

**WE'LL  
WEEP  
FROM  
BEYOND  
THE  
GRAVE**

**by PIOTR SIWECKI**

*translated by Marek Kazmierski*

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- For God's sake... let's finish... enough for now?... - thought the man with short hair and glasses.

- We need many more flowers to be walking beautifully... - thought the woman in a black biker jacket, skinny black jeans and black suede boots. This is not her favourite outfit... today, though, this is the only thing she could wear... leather jacket, black underwear, black jeans, black boots... only in this outfit - this is what she felt, feels and will feel... only in this outfit does she feel today enough appropriate distance to that which has happened.... in thought, speech, deed and dereliction...

Leaning across the passenger seat, she opened the door of her black Toyota for the man.

At first he sat with his back to her.

He likes aniseed sweets...

He likes re-heated cheese dumplings...

He likes meatballs in mustard sauce...

He likes to cook and eat alone...

He likes to fall asleep in his armchair, book in lap, any lazy Sunday afternoon...

He likes this immanent, difficult freedom, which he can't seem to express in some anecdotal form, because... in fact, he does try to avoid that which is around him... his mother always lectured him about minding his own business, never others', and that he mustn't gossip...

He doesn't like...

He likes his woollen sweater with its hip-height pockets, the one with the big, wooden buttons, the one mother knitted for father one summer, ages, ages ago, on some holiday, holed up in a cottage in the woods and...

He knocked his shoes together a few times, slid his feet, shod in soft, suede brown shoes, inside the car, then turned to face the dashboard.

He fastened his seatbelt.

He angled his knees to the right, towards the door, so as not to get in the way of the gear stick.

She looked at him in a way he would not notice.

She likes stealing such glances.

She knows he still hasn't realised she often looks at him this way...

He...

Sometimes, he wants to tell her that the flat they share wasn't inherited from his grandmother, rather his grandmother's fiancé, the director of some gas processing plant, way back in the days of darkest communism... he sometimes wants to tell her that his grandmother's lover had perished in the Miednoje massacre... maybe one day I'll tell you that my grandfather's sister was one of the children they experimented on in Auschwitz... maybe one day I'll feel like telling you that my father's mother was a nurse in the Warsaw Uprising... maybe... maybe one day I will want to tell you about the uncle who painted Orthodox icons, in the old way, on wooden slates... one day, I will tell you all this, because one should not keep

this much shut up inside...

If she had glanced at him then, she would have seen eyes filled with granite tears.

In each such tear an asphalt-lined playground, where no kids swing from the old car tyres suspended there - only a grey wind whipping across the courtyard, the smell of dried out leaves the colour of faded beige... on each leaf, as if perched on a flying carpet, a Memling the size of a pin head and on its shoulders, on the head of each Memling, a hundred demons - naked teenagers with the faces of forty year old women, each womb heavy with the flesh of a foetus, the skin on each belly perfectly transparent...

In each granite tear, in the centre of the playground, a concrete ring, a sandpit set within, a low cherry tree emerging from its centre - though it flowers each year, the tree bears no fruit...

- OK... now... you can talk... now you can... now finally you are like a child... - she thought.

They tore his words from her womb... yet perhaps these were not his words? ... he thinks it's possible, but... not a word should be said about this... to no one...

It only lasted a moment and...

One should talk as much about this, as much as necessary, but perhaps not in the way that's necessary?

To fall silent?

To scream?

Blame?

What if they have no opinions, or abandoned theirs in the cause of absolute freedom, freedom from possessing opinions?

Perhaps everything they do is motivated by fear?

Fear...

No one is to blame? ...

Thought, speech, deed and despondency...

Perhaps it is worth noting that once upon a time he tried hard to be overcome by the theories of Hannah Arendt...

Perhaps it should be said that, ever increasing frequency, he feels it when people look at him, when they address him, feels that they are only waiting for him to say, to do something which will confirm their suspicions, their belief that he should not be working as a school teacher... after all, the majority of his colleagues are women... this in itself marks him out as suspect...

If it weren't for what's already happened, if he had not agreed to that which is done... if not for her, for them both... if not for the fact that they want to live like this, that in a year their child could have cried in the evenings, when sleep refused to come, and they would only have wanted to rest, to grab a beer, grilled sandwiches and slump in front of some soap opera, which even she would have grown to like, seeing herself in it, finally, seeing in it more of the reality missing from her life, which, for reasons unclear to her, more and more often, and not

only in dreams, she finds herself watching as if it were a reel wound backwards, a film about a walk across a cemetery on a sunny, spring day, a day of few visitors to graves which look like playing blocks scattered across the floor... for the child to finally go to sleep, one of them would have had to go and sleep in the child's room...

But hush now... no more words...

We touch the moving wall and...

No need to speak, though not so as to make out that we hate people like that, no, we adore them, or maybe just respect their decisions?

No need to speak, if for no reason other than to make out that women such as she are as necessary as those who would never, ever, do what she has done?

No need to speak... is it not time for a different set of rules?

Barbed wire, strung tight, electricity coursing through it and...

She had wanted it to happen...

