

Reunion

by Kia Corthron
September 2016

CHARACTERS:

JO, a Jewish American middle-aged woman

MAY, an African-American middle-aged woman

NOTES:

I have written May as African-American, and I believe she works best that way. However, I have provided alternative lines at the end of the document that will make the play work in case she is not cast black.

Photographs are cited. In the stage directions I ask that they be displayed as projections for the audience. Alternatively a production assistant—or, if the concept works, one of the actors—could hold up a copy of the pictures. *Please keep the photo credit (bottom left of the image) and/or cite the copyright credit in a program: **copyright AFP/Getty Images**.*

Ellipses within quotes signify omitted text but do not necessarily indicate a pause.

The women will gather info from May's smartphone at a ridiculously fast speed. I've provided for this illogic with a little fourth-wall break on page 5.

[JO on a park bench, reading a book. MAY enters, absorbed in her smartphone. SHE sits on the other side of the bench, without noticing JO. JO glances up absently, then stares. The initial dialogue, after the two recognize each other, should move swiftly and giddily.]

JO

May?

[MAY looks up, momentarily confused. Then:]

MAY

Jo?

JO

Oh my God.

MAY

Oh my *God!*

JO

What're you *doing* here?

MAY

Met a friend for lunch. Thought I'd take in some sun. You?

JO

I live here!

MAY

Really!

JO

[Points:] There. *[Points another direction:]* And teach there.

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MAY

Really! How long?

JO

Which?

MAY

Both!

JO

Living there nineteen years. Teaching *there* fourteen years.

MAY

Wow!

JO

I didn't know you still lived in the city!

MAY

Never left.

JO

Really!

MAY

Queens.

JO

Last time we saw each other . . .

MAY

Kate's wedding.

JO

Kate's wedding! Her first, right after college.

MAY

No, the second one. We all had kids by then.

JO

Right! Then there was the third . . . You weren't there.

MAY

Kate and I lost touch . . . God, how long ago?

JO

Don't count. [Then, indicating the two of THEM:] We lost touch.

MAY

We did.

JO

Well. Guess we got busy. Our lives—

MAY

We had a fight.

JO

We did? [MAY nods.] Wow. I hope it wasn't over a man!

MAY

No. *Well* . . .

JO

Or a woman! I remember junior year . . .

MAY

Kate was hot! But no.

JO

Politics?

MAY

Yes!

JO

Oh. *[Pause.] Oh.*

MAY

Waiting for the taxi to the airport after Kate's second.

JO

I remember.

MAY

We wound up taking separate cabs!

JO

Let's not talk about that.

MAY

Just because the Democrats were so spineless they let the Supreme Court decide the election, don't blame we who believed in Nader.

JO

Let's not talk about that!

[Pause. Then MAY fiddles with her phone, finds something, shows it to JO. JO gasps, takes the phone. MAY laughs.]

JO

When was *that* taken?

MAY

Kayla's second birthday. So Joey must've been . . . ?

JO

Three. That picture's over twenty years old! How'd you pull it up so fast?

MAY

[Looking at audience, grinning:] It's a Galaxy-eye-Samkia four hundred Mbps Advance Deluxe speedphone! *[Winks at audience.]*

JO

[Scrolling:] And there's you and Ed! *[Looks up, hesitant:]* I heard you and Ed . . .

MAY

Yep. You and Dave?

JO

Same. Kids grew up bi-borough. *[Pointing in the direction of her home.]* West Seventy-Fourth all week, and every Friday the 2 express to Brooklyn Heights with Dad.

MAY

"Kids"? Plural?

JO

[Nods.] Three sons. Joey was an only seven years, then Seth, year later Dan.

MAY

Little Joey. A man now! How's he doing?

JO

[Pause.] Moved away. I don't hear much from him anymore.

MAY

Oh.

JO

But his brothers are great! Good high schools. You have a brood?

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MAY

Kayla was my only. Dental assistant.

JO

Chip off the old block!

MAY

Huh?

JO

[Unsure.] You were bio. Right? Pre-med?

