

THE KEEPERS OF INFINITE SPACE

by Omar El-Khairy

The Keepers of Infinite Space had its world premiere at Park Theatre in January 2014.

A play about a Palestinian prisoner in an Israeli jail. It explores the dynamics of the Israeli prison system revealing the painful complexities of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Shadi is a sixteen-year-old Palestinian prisoner. Tom works for the British International Committee of the Red Cross as an aid worker. He is trying to convince Shadi to record his testimony upon arrest.

SHADI – 16 (PALESTINIAN)

(Beat.) I hung in the air – blood dripping from my body. My shirt covered in blood. My whole body shaking. I remember feeling numb – from the shrapnel that hit me in the thigh.

We were at this demonstration. My brother, Abed – he was – was standing right next to me. I'd told him not to come, but he wouldn't listen.

He was hit straight in the head with a tear-gas canister.

'There is no change nor strength except through Allah, to Allah we belong, and to Him we will return.'

That's all I remember him saying – my father.

Pause.

It was sometime in the morning – three – four, maybe. I heard this loud bang – then the sudden stench of gas. There was a flood of soldiers into the house. My mother began shouting, and then I felt someone grab me and rip me out of bed. The soldiers took me outside – to their jeep. My mother followed them – lashing out and screaming. *(Beat.)* But my father – he just stood there – in the doorway. Silent.

That's the last time I saw them.

Pause.

I was undressed and left standing in my underwear. They dragged me for interrogation. They beat me. They beat you hard in those first few days because they know no one's going to see you – or the bruises. And this carried on for days.