She had wanted him to stay inside her that night, since she'd decided that he would be the first, out the three of them, the three she had tried to live with in those few years, now gone... yes, the first to be allowed to stay in to the end and without any precautions and she wanted him to be there when it happened, when they came to tear his words from her... she wanted to try it... wanted in this way to experience her own body, a body which, as her mother often joked, is so terribly beautiful that one either wants to whip it 'till welts showed or stand her, naked, in an open window, so that everyone could see what it really means to be this beautiful...

This is how she had wanted to pray for this world, a world in which she can't, or rather shouldn't, become a mother? ...

Or maybe, if she had given birth, instead of leaving the child behind in hospital, like her friend and... maybe if she had given birth and raised it... maybe this would have been a better punishment... or perhaps the best atonement would have been to adopt?

She was thinking this... considering options... but maybe another time... if this prayer is not enough... if this punishment is not enough... if this experiment fails...

She started to wonder about something she'd heard on TV once, some Pauline monk from Bright Mountain talking about a real offering and...

He was talking about non est propheta vocatus in patria natus... or something like that...

Had he mentioned Lorena Bobbitt?

He kept repeating: you must suffer... abandon your own father and very own mother... you'll die... enjoy life... this life and the other...

This and that...

This one and that...

His words torn from her womb...

While he sat in the room next door and tried to hear her scream...

Nothing...

Silence...

The kind of silence which makes the soul push all flesh up into one's mouth and turns it into a tongue, which is best swallowed and...

This is a historic moment, that little is certain, surely...

He doesn't know that she planned it all...

On a steaming July day, driving back from a friend's cottage... listening to the Tears latest album... she tossed the CD out the window and put her foot down... a little girl from a neighbouring village found the CD... afraid to pick it up, this thing like a forbidden sweet abandoned by the side of the road... an anti-personnel mine... and she, crying, driving on, accelerating... as if she were trying to not get there...

Fucking bitch? ...

Stupid prick? ...

Was she testing him?

Always so calm, like a sunny, summer dusk on a meadow beyond the city viewed from the verandah of a holiday home...

Now, that he's decided to stand by her, he will do anything she tells him to... and she will either ignore him or, as he will sometimes imagine, will mount him like the angel of the apocalypse and...

He sometimes fears this world will go to hell because of him and...

All those who belittle themselves will be exalted in the end, surely...

He wants to remain faithful somehow... worried he is reading the Book wrong... he scans through the bustle of many religions... through those calling out in the desert... those calling out in the jungle... he reads in the kitchen, after she's gone to work... reads and looks out the window... sees the window eats the words...

His words... the words have been torn from her womb...

Only now can he begin to think of it this way...

He will feel as if only now he has started to think...

The feeling of guilt - slapstick style, and yet guilt - generated by an oppressive cultural system?

This can yet take them places where wonders will never cease and... the car edged forward slowly, silently, down a narrow street through a housing estate, but in a moment its tyres will squeal happily round the bend, because she likes the sound of rubber burying itself in tarmac...

It would be good if the radio, which she will turn on in a moment, having stopped at some junction, played Save a Prayer by Duran Duran or an interview with some impassioned psychologist about the philosophy of Ernst Bloch or...

A rook landed on the asphalt-lined playground.

Early spring sunshine poked through grey cloud cover.

Agnieszka's twenty five year old son stretched, standing in the window of a flat on the second floor of a tower block on a new estate out on the edge of town - there

was a field of strawberries here once... some think the air here still smells of strawberries...

To Teddy it almost certainly smells of strawberries here - even in winter, though he often looks like everything around him stinks and interferes with the music he hears being played on an ocarina by a half-naked hermaphrodite sitting on a rock by an ever more busy city exit road...

A Memling, living in the ear of Agnieszka's son, has once again finished painting the Last Judgement - this time on an alder tree leaf.

Agnieszka's son tried to unblock his left ear using his index finger... opened his lips the way you do when trying to even out inner pressure when driving between valleys and mountains...

He heard the squeal of the black Toyota's tyres...

He tries to ignore such trifles, but he's still sensitive to them and...

He stretched and stretching felt his back twinge right in the spot where angels' wings start from as shown in old paintings...

After a while he turned his back to the door...

The Memling in Agnieszka's son's ear stretched out on a grain of sand, warmed by the sun, and remembered that the mother of Agnieszka's son's colleague goes to visit her ill, elderly neighbour, every day, the neighbour whose own daughter only visits once every few months, in this tiny, empty, sleepy town in which she was born and raised... she visits rarely, tied up with work... having no say in it... that's life... only why, when she does travel down, her mother's neighbours see her as unpleasant, as... as if she thought herself superior... as if everyone here lived so ineffectually, you couldn't imagine worse, and...

Meatballs...

Agnieszka's son felt that today he had to eat some meatballs with buckwheat and cucumber salad. Definitely cucumber salad: the vegetables sliced thinly, the ones he bought off the market square three days back, with a pinch of pepper, and salt, and some sour cream... once upon a time, he loved lashings of sour cream, but now...

Now he will have to dress and go to the shop to buy meat.

It's not too far... near enough to descend the stairs...

