

TERU'AH

A two act political  
drama

by David Greenberg

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# TERU'AH

THE TIME: Now

THE PLACE: The West

A huge banner hangs across the back of the stage. It remains, wherever we may go.

IT READS: 'PEACE, ORDER AND GOOD GOVERNMENT'

The stage is arranged with tables and chairs to accommodate a variety of similar scenes: Morton's apartment, Zak's apartment, the faculty lounge, an office etc. The front of the stage has a street lamp at one end. Sometimes we will meet on the street.  
Teru'ah

## Cast

Blair Frederick	Prime Minister	voice only
Morton	professor	50s
Helen	Morton's wife	50s
Simon	powerful lawyer	40-50
Zak	professor	40-50
MacKenzie	professor	40s
Moira	Zak's	35
Corrie	girlfriend	30s
Universal	MacKenzie's	20s
Reporter Henry	wife	50s
Karl	male/female	60s
	Henry Ford	
	Karl Marx	

Various protesters, sign carriers and off-stage voices



## SCENE TWO (ONE WEEK LATER)

MORTON walks into his living room and sits down, heavily. He picks up the remote to turn on the TV and then changes his mind. His wife, HELEN comes into the room.

HELEN

I didn't hear you come in — you're home early.

MORTON

I couldn't take it.

HELEN

What, are they still celebrating? It's been a week, already.

MORTON

You're going to think I'm crazy. It's like they're sneering at me. At me!

HELEN

This thing will pass and they'll realize how important it is to have a good Jewish *kopf* on the team.

MORTON

Don't be absurd. It's not going to pass, believe me. They're on a roll. They've got momentum and God help anyone in their way. We're out of it, Helen.

HELEN

You're such a dark man, Morton. God help me — you're a Maoist!

MORTON

A Maoist! Now I'm a Maoist.

HELEN

Perpetual revolution...permanent discontent. That's who you are. It's your part, Morton. Your role in life is to be always on the outside trying to get in and as soon as you get in, you jump out the window.

MORTON

I didn't jump. I was thrown.

HELEN

It's just the heat of the moment and you know it. It's not like you haven't heard a few remarks in your life. They had to give something to *them*, so they played a little politics. It will fade.

(MORE)

HELEN (cont'd)

You can't seriously imagine anyone listening to this country on such an issue...they're not going to make Jerusalem into an international city because the great white north thinks it should happen. What's the matter with you? There's something else, isn't there? Did somebody say something...?

MORTON

They burned an Israeli flag in the parking lot this afternoon.

HELEN

(momentarily shocked)

Well...who?

MORTON

Students, of course. Hundreds of them. I even recognized some of mine. But there was plenty of faculty standing around, watching from the windows.

HELEN

Probably drunk or doped up on something.

MORTON

MacKenzie was standing right beside me and we watched, together.

HELEN

Well I'm sure there will be repercussions. They don't tolerate that at Our University and you know it. I mean we're not in Quebec, for heaven's sake.

MORTON

I could tell he was pleased.

HELEN

Did he say that? Did he say something?

MORTON

No.

HELEN

Well what do you mean?

MORTON

No. He didn't say anything. He just watched.

HELEN

And what did you do?

MORTON

I watched.

HELEN

And-?

MORTON

I looked over at him. I was about to say something and I saw the look on his face. He wasn't smiling but his face was...how can I say this...it was lit. He was pleased. He turned away from me but the look on his face, I tell you. It was a look of triumph.

HELEN

You were never very good at reading faces.

MORTON

That's not all.

HELEN

(resigned)

Somebody made a remark?

MORTON

They have resurrected that proposal to boycott all the Israeli universities.

HELEN

Not again!

MORTON

So I said to MacKenzie, 'how is it you promote academic freedom by boycotting Israeli academics?' and he replies to me: 'Israel's standing in the world academic community is undeserved.' Undeserved! Twenty percent of the Nobel prizes! Einstein. They would boycott Einstein. Explain to me please, how they are supporting academic freedom by boycotting twenty percent of the Nobel prizes ever awarded?

HELEN

And it will fail, as it did-

MORTON

No. It passed.

HELEN

What?

MORTON

It passed. It passed.

HELEN

Well, even so. It won't last. Reasonable people will prevail. This is what we must expect.

MORTON

Reasonable people. There's an idea. Like Blair Frederick? Like MacKenzie? These are the people who are making the decisions. They could put an end to it in a minute, you know. Just like that!

(MORE)

MORTON (cont'd)  
 (snapping his fingers)  
 But they don't do they? The whore of politics is sucking  
 cock all across the campus.

HELEN  
 Pardon me?

MORTON  
 The fucking whore of politics is sucking cock. You heard  
 me. The cocksuckers are in control...you call that  
 reasonable?

HELEN  
 Well, I haven't heard it put that way before, that's all.

MORTON  
 Well get used to it. The next slurp you hear will be  
 a socialist politician with a sudden taste for-

HELEN  
 -I think you have made your point.

MORTON  
 There are no reasonable people at times like this. It's  
 starting. Here of all places. Well, I suppose I shouldn't be  
 surprised, after all. Look at last time.

HELEN  
 You can't be serious, Morton. Those days are long gone. This  
 country has made such a public display of itself it couldn't  
 possibly turn on us like that. Are you kidding me? Why the  
 other day the city council indicated that the new garbage tax  
 would put the sanitation department back in the 'African.'

MORTON  
 Yes, I read that. It was a computer error.

HELEN  
 They have these Muslim women going to vote, completely  
 covered except for their eyes and then the idiot behind the  
 table asks for photo identification!  
 (can't help laughing)  
 Have you ever heard of anything so ludicrous in your entire  
 life? Come on Morton, that lovely French lady they made head  
 of the United Nations Human Rights thing...you know who I'm  
 talking about!

MORTON  
 -The judge?

HELEN  
 Yes, yes, that's her. Well she was off to Iran, you know  
 what for? It was a human rights meeting! Can you imagine? She  
 had a wonderful time, apparently.



MORTON

She's that judge from Montreal.

HELEN

It's distressing, I'll say that much; but please don't blow this out of proportion. There's no possibility whatsoever of anything strange happening and I think you know that.

MORTON

Perhaps I will just strap on a few sticks of dynamite and walk into the next Chancellor's dinner. It works for them.

HELEN

Yes, that's an excellent idea.

MORTON

Glad you agree.

HELEN

Oh for God's sake, Morton. The world is not what it was. You can't possibly believe that an educated public would succumb to this kind of nonsense. So they want to make Jerusalem an international city. They'll make a big show of trying to do something and then have a Royal Commission and no one will ever hear of it again. We all want a lot of things but rational people don't expect to get them.

MORTON

Rational people don't worry me.

The doorbell rings and she gets up to answer it.

We hear HELEN (off stage) inviting ZAK and SIMON into the house. She is somewhat surprised to see them.

They enter the room in a hurry.

Morton points the TV remote at the news crew and sits down.

The others gather around.

## SCENE THREE

SIMON  
Has he appeared yet?

HELEN  
Who? What is going on?

MORTON  
It's the triumph of the will, my dear.

