**Mishy Hartman (narration:)** Hey listeners, it’s Mishy. Kibbutz Nahal Oz was one of the scenes of some of the most horrific acts of violence carried out by Hamas on October 7th. While the numbers are still very much in flux—as of now it seems that at least 100 of the kibbutz’s 470 members were killed.

Since Nahal Oz is practically on the border with Gaza, it's known its share of horror and tragedy over the years. In fact, it was established on the remains of a previous kibbutz, Kibbutz Be’eri Yitzhak, which had been decimated in a battle with the Egyptian army in 1948, and whose surviving members had decided not to return after the war. Three years later, in 1951, a new group reestablished itself there—creating what would soon be called Kibbutz Nahal Oz. Our senior producer Yochai Maital will take it from here.

**Yochai Maital (narration):** April 29th 1956 was supposed to be a particularly festive day on Kibbutz Nahal Oz. Four couples were going to get married in one big joint celebration. And what's more, Moshe Dayan, the IDF Chief of Staff, who enjoyed sort of a rock star status in those days and was related to one of the couples, was going to attend. Among those preparing the joyous event was Roi Rotberg, the kibbutz’s 21-year-old blue eyed head of security.

That very same morning, Roi went out to the nearby wheat fields where some Arab herders were, at least so he thought, trying to steal agricultural equipment. But it was a trap. Roi was captured, killed and kidnapped to Gaza, where his body was severely mutilated. According to some accounts, his eyes were gouged out.

Dayan learned of the murder, retired into a room, and wrote a short eulogy, which he delivered the following day at Roi’s funeral. It took him half an hour to write, but the effects of his words reverberated throughout Israel, and indeed, throughout time. He intended to eulogize a single fallen comrade, but in doing so, he penned an ethos: succinct and brutal, defiant and tragic. It's considered one of the most defining iconic speeches in Israeli history, and has over the decades been adopted by both the right and the left, each of whom saw in it an ideological rallying cry.

In light of Saturday's horrific events, which cost the lives of so many members of the very same kibbutz, we bring you Dayan's eulogy in his own voice. We’ll let you make your own sense of his words. But one thing is clear: the eulogy of Roi Rotberg, read over the open grave of a young kibbutznik on April 30th 1956 remains heartbreakingly relevant. The text was translated by Mitch Ginsburg and dubbed by Yair Pascu.

Yesterday with daybreak, Roi was murdered. The quiet of a spring morning blinded him and he did not see the stalkers— those waiting in hiding for his soul on the furrow. Let us not hurl blame at the murderers today. Why should we complain of their hatred for us? Eight years they have been sitting in Gaza’s refugee camps, and have witnessed with their own eyes how we have transformed the soil, the villages where they and their forebears once dwelled, into a homeland. It is not, therefore, from the Arabs of Gaza that we must demand Roi’s blood, but rather from ourselves.

How did we shut our eyes to the reality of our faith? How were we unwilling to see the destiny of our generation in its full cruelty? Have we forgotten that this small band of youngsters settled here in Nahal Oz carries upon its shoulders the heavy gates of Gaza. Beyond which hundreds of thousands of eyes and arms huddled together and pray for the onset of our weakness so that they may tear us to pieces. Has this been forgotten? For we know that if the hope of our destruction is to die out, we must be armed and ready morning and evening. We are a generation of settlements. And without the steel helmet and the maw of the cannon. We shall not be able to plant a tree or build a house. Our children will not have lives to live if we do not dig shelters. And without a barbed wire fence and a machine gun we cannot pave paths or drill for water.

The millions of Jews annihilated without a country look at us from the ashes of history and command us to settle and rebuild the land for our people. But beyond the furrow that marks the border lies a surging sea of hatred and vengeance yearning for the day that tranquillity blunts our alertness. For the day that we heed the ambassadors of conspiring hypocrisy who call for us to lay down our arms.

It is to us that the blood of Roi cries out from the remains of his shredded body. Although we have vowed a thousand vows that our blood will never again be shed in vain, yesterday we were once again seduced, coaxed to listen, to believe. Our reckoning with ourselves, our coming to terms shall happen today. We mustn't flinch from the hatred that accompanies and fills the lives of hundreds of thousands of Arabs who live around us and are waiting for the moment when their hands may claim our blood. We mustn't avert our eyes lest our hands be weakened. That is the decree of our generation. That is the choice of our lives. To be willing and armed, strong and unyielding, lest the sword be knocked from our fists, and our lives severed.

Roi Rotberg: the thin, blond lad who left Tel Aviv in order to build his home alongside the gates of Gaza, to serve as a wall for us all. Roi—the light in his heart blinded his eyes and he saw not the flesh of the blade. The longing for peace deafened his ears and he heard not the sound of the coiled murderers.

The gates of Gaza were too heavy for his shoulders and crushed him underneath.