MAY

Pre-vet.

JO

[Confused.] R.O.T.C.?

MAY

Veterinarian.

JO

Ah!

MAY

[Shrugs.] Didn't finish. Now I clean dishes for dogs at the ASPCA.

JO

[Unsure how to respond.] Ooooooh . . .

MAY

I love animals!

JO

Me too!

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MAY

Two cats, two dogs.

JO

A pomeranian. *Enough.*

MAY

Weren't you English, Creative Writing minor? I bet you teach English!

JO

Third grade.

MAY

The little ones!

JO

Love that age! The tweens tween tots and tweens.

MAY

We met in third grade.

JO

No!

MAY

Yep!

JO

Eighth grade. Homeroom.

MAY

That's when we became *friends*.

JO

Best friends! Through high school. Through *college*!

MAY

But we *met* in third grade. Remember? *[Stands, as if making a speech to an audience:]*

I am Addie Mae Collins. I was fourteen years old.

I am Denise McNair. I was eleven years old.

I am Carole Robertson. I was fourteen years old.

I am Cynthia Wesley. I was fourteen years old.

[MAY turns to JO, expecting recognition. JO stares, baffled.]

MAY

The four little girls! Birmingham church bombing!

JO

Oh . . .

MAY

The school play! Third grade, we took turns. The girls, each of us saying one of the names.

JO

Yes!

MAY

Black History Month! No! Martin Luther King Day! Wait! Was Martin Luther King Day a day yet?

JO

We stood facing the audience. The girl on the right end started with the first name and it moved down the line, each of us saying it. I am . . . *[Remembers SHE doesn't remember. Looks to MAY for help.]*

MAY

Addie Mae Collins, I was fourteen years old. I am Denise McNair—

JO

Nervous! The teacher kept complaining she couldn't hear me. But *you*. Loud and bold and proud, you should have taken acting classes.

MAY

Tried. Couldn't fit it into pre-vet.

JO

You used to sing *Jesus Christ Superstar*, the entire double album. You sang it at my family's seder!

MAY

Only "Trials and Tribulations," only the seder song, Last Supper. I *loved* those Passovers with your family! My first time engaging in the ritual. The *sharing*. I make the effort—every spring I still always manage to drum up a seder invitation from somewhere!

JO

That was a beautiful thing.

MAY

Yes!

JO

No. I mean, yes, seder, but I was talking about the thing in third grade. What was her name?

MAY

Teacher? [*JO nods.*] Miss Iris. [*Starts fiddling with her phone.*]

JO

Miss Iris!

MAY

Look.

[MAY shows JO her phone. Projected for the audience is what MAY and JO see on the phone screen:]



JO

[Shaking her head.] Tragic.

*[As MAY sets her phone back down on her lap, the projection disappears.
After a moment:]*

JO

I could do it with my third grade! I could do a presentation for their parents! Black History Month! Or Martin Luther King Day!

MAY

[No sarcasm:] Or any day! We're still black the rest of the year!

JO

Yes! *[Beat.]* But I have twenty-five kids, eleven boys. Plus the one that was a girl in the fall and now identifies as a boy! I want *all* the children to participate. Would it be weird to have the boys say it too?

MAY

No! *[Idea:]* Or . . .

[MAY flips through her phone screen a few moments.]

MAY

Okay, so the girls can say: I am Addie Mae Collins. I was fourteen years old.

JO

[Pleased to remember:] I am Denise McNair! I was eleven years old.

MAY

And the boys could say

I am Ahed Atef Bakr. I was ten years old.

I am Zakariya Ahed Bakr. I was ten years old.

I am Mohammad Ramiz Bakr. I was eleven years old.

I am Ismail Mahmoud Bakr. I was nine years old.

They all have the same last name because they all came from the same family: cousins.

[JO stares, baffled.]

