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CHAPTER VI

TODAY'S TRUTH IS TOMORROW'S LIE

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CHARACTERS

JAN *Retired professor, over sixty, but feels younger.*

ŁUCJA *Student, under thirty, but feels older*

A study. A huge photo of a young man wearing large sunglasses hangs on the wall. There is a desk and in the corner, a seating area with a small, low table.

A young woman stands in the room looking about her – she carries a cloth tote bag over her shoulder and has an energy drink in her hand. She looks at the photo on the wall and sits down on an armchair in the seating area. She waits and lays a list down ready. She then takes a tape recorder out of her bag and performs a speech check. There is a loud clatter behind the door. She jumps up startled. A man comes in with a tray, on which there is thermos jug, two mugs and an antique samovar.

JAN *May I offer you a...*

ŁUCJA *No thank you... (She raises her plastic bottle).*

JAN *Ah, you have your drink with you.*

Pause. He examines her.

Łucja holds his gaze.

JAN *What can I do for you Ms – (He holds out his hand).*

ŁUCJA *Janda*

Observing her closely Jan holds on to her hand and spins her around, as if in a dance.

JAN *What is a lovely young woman like you doing in a dusty archive?*

ŁUCJA *Clearing things up.*

They laugh

ŁUCJA *In the name of the archive, thank you for allowing me to come.*

Jan looks at her

ŁUCJA *I have... a catalogue of questions*

JAN *I've already answered them by email.*

ŁUCJA *It's about...*



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JAN What was your name?

ŁUCJA Janda, Łucja.

JAN The bringer of light. Łucja, why are you here?

ŁUCJA (*takes a deep breath*) It's about your tapes.

JAN They aren't my tapes.

ŁUCJA No, no, only there are some questions.

JAN I answered the archive's questions by email.

Łucja remains silent

JAN Do you have different questions?

ŁUCJA (*hesitates*) No.

JAN Other...wishes? What is it that you would like?

ŁUCJA Other...answers.

JAN Then dear Łucja you need to ask somebody else.

Silence

ŁUCJA Professor you provided us, well the archive, with 8 CDs of original recordings from the eighties. May I put it this way; they're historical testaments from the bowels of the university.

Jan remains silent.

ŁUCJA (*looks at her papers*) Faculty board meetings and Solidarity meetings were recorded during the historical years 80 - 83.

JAN Indeed.

ŁUCJA And you took part in most of the meetings.

JAN How - ?

ŁUCJA I recognised your voice immediately.

JAN (*laughs*) Charming.

ŁUCJA (*laughs*) Yes – To us, well the archive, these eight CDs are priceless documents, because in a way they make a moment in history a tangible experience, if I may put it that way.

JAN I'll allow it. You may. What do you want?

ŁUCJA This isn't easy – Well – Just as an example, on CD 6 there is an incredibly long silence during this faculty meeting. There's only rustling and the clearing of throats and then your voice is heard and you very calmly say – well your voice, very calmly tells the Director of Public Prosecutions of the People's Republic of Poland that, in the name of the faculty, you suggest that he steps down as a professor of the university. Because he, the Director of Public Prosecutions, has violated laws. Then there is silence again and then a coughing fit, somebody is breathing heavily and then all of a sudden there is the sound of a scraping chair, footsteps, then again more footsteps, a slamming door and then silence – silence.

JAN The silence made an impression on you.

ŁUCJA Absolute silence – I don't think there's anything after. It's the end of the meeting, everyone is leaving now and suddenly there's this gasping near the microphone UHUUUUUUUU, they're breathing heavily. It goes on for ages, I think somebody must be suffocating and it goes on and on, until the Director of Public Prosecutions' voice says in the distance "I have taken note of your suggestion." Boom. Over. Wow.

JAN Good. What do you want to know?

ŁUCJA May I?

JAN Please take a seat.

ŁUCJA The scraping of chairs, footsteps, doors slamming. Who left? Was it out of protest?

