PLAY: HAND OF GOD
by Mona Mansour

CHARACTERS

THE YOUNG KID - he's 11 or so. Pure kinetic energy. He should be playing outside. Sports are his mythology. You'll see.

THE ONE GRANDMA - she's getting her nails done. She talks a lot

THE OTHER GRANDMA, WHO IS MOSTLY QUIET - she is basically not doing anything but eating something and watching what everyone is doing and occasionally saying something

THE AUNT, 30s - she's doing the one grandma's nails

THE DAD, 40s - he's trying to fix something on the laptop

THE OLDER BROTHER, late teens - on his device

THE MOTHER, 40s - you won't see her right away

The time is a little bit into the future of this very difficult now.

At top - An apartment in the city. Everyone except the MOTHER is in the living room, or, you know, the biggest room in the apartment, so they call it the living room. They've been there all day, every, every, every, for a while. There are a couple couches, a couple chairs, a rug in the middle.

I wrote this thinking of my own family of immigrant father, dual cultures. But ethnicity can vary depending on who you are at home!

THE YOUNG KID is bored. He bounces off the couch where his dad sits with a not-new laptop, trying to figure something the f*ck out. THE YOUNG KID goes to the middle of the room. THE YOUNG KID has a lot of energy.

THE YOUNG KID
Let's do this
It's time to do it
Come on now

THE DAD
Not today

THE YOUNG KID
Come on

THE DAD
You're working. We're working. You're supposed to be working. Wait patiently
THE YOUNG KID
I know but you can't get on the site

THE DAD
I will get on the site, and then you'll do your whatever the damn thing is you're supposed to do first. The assignments. Shortly.

THE YOUNG KID
Okay.

THE DAD
I don't understand this. The school sent me 25 passwords. It's ridiculous.

THE YOUNG KID
I know.

THE DAD
Like it's a secret government site. It's education.

THE YOUNG KID
--Okay. Ready?

THE DAD
Just for five minutes.

And now the KID moves - he moves really well, he does a move he's watched over and over and over: He dribbles an imaginary ball, he throws, the arm farthest away from the 'basket' curving up and over his head as he throws.

THE YOUNG KID
(as he moves)
Okay he takes it, then there's a stutter step and then SKY HOOK, baby sky hook, AND BOOM. Who is it?

THE AUNT
Magic Johnson.

THE YOUNG KID
That's right. Why?

The KID re-enacts the move.
THE AUNT
Why what?

THE YOUNG KID
Why a baby sky hook and not just a sky hook.

THE AUNT
I can't remember.

THE YOUNG KID
Come on.

THE AUNT
I don't know.

THE YOUNG KID
"Baby" because you use the wrist, not the arm. This was Magic doing what had been Kareem's signature move, people didn't expect it from Magic just that moment. When?

THE AUNT
We don't know.

THE ONE GRANDMA (GETTING HER NAILS DONE)
1987.

THE YOUNG KID
You got it grandma. Grandma got it! Grandma. Got it.

He goes over and tries to hug his grandma.

THE ONE GRANDMA
I pay attention.

She tries to hug back, moves her hand.

THE AUNT
Don't move please.

THE ONE GRANDMA
"Don't move please." Okay okay.

THE AUNT
You want me to do a good job, right?
THE ONE GRANDMA
I want to go to a salon.

THE AUNT
(to grandma)
This is your salon.

THE YOUNG KID
Grandma knows her shizz.

THE AUNT
(to the young KID)
Yeah you're in school. You know that right? You're actually in school right now. Okay? Okay?
--Can you acknowledge that you're hearing that.

THE YOUNG KID
I hear you.

THE AUNT
Okay.

THE YOUNG KID
Why are you not on him?
(meaning: the older brother sitting on one of the couches, silently on his device)

THE OLDER BROTHER
Because I'm doing my assignments.

THE YOUNG KID
Fortnite!

THE OLDER BROTHER
So? I get my work done.

THE YOUNG KID
Okay guys here's another. Iconic.

He does another move, another basketball move, a throw from the foul line - and in it goes.

THE YOUNG KID
He drifts to his left, makes a jump shot, and IN.
Who is it?
Guys. Come on--
THE OLDER BROTHER
MJ, 1989, Game one, Cleveland Cavaliers, iconic.

THE YOUNG KID
Iconic.

For a second, the other grandma sort of speaks up:

THE OTHER GRANDMA (WHO IS MOSTLY SILENT)
Did they say we can go back to work? When can we go back to work?

THE DAD
I don't know mom. Soon.

THE OTHER GRANDMA
I'm sick of being with just you all. I really am. I've got friends in the neighborhood I want to see. I like being busy.

THE DAD
I know mom.

THE OTHER GRANDMA
Okay.

And now goes back to whatever she was doing, which may have been just sitting there and listening/judging/we can't always tell.

THE YOUNG KID
There's this.

Now he switches gears -- he's a baseball player holding an imaginary bat, waiting for a pitch. He does a bat waving, gum chewing thing.

THE AUNT
Jeter.Obviously.

THE YOUNG KID
This one.

Another stance, another type of bat wave.

THE DAD
Gary Sheffield
THE YOUNG KID
That's right.

THE DAD
I liked Sheff.

THE YOUNG KID
Now...This.

*Here he does a really weird batting stance, like -- just weird.*

THE YOUNG GUY
Got it?

THE AUNT
Hm.

THE YOUNG KID
You don' know?

THE ONE GRANDMA
I'm not sure

THE AUNT
The fat white guy?

THE ONE GRANDMA
They're all fat white guys haha

THE YOUNG KID
No they aren't. You just named two who aren't.

THE AUNT
Younis.

