

THE LECTURE

Written by

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Based on the short story "Mr. Andrews goes to Warsaw" by Olga Tokarczuk

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FADE IN:

1 INT. TERRACED HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

SUPER: London, Saturday, December 12, 1981, 06:15

JOAN ANDREWS, 49, hidden Northern accent, cropped hair with a few grey streaks, wakes curled up in a sleeping bag and raises her FACE towards the window. She looks worn out. Joan stretches herself and turns on the small electric heater behind her.

The living room is shabby and crammed with functional furniture. On the coffee table, piles of newspapers, an ashtray with stubs and a pyramid of cans of pop.

Below the table, a pair of polished leather shoes (Brogues).

2 INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Whistling, Joan, now in an oversized cardigan, brews tea in a pot.

JOAN
Cuppa... Evelyn?

EVELYN, a woman with an anxious face, sits at the table staring at the crossword section of the Daily Mail. She is about the same age as Joan but looks 10 years older.

EVELYN
Black as coffee.

Joan pours her a cup of tea and gives her an encouraging smile.

JOAN
And how are we today?

She takes the newspaper from Evelyn. The front page displays a picture of an ill-humoured Maggie Thatcher next to the headline: "National Union of Mineworkers elects new president".

EVELYN
Black as coal. Black as the sun.
Black as a swan.
(beat)
They're after us.

JOAN
 (looking up)
 Who's they?

Evelyn doesn't reply. She gets up and reaches for the light-switch at the wall next to the kitchen table.

Quickly, she switches the light on and off, five times.

JOAN (CONT'D)
 Evelyn, what are you up to?

EVELYN
 Just replying.

JOAN
 Who to?

Evelyn sighs, as if dealing with a slow-witted pupil.

EVELYN
 They sent me another message.
 It's coded. See - the lights?

On the other side of the street another terraced house. Two rows of windows, some illuminated, some dark. Only, in this moment, the lights are being switched off and on in another room. The pattern changes.

JOAN
 And what did you tell them?

CLANG: two slices of bread pop up from the toaster, burned black.

EVELYN
 Oh, you wouldn't understand.
 (re toaster)
 Told you to turn it down.

An OUTCRY is heard from next door...

3 INT. TERRACED HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Joan rushes into the living room.

TWO ELDERLY MEN are fighting over a mattress, which stands upright in the middle of the room. Both men are tearing at one end.

MAN 1 has long grey hair with yellow streaks and looks shabby.

MAN 2 wears a wool cap and a suit that is too tight.

MAN 2
(irritated)
This is not the right spot!

MAN 1
(unintelligible)
It ... sss ... mine!

Joan's POV: One half of the room belongs to MAN 2. He has spread his mattress in the right corner. The sleeping bag lies neatly folded on the mattress.

In the other half of the room plastic bags stuffed with clothes and books are scattered all over the floor. There is a pair of hiking shoes. And in one shoe a BOTTLE of liquor.

As the argument turns more agitated, Joan

- looks from one man to the other and grips a square object in her hand

- looks at the bottle, only an arm's length from MAN 1, who tries to pull the mattress back in his corner. In vain, because MAN 2 holds on to it - he is shorter, but unexpectedly strong.

JOAN
(tense)
Oi - forget the rules did we? No
booze inside the house.

Suddenly MAN 2 lets go of the mattress and snatches the bottle, while MAN 1 stumbles and falls.

Quickly, Joan steps up towards MAN 2 and grabs his forearm.

He gives her a blank stare, then his hand closes around her WRIST.

Joan groans, lets go of his arm and takes a step back.

JOAN (CONT'D)
(reassuring)
Put it down, William.

Now we see Joan holds a (folding) Polaroid camera in the other hand.

Joan slowly lifts the camera, focusing on MAN 2/WILLIAM as he slowly lowers his arm - then suddenly throws the bottle! The bottle flies across the room and SMASHES against the wall behind MAN 1.

Joan takes a portrait of William's blank face, then of the puzzled face of MAN 1.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Well, that's one way of giving up
the drink.

CUT TO:

4 EXT. /INT. LONDON - DAY - AERIAL VIEW

Joan exits the terraced house in her long woollen coat and polished Brogues, and turns right down the street.

After a while, we notice Joan walking down a narrow blind alley. One brick house after another. Tiny front gardens. Rotten leaves covered with a layer of frost.

The camera rises, revealing more identical houses, with the same rectangular back gardens.

The pattern of houses and streets starts to resemble a grid. A labyrinthine urban maze. As we lose Joan within it -

FADE TO:

5 INT. UNIVERSITY - JOAN'S OFFICE - DAY

A white and blue paisley pattered armchair. Joan stands behind it, elbows on the backrest. She has changed into dark blue corduroys and a matching jacket. She wears no make-up, except for mascara. With piercing eyes, she takes in the class in front of her, which immediately falls silent.

Joan pins the Polaroid pictures of the two men to the wall.

Seated on a couch and two easy chairs opposite of Joan is a group of SIX STUDENTS. Behind them, on the wall, we see a long shelf lined with an array of Polaroids displaying a multitude of diverse FACES.

Joan points to the new pictures of the two men's grimaced FACES with their eyes wide open.

JOAN

What do we think's going on here?
(no reply; impatiently)
Late night? Come on, thoughts?

Reading from a report a MALE STUDENT raises his hand.

MALE STUDENT 1

The man on the left suffers from acute schizophrenia.

JOAN

What makes you say that?

MALE STUDENT 1

Just from his case history, the chaotic appearance, manic state -

JOAN

The NHS are gonna love you. If you can diagnose that from a Polaroid, who needs us psychiatrists?

(re the photo)

From what we can observe, what can we deduce? One of you, take a punt.

FEMALE STUDENT 2

Survival instinct?

Joan sifts through neatly-stacked papers on her desk.

JOAN

Go on. I'm listening.

FEMALE STUDENT 2

Seems fairly healthy.

JOAN

Oh, William Clark knows how to look after himself, that's for sure.

She stuffs a manila folder into her briefcase, browses through letters to PROF. JOAN ANDREWS, FACULTY OF PSYCHIATRY.

JOAN (CONT'D)

He does not wanna give up his bed.

She picks one with a stamp that says: POLSKA RZECZPOSPOLITA (REPUBLIC OF POLAND) and throws it into the briefcase.

JOAN (CONT'D)

As somebody who spends every night sleeping on a floor in the name of research, I know where he's coming from.

She lifts her head, facing the students.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Any sympathy for Mr. Clark?

MALE STUDENT 1

Up to the point where he glasses
the other guy.

JOAN

Ah, but he doesn't.

(points to the photos)

William Clark is harmless. No
history of violence. Never laid a
hand on anyone. Look at his file,
anything there that could help us
understand this extreme reaction?

All students lower their heads and browse the report. All,
but one. LIVIA, mid 20's, Black-British, angular spectacles,
sitting upright in her chair.

LIVIA

Before William moved in with us, he
was treated at St. Anne's for eight
years - in the closed ward. On the
first night, he asked me when the
"fairies" were coming and...

JOAN

(cuts her off)

And who were the fairies?

Joan turns from Livia to the male student next to her. Livia
grips her pen - it hurts her to be overlooked.

MALE STUDENT 3

(scanning his notes)

The night staff... who used to
strap him to his bed at... St.
Anne's.

Joan takes one Polaroid off the wall. She hands the picture
to the male student.

JOAN

This isn't just a mattress. It's 3
by 6 feet of personal freedom.

(beat)

I need volunteers to cover for me,
keep an eye on our William, make
sure he gets his space.

They all raise their hands, eager to please - or just scared?

JOAN (CONT'D)

Sort it out amongst yourselves. I
am going behind the Iron Curtain.
Out of the frying pan.

The students grab their bags, take their leave. Livia stays.

Joan sinks into the armchair and lights an Embassy Gold cigarette. Around Livia she's more laid-back, less performative.

Livia hands her a manila folder with a manuscript - for Joan's lecture.

JOAN (CONT'D)

(exhales)

Thank you.

LIVIA

It was nothing really, I just made a few trims. It's very good, but I wonder if -

JOAN

(looking at her)

Thank you for not going to Berkeley.

LIVIA

(looks away)

I haven't decided, yet.

JOAN

Ah.

Joan gets on her feet, ashes into an ashtray and slips the folder in her briefcase.

She reaches for a small bottle of perfume (YSL) on the shelf above her desk, sprays it on her wrists - there is a little bruise on the right wrist where William grabbed her.

JOAN (CONT'D)

I need good people around me, Liv. People who care. That I can trust. I've got one more battle to fight this year - budget committee. If they cut the funds...

(turning back to face her)

Our patients might spend the rest of their lives in the closed ward.

Livia waits if Joan asks her why she hasn't taken that important decision, yet. Then she heads for the door.

LIVIA

(disappointed)

I'll let you know when you get back.

As she leaves, Joan opens a drawer in her desk and takes out a POCKET FLASK, 3 packets of POLAROID film and a travel beauty bag and pops the items into her briefcase.

Joan takes her coat from the hat stand and turns around one last time: She glances at the FACES on the Polaroids on the other side of the room. Someone will miss her, for sure.

6 EXT. BUSY LONDON STREET - LATER

In a swarm of pedestrians, Joan catches a cab carrying a small suitcase and her briefcase.

7 INT. LONDON HEATHROW - TERMINAL - LATER

Joan comes out of a Harrods' shop, green bag in one hand, briefcase in the other. The terminal is buzzing with life. Joan walks with the flow of travellers.

She stops at another store that offers a variety of hats - for summer and winter - on a display stand.

8 INT. LONDON HEATHROW - BAR - LATER

Joan sits at the bar. She browses through her manuscript while sipping a pint and eating crisps from a bag.

Above the bar a TV set is turned on to a news report.

REPORTER (V.O.)

What does MAD actually stand for?
Mutually Assured Destruction.
Simply put, "if you drop your bomb,
we'll launch ours"...

Joan glances at the TV screen, crumpling up the napkin.

REPORTER

A grim thought certainly, but for many it's comforting. After all, now Governments know the likely devastating outcome of nuclear war, they're far less likely to start one.

Joan throws the napkin into a nearby trash can. Scores.

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)

Last call for passengers on the flight 773 to Warsaw.

Joan takes a Russian-style FUR HAT out of the plastic bag which also contains a carton of Embassy Golds from Duty Free. She puts on the fur hat, then takes out her Polaroid Camera and angles it at her face. Click.

9 OMITTED

10 EXT. SNOW WHITE LANDSCAPE - DAY (JOAN'S DREAM)

Snow flakes are swirling in the wind and Joan's coat flaps to the sides revealing her bare white body.

Joan's POV looks down at her bare legs, sees her Brogues - sinking into the deep snow, getting soaked.

The sound of a hectic FLAPPING OF WINGS makes Joan's POV turn around. Nothing.

The camera looks up and sees a CROW circling above her. The bird CROWS. It sounds like a malicious laugh.

More snow is falling. A snow drift. The landscape and then the full screen slowly dissolves to WHITE.

11 INT. PLANE LONDON WARSAW - CONTINUOUS

Joan wakes, engulfed in a cloud of smoke.

She's confused. Grips the armrest, bracing herself, only to see the woman in the next but one seat smoking a cigarette.

BEATA is an elegant lady in her mid 60s. She appears to be having a good laugh with the STEWARDESS - about Joan?

Joan opens the window shade and cranes out, below. Clouds. Blue sky. She looks down at her shoes which are still impeccably polished - and dry. Joan chuckles.

BEATA (O.S.)

Drink?

Joan turns. Takes her in.

BEATA (CONT'D)

They're calling last orders.

JOAN

Sure.

Beata makes a signal to the stewardess.

BEATA
First time to Poland?

JOAN
First time to any Communist
country.

BEATA
Are you in the fashion industry?

She refers to the fur-hat in the seat between them. Joan
laughs.

JOAN
No - though I'm sure my students
think I'm a bit of a diva. I'm a
Professor.

BEATA
Really - of?

JOAN
Psychiatry.

BEATA
'Better watch what I say then.

Joan's smile belies the amount of times she's heard that.

BEATA (CONT'D)
Is this a work trip?

JOAN
I'm giving a lecture at
(clears her throat)
a conference.

Beata glances at Joan - notices the bruise on her wrist.

BEATA
Showing us how it's done, eh?

JOAN
Just offering my perspective.

BEATA
I'm sure whatever you say will be
an improvement. Poland is full of
educated people, great minds, but
progress? It can be a little slow.
(leans close, cynical)
In Poland, nobody gets to choose to
"see a psychiatrist".

(MORE)

BEATA (CONT'D)

There's no time to be neurotic when
you spend half your life queuing
for toilet-roll.

JOAN

No.

(droll)

Will I just get the pilot to turn
the plane around?

BEATA

(laughs)

Oh, there's no going back now! You
never know, you might shake things
up.

A beat, then the stewardess brings their drinks (Vodka).

Beata hands Joan her business card. It reads: "LOT,
INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS TRAVELS, BEATA RYBOTYCKA."

BEATA (CONT'D)

If you are ever lost in Warsaw.

Beata raises her glass.

12

INT. WARSAW AIRPORT - BORDER CONTROL - DAY

SUPER: Warsaw: Saturday, December 12, 1981, 15:20

A bleak airport hall. On one of the walls hangs a radiator,
painted grey. A GERMAN SHEPHERD is tied to its pipes and
nervously runs around in a half-circle, tearing at the leash.
Next to him leans an ARMED SOLDIER with half-shut eyes.

Joan stands in a line of passengers, yawning, feeling the
effects of the flight, the Vodka.

In front of them is a little booth. The stern looking BORDER
GUARD is thoroughly checking the passports.

Next to this booth is another one with no queue. It's for the
crew that is now approaching, talking and laughing. The OTHER
BORDER GUARD cursorily waves them through. Joan sees Beata
among them. She seems to be in a hurry.

13

INT. WARSAW AIRPORT - ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES HALL - LATER

At the carousel, a lone cardboard Box slowly circling around.

Joan is the only passenger still waiting for her baggage. She
curses in frustration.

14 INT. WARSAW AIRPORT - ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES HALL - LATER

Joan roams around the hall with her briefcase and Harrods' bag in one hand, her coat in the other. There are not many greeters left.

On the other side of the bar, in the middle of the hall, stands a YOUNG WOMAN in jeans and an anthracite parka jacket, totally immersed in a book.

The title says "READ MY MIND".

At her feet is a cardboard sign with "PROF. ANDREWS" written on it.

Joan approaches her, measuring her.

JOAN

I hear it's quite good.

ALINA WACHOWIAK, 26, brown hair, serious face, lowers her book, thrown... and a little starstruck.