JAN It was a vegetative protest. A sphincter strike. Three people went out to shit. We



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were scared. We were shitting ourselves with fear.

ŁUCJA Not you.

JAN The Director of Public Prosecutions of Poland was at the same time a respected professor of our faculty. He had given an informal order as Director of Public Prosecutions to arrest members of Solidarity. By this he had broken established law and he was no longer acceptable to us as a professor of the law faculty. However as the Director of Public Prosecutions he was powerful and that scared us. All of us.

ŁUCJA Scared of what?

JAN Scared of disappearing. My wife was pregnant. We were expecting our first child.

ŁUCJA When you gave him the paper, did you realise what it meant?

JAN It was insanity. A mixture of Boy-Scout spirit, rebelliousness and professional legal sensibilities – We had to do something.

ŁUCJA Was it usual to tape these meetings on cassette?

JAN No.

ŁUCJA Who could have had an interest in recording the meetings?

JAN What do you think?

ŁUCJA I'm asking you.

JAN Is this an interrogation?

ŁUCJA There are still questions as to the origin of the tapes.

JAN I've answered the questions of the origin. I received the tapes in the spring of ninety-one.

ŁUCJA Who from?

JAN A small package lay in my pigeonhole at the faculty office, with no return address.

ŁUCJA The secretary -

JAN - Hadn't seen anyone

ŁUCJA Why was the parcel given to you in particular?

JAN I received the tapes in '91, I digitalised them in 2001 in order to preserve the recordings.

ŁUCJA You destroyed the tapes.

JAN No

ŁUCJA The tapes still exist.

JAN They destroyed themselves. The quality was poor.

ŁUCJA The tapes no longer exist.

JAN No.

ŁUCJA What do you think, why did you receive the tapes?

JAN You may speculate on that with pleasure.

ŁUCJA You were a member of the faculty board. You were the president of Solidarity at the university.

Jan remains silent.

ŁUCJA You were a leading figure of the opposition movement.

JAN There were others still. (*He fiddles with the samovar*). You know in the eighties we had a sausage dog, - tea? (*She refuses; he pours himself a coffee from the thermos flask*). When he was commanded to - "Seek", you had to say something like that - he would run and start digging at mouse holes as if he was possessed. He would come back to a whistle. He never managed to catch a mouse. Not even once, but he loved the game.

Łucja remains silent.

JAN One evening in the winter of eighty-two we, the sausage dog and I, played the seek game on our evening walk, but we went a bit far. The police stopped us. I didn't have any ID with me and was escorted home by five police men. They rang the bell and my wife opened the door: "Is this your husband?" they asked, "yes, that's my husband" said my



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wife. They cautioned us on the curfew and then Zbiszek and I were released into her custody.

ŁUCJA Zbiszek?

JAN The sausage dog.

ŁUCJA It was degrading.

JAN It was a game. I had a goal, I could laugh at that sort of thing. What's your goal?

ŁUCJA Please don't misunderstand me. At the archive we collect eye witness reports. We listen to people's own life stories. Sometimes they're tragic, sometimes absurd, sometimes they're long stories, sometimes they're short, but they are always in some way... complete. Then suddenly last month eight CDs arrive: Rustling, rasping, rattling and in between, murmuring that can't be understood. Then heated arguments drowned out by coughing fits, addresses, reports, gasps, wheezes. Resolutions. Ellipses. Fragments. I listen to it, I'm part of it and I can't understand anything, not a thing. It all belongs together somehow, but nothing fits...a puzzle.

JAN A puzzle requires patience.

ŁUCJA Did you listen to the tapes before they were digitalised?

JAN Not all of them. Marek burned the CDs.

ŁUCJA You didn't keep them in your hands?

JAN Why? Marek knew how to do it. I didn't.

ŁUCJA How could you be sure that - ?

JAN I was trusting.

ŁUCJA Well ok, let's take the strike. December '81. A Monday. Exactly the day after martial law was declared, I researched it.

JAN Efficient.