MAY

The four little *boys!* The Palestinian boys the Israeli military targeted and killed on the Gaza beach, 2014. *Well.* Of course Israel says it was *really* targeting a Hamas compound and made a mistake, which journalists on the scene find ridiculous: it was *obviously* a modest fisherman's hut where the children were playing, and anyway the kids were hit while outside running on the *beach*, in *clear view of—*

JO

No.

[Pause.]

MAY

No?

JO

[Negative:] Uh uh.

[Pause.]

MAY

[Now understanding:] Oh.

JO

Oh *don't even*. You and I marched in those pro-Palestinian rallies *together*, remember? I was the one who educated *you* about the Occupation.

MAY

[Remembering:] That's right! *[Beat.]* So . . .

JO

So I'm not some crazy Zionist. Some crazy Zionist *settler*, the only settling I did was from Riverdale to the Upper West Side.

MAY

Then—

JO

Then why don't I want my students to say those names? My kids are eight-year-olds, May! The Middle East is complex. A complex, *ugly* situation, a lot to throw at small children who don't understand the whole picture.

MAY

You were fine with throwing them four little black girls blown to bits at Sunday School.

JO

That's an *American* horror story! They learn about it in social studies.

MAY

Well maybe they should learn about—

JO

No.

[THEY stare at each other, then JO sighs in frustration.]

JO

God forbid we try to understand the conflict from *both* sides.

MAY

[*A startled beat.*] So, when you were going to do the “I am Addie Mae Collins,” were you planning for another child to say “I am the Klansman who killed Addie Mae Collins” to get a balance of perspective?

JO

Oh, now *this* brings me back to old times, May and her manipulative sarcasm. You know damn well I am *not* talking about giving terrorists a voice—

MAY

The Israeli army isn’t terrorist?

JO

Civilians, May! I’m talking about the suffering of Israeli *civilians*.

MAY

And I’m talking about the suffering of Palestinian civilians.

JO

And *that’s all*. I acknowledge Palestinian civilian deaths as *well* as Israeli civilian deaths, but the *Left*. The goddamn American [*finger the quote marks:*] “Progressives” who mourn the killing of every single Arab baby but if I were to *dare* mention a Jewish child blown up by some suicide-bombing monster, or these *stabblings*, [*MAY begins working her smartphone*] then *I* get accused of the heinous crime of *balance*, like balance is some unconscionable lie, *this* is the question I like to ask so-called Progressives: In what 1984 “War is Peace” world are we living in when “balance” means *imbalance*? When “balance” is a four-letter word?

MAY

[*Reading:*] According to the Israeli human rights organization B'Tselem,

JO

[*Rolled eyes:*] And *then* they pull out their smartphones.

MAY

[*Reading:*] at the hands of the conflict, almost four times as many Palestinians were killed as Israelis between 1987 and 2000, and more than *six* times as many Palestinians as Israelis were killed between 2000 and 2014. If we go back to 1948—

JO

Hello! I am not exactly in love with the Israeli army, May, God *knows* there's monsters there too, but Hamas—

MAY

Who *I* am not exactly in love with.

JO

Hamas *could* target *military* sites, but no. It deliberately aims rockets for Israeli *civilian* areas. [*MAY frowns, starts pecking on her phone.*] Sure, Palestinian civilians die, well what's the IDF supposed to do when Arab terrorists are hiding in civilian homes? And don't say "There's no other room on the narrow Gaza Strip," they could—

MAY

[*Reading (italics not in original):*] "Within one of Tel Aviv's most *densely populated neighborhoods* sits Ha'Kirya, the [Israeli] army's headquarters, a gigantic complex of monolithic buildings that house the offices *where attacks on Gaza are planned....* [An Israeli] military base is nestled *in the middle of the campus of Haifa University*" *who's* bombing from civilian areas?

JO

Bit of an unfair fight since *you've* got the access to all the information.