ALINA

Professor Andrews... I'm... it's an honour to meet you.

(shakes her hand)

Alina Wachowiak. Good journey?

JOAN

The flight was fine. The last hour, I could've done without.

(hands her a bit of paper)

They lost my luggage.

ALINA

Ah. Welcome to Poland. I'm sorry. We'll deal with it tomorrow.

She sets off, for the exit.

JOAN

Tomorrow? All my stuff's -

She trails off, struggling to keep up with her.

ALINA

The office is closed, and you're expected at the conference - you should probably put on your coat.

Joan, flustered, doing as she says.

ALINA (CONT'D)
You have a toothbrush?

JOAN
(irritated)
Yes, I've a toothbrush.

ALINA
Then you're lucky. Most people here
don't.

The exit doors slide open and a cold breeze blows in their faces. Joan stops at the threshold in her Brogue shoes.

Joan's POV - A snow-drift blocks the view of the parking area, only a few patches of grey and red and yellow headlights are visible.

As she puts on her chapka -

CUT TO:

15 INT. ALINA'S CAR - DAY (AFTERNOON)

Squeezed into the front seat of a tiny green Fiat 126p, Joan scratches the icy window and through the bull's eye watches fragments of the city pass by on a 4-lane boulevard.

The cityscape is covered with fresh snow and tinted into the dark blue of the fading afternoon, the snow storm has lessened.

Pedestrians swarm the sidewalk; cars drive by; children run and throw snowballs in a park; an man shovels coal off a horse carriage.

-ALINA
The Palace of Culture. That's where
we're going.

Joan looks out of the window, she is not in the mood for small talk - the lost luggage is nagging at her.

Joan escapes the conversation by taking out her Polaroid. She shoots a picture of the Coal Carriage.

ALINA (CONT'D)
This is a camera? How does it work?

JOAN
(cold)
Magic.

She waves the picture to dry it.

Alina glances at her and falls silent.

16 EXT. PALACE OF CULTURE - DUSK

The fiat arrives at the imposing building. Joan follows Alina up the steps, looking up - and up - at this intimidating building.

A CROW takes off from a cornice on one of the building's terraces and circles the Soviet style skyscraper and its rows of lit windows.

From the crow's perspective, we see taxis arriving, crowds streaming into the building through the front entrance.

The crow flies around the corner: On the back of the building THREE GREY VANS are parked in a straight line.

17 INT. PALACE OF CULTURE - STAGE OF AUDITORIUM - LATER

Joan leans at a lectern facing the huge auditorium with its pompous Stalinist architecture. She is tense. All seats are taken. This could be a convention of the Communist party - but it's the Psychiatrists' Conference.

The audience in the first row, ACADEMICS and JOURNALISTS, eyeball her. Some wear headphones for translation.

JOAN

... fellow academics, thank you for the opportunity to speak here today and the very warm welcome - it's an honour to be here. However I should warn you, if you're easily offended or of a closed mind, this might not be your cup of tea.

A beat, as that registers / translates. She enjoys provoking.

JOAN (CONT'D)

What if schizophrenia doesn't exist? What if it only exists in the minds of us doctors, trying to "cure" a patient?

A finger tapping on the lectern belies her confidence.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Whose way of thinking we don't understand.

(MORE)

JOAN (CONT'D)

What if we've been getting it wrong
all this time - and we're the
enemy?

In the audience: a YOUNG WOMAN hands a roll of grey toilet paper to the person in front of her.

On the opposite side of the auditorium another roll passes from one hand to another.

JOAN (O.S) (CONT'D)

How can we even begin to understand
our patients if we lock them up in
asylums, sedate them, tie them to
their beds?

Joan notices people starting to shift in their seats - losing interest? Tries to claw back their attention -

JOAN (CONT'D)

Only to just send them back to the
pressure-cooker of family life and
stressful jobs - the very cause of
their problems. How's that helping?

There is a visible movement in the audience now, like a wave.
Clusters of people standing up, everywhere in the auditorium.

JOAN (CONT'D)

(growing irritable)

I've pioneered a new way of doing
things, to better understand the
human beings we're dealing with.

WHISPERING - that grows louder, forcing Joan to raise her
voice -

JOAN (CONT'D)

I live with them, talk to them. We
share meals, stories. And by doing
so, I am learning to see the world
through their eyes -

She sees the first OBJECTS flying towards her in SLOW MOTION.

A swarm of at least a hundred toilet paper rolls sailing in
the air like kites.

For an instant Joan is struck by the sheer beauty of it -
then she raises a hand to shield her face, catching a ROLL.

END OF SLOW MOTION

On the roll, in English: "WE LIVE IN AN ASYLUM. DO YOU GIVE A SHIT, PROFESSOR?" And the message goes on and on...

Out of the dark, a group of PROTESTERS storm the stage. They flank Joan and hold up large BANNERS reading "HOW TO CURE THE POLISH PATIENT?" and "FREE SPEECH THERAPY FOR EVERYBODY".

ANGLE: all of their mouths are taped with band-aid.

All hell breaks loose in the audience. Some applaud / laugh, others jeer. Joan is caught in the crossfire, affronted -

JOAN (CONT'D)

Sorry, what the hell's going on?

SOMEONE gently moves Joan aside. A young fragile guy, 19 years old: MAREK. He wears a straitjacket.

Clumsily, Marek leans over the microphone - and accidentally sweeps Joan's papers off the lectern.

(NOTE: All instances of the Polish language shall be indicated by italics. On screen this text will appear with English subtitles.)

MAREK

(too close to the mic)

How can a sick society provide proper health care? Maybe the patients in our wards are the "normal" ones, because they dare to speak the truth when they scream "let me out"...

Marek steps back into the line of protesters. Another PROTESTER tapes Marek's mouth shut with band aid.

Journalists and photographers rush to the lectern.

Joan is blinded by FLASHLIGHTS, she is clearly confused.

A YOUNG JOURNALIST shouts over the commotion.

YOUNG JOURNALIST

Professor Andrews, as a citizen of the free world - how do you see the movement of the new Polish union, Solidarnosc with its over 9 million members?

Perplexed, Joan stares at the journalist.

JOAN

I'm not here to discuss politics.
 (to the protestors)
 You've made your point - off the
 stage. People are here to listen
 (to me)...

The microphone and stage light are turned off. More people flood the stage - secret service officers in plain clothes - and Joan is crowded, buffeted around.

Pages of her lecture are scattered all over the stage. The protesters trample on them as they take off.

Amidst the chaos, we might glimpse an OLD CLOAKROOM ATTENDANT kneeling, nabbing as many toilet rolls as she can.

A saving HAND grabs Joan's arm and pulls her away from the commotion.

Alina.

She leads Joan through the chaos across the stage, passing the young man with the band-aid on his mouth - MAREK.

ALINA

(hissing to Marek)
What were you thinking, you idiot?
You should have let her finish!

Just then, TWO MEN step in and bundle Marek backstage, while another MAN blocks the way (One of them is the LITTLE MAN), diverting the crowd to the other door -

18 OMITTED

19 INT. PALACE OF CULTURE - BALLROOM - LATER

The reception is in full swing. The academics drink, eat and laugh, as if there was no tomorrow. The students' performance is the talk of the party.

Joan stands in a corner - forgotten. She composes herself. Fixes her outfit and discreetly sprays perfume on her wrists.

She sees Alina talking to Marek (still in his straitjacket) and a LONG-HAIRED BEARDED GUY with metal-rimmed glasses in his 30s, who seems intense, possessive: JAN.

Jan is shoved aside by JOURNALISTS raising their microphones towards Marek and Alina. Obviously pissed, Jan heads towards the buffet.

Above the buffet, a monumental Soviet mural, displaying ENTHUSIASTIC FEMALE FARM WORKERS.

Intrigued, Joan takes out her Polaroid, swiftly adjusts the flash and takes a picture.

She approaches the buffet. Jan pours himself a glass of vodka and offers one to Joan. They raise their glasses and drink.

JOAN

(re: Alina)

There was me thinking she was just another ambitious post-grad.

JAN

Alina's not particularly ambitious. Determined, yes.

JOAN

And you?

JAN

Like you Professor, I believe there are other ways of doing things. Solutions to every problem.

JOAN

Philosopher?

JAN

Mathematician.

JOAN

Interesting.

(lets that hang there)

How long are you together; a year, year and a half?

JAN

Well observed, Professor.

JOAN

Wild guess. I'm better at studying people than courting them.

(drains her drink)

Never made it past six months.

Jan smiles and takes three more vodkas from a tray.

JAN

We will have been together a year on Monday.

Joan takes her drink.

JOAN
 Congratulations.

Jan signals Marek to join them. On his face are red traces from the band-aid.

JAN
 (to Marek)
You owe our guest an apology.

Joan takes him in, his kind face is somehow disarming.

JOAN
 I was a bit nervous how Communists would react to my lecture - but I didn't expect to be greeted with toilet rolls.

Jan translates it in Polish.

Ironically, Marek makes an apologizing bow.

MAREK
You know what's going to kill communism?

Jan translates.

JOAN
 Capitalism?

MAREK
Imagination!

Jan translates - the answer makes Joan smile.

JAN
 (to Marek)
Look into the mirror and see what imagination did to your pretty face. Drink up and go home.

Jan lifts the glass of vodka to Marek's mouth. Marek drinks.

MAREK
Another one.

JAN
Eat first.

Jan feeds Marek with a canapé. Offers one to Joan, she declines.

Joan takes out her Polaroid camera and takes a SNAPSHOT of the two of them. She waves the photo, and hands it to Marek.

JOAN

In Britain, unions fight for better conditions and fair wages. Here, all workers earn the same no matter what their trade, yes? What are you fighting for?

Marek can't take his eyes off the Polaroid photo, fascinated with the process, the slowly-emerging image.

JAN

Freedom and bread, Professor.
(re: the hospitality)
Though you'd never tell from looking round. These canapés.

JOAN

How bad is it here, really?

JAN

In the last few months, because of Solidarność and Mr Walesa, we've gained more freedom than any other country in the Eastern Bloc. But it's like walking through a dream. You know the alarm clock can go off at any time. I prefer to wake before it rings.

Jan is checking his watch and scans the hall for Alina. He spots her, still in conversation with a strong man.

JOAN

(following his gaze)
She seems to know everyone here.
(glances at him)
You must be used to playing second fiddle...

Jan smiles, politely.

A beat, then Alina approaches them with the strong middle-aged man, JAKUB.

ALINA

Professor, meet Jakub Wolski. Head of Psychiatry at the university clinic.

The man reaches out his butcher's hand and grips Joan's.

JAKUB

(heavy accent)

Interesting opinions, Professor - those we got to hear. But the reality, here? I show you my clinic. Then you will understand the problems we face.

JOAN

(enthusiastic)

Absolutely!

(to Alina)

Find time for that.

CUT TO:

20 INT. PALACE OF CULTURE - LOBBY - NIGHT

Joan follows Alina, Jan and Marek through the lobby.

Passing the telephone cabins, Joan notices the little man, still in his stage-hand overalls, talking confidentially on the phone, dictating from a notebook. Joan slows down, staring at him.

Instinctively the little man turns and looks at Joan.

Joan quickly looks away.

21 OMITTED

22 EXT/INT. PALACE OF CULTURE - ALINA'S CAR

Alina, Jan and Joan are getting into the car and Marek is mounting a red moped. Alina looks at Marek out of the driver's window. He's not wearing a helmet.

ALINA

Drive safely!

Marek hits the pedal, starts the moped's RATTLING engine.

JAN (O.S.)

That machine is so slow, he can't get himself killed. Unless he is run down by a pedestrian.

(re Marek)

He is crazy you know.

23

INT. ALINA'S CAR - NIGHT

Joan's POV - On the opposite lane, at least a dozen grey vans pass by, driving towards the city centre... Ahead of her, in the distance, a magical pattern of light slowly starts to form: a multitude of lit windows that reach vertically into the sky and belong to tall blocks of flats.

Joan is taken in by this peculiar view: a satellite town.

Alina and Jan are fighting in an unintelligible language.

ALINA

*...This is not a fucking equation.
It's not that simple!*

JAN

*Yes, it is. I want to go.
(beat)
And I'd rather go with you.*

ALINA

*(furiously)
You're fucking running away?
Because you're scared?*

Alina clutches the steering wheel. She avoids eye-contact with Jan and concentrates on the rearview mirror: Headlights of a car behind them.

JAN (O.S.)

*You think that anything here
depends on your actions?*

ALINA (O.S.)

*You fucking always have a great
excuse to not do anything. You're
above it all!*

JAN

Nie przeklinaj proszę.

ALINA

*Może się jakiegoś polskiego słowa
nauczy.*

(she turns to Joan)

Kurwa is fuck.

She pushes a tape into the tape recorder and a female voice starts to speak in Polish in a monotonous VOICE.

Jan turns around to Joan.

JAN
 (sarcastically)
 Meditation 101 - she's just a
 beginner. And I can't see any
 progress.

Joan's POV - Through the window she sees a STREET SIGN that
 indicates the Warsaw city limits.

JOAN
 (a bit worried)
 We are going to my hotel, right?

24 INT. ALINA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Alina, Joan and Jan stand in the middle of a minuscule
 apartment.

ALINA
 Please make yourself at home. I'm
 sorry it's not much...

JOAN
 (tense)
 It's fine.

JAN
 (smiles)
 The university can't afford to pay
 for a hotel. They're bugged anyway.

JOAN
 What about my suitcase?

ALINA
Shit, I completely forgot about it.

JAN
*You go to the airport first thing
 and I'll call Marek to pick her up.*

Refers to Joan, who's starting to feel uncomfortable.

ALINA
 (shaking the duvet)
*So I should stop seeing him, but
 he's okay for a lift?*

Jan heads to the corridor.

JOAN
 Is there a problem?

ALINA

No problem. Marek will pick you up
at 8 o'clock tomorrow. I will get
your suitcase.

JOAN'S POV - In the corridor, Jan lifts the receiver of a
telephone.

JAN (O.S.)

*What's the number of the student
dorm?*

ALINA

(shouting)
44-82-55. Room 909.

Jan talks on the phone to Marek as Joan grabs Alina's arm a
bit too firmly.

JOAN

(in a low voice)
I don't mind sleeping on a couch,
but I came here to give a lecture
and I'd like to finish it tomorrow,
okay? So do whatever you have to do
to make it happen, or get me on the
next flight home.
(leans close)
How dare you lot hijack my stage!

ALINA

Honestly, I had no idea.

Joan measures her, unconvinced.

JOAN

That was a wasted opportunity. You
could've learned something - about
how to really screw the system.
(beat)
Have you any idea how long it took
me to prepare for that lecture?

Alina holds her gaze.