The UNIVERSAL REPORTER appears with his microphone and a soap box which he sets up in one corner of the stage.

UNIVERSAL REPORTER  
I'm here on the Yorkton Campus this evening following an historic vote by the faculty. They decided overwhelmingly to boycott any further academic contact with Israeli universities. The vote was almost ninety percent in favor and now-....just wait a minute, I have faculty spokesman William MacKenzie...Good evening, Professor MacKenzie. Do you have a moment to explain to our viewers at home what has actually happened here tonight?

MacKenzie appears from the wing and strides purposefully over to the news crew.

MACKENZIE  
Well, certainly, Bon soir, Comment sa va? Always a pleasure to talk to you.

UNIVERSAL REPORTER  
(giggling)  
Merci, eh tu.

MACKENZIE  
This is a seminal moment in the fight for progressive justice in this country and around the world and I'm very proud that our faculty here has taken the lead in this. Basically, what's happened is that we have expressed our solidarity with a displaced and oppressed people...We support the rights of all people to be educated. And until-  
(cheers and howling impinge in the background)

UNIVERSAL REPORTER  
For the benefit of our audience, I'll just add here that it sounds worse than it is.  
(MORE)

UNIVERSAL REPORTER (cont'd)

That noise is just some students, very exuberant students, I might add, cheering as an Israeli flag is burned in the parking lot. It's nothing, really. Everybody seems to be in quite a good mood, in fact...

MACKENZIE

Oh yes. It's like the first day of spring, I tell you. Freedom from the grip of an ancient cold.

UNIVERSAL REPORTER

We understand the Prime Minister is scheduled to speak.

MACKENZIE

I'm not really at liberty to say. We did hear a rumor that he might-

UNIVERSAL REPORTER

Oh, there he is...

We hear background noise of Frederick's voice and cheering and car horns...

Frederick appears at the back edge of the stage. He is faceless, hidden in shadow. He talks with voluble enthusiasm, waving his arms occasionally. His voice is entrancing.

FREDERICK

Let me say, I've never been so proud to be a Canadian. We are not here to support this revolution, ladies and gentlemen. Oh, no. We are not going to support this revolution: We are going to lead it!

(Shouting and cheering.)

FREDERICK (cont'd)

When I used to go here and there throughout the country, simply as a public speaker, people used to ask me why we believed that a revolution would be necessary, instead of working within the framework of the established political order and with the collaboration of the parties already in existence. Why must we have a new party, and especially why a new revolution?

SIMON

What the hell is he going on about?

MORTON

Ho! Ho!, Ho!

(starts to laugh hysterically)

## FREDERICK

It is out of the question to think that such a revolutionary reconstruction could be carried out by those who are the custodians and, more or less, the responsible representatives of the old regime - or by the political organizations founded under the old forms. Nor would it be possible to bring this about by collaborating with these institutions, but only by establishing a new movement which will fight against them for the purpose of carrying through a radical reformation in political, cultural and economic life. But let me say, our revolution was...entirely a bloodless proceeding. When the party took over power after overthrowing the very formidable obstacles that had stood in its way, it did so without causing any damage whatsoever...to property. I can say with a certain amount of pride that this was the first revolution in which not even a window-pane was broken. **(1)**

The crowd breaks into uncontrolled chanting and screaming....

## UNIVERSAL REPORTER

Well. That's the scene here at the Yorkton University campus where the faculty got a surprise visit from the newly-elected Prime Minister, Blair Frederick. This evening the faculty voted overwhelmingly to cut off all academic ties with universities in Israel as a protest against the repressive regime there. For reaction we go to Benjamin Goldstein, president of the-

## SIMON

Turn it off.

The Universal Reporter turns to stone.

## HELEN

Good God, what is happening?

## SIMON

We'll have to call a meeting right away. I-

## MORTON

Yes, a meeting. Let's have a meeting. We'll designate who among us will be the new Judenrat. I believe you'll be elected, Simon. No doubt about it. You and Bloomenstein and Feldt: all the big Jews. You can assign the lesser positions to undermenchen like me. Perhaps I could be a policeman. I always wanted to be a cop. I'll round up the Jews on the list and we'll send them someplace...where will we send them, do you think? We need a new Poland. How about Quebec? That would be a good place, I think. They can burn Jews all day in Quebec and no one will say a word.

(MORE)

MORTON (cont'd)

The ash will fall like snow on the little French villages, just like a Kreigoff and the stink will hang in the air but 'sacre blue,' don't worry 'mon petit chou,' they are just burning garbage...nothing for you to worry about...Hail Mary, mother of God-

ZAK

Morton-

MORTON

You could be the liaison with Frederick and the NDSA. With your white girlfriend they might forgive you, you know? That is, of course, if she doesn't denounce you when they start the roundups.

SIMON

Will you calm down!

MORTON

You should even suggest they create a special Ministry of Jewish Affairs and offer to organize it for them. This way-  
(losing control)

Kill the Jews! Kill the Jews. Round 'em up...the arrogant bastards, the greedy, parasitic virus, the AIDS of humanity...if we can only get rid of the Jews! Eight billion people in the world...sixteen million Jews...that's the problem...the Jews...and their ill-gotten gains, the eternal subterfuge of the eternal Jew. The irrepressible Zhid! The succubus Kike. Deceitful, dubious, fraudulent, he insinuates himself into the host and begins to suck the essence, gorging on the pure, sweet blood of the human being! He's smart! He's cunning. Soon enough, the sheeny sarcoma glinting black and greasy on the white countenance of the Aryan angel cannot be eradicated without killing the angel itself! Jews! Everywhere! Filthy, slimy, grubbing, Jews. Greasy, dark-skinned malevolent, conspiratorial, satanic spawn, slithering across the face of mans nobility...infecting the cells...miscegenation, inflation, floods and hurricanes...death and lightning bolts...murder rape, pornography, deicide...evolution - psychotherapy!!! Fuck you! Fuck all of you! Fuck everything and everyone. For thirty years I worked for that party...for thirty years. I campaigned for Blair Frederick when there was no hope. Lord Jesus Christ! Save me! Here we go again.

(glares at everyone)

Oh little town of Bethlehem,

How still we see thee lie.

The dead are laid where Jesus stayed,

And tanks go rolling by...

They sang that at the Christmas party last year and I pretended to laugh...you remember? I laughed. MacKenzie and the others, all grinning, sloshing wine and singing and I laughed. Ho! Ho! Ho!

Helen embraces him as he staggers. She leads him away.

SCENE FOUR (Some weeks later)

ZAK goes to the bar and pours himself a drink. We hear the party chatter of MOIRA, MACKENZIE and CORRIE, who saunter out holding wine glasses. They find various places to sit or stand.

MACKENZIE

That was a wonderful meal, my dear. What do you call those things again?

MOIRA

Kishke.

MACKENZIE

Kishke. I must remember that.

MOIRA

These Jews are so proud of it but my mother made it for years only she called it Haggis. Not so special after all.

An unnatural silence follows her remark. *She thought she was making a joke.*

CORRIE

(uncomfortable with the  
silence)

Well I certainly don't want to know what's in them then.

