

DRAMATISATION FOR CLASSROOM PERFORMANCE**Pg. 113 to 116.**

CHARACTERS:

ZENA: 12 yrs.

JOSEF: Her brother, 15/16 yrs.

DAD: About 40 plus, Lebanese, probably has a moustache. Zena loves him but they argue.

MUM: A bit younger than Dad. She is pregnant.

ZENA IS IN THE KITCHEN GETTING A DRINK AFTER SCHOOL. THE LOUNGE ROOM IS NEXT TO IT. JOSEF COMES IN FROM OUTSIDE WITH THE PHOTOS.

JOSEF: Don't suppose you want to see these?

ZENA: Yay! My photos! What are they like? Are they any good?

JOSEF: (LAUGHS & HANDS HER THE PRINTS) You're not much of a photographer.

ZENA: (GRABS THEM & LOOKS AT THEM) Oh, they're rubbish! What did I do wrong?'

JOSEF: Well, this one's too close. What is it?

ZENA: It's the bottle with the chemical dripping into it but... And this is the dead grass. This one's not too bad though. It's a bit blurry but you can see the chimneys sticking up behind the containers. Oh, and this one's great! See?

THEY LOOK AT IT TOGETHER

JOSEF: It's a bit dark.

ZENA: No, it's looking between the containers. Like down a dark passage. You can still see tanks and stuff at the end. Can you read that name, Joe?

JOSEF: (PEERING) Not really. It's a bit far away.

ZENA: Oh, bummer! They were going to be part of my assignment. If you can't see anything, they're useless. Hey! D'you reckon a magnifying glass would help?

JOSEF: (SHRUGS) Maybe.

ZENA: (DROPS PICS ON KITCHEN TABLE) I think I've got one in my bedroom. (EXITS)

**JOSEF TAKES A COKE, GOES TO THE LOUNGE ROOM AND SITS IN FRONT OF TV
DAD ENTERS FROM OUTSIDE. PICKS UP PHOTOS AND EXAMINES THEM IDLY, THEN
LOOKS MORE CLOSELY.**

DAD: Josef!

JOSEF: Yes, Dad.

DAD: (GOES TO LOUNGE ROOM) Why have you been taking these photos?

ZENA ENTERS KITCHEN WITH MAGNIFYING GLASS.

JOSEF: Eh?

DAD: If my boss saw these photos, I would be in big trouble.

JOSEF: Why?

DAD: Security regulations. Very tight security there. No cameras, no photos.

ZENA: (FOLLOWS DAD) Is that the place where you work, Dad?

DAD: Yes, and I would like Josef to tell me why these photos were taken.

ZENA: Um, I took them, Dad.

DAD: You, Zena? Why?

ZENA: It's where the chemical's coming from.

DAD: The what?

ZENA: You know. The stuff you took to work for one of your chemists to look at.

DAD: You told me you found it in the creek.

ZENA: I did! It was dripping into the creek and – and I followed it. It led me to the fence.

DAD: Didn't I say you were not to go to the creek again?

ZENA: I didn't! I went along the factory fences. And I found where it was coming from.

DAD: I see. And you took photos?

ZENA NODS, A BIT SCARED.

DAD: So! You want me to lose my job?

ZENA: Why would you ...

DAD: Because I have taken your bottle to one of our chemists. Do you think I can tell him it is coming from our own factory?

ZENA: Yes! He'll want to know!

DAD: Ha! I do not think so! If there is something leaking from our factory, Zena, I am not going to be the one to tell him.'

ZENA: Why not?

DAD: (POINTS HIS FINGER AT ZENA) 'Because – trouble – makers – lose – jobs! (TURNING AWAY) I am very disappointed in you, Zena.

ZENA: But, Dad ...

DAD: You have lied to me, you have disobeyed me and now you sneak around the place where I work, trying to make trouble!

ZENA: I'm not trying to ...

DAD: I don't want to hear anything more about it!

ZENA: But, Dad, it's import ...

DAD: (TURNS ON HER) Zena! That's enough! I am not talking about it any more!

ZENA: (SHOUTS) You have to! It's important!

DAD: (FURIOUS) Don't you dare speak to me like that!

ZENA: (DRAWS A DEEP BREATH) Dad, just listen to me for once! I had to find out where it was coming from because – because it's poison, Dad. There was a dead bird and a dead lizard, and that stuff poisoned them! And it's coming out into our creek. You can't just pretend it's not there!

DAD GLARES AT HER. SPEECHLESS.

MUM IS STANDING IN THE DOORWAY

MUM: She's right, Fared. You can't just ignore it.

ZENA: (GLANCES AT HER MUM, GRATEFULLY) Dad, we've got a baby coming; we've got to try and keep things safe for it.

DAD: You don't understand! Neither of you! Things are not like what they were.'

ZENA: What do you mean?

DAD: I do not want to be like Hakim and lose my job. I have to be careful. People are more suspicious. Of us.

MUM: And that is why you must report it, Fared. We will not allow bigoted people to take away our freedom to act responsibly.