

I Like Mike!

By Aharon Meged

Play no. 147

Opening show: 23/08/1956

Directed by: Israel Becker

Settings by: Joseph Bass

Cast

Benjamin Arieli, Clerk: Shmuel Rudensky

Yaffa Arieli, his wife: Nyura Shein

Tamara, their daughter: Tal, Tania Peres

Tsip, her sister: Rina Paz

Malka, a friend of the family: Hana Hendler

Micha, Sgt. Major in Israel army, Tamara's friendr: Shlomo Barshavit

Mike Abrahams, young American Tourist: Avram Aviram

Krichman, Clerk: Shraga Fridman, Shlomo Bertonov

Mrs. Krichman, his wife: Temima Yudelevitz

Shiloni: Pesach Gutmark

Efron: David Ram

This is a satirical play which pin-pricks certain aspects of life in Israel, such as emigration, dodging of army service, and so on. It revolves around the family of Benjamin Arieli, a junior civil service clerk. His daughter Tamara is due to be called up for military service. But his wife, Yaffa, moves heaven and earth to obtain an exemption for Tamara who has such a fine voice, and the army "being such a waste of time for a young girl". At this precise moment Mike Abrahams appears on the scene. He is a young American tourist, a student who is interested in agricultural machinery, and whose father, a well known Zionist, owns a cattle ranch in Texas.

Yaffa throws herself energetically into the task of bringing Mike and Tamara together, a marriage would release her daughter from army service, and the whole family would go to visit Mike's folks in America. One of Yaffa's first action in this direction is to get rid of Micha, a young army officer who is engaged to Tamara.

The plan succeeds. Mike falls in love with Tamara, proposes marriage to her, and even obtains the consent of his father. The Arieli family is plunged into feverish preparations for the marriage and their journey to America. They take lessons in English. They have passports to get out. But Tsip, the 12-year daughter of her family, revolts against the plan and is determined to prevent its implementation. She sends her sister an anonymous letter accusing her of betraying Micha. Hearing that the Arielis are preparing a big party in honour of Mike, to which all the leading official's in her father's department are invited, she telephones Mike to Beersheba to tell him that the party has been postponed. And when the party takes place, she does everything she can think of to annoy the guests. In the middle of the festivities Mike telephones

from Beersheba, and fearing that all her tricks will be discovered Tsip runs away from home.

The Arieli family is consumed with anxiety about Tsip who has been missing for three days. She is finally discovered hiding out at Micha's place. She agrees to come home on condition that her parents give up the idea of going to America. Benjamin and Yaffa pretend to accept her condition. In the meantime, however, another "tragedy" occurs. Mike has fallen in love with the Negev and has decided to set up a cattle ranch near Eilat. He refuses to give up his obsession even if it means calling off the wedding.

Micha comes to the Arieli home to say good-bye to Tamara before his own departure to the United States on a mission for the Army. Tamara offers to go back to him. But at that moment two M.P.'s appear, to summon Tamara to the recruiting office.

All ends for Tsip. The house is quiet again, and she can go on doing her homework without interruption.