ZAK

You were saying... bout the Jewish issue-

MACKENZIE

Jewish issue? I didn't say anything of the kind!

ZAK

Pardon me. I must have misheard you.

MACKENZIE

Can't a fellow have a beef with Israeli policy and not be called names?

MOIRA

Walt, I'm surprised at you. No one is calling you anything.

CORRIE

He's just saying what everybody thinks. He's always been up front about that sort of thing. You can't condemn him for telling the truth.

ZAK

The truth? Well, we are all entitled to a view, that's for sure. But they'll be here sooner or later, believe me. In force. I mean they probably already are here.

MACKENZIE

That's my point. Did you ever ask yourself why they do come here? They say we're supporting their enemies and in fact we are. It's bloody good tactics, really, when you think of it. They can't beat the Israelis, God knows. So choke off the supply line. Well, I never signed up to supply Israel. Why should I be blown up to protect a country eight thousand miles away? It's not just Canada, Zak. I'm proud to say the motion going to the U.N. will come from our Canadian delegation but the British are backing us all the way. And the French and all of Africa...this is Canada taking a real lead in solving once and for all the problems that have been driving us all mad for years...for centuries!

ZAK

Ahhh. A final solution.

MACKENZIE

(still friendly)

Don't you dare, Zak. I won't have it.

ZAK

So you send a man who thinks Hitler was right to gas the Jews to the U.N. as your representative...but this is not anti-semitism, it's just what? Politics?

MACKENZIE

Hitler! Who's talking about Hitler? You see, that's the problem with you people-

CORRIE

He didn't mean that the way it sounded. For God's sake, we've been friends for years. How could you even think we would be anti-Semitic?

MACKENZIE

It's all right, Corrie, calm down. I'm sure Zak understands what I meant, what I was trying to say was-

ZAK

-The head of the Canadian delegation, has stated publicly that Hitler was right to gas the Jews. What's to understand? Let me quote: Hitler "was going to make damn sure that the Jews didn't take over Germany or Europe.

(MORE)



ZAK (cont'd)

That's why he fried six million of those guys. Jews would have owned the God damn world. If it wasn't for Hitler, you would be owned by Jews right now." (2)

MACKENZIE

The man made one stupid remark. He shouldn't have said that. Nobody's defending that. And we took away his Canadian Hero Medal, for Christ's sake! In any case, does it nullify all his other accomplishments? He's done wonders for his own, those Indians. Natives, we call them now.

CORRIE

I always thought natives were Negroes...er, blacks.

MACKENZIE

As usual, we started out talking about the motion on Jerusalem and what are we talking about? Is this one an anti-Semite...did that one make a Jewish remark...God man, it's enough already.

CORRIE

We kicked Zundel out of the country, didn't we? (3)

ZAK

You did this for the Jews?

CORRIE

Didn't we send books when the Arabs burnt the library in Montreal? I bought over a hundred dollars worth of new books myself and I'm not even Jewish, but I like Jews. Obviously. (4)

MOIRA

I beg your pardon?

ZAK

The head of the Canadian delegation to the U.N. says Hitler was right to burn the Jews but I'm the one who is digressing?

MACKENZIE

That's exactly what I'm saying, Zak. Hitler should not have killed the Jews. There was no justification whatsoever for such actions. There. What else can I say?

MOIRA

I beg your pardon?

MACKENZIE

None whatsoever. Whatever was going through his mind, I can't say, but no Canadian...well, no intelligent Canadian-

CORRIE

He was mad...there's no doubt about it. He was mad as a hatter. Nobody's saying anything else. Nobody's in favor of gassing Jews.

ZAK

That's a relief...

MOIRA

Really...

CORRIE

We're trying to stop the killing.

MACKENZIE

God only knows...I mean the man was facing a monstrous problem, wasn't he? If he hadn't found something to focus on...what I mean is, he went too far, of course...but it's not the point any longer. That was almost seventy years ago! Seventy years! Se-ven-ty years! I doubt if there's a man alive who was even there but here we are still paying reparations. When does it end? How many generations have to pay for one mistake? It's time to move on, man. The Jews can't keep throwing that in our faces forever and I for one...well I am tired of it. If that makes me an anti-Semite in your eyes...

ZAK

And the actual numbers! Who knows how many really were murdered? The numbers keep changing...

MACKENZIE

Yes, yes, the murders, the murders. Okay! Murders. But here we are now, in the Twenty First Century and Israel is acting just like Hitler!

MOIRA

I thought you just said Hitler wasn't so bad after all?

ZAK

Poor old Hitler. He'd be turning over in his grave right now if he heard you, Walt. Jews being likened to Nazis! Imagine what he'd think?

MACKENZIE

I'm not going to fall for it, Zak. Not this time. Oh, no. I'm done crawling around on all fours over that issue. This isn't about the Jews. It isn't about Hitler. This is about Israel, the country, the political entity that is dragging the world into a vortex of nuclear holocaust. Ah! You see. I dare to use the word. Holocaust. That's what it is. A holocaust. We're trying to prevent the next holocaust.

ZAK

But it's not about Jews...

MACKENZIE

No. This is not about the Jews.

ZAK

Just the Israelis...who happen to be Jews...

MACKENZIE

Yes. That's my point exactly. And you need to see that. You all do.

ZAK

All of us...

CORRIE

It's in your own best interests, if you think about it, Zak. After all, you're a Canadian, aren't you? You were born here? You live here? Why should you be blown up for Israel's sake? What's in it for you? You're not like those people. My God, I've known you and Moira for how long? Ten years? Have we ever made an anti-Jewish remark? Have we ever said anything about Jews, even when you are going on about Israel and the Arab terrorists...I mean wasn't Menachem Begin a terrorist?

MACKENZIE

There's no moral reason not to go ahead with this. Why are the Israeli's more important than the Palestinians?

MOIRA

Why are the Palestinians more important than the Israelis?

MACKENZIE

Peace! That's all we want. Peace. Peace with their neighbors, peace on earth and good will t'ords men.

ZAK

Merry Christmas.

(mesmerized by Walt's  
unravelling)

We should do this for the sake of the world!

MACKENZIE

Think about it, Zak. We open the city to all the great faiths and we place U.N. peacekeepers on every street corner. The stirring sight of a blue beret and a multinational force of stalwart lads all dedicated to the glory of...multiculturalism and ethnic diversity.

MOIRA

It brings tears, it really does...

ZAK

Sure, just ask the Tutsis. (5)

MACKENZIE

I'm sure you're wondering about the militants. Will they go along?

ZAK

The militants? Militants. Hmmm. No...no. I was wondering what will happen to the Jews...sorry, the Israelis, I meant to say.

MACKENZIE

They'll have to accept it, won't they?

(burning with excitement)

The entire world arrayed against them, an irresistible force. They will see they cannot prevent this from happening if we stand as one world. They will realize the Muslims have a right to Jerusalem just as much as any Christian, as any...Israeli. I believe the cooler heads among your people will surely see that this is the best solution for everyone.

ZAK

The cooler Jews, you mean?

