

Will

A ten-minute play

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Character List

1F

Fatima - The royal princess of an oil-rich kingdom.

Notes

Shift - Indicates a shift in time to the past - different each time.

Shift back to present - Indicates a shift back to the present time.

(breath) - Indicates a breath Fatima takes in the current time.

A lavishly furnished bedroom in a villa on the palace grounds of a desert kingdom.

Fatima, who is not allowed to leave the room and has not left for over a year, is looking out at the lawn through the window.

FATIMA

There ...
 ... Behind that rose bush.
 Yes, finally! It's him!
 I've been waiting all morning.
 There he is my pretty.

(laughs)

Look at those feathers.
 Such a show-off.

(calling out the window)

Aren't you Pierre? You little show-off.

(turning away from the window)

Of course that's him.
 He's the only one with three-quarters of his tail-feathers.
 All the other peacocks fled the fire when it spread.

(gets agitated)

That's not true, my father's lying.
 I wasn't trying to make trouble.
 It was chilly that night and
 I thought a little fire would keep me warm.

(pause)

See for the first time in months, he'd allowed the guards to let me out of this room.
 Because of my hunger strike.
 The only thing those guards my father place outside that door are afraid of.
 That I would die under their charge.

(pause)

So I got out onto the lawn and laid down on the ground.
 I looked up at the deepest blue, at the most beautiful blanket of stars.
 And I thought to myself.
 I want to party with the stars.
 So I made a fire.

(pause)

Why are you back here?
 I told you the last time I don't want to see you.

There's nothing you can say that will convince me my father only wants what's best for me.

(pause)

Let me guess you brought more luxury clothes?

These walls are the only ones who will see those clothes.

My father will never let me out.

Not unless I promise I will not run away again.

(pause)

You have no idea

What chains these desert sands make.

(pause)

What my mother would say?

Don't you dare speak about my mother.

You're half the woman she was.

She's not some prize he married for political reasons.

She was my father's first and only real love.

You're just window dressing.

Bought and paid for by the oil that flows through this gilded kingdom.

You know nothing about true loyalty and family.

Shift.

Fatima takes a breath. Then another. And then another and yet another. Her breaths start coming in ever quicker succession till she finds her breaths are shallow, and she's struggling for air.

FATIMA

It's as if there's thick fog deep and dense in my lungs.

I try to take deep gulps of air, willing the scuba mask to work like Alice says it would.

No matter how hard I try.

My lungs simply will not fill.

...

Push through Fatima.

Push through.

Come on.

Come on.

Come on!

You have to do this.

It's the only way to get to that yacht.

The only way you can leave.

The only way you will get free.

Fatima surfaces and takes big gulps of air.

She screams in frustration.

FATIMA

Damn these weak lungs.

No it is not fine Alice.

I have to learn to dive.

The yacht can't come any closer to shore.

Going underwater is the only way to get to the yacht without any of my father's men seeing me, seeing us.

Underwater scooters?

How much do those cost?

A hundred and twenty thousand?

I ...

Yes, yes okay.

I have a necklace and ring set that's worth close to that amount.

(breath)

Shift back to present.

FATIMA

Did they tell you they let me see my sister yesterday?

For the first time since they caught me.

For the first time since he's held her hostage in her own villa.

What kind of deranged father separates his daughters for years on end.

(pause)

I hugged her, I kissed her cheeks.

I reminded her that she's why I did it.

That she inspired me with her courage by being the first one to stand up to our father.

(pause)

Rahil.

Just like her namesake.

She is of pure will.

(pause)

My greatest regret is that I didn't go with her that night when she came to my door.

When she said "I'm leaving, will you come with me?"

Then I still thought how lucky I was to be a princess in my father's kingdom.

My greatest shame is I didn't go with her and because of that, she got caught.

She barely made it past the walls of the palace.

(pause)

When he locked her up after she got caught.

I knew then.

There is no room here for any kind of life of my own making.

