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Tags: [Lebanon](#), [Israel](#), [politics](#), [home](#), [war](#)
Writer/s: [Boris Kelly](#)

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Dr Joseph Levy had returned from Paris in the autumn of 2006. His apartment in Notting Hill was much as he'd left it which was something of a welcome surprise given that his son Isaac had been staying there with his girlfriend for the past two weeks. The cleaner had been in everyday, of course, and the children were forbidden to cook in the house unless he was at home. He couldn't trust them with anything perishable or sharp so instead he left them an allowance to eat out while he was away. Now they had left for Spain and what's-her-name, the cleaner, had done a marvellous job of removing almost every trace of their presence so he could feel at home, at last.

It had been a gruelling time in Paris, not least because of the debacle in Lebanon. It was the talk of the town and had driven him to the brink of apoplexy. Why couldn't that Kadima rabble just get on with the job instead of tinkering at the edges? War is war is war. Everyone knows those maniacs won't leave us alone: it's in their nature. They had their chance at Camp David and they blew it. If only Sharon's brain hadn't exploded, we'd be swimming in the Litani by now. Ben-Gurion was right: we need that water. Destiny is a one-way street. Who had said that?

His shoes were already off, tie loosened, top button undone, music on, drink poured. Home! Did anything feel better than being home? He walked into the living room and sat at the low table to sort through his mail. There were not as many personal letters these days since email had come along. Mercifully, his mother had not learned to operate a computer so he was only subjected to her handwritten epistles once a month. He laid this one aside for scanning some other time, he didn't have the energy for it now. Besides, he knew what was in it. He had spoken to her from Paris and Tel Aviv had remained untouched throughout the Hezbollah bombardment. Nasrallah had been bluffing when he said they could hit Tel Aviv. But next time it would be for real. There was no doubting it and no way to prevent weapons coming in across the Syrian border. No-one seriously believed the Lebanese army or the UN force would be able to stop the flow or disarm Hezbollah. There was only one way to do that.

There was a mountain of correspondence to go through, but later, not now. He was uneasy, Dr Joseph Levy, something played on his mind like an out of tune fiddler and he knew exactly what it was. The tipping point was approaching and he had to do something about it.

It was in evidence at the conference. The lowered eyes, the fading conversations as he approached, the less than enthusiastic response to his paper. They were turning, the world was turning.

He took his slightly moist socks off and wiggled his white toes laying back to gaze at the ornate plasterwork in the ceiling. It was easy for them. They had nothing to remember. No horror to speak of, not real horror. There was no comparison to be made, anywhere in history. He thought of the woman, that professor of linguistics who couldn't keep her self-hating nose out of the media trough. What motivated her? he wondered. What could she possibly gain by soiling the dreams of her own people by writing, relentlessly writing that poisonous drivel in that rag *Haaretz*.

Dr Levy was the convenor of a very influential group of people, highly respected, feared even in some quarters. He knew people, important people. He could pick up the telephone right then and there and make things happen. He could make things very difficult for people. He could and he would and he had. It was his duty, as he saw it. His small offering to the dream. He was pleased that she had decided to leave Israel and run away like a wounded rat to Holland. Good riddance to her. He knew she wouldn't leave them alone though. The endless, mindless carping would continue but at least there was some sense of victory in having forced her out. Gaza had done it, she had written recently. Gaza was the point of no return for her. But for him Gaza was something to be proud of. It was going well. The wedge had been driven in hard and Fatah and Hamas were really at each other's throats now. Skirmishes had broken out, street fighting. They'd have to break eventually.

His mind grew drowsy as the whisky kicked in. He closed his eyes and breathed deeply. Later he would go to dinner with a group of old friends to celebrate Paul's appointment. It was a great victory for them having him appointed to such high office and it would be good to see them all again at their favourite restaurant in Soho. Yes, really good to see them: such a fine group. Last time he'd seen Paul was in Jerusalem and they had laughed then at the prospect of him moving from Capitol Hill to The Bank. They had sat beneath the vine and caroused before walking through the darkened streets and giving thanks for all that was around them.

Dr Joseph Levy fell into a reverie. His mind swam in a sea of pleasant thoughts but always with that faint niggles that would never go away. Fuck. Why were they always there, however distant? He hardly ever saw their faces but he could smell them and hear the roughness of their voices, the evil in their laughter. They would never leave his mind, they had colonised it forever. Destiny.

Adapted for performance by Barbara Campbell from a story by Boris Kelly.