THE ONE GRANDMA
Younis that's right. Him.

THE OLDER BROTHER
Youklis. It's Kevin You-klis.

THE YOUNG KID
THE AUNT
Okay

THE ONE GRANDMA
Okay

THE AUNT
Yeah that's a weird one.

THE YOUNG KID
Yeah.

They get quiet. The aunt does the grandmother's nails. The Dad is still trying to sort out admin on the computer. The Young KID pivots between his sports. Maybe does some soccer moves as well.

THE ONE GRANDMA
(to the Aunt)
Get it on the side.

THE AUNT
What do you mean?

THE ONE GRANDMA
I mean, scrape it. Scrape the polish off where you messed up -- Let me do it.

She uses her finger to scrape the nail polish off a part of the other hand.

THE AUNT
Why would you do that? Now you've got nail polish on your finger.

THE ONE GRANDMA
That's what they do at the salon, if they make a mistake. They just scrape it off. Simple. Just give me the polish remover.

THE AUNT
This is why I don't like doing this. You correct me before I'm finished. And then you mess it up. And then we have to start all over.

THE ONE GRANDMA
What else do you have to do?

As she uses nail polish remover to fix her nails, The One Grandma waxes poetic about her own sports story.
THE ONE GRANDMA
There was one soccer game we all went to
A little game in our town, you know? Our village.
And this crazy thing happened.
No one forgot it.
The guy was you know, going down the field
Toward the goal,
and I don't know exactly what happened, but the guy
The ball goes into the air and his HAND hits it in
Everyone could see it
Everyone
Everyone starts screaming
But the referee says no
The referee says It's good.
And everyone loses their mind. They just go crazy.
And later the guy says, you know what?
"That was a hand. It was the HAND OF GOD.
That's what that was."
And some of us that day, we thought that too.
We thought we saw a miracle.
A miracle or a cheat. Take your pick.
People went crazy in the stands.

A beat.

THE YOUNG KID
No.

THE ONE GRANDMA
Huh?

THE YOUNG KID
No. That's not
You weren't
That wasn't a game YOU saw
That was the WORLD CUP
England versus Argentina
It was Maradona!

THE ONE GRANDMA
Okay. Whoever it was.
THE YOUNG KID
No no Maradona isn't whoever.

THE AUNT
Just let her say it

THE OLDER BROTHER
Yeah just let it go.

THE YOUNG KID
THAT was the World Cup. The WORLD CUP. Do you know what the world cup is?

THE ONE GRANDMA
Yes I do! of course I do, Jesus.

THE YOUNG KID
EVERYONE knows about that grandma.
That's not some "little" match you were at.

THE ONE GRANDMA
So what.

THE YOUNG KID
I'm saying everyone knows about it. it's not like some secret thing you happened to see

THE ONE GRANDMA
Okay okay

THE YOUNG KID
Are you saying
Thinking we're not gonna notice?
That's like me saying, 'I was there when Ali did Rope a Dope.' I wasn't there.

THE ONE GRANDMA
How do you know where I was or wasn't? Have you ever asked me? Have you?
I used to go to some things.

THE AUNT
Stop with this anyway.

THE YOUNG KID
With what?
THE AUNT
Running around and stuff.

THE YOUNG KID
I'm supposed to get exercise! You said if I couldn't go outside --

EVERYONE EXCEPT THE YOUNG KID
You can't go outside!

THE DAD
You can't go outside!

THE AUNT
You can't go outside.

THE YOUNG KID
you said if I couldn't go outside I could do this

THE AUNT
(to the dad)
He's supposed to be doing the virtual learning. He's supposed to be in school right now.

THE DAD
Yes

THE AUNT
He really is

THE DAD
I KNOW! OKAY. I've been at this. I'm not an administrative person. I don't like this thing of five screens open at once. I don't like that they make you put all the passwords every time. I don't like that. I don't like getting five emails for every class, and then another form to fill out after that. This makes me feel like an idiot. I don't like it.

THE YOUNG KID
I don't either.

THE DAD
See? It logged me out again. Why do they care if you log in or don't log in? Who's going to steal this information? Someone's going to steal this information? About the math class and the literature class? Who is going to steal that?

THE OLDER BROTHER
it's not the stealing, they need to make sure he's doing it
THE DAD
I’m not a teacher here. Okay? I’m really not. For fuck's sake! Why--

He almost throws the computer. He's had it. He's tried to keep it together. Beat. The Young KID sees all this, of course, then --

THE YOUNG KID
Then there's this one. Ready?

He starts to slow-mo the big home run that Kirk Gibson hit off Dennis Eckersley -- and just then THE MOM comes through the door. She's naked. Nearly. In her underwear. She has taken off her clothes, postal worker clothes. She kicks them inside, into the apartment, and closes the door behind her. It’s jarring, but of course kind of regular to them all now.

THE AUNT
hi Sis. How you doing?

THE MOM
Don't anyone touch that.

The Dad goes up to her.

THE MOM
No.

THE DAD
I know, I know. Hi baby.

THE YOUNG KID
Hi Mom.

THE MOM
Hi. I'll go shower.

She goes. Now, like clockwork, the Dad finds a way to pick up her clothes without touching them. He uses a broom or something. He picks them up and takes them into the kitchen. All the frustration he had with the stupid computer is gone -- he’s very careful as he does this, uses very minimal movements. He’s like one of the sports dudes his son embodied. Everyone watches. The Older Son gets up, finds a trash bag and they put mom’s clothes inside that. It’s a dance they do every day. The Dad finishes wrapping up the clothes. The dad senses the shift in the room.

THE DAD
(to Young KID)
Who you gonna be now?

THE YOUNG KID
Let me think about it....

end of play.