MACKENZIE

Jews? Who said anything about Jews? Did I even mention the word? No. And here you are back on the Jews. This is irrational...it's an obsession that grows like a cancer on the brain. You kill it one place and it pops up in another. Who said anything about Jews? How can I convince you this is not about Jews? What do I have to say?

ZAK

I don't think there is anything, really...

MACKENZIE

You see? You admit it when you're finally cornered, when you're finally forced to see the rational side of this equation. Israel is not about Jews.

ZAK

Of course not. How stupid of me.

MACKENZIE

Look. If we really want to get into the facts of it, Israel has no right to exist, not realistically speaking. The British should never have placed that cursed Balfour Declaration before the UN and the U.N. was completely out of line in voting to partition Palestine along religious lines like that. And if those New York Zionists hadn't persuaded the Americans to enter the First World War on the allied side...oh what does it matter now, anyway. Water under the bridge. I mean, what did we expect to happen?

(MORE)

MACKENZIE (cont'd)

We had no right to give Arab land to a bunch of Europeans. It was colonialism by proxy, nothing more. Now's our chance to right a great wrong, to correct the record, so to speak.

ZAK

I thought Israel was the U.N.'s attempt to right a great wrong...

MACKENZIE

Perhaps it was. I believe there were men of good faith then, as now, who naively believed...well, you know, the guilt factor and all that. But we've learned a great deal since then, Zak. We've had sixty years to consider our mistake and now the world is truly on the brink of disaster, all because of our good intentions!

ZAK

So you're righting a great wrong...

MACKENZIE

Exactly. A correction, long overdue. Can you really ask the world to commit suicide to protect the Jews?

ZAK

Jews, now?

MACKENZIE

Well, you are the one forcing the issue. Who lobbies the governments of the world incessantly? Who demands endless obeisance to the orthodoxy of guilt and repayment?...yes, repayment, always the reparations. As if you were the only victims of World War Two. What about the Russians? They lost twenty million! Is Germany forced to pay them? Not a dime. Not a dime, Zak.

ZAK

Only the Jews.

CORRIE

I brought a wonderful cake! Wait until you taste it. It's from the Jewish bakery!

MACKENZIE

I'm glad to see you're taking it this way, Zak. This is actually what I expected, isn't it Corrie? Didn't I say that as we were driving here. I said: 'Zak is no fool and he will see the truth in my words.'

CORRIE

(so desperate for people to get along, she chirps)

Yes, he did. I can verify it. Those were his exact words.

MACKENZIE

That's right.

CORRIE

There's the sweetest little old Jewess there and she always finds the best pastries for me...

MOIRA

(her voice is failing)

Yes...

CORRIE

Something wrong? Aren't you feeling well?

MACKENZIE

To: The New World Order!

ZAK

Judenrein!

MACKENZIE

(ignorant of the phrase)

Yes, certainly! Absolutely! What is it, again?

MOIRA

(pointedly interrupting)

I'm really not feeling very well.

She stands up and forces Zak to support her

MOIRA (cont'd)

I'm terribly sorry...

CORRIE

Well...of course, dear...Can I get you anything?

MOIRA

No. Thank you. It's just something, a bug, you know.

MACKENZIE

Yes, a bug. There's something going around...well perhaps we should be going, Cor.

CORRIE

I'm so sorry, dear. Are you sure?

MOIRA

(almost losing it)

I'm sure. Yes. I'm fine. I mean there's nothing you can do. It's a virus and you don't want to catch it.

MACKENZIE

Yes, well, that's a shame. We were having such a fine debate...this Zak of yours is really a clever man, sees right to the heart of things.

MOIRA

Thank you both...for coming. I'm sorry.

CORRIE

Don't worry about it, Mo. Shit happens.  
(she giggles)

MOIRA

Yes. I'm sorry.

MACKENZIE

Well perhaps we should be going.

ZAK

Thank you for coming.

MACKENZIE

Enjoyed it. Lots to be thinking about these days, isn't there Zak? Big changes. You can feel it. Things aren't the same anymore.

ZAK

No.

MACKENZIE

Fickle finger and all that.

ZAK

Yes.

CORRIE

Well. I'll leave the cake.

MOIRA

There's no need.

CORRIE

Oh, no, I wouldn't think of it. It's from the Jewish bakery on Crystal Street. You know the one that-

MOIRA

Please, I'm...

CORRIE

It always smells so good in there, I can hardly stand it. Like a chocolate shop, you know. And there's this one little old Jewish lady, her name is Ada and she always finds me the best pastries.

ZAK  
Thank you for the cake, Corrie.

CORRIE  
Yes, well, I certainly hope you understand-

MOIRA  
Understand?

CORRIE  
I mean about...everything, you know...

MOIRA  
What are you talking about?

MACKENZIE  
Oh, never mind, now. She's not feeling well, Corrie. It's no time for politics.

MOIRA  
Understand what? What are you talking about?

CORRIE  
Why are you getting so upset? All I said was-

MOIRA  
-I heard what you said. What do you mean?

ZAK  
I think Moira needs some rest, really.

MACKENZIE  
Yes, of course, of course. We best be going, I think.

CORRIE  
I'm sorry you're not well, dear. I'll leave the cake. It's in the kitchen-

(Walt ushers her out the door)

Moira and Zak remain frozen for a few seconds watching them leave. Moira leaves. Zak sits down.



## SCENE FIVE (A WEEK LATER)

Morton appears, sees Zak and walks over to him.

MORTON  
Are they here yet?

ZAK  
Relax. Sit down. It's nothing. It's nothing.

MORTON  
Easy for you to say.

ZAK  
Easy? It's not easy for anyone. I offered. They don't want me.

MORTON  
I know what this is about, don't worry.

MACKENZIE appears, sees them, smiles from a distance and gingerly takes a seat nearby.

MACKENZIE  
Not interrupting anything I hope...?

ZAK  
Good afternoon.

Morton stares at MACKENZIE but does not speak.

MACKENZIE  
If you'd rather, I can-

ZAK  
Not at all-

MACKENZIE  
Very well, then. You're being done today, aren't you, Morton?

MORTON  
Yes...You know that. Why pretend? That's why you are here.

MACKENZIE  
Look, I'm terribly sorry if civilized discourse offends you, but-

They turn as SUE BLACKSTONE (6) comes into the room. She has short hair, black, horn-rimmed glasses and wears an ill-fitting suit of drab colors...she screams, 'mousy.'

Ah, there she is. MACKENZIE (cont'd)

My goodness, the traffic. BLACKSTONE

Yes, it's awful. We're going to have to ban the automobile. MACKENZIE

While we're in a banning mood... ZAK

Sorry? BLACKSTONE

Never mind him, Miss Blackstone, he's just...difficult. MACKENZIE

Are you Mr. Leitner? BLACKSTONE

I am Leitner. MORTON

Good afternoon. Let's get started, shall we? BLACKSTONE

Ready, Aim. You're fired! ZAK

Right. First, let me explain that this is not a legal proceeding in any way and you're certainly not obliged to be here. You understand that, don't you? BLACKSTONE  
(trying to ignore him)

Unless he wants to keep his job... ZAK

And you are? BLACKSTONE

It's all right, just go ahead. MACKENZIE

The university has decided in its role as a leader in the progressive movement- BLACKSTONE

ZAK

Is that anything like a bowel movement?

