

**Aunt Jennifer**  
**A Play in One Act**  
**by Moti Ben-Ari**

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**Dramatis Personae**

Mrs. Lawton, a guidance counselor  
Tiffany, a high school student

Sally Fincher  
Päivi Kinnunen

**The Play**

Mrs. Lawton?

Hello. Are you Tiffany? Come in, please.

What did you want to see me about?

I'm the new guidance counselor and I'm talking with all the students. I would like to know how you see your future.

OK. What do you want to know?

Why don't you start by telling me what your parents are like?

Well, I'm sure you know my Mom. Her picture is on the wall next to the gym. She was captain of the cheerleading squad. She was really something.

Do you want to be like her?

Of course, wouldn't you?

And how is your mother now?

OK ... I guess. She works as a checkout clerk at the supermarket.

What about your father?

Oh, he's not doing well at all. After graduation, he got a good job as an electrician at the factory, but with all the stuff coming from China, the factory closed. Now he just watches TV and drinks, so my Mom has to work overtime. And my Mom, well ... .

What is it, Tiffany? Please don't cry.

It's just that with all that work, you know, standing on her feet all day, dealing all those groceries, putting up with mean customers ... she looks like an old woman. I wish that she could have stayed like she was back then.

It must be hard on her.

This thing with my brother really hit us hard. Last year he needed this big operation and we had to sell our house to pay for it. Now we're living in a small apartment in a bad part of town. Without help from Aunt Jennifer, I think we'd be out on the street.

Aunt Jennifer?

Aunt Jennifer is so, so cool. She's like really old, I think 32, but she could pass for a kid in high school. I've seen pictures when she was in school. She wasn't as pretty as my Mom, and she was really, really less glamorous. Anyway, she studied computer science in college and got a job as a programmer with some tech company. She's got another word for it. Some kind of engineer. Boring. She looks at computer screens all day. Boring, boring, boring. And the geeks she works with!

How do you know all this, Tiffany?

Oh, Aunt Jennifer took me to her office one day. You can't imagine this place: big windows and carpets, and a lounge with a coffee machine. She gets these big lunches with all sorts of stuff I never heard of. I had chicken teri... teri... teri-something. It was really good. In the mornings, she works out in the gym they have at work. I guess that's why she still has a good figure after having the twins.

It sounds like a wonderful place to work.

They're so cute, my cousins. They even go to work with her, to a daycare center they have. So many fantastic toys and games. And Aunt Jennifer comes to see them at lunch. I barely see my Mom, you know.

I'm sure it's difficult when she has to work so hard.

At least my uncle isn't a computer geek. He's some kind of banker. Well, that's almost the same thing. He's always looking at the screen of this Berry-something gadget he has. Boring. You should see their house: it's a big house in the suburbs with a swimming pool, so I guess they're doing OK. He's not cool like my Dad is. Well, like my Dad was when he was in high school.

That's a nice necklace you have, Tiffany.

Thank you, isn't it great? Aunt Jennifer brought it back from one of her trips. They have so much work at her company that they have to send some of it to foreign countries. Aunt Jennifer flies to these places all the time: India and Sing... Sing... Sing-something. It sounds so exciting. I wish I could travel.

Maybe someday you could work at Aunt Jennifer's company and then you could travel, too.

She said that if I learn to use a computer, she'll arrange a summer job for me. Can you imagine me working with a computer? Me?! Boring, boring, boring. I'm not going to waste my summer in front of a computer.

Aunt Jennifer has been very successful, hasn't she?

She was SO, SO LUCKY. Not like my mother, who had such ROTTEN, ROTTEN LUCK. I sure hope that I will be as lucky as Aunt Jennifer.

Tiffany, you'll graduate next year, and since you have very good grades in mathematics, I thought we could talk about how to apply for a scholarship at the state university. They have an excellent program in computer science.

Maybe some other time. Sorry, but I've got to run. Aunt Jennifer gave me a big check for my birthday and I've arranged to meet my friends at the mall. You wouldn't believe the new shoes they just got in. Bye.

See you, Tiffany ... at the supermarket.