[*MAY hands JO her phone. JO begins scrolling.*]

JO

And *no*, I'm not going to some stupid biased Zionist site. Ah! *The Washington Post!* [*Italics not in original:*] "*A new kind of terrorism' in Israel.*" "*Near-daily...attacks* against Israeli civilians and soldiers are causing fear and anger," look at this! Seventy-seven stabbings, twenty-seven car attacks, eighteen shootings, two bombings, [*MAY takes phone, scrolls*] do you know what kind of terror that engenders in an Israeli child? Walking the street in grave fear of *every* adult, seeing a man with his hand in his pocket and never knowing what that hand clutches—

MAY

[*Eyes on phone:*] "The attacks...often appear to be spontaneous and opportunistic. Many are undertaken by young, unmarried Palestinians. The most common weapon used is a kitchen knife. The second most common is the family car. Most victims survive, and many of the Israeli soldiers, who wear body armor, are only lightly wounded, if at all." The death toll thus far has been twenty-nine Israelis versus one hundred eighty Palestinians.

JO

The Israelis were defending themselves!

[*THEY stare at each other. JO laughs ironically.*]

JO

Numbers! As if a Palestinian life is worth more than an Israeli one.

MAY

Who said—?

[*JO snatches the phone back and scrolls, the action startling MAY, cutting off her thought.*]

JO

[*Finding a reference:*] "One of the dead Israelis, Aharon Banita Bennett, 22, was pushing a baby stroller when he was knifed; a couple, Eitam and Naama Herkin, were shot dead in their car in the West Bank, their four children sitting in the back seat." [*Looks up, stares at MAY.*]

MAY

Their children watching. [*Shakes her head.*] Horrible.

[Pause. JO shakes her head in a cautious accord.]

MAY

They were settlers.

JO

[Low and threatening:] What did you say.

MAY

It said “their car in the West Bank.” Assuming they were driving near their home, they were living there in violation of international law. If they’d obeyed the law, they wouldn’t have been there, they’d be alive.

JO

Oh. My. God.

MAY

It’s horrific! I’m not defending what happened. But it never *would* have happened if—

JO

[Glaring, handing the phone to MAY.] Read on.

MAY

[Reading.] “The Israeli dead include...a peace activist, Richard Lakin, 76, whose Facebook page called for the sides to ‘co-exist.’”

[MAY sighs sadly.]

MAY

Awful. *[Beat.]* Teenagers with kitchen knives.

JO

Don’t you *dare* sugarcoat it! It’s murder, May!

MAY

Of course! *[Pause.]* But—

JO

But WHAT?

MAY

[Reading:] “In parallel violence, 45 Palestinians have been killed in demonstrations against Israeli forces...as Israel deployed snipers who fired live rounds.”

JO

Well you and I don’t know what happened at those demonstrations.

[MAY starts typing. JO puts her hand over the screen.]

JO

NO MORE PHONES!

[MAY stares at JO a second, then drops her phone into her bag.]

JO

You confided to me once. Years ago you told me how you were sick of conservatives talking about Africa and AIDS, Africa and the child soldiers, Africa and female circumcision, the way they spat the word, *Africa*. The way they’d look at you, *testing* you, your reaction, or *not* look at you in a way that said they didn’t care *where* your ancestors came from, Africa is *fucked up*. The only thing worse, you said, were the liberals on their secular crusades to *save* Africa, certain that peace and prosperity could never happen without the altruistic intervention of the Great White West. You agreed with certain criticisms, clitoridectomy among them, but you knew it wasn’t solely an African practice, you understood the historical colonialist context of many

of the problems, you had a *personal connection* to the continent that prevented you from looking at the situation half-blind. *I* have a personal connection to Israel.

Forget history, I have family there *now*. Aunts and uncles, cousins. I can't just cut off my love for them because I don't approve of their decision to settle, I can't just say Well then you deserve whatever happens to you. *[Beat.]* When we were in college, you were called "anti-Semitic" and I was the self-hating Jew. The labels given to anybody who dared criticize the state of Israel in all its wisdom. Now everything's turned around: Jew or Gentile but *especially Jew*, you are chastised *soundly* for defending Israel in *any* context. And God forbid you ever utter the words "Palestinian" and "terrorist" in the same sentence.

MAY

Believe it happens frequently on Fox News.

