

Characters

ANYA	late teens
MOSES	late teens
HARRY	late teens
AVIVA	40s
RENYA	40s
FRIEDA	40s
MRS. BROWN	60s
Kaminsky	80s

Setting

DIRTYLAND is set in a town called Avak. Two months previous to the start of the play, the local townspeople committed a massacre against a foreign group of people who had settled in the town. Every person remaining in the town was involved in the massacre.

Notes

- The field was the site of the massacre and where bodies were burnt. The grass won't grow back and the people of the town avoid it.
- When Aviva hears music playing, it is inaudible to the audience.
- / signifies the point at which there is an overlap in conversation and the next line of dialogue begins.

1.

Anya, Harry, Moses, Renya, Aviva and Mrs. Brown speak to the audience. **Frieda** is present but remains silent.

ANYA This is the story of my tooth.

It's my tooth. It's been bothering me. I think it's chipped. I've chipped it and it aches. No. Let me. Let me / please let me start again.

HARRY, MOSES please let me start again.

ANYA My tooth. This town. The town of Avak and the story of my tooth are related. / You see

AVIVA You see, the first half of this town murdered the second half. The notion of a first half / exists because the first half came first and then the second half followed.

MOSES exists because the first half came first and then the second half followed.

ANYA And in the midst of the. *(Beat.)* Massacre, I chipped my tooth. It was rough and it was hot and it was wild. We women were made / to show our teeth.

AVIVA to show our teeth. Some women have the gold teeth. They keep their riches / in their mouths.

ANYA in their mouths. But I'm too young to have any riches. *(Beat.)* And now, with a chipped tooth I'm. Not ugly but. I know there are worse things. Of course there are worse things than this. / Comp. En. Sation

RENYA Comp. En. Sation.

ANYA Payback. There's a dirty word. A new word in the button factory and the women don't like it.

Pause.

It's my tooth and. It aches and. I want a dentist a dentist passed through here once but he turned his nose up at us.

Mrs. Brown laughs

ANYA I want a new jacket. I want fresh cream again. I want to be a waitress and be entitled to free or discount meals.

So my tooth.

ALL Sad.

ANYA Isn't it.

2.

Anya, Moses and Harry are at the meeting place. Moses is tall with dirt under his nails. Harry is short with dirt under his nails.

HARRY I'm not booking no room I reckon that's stupid as fuck.

ANYA You can sleep on the floor.

HARRY No way!

MOSES I'll do it. I'll book it.

ANYA You book a room in the city and that's where we'll go.

HARRY You two can fuck off I'm not going to any room.

ANYA Moses.

HARRY *(Mimics her.)* Moses. Cunt.

ANYA You are.

MOSES Let's just focus on the situation.

HARRY You're a fuck up.

MOSES She's not a fuck up.

ANYA You're the fuck up, fuck up.

HARRY Fuck up.

ANYA No!

HARRY What are crabs?

Pause.

MOSES I'll book the room and when we arrive we will need to behave in a certain way.

ANYA Like husband and wife?

MOSES Well / possibly

HARRY If you two are husband and wife what the fuck am I?

ANYA The dim-witted brother. Half brother. And you're not sleeping in our bed.

Harry lunges at Anya and they wrestle a little and he tries to pull up her skirt and she pushes it down.

ANYA Don't do that!

HARRY Whore. Whore faced whore.

ANYA But Harry, I always wanted a brother...

MOSES The train to the city leaves on the second Wednesday of the sixth month.

ANYA That's in. *(Beat.)* Two days.

MOSES Two days. Kaminsky can help to get us on the train. I've bargained him down to two mirrors.

Pause.

HARRY Fucken Hell.

MOSES Two mirrors in two days.

ANYA I haven't seen a mirror in I don't know / how -

HARRY Lucky for you.

ANYA Moses!

MOSES There must be some around.

HARRY I'm not scared of fucken mirrors!

MOSES In the factory?