ŁUCJA I'll reconstruct things. Martial law was declared on Sunday. At eight o' clock on Monday evening you stage, with other activists, an occupation of the university buildings and stay the entire night. The occupation of the university is a beacon of civil rights. It's the powerful signal of a powerful movement. There are two thousand Solidarity members at the university, but the next morning you learn that you were almost alone there, with a handful of people, in the enormous building.

JAN There were sixteen who stayed, sixteen out of two thousand, eleven of them were from my faculty, plus the dean. Something at least.

ŁUCJA There was an emergency meeting the following morning. CD 4. There is a sense of fear and perplexity in the voices, if I interpret them correctly.

JAN The meeting was at six o'clock in the morning, it was cold and dark. We sat in the empty university and didn't know what to do. What would happen next? What should we do? What were the others doing? Who was going to make the first move?

Łucja looks at him.

JAN We spoke with the leaders of the students, they called for a strike – and then the police came and stormed the building. All at once there were two figures from ZOMO¹ in the hallway of the dean's office, one was surly and the other was drunk. The secretary held them up, while the dean let a dozen other people disappear through the back door. At least nobody was hurt. There were no injured.

ŁUCJA Where was it supposed to lead? Did you know what you wanted?

JAN We were so close to our goals. Solidarity had been legalised for a year. For a year we had argued openly about the correct path for Poland. The movement had become large, a powerful wave that swept over the land and brought movement to everyone and

1

ZOMO – Zmotoryzowane Odwody Milicji Obywatelskiej / Motorised Reserves of the Citizens Militia – A paramilitary police force.



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everything. None of us had expected this blow. Not one. It was Sunday morning when Jaruzelski declared martial law on the television. We weren't prepared for that. We wanted freedom for Poland. Freedom of speech, freedom of the press, free unions. We had come so far, we were so close. And then all at once on 13.12.82, at six o' clock in the morning, everything ground to a halt.

Silence

I took the bus on that Sunday morning. The few passengers stared straight ahead. The streets were as empty, as if time stood still. As if a giant hand had stopped everything. As if the bus was driving through a world that had stopped turning, transporting people turned to stone. It was really cold. A merciless blue sky above us and suddenly dong, dong, dong, dong...

ŁUCJA What was that?

JAN (*laughs*) Early Mass. – I went to a colleague's and we discussed what had to be done.

ŁUCJA What was your timeframe?

JAN Sorry?

ŁUCJA I mean how much time had you given yourself, to take steps to reach your concrete goals?

JAN I don't understand.

ŁUCJA What was your time table?

JAN We were taken by surprise, my wife and I. We couldn't stay in the flat. My son was nine months old and we left overnight, by foot, with a pram and two shopping bags.

ŁUCJA You went into hiding?

JAN For a couple of days, at my wife's sister's. That way we weren't alone. We were witnesses for each other, in case...We hadn't expected to go underground and there was the baby...I know I went to uni on Monday morning and said to myself that I was going to war now.

ŁUCJA That was insane.

JAN It wasn't sensible.

ŁUCJA Why did you still do it?

Jan remains silent.

ŁUCJA To whom were you trying to prove something?

JAN A colleague of mine was arrested immediately, when he was released years later Solidarity had been forbidden. I asked him whether we would live to see the liberation of Poland and he said: "Listen, I don't have any hope for myself. We're standing at the beginning of a long development. Perhaps our children will see Poland liberated, but that's not very likely. I believe that our grandchildren will have a free country to... (*He breaks off*).

Łucja remains silent.

JAN Yes that was our hope.

ŁUCJA Did you consider what danger you were bringing your family into?

JAN I fought so that my son and my grandchildren would be able to live in a free country. Perhaps it wasn't sensible, but this underground at our home, in the kitchen, behind closed shutters made sense. We didn't live in any more danger than our friends. We didn't need a time table. We needed patience.

ŁUCJA What does your son say to it all today?

JAN Nothing.

ŁUCJA Does he see his father as a hero?

JAN No.

ŁUCJA What then?

JAN My son lost his life in a traffic accident in 2001.



