelling is in the heavens above, and whose powerful Presence is in the highest heights. Adonai is our God, there is

none else. Our God is truth, and nothing else compares. As it is written in Your Torah: "And you shall know today, and take to heart, that Adonai is the only God, in the heavens above and on Earth below. There is no other." Therefore we put our hope in You, Adonai our God, to soon see the glory of Your strength, to remove all idols from the Earth, and to completely cut off all false gods; to repair the world, Your holy empire. And for all living flesh to call Your name, and for all the wicked of the Earth to turn to You. May all the world's inhabitants recognize and know that to You every knee must bend and every tongue must swear loyalty. Before You, Adonai, our God, may all bow down, and give honor to Your precious name, and may all take upon themselves the yoke of Your rule. And may You reign over them soon and forever and always. Because all rule is Yours alone, and You will rule in honor forever and ever. As it is written in Your Torah: "Adonai will reign forever and ever." And it is said: "Adonai will be Ruler over the whole Earth, and on that day, God will be One, and God's name will be One.

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