JOAN (CONT'D)

30 fucking years. Starting the day
I walked into the Psychiatry
Department at UCL and told them I
didn't want to do General Practice,
like all the other ladies, thank
you very much. I fought my way onto
that course and I've been fighting
every day since.

(MORE)

JOAN (CONT'D)

And I won't be shut up by some half-arsed student protest...

ALINA

(won't be patronized)

I need your passport and ticket.

(off her look)

Do you want your suitcase?

Joan, can she trust her; has she much choice?

As she hands Alina her papers, Jan enters the room with a bottle of Vodka and hands it to Joan.

JAN

Courtesy of the manager.

ALINA

(coolly)

Jan doesn't have a telephone, but if you need to reach me, you can call my uncle at his garage.

She hands Joan a flyer.

ANGLE: The BLACK & WHITE flyer of "HENRYK'S CAR WORKSHOP" displays a neon sign of a car tire.

Alina takes Jan's hand as she exits, throwing Joan a look.

ALINA (CONT'D)

Stuck-up cow. In her books she's another person.

25

INT. ALINA'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Joan, at the window. She drinks a shot of vodka, grimacing at its taste.

Joan's POV - Jan and Alina come out of the front door and head towards Alina's Fiat. They are fighting again.

Joan opens the window and hears the ECHOING SOUND of their heated conversation. Alina a few steps behind Jan.

Suddenly, Jan turns and holds Alina in a tight embrace. They kiss passionately.

Joan, envious? As she closes the window -

26

INT. ALINA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

SERIES OF SHOTS

A) Joan empties her briefcase on the coffee table, next to the opened vodka bottle: It contains a clip holding a bundle of dollar notes, a pack of cigarettes, matches, a pocket flask of whiskey, the Polaroid camera, 3 packages of film, a flashbar, some slides and a travel beauty bag, containing mascara, the bottle of perfume and her TOOTHBRUSH.

B) Brushing her teeth, Joan makes a tour of the apartment. She takes in a FRAMED PICTURE on the wall: a younger Alina fishing at a lake with a moustached man twice her age.

C) A radio on the coffee table, it has a flip alarm clock. The time says: 23.55. Joan turns it on: a Polish moderator announces a SONG by Gordon Lightfoot. Joan hums along with the tune.

GORDON LIGHTFOOT (V.O.)

"If you could read my mind, love/
What a tale my thoughts could tell"

D) Joan stops in front of the bookcase, checks the titles. Part of the shelf is filled with her books. She opens one: passages are underlined. Ashamed of her earlier outburst she quickly closes the book.

GORDON LIGHTFOOT (V.O.)

"Just like an old time movie/ 'Bout
a ghost from a wishing well."

ANGLE: THE RADIO ALARM CLOCK. Abruptly, the Lightfoot-tune STOPS in the middle of the song, just as the clock flips to: 24.00.

27

EXT. SATELLITE TOWN - DAY

SUPER: Warsaw: Sunday, December 13, 1981, 07:53

A crow is circling around the housing blocks.

PRE-LAP: a CRACKING NOISE from a radio -

CROW'S POV - Apartment windows that all look the same. Only a few lights. Unerringly, the crow navigates towards one of the windows, landing on the window sill...

...While we hear an ear-piercing RADIO JINGLE and then a detached MALE VOICE with a hint of nervousness.

RADIO-SPEAKER (V.O.)
*Good morning, Polskie Radio is back
 on air. We are sorry for the
 extraordinary... blackout.*

28 INT. ALINA'S APARTMENT - DAY

ANGLE: THE SAME RADIO ALARM CLOCK

RADIO-SPEAKER (V.O.)
*...In a few minutes you will hear
 an announcement by the military
 council.*

Joan opens her eyes -

RADIO-SPEAKER (V.O.)
*Please do not switch off your
 radio. I repeat... Do not switch
 off your radio...*

- and finds herself nestled up against the brown synthetic leather cover of a couch that is too short for her legs.

She reaches out for the radio on the coffee table and pushes some buttons, until it stops.

Stiffly, Joan throws back the duvet and gets up. With distaste she grabs her trousers and yesterday's shirt from the chair and starts to get dressed. She glances at her watch: 7.55.

JOAN
 Bollocks. Fuck.

Joan rushes into the BATHROOM and sees her face in the mirror: last night's mascara has left smudges under her eyes that are bloodshot. She searches the cabinet for make-up remover, but it is empty, except for a used bar of soap.

Hastily, Joan washes her face with cold water and soap.

Brushing her teeth in the KITCHENETTE, Joan searches the cupboards. Finds a tin can with a last spoonful of ground coffee.

She makes a cup, puts on her jacket, takes her lecture and pauses in front of the mirror in the CORRIDOR, straightening her back. There still is a smudge under her right eye, she rubs it with her finger.

LATER

ANGLE: The watch shows 8.50.

Joan pours hot water directly into the tin can and drinks the coffee from it.

Joan studies the flyer of HENRYK'S CAR WORKSHOP that Alina gave her. She lifts the telephone receiver, dials the number on the flyer, listens. No dial-tone.

From this position in the room, Joan sees the CROW pecking on the window sill. Intuitively, she is drawn to the window, and opens it. The startled crow flies away, laughing maliciously.

Joan's POV - The neighborhood seems in perfect peace...

- a row of monotonous high rises. Above them a stripe of grey sky.

- the apartments on the opposite side: many curtains are still drawn.

- below: a vast, deserted square, covered with snow. At one end: a solitary telephone booth and then...

- a pair of enormous tire tracks running across the square... We follow the tracks to the other end of the square, until we see the tank which is stationed there.

BACK TO SCENE

Slowly, Joan steps back, startled.

She stands in the center of the apartment. She takes in the room again, as if seeing it in a new light. The telephone.

Joan goes to the telephone and lifts up the receiver again. No signal. She bends down: there's a notebook with a telephone number scribbled down.

She takes the telephone cable and follows it to a wardrobe. The socket must be behind it. Resolutely, Joan starts to move the wardrobe. She manages to move it a few centimeters.

Joan is crawling on the floor, checking the cable in the socket: it is intact. She sits on the floor, catching her breath.

30

INT. APARTMENT BLOCK - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Joan steps into the hallway. In one hand her briefcase, in the other the green plastic bag from "Harrods' Duty Free".

She rings at the neighbor's apartment next door. No response.

She tries another door. Nothing.

She walks back. Tries the door opposite Alina's apartment.

The door is half-opened by an elderly NEIGHBOR: a distinguished man, wearing his Sunday tie under a cardigan.

JOAN
(slowly, stilted)
Sorry to bother you. Do you speak English?

The neighbor just gives her a blank stare. He takes in Joan and her wrinkled outfit.

JOAN (CONT'D)
Do you have a phone? Te-le-*phone*?

She signs making a phone call.

The man doesn't even blink.

Joan takes out a carton of cigarettes from her plastic bag.

NEIGHBOR
Keep them. It's not working.

Impatiently Joan hands him the carton.

JOAN
Please, I need to make a call.
Phone - not working. You know Alina?

NEIGHBOR
Alina?

JOAN
I was staying... I'm a professor.

NEIGHBOR
Profesorka?

He hurriedly beckons her in and hands her a pair of felt slippers. Joan puts them on over her shoes.

31 INT. NEIGHBOR'S APARTMENT - DAY

Joan follows the Neighbor into a narrow corridor, clumsily sliding in the slippers. The neighbor points to the telephone atop a little table.

Joan lifts the receiver. No signal.

NEIGHBOR

I told you! They must have cut the city's phone line. Maybe even in the whole country...

Joan just stares at him, not understanding.

NEIGHBOR (CONT'D)

Anyone travelling to Warsaw in December is either a fool or a maniac.

FOOTSTEPS in the outer hallway break the silence. It sounds like feet marching in lockstep.

They come closer.

They stop.

Silence.

Joan and the old man look at each other.

Joan slides to the door, without a sound, in her slippers.

She looks through the peep-hole.

JOAN'S POV - HALLWAY - PEEP-HOLE MATTE

THREE MEN in front of Alina's apartment. We only see their backs in black leather jackets. One of the guys, the LEADER, rings the bell. He nods to the guy next to him who draws a crowbar out of his jacket. He breaks the door open.

The LEADER turns around. It's the LITTLE MAN from the night before at the congress.

Joan holds her breath. The men disappear into Alina's apartment.

TWO OTHER MEN drag a WOMAN in a dressing gown through the corridor. A LITTLE GIRL in pajamas is clinging to her leg.

Brutally, the men separate mother and child, dragging the woman to the elevator.

The girl CRIES out in sheer terror.

BACK TO SCENE

Impatient, the old neighbor pushes Joan aside and opens the door...

JOAN'S POV - HALLWAY - PEEP-HOLE MATTE

The old neighbor kneels down next to the girl...

...just as the three men come out of Alina's apartment.

LITTLE MAN

*When did you last see Alina
Wachowiak?*

NEIGHBOR

A couple of days ago.

The little man shows him a photo.

LITTLE MAN

*Have you seen any of these people
with her? One of them is an English
woman...*

The neighbor shakes his head. He ushers the little girl towards his door.

NEIGHBOR

When will her mother be back?

LITTLE MAN

*(politely)
Just a routine check, Sir. Should
not take long.*

32

INT. NEIGHBOR'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

In the corridor: The neighbor leans on the door, sweat on his forehead. His hand still on the shoulder of the little girl.

Joan presses herself to the wardrobe, hiding between coats and umbrellas.

JOAN

*(whispering)
Who were they?*

NEIGHBOR

SB. Milicja.

JOAN

(incredulous)
Militia?

NEIGHBOR

*Tell Alina she can't come back to
the apartment. You hear me?
(pointing at her)
They're looking for you as well!*

JOAN

I don't know what you're saying.
Did something happen - to Alina?

The little girl tugs at the neighbor's sleeve, still crying.

GIRL

Mr. Tadeusz, can I watch Teleranek?

The neighbor ushers the reluctant Joan to the door.

NEIGHBOR

Tell Alina she can't come back!

In the background: the little girl turns on the TV set. To her disappointment, there are no cartoons.

ON THE TV: the grey logo of TVP with the SOUND of a funeral march by Chopin. The still frame changes to a live broadcast: GENERAL JARUZELSKI at a desk, the Polish national flag behind him, clears his throat.

GENERAL JARUZELSKI (V.O.)

*Citizens of Poland, very heavy is
the burden of responsibility which
lies upon me at this very dramatic
moment in Polish history...*

33

INT. APARTMENT BLOCK - HALLWAY - DAY

Joan tentatively opens the door to Alina's apartment. The place is a mess: clothes and books are scattered across the floor.

Reluctant to enter, Joan grabs her coat from the rack in the corridor. Glimpsing her fur hat on the chest of drawers next to the telephone, Joan rushes in and takes the hat.

ANGLE: THE NOTEBOOK next to the telephone. A page has been torn out. On the next page the imprint of the writing is still visible. It reads: "MAREK 44-82-55, ROOM 909".

34 INT. APARTMENT BLOCK - STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

A quadratic staircase. Greenish light from the neon lamps.

The sound of a DOOR CLOSING above her stops Joan. She recoils into a corner of the mezzanine.

HURRIED STEPS in the staircase. The echo of WHISPERING VOICES. Neighbors fleeing or the secret police chasing them?

Joan presses herself to the wall, waiting until the sound is gone. Then she pushes the front door open...

35 EXT. SATELLITE TOWN - PLAZA

Joan steps into the grey daylight, finding herself on the vast snow covered plaza circled by housing blocks.

In the middle of the plaza, the telephone booth. It's about 100 metres away from the tank that looks like a giant reptile dozing.

Joan cautiously walks towards the phone booth, eyes fixed on the tank.

36 INT. SATELLITE TOWN - PHONE BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Joan takes out the flyer of HENRYK'S CAR WORKSHOP and lifts the receiver with one hand. With the other hand she checks her pockets: only British pennies.

Frustrated, she slams down the receiver.

She takes a sip from her pocket flask, thinks, lifts up the receiver again. Listens. No signal. She hammers on the cradle. No signal.

JOAN'S POV - A middle-aged MAN IN A BLACK LEATHER JACKET runs to the phone booth, wildly gesturing to her.

Quickly, Joan turns to the phone, lifts the receiver and pretends to be in a conversation.

The man knocks on the glass, repeatedly, vigorously.

37 EXT. SATELLITE TOWN - PLAZA/PEDESTRIAN ZONE - CONTINUOUS

Joan bolts out of the phone booth, frantic. Ignoring the man, she hurries towards the housing blocks.

The man calls after her.

MAN IN A LEATHER JACKET

Wait! How did you make the phone work? I need to reach my wife...

Joan starts to run. Turns into a narrow alley between two concrete walls, takes another turn...

38 EXT. SATELLITE TOWN - PEDESTRIAN ZONE - CONTINUOUS

...And emerges on a deserted concrete plaza circled by housing blocks. In the middle of the plaza, a single telephone booth. It's a symmetrical copy of the other plaza. Only the tank is missing.

Joan spins around and takes in the satellite town with its duplicated, anonymous housing blocks and entrances. The different house numbers blur in her vision. She is lost.

A RATTLING SOUND grabs her attention.

A red moped - with an unhelmeted driver - comes into view and drives right across the plaza, skidding on the snow.

JOAN

(Is it? Calls out)
Marek? MAREK!

Joan hurries after him.

39 EXT. SATELLITE TOWN - IN FRONT OF ALINA'S APARTMENT BLOCK

Joan sees the red moped parked in front of Alina's doorway - number 5. She turns around: the tank is still there. This is the right place.

Joan glances around to check if the secret police officers are around. The only vehicle that can be seen is the red moped.

Starts walking towards the building entrance, suddenly the tank's turret moves with a grind, startles Joan, who stumbles and falls. Her bag opens and the Polaroid Camera falls out. She starts running and hides behind the entrance to the housing block, her back against the wall.

Out of nowhere, a CROW laughs it's weird laugh above her.

Joan looks up, spellbound. Then lifts the Polaroid camera to her eyes.

But in the viewfinder she sees a man crashing through a window above her.

With a sickening THUD the body hits the snowy ground and sinks into the knee-high carpet of snow just in front of her. It is MAREK

Joan takes a few steps towards the body, hears a noise above her, sees the grimaced face of the LITTLE MAN at a broken window in the 5th floor - Joan pushes the button, takes another picture.

She lowers the camera. There's no sign of Little Man, so she rushes to the body, trudging through the snow.

A thin stream of blood runs from the back of Marek's head.

In disbelief, Joan looks at Marek's kind face.

MAREK'S POV: Joan leaning over him. A vast white sky.

With a trembling hand, she points the camera at Marek.