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ŁUCJA I'm sorry.

Pause

JAN For years this fear accompanied me, day and night. It was always there. Fear of disappearing and suddenly not being there for him. But in every moment I knew that there was sense in holding out against this fear. It. Made. Sense.

Łucja remains silent.

JAN What are you scared of?

ŁUCJA I've never been persecuted. I...I'm not scared of an accident, I don't think about those sort of things.

Jan remains silent.

ŁUCJA Sometimes I panic that I won't make it.

JAN Make what?

ŁUCJA That I won't reach my goals.

Jan looks at her

ŁUCJA (*takes a deep breath*) Well. My goals. I have a plan for the next five years. First I looked for this internship at the archive, where I can collect material for my degree dissertation. It makes sense for career reasons and it's economical. – And imagine, the archive has offered me the chance to work on a European oral history project! To me it's a ticket to the academic community. There are at least three co-authorships in it for me. One of them is almost sure to be – fingers crossed – at *Kwartalnik Historyczny*² I'll finally get further!

JAN Where will it finally get you?

ŁUCJA (*boldly*) I want to join the editorial staff of *Kwartalnik Historyczny*.

JAN You're purposeful. You act strategically and efficiently.

ŁUCJA I haven't published a single thing yet.

JAN Studies come first, then you'll have your degree and the degree is the starting point.

ŁUCJA All of my fellow students are publishing things already.

JAN To what end?

ŁUCJA To get on.

JAN Before the start?

Silence

ŁUCJA It's all very well for you, you don't have to publish anything anymore.

JAN I will write a history of our faculty.

ŁUCJA What for?

JAN Why not?

ŁUCJA Why don't you leave publishing to the younger generation, who really need to make a mark? You've long passed the finishing line. You've had your career.

JAN If I wrote a history of the faculty then I would write that there used to be social engagement. Commitment to the common good.

ŁUCJA The university's organisational commitment – there are questionnaires.

JAN I'll write of experience in the value of collective actions.

ŁUCJA You mean back then in the last century?

JAN Yes.

ŁUCJA I'm living now. In a free country, where I can achieve things.

JAN You're living in a system which compels young people to publish texts before they have anything to say?

ŁUCJA I've chosen to have a career.

JAN You've subjugated yourself?

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ŁUCJA It's my free choice.

JAN And if it doesn't work out with the career: What then?

ŁUCJA Then I'll have to ask myself where I went wrong.

JAN You mean you would question yourself, rather than the system?

ŁUCJA Yes.

JAN And those who fail?

ŁUCJA They'll slip to the edge where social nets lie in wait.

JAN And then?

ŁUCJA Everyone must decide for themselves.

JAN And you?

ŁUCJA I would always fight for a second chance. Place all my bets onto getting back into the game.

JAN What about the others?

ŁUCJA What others?

JAN There were four of us in those days, four professors who were in Solidarity, Stefan, Leszek, Olga and myself. In the summer of '82 a directive came from the secret police to dismiss the four of us without notice. We knew nothing about it. We learnt years later that the dean had saved us. She sat with four men on the committee and was the only one who fought for us. The men were scared of losing their positions. She never spoke of it by the way.

ŁUCJA How did you find out?

JAN CD 12.

ŁUCJA CD 12?!

JAN (*laughs*) Just joking. There are 8 CDs

Ł ucja laughs.

Jan fiddles with the Samowar.

ŁUCJA You speak of the dean with reverence.

JAN Yes. – Tea?

ŁUCJA (*shakes her head*) Why are you telling me this?

JAN I was never alone. I always had people on my side.

ŁUCJA I live in a free country. I set my goals myself. I have to make it alone.

JAN Entirely alone? Are you sure?

ŁUCJA I...

JAN -If you don't need anybody, then nobody is there?

Ł ucja remains silent.

JAN One day my doorbell rang and a Captain Lenski of the SB³ was standing in front of the door. I suggested that he should get my secretary in the university to make him an appointment. He said it would be better to talk at home. The next day I went to the dean and said that I had been checked by the secret police and what should I do. She answered "You will know what to say. By the way, Lenski visits me regularly here in the faculty."

