**Toby Einhorn:** My own first match I made when I was 10. So I've been matchmaking as long as I can remember. And since October 7th, like one woman that I really had a great idea for her, and she was not interested. And then after the guy went to reserve duty, he sent me some pictures of himself in uniform, and I showed her the picture of him in uniform, she's like, “oh my god, definitely yes. OK, this is a great idea.” I didn't tell her that I had already suggested the guy to her with a different picture when he wasn't in uniform. And this happened a few times, so I understood that everyone loves a man in uniform.

**Mishy Harman (narration):** Hey, I’m Mishy Harman and this is Israel Story. As you know, we’re in the midst of our “Wartime Diaries” series, which is an attempt to collect slivers of life during these seemingly endless and difficult days.

Today is *Tu B’Av*, the less commercial, more Mishna-bound, Jewish version of Valentine’s Day. Now the war has of course impacted love, dating and relationships in all kinds of ways. We’ve heard and told (and will continue to share) stories of couples who got together, couples who broke up, and - tragically - partners who lost their loved ones. But for our short, and slightly more lighthearted *Tu B'Av* special, our producers Mitch Ginsburg and Yael Ben Horin wanted to get the scoop from a real maven - someone with a bird's eye view of the local, post-October 7th dating scene. So they got into the car, drove to Kfar Shmaryahu and met Rebetzin Toby Einhorn, who runs a one-stop-shop for all matters of the heart. Here she is.

**Toby Einhorn:** My name is Toby Einhorn. I am 50 years old. I'm married to the love of my life, thank God, for the past 26 years. And what I do professionally - but it's my passion, my mission in life, my love, my excitement - is I am a matchmaker and a dating and marriage coach.

**Mitch Ginsburg:** And what’s that like these days?

**Toby Einhorn:** So dating since October 7th in Israel has been really hard on a lot of levels, but also really amazing and very exciting and very beautiful and just miraculous. And what I could say is that, on the one hand, you have all of these eligible bachelors who are not available because they're at war, and also women that are at war. And so it's much, much, much harder to make matches. You know, you'll call somebody and they'll say, “yeah, I'm super interested in this woman, but I’m in Azza. So, you know, you caught me on my one 24 hour, you know, break.” So that's really challenging.

**Yael Ben Horin:** Can you share an example of those challenges?

**Toby Einhorn:** Yeah. One of the people that I work with in dating coaching had gone out on a first date with a guy before October 7th, and didn't want to go out with him again, but didn't have an opportunity to tell him before the holiday. And then he was called up to Azza, and she said to me, “how do I break up with somebody… You know… How…” He was interested! “How do I tell him I'm not interested when he's fighting for the country and fighting in a war?” So I said, “well, let's wait, you know, let's see.” And then he phoned me at the first possible opportunity. He's like, “Toby, thank you for this idea. This is amazing girl. She's in my heart the whole time while I'm fighting.” And I'm thinking, ‘oh, my good lord. Like, what do I do? What do I say?’ I'm like, “OK, you know, it's always good to have, like, also like other people in mind, like your family at home.” And he's like, “no, this girl, she's so special.” So I actually advised her, if possible, to wait before she told him that she wasn't interested, because I really felt that it could influence his state of mind. And I was worried about that. And she was like, totally with me, this woman, and she waited, you know, a few weeks until, you know, she let him down.

**Mitch Ginsburg:** And any successes?

**Toby Einhorn:** Well…OK. Another story I could tell you is that a couple that I set up, she said that she can't, because she's in *miluim*, she's in reserve duty. And he said, “well, I'm in reserve duty also, but I'm willing to, like, I really would like to meet her, and I'm willing to…” and she said, “no, I can't. I can't focus on it right now.” And he understood. He wrote me back a month later. He's like, “Toby, we found ourselves on the same base, and we started dating!” So that’s very very cute. And I would say, like a lot of engagements happened, I think, much quicker because of the war. People realizing that we don't have time to lose. The soldiers realizing what's important in life, and that they do want to have someone to come home to. And in my mind, as a dating and marriage coach, that's great, and that's also has a little bit of a worrisome element, because making, you know, I always say when you make decisions, you shouldn't be in your highs or in your lows. You shouldn't be in a very extreme situation. So if someone actually asks me, as a dating coach, I would advise that unless you had decided already that this is the person you wanted to marry before October 7th, if you decided while you were at war, wait.