She adjusts the flash, steadies her hand and focuses: Marek lies there as if in a white coffin.

Joan takes two pictures: the head, and the whole corpse.

She hears noise from the building's entrance.

LITTLE MAN
(yelling)
Stop!

Joan, in sheer panic, collects the scattered photos from the snow and starts to run, hard.

She takes a sharp turn to the right and runs to the back of the apartment block, where she passes a parked a gray secret police van and a blue militia sitting next to a playground that hasn't been completed but is already decaying. The rusty slide ends halfway in the air.

40 EXT. SATELLITE TOWN - DIRT YARD - DAY

We TRACK with Joan as she take another turn leaving the concrete buildings behind her, runs across a frozen landscape, slaloming around weird concrete poles sticking out from the mud, briefcase in one hand, the Polaroid camera in the other.

In the windows, the blue glow of television screens. From everywhere comes the SOUND of TV sets and radios echoing the speech, not in sync.

*GENERAL JARUZELSKI (V.O.)
I declare that today... the Council
of State, obeying the constitution,
declared a state of war at midnight
on the territory of Poland.*

The Little Man follows her in the distance...

41 EXT. SATELLITE TOWN - DIRT YARD - CONTINUOUS

It's a mad race through a strange, bare landscape. Joan runs through the frozen mud and leaves the Little Man further and further away in the distance.

The Little Man slows down, BREATHING heavily. He stops in the middle of the field, eyes flitting round, wound-up. He can't catch up with her.

CUT TO:

42 OMITTED

43 OMITTED

44 OMITTED

45 OMITTED

46 OMITTED

47 OMITTED

48 SCENE MOVED AFTER SCENE 51

49 OMITTED

50 EXT. SATELLITE TOWN - CONSTRUCTION SITE - CONTINUOUS
Joan breathes heavily, sitting crawled up in a massive cement pipe, too exhausted to run any further. She holds her breath when she hears the roar of an engine. A gray van passes by slowly on a dirt road near by. The little man scouting his surrounding through the passenger window, his face tensed.

Complete darkness surrounds Joan as she silently crawls deeper down the pipe. The only sound we hear is her heavy breathing, echoing on the cement walls. At the end of the pipe, Joan sees a light. She continues crawling towards it.

51 EXT. SATELLITE TOWN - CONSTRUCTION SITE - AFTERNOON

When Joan is almost outside, ANGLE on a gun being aimed at her - against the light, we can only see a LITTLE SILHOUETTE.

Joan raises her hands.

The gunman LAUGHS. He steps back and we see it's a 10 year-old BOY with a toy gun. He runs away laughing.

Joan sees the boy running towards the 8-lane boulevard.

The afternoon light fades. On the horizon, behind the boy, we can see a huge WHITE CROSS.

48 EXT. SATELLITE TOWN - EIGHT-LANE BOULEVARD - CONTINUOUS

Joan crosses an eight-lane boulevard stretches endlessly through the no man's land of the satellite town. A few housing towers with white space between them line the boulevard. Not a single car on the street.

ANGLE: A huge sign that encompasses eight of the lanes and says "WARSZAWA" - in both directions.

She keeps walking towards the surrealistic cross, shining in the dim light on the horizon.

52 OMITTED

53

EXT. SATELLITE TOWN - CHURCH SQUARE - LATER

Joan arrives on a square that is set directly next to the boulevard. A futuristic low-rise building resembling a flying object sticks out of the monotonous housing estate.

Next to the church stands the illuminated white cross.

At least a hundred CHURCHGOERS gather in front of the church. They stand in little groups.

Joan tries to blend in with the crowd, but as soon as she approaches a group, people turn away from her.

Insecure, Joan retreats to the far corner of the square and observes the crowd - the movement between the various groups; men and women carrying bags. It's a black market.

Joan assesses the set up, and instinctively opens her briefcase, fumbling for the carton of Embassy cigarettes.

She puts it upright, so that the gold packaging can be seen.

Joan approaches the closest group. Nobody seems to pay attention to her. Clumsily, she opens her briefcase. A MAN WITH A GREEN SCARF glances at the cigarettes, shakes his head and gives Joan a look full of contempt.

Joan approaches the next group.

MAN WITH GREEN SCARF
(yelling)
Watch out for the rat!

Everybody turns around, quickly identifying the stranger.

Joan pauses, thrown.

The groups slowly converge on Joan. They all look the same in their anthracite winter coats and woollen hats. They stare at Joan.

Joan tries to speak, but can't utter a word.

A YOUNG MAN picks up a big branch and weighs it in his hands. Suddenly jumps forward.

Joan tenses and takes off, almost spilling the cigarettes as she snaps shut her briefcase. The young man follows her, playfully feigning to whack her.

The crowd cheers and laughs.

The young man stops and drops the branch.

MAN WITH GREEN SCARF (CONT'D)
Get lost, whore!

A few old women start to sing a triumphant, archaic CHURCH SONG with sharp voices.

Joan keeps running, while the church bells RING.

54 EXT. SATELLITE TOWN/PEDESTRIAN ZONE - EVENING

In the middle of a pedestrian zone between the housing blocks, a flat building with shops.

In the shop window we can see three FEMALE MANNEQUINS, dressed in green summer dresses from the state-owned clothing company "Moda Polska". They are stretching their arms towards Joan.

Joan approaches the window, notices a little door next to the shop that is ajar.

55 INT. BASEMENT/STORAGE ROOM - NIGHT

In one of the corners we can see a pile of mannequins, in another corner a ladder - on a rung: a pair of wet socks. Below the ladder: the drenched Brogue shoes, stuffed with newspaper to dry.

Joan has built a makeshift shelter out of pieces of cardboard. She is rubbing her feet with whiskey from the flask. She covers herself with her coat and old newspapers.

Her head with the fur hat is the only part of her sticking out. She closes her eyes. Breathes slowly, deeply, to calm herself.

Opening her eyes, Joan stares right into the lifeless eyes of one of the mannequins. Hold.

56 EXT. SATELLITE TOWN - TRAMWAY STOP - DAY

A deserted tramway stop at an intersection of two big boulevards. Joan pulls the chapka over her ears. She rubs her hands, takes out her pocket flask and drinks the last sip. Uses old newspaper scattered around to stuff her coat. On the front page: **Monday, December 14, 1981**

She walks up and down the tramway stop.

57 EXT. SATELLITE TOWN - TRAMWAY STOP - DAY

A tram arrives, slowing down at the stop - but it's so packed that the doors can't open. Passengers' faces, pressed against the window-panes.

Among them, JAN. His squidged face looks strangely distorted.

Joan spots him, can't believe her luck. She tries to alert him, without drawing attention to herself, her voice husky -

JOAN

Jan! Hey! Let me on! JAN!

Jan glances at her, then he just looks through her.

Joan is baffled.

The tram starts to roll away, slowly at first.

JOAN (CONT'D)

I need to tell you something.

Joan keeps pace with the tram.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Marek. Marek is dead!

Still, nothing. So she goes through her pockets, finds the picture of Marek's crushed skull. Slams it on the window.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Look at him.

There's A WOMAN next to Jan. She looks at Joan, horrified, then quickly averts her eyes.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Jesus - what's wrong with you all?

A flicker in Joan's eyes. She takes the Polaroid camera out of her briefcase.

Running alongside the tram, she tries in vain to focus on Jan, and shoots the picture anyway, just as Jan looks directly at her.

58 EXT. SATELLITE TOWN - TRAM TRACKS - CONTINUOUS

The photo between Joan's fingers. Jan's silhouette slowly taking shape...

Breathing heavily, Joan walks on the tram tracks like an archaic hunter in the tundra. The briefcase now strapped around her back, she follows the tram, which can be seen as a faint point in the distance.

JOAN
(mutters)
Come on. It's you. I know it's you.

ANGLE: On the Polaroid a blurry white figure. Could be Jan. Could be anybody.

Joan curses - frustrated, or starting to question herself?

59 EXT. SUBURB - STREET CORNER - HOURS LATER /AFTERNOON

A neighborhood with 1950's style buildings. The architecture is less brutal. Joan takes out the flyer of Henryk's garage with the logo of a car tire. It must be around here.

60 EXT. SUBURB - STREET CORNER - AFTERNOON

Joan rounds a corner, only for her path to be blocked by a QUEUE OF PEOPLE. Locals wait stoically in the cold. Some read books or newspapers. When AN OLD WOMAN stands in line behind her, Joan starts to feel warm, safe and invisible.

People pass by carrying loaves of bread and buckets filled with water.

61 EXT. SUBURB - FISH STORE - CONTINUOUS

The queue enters a white tiled store, totally empty, but for a large basin filled with water. At the front of the queue, Joan glimpses towards the counter. The FISH VENDOR, a massive lady, leans over a table wearing a white apron, stained with blood.

A YOUNG MOTHER approaches the table.

FISH VENDOR
Dead or alive?

YOUNG MOTHER
Dead, please.

The massive lady takes a struggling carp out of the basin. She presses it to the table with one hand and lifts a hammer with the other.

The hammer comes crashing down. The dead carp ends up in a net bag carried by the young mother.

Fascinated, Joan can't take her eyes from the massive lady's stoic face.

FISH VENDOR
Dead or alive?

NEXT MAN IN LINE (O.S.)
Alive.

A MAN IN A BLUE BOILER SUIT carrying a bucket in front of Joan receives the struggling carp in a bucket. Bumps into her as he leaves.

FISH VENDOR
(to Joan)
Dead or alive?
(beat)
Question too hard for you?

Embarrassed, Joan steps out of the line. We TRACK with her as she passes the queue, and we might hear:

FISH VENDOR (O.S; CONT'D) (CONT'D)
*Dead or alive! There's nothing in
between, right?*

Joan eyes follow the man who bumped into her crossing the street. On the back of the boiler suit, the logo of Henry's Garage.

61A EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Joan follows the man as he enters a gate. Above it a single illuminated neon sign of a car tire.

62 INT. HENRYK'S CAR WORKSHOP - LATER

A glass of freshly brewed black coffee with the grains slowly sinking down.

Joan sits at one end of a little camping table, trying to warm herself.

Henryk, at the other end, observes Joan warily while drawing on a cigarette. He is a small and wiry man in his early 50's with distinctive lines on his forehead and an even more distinctive moustache.

JOAN

Alina told me to call you - in an emergency.

Henryk shrugs, uncomprehending.

Joan is distracted by the remains of Henryk's lunch on the table: an empty plate with bread crumbs and a jar of pickles. One last pickle is swimming in it. She takes a sip of coffee to fill her empty stomach.

Henryk stares at her. What the hell does she want?

JOAN (CONT'D)

E-mer-gen-cy? Alina. Your niece.

HENRYK

What about Alina?

JOAN

She's in danger. The Militia.

HENRYK

Milizia?

JOAN

You need to warn her. Alina, not safe.

HENRYK

What's Alina got to do with them?

JOAN

I don't know what you're saying. She has my passport. Passport. My ID. I need it, to get out of this bloody place.

(nothing)

To fly. England.

Henryk shakes his head, signs -

HENRYK

No airplanes.

JOAN

What - are you saying - there are no planes?

They stare at each other.

Joan opens her briefcase and takes out the Polaroid picture of Marek in the snow coffin.

She hands it to Henryk whose face hardens.

HENRYK

What the fuck happened to the boy?

He rears up, raging. Accusing?

JOAN

That had nothing to do with me. My driver. Marek. He was pushed - out of a window.

(off his incredulous look)

Look, just take me to the Embassy. Embassy?

HENRYK

Ambasada?

He refers Joan to a big ROADMAP of Warsaw on the wall.

JOAN

Am-ba-sa-da?

Henryk vaguely points to an area in the centre of the map.

JOAN (CONT'D)

And where are we? Us, where?

Henryk points way over to the left.

Dismaying, Joan takes out a bundle of dollar notes and the box of Embassy Gold cigarettes.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Thanks for the coffee.

HENRYK

My pleasure.

He takes the cigarettes with a nod and just one dollar bill.

HENRYK (CONT'D)

For the gasoline.

He motions, come on then. Joan gets up, relieved, discreetly putting the money back into her pocket. She reaches for the empty plate and quickly picks up the bread crumbs.

63

INT/EXT. YELLOW POLONEZ/ KINO MOSKWA - DUSK

Joan sits in the front passenger seat, the bucket filled with water and the living carp between her feet.

On the back seat lies a Christmas tree.

The car stops at a red light in front of a large and gray theatre building displaying a poster for "Apocalypse Now". In front of the cinema a "skot" tank stands still, a tram passes by.

ANGLE: a ROSARY still dangling from the rear-view mirror.

HENRYK

(to the rosary)

I could have robbed her. Dollar has skyrocketed since yesterday.

JOAN

Catholic?

HENRYK

(deadpan)

Buddhist.

He laughs, only to glimpse something in his rear-view mirror:

A GREY VAN appears behind them, and stops the red light next to them.

Sensing a problem, Joan whips off her fur hat and sticks it on Henryk's head. Then pulls the Christmas tree from the back seat in between them.

Henryk shoots her an irritated look.

64

EXT - KINO MOSKWA - SAME TIME

The DRIVER stops the van alongside Henryk's Polonez.

The PASSENGER absent-mindedly looks over to the yellow Polonez:

He sees a man in a boiler suit with a chapka on his head and a Christmas tree on the passenger seat (Joan is obscured).

He rolls down the window to get a closer look.

PASSENGER (O.S.)

Didn't Krajewski put a woman with a chapka on the wanted-list?

The driver looks over, as well.

DRIVER

That's a man, for god's sake.

(beat)

(MORE)

DRIVER (CONT'D)

*Let's go and get him, anyway!
Tomorrow we might have to check all
men with chapkas in this fucking
town.*

They laugh out loud.

The light turns green and the driver speeds away.

PASSENGER (O.S.)

Whatever makes the dwarf happy.

65 INT. HENRYK'S YELLOW POLONEZ - CONTINUOUS

Henryk drives on, still wearing the chapka. With his right hand he grapples with the Christmas tree.

HENRYK

*(curtly)
Put the damn tree back!*

Joan pushes the tree back, only to see something beneath it on the back seat - a machine?

JOAN

What's that?

Henryk ignores her. Takes a smaller side street now, when...

FLOOD LIGHTS suddenly blind Henryk and Joan. Dogs start barking.

Henryk brakes.

Water sloshes out of the bucket, soaking Joan's trousers and her shoes - again.

66 EXT. WARSAW STREET - CONTINUOUS

Two military jeeps are blocking the street at one end, their headlights spotlighting the Polonez.

67 INT. HENRYK'S YELLOW POLONEZ - CONTINUOUS

Henryk goes into reverse gear, quickly drives back and around the corner. The car slides on the icy street.