BLACKSTONE

-progressive...progressive movement, that it must disassociate itself from all forms of oppression, whether these are carried out by states or corporations or individuals and-

ZAK

Excuse me?

BLACKSTONE

Who are you?

ZAK

I'm nobody, madame. A nothing in a world of nothingness. Pardon me, I apologize, I am only a poor Jew, but-

MACKENZIE

-Now see here-

BLACKSTONE

-You're wasting my time - and yours.

MORTON

Leave it, Zak.

BLACKSTONE

Now really, sir-

ZAK

Is it true you're planning to ban Hillel from the campus?

BLACKSTONE

I'm not planning anything, Mr.-?

ZAK

Goldenzweig.

BLACKSTONE

Yes, of course...

ZAK

I beg your pardon?

BLACKSTONE

I have been asked to conduct these interviews, that's all.

MORTON

Kind of a specialist...

If you like.

BLACKSTONE

ZAK

Yes, I've heard about you...They call you the anti-Jew, don't they.

MACKENZIE

They? Who would they be, I wonder? Now we can either continue this or not. It's really up to you, Morton.

MORTON

Of course. Go on. Go ahead. I'm all ears.

ZAK

Just a question...one question.

(She waits.)

Why only the Jewish teachers?

BLACKSTONE

Mr. Goldberg-

MORTON

Goldberg? Who's Goldberg?

MACKENZIE

That's enough. I have held my tongue but-

BLACKSTONE

That's fine. What do you want?

MORTON

Just the Jewish teachers?

BLACKSTONE

Do you know the story of the elephant, Mr. Goldenberger? The professor asks his students to write an essay about elephants. The German writes: The organizational habits of the elephants. And the Frenchman writes: The sex life of the elephant and the Englishman writes: Hunting elephants and the Jew writes: The elephant and the Jewish question.

ZAK

Yes, I know this story very well. We give it a somewhat different tack.

BLACKSTONE

No doubt.

ZAK

A matter of interpretation yes?

BLACKSTONE

Perhaps. But one thing is absolutely certain.

ZAK

And that would be what, exactly?

BLACKSTONE

This has nothing whatsoever to do with Jews!

ZAK

Nothing? Nothing you say?!

BLACKSTONE

(triumphantly)

Nothing! I'm not a novice at this Mr...Mr-? I'm sorry-?

ZAK

Goldentuchas.

BLACKSTONE

Goldentuchas, yes. Mr. Goldentuchas. I've had a lot of experience with you people.

MORTON

That's very encouraging.

BLACKSTONE

Oh, yes. We know how you operate. We've caught onto it, you might say. Everything gets turned into The Jewish Question and pretty soon we're talking about the Holocaust with a capital; 'H' and the Spanish Inquisition and God knows what. Well, it's not going to happen here today. You are wasting your time.

ZAK

No Jews today. No bread, no Jews...

MACKENZIE

Morton I'm surprised, I really am. I had great faith in you. That's why I recommended you.

MORTON

You recommended me?

ZAK

You denounced him!

MACKENZIE

Oh for Jesus' sake. How melodramatic can you get? I merely suggested he would be a good subject to be interviewed. I was thinking of you people...I was trying to help you.

MORTON

Thank you. We appreciate your...your...

MACKENZIE

You think you can turn us into a couple of anteye-Seemites (sic) just by a few manipulations, but we're not going to fall for it.

(MORE)

MACKENZIE (cont'd)

Miss Blackstone here came all the way from England to conduct these interviews for us - at our invitation - and she will not be thwarted by your usual bluff. She knows. She understands.

BLACKSTONE

That's right, sir. I assure you I have been tested by the best. I know every trick in the book.

MACKENZIE

Yes, exactly. No point. Don't even bother.

ZAK

Every trick...

BLACKSTONE

Don't try it. I'm onto you already. I won't be baited by you people. This is not about Jews. We're not going to talk about the Jewish Question.

MORTON

Could you at least, please, tell me what is the Jewish Question...so I don't accidentally talk about it, of course.

MACKENZIE

Enough, I say -

BLACKSTONE

Shall we continue or not? It's entirely up to you, as I said before we started.

MORTON

Perhaps I could answer this Jewish question for you, madame, after all, I am a Jew.

BLACKSTONE

Well, it won't do you any good here.

MORTON

It doesn't seem to do much good anywhere, to be honest with you-

MACKENZIE

I propose we forbid the use of the word Jew or Jewish or Judaic or Judaism or anti-Semitism or anything directly or indirectly related to those subjects...that way we just get right to the point and they can't lead us off...

ZAK

(giggling)

...on some wild Jew chase. Sorry. Sorry.

BLACKSTONE

I will not be intimidated by your threats...none of you. You think you can make me out to be some kind of an Anteye-Seemite but-

ZAK

She said it! She said it!

BLACKSTONE

-But it won't work. You're just going to have to answer the questions or not. It's entirely up to you. Nobody's keeping you here.

MORTON

And if I don't?

ZAK

It's just like failing to take a breath test when the police stop you. Anyone who refuses to take a breathalyzer test is automatically guilty of drunk driving.

MORTON

So I would be guilty of what, exactly, if I don't answer your questions?

MACKENZIE

No, no, no! Not guilty of anything. No accusations are being made!

BLACKSTONE

Certainly not, I only meant to say-

MACKENZIE

-we are endeavoring to clarify the situation, that's all.

BLACKSTONE

Yes. Clarification. We want to be absolutely clear. Crystal clear.

MORTON

About what, exactly?

MACKENZIE

The administration requires clarification. That's clear enough, isn't it? We are assisting the government in its efforts to promote a progressive and peaceful policy. What could be clearer than that?

ZAK

It's just that I'm not clear about what you want? You say it's not about Jews-

MACKENZIE

Ding Dong. Ding Dong. Not allowed. No Jews.



MORTON

No Jews allowed.

BLACKSTONE

How dare you! How dare you, sir. Who ever said anything like that? You are the only one who has mentioned the word, in fact. I shall file a defamation suit against you if you dare to imply in any way that I have some prejudice against you people. Lord knows, you're all the same.

MORTON

The thought never entered my mind.

MACKENZIE

Quite right...

ZAK

You are only asking Jewish faculty these questions and so-

MACKENZIE

One has to concentrate limited resources where they will do the most good. Surely you can understand that.

MORTON

Of course.

ZAK

Which is why you stop Muslims in terror sweeps and blacks in drug crack-downs...

MACKENZIE

Liar! That is not permitted and you know it. Why even say it. Order-In-Council seven four three dash two zero zero seven expressly forbids any racial profiling, Morton. You know very well that the NDSA would never countenance such activities. It is totally against everything we believe.

MORTON

You don't do that? You mean you don't stop Muslims and blacks?

MACKENZIE

Of course not! Are you mad?