JO

You know damn well I don't listen to any damn Fox News, May. Fight fair!

MAY

[Beat.] You're right. *[Pause.]* So? What do you want?

JO

[Pause.] I'm sick of always having to hear the latest stats from the Misery Scoreboard. Why is it that if I mention Israeli deaths at the hands of Palestinians I am instantly barraged with a body count to prove how Palestine has suffered infinitely more, but if *you* speak of the Israeli army killing Arabs, I'm expected to either chime in to the condemnation in grim agreement or nod and say nothing, because to then bring up Palestinian terrorism would mean *I'm* the one unfairly

playing the “balance” game. *This* is what I want: I want you to say those killings of Israeli civilians, of the couple in front of their children, of the elderly peace activist, I want you to call those incidents “murderous acts of terror” because they *were*, and not follow it up with a “but.”

[MAY, accepting the challenge, opens her mouth to speak. Fails. Tries again. Fails. Tries again. Fails.]

JO

Oh my God, you can't do it!

[MAY tries to speak again, is again unsuccessful. Then a chuckle escapes her. Then a couple more. JO tries to stay angry but then begins to laugh with MAY.]

JO

Oh my God.

MAY

Oh my God!

[Their laughter, which is cautious—should never become hearty and sitcom-y—fades pretty quickly.]

MAY

You mentioned “terrorism.” May I speak?

JO

[Shrugs, surrenders.] Speak.

MAY

A settlement was built in Gaza near a Palestinian high school. It was one of

twenty-two settlements on the Strip at that time, November 1987, pretty swank digs apparently, erected right in the middle of Palestinian utter poverty. There are various interpretations—she was throwing stones, she was protesting, she was waiting for school to start—but at any rate Intissar al-Atar, a seventeen-year-old girl, was standing in her schoolyard when she was shot and killed by a resident of the nearby settlement. The murderer, Shimon Yifrah, was arrested but immediately released on bail because the Court determined quote “the offense is not severe enough” unquote. The judge’s opinion was that in shooting into the schoolyard, Yifrah had only wanted to scare the girl, not kill her, and thus Yifrah was given a seven-month sentence that was instantly suspended: he did not serve one single day in prison. The *de facto* acquittal immediately inspired celebratory singing and dancing from other settlers in the courtroom. It’s not the only such narrative illustrating the relationship between Arabs and settlers, but it was a pivotal one, and soon after came the First Intifada.

[Pause.]

JO

That’s a terrible story.

[Pause.]

MAY

“But”?

[JO looks at her.]

JO

It's old news. *[MAY smirks, an "I knew it" nod.]* Look. You find it annoying, *I* find it annoying when Israelis defend themselves with a four-thousand-year-old argument.

MAY

Nineteen eighty-seven isn't four thousand—

JO

PALESTINE HAD ITS CHANCE! Oslo, the *first* Oslo. *[Sarcasm:]* "Peace at last!" And what did Israel get for signing on to peace? A few dozen civilian bus riders blown to smithereens.

MAY

Terrible.

JO

"But?"

MAY

[Shrugs.] Inevitable. Oslo was vague. Under the Oslo I Accord, Israel retained control of Palestine's water and infrastructure and land. Arafat wanted to sign *something* at long last, Arafat figured Israel's authority would be rendered moot anyway with the onset of Palestinian statehood—a glorious reality he figured was just around the corner.

JO

Well maybe it *could* have come if some Hamas hadn't flagged down a city bus. *[MAY starts to respond.]* Let's just stick with the present, shall we? The twenty-first century. You talk about those four little Gaza boys, 2014. Where did that all *start*? If you'll recall—

MAY

I recall very well. The bombardment of Gaza, which went on for fifty days, which gave me a lot of time for a lot of googling, time for a lot of very *lively* discussions—

JO

It all started with the brutal murders of three Israeli boys.