ŁUCJA Was she cooperating with the SB?

JAN She was covering for us.

ŁUCJA How can you be sure of that.

JAN I had trust.

ŁUCJA Did *she* pass the tapes to you?

JAN In that way? Certainly not.

ŁUCJA The secret agent?

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JAN Lenski? Maybe. Possibly.

ŁUCJA Is that your suspicion?

JAN I suspect that Lenski occasioned the recordings to be made.

ŁUCJA How could he have convinced anyone to do that?

JAN Lenski had...methods. And he had power. I was supposed to begin a research semester in Holland. It was a big thing for me. Lenski ordered me to come to his office. A letter of formal obligation was lying there. I refused to sign it, didn't get a passport and stayed at home.

ŁUCJA You gave it up?

JAN I wanted to carry on being at peace with myself.

ŁUCJA One of your colleagues cooperated with Lenski. Aren't you interested in who recorded the tapes, or don't you want to know?

JAN It's over 30 years ago. Most colleagues are dead.

ŁUCJA Which of your colleagues had asthma?

JAN Jerzy.

ŁUCJA He had the microphone.

JAN Yes.

ŁUCJA He was the traitor.

JAN Nonsense. Jerzy was ill. To ill to say no, what do I know. Understand that I don't want to know how Lenski softened poor Jerzy up. How or why it was Jerzy, or anyone else, is of no importance.

ŁUCJA But –

JAN I gave these tapes to the archive, because they give a glimpse of what went on at the university during the years of martial law. As eye witness documents, which we wouldn't have had if Jerzy hadn't prostituted himself at the time. Be thankful to him young lady.

ŁUCJA Is it possible that he passed you the tapes...

JAN In 1991 he had already been dead for three years.

ŁUCJA You waited over 20 years before you put the tapes at the disposal of the public.

JAN I waited out of respect for the people concerned.

ŁUCJA They're dead now.

JAN Yes

ŁUCJA You didn't release all of the tapes.

JAN No.

ŁUCJA Where are the tapes?

JAN They don't exist anymore.

ŁUCJA You've destroyed them.

JAN My son had them with him when he had the car accident. The car was burnt out. He didn't have time to...he wasn't able to finish it.

ŁUCJA You haven't heard the complete tapes.

JAN There were too many. We had other things to do in 1991. For years there were three boxes in the children's room, on top of Marek's wardrobe. I have to admit, I'd forgotten about them. They fell into our hands when he moved out in 2001 and he had the idea that they should be digitalised in order to preserve them. Marek was studying at the film academy; they had a studio for this there. And then one day, on the way there, the accident happened.

ŁUCJA That was in the summer of 2001.

JAN Yes.

ŁUCJA On the B 713, on the 26th of July.

JAN You've even researched the B 713.

ŁUCJA The scene of the accident is outside the city. Not on the way to the academy.



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Jan remains silent.

ŁUCJA There was a police investigation.

JAN Yes. It was an accident. The sun blinded him.

ŁUCJA He was driving North towards the city. It was midday, the sun was behind him.

JAN The sun shone into the rear view mirror, the interior mirror.

ŁUCJA That's how it was reconstructed.

JAN Yes. He had light-sensitive eyes and he wasn't wearing sunglasses.

ŁUCJA You believed that.

Jan remains silent.

ŁUCJA You believed me too.

Jan remains silent.

ŁUCJA I deceived you.

Jan remains silent.

ŁUCJA The truth is I spent nights sniffing around and swallowing a lot of dust in the archive. Why? Because I wanted to bring the truth to light.

Jan gets up and turns away.

ŁUCJA Unlike you – (*She gets up*). Is this painful? Does it make you angry? Not even a little? Or perhaps yes? Do you feel something throbbing? Is something constricting your throat? Are your fists itching? What would you like to do now? – You can't throw me out. You can't berate me. Or – do you have other wishes? Do you perhaps want to know something at last?

