

# عندما تبكي فرح | **When Farah cries | Wenn Farah weint**

a stage play by Mudar al Haggi

realized by Theater Arbeit Duisburg

space and time

Damascus (Syria), Amman (Jordan) in 2013

characters

Farah: a woman in her 20s

Ahmed: a man in his early 30s, Farahs boyfriend

Dunya: a woman in her 30s

Father: Farahs father

Officer: military man at the border

## **Scene 1 – in Dunyas flat (Damascus)**

Farah and Dunya reach Dunyas flat after a demonstration and being chased by the police. They do not know each other so far. Dunya is an activist since some time, Farah has just experienced her first demonstration. They talk about feelings while protesting, changes in Syria and their lifes: Dunya has left her family 10 years ago and lives alone since then, Farah studied sculpting but is not able to work artistically any more. Their conversation is interrupted by incoming phone calls of Farahs boyfriend Ahmed and her father – both are worried about her and check on her; she tells them she is at the hairdresser. Farah describes to Dunya what she experienced during the demonstration: she saw her mother (who is already dead) protesting next to her, running behind her. When Farah turned around, she did not see her mother, but Dunya.

## **Scene 2 – in Ahmeds room (Damascus)**

Ahmed is wanted by the regime and has to flee. He is waiting for a lift to Amman, packing. Both him and Farah ensure each other that their division will not last for long, the revolution will succeed soon. Thoughts about the future, questions wether it would be better to return to the village in the Aleppo region and memories are circulating in his mind. Farah promises him to be reasonable while he is gone. The moment he has to leave she confesses to him: „I went out to a protest“.

## **Scene 3 – a checkpoint at the border between Syria and Jordan**

Farah tried to follow Ahmed to Jordan but got caught at the border. An officer is investigating, trying to find the reason for her flight. She says that she tries to find work, but the officer found items related to the revolution amongst her things. He calls her father, and both men decide that she has to be sent back to Damascus.

#### **Scene 4 – in the flat of Farah and her father (Damascus)**

Farah is back to Damascus, she is sick and feverish. Her father, a childrens doctor, wants to give her an injection. While treating her, he investigates on Farahs trip and plans. He does not know anything about Ahmed but is suspicious about her syrian friends in Jordan, Laila and her brother Ghassan, to work for the opposition. After the injection Farah falls asleep. The father is talking to her about how much he loves and needs her. Waking up Farahs first question is about her mothers attitude towards the revolution (if she would still be alive).

#### **Scene 5 – in Duniyas flat (Damascus)**

Farah is visiting Dunya again. She hears more about Duniyas life: that this woman spends days in darkness, alone with the ants in her flat, to than dress up, go out and meet with people. Farah tells Dunya about her failed flight and that this was her last hope. Dunya encourages Farah to make her own decisions instead of being a victim of circumstances, to start working again to create her own life and story through her art. And to leave Syria. Dunya herself decided to stay in her flat, in Syria, the place she will die in. She only agrees to stay in contact with Farah under one condition: that Farah started sculpting again.

#### **Scene 6 – in the fathers clinic (Damascus)**

Dunya visits Farahs father in his clinic. They discuss several issues: family, which the father believes to be the most supporting community in life; Duniyas lifestyle and decision making, political issues. He accuses Dunya of being the reason for Farahs attempt to leave Syria. Dunya tells him that Farah is wanted by the security and that they have to smuggle her out as soon as possible. After more debates, the father agrees to contact the Free Syrian Army in ordert o help his daughter.

#### **Scene 7 – in a cofeehouse in Damascus**

The father meets with the Officer that arrested Farah beforehand. He is now the one that shall enable her to cross the border to Jordan. They agree on the conditions and then debate about the revolution, political and social changes and how to end the violent crisis. They also talk about family: the officer about his 3 daughters and his son-in-law who is ruining his life; the father about visiting the grave of his his dead wife for the first time. When they split, the father asks the officer why he did call him the day that he arrested Farah.

#### **Scene 8 – in the streets in Amman**

Farah and her father arrived in Amman. The father points to Castle Hill in the distance and tells a story of visiting it with his wife years ago who at that day was happy instead of sad, posing for photos and even trying to kiss him in public. While waiting for the friend and brother of Laila, Ghassan, to pick her up, father and Farah talk about the future in Amman. Farah envisions an independent life earning her own money, the father disagrees. Finally Ahmed turns up, introducing himself as Ghassan.

### **Scenes 9 + 10 – in Ahmeds and Farahs flat (Amman)**

Farah and Ahmed are living together in Amman, trying to be happy. But Ahmed is worried about his family in Syria. Farah poses for a photo and tells Ahmed that she plans to sculpt again, also in order to immortalise all of the pain. Ahmed tries to reach his family by phone over and over again, he wants to know if his mother is still alive. Farah talks about speaking to her father the other day: he decided to move back to Suwaida to his sister, it seems that he lost all hope. Farah asks why they can't just be happy and in love, Ahmed accuses her of being untrue. He feels left alone with all responsibilities. Farah defends herself, the fight escalates. The phone rings, Ahmeds mother is on the line, she is still alive.

### **Scene 11 –on Castle Hill in Amman**

Farah on top of Castle Hill, overlooking the city. She tries to communicate with Dunya, she misses her and is worried about her as she is living in a war zone. She tells Dunya that she is sculpting again, about marriage plans with Ahmed and her doubts about these plans (the reason for the marriage is to make her stop crying and is constraining her freedom). Farah fantasises about seeing Dunya again in Damascus, going out together until late at night. She fears that Dunya got arrested and sends a message to the police that might keep her. Farah describes the sculpture she is working on: a womans body with ants marching on it. She begs Dunya not to disappear and to let her know that she is alright.

*Explanation to the womens names:*

*The arabic „Farah“ means „luck, joy“, „Dunya“ means „world“.*