ZAK

But you only ask Jews these questions-

MACKENZIE

Ding Dong! Ding Dong! That word is not allowed.

MORTON

What word?

MACKENZIE

Oh, you think you're so smart. But I'm way ahead of you. Just forget it.

BLACKSTONE

Really, those with nothing to hide have nothing to fear.

MACKENZIE

What could be simpler?

MORTON

I just wish I knew what I might be hiding. A fellow could be hiding things and not even know it! Then he would be guilty.

MACKENZIE

Damn it! There's no guilt or innocence here. You aren't being judged...this is just an inquiry, an attempt to ascertain the facts.

ZAK

Just the facts, mam... Ah, the facts. Any facts in particular, or just facts in general?

MACKENZIE

You must ignore him; he will have us walking on our hind legs and barking if you're not careful.

BLACKSTONE

Do you support the illegitimate existence of the state of Israel?

MORTON

Sorry?

BLACKSTONE

Have you ever donated funds to any organizations involved in terrorism in the Middle East, including: B'nai Brith; Anti-Defamation League; Union of Jewish Students; The American Jewish Committee; Hadassah; Jewish Agency; World Zionist Organization-

MORTON

Yes, but-

BLACKSTONE

Which ones, specifically-

ZAK

I'm afraid I can't-

MACKENZIE

(trying to help)

Admit to one or two of the lesser ones and, you know, they'll probably let it go.

BLACKSTONE  
It's really not kosher to coach the witness.

MACKENZIE  
I'm sorry.

BLACKSTONE  
You haven't  
answered.

MORTON  
What's the question, exactly?

BLACKSTONE  
Which organizations do you support?

ZAK  
He signed a petition calling for an end to the seal hunt.  
I know this for a fact.

BLACKSTONE  
Fine. I'll have to record that as a refusal to answer.

MORTON  
I haven't refused, exactly.

BLACKSTONE  
Have you ever written letters to the editor or in any way  
supported the genocide of the Oppressed People In Question?  
Hereafter referred to as the OPIQ.

MORTON  
People in question? Is this like the Jewish Question?

MACKENZIE  
There you go-

BLACKSTONE  
Who said anything about Jews, I ask you?

MORTON  
But who are the people in question? What are you  
talking about?

BLACKSTONE  
You know exactly to whom I refer and don't try for one  
moment to wiggle out of it.

MACKENZIE  
Exactly. Precisely. Without question. No doubt whatsoever.

BLACKSTONE  
I refuse, categorically to play into your hands. I will not.  
I shall not.

MACKENZIE

We, shall not. You are not alone, Ms. Blackstone.

ZAK

Just a hint, perhaps. The first letter-

BLACKSTONE

Are you prepared to sign a written declaration condemning the Fascist, Racist, War-Monger Super State and it's lap-dog proxy and call for the immediate right of return for all exiled OPIQs, along with restitution, a formal truth commission and guaranteed executions of war criminals to be identified by the victims or their designates?

MACKENZIE

It's a bloody formality. Just sign the damn thing and be done with it. We can all get back to something more productive.

BLACKSTONE

I happen to find this very productive.

MACKENZIE

I didn't mean it quite like that-

BLACKSTONE

It begins right here, sir. Right now.

MACKENZIE

Of course. Of course it does...I would never suggest otherwise.

ZAK

Unless you want him to.

MACKENZIE

Good lord. Why must you turn this into a farce? What do you hope to gain?

BLACKSTONE

Typical diversionary behavior. Ad hominem, ad infinitum.

MORTON

Annuit Coeptis.

ZAK

Ouyay utsnay?

MACKENZIE

Enough, God damn it.

MORTON

So we're done then?

Hardly.  
BLACKSTONE

MACKENZIE  
Have you no dignity at all?

MORTON  
Please accept my - our - apologies. Continue.

BLACKSTONE  
If I may...Do you consider yourself to be deserving of special consideration by any government, social institution or invisible deity?

MORTON  
What?

BLACKSTONE  
Do you believe you have a right to another's property, moveable or immovable, living or deceased, animal, mineral or vegetable because of alleged past suffering at the hands of misunderstood and oppressed nationalist entities only trying to pull the knife out of their own collective back?

MORTON  
Certainly....not? I don't know.

BLACKSTONE  
That must be recorded as a refusal to answer.

MORTON  
Isn't there a box for 'don't know?'

BLACKSTONE  
I did not design the questionnaire Mister Leitner. I can only follow instructions. I have been hired to do this because of my unbending willingness to following instructions and my experience with-

Everyone stares at her for a second.

BLACKSTONE (cont'd)  
-difficult respondents.

Everyone sighs.

MACKENZIE  
Continue, Miss Blackstone, Continue.

BLACKSTONE  
Do you socialize primarily with people holding similar views to your own and with whom you feel comfortable because none of your values are challenged due to that fact that your friends are as narrow minded and clannish as yourself?

Zak and Morton are dumbfounded.

MACKENZIE

Another refusal to answer, Morton, and I'm afraid there's no hope.

ZAK

Can he come back to that, later?

BLACKSTONE

'Fraid not. I know what you're up to, Mr. Gold.

ZAK

Well, what if he doesn't understand the question?

BLACKSTONE

That is not possible. We anticipated this very tactic and the questions have been designed for universal understandability within a narrow range, plus or minus two percentage points seventeen times out of twenty one, regardless of the sociological predisposition of the respondent and in complete agreement with the bell curve ratios for the various age groups with factors for gender and income level.

MACKENZIE

There you have it. The Esperanto of questions. Satisfied now?

BLACKSTONE

Are you now or have you ever been a card-carrying member of any group or organization which has been listed by your opponents as a front for immoral political activities?

MORTON

I really couldn't say.

BLACKSTONE

Right. Do you believe the bar should be adjusted to suit the applicant's relative position vis a vis the subject goal?

MACKENZIE

For God's sake, Morton, have you nothing to say in your own defense? Nothing we can use to ameliorate this appalling performance?

MORTON

(hopefully)

I support the smoking ban in restaurants.

The lights fade slowly. Zak is left sitting, reading a newspaper while Morton, MacKenzie and Blackstone leave the stage.

## SCENE SIX (LATER)

Moira returns from work. She is obviously distressed; her body language is clear. He looks up at her.

She sits down but neither speaks for a moment.

A little wine?  
ZAK

Sure.  
MOIRA

He rises and pours them each a glass of wine. He hands her the glass and she takes it and places it on a table without drinking.

MOIRA (cont'd)  
They fired Mel Rosenberg.

ZAK  
They decided not to renew his contract. It's not quite the same thing.

MOIRA  
He's going back to Israel.

ZAK  
Yes.

MOIRA  
I was in the lounge, this afternoon,...I saw that woman, Blackstone?...she's very prim and proper, isn't she? I thought, 'my God, the woman is a cartoon with that grey suit and those awful taupe stockings and the black shoes...'  
She was drinking tea with Juliette Bedeau, you know her, the French girl from the administration-

ZAK  
Yes-

MOIRA  
-and I went over, you know...I had a tray with my lunch and I was almost there and she said something to that Blackstone woman and they both looked at me...I couldn't turn away, it would have been too obvious. And Juliette doesn't look at me and the other one, she glances up as I get to the table...Juliette and I have had lunch a hundred times. I mean you always share a table, don't you? You don't go off-  
(She runs out of gas)

ZAK

Yes. Yes.