ANYA There must be.

HARRY My mother. *(Quieter.)* She kept one.

MOSES *(Beat.)* In the city, yes, we will pose as husband and wife. And you, Harry, will be my brother.

ANYA And we are from -

MOSES From Lintberg. Just passing through.

ANYA Looking for work.

MOSES Do you understand, Harry?

HARRY We're not from Avak.

ANYA That's right. We've never even been here before.

MOSES Not seen it.

ANYA Nor smelt it.

HARRY You both fucken reek of it.

ANYA (*Beat.*) Will we need new shoes?

MOSES Mirrors first. This must be done right. There's no other way.

HARRY Or you idiots could go fuck like Mrs. Brown and get married.

ANYA I'm nothing like Mrs. Brown. Moses, I'm nothing like Mrs. Brown.

MOSES Of / course not.

ANYA Not like Mrs. Brown who sits on her big terrace waiting for her – She doesn't pay back. She's lazy she's dirty. No. That's not me. Harry. You! That is not me.

MOSES Of course not.

ANYA I don't.

HARRY Just jokin.

ANYA I don't.

MOSES It's alright, Anya.

ANYA I don't. I never asked you to come.

HARRY (*Beat.*) I wanna come.

MOSES He wants to come.

ANYA He'll have to leave his mother.

MOSES You'll have to keep it from her.

ANYA Yes.

MOSES He knows. You know that, don't you Harry?

HARRY *(Beat.)* Fuck off.

ANYA I'll still go to the factory tomorrow?

MOSES Yes. You'd better.

Silence. Harry scratches his groin. Anya puts her hand to her cheek.

MOSES Is it still bothering you?

ANYA Not really.

MOSES It is. Let me see.

HARRY Let me see.

MOSES I'll look first.

HARRY I have smaller hands I could get in there and see.

MOSES Get off.

HARRY You're hurting her.

MOSES No I'm not.

HARRY It's broken. Ugh, I think it's infected.

MOSES He's right. It is.

ANYA I thought I might see a dentist in the city. I've been thinking about that. *(Pause.)* Maybe we could all see the dentist.

MOSES Of course. We can do that.

HARRY Yeah.

Harry scratches his groin.

Silence.

ANYA You might see someone about your arm?

MOSES I don't think so.

ANYA But it's –

MOSES I have full use of it now.

ANYA (*Beat.*) I saw it. The man with the –

MOSES You / saw?

ANYA I was watching. Most of the women were watching. I was picking up some of the jackets lots of people dropped their jackets.

MOSES Yes. I saw you picking up jackets.

ANYA You did?

MOSES Yes. A short green one.

ANYA That was a child's jacket, silly. That was Irena's jacket. (*Beat.*) I kept it. But it's not like I'll be taking it to the city.

MOSES Of course not.

Silence.

HARRY Mrs. Brown took a jacket.

ANYA ...

HARRY I saw it. On her (*Beat.*) bedroom floor. Looked like a fox but it was a jacket.

ANYA ...

HARRY Like a flat fucken fox. It was lookin at me. It was lookin at you.

ANYA (*Beat. To Moses.*) Would you like to see me in that jacket?

MOSES ...

ANYA I can't wait to see the dentist.

MOSES It's very important we get you to the dentist.

ANYA Do you think Mrs. Brown might have a mirror?

MOSES *(Beat.)* It's possible.

3.

Mrs. Brown *is polishing a man's pair of shoes on her terrace.*

MRS. BROWN The rise and fall. (*Beat.*) Left foot change, right foot change, box step and promenade. (*Beat.*) Promenade. Promenade. One, two, three, breathe. (*She inhales deeply.*) One, two, three, breathe. (*She inhales deeply.*) One, two, three. One, two, three. One, two, three. One, two, three. (*Beat.*) Isn't it lovely, Mr. Brown? Rise and fall. Rise and fall, Mr. Brown.

Mrs. Brown *sighs.*