JAN (*slowly*) You've abused my trust.

ŁUCJA Yes! Damn it! Yes!

Jan looks at her.

ŁUCJA I...I'm sorry. – Please...forgive me. I'm sorry.

JAN Why are you doing this?

Pause

ŁUCJA (*glances at the photo on the wall*) Is that him?

JAN Just before his twentieth birthday.

Pause. They look at the photo.

ŁUCJA Could you imagine somebody wanting to see the tapes destroyed at all costs?

JAN Who?

ŁUCJA Lenski, the secret agent?

JAN Would he have got them to me then?

ŁUCJA Are you sure that the tapes came from Lenski?

JAN No.

ŁUCJA Lenski is now living in Torun. His name is Kowalski and he runs a mobile phone business on the internet.

Jan remains silent.

ŁUCJA The SB was replaced by the UOP⁴ in 1990.

Jan remains silent.

ŁUCJA A partly charred UOP report of 26.7.2001 available to the archive, mentions the completion of an operation that led to "the destruction of relevant materials".

Jan remains silent.

ŁUCJA The 26.7.2001 is the day on which –

JAN (*tired*) They burned a lot in those days, especially their own reports.

ŁUCJA They speak of operation 713.

Jan remains silent.



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ŁUCJA That's the number of the road on which your son perished.

JAN Why are you doing this?

ŁUCJA I don't want to conjecture.

JAN No?

ŁUCJA I want to find out the truth.

JAN And then?

ŁUCJA Make it public.

JAN You want to find truth and begin with falsehood. What kind of truth should it then become? What conditions does your truth have to fulfil?

ŁUCJA Listen, I've spent months in research. It must be of interest to you too. How your son...

JAN No.

Łucja remains silent.

JAN *That* he died, *that* he disappeared, *that* in all the years that followed there was nothing there anymore, as if somebody had switched off the light in our lives...My marriage broke up over it.

Łucja remains silent.

JAN My wife and I speculated for ages. Our friends too. All these conspiracy theories, this cheap poison, don't lead anywhere.

Łucja looks at him.

JAN It was ultimately an accident, in an old car with worn tires, on a badly tarred road. Marek drove too fast without sunglasses. He'd only done his driving test a couple of weeks before.

ŁUCJA Why wasn't he wearing sunglasses?

JAN I don't know, he usually did, but not that day.

ŁUCJA Is that positive?

JAN They would have found them.

ŁUCJA They didn't find them.

JAN No!! – It was raining permanently that summer, the South had catastrophic floods. On July 26th a storm lay over the country. Somebody drowned in Krakow. Two people were struck by lightning in Warsaw. And here, and only here, only here! – The bloody sun was shining at midday.

ŁUCJA Let me –

JAN That's enough!! Stop it!

Łucja remains silent.

JAN It's wrong to bow to the laws of the gutter press by selling a cheap sensation as the truth. I see the headlines and how hollow revenge is crawling out of its hole again. Don't you see it?! You're intelligent and ambitious. You're too good for –

ŁUCJA Listen –

JAN Don't sell yourself short.

ŁUCJA You don't know anything about my life.

Pause. Then Jan starts to laugh.

JAN Lovely Łucja, say that again.

Łucja remains silent.

JAN One day Jerzy stood at the door of my third floor flat: "You don't know anything about my life" he wheezed, "that's why I would like to ask you a favour. Would you be willing to look after a small package for me, for an indefinite time?" I asked, "Why me of all people? You don't know me." He said "I trust you" and chuckled shyly. I looked at him and knew that I was the only one he could go to. I took it, he said "thanks" and left.

ŁUCJA And he never came back?



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JAN It was said that he'd gone away to convalesce – but he never came back. There were rumours that he'd gone to a foreign country in the West.

ŁUCJA You lied.

JAN Yes.

ŁUCJA Why the fairy tale of the anonymous package in the secretary's office?

JAN Because Jerzy trusted me.

Ł ucja remains silent.