MAY

Three Israeli *settler* boys. [*JO about to flip out.*] That does *not* in any way justify murder but I want to make sure all the facts are on the table. A ceasefire was called in November 2012 which Hamas honored. The ceasefire agreement was for no rockets from Hamas, and Israel would make strides toward ending the Gaza blockade and would discontinue the attacks on the Palestinians they named as militants. The Israeli government admits Hamas held up their end of the bargain.

JO

Says who? You could be making all this up.

MAY

[*Picks up her phone and holds it out to JO:*] Wanna look it up?

[*MAY waits. JO doesn't move. MAY sets her phone back down.*]

MAY

Then in April, a unity agreement was reached between Hamas in Gaza and Fatah on the West Bank, something that majorly agitated Israel, something Israel never wanted to happen, especially as even the U.S. seemed to be going along with it. So when those three settler boys were *brutally murdered*, it became the green light for all Israel military hell to let loose. [*Beat.*] It was bound to happen. If Israel waited long enough *something* would happen. If you forge a blockade resulting in unemployment for forty percent of a people, sixty-seven percent of its *youth*, if the water isn't drinkable and the electricity sporadic, if you destroy people's homes and not rebuild and traumatize millions of children through threats and terror and too many funerals, *some* of those children will indubitably grow into angry, desperate youth and if you wait long enough *something will happen*. All evidence points to the fact that the "something," the killing of those settler boys, was the responsibility of a

rogue Hebron clan that had been an irritation to Hamas for years, Israeli high advisors *conceded* that the fault likely did not lie with Hamas, that neither Hamas nor the overwhelming majority of Palestinian women and men and children were to blame and *yet*. In an act of retribution that would be akin to a British immigrant being murdered in Manhattan, and the U.K. in turn bombing New York City for several weeks straight, Israel descended upon Gaza, that one hundred forty-one square mile inescapable strip, Israel hammered down all its military might for fifty days to teach the Gazan people a lesson a hundredfold. Or, to be more accurate—

[MAY picks up her phone and scrolls.]

MAY

Twenty thousand Gazan homes destroyed and five hundred thousand Gazans displaced. There were two thousand one hundred thirty-nine Palestinians killed, four hundred ninety of whom were children. On the other side sixty-four Israeli soldiers were killed and six civilians, one of whom was a child. Ninety-seven percent of the dead were Palestinian, to update the Torah that would be thirty-two eyes for an eye.

JO

Joey's there.

[MAY looks at JO.]

JO

I begged him not to go! I said the settlements are immoral. I said the settlements are dangerous! But . . . He went to Chicago for college, got caught up with some *group* on campus. *[Beat.]* He's secular. He never wore a yarmulke! Not in the States anyway.

MAY

When?

JO

2014, three months before . . . *[Beat.]* He would've been fine in Israel proper! *Happier.* You know how much it costs to rent in Israel proper? But the *territories*. Go out to Judea, Samaria, yeah the West Bank's a *bargain*, *buy* a house and a garden for a dime, plus tax breaks, *incentives*. Right in the midst of the Arabs' festering seething resentment. *[Beat.]* She's pregnant. I've never even met her! *[Shrugs.]* Seen pictures. Facebook. *[Ironical chuckle. Then suddenly turns to MAY.]* He was a witness! A car plunged right into a husband and wife . . . They survived, thank God.

MAY

The teenage boy? Driver?

JO

The *driver* was a *woman*. An older woman, grandmother for God's sake! *[MAY is startled.]* Yeah, and now I'm gonna have a grandchild born right in the middle of—

[JO roughly wipes a tear. Pause.]

MAY

[More to herself:] Over the years, wonder how many of *her* children and grandchildren she lost—

JO

YOU DON'T KNOW THAT!

MAY

After the car incident. What happened to the grandmother?

JO

What she deserved.

[JO glaring. Silence.]

MAY

[Genuine:] I hope Joey stays safe. *[JO, surprised, looks at MAY, then looks away.]* And I hope the neighboring Arab families stay safe from Joey.

[JO suddenly prepares to leave, quickly grabbing her bag, etc.]

MAY

Jo—

JO

Thank you very much. I will use your idea in my class, *the four little girls*, Birmingham.