Shift.

Fatima holds a smartphone aloft in front of her
and speaks angrily into it, as she records a
video.

FATIMA

Alice.

My father has my sister Rahil locked up.

Shot up with drugs and sedatives.

Claiming bi-polar disorder is why she ran.

But the man she loved betrayed her for some hard bought loyalty to my father.

And now she's a prisoner in the desert without a mirage in sight.

We have to put the plan into action.

I have to leave this place.

Shift back to the present.

FATIMA

You know after they caught me on that yacht.

They brought me back to the kingdom and they first thing they did was

To beat me on the soles of my feet.

There's a Hadith of the Prophet that says not to leave mark on your women.

But in my father's mind that meant it is okay to hit a woman on the soles of her feet.

And so that's what his men did.

My feet were so swollen I had to drag myself across the floor to use the bathroom.

Shift.

Fatima holds the phone aloft again. She records
another video.

FATIMA

Alice, if there is ever time when you do not hear from me.

When my texts and calls do not reach you.

You will know that they've done to me what they did to Rahil.

And I am imprisoned against my will.

No matter what they say.

Please remember I will never give up.

I will always want my freedom.

So if time passes and you do not hear from me.
 You have to release all the videos I've sent you.
 Get people to listen to our stories - me and Rahil's.
 Tell everyone who my father really is.
 The hypocrite, the monster.

Shift back to present.

FATIMA

Your daughter is young now so you can't see it yet.
 But when she gets old enough, you'll see.
 He'll make sure she doesn't go to school anymore.
 He'll say the Quran is enough for her.
 To be a righteous woman.
 To be a good wife and mother.

(pause)

You might think he'll treat you and your daughter differently because you're not a
 bedouin like my mother.
 That because your father's his political ally he will not do it.
 You're wrong.
 The moment you became his wife, you and your children are his to decide what to do
 with.

Shift.

FATIMA

I have Alice's number memorized.
 Of course I do.
 I've been reciting it in my sleep for years.
 Like how I recite the ways I know.
 To be agile.
 To be quick.
 To breathe underwater.

(pause)

So I'm never alone.
 Because I know Alice's number.
 But this time.
 I text.
 No dice.
 I call.
 No dice.
 Then I realized.

(laughs)

I got the numbers mixed up.

It's 287 not 387.

I text again.

I call again.

No dice.

...

Then I realized.

No silly, that's my number, the 287.

Hers, Alice's starts 743.

(starts dialing furiously into the phone)

743.

No.

437.

No.

427.

No.

417.

017.

217.

No no no no no!

(throws the phone across the room)

Alice!

Where are you?

Alice!

You promised.

When I finally trusted you with my plan, after years of you being my trainer.

You promised.

When I told you I was suffocating from the yearning of all I cannot be as long as I stay under my father's roof.

You promised.

When we crossed the border in your car on our way to the coast, to the waiting yacht.

My spine curved from being in the spare tire compartment.

And I leapt out of that trunk and breathed freedom for the first time in my life.

You promised.

When we had our noses flat on the deck of the yacht, our backs to the stars, our wrists cuffed, blood pooling at our ankles.

You promised you would keep fighting for me.

(pause)

Alice!

(breath)

Shift back to present.

FATIMA

When I first saw Rahil yesterday, my heart almost stopped.
Her eyes were wrung so dry, they shone like glass.
Translucent mirrors with no reflection.
Her shoulders limp, broken from carrying the shards of her will.

...

Her first words to me after all these years apart.
After I'd run away to try and save any part of my mother that is still in the both of us.
What she'd started all those years ago.
Her words smashed the ground between us.
Those lips that once mouthed escape now pleading.
Stop Fatima.
Stop fighting.
Our place is here in this kingdom.
We are want of nothing.
Our father gives us only the best.
We are want of nothing.
This is our home.

(pause)

This is
Allah's Will.

(breath)

FATIMA

What about mine?

(breath)

END OF PLAY