She looked over the rabbi-endorsed kosher certificate, biting her lower lip. "Is this one okay?" Oshry asked and looked down at his watch. They had been roaming the streets of Tel Aviv for over an hour in search of a restaurant that would cater to Nurit’s specific demands. "Well, it wouldn't be fake, would it? Right, Osh? They don’t have an underground network of kosher certificates," Oshry had already hurled his keys, cell phone, and wallet on the nearest table in the shade. "Okay," Nurit threw her hands in the air. "I guess we're eating here." She sat down in her chair and looked over the chalkboard on the wall. "What should I get? What're you gonna get?" Oshry called the waitress over. "One hummus with ground beef. Be generous with the tahina. And a cola. Know what you want?" "Well, I didn't have much time to think about it, did I?" The waitress stood and looked at Nurit, tapping her pen against the table. "Fine, fine. I'll get a regular hummus and a cola. But make sure it doesn't touch the meat." The waitress nodded and walked away. "That it doesn't touch the meat? Still with this?" Oshry scrolled through his phone. "Well my mom said that she's making pashdedot for dinner. I don't want to not be able to eat them." Oshry took a deep breath and clasped his hands together. "Are you going to do this whole show again this week?" "Don't start with me. I like it." He laughed. "Yeah, right. Nuri, last Shabbat I caught you watching Big Brother when I went to walk Kelev." "I was looking for my magazine."
Oshry laughed and grabbed her forearm. "You were dying to find out what happened with Efrat."
She tossed her long, brown hair over her shoulder. "I didn't turn it on. I didn't break any rules."
Oshry rolled his eyes. "Whatever."
The waitress brought out a stack of pitas and two bowls of hummus.
"So, my hummus didn't touch any meat, right?"
The waitress stared at Nurit.
"Can I get slices of onion?" Oshry asked.
"Yeah. No problem."
"Right? No meat?" Nurit asked.
"No meat," she said, walking away.
They sat not talking. Ripping pita and dipping it into hummus.
"Want some of mine?"
"Pashdedot."
They continued to eat.
"Does it sort of taste sour to you?" she asked.
"Nuri, it's okay, you know? You don't have to do this."
Nurit stayed silent.
"You don't have to play Dos for a Day to atone for your sins. He's not going to smite you dead. Not now, not ever."
Nurit slammed her bottle of cola on the table. "And how the fuck would you know?"
Tears sprang to her eyes.
"I just know."
"You don't. You don't know anything," Nurit said. "Can we maybe just stop talking?"
They ate in silence a few more minutes.
"It's my cousin's birthday tomorrow and he's doing this beach thing in the afternoon," Oshry said.
"Which cousin?"
"Tzion. He's going to bring some beers, some guitars, some kebabs and we'll have this little party at Tel Baruch."
Nurit put down her fork that she had been using to poke at her chickpeas. "Oshry, I know that this is a hard thing for you to accept and I don't expect you to join me, but as my boyfriend, I would appreciate if you could respect my decisions and support me."

"What did I say?"

"You know that I'm not going to go tomorrow. I already told you that I met this woman with the kabbalah healing class. She's doing this Shabbat service where – Oshry, don't roll your eyes."

"You can't understand why this is frustrating me? You can't understand why it bothers me that my fun, funny, cool, sexy girlfriend has turned into this spiritual 'peace and love' robot?"

"What robot? I really don't appreciate your saying that."

"Stop being so easily offended. I thought you had a thick skin."

"I do. I did." She looked down at her sandals. "I don't know."

"Are you ready to admit that all these games you're playing with this rebbetzin and that shaman is because of what happened? That this isn't a divine calling to devotion?"

Nurit stared at him for a long moment, pursing her lips together. "Didn't I ask us to please just stop talking?"

"Sure. Let's ignore the whole fucking thing."

"I would just appreciate if you could respect my decisions."

"Your decision to ask me to turn on a light on Shabbat? Nuri, stop feeling guilty about something you had no choice in. You're going to work and study and take care of an infant while I'm in Miluim every other weekend? You're going to take the bar exam breastfeeding? There was no decision to make. There was only one clear solution."

