

# DAILY Actor

## 'Disgraced' by Ayad Akhtar

**AMIR:** That was the first girl I ever kissed. Rivkah was the first girl I ever got up in the morning thinking about. One time she went away on vacation in the middle of the school year. She was gone a week, and I was *a mess*. Didn't even want to go to school if I couldn't see her. *(Remembering)* She was a looker. Dark hair, dark eyes. Dimples. Perfect white skin.

So Rivkah and I'd gotten to the point where we were trading notes. And one day, my mother found one of the notes. Of course it was signed, Rivkah. *Rivkah?* my mom says. *That's a Jewish name. (Beat)* I wasn't clear on what exactly a Jew was at the time, other than they'd stolen land from the Palestinians, and something about how God hated them more than other people... I couldn't imagine God could have hated this little girl. So I tell my mom: "No, she's not Jewish." But she knew the name was Jewish. *If I ever hear that name in this house again, Amir, she said, I'll break your bones. You will end up with a Jew over my dead body.* Then she spat in my face.

*That's so you don't ever forget,* she says. Next day? Rivkah comes up to me in the hall with a note. "Hi, Amir," she says. Eyes sparkling. I look at her and say: "You've got the name of a Jew." She smiles. "Yes, I'm Jewish," she says. *(Beat)* Then I spit in her face.

*\*culled*