



The Bermans are disturbed by the fact that their next-door neighbor is neither ultra-orthodox nor orthodox.

- Can you empathize with the desire for homogeneity in your community?
- Can you imagine a neighbor you would not wish to have?
- Must the warm desire for homogeneity always lead into racism?



**Zorik:** Natasha, this is your country.

**Natasha:** Zorik, there are Jews in Canada and New Zealand too. There are even Turks in Germany. All the nations are mixed up now. It's called Globalization. Maybe you've heard of it.

- Do you think Globalization is the enemy of national identities?
- Do you believe there should be a connection between nations and land? For example, do the French have a stronger connection to the land of France than you have for France? Do you feel particularly connected to New York? Israel?

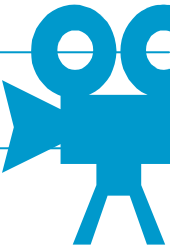
**Rochele:** "You are my old wine, Father"

- Does this display of trust and obedience strike you as impressive? Irrelevant? Obsolete? Desirable?

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## EPISODES 3 & 4:

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Shmuel does not understand Russian, nor does he have much respect for a secular way of life. Sasha knows no Jewish blessings, and has knowledge of medicine not Talmud.

- What do they have in common as Jews?
- In what way are they both part of the Jewish People?

In the end Sasha tries to learn a blessing from Shmuel.

- Does/should Jewish unity always require that the secular learn elements of religiosity?
- What is the cost of aliyah (a Jew emigrating to Israel)? All of Zorik's family would seem to be having a hard time in Israel. Would you say that making aliyah is an expression of a strong Jewish identity, or the beginning of a process of losing one's identity altogether?

**Natalie:** I found a place that's just like Moscow!

- Does multiculturalism mean finding common ground, or leaving room for everyone's individual niche?
- Does cultural diversity end up as a collection of different ghettos?
- What would you say is your ideal culinary image of a culturally diverse society? A melting pot? A fruit salad? Cholent?

### ***Bit of background on the actress playing Marina***

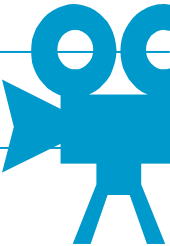
Yevgenia Dodina trained as an actress in Moscow, and made aliya in 1990. She is now a prize-winning actress on stage and screen, and in 2010, twenty years after her aliyah, she was chosen to light one of the twelve torches at the official Yom Ha'atzmaut ceremony in honor of her contribution to Israeli theater.

- What does it mean to be moved by someone writing a single letter in a Torah scroll?
- Were you moved?
- Prior to watching the series, would this scene have moved you?

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## **EPISODE 5.**

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- Would you say the women in this series are weak, or strong?

**Rochele:** How do you put on your shoes?

**Zorik:** However I like...

**Rochele:** You don't understand a thing.

- Have you ever been in a conversation with an Israeli where you feel, or are effectively told, that you don't understand a thing?
- Can the connection between Rochele and Zorik overcome these misunderstandings?

Rochele finds herself breaking some rules, but trying to keep others.

- When it comes to rules, where is the line between hypocrisy and responsibility?

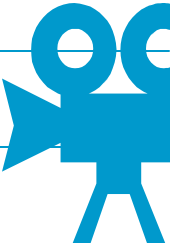
Zorik waits for Rochele instead of going to the club with Natasha

- What do you think this episode is telling us about the advantages and disadvantages of following your heart?

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## EPIISODE 6:

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- When Zorik and Rochele kissed – did you experience this as a victory or a defeat? Of what? By whom?

Wikileaks has established a very clear moral judgment of secrets. Throughout this series there are an enormous number of secrets being kept and revealed: Marina's affair, Leah's health, and of course Zorik and Rochele's affair.

- How are we left thinking about secrets, now?

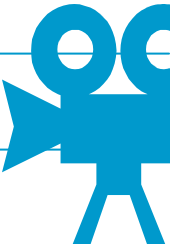
**Rochele:** "What will become of us?"

- What would you like to happen to Zorik and Rochele? Are you surprised by your inclination?

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## EPIISODE 7:

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**Leah:** God is testing us.

- Is this a familiar way of responding to adversity in your family?
- Do you think this perspective is helpful?

**Aharon:** I believe in honoring your mother and father, in telling the truth, in family loyalty.

- Do you have such a clear set of values governing your life?
- Do you identify with all of Aharon's values?
- What do you believe in?

Zorik and Roi served in the 669 Unit – the crack search and rescue unit of the Israeli army.

**Sasha:** "If it's a choice between your brother and your lover, go with your lover."

- Agree?



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