MAY

[Shrugs.] It wasn't *my* idea. I just remembered—

JO

I'll see you around, May.

[JO leaves. MAY stares after her a few moments, then takes out her phone, fools with it. SHE is startled by something SHE sees. JO returns, standing.]

JO

Why are we fighting? Why are we saying *your* side's right, *my* side. Don't Israelis and Palestinians all want the same thing. Peace?

MAY

There's a blockade of Gaza, there's a wall on the West Bank, checkpoints. The Israeli military's presence restricts Palestinians from moving freely, from lifesaving food and medicines getting *in*, that's called "Occupation."

JO

Oh Christ—

MAY

The settlements and their continued proliferation are a direct, smug provocation against peace. Those four little boys were *murdered*, and Israel's verdict is that it was a quote "tragic accident," absolving themselves of any wrongdoing.

JO

Your *point*?

MAY

Israelis want peace. Palestinians want peace with justice.

[THEY stare at each other. Then JO turns to leave again.]

MAY

Jo?

JO

[Her back to MAY.] What.

MAY

Would you like to see the family of the four little Gazan boys?

JO

[Turns to face MAY.] No, May, I would *not* like to see the family of the four Gazan boys. How many times do I have to tell you? This is *too complicated* for third-graders. You and I just had a long discussion and resolved *nothing*, look. I appreciate your showing me the picture of the four little girls. *That's* what I'm interested in, that's what I'll show my third grade. Only the four little *girls*.

MAY

But—

JO

ONLY THE FOUR LITTLE GIRLS!

[JO turns quickly and is gone. MAY looks at her phone. There is a projection of what she sees:



end

Alternative text for a non-black May

p 10—

MAY

[No sarcasm:] Or any day! ~~We're still black the rest of the year!~~ There's still black people the rest of the year!

pp 17-18 (Edits, mostly pronouns, in blue)—

JO

Kate confided to me once. Years ago she told me how she was sick of conservatives talking about Africa and AIDS, Africa and the child soldiers, Africa and female circumcision, the way they spat the word, *Africa*. The way they'd look at her, testing her, her reaction, or *not* look at her in a way that said they didn't care *where* her ancestors came from, Africa is *fucked up*. The only thing worse, she said, were the white liberals on their secular crusades to *save* Africa, certain that peace and prosperity could never happen without the altruistic intervention of the White West. She agreed with certain criticisms, clitoridectomy among them, but she knew it wasn't solely an African practice, she understood the historical colonialist context of many of the problems, she had a *personal connection* to the continent that prevented her from looking at the situation half-blind. *I* have a personal connection to Israel. [cont'd]

Sources

I attained the image of the four little girls killed in the Birmingham church bombing through google images and am fairly certain it's public domain.

p 10

Beaumont, Peter. "Israel exonerates itself over Gaza beach killings of four children last year." *The Guardian*, June 11, 2015.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/11/israel-clears-military-gaza-beach-children>

p 10 – I am Ahed Atef Bakr. I was ten years old.

p 26 – it was a quote "tragic accident,"

ProCon.org. "Deaths in the Conflict, 1987-2014."

<http://israelipalestinian.procon.org/view.resource.php?resourceID=000639>

p 14 – almost four times as many Palestinians

Blumenthal, Max. "How Israel Used Its Own Civilians as Human Shields While Assaulting Gaza."

Alternet, August 6, 2014. <http://www.alternet.org/world/how-israel-used-its-own-civilians-human-shields-while-assaulting-gaza>

p 14 – "Within one of Tel Aviv's most *densely populated neighborhoods* sits Ha'Kiryat"

Eglash, Ruth, William Booth and Darla Cameron. "'A new kind of terrorism' in Israel." *Washington Post*, April 8, 2016. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/world/israel-palestine-deaths/>

p 15 – "Near-daily...attacks against Israeli civilians"

p 15 – "The attacks...often appear to be spontaneous and opportunistic."

P 24 – An older woman, a grandmother (see the Nov. 6th incidents)

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