Joan grabs the door handle. Clamps the bucket between her feet.

68 EXT. WARSAW STREET - CONTINUOUS

One military jeep speeds forward in pursuit of the Polonez. The other one turns around, speeding in the opposite direction.

69 INT. HENRYK'S YELLOW POLONEZ - CONTINUOUS

Henryk cranks up the roaring engine. Races through barely-lit streets.

ANGLE: in the rear-view mirror two yellow beams appear behind them - the jeep's headlights.

Henryk accelerates, then takes a sharp turn to the left.

Ahead: two yellow beams in the distance. The headlights of the second jeep...

	HENRYK	JOAN
<i>Fuck!</i>		<i>Fuck!</i>

Without a warning, Henryk brakes. Joan is thrown forward. Stems her hands against the windscreen.

Henryk starts the engine, drives on at walking speed searching for a side road.

ANGLE: The bucket between Joan's feet. The water is swashing against the bucket. The carp is floating up and down.

HENRYK (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Here we go...

Henryk switches off the head lights. Outside it is dark, now.

70 EXT. WARSAW STREET - CONTINUOUS

The Polonez turns to the left onto a bumpy narrow gravel road at the backside of a factory building.

71 INT. HENRYK'S YELLOW POLONEZ - CONTINUOUS

Henryk's foot pushes down the gas pedal.

HENRYK (O.S.)
Ready for take-off...

ANGLE: The water in the bucket swashes more violently now. The carp's tail is bumping against the bucket.

JOAN'S/HENRYK'S POV - Darkness ahead of them. They race through it like a black tunnel.

JOAN (O.S.)
(shouting)
Jesus, careful!

Henryk turns the headlights on, for a split second: A pile of CAR WRECKS just a few metres ahead of them.

Henryk brakes.

72 EXT. COURTYARD - NIGHT - INSTANTS LATER

Joan crawls out of the car and retches - there's barely anything in her stomach to bring up.

Henryk leans at the drivers' door, opening a pack of her Embassy Golds. He smells the cigarette, lights it. Not bad.

HENRYK
Welcome to Warsaw.

In the distance, he sees the YELLOW HEADLIGHTS passing by on the main road.

Joan pulls herself up at the car and catches a glimpse of the back seat. She opens the back door.

73 INT. HENRYK'S YELLOW POLONEZ - CONTINUOUS

ANGLE: on the back seat, underneath the Christmas tree, which has slipped to one side, a huge machine.

JOAN
Why are you hiding a Xerox machine?

HENRYK
(closes the door, hushed)
You want these fellows to give you a ride? Go ahead! Board and lodge is free as well!

74 OMITTED

75 OMITTED

76 INT. HENRYK'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

KRYSTYNA, Henry's wife, overworked and charismatic, walks around the apartment with Joan's wet clothes.

KRYSTYNA
*Good Lord! Did you fish her out of
 the Wisla?*

Passing the wardrobe, Krystyna takes a pair of ironed trousers and a folded woollen sweater out of it.

Henryk reaches out to take a car key from the key hanger in the corridor.

KRYSTYNA (CONT'D)
 (cutting him off)
Where do you think you're going?

HENRYK
I have to bring her to the embassy.

KRYSTYNA
*What about the curfew? She can
 sleep on the couch.*

Joan hears them arguing from inside the BATHROOM.

KRYSTYNA (CONT'D)
 (yelling)
*A lady from the airline was here.
 Something about a lost piece of
 luggage. It's hers then?*

77 INT. HENRYK'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

The bathroom is minuscule and tiled in green.

Joan leans with her back on the door, closing her eyes and listening to HUSHED VOICES she obviously can't understand.

HENRYK (V.O.)
*What the hell do I care about her
 luggage?*

Joan looks into the bath tub. The carp lies lifeless in the puddle of water. Joan runs the tap...

HENRYK (V.O.)
*Alina is in trouble, I have to find
 her...*

The carp suddenly stirs, alive and kicking.

Joan observes the carp, then lets the WATER RUN full force.

She glances up at the mirror. Her face is bruised and haggard - the smudges of mascara still under her eyes. She stretches out her arms - can almost touch both walls. Trapped in a cell. There's something grimly amusing about this. She stares at herself.

JOAN

(sings with a frail voice)

"If you could read my mind, love/
What a tale my thoughts could tell/
Just like an old time movie/
'Bout a ghost from a wishing well"

She breaks off and starts to laugh, desperately.

78 INT. HENRYK'S DINING/LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A modest and cozy living room with Catholic devotionals on the walls like a Pope John Paul II calendar; sports trophies on the shelf. In a corner two satchels, packed for the next morning.

At the table Krystyna and the TWO DAUGHTERS (6 and 9) are eating soup, curiously keeping an eye on the corridor.

Henryk is eating ravenously, not even sitting down.

DAUGHTER 1

*Do we have to go to school
tomorrow?*

KRYSTYNA

Yes, you do!

HENRYK

No!

Joan appears in the doorway, looking dishevelled. She wears a grey woollen jumper with a flower application and a pair of trousers which are too short and too wide. They are held by a lycra belt that Joan has tied around her waist. She could go for an experimental arts teacher - or a bum.

The girls stare at Joan and start to giggle. Krystyna wants to serve her soup, but Henryk ushers Joan to the door.

79 EXT. HENRYK'S HOUSE - PARKING - NIGHT

Henryk and Joan carry the Xerox machine from the yellow Polonez to Henryk's car, a dark blue Lada.

80 INT. HENRYK'S LADA/EXT. HOSPITAL - LATER

Henryk stops the car in front of a shabby building with a flickering RED CROSS.

JOAN
(peevied)
Why are we stopping here?

HENRYK
(sensing her impatience)
I am not your cab driver.
(points to the trunk)
Give me a hand.

81 INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Henryk and Joan carry the Xerox machine, covered with a blanket, through the corridor towards the elevator.

Nobody pays attention. Chaos reigns: Men and women of all ages with lacerations.

82 INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

The PATHOLOGIST, a tall woman in her 50's, opens the door. She raises an eyebrow at Joan, Henryk signals she's okay.

83 INT. HOSPITAL - PATHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

They follow the pathologist through her office to a door with a sign that says "CAUTION X RAY".

84 INT. PATHOLOGY/BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

They step into the semi-darkness of a cramped room without windows to the sound of TWO TYPEWRITERS clacking in a dissonant rhythm.

Henryk and Joan - sweat on her forehead - put the machine on the floor. It's littered with laundry baskets, loads of files.

In the middle, a long table and two typists. One is an ill-humoured NURSE in her 30's, the other is - Alina.

HENRYK
(to Alina)
Thank god, you had me worried!

Alina glances over, not registering Henryk's company, and continues typing in frantic staccato.

ALINA

What took you so long with the machine?

(beat)

We're almost done here, we need to copy them fast.

Joan clears her throat, but no one pays attention.

NURSE/TYPIST

(sarcastic)

Yes, let's hurry up. "Apocalypse now" is playing tonight at the Iluzjon.

Joan can't believe Alina doesn't notice her. As she marches up to her, the typewriter pings and Alina attempts to move the carriage on to the next line.

Only for Joan to grab the RETURN LEVER, and cut her a look.

The clacking sound stops.

Alina glances at the feet next to her desk, recognizes Joan's battered brogues, takes in her ragtag outfit.

A beat, then Alina laughs, relieved.

ALINA

Oh my God, I didn't recognize you. How are you? It's good to see you.

Alina tries to shift the lever, but, Joan holds on to it. She stares Alina down, trying to control her anger.

JOAN

It's good to see you too, because I need my passport, and I need you to take me to the embassy.

ALINA

Sure, soon.

JOAN

(snaps)

Now.

(trembling voice)

You are not walking out on me again!

Alina looks up, Joan's despair is unsettling.

ALINA

Okay, I'm sorry, I had to save files from Solidarity's office.
 (off her puzzled look)
 Because of Martial law. The curfew? You don't know? They cut the phone lines, closed the borders. Anyway, I knew you were with Marek -

JOAN

Closed the borders? How the fuck am I supposed to go home?

As she processes this, Alina suddenly turns to Henryk.

ALINA

(alarmed)
Where is Marek?

Henryk exchanges looks with Joan: you're the shrink, please deal with this. Out on Joan.

85 INT. PATHOLOGY - CORRIDOR - LATER

Through the bull's eye window of a door Henryk observes Joan and Alina. They sit next to each other on a bare stretcher in a tiled hall.

Joan is giving Alina the bad news, showing her the photos. Alina just stares blankly towards us.

Henryk sighs, he is clearly upset. He takes out a couple of Embassy Gold cigarettes.

Henryk's POV - Alina, her face a mask, stands up from the stretcher and walks out of the frame.

86 EXT. HOSPITAL - BACK ENTRANCE

Henryk leans on the wall, smoking.

A NIGHT NURSE steps out, inhaling the winter air.

NIGHT NURSE

20 years and still can't get used to the smell of stale urine.

Henryk offers her a cigarette.

They smoke.

HENRYK

Tough day, yesterday?

NIGHT NURSE

It wasn't that bad. They informed us Friday to have 100 beds ready. So it didn't come as a surprise. What got me, is that we had to send sick patients home to make room for these idiots who can't just keep their mouths shut.

HENRYK

Friday, you say?

NIGHT NURSE

Yes, I telegraphed my old ones to stay at home.

87

INT. MORGUE - CONTINUOUS

Inside the tiled hall with a dozen stretchers. On the stretchers: bodies covered with ordinary bed sheets.

Alina walks past them, as if in a daze. Joan follows her.

Suddenly, Alina stops and stands over a stretcher. Hesitantly lifts the sheet, which has a flower pattern, from the face of the dead person: AN OLD WOMAN.

Alina turns away, only to move to the next stretcher, and the next, uncovering several bodies, leaving them just like that.

JOAN

(softly)

Alina, don't.

Alina shakes Joan off and uncovers another body.

JOAN (CONT'D)

You're in shock. Stop -

Alina tears the sheet off another body. Marek. She stiffens.

His eyes are still open. The bruising on his neck has gone blue. Alina looks at Marek's face, reaches out to touch it - then stops herself.

ALINA

Give me your magic camera.

(off her reluctance)

Give it to me.

Joan hands her the camera.

Alina focuses, blinking back tears, then defiantly pushes the button. CLICK: the Polaroid picture comes out.

88 EXT. HOSPITAL - BACK ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Henryk drops the cigarette butt on the ground, stubs it out with his shoe. Just then, a grey van stops in the driveway. A few SECRET SERVICE OFFICERS get out. They are heading for the main entrance. Henryk hides in the doorway.

89 INT. MORGUE - MOMENTS LATER

The pathologist bursts in, followed by Henryk who stays close to the door. They see Alina standing next to Marek's body.

On the fresh Polaroid picture Marek's FACE appears in an eerie greenish light.

HENRYK

Secret Service is here!

PATHOLOGIST

Out! And take all your stuff! I won't be risking the patients' safety for a few flyers. They are killing people!

HENRYK

Relax, we're out of here. Just organize us a safe ride.

90 INT. HOSPITAL - BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

Alina and Henryk carry the heavy machine, Joan is walking ahead, opening the swing doors - they all wear medics' scrubs. Joan carries a brown envelope for X-rays.

HENRYK

What use are these pictures if we can't publish them?

ALINA

Can't publish them here...

Alina glances at Joan. She doesn't understand what they're saying, but detects that Alina wants something from her.

JOAN

What?

ALINA
 (short of breath)
 The polaroids. You can do something
 with (them) -

JOAN
 No.

ALINA
 Publish them.

Joan opens another swing door. She is face to face with Alina who pauses an instant to balance the heavy weight.

JOAN
 Just take me to the embassy. And
 give me my passport.

Beat.

ALINA
 (to Henryk)
I left it at Jan's...

HENRYK
 (shakes his head)
No chance to go there now. Move on!

They are staggering towards the back entrance. Joan keeps up with them, a flicker of panic in her eyes.

91 EXT. HOSPITAL - BACK ENTRANCE

Joan grabs Henryk's shoulder.

JOAN
Amba-sada. You promised!

Henryk and Alina put the machine down.

ALINA
 There's a curfew, it's not safe.
 We'll take you tomorrow. We just
 need to find somewhere for you to
 stay tonight -

JOAN
 I don't want to stay another night,
 I want to go home - I want nothing
 to do with this.

Henryk pushes the back door open. He looks around: the coast is clear. There is an ambulance waiting in the driveway. Henryk runs to it, motions them to follow with the machine.

Joan shakes her head, scared. But there is no other way out.

92 EXT. STUDENT DORM - NIGHT

The ambulance stops in front of the student dorm, engine running.

Henryk jumps out from the driver's side in a paramedic's coat and opens the back door. Alina and Joan get out.

Joan glances at the huge box-shaped building that rises in front of her and spans around the corner - all windows are dark. Alina gestures, wait.

She disappears in the dimly lit entrance of the student dorm.

Nervously, Joan scans the street. Nothing but darkness.

HENRYK
(trying to calm her)
Okay... okay.

Alina is back after a moment.

ALINA
They sent all the students home to
the countryside. They already
searched the place.

ALINA (CONT'D)
Just don't turn on the light.

Just then, the ambulance speeds away leaving them in front of the dorm.

93 INT. STUDENT DORM - CONTINUOUS

Joan follows Alina through the deserted corridors of the dorm.

From time to time, out of darkness, scattered objects appear on the floor:

- a single tennis shoe
- a guitar

- scattered sheets of paper with chemical formulas written on them.

Most of the doors are wide open, as if the students had just left minutes ago.

A room number comes into focus: 909.

94

INT. STUDENT DORM - MAREK'S ROOM 909 - NIGHT

A small room accommodating four. Bunk-beds on each side.

Alina walks over to the tiny desk at the window, illuminated by the moonlight. It is scratched and stained with ink.

Joan collapses on Marek's bed, stretches her legs and stares into the darkness.

JOAN

Alina, what exactly are you doing?
What were you and Marek trying to
achieve?

ALINA

(echoes her)
A new way of doing things. A new
way of living.
(gets upset)
Jesus, he was harmless. He had no
reason to run away. He wasn't even
a member of Solidarity. If I'd been
there.

JOAN

They would've killed you.
(beat)
Don't blame yourself.

But Alina does. She's full of rage, guilt, and a desire for justice.

ALINA

These photos... you have to take
them back to England.

JOAN

Stop.

ALINA

Newspapers will publish them. Tell
them this was murder - maybe there
have been more cases like Marek's?
(MORE)

ALINA (CONT'D)

You can take more photos... tanks,
soldiers...

Alina empties her purse on the bed, all items fall out. She turns on the flashlight and sits on the bed, facing Joan.