When he gets back, he'll shower.

He likes it when, under the shower, eyes closed, suddenly everything becomes so clear, as if he were looking right into the heart of darkness...

Having showered, he will look in the mirror... looking, he will towel dry his hair... recall the face of a girlfriend from school, the one whose child he babysat not long ago, when she said she had to go out, when she couldn't take it any more: shut up with a year-and-a-half old son in a world to which, not that long ago, she had escaped from Agnieszka's son and... she couldn't take the world from which the father of her child had already escaped... escaped to the mountains or the desert?... escaped because he couldn't get used to the sound of the child bawling or because when he asked her for anal sex she told him the arsehole was for

shitting, and anyway... she's not that addicted to him, not enough to fear that for this or that reason he will leave, run off, that she won't manage... thought, speech, action, abandonment and neglect... she cried...

Fucking prick?

Stupid cunt?

They never found a common tongue...

Nobody taught them how to communicate through this child, which after all... and anyway it will speak out your words, you, Aromatic Flower... Apple Branch...

With thought, speech, action and absence... abandonment...

This and that...

But he will go back to her... she will let him... he'll have to... her parents, his parents... they'll threaten to stop helping with the mortgage repayments, if they don't sort it out... and it doesn't matter what started it... you've got to sort it out and that's that... her mother will say only this: a moment's weakness... you must... his mother will tell her: it's about the rest of your lives and not only yours either... do you think that I... his mother will say... after all.. I... his father gone a whole year... Martial Law, the awful winter of '81... called up to serve... and me... I once went to visit my relatives, for a week, and left him with our son, and he said, afterwards, that he was afraid, even though the child was six already... anyway... you can't manage without us... neither of you graduated yet... is nothing scared to either of you? After all... you can... you must be strong... I'll talk to him... I will... I will visit... we'll give you a little extra this time, enough for a child minder... you'll work a bit in our shop... you like curtains after all... and as for him... I had a chat with him... told him that if one bird isn't enough for him, he'll just have to start earning more... when he starts work, he'll change his mind... I told him to... I will tell you, better this way, better you know exactly what I said to him... I told him to love you... will power... and anyway... you don't have to give in to him... teach him to give in to you... teach him... teach them both... it was after this talking to - talking with his mother... his father waiting in the car... never was one for talking... for him everything just sort of happens... she called Agnieszka's son... not that he always gave her good advice... she once heard from someone that in life he wants least to be the one who is happy only when others are worse off, to be the one who laughs at others, to hide behind this laugh, hide from the eyes of others... he'd talked about this after she left him... he was so quiet... it terrified her, and then, in time, started to bore... and anyway... he was always like that... did whatever she wanted and ... she wanted to see , just once more, how submissive he could be... she wanted to see if he can leave the child with someone with who, who you really could, should, there is no other way but... to trust... when, come the morning, she returned drunk and exhausted, he was sitting in the living room in front to the TV... her son sleeping calmly in the next room, because Agnieszka's son, having learnt by watching his sister's kids, had fed him an hour ago... he watched her, barely able to stand, kissing her son's hand... he helped her lie down in bed... before she fell asleep,

she asked if he had ever read the Fortunate Event by Mrozek... he hadn't, but he had remembered the Happiest Family of the Month by Lenz... sat by her as if she were dying... after a couple of hours he couldn't hold out any more... closed his eyes, rested his head... fell into a light sleep, in which, sitting by her in an armchair, he started to masturbate, watching her breasts rise and fall slowly... she wasn't asleep... pretending... eyes half shut, she's been watching his close, the head falling back... she dozed off... in his dream... in hers... he recalled that he liked her best in those cut off jean shorts and black sleeveless top... in his dream...in hers... in the dream, he came inside his underpants, though he thought that she probably wouldn't notice if he lifted her orange jumper, uncovered her tummy... in his dream.. in hers... he came thinking about it... he always comes by himself... even Ewa doesn't let him come inside her, though she's on the pill... when he woke, when she woke she told him it was time to leave, thanked him for being such a help and...

He only said if he were ever needed again to...

And now Agnieszka's son, without brushing his teeth or anything, dresses and goes out.

Come evening, he will go with Teddy in his gas-powered Nysa out of town, to the farm, to see Limp, the old Solidarity dissident, the one Teddy sometimes argues with over this and that, sitting by the massive, wooden table in the kitchen, smoking weed and absorbing heat from the big tiled oven, the one Limp's one-eyed cat likes to rest against... they call the cat Granddad, because apparently Limp's grandfather promised, on his death bed, to return as a one-eyed cat... they will go to play a few instruments, build up their strength, because Agnieszka's son feels that in the bank where he works they are preparing a nasty surprise for him... he will have to talk to Teddy, ask him to talk to his aunt, for her to...

In fact, he only wants to drive out there to once more feel the aroma of damp, fallen, left for dead walnut leaves...

- Best way to do away with desires is to satisfy them... - thought Agnieszka's son to himself, standing in the queue at the meat counter.

When he gets back from Limp's farm, he will call Ewa and tell her that in a day or two he will have enough time on his hands for her to dress him up, do his make up and...