MOIRA

I just stood there for a few seconds like an idiot and then finally I saw Arnold Fritsch sitting by himself and I just sort of changed course, you know. They never even spoke a word to me. I-

(she can't finish her sentence)

ZAK

Chazerai!

MOIRA

I will never forgive her for that. Never.

ZAK

This is exactly the kind of thing I was worried would happen.

MOIRA

-Don't!

ZAK

You must listen to me.

MOIRA

Shut up!

ZAK

It's going to get worse. Much worse. This is just the beginning. First, the thin layer is peeled off...the daily protocols are abandoned. It starts with the manners and then pretty soon, when they see they can get away with that they start making comments or ignoring you in lines or seating other people before you...all the petty things.

MOIRA

I won't hear this.

ZAK

Do I have to remind you of that delightful dinner party with Walt and Corrie? You have to listen to me. You think you can handle this but you have no experience. You cannot know and you will not be able to get through it unharmed.

MOIRA

And what you are leading up to is not going to harm me?

ZAK

There is harm and there is harm.

MOIRA

You're not worried about me, are you Zak? You're worried about Zak.

(MORE)



MOIRA (cont'd)

You're worried that I will succumb and leave you in some very public way, so you are leaving me first. You've fed yourself on all those stories from the nineteen thirties and now you're using it as an excuse.

ZAK

Why would I need an excuse?

MOIRA

I know you.

ZAK

Apparently not.

MOIRA

-Marry me.

ZAK

I won't.

MOIRA

Because I'm not Jewish? I told you I would convert. I would be happy to convert.

ZAK

Convert! You think this is a religious issue?

MOIRA

A convert is to be considered the same.

ZAK

Sure, sure, in your dreams. This isn't about good enough or pure enough or Jewish enough.

MOIRA

This is what people do in times like this. They get married...they have a big Jewish wedding and shove it in their faces. They have a huge, obnoxious, wasteful party that drives them mad.

ZAK

I couldn't do it to you.

MOIRA

You really don't trust me, do you? Underneath all the intellectualizations and commentary you really think I would betray you.

ZAK

I can't help you ruin yourself, Moira. If you want to do something grand, if you want a cause, you'll have to find it elsewhere. And I'm afraid there isn't much choice.

MOIRA  
(stunned)

Liar!

ZAK  
Our landlord, Mssr. Belec was here this afternoon and he has asked us to leave - asked me - to leave the apartment.

MOIRA  
(she sits up)

What?

ZAK  
The other residents of the building have signed a petition to the court asking that we be relocated. They no longer feel safe in their apartments and so- (7)

MOIRA  
Safe? From you?

ZAK  
These gangs are targeting Jewish residences now, not just the public buildings.

MOIRA  
They cannot do that! We have the same rights as-

ZAK  
Well, the convention, you know, the convention on human rights forbids anyone from making another feel unsafe or uncomfortable in his home.

MOIRA  
And we make them unsafe?

ZAK  
Well, it's the UN thing. The government has signed onto this charter and I have spoken to some people high up. They believe the court will agree. It will put the welfare of our neighbors in front.

MOIRA  
Perhaps I have lost my mind.

ZAK  
It sort of has that flavor to it, I know. You stand there talking to someone you have known for years, going through the routines you've created with that person and they suddenly refuse to participate. You think you are going mad. It cannot be. But it is. But it cannot be...and so on until you don't know whether to explode with rage or hide. You know what a Bouncing Betty is? It's an anti-personnel mine.  
(MORE)

ZAK (cont'd)

When it's triggered it leaps into the air about four or five feet and hovers just long enough for the victim to know he is already dead.

Moira stands up slowly and goes to Zak. She looks at him for a moment. He brushes his hand against her hair. She slowly backs off stage and disappears.

Zak takes a chair but sits uncomfortably, fidgeting.

Morton enters the room carrying his inevitable sheaf of papers.

He sits. Simon arrives, sees them and walks over.

SCENE SEVEN (DAYS LATER)

SIMON  
Sorry I'm late.

ZAK  
They said on the radio this morning that your meeting was amicable. What exactly does that mean?

SIMON  
They're going ahead full speed.

MORTON  
What about the police?

SIMON  
You would have liked this. I was sent down to meet the new commissioner. We had a good talk for a while. It was interrupted only once for prayers. I don't know...his appointment was a move designed to get the situation in the east end under control. One of their own and all that.

MORTON  
The Commissioner of Police?

SIMON  
I couldn't believe it myself. But the others weren't that perturbed. I mean really, what can one say?

MORTON  
And what does he propose to do about the north end?

SIMON  
He proposes nothing. They have no resources to spare.

ZAK  
So, in other words, the gangs have a free hand in Camden Hills.

SIMON  
Well he isn't going to pull officers out of the east end in order to protect the rich Jews in Camden Hills.

ZAK  
He said this?

SIMON  
No, of course not. But the message was clear enough. He said it would be easier if all the Jews lived in one section of the city...that way they could provide a better ratio of officers.

ZAK

You just made that up.

SIMON

(Laughing out loud.)

I suggested it to him, actually...you know, just to see what would happen.

(grinning)

He agreed. Hadn't a clue what I was really saying.

MORTON

We will all have to follow Friedman's lead.

SIMON

Yes, that came up as well. They're going to prosecute him to the hilt. Going for the full six years.

ZAK

The bastard that attacked him only got two!

SIMON

Their position is that possession of an illegal handgun is more serious than simple robbery. They were considering charging him with attempted murder and they only barely dropped that after pressure from Rosen, Veigler and Nussbaum.

MORTON

The Judenrat.

SIMON

They hate it when we call them that but of course as soon as they turn around that's what people say.

ZAK

What do they think of this police commissioner?

SIMON

He's in way over his head but I believe they're going to make allowance, if you follow me.

ZAK

He's a made man, huh? Well he will fuck up with the wrong people eventually, won't he?

Simon shrugs, looks into the distance for a moment.

MORTON

Couldn't you say something?

SIMON

Advocate for someone more likely to be a Jew-lover?

MORTON

They're lining the cattle cars up at Union Station and you're mincing words with Moloch. We should be killing these filthy vermin.

ZAK

You are going to talk yourself right into a Commission investigation.

MORTON

I look forward to it. See if you can arrange it. Make sure everybody important is sitting near the podium.

ZAK

Every time we meet you end up going off like this. It's of no value.

SIMON

So they will not patrol the neighborhood and we are forbidden from defending ourselves.

ZAK

This is how it appears.

MORTON

How Canadian.

ZAK

Where's a good Jewish conspiracy when you really need one, huh?

SIMON

I guess we will have to do for the time being...

## SCENE EIGHT (MORE WEEKS HAVE PASSED)

It is night. The street lamp glows. Distant traffic sounds can be heard over the loudspeakers.