JOAN

I'm sorry for what happened to your friend. Truly. But this is not my fight.

(bitter)

And if these photos are published anywhere those fuckers will track you down.

The flashlight illuminates the strip of wall in the bunk bed.

Now we see the wallpaper is covered all over with minuscule DRAWINGS, made with a ballpoint-pen: Fairy-tale dwarfs and animals mix with the figures of Reagan, Brezhnev, Thatcher and Jaruzelski who also inhabit this peculiar fantasy world of forests, oceans and cities - which turns out to be an imaginary world map. Somewhere above the Atlantic, Joan spots Marek sitting on a flying carpet.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Imagination can kill communism - he said that to me. Poor kid. Head full of dreams.

ALINA

Do you believe in anything? How can a psychiatrist not believe in the power of dreams?

Joan leans back into the corner of the bunk bed, lifts her camera, focusing on Alina's green eyes.

JOAN

I believe in what I see. I stopped dreaming a long time ago.

(beat)

I tell a lie, I had one on the way here on the flight, first in ages. I was trying to run through snow, nothing on but my coat, I could barely move.

(chuckles)

Shoes were a right state. And this bloody crow kept teasing me -

ALINA

If I couldn't dream, I would kill myself.

Joan's dream pales into insignificance compared to that.

JOAN

Anyway.

ALINA

(analyses her)

You want people to see the real you, but that makes you scared.

JOAN

Go on.

ALINA

Speaking in public must be a nightmare for you.

JOAN

It's not helped when you're pelted with bog-roll.

ALINA

The crow is interesting...

JOAN

Messenger of death?

ALINA

It is the name of the military council, that runs our country. WRON means crow.

(beat)

If you believed in the power of dreams you would realize that you being here is not just an accident.

JOAN

(intrigued)

Do you do this with Jan? Read his dreams, try to get under his skin?

ALINA

Jan doesn't dream either. So he says.

JOAN

Where's he in all this?

ALINA

He went back to his parents' - they're out in the countryside - I haven't seen him since Sunday morning.

Joan tries to read Alina's face - she means it.

JOAN

I saw him this morning. He made out he didn't know me, but I'm sure it was him.

ALINA

Where?

JOAN

A tram stop, near your apartment.

ALINA

(thrown)

It couldn't have been.

Joan grabs her coat from the floor, takes a stack of photos out of her pocket, and slides the one of Jan across the bed to Alina. She picks it up, examines it.

ALINA (CONT'D)

This could be anyone.

JOAN

I know, but it's him, it's Jan, I know what I saw.

Joan gets up with sudden clarity and determination.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Sometimes we just need to take a step back, look at things from a distance to recognize a pattern.

She takes the brown X-RAY-envelope from her briefcase.

Kneeling down, she spreads all the photos on the floor, focused on the task like it was a puzzle, confident she will solve it.

Alina opens Marek's locker and finds a box with hard-boiled eggs and a bottle of vodka without the excise tax band.

ALINA

(glances at her)

Have you ever hallucinated before?

No response. Joan's too distracted, trying to order the Polaroids - in a square, chronologically. A beat, then -

JOAN

Bollocks.

She points to the first picture: JAN FEEDING MAREK WITH A CANAPE AT THE PARTY.

JOAN (CONT'D)

The time code says 22:15.

Alina peels an egg and hands it to Joan. She devours it and flushes it down with vodka.

Alina takes the picture and examines it. There are SEVERAL SMALLER FIGURES in the background.

She gets up, rifles through a drawer and comes back with a magnifying glass, hands it to Joan.

One of the magnified figures on the photo is the Little Man.

JOAN (CONT'D)

(feeling vindicated)

It's him.

Joan takes the picture that shows Marek being pushed out of the window. Through the lens they look at the figure magnified: the LITTLE MAN, again.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Who is he?

ALINA

I don't know. Ubek.

Joan points the magnifying glass to another figure: a LADY in a light blue dress - BEATA.

JOAN

(whispering)

Oh my God - you.

ALINA

You know this woman?

JOAN

She was beside me on the plane - works for LOT. Well, that's what she said.

(beat)

Why would she be at the conference?

ALINA

Jan was right. They were tailing you from the airport.

JOAN

Who's they?

ALINA

SB? I guess they have a unit that deals with foreigners. Jan knows more about these things. When did we leave the party?

JOAN

Maybe ten minutes after I took this picture of Jan and Marek.

Alina has two photos on her lap:

INSERT: POLAROID: JAN/GHOST ON THE TRAM

INSERT: POLAROID: JAN FEEDING MAREK A CANAPE

ALINA

If they've been tailing us, they'll know I'm with Jan - why didn't they come looking for me at his place?

Joan avoids her gaze, takes a swig of vodka.

ALINA (CONT'D)

I need to sleep. If you want to go on with your research...

She takes a lamp from the night stand, and puts it on the floor next to Joan. Then she lies down on Marek's bunk, behind Joan.

A long beat.

JOAN

Where are your parents, Alina?

ALINA

Long gone. Mum died three years ago. My father left when I was little.

JOAN

(not facing her)

I would've been the same age when my mother died.

ALINA

(looking at her)

Exactly the same age: twenty-two. You mentioned it in one of your books. My favorite one.

(beat)

Did she die in the hospital?

Alina expects Joan to turn around, but she doesn't. It is easier for Joan to talk this way.

JOAN

(slowly)

No, Mum lived there, sedated, the
guts of her life...

Joan stretches her legs and lies down on the floor, exhausted, but also - safe. Her hand is still gripping the Vodka bottle.

Alina bends down from the bunk, takes the bottle, softly loosening Joan's grip. She wants to withdraw her hand, but Joan holds on to it.

Joan closes her eyes.

95

INT. STUDENT DORM - MAREK'S ROOM 909 - LATER

Joan is sound asleep on the floor in a coiled sleeping position, her head resting on Alina's lap. The half-empty bottle next to her feet.

Carefully Alina beds Joan's head on her rolled cardigan and covers her with Marek's blanket.

She picks up the Polaroids and puts them together in a stack.

The one on top catches her attention: A scene from the reception after the congress: A SOVIET MURAL OF FARM WORKERS. BELOW, THE BUFFET. A FEW FIGURES ARE SERVING THEMSELVES WITH DRINKS.

Alina takes the magnifying glass.

INSERT POLAROID: ONE OF THEM IS JAN. HE IS TALKING TO THE LITTLE MAN. THEY APPEAR TO KNOW EACH OTHER.

Alina is taken aback. With a trembling hand she slides it in her pocket and hastily puts the other Polaroids back in the brown X-Rays envelope.

Alina takes the flash light and her purse from the bed. Hectically throws her belongings back into the purse and rushes out of the room, without even closing the door. She hasn't noticed that she's left something behind on the floor.

ANGLE: Alina's student record book.

96

OMITTED

97 OMITTED

98 INT. TILED HALL - DREAM (JOAN'S DREAM)

PHANTOM POV OF A CHILD: We are standing next to a stretcher.

ANGLE: a WOMAN'S HAND restrained by a massive leather strap.

A CHILD'S HAND reaches out and touches the woman's hand.

The GASPS get louder. They come from the PERSON on the stretcher who has difficulties breathing: She is covered from head to toe with a WHITE NET that is pulled snug at the four corners. TWO DOCTORS are guarding the person. The wheels of the stretcher SQUEAK.

ANGLE: HER FACE under the net, her mouth half-open like a carp caught in a net.

CHILD'S POV: One doctor - we only see him up to his waist in a stained white coat - pulls the net even tighter.

He pushes the stretcher through a metal door into a room. He shuts the door and takes the knob out -

98A EXT. STUDENT DORM - NIGHT

From outside - the faint reflection of a flashlight flickering erratically in the windows of the dorm.

99 INT. STUDENT DORM - MAREK'S ROOM 909 - CONTINUOUS

Darkness. Joan wakes with a startle, drops of sweat on her forehead. She sits up, processing where she is, that she's on her own.

She hears the SOUND of guitar strings and the CLANG of an object being dropped on the floor...

JOAN
(hushed)
Alina?

100 INT. STUDENT DORM - MAREK'S ROOM 909 - CONTINUOUS

The door is gently pushed open by a gloved hand followed by the light of a torch, like in the dream.

The Little Man enters, without a sound. Feels his way inside, to the edge of the desk.

Locates Joan's BRIEFCASE on the desk.

Clamping the torch between his teeth, he rummages inside the briefcase.

He finds a plastic envelope with a "Polaroid" logo. Rips it open - empty.

He points the torch to the BUNK BED on the right - empty.

He points the torch to the other side - there stands Joan, paralyzed, hands behind her back: like a schoolgirl, who has been caught doing something forbidden.

A beat, then the little man darts at her.

Joan reflexively steps to the side and raises the vodka bottle she'd hidden behind her back.

She smashes it against the Little Man's head!

The bottle breaks and the Little Man falls to the ground - vodka splashing.

He doesn't move, apparently knocked out. The torch slips from his hand and rolls on the floor, throwing light on different parts of the room. Eventually, it rolls under the bed - the room is dark again.

Joan bends over the Little Man, alarmed, swallowing hard - she didn't mean to severely injure him...

The Little Man suddenly tilts up, a knife in his hand, and stabs Joan in her left upper arm.

Joan screams in pain.

The SOUND of heavy breathing. One is heavier, quicker and closer to us in the darkness.

It is Joan who has recoiled into a corner, bending from the pain, her hand still clutching the broken bottle.

The Little Man's breathing can be heard somewhere.

Joan slightly turns in this direction.

Instantly the SOUND of the Little Man's breathing gets louder and quicker... as he plunges the knife into the wall just an inch from Joan's upper body.

Joan draws aside. With her free hand, she gropes for and flicks the main light switch:

A greenish neon light illuminates Little Man's WET FACE.

Little Man adjusts to the light and quickly grabs Joan by the shoulder... raises the knife...

Just as Joan, fuelled by a last shot of adrenaline, stabs the bottleneck into the Little Man's neck, groaning.

Blood streams out of the wound.

Little Man drops the knife and lifts his hand to his gushing wound. His face is contorted, his breathing laboured - until it's an agonized GURGLING sound.

He folds into Joan's arms. She can hardly hold him. Gazes at him in disbelief.

Blood bubbles out of his wound. He is stiff. Dead.

Joan pushes him away and gets to her feet. Panicking, she rushes to the door, grabbing her belongings: the briefcase, the fur hat, the X-ray envelope. She looks down at her left arm. The sleeve is soaked with blood. She finds a towel and sloppily bandages the wound. She throws on her coat, runs out.

Next to the Little Man's corpse: Alina's student record book, covered in blood.

101 EXT. WARSAW SKY - NIGHT

SUPER: Warsaw: Tuesday, December 15, 1981, 00:50

Top angle. Joan runs out of the dorm. Military vehicles nearby.

CROW'S POV - We hear the SOUND of flapping wings, as we see Warsaw from above: Dark streets, from time to time a faint light.

The city's arteries, the main roads, are lifeless. Some of them are blocked by tanks at strategic points. We fly across the deserted and dark old town towards a bridge that comes closer - and shifts into a lopsided perspective.

The river below is an inky black, white ice floes float by.

102 OMITTED

103

EXT. STREETS OF WARSAW/SASKI GARDEN/HOTEL VICTORIA - NIGHT

Joan stumbles, but keeps running. Her open coat flapping like the wings of a bird. On the street, ahead of her, an armada of armored vans - Joan turns..

And is now rushing through the snowy Saski Garden. Through the trees we can see fires by which soldiers gather to keep warm. It's a surreal sight.

In front of her, the "Victoria", a modern luxury hotel for foreign visitors. Joan approaches the building, looking around. In the tastefully-lit lobby, she sees groups of men. They are talking animatedly, some of them laugh - the sound doesn't penetrate the thick glass.

Joan strides up to the grand entrance - only to be halted by a well-built DOORMAN, in a grotesque uniform.

He eyes Joan - who has blood on her face - with contempt: just another bum who got beaten up by her drinking buddies.

DOORMAN

Out!

JOAN

Please - let me in! I'm a British citizen. I need to get to the Embassy!

The doorman stares at Joan, scanning her torn clothes.

JOAN (CONT'D)

I was attacked. I'm injured!

DOORMAN

(barking)

Passport!

Joan has no answer. How can she explain that Alina has it?

JOAN

(hysterically)

Ambassada, please!

Nervously, the doorman looks down the street where a van of the militia is parked. TWO MILITIA OFFICERS are getting out, alerted by the raised voices?

The doorman grabs Joan by the elbow and pushes her from the carpet, so she is out of their sight.

DOORMAN

(hisses at her)

*Go back to where you came from or I
call the militia. MI-LI-TI-A!*

Joan has not noticed that someone is watching her from the lobby. A lady who was among the group of men - travellers who got stuck in Warsaw: Beata. She sees Joan staggering away.

On her last legs, Joan lets herself sink into the snow-covered bushes behind the hotel. She takes a few breaths, then crawls into the bushes like a wounded animal.

Through the branches, she sees a hunched OLD LADY approaches the soldiers around the burning drum. She is carrying a thermos and three cups. She pours them hot tea. Steam rises from the cups. The soldiers drink, grateful. Cook sausages on the fire.

PHANTOM VOICE (O.S.)

It's past the curfew, grandma!

OLD LADY

*I'm not scared of anything,
gentlemen. I survived the Uprising.*

In the bushes, Joan squints - and loses consciousness.

104 EXT. SATELLITE TOWN - PLAZA - JOAN'S DREAM

Alina is running through the satellite town.

A flock of crows sits on a young man's naked body, lying in the snow. It is Marek. The crows are pecking at him.

As JOAN runs to him, we hear an old woman SINGING.

OLD WOMAN (V.O.)

*Get away, away, birdies. The head's
been bitten. Get away, away from
his pale little body...*

Alina tries to scare off the crows, but they attack her.

Alina runs, followed by the flock of crows.

105 INT. GUEST ROOM/BRITISH EMBASSY - DAY

Joan awakens in a bed.

It takes a moment for her vision to adjust. She finds herself in an elegant room with dark furniture and an armchair with a shiny turquoise chintz covering. On a coffee table stands a vase with a voluptuous bouquet of WHITE LILIES.

Joan's gaze pans along the ornate wallpaper, displaying an exotic and colorful pattern of birds and trees. It stops at a FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH of Queen Elizabeth. First time Joan is pleased to see that face.

Irritated, she turns to the window. The half-drawn curtains give only a hint of the world outside. It is grey, just like London.

At a valet stand in the corner, Joan sees her coat and the chapka, the briefcase and her brogues - neatly polished, dry.

A burly MALE NURSE (35) enters the room with a tray.

