

Aunt Lisa

By **Nissim Aloni**

Play no. 239

Opening show: 18/01/1969

Directed by: Nissim Aloni

Set and Costumes by : Audrey Bergner

Lightning by : Natan Panturin

The Cast

Max, a Gardner: Rafael Klatzkin

Luzo, a Gardner: Shmuel Segal

Kook, a Gardner: Yosef Polak

Victor Kadosh, a young sculptor from Haifa: Shai Danon

Miriam Blank, daughter of Avigail and Alexander Blank: Edith Astruc

Yascha, a very old Caretaker: Haim Amitai

Dr. Atlas, agronomist Lisa's fiancée: Israel Becker

Mrs. Perl, Chairwomen of the Local Council: Stella Avni/Bat-Ami

Lisa Blank, M. Jacques sister: Hanna Rovina

Yosef Blank, M. Jacques son: Nachum Buchman

Figures

Monsieur Jacques, father of the family

Bertha, his wife

Lily, their daughter

Alexander, their son

Michael, their son

Avigail, Alexander's wife

The Play

Three elderly gardeners, Max, Luzo and Cook, are as is their daily custom, playing in the garden of Lisa Blank until sundown, when by chance, after having lost his way, Victor Kadosh, a young sculptor from Haifa, appears in the garden, carrying on his back a figure of Yaakov Blank, known as Monsieur Jacques, founder of the nearby village and brother of the owner of the garden. Apparently, the people of the house are awaiting the arrival of Yosef Blank, son of M. Jacques, who was away from the house for 36 years and was supposed to return four days ago.

The agronomist Dr. Atlas, who is the eternal fiancé of Lisa Blank, has lost his notebook and suspects that it was taken by Miriam Blank, the youngest and only daughter of the family, who was called away from her boarding-school, Switzerland, because of the arrival Yosef Blank.

Much later the same night, Yosef Blank finally appears, drunk and with his clothes torn in the car of Mrs. Pearl, Chairman of the Village Council. Mrs. Pearl knows that Yosef Blank was, for the last 15 years, in the central prison

of Great Meadows near New York and she requests that his arrival be concealed until after the coming village anniversary celebration, a celebration whose central figure is M. Jacques, the father of Yosef Blank.

Lisa Blank, Yosef Blank's aunt, agrees. Dr. Atlas, who is aware of Lisa's former secret love for Yosef Blank asks her to forgive Yosef, Lisa refuses. She believes that Yosef Blank has no other choice but to murder her.

The next day, at the local village theater, Miriam returns the notebook to Dr. Atlas. From his fragmented notes she is able to guess a part of the past. The agronomist, on whom the past lies heavy tells Miriam that Yosef Blank killed his father, and that the gardeners were for a long time Yosef's emissaries. They were sent, in return for Yosef's gold, to kill Aunt Lisa, who was present at the murder of the father in the wine-cellar.

Yosef, who has sobered up, meets Lisa in the living room. She reveals to him that she has "married" his emissaries and has turned them into gardeners in the garden that was landscaped with his gold. She tells him that the gardeners do not remember anything, not even him.

Yosef goes to the garden to see the gardeners and they pretend to know him. Miriam suggests that he return their "youth" to them in a theatrical manner, that is to put them in make-up and grease paint, so that they will learn by heart their former roles. Dr. Atlas meets with Mrs. Pearl at the local theater in an attempt to stall the murder that is on the minds of the Blank children. When he sees that he has no other way, he tells her about the murder of the father.

When the two reach the family home, they find that the gardeners – now "young" – have invaded the house. Max asks to dance with Lisa. Dr. Atlas threatens the gardeners with a revolver. Miriam and Yosef Blank enter the room and announce that they have decided to get married, which is in accord with the unique and special will of M. Jacques. Pearl asks Yosef Blank if he really killed his father, as Dr. Atlas says. Lisa has no other choice but to declare that Dr. Atlas has lost his mind since he has brought to the open the family secret.

Lisa asks the sculptor from Haifa to make a figure of her also because she believes she has found a way to beat Yosef Blank. On the day of the wedding Dr. Atlas leaves the house. He goes to the village with a letter signed by Lisa. It seems as though he is losing his mind.

The people of the house, with the exception of Dr. Atlas, are waiting for the Rabbi who does not appear. Lisa Blank reads in the cards that the wedding will not take place. Mrs. Pearl appears and announces that according to her declaration, Lisa Blank leaves no choice to Yosef Blank. He must kill his aunt if he wished to remain in the house. The gardeners carry out the murder.

When the sun rises on the Blank household however, another picture, that is slightly ridiculous be revealed.