The 'street' is empty for a full thirty seconds. Then Zak appears, hands in his pockets, walking slowly. He is wearing a long, dark raincoat, like a campy-looking spy from a John Le Carre novel. He is walking an invisible dog, using one of those stiff carnival leashes. He stops by the lamp post.

ZAK

There you go.

He allows "the dog" to pee on the lamp post.

ZAK (cont'd)

Well? Nothing here either, I see.

He looks up and waits apprehensively, his hand stiffening in his coat pocket.

SIMON

Zak? Is that you?

Simon appears, walking briskly. He looks at the empty dog halter.

SIMON (cont'd)

What are you doing?

ZAK

Walking the dog.

SIMON

I see. Actually, I don't see.

ZAK

Call him, he'll come right to you. Go ahead. Go on Zhid. Go to the nice man.

(Confidentially)

I don't think he likes Jews.

SIMON

That must be it.

ZAK

They said he was a Jewhound and foolishly I thought he would be able to sniff out Jews; but as it turns out, he can't tell a Jew from a giraffe. Wouldn't you know it. You can't trust anybody these days.

SIMON

So it appears. Are you sure you're all right?

ZAK

If I am crazy, am I the person to ask about it?

SIMON

Well, you know how it is with Alzheimer's: if one thinks he might have it, he probably doesn't. I just thought maybe we could apply this principle.

ZAK

I assure you. I am as sane as anyone. Completely under control. He's laughing!

SIMON

Who? The dog?

ZAK

An inside joke.

SIMON

The dog, he likes your jokes?

ZAK

Sometimes. I thought we might, together that is, the two of us, me and Zhiddy Boy here, I thought we might be able to find it.

SIMON

It...?

ZAK

The Jewish question. We are looking everywhere. Under bushes, under rocks...along the sea shore. So far, I have nothing to report. We have checked several hundred lamp posts, dumpsters and fire hydrants. Perhaps we're looking in the wrong places.

SIMON

One place is as good as another.  
(Lights a cigarette)

ZAK

It could be anywhere! How can just one man and a single Jewhound, who is not even a very good Jewhound to start with, find it when it could be anywhere?



SIMON

I don't think you are going to find it that way.

ZAK

But they have the answer!

SIMON

So what else is nu?, pardon the pun. I mean what can I say?

ZAK

You're the big time lawyer. You're the one with all the contacts. You could at least get them to give you a hint, you know what I mean? Just a hint. The first few letters, maybe.

SIMON

It's been tried before. Better men than us. It's no use. They won't ever tell you what the question is because they don't know. They've got an answer, but even that changes all the time. Here it's a pogrom, there it's a gas chamber, here it's a country club, there it's a quota...They've tried 'em all and they're always wrong. Here we still are. You know why? Because they don't know the question. If they could figure out the question, they'd be more than half way to finding an answer, a final-

ZAK

-Solution.

SIMON

Yes. A final solution to the Jewish Question.

ZAK

That would be...a good thing?

SIMON

For them, sure.

ZAK

Maybe it would be good for us.

SIMON

Mmm.

ZAK

I thought we had joined up with the side that had joined up with us.

SIMON

Who was that?

ZAK

You know...the Lefties...

SIMON

Lefties? Where have you been for the last hundred and fifty years? Lefties! Lefties are sort of like the aristocrats of medieval times. They use the Jews to get power and fleece the population and then they throw them to the enraged masses...that's your lefty for ya. The Nazi is a much more honorable man than the lefty could ever be. I would strike a deal with a real Nazi before I would turn my back on a university intellectual for one second.

ZAK

I thought we were the left. We're not the Left, anymore?

SIMON

Now we're The Leftovers.

ZAK

Very funny.

SIMON

You surprise me. Look at the real left, the communists of the turn of the century...I mean the last century. Half the communist party members in the United States were Jews, yes? Okay, that's an exaggeration. Forty percent? I don't know.

(8)

ZAK

Come on, not that old bull shit again.

SIMON

Bull shit? What bull shit? The Jews weren't communists, as a rule, but the communists were most certainly Jews to a large extent.

ZAK

Because they thought it would improve their condition...they-

SIMON

Zak, Zak, Zak. Who cares why? They were communists. Yes.

ZAK

But none of the leadership. All the leaders were gentiles.

SIMON

Of course. None of the leaders...Trotsky, maybe...but the others - all goyim. That's right. And do you know why?

ZAK

They wouldn't elect Jewish leaders even among the communists.

SIMON

No. Dead wrong. We set it up so that all the leaders would be gentiles; that way the public wouldn't think the Jews were communists.

ZAK  
We did that?

SIMON  
Of course. Who else but the wily Jew?

ZAK  
So the absence of Jews among the communist leadership-

SIMON  
-is proof that the Jews were in charge of the communist party in the United States.

ZAK  
-whereas if there had been Jewish leaders-

SIMON  
It would be proof that the Jews were in charge of the communist party.

ZAK  
Wow.

SIMON  
We're an amazing people. I thought you knew this.

ZAK  
I knew it, but I didn't know we were that good.

SIMON  
Then the Communists decided to get rid of the Jews. And now your Leftie friends...But that's okay, because Gerry Falwell, may he rest in peace and Pat Robertson are going to take us in, at least until Jesus comes back. We've got it all figured out, as usual. You can't fool us. Once again, what's the problem?: They don't know the question.

ZAK  
How do we get everyone on board for this? It seems like such a monumental operation.

SIMON  
That's not a problem because we don't have to get anyone on board.

ZAK  
We don't?

SIMON  
They're born on board...genetic. Jews are born knowing what other Jews think.

ZAK  
You're kidding!

SIMON

You ever see a flock of birds swinging through the air, all separated by exactly the same amount of space, all turning in the right direction at the same time. I mean it's a bloody marvel. They never make a mistake. How does every one of a hundred thousand birds know to turn this way or that? You ever wonder about that?

ZAK

Wow. Okay. Tell me what I'm thinking right now.

SIMON

I don't mean petty stuff. We're not talking mind readers...we're talking instinct. The Jewish instinct. The insurmountable, undeniable, inexplicable, indescribable, irresistible Jewish instinct. The thing that makes us Jews!

ZAK

What is it? What is it?

SIMON

That's the *Jewish Question*, Zak.

ZAK

We found the Jewish Question!

SIMON

What is a Jew!

ZAK

What is a Jew? A Jew! Achew! Pardon me.

SIMON

You've got your *zeks kashes*. You know: who, what, why, when, where and how. It's the *what* that matters. What is a Jew? The Germans did okay, for a while, but they got into halves and quarters and eighths and then they started issuing certificates...you know, this guy is not really a Jew and this guy is and this one is part Jew but what part and so on and pretty soon they were all fucked up...they couldn't tell a Jew from a giraffe...so they decided to kill everybody. But then they got into trouble with that because so many Jews had married human beings that everything was confused. I mean the krauts gave it the old college try but it just didn't work out. (9)

ZAK

What a marvel.

SIMON

That's the question. You answer that, you've got it all solved, Zak. What is a Jew?

Simon, walks off. Zak watches. He raises his hands as if to speak and then decides he has nothing to say.