NURSE
(with a Scottish accent)
You're up. How are we?

He sets the tray on her night stand and helps Joan to lift herself up to a sitting position.

NURSE (CONT'D)
Just getting you comfortable.

Joan swings her legs out and is surprised to find she's wearing claret-red silk pajamas.

NURSE (CONT'D)
There you go. Mind that arm.

Joan sees her left upper arm is bandaged under the sleeve.

NURSE (CONT'D)
I brought you a few wee painkillers
- you should see a doctor next week
to get those stitches out.

JOAN
Where am I?

NURSE
Safe. Eat up.

The nurse pushes the movable night stand in front of her and leaves.

On the tray: Scrambled eggs with strips of glistening bacon. A pot of steaming tea and a bottle of pills.

Joan devours the food. After a few bites, a strip of bacon drops on her leg. She picks it up with her fingers leaving a greasy stain. She chews on the bacon and looks down on the stain. Gagging, she pushes the plate away.

She pushes herself up and shuffles to the washing basin. She glances at her ashen face, then quickly looks down. She washes her hands.

Joan looks at herself in the mirror again - and finds Beata's smiling reflection next to her.

BEATA
Sleep well?

JOAN
(thrown)
What is this place? What's going on?

BEATA
You're in the Embassy. Next stop home.

Beata opens a drawer in the dresser and takes out a cigarette case and lighter. She lights one for herself, then bends down to a duffle bag and takes out a crumpled sweater.

BEATA (CONT'D)
Yours?

Joan winces at the memory and turns away.

BEATA (CONT'D)
It was found in the university halls of residence. Room 909.

Joan stays silent, masking terror.

BEATA (CONT'D)
(softly)
You realize he is, was, an officer of the Polish SB? Fortunately, one of his informers also works for us. Otherwise, you might have woken up somewhere less comfortable.

Beata throws the sweater on the armchair.

BEATA (CONT'D)
What did he want from you?

Joan sits down on the bed, numb.

JOAN

I don't know.

Beata opens the wardrobe. Garments in different sizes and various "British" styles - like a rack for extras in a spy movie. She browses through them, glances at Joan, and selects a dark blue ensemble, jacket, pencil skirt and high necked-blouse. She lays the clothes on the bed.

BEATA

Try this.

(beat)

Don't worry, they found the girl's ID there - Alina Wachowiak. She's the main suspect now.

(brings over her brogues)

I'll debrief you fully before you leave. It'll be the last time you talk about it to anybody.

JOAN

When do I leave?

BEATA

Tonight. On a diplomatic carrier. It's the only flight out of here.

She hands her the ticket, opens a drawer and takes out a little plastic case that contains underwear, tights and a toothbrush. An agent's travel kit. She places it on the bed.

JOAN

Who are you?

BEATA

The person who got rid of your problem.

(beat)

Because we can't afford you to become our problem. I'll leave you to get dressed.

Joan stares at the wall - caught in an inner struggle.

JOAN

Alina - what'll happen?

BEATA

(indifferent)

Let's just worry about getting you out of here, shall we.

She walks to the door, turns around.

BEATA (CONT'D)

Oh, the ambassador wants to see you, once the paperwork's done. Don't bother him with details. His job is to know as little as possible... I've dealt with enough amateurs for one day.

She leaves.

Joan waits until the door is closed, then very gingerly unbuttons her pajama shirt. She takes a roll of bandages from the side table and awkwardly starts to bandage her chest with her one good hand. There are bruises on her left arm.

106 OMITTED

107 INT. AMBASSADOR'S SALON - CONTINUOUS

A valet opens the door and the AMBASSADOR enters the salon. A tall man in his 70's, upright posture, a book in his left hand.

AMBASSADOR

Professor Andrews...

Joan turns round from a book shelf. She's in that austere blue ensemble and her face is haggard. It's quite a shock to the AMBASSADOR. But he masks it well.

AMBASSADOR (CONT'D)

A pleasure to meet you. I only wish the circumstances were different, but there you go. How are you? I heard you had a rather nasty fall. Nothing too serious I hope?

JOAN

I'll live.

AMBASSADOR

Please.

He invites Joan to sit, and places the book on the table.

It's by Joan. THE UNKNOWN TERRITORY: DREAMS.

The table is lit by a transparent globe lamp with an elegant lamp stand, made of brass. It diffuses a warm, multi-colored light.

The valet serves tea.

Joan takes in the large abstract painting on the wall. Two black dots in the centre seem like eyes focusing on her.

AMBASSADOR (CONT'D)

Remarkable, isn't it? A Polish painter. Graphic art's quite the thing here. It seems the dreadful living conditions have fired their imaginations. Not easy to get the colours these days.

Behind the ambassador is a large bay window. Joan sees the avenue outside and the TANK that blocks it.

AMBASSADOR (CONT'D)

I heard about that business at the conference. Terrible shame. Things here have become rather heated, of late. Always best to check with us, before you accept an invitation.

Still staring outside, Joan tightens the grip around her briefcase. Mind elsewhere.

The ambassador takes the book from the table and glances at Joan's portrait on the jacket. She looks like another woman - from another era. He produces a pen, requests -

AMBASSADOR (CONT'D)

Would you mind? My wife is a huge admirer. She's in Paris, Christmas shopping. She'll be so disappointed to have missed you.

JOAN

(suddenly very present)
If you had the choice, would you take the carp dead or alive?

AMBASSADOR

I'm sorry?

JOAN

They sell carp in the streets. People stand in line for it.

AMBASSADOR

Yes, it's one of the few things we have in common, the love of a good queue.

(his quip falls flat)

(MORE)

AMBASSADOR (CONT'D)

Carp is a traditional Christmas dish here. I must say, I am quite squeamish. I'd prefer it dead.

JOAN

(pensive)

It's definitely more convenient. I would have preferred it dead, too. Better the lady behind the counter swinging the axe than clubbing it to death in your own bathtub.

(beat)

It's harder than you think...

Joan opens her briefcase and pulls out the brown X-ray envelope from which she takes out a stack of Polaroids. A beat, then the Ambassador stands, wondering where this is going?

AMBASSADOR

Scotch?

He goes to the trolley table and pours them two glasses.

Joan displays the picture of the CARP IN THE BATHTUB on the table.

JOAN

It's amazing... they only need a puddle of water to survive.

The ambassador raises his glass.

JOAN (CONT'D)

So you think it's less cruel to have the carp killed right away?

The ambassador sips, trying to read her.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Interesting. What if the person who buys the carp doesn't make it home, because he dies on the way? What if somebody saves the carp and throws it back into a pond? What if the guy who buys the carp makes it home, keeps the carp alive, only to bottle out of killing it? There's a slight chance that this carp could survive, no?

AMBASSADOR

If I'm following you right, you're suggesting the carp could've lived longer?

Joan takes three pictures from her stack and displays them on the coffee table:

- the first picture shows MAREK AND JAN JOKING AT THE PARTY.
- the second: MAREK IN THE MORGUE.
- the third: THE LITTLE MAN PUSHING MAREK OUT OF THE WINDOW.

With a stony face the ambassador takes in the pictures.

Then he takes the cable of the globe lamp, groping for the light switch, hesitates.

ANGLE: His FINGER ON THE SWITCH - as he turns off the light.

108 INT. BRITISH EMBASSY - OFFICE NEXT DOOR - SAME TIME

A young MALE SECRETARY transcribes the conversation, a bit too slowly, the last words being "SURVIVE, NO?..."

An impatient Beata steps up and inspects the RADIO on the desk. She turns it off, then on again. Nothing. Someone's deliberately cut the transmission.

BEATA

Fuck diplomatic immunity.

Furiously stubs out her cigarette.

109 INT. BRITISH EMBASSY - AMBASSADOR'S SALON - CONTINUOUS

Joan and the ambassador sit in their armchairs in the semi-darkness. The ambassador hands the pictures back to Joan.

AMBASSADOR

Who was he?

JOAN

Killer or the victim?

AMBASSADOR

The victim.

JOAN

His name's Marek. He was a boy, 19.
Loved art, just like you.

(MORE)

JOAN (CONT'D)

Believed imagination could defeat communism. He was one of the protestors who ambushed my lecture.

AMBASSADOR

(fishing)

Who were the others?

JOAN

I think you probably know that. Is there anything you can do for her?

AMBASSADOR

In theory. She could walk into this embassy and demand asylum. Getting her out of the country's the hard part. God knows how long they'll persist with Martial Law - even our service was surprised by that. Of course, we'd all seen it coming, but not before Christmas!

(drains his Scotch)

Not that it would've made a blind bit of difference if we had known it.

He pours himself another drink. Joan hasn't touched hers.

AMBASSADOR (CONT'D)

The last twelve months have been like watching the bloody Titanic heading towards the iceberg. The euphoria, the wind of change, you could feel it. But it was all for nothing. They won't win. Nobody, not even us, the good guys, wants them to.

JOAN

I don't understand...

The ambassador turns the globe and points his finger to three little spots: HUNGARY, POLISH PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC and the CSSR.

AMBASSADOR

Budapest 56, Prague 68, and now Warsaw? What do you think the Soviets will do if the Polish actually succeed and overthrow their government? And what about our actor friend in the White House? One can only imagine how he'd react to that.

(MORE)

AMBASSADOR (CONT'D)

Maybe one day they'll drop the bomb
and be done with it, start a whole
new game of chess.

The ambassador pushes the globe, so that it starts to circle
like a spinning top.

Joan stops it with one hand.

JOAN

This is madness.

AMBASSADOR

Or, in other words, our policy of
"mutually assured destruction"...
(nodding to the envelope)
What are you planning to do with
them?

Joan doesn't answer, but looks the Ambassador square in the
eye.

AMBASSADOR (CONT'D)

You don't think a couple of photos
can change the world, do you?

Joan gets up.

The Ambassador switches the light of the globe lamp on.

He pushes the book to Joan and hands her a pen, who signs on
the first page.

AMBASSADOR (CONT'D)

Thank you. I particularly liked the
chapter on how dreams can help one
make the right decisions.

(checking his watch)

Your flight is at 6.30. You're all
set with your temporary passport. I
wouldn't advise you to leave the
building, too dangerous.

They shake hands.

AMBASSADOR (CONT'D)

(looking at her)

We'd love to have you back...

110 INT. BRITISH EMBASSY - OFFICE NEXT DOOR - SAME TIME

Beata comes back into the room, leans at the desk, chewing on a pencil. The male secretary is typing the ambassador's last line.

AMBASSADOR (V.O.)
And do bring your friend, next
time.

Beata throws the pencil on the desk. Rushes out.

111 OMITTED

111A EXT. eMBASSY - DAY

Beata exits the embassy in a hurry. Turns right towards the big boulevard longing the park. Soldiers and "Skots" stand in front of the embassy. She turns back towards the town center.

112 EXT. 4-LANE BOULEVARD - TOWN CENTER - DAY (NOON)

The boulevard's sidewalk is filled with PEDESTRIANS. For the first time in three days, people are back on the streets and the sun's out, bathing everything in a cold pale blue light.

Among this swarm of faces - Joan, clutching her BRIEFCASE. With the chapka on her head she looks like a local.

Joan's POV - an ordinary December day - except for the countless BULLETINS glued to the lamp poles and except for the fact that all the pedestrians walk by, their heads bent.

Everybody except for Joan and - a few metres behind her - Beata.

She stretches her neck, scanning the crowd. Most of the women wear woollen hats or chapkas.

TRACKING TO ONE SIDE we see the crowded sidewalk, the 4-lane boulevard, in the middle of which are the tram tracks.

A RATTLING SOUND and a tram comes into the screen.

BEATA'S POV - A SWARM OF PEDESTRIANS cross the street to reach the tram. Among them: Joan.

113 EXT./INT. TRAMWAY STOP & TRAMWAY - CONTINUOUS

At the tram stop Joan suddenly runs to the front door and squeezes herself into the tram.

Behind her, Beata is blocked by a group of NUNS.

Beata curses and only makes it to the back door. She jumps in, scans all the passengers while trying to move forward... but the tram is too full.

Beata gets some hostile looks before she spots Joan's chapka just a few heads in front of her...

The tram starts to roll very slowly.

Beata is being pushed to a steamed up WINDOW by the bodies behind her...

Beata's POV - Joan, standing outside, next to the group of nuns. She smiles at Beata. Good day.

Beata swears like a sailor. Passengers around her burst out laughing, realising she's been fooled.

114 OMITTED

115 OMITTED

116 OMITTED

117 EXT. HENRYK'S CAR WORKSHOP - LATER (AFTERNOON)

Joan urgently knocks at the garage door.

JOAN
Henryk! Alina?

The door is torn open by Jan.

JAN
They're not here.

118 INT. HENRYK'S CAR WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

Messy. Cluttered.

Joan notes the changed appearance.

In one corner lies a pile of boiler suits. Next to it some wire hangers. In another corner: Alina's purse, shoes and clothes.

Jan follows her gaze.

JAN

What do you think they were doing?
(droll)
Hopefully not building a bomb.

JOAN

You need to stop her, Jan. It won't change a thing! She should hide, or leave -

JAN

She wont listen...

Jan points to the rubbish bin.

Joan peeks inside: a bunch of clipped red wires and some broken car antennas. She takes an antenna, examines it.

119

INT. APARTMENT BLOCK/GROJECKA STREET - ELEVATOR - SAME TIME

ANGLE: A silver fish hook, dangling on a rod.

Alina and Henryk in the elevator, both wearing their fishing gear and carrying rods. Alina's face is almost hidden by an oversized flat cap.

She presses the button for the 12th floor. They go up.

The elevator stops on the 4th floor. A soldier, wearing the uniform of the COMMANDING OFFICER steps in. He greets them with a nod and presses the button for the 11th floor.

With the elevator door slowly closing we see the officer head-on: a handsome man in his 30's, lost in his thoughts.

Behind him: Alina and Henryk are scared stiff.

ANGLE: the display panel shows the 7th floor...

COMMANDING OFFICER (O.S.)

(without turning)

How many did you catch today?

HENRYK (O.S.)

Zero.

ANGLE: the display panel shows the 8th floor...

HENRYK (CONT'D)

*Don't tell my wife I was freezing
my arse off just around the block,
standing in line for the carp.*

COMMANDING OFFICER

How would I recognize your wife?

HENRYK

*She's the one waiting at the door,
pan in hand.*

ANGLE: the commanding officer's face, as he laughs out loud.

Behind him: Henryk grins, satisfied with his punch line. Alina closes her eyes. As she opens them, the commanding officer looks straight at her with a disarming smile.

COMMANDING OFFICER

Sorry, we forgot our manners.