"You didn't let me think all the possibilities through. You kind of just decided for the both of us how it was going to happen."

"No, I skipped your tears and hours of soul searching and brought us to the conclusion you would arrived at when the kid would have been three."

"Don't do that. Don't hypothetically envision our child."

Nurit burst into tears. Diners at nearby tables turned to look at Oshry who shrugged and continued to eat his hummus.
He reached across the table and took her hand. "Listen, Nuri, I know that you're going through a hard time. And I hate that you're suffering. But I wish that you would let me help you, instead of all these witch doctors putting hocus pocus in between your ears."
"Let you help me? It's my fault that I'm not letting you help me? Oshry, that's not how help works. You don't wait until I allow you to help."
"Don't start twisting my words with your voodoo."
"If you were helping me, you would accept that this is what's making me feel better right now. Connecting with these people is giving me support."
"But why can't that be me?"
"Because you're not being that person."
"I could be."
Nurit wiped the cold water dripping down the side of her bottle.
"Maybe you can't be. Maybe because you're a guy you can't understand."
"Maybe."
"You can't understand what a difficult decision it is."
"You know what? You're right. Of course I can't."
Nurit sat up straight in her chair. "Because you know, on the one hand, I want to be this modern woman. I want to assert. I want to decide."
"And you should. You should."
"And then," Nurit bit her lower lip. "And then there's the possibility that I just damned my uterus and myself for eternity."
"Nur…"
"Do you know what the rebbetzin told me?"
"Huh?"
"She said that Ramban said that someone who kills an unborn baby is punishable by death. She said that she knows this woman who returned to orthodoxy after being secular and going through this whole same thing. And then this woman couldn't conceive, no matter what she did. And then to top it off, she gets uterine cancer."
Oshry sighed. "You're not getting cancer."
"And when the rebbetzin finishes telling me this story, she concludes that this woman had it coming to her. Divine retribution she called it."
"Nuri, you're not getting cancer."

"How do you know? What's going to happen then? You're still going to marry me without a womb?"

"I can't believe a rebbetzin would say those things to you. After you told her. It's not like you can do anything about it now."

"I didn't tell her."

"What?"

Nurit shook her head.

"You're turning to these witches for advice? You're treating them like your ticket to peace of mind? And you can't even be honest with them?"

"What would they think of me? They'd tell cautionary tales about me once I got cancer."

"Nur, you've got to give up this sham. If you're going to be your 21st century woman, you've got to own your choices and be vocal about them."

"OK. Whatever. Let's talk about something else."

"No. You know, you should talk to my sister about it."

"Why?"

"She had one. When she was maybe sixteen."

"Really?"

Oshry reached across the table and took her hand. "Yeah. I'm sure she could give you support and advice."

Nurit scoffed and pushed his hand away, "And that's exactly my point. You tell me not to be ashamed, but as close as Roni and I are, she never told me that. You never told me that. That means there's shame there."

"Maybe it never came up."

"This is the woman who told me graphic details about her pregnancy hemorrhoids."

"You see? She was in the same situation, and she got pregnant. Twice."

Nurit sat in silence for a moment. "That's true."

"You see? She didn't get uterine cancer. Has ve’halilla. And she didn't keep Shabbat or keep kashrut or put some silly book on a pedestal."

Nurit nodded.

"She's happy, she's healthy and she's asserted her rights as a woman," Oshry said.
Nurit continued to nod.

"Nur, just switch your mind about it. Just decide that you did what's right for you right now. And when it's another type of right, you'll have the opportunity to do it properly."

"You think so?"

"Of course. Roni's proof, right? You don't have to take this insurance policy with Hashem to guarantee your future fertility. You don't have to cavort with witches to get in His good favour.

"You know, I'm happy we talked about this. Open like this, finally. Come, motek. Let's get home and rest for a bit."

Oshry motioned to the waitress to pay the bill.

The waitress walked over to the table and said, “Eighty.”

Oshry threw some bills on the table, stood up and reached for Nurit's hand.

"Want to walk the long way home along the boardwalk?" Oshry asked.

"No, let's go home. I want to tidy the house and take a shower before Shabbat starts."