JAN Because I didn't know anything about his life.

Ł ucja remains silent.

JAN Because people like you come and question me about Jerzy.

Silence.

JAN The recordings contain nothing which could motivate a murder. There is nothing in them that is that volatile or dangerous.

ŁUCJA How do you know that?

JAN I was at most of the meetings.

ŁUCJA Not at all of them.

Jan remains silent.

ŁUCJA So it's still a possibility.

JAN But unlikely.

ŁUCJA I said possibility.

JAN Łucja, you've run out of steam. What's the matter with you? Some numbers and a vivid imagination. Stop making conjectures. Don't waste anymore of your energy and acumen. Study. Learn to research thoroughly: To recognise false leads, tick them off and follow new leads – that's how to become a successful academic. You have the brain, you have the flame. You'll be successful.

Ł ucja remains silent.

JAN Do you know, I always used to relate an anecdote about John XXIII to my students. When John was appointed pope he was really scared. Scared of not being successful. One night an angel appeared to him in a dream. Johannes called out: "Lord I'm scared that I won't be successful!" The angel answered "Giovanni, don't take yourself so seriously!"
He laughs.

Ł ucja remains silent.

JAN Just let go and you're free. Łucja I beg you, don't put your freedom at risk. Don't subjugate yourself. Don't hide the light of truth under anyone's bushel. I beg you. We fought in those days that the truth shouldn't bow to anyone, not to any doctrine or system-

ŁUCJA - and that everyone should be allowed to speak of their own truth.

Jan remains silent.

ŁUCJA Because we're all blind sometimes and are dependent on the truth of others.

Pause

JAN The death of my son is not fodder for your career.

ŁUCJA I'm sorry. My idea was that together we could follow the trail – A win-win situation – good, I was mistaken.

Jan remains silent.

ŁUCJA But I have a right to speak of my own version of the truth.

Jan remains silent.

ŁUCJA Do you want to hear my version of the truth, or better not?

JAN Please.

ŁUCJA Thank you for the lecture professor sir. The light of truth is always hidden under a bushel when it's a matter of our own lives. Isn't that true? Stories of our own lives should be rounded. And that's when the light of truth is dimmed a little. Good, your truth is your



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own. It's your own affair to look away. It's your right to have a blind side, so that when you look back at it your life is rounded. – My truth is that I'm at the beginning. I'm alone and everything depends on me. I'm there where a cutting wind blows and it defines my profile, not anybody or anything can block my view. There, where I want to go, there's plenty of light.

Jan remains silent.

She packs her things into the cloth tote bag. He watches her.

ŁUCJA That's my version of the truth. Please excuse me.

She turns to go.

JAN You don't need to be excused. You have a right to your version of truth. Only I beg you, leave me with my version of truth. Please.

Łucja hesitates briefly and leaves her bag on the table.

JAN Thank you.

ŁUCJA (*turns towards the door*) There is no need to thank me.

JAN May I ask you one more question?

Łucja stops in the doorway.

JAN You're a beautiful woman. Have you ever viewed your own back? Undressed? Extensively? For no reason other than looking at it?

Silence

JAN No need to answer if you find it a strange question.

ŁUCJA In the mirror. With two mirrors – My boy friend took some photos before that. There was my back...totally foreign – But between two mirrors alone. Alone, it was me.

JAN I can imagine that.

ŁUCJA And you?

JAN I've never been interested in my own back.

Łucja leaves.

Jan opens the samovar and takes out a small package of CDs. He breaks them, one after another. He empties the bag that she left behind on the table. Tape recorder, plastic bottle and a small bulging case. Perhaps he turns on the tape recorder and listens to the last dialogue. He fetches a waste paper basket and throws everything little by little into the waste paper basket with enjoyment. The CDs, the questionnaire, the plastic bottle, the tape recorder and lastly the case. He stares. Opens it. In it there's is a pair of sunglasses, bent out of shape, the glass is broken. He gazes at them, maybe sits down...finis ad libitum for director and actors.

Black