(to Henryk)

*It's a sad affair: my wife hates
fish and I am not a hunter.*

ANGLE: the display panel shows we're on the eleventh floor.

COMMANDING OFFICER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Good luck with your next catch.

120

INT. HENRYK'S CAR WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

Joan stands at the work bench, observing Jan.

JAN

*Alina took pictures with your
camera - give them to me, I can
keep her out of trouble.*

JOAN

*You think a couple of photos can
change the world? You're just as
romantic as Marek. Oh by the way,
Happy Anniversary.*

Jan looks at Joan, as if she was out of her mind.

JOAN (CONT'D)

*One year today, isn't it? Or was
that just another lie?*

Joan offers an Embassy Gold cigarette to Jan. He smells it, patting his pockets for matches.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Good right? Once you've tried the real thing you can't go back.

She finds a lighter on the work bench. Lights his cigarette first, then hers.

JOAN (CONT'D)

The photos - what's in it for you?

JAN

Freedom. A travel permit. Maybe a scholarship in England.

JOAN

I understand.

JAN

Do you? The work I do might change the world. It's not about numbers, it's about codes, algorithms...

JOAN

(echoing him)

A solution to every problem?

121 INT. APARTMENT BLOCK/GROJECKA STR - 12TH FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

At the far end of a dimly-lit corridor, Alina leans against the wall holding the two fishing rods.

As we move closer, we see Henryk, behind her back, crouched in front of a door. He inserts a piece of wire into the key hole. Turns it, slowly.

Nervously, Alina keeps an eye on the corridor.

122 EXT. ROOFTOP - GROJECKA STREET - DUSK

Henryk's HAND pushes open a roof hatch and we see CLOUDS and a piece of sky.

Henryk stands on an iron ladder. He bends down to Alina. She hands him the fishing rods and the backpack. Henryk throws the stuff on the rooftop - it SLIDES on the icy surface.

123 INT. HENRYK'S CAR WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

Jan and Joan, leaning on the workbench, smoking.

JAN

My professor introduced me to a government agency. They were looking for someone who could program a computer to process all the data they had gathered in the last census: How many students graduated, how many of them are male... You pressed "enter" and were able to filter information and connect the dots...

JOAN

So you're helping install a new program to...

JAN

Register citizens, categorise them, filter out potentially suspicious ones. Just hit "enter" and you can filter and connect the dots.

(bitter)

I didn't think they would use it this way!

JOAN

(cutting)

'Course you didn't.

JAN

When they started these black-lists, I erased all the names I knew. First in Warsaw. Then in my hometown... But then there are all the others. I have to go. I don't want to be their pawn.

JOAN

What about Alina?

Jan stubs out his cigarette. He looks at Joan.

JAN

If you want to help - save her from herself.

124

INT. APARTMENT BLOCK - GROJECKA STR - 11TH FLOOR - SAME TIME

The Commanding officer steps out of an apartment. A FAT WOMAN in a bathrobe closes the door after him. The Commanding Officer carries a chain of sausages, wrapped in a newspaper.

He walks down the hallway to the elevator. A CLANGING SOUND in the distance. Curious, he walks in the direction of the clanging.

The door to the staircase is open. He climbs the stairs -

125 INT. APARTMENT BLOCK - GROJECKA STR - 12TH FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Commanding officer's POV - at the end of the corridor: the folded out ladder that leads to the roof top. The ladder is RATTLING in the wind.

126 EXT. ROOFTOP - GROJECKA STREET - DUSK

Henryk clings to the tall antenna mast, one metre above the ground. The wind is blasting in his face. A group of crows stoically sits on the mast, above him.

Henryk stretches out his hand. Alina hands him a car antenna. Henryk twists the antenna - and it lengthens double-size like a telescope. With a wire he connects it with the top of the fishing rod.

Alina's POV - Henryk connects their self-made antenna to the antenna mast. As she looks down we see the source of the now impressive construction: a small radio transmitter, connected to a transistor record player.

Alina plugs a portable microphone into the record player. The pirate transmitter is ready.

127 INT. APARTMENT BLOCK - GROJECKA STR - 12TH FLOOR - SAME TIME

Commanding officer's POV - he stands directly under the roof hatch, that's open just an inch. Stowing the sausages inside his coat, he climbs the ladder, and closes the hatch.

He folds the ladder, turns on his heel and walks back, whistling.

Out of the corner of his eye, he notices a tiny silver object glittering on the floor.

128 INT. HENRYK'S CAR WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

Jan's POV - Joan's fingers nervously stubbing out her cigarette.

Joan is thinking. Jan observes her, tense. Time is up.

Joan opens the briefcase and hands Jan the brown X-ray envelope.

Jan opens it, glances at the first picture of MAREK IN THE MORGUE. He stiffens, and has to steady himself at the work bench. Quickly tucks the envelope in his coat pocket.

He staggers to the door, visibly shaken, only to turn.

JAN

You did the right thing, Professor.

A beat.

Joan goes to the large blackboard on the wall of the garage, where all the orders are listed.

She takes the chalk, thinks.

129

EXT. ROOFTOP - GROJECKA STREET - DUSK

Henryk jumps off the antenna mast with a thumbs up gesture.

Alina's switches on the microphone with trembling fingers.

ALINA

(into the mic)

Good afternoon, Warsaw. This is the first uncensored broadcast under Martial Law.

We slowly move away from Alina who stands in the middle of the vast rooftop. We pass Henryk who lights a cigarette - his part of the job is done. Almost. He takes off his watch - a MECHANICAL WATCH by Slava - and sets the stopwatch.

ALINA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

To anyone listening in the inner district. If you receive this signal, please switch the light off for a second in two minutes, at
(checking her watch)
15.45.

Henryk starts the stopwatch. We hear the SOUND of the seconds hand ticking. Stay on Alina and Henryk, standing on the rooftop, facing the navy blue sky... until the ticking abruptly STOPS.

ALINA'S & HENRYK'S POV - In the apartment block opposite them half the lights are switched off and on.

ALINA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

For the past 36 hours we have been living under martial law. I am a different person on Tuesday than I was on Saturday...

130 EXT. WARSAW STREETS - SAME TIME

SERIES OF SHOTS

- Joan walks down the street. And there, all of a sudden, a cab drives by, as if this was Soho! Joan stops it, gets in on the back seat. She takes out the last two packs of Embassy Golds from her briefcase - that should do for the fare.

JOAN

Airport!

The cab drives off.

131 EXT./INT. MILITARY VAN - GROJECKA STREET - SAME TIME

Five soldiers hanging around the military van, parked in front of the building. The youngest soldier is scanning the front entrance.

The DRIVER opens the door and sticks his head out.

DRIVER

Listen to this!

He turns the volume of the car radio louder.

ALINA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

... He was thrown from a window. I don't know how many of your friends and neighbors have been arrested. We don't know where they were taken to. But, if we all ask these questions, they will have to give us answers...

132 INT. CAB - SAME TIME

Joan in the backseat of the cab. Worn out and defeated. She holds the battered briefcase in her lap with both hands.

ALINA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

We are in a state of shock. This is how the "crow" wants us to be. Easy to scare, easy to control...

Joan's POV - Driving through the dusk on another bleak 4-lane boulevard lined with grey, utilitarian apartment blocks.

Joan is suddenly struck by the voice talking on the radio. It sounds familiar...

ALINA (V.O.)
Let's not make it easy for them...

JOAN
(to the cab driver)
Turn this up. Louder.

The driver doesn't react, too absorbed by Alina's speech.

Impatient Joan leans forward, and turns the volume up.

133 EXT. ROOFTOP - GROJECKA STREET - SAME TIME

Alina's POV - Henryk points to his watch, hurrying her -

ALINA (V.O.)
They have tanks, but we have radios...

134 EXT. MILITARY VAN - GROJECKA STREET - SAME TIME

The soldiers hastily salute, as the Commanding officer approaches the door of the van and listens to...

ALINA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...They can block roads, but they can't stop us from thinking. They can't control our minds. We're too many. And we're all different. They think we're asleep, but we're wide awake.

The Commanding Officer freezes as he mentally replays the moment in the corridor from a few minutes ago.

Cursing, he looks up at the roof top.

135 INT. CAB - DUSK

Joan's POV through the window - as darkness falls, the dead apartment blocks suddenly come alive in a changing pattern of lights from the windows - the buildings seem to pulsate!

A hallucination?

Doubting her sanity, Joan bends her head for a better view - and catches a glimpse of the cab driver's face: he's totally puzzled as well. Intuitively, the driver hits the brakes and with this the...

IMAGES SLOW DOWN

136 EXT. 4-LANE BOULEVARD - MOMENTS LATER

...AS WE STAND in the middle of the deserted 4-lane boulevard next to the cab (doors open) with Joan and the driver, both spellbound by the spectacle of the lights being switched on and off.

JOAN
(whispering)
You were right, Evelyn. Buildings
can talk. A coded message...

After a moment of silence the radio transmission continues with a CRACKING NOISE...

ALINA (V.O.) CONT'D
(very calm)
*I want you to lie down, now. If you
sit, choose a comfortable position.
Imagine a place where you feel safe
and free at the same time: a beach
under a night sky full of stars -
or a meadow in the early morning.*

137 EXT. ROOFTOP - GROJECKA STREET - SAME TIME

The five soldiers, led by the Commanding officer, storm the roof top, and approach the antenna mast, weapons raised...

ALINA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
(hypnotically)
*Smell the morning dew. When you're
ready, close your eyes...*

Disturbed by the invasion, the crows soar up from the mast and rise in an almost symmetrical swarm.

ALINA (V.O.)
... Release all tension...

The soldiers, fingers on triggers, form a closed circle... around the tiny record player that is still linked to the transmitter and the big antenna.

CLOSE: the wheels of the tape inside turning.

INSERT: The handwritten tape label says "Meditation 101"
(Alina's self-recorded tape).

138 INT. HENRYK'S CAR WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Exhausted, but euphoric, Henryk and Alina enter the garage.

When Henryk turns on the light, Alina sees Joan's MESSAGE on the blackboard: "CROW DREAM CAME TRUE. RUN!"

139 INT. POLISH SECRET SERVICE HQ/OFFICE - SAME TIME

Jan is standing next to two SB agents and the Chief officer, who tears the brown X-RAY envelope open. He takes a pair of gloves from his drawer - revealing a row of Vodka bottles underneath - puts them on and takes out a stack of Polaroids.

The first picture shows Marek's body in the morgue.

Impatiently, he spreads all the pictures on his desk.

- TWO MEN FIGHTING OVER A SLEEPING BAG.

- CLOSE-UP SELFIE OF JOAN WITH HER AIRPLANE TICKET.

- A SHAKY PALACE OF CULTURE.

The Chief officer, furious walks up to Jan and slaps him hard. Another picks up the receiver and hands it to the chief officer. (REWRITE Jan laughs)

CHIEF OFFICER
Stop her at the border.

He swipes the photos from the desk.

CLOSE UP on the photo of the CARP SWIMMING IN A BATH TUB.

140 INT. WARSAW AIRPORT - ARRIVALS & DEPARTURE HALL - NIGHT

Joan makes her way towards the passport booth. The airport is empty, with heavy military presence. Beata catches up with her. Joan stops.

BEATA
The ambassador sends his regards.
There's something we need - your
holiday snaps. We can't have them
crossing the border...

JOAN

Already handed them over to your
Polish colleagues.

BEATA

That was wise. You're a fast
learner, Professor.

BEATA hands Joan her new passport and watches her as she
crosses the passport control.

141 INT. HENRYK'S APARTMENT - SAME TIME

ANGLE: Two feet in slippers sneak into the apartment. It's
Henryk, rubber boots in his hands.

HUSHED VOICES from the kitchen, where...

He finds half a dozen NEIGHBORS around his table. The radio
is still playing Gordon Lightfoot's SONG.

Krystyna is serving cherry liquor. Somebody brought a smoked
ham from the countryside. Everybody is talking and eating.

MALE NEIGHBOR

*World falls apart, Henryk Bugaj is
gone fishing.*

FEMALE NEIGHBOR

(to Henryk)

*You won't believe what you just
missed. Have you seen the lights?*

Henryk feigns ignorance, takes a slice of ham and steps onto
the balcony.

Krystyna looks at him, sensing he knows more than he lets on?

142 INT. WARSAW AIRPORT - ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES HALL

Joan walks fast past the arrival area. With a loud JOLT, the
baggage carousel starts to roll nearby.

Joan walks up to the baggage carousel, where a single
suitcase is slowly circling around.

It's Joan's. She shakes her head at the absurdity and grabs
her suitcase.

143 EXT. HENRYK'S BALCONY - NIGHT

Henryk lights an Embassy Gold and smokes, smiling to himself.
In his view: the Palace of Culture.

144 INT. PLANE WARSAW - SAME TIME

Joan closes the door to the toilet, unbuttons her blouse. Her chest is bandaged like an Egyptian mummy.

She unravels the bandage and we see that she has all the other Polaroids taped to her chest with band aid.

She takes them one by one off her chest. She looks at the incriminating picture - the one she had shown to the ambassador.

CLOSE: Little Man pushing Marek out of the window

CLOSE: Marek's face in the snow coffin.

CLOSE: A pair of green eyes: Alina's.

145 INT. HENRYK'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - SAME TIME

The same carp swims gaily in circles, snapping for crumbs that Henryk's daughters are throwing him with sad faces.

146 INT. PLANE - LATER

Joan takes her seat. A handful of PASSENGERS on the plane. They have reached cruising altitude. The stewardess is serving drinks.

Joan sits in the last row, staring out of the window: below, tiny lights of a distant city.

147 INT. PSYCHIATRIC CLINIC WARSAW - SAME TIME

Jakub, the psychiatrist from the Conference, hands us a white hospital gown with his butcher's hands.

JAKUB

*We will keep you here as long as
you want.*

Jakub turns on his heel and now we face Alina, her hair cut very short in the middle of a white-tiled cell.

Next to her, on hospital cots are other FEMALE PATIENTS of the closed ward. ONE WOMAN is tied to her cot with leather straps. ANOTHER WOMAN knocks her head against the wall in a steady rhythm.

Alina presses something to her chest. A book.

From the book's cover Joan smiles at us, enigmatically.

ALINA

Just don't forget me in here, OK?

Jakub closes the door. It locks with a CLANGING sound like the lid of a coffin.

Jakub takes out the door knob and walks down the hallway.

We hear the GUITAR RIFFS of David Bowie's "Afraid" as we

CUT TO:

148 INT. PLANE - SAME TIME

Joan in her seat, is gripping the armrest.

Her eyes are closed.

Her eyelids tremble.

Suddenly her face breaks into an enigmatic smile.

JOAN

(opening her eyes)

I hear you...

THE END

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