

WHEN YOU WAKE UP

Krzysztof Pieczyński

28 INT. HIGH-SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - DAY

JERZY, 45, walks down an empty school corridor. He stops before a large door and hesitates a moment.

He adjusts his top hat, takes a deep breath and opens the door and makes his entrance. Inside, the auditorium is filled to the rafters by students talking among themselves. The noise dies down as JERZY marches down the aisle. A teacher standing on the stage smiles and points toward JERZY as she announces him and leaves the stage.

JERZY climbs the stairs and takes the stage with an artificially brisk gait. He assumes a large theatrical smile and takes off his top hat with a flourish. The students burst out laughing. JERZY mistakes the laughter for approval and his smile broadens. BRYGIDA is sitting near a window. She realizes what is going on and looks pained. JERZY walks to the center of the stage and in a bell-like voice greets the audience with a hearty "Greetings young people!". More laughter from the audience.

29 INT. LARGE BAR - NIGHT

A party is going on and people are clustered around a buffet table. Three distinguished looking men are standing in a group and talking. They are the director FRANEK, 55 years-old, with glasses and an intellectual air, the composer KONRAD, who's a bit older and fully aware of his charm and fame and the director JANUSZ who's over 50, bald, intelligent and with a very wide mean streak. Among the other guests are the actress playing Mary Stuart, ZYGMUNT, ANTONI, KAZIO and JERZY, 25.

KONRAD

And a toast to your new movie.

EVERYONE

Cheers!

FRANEK

Please don't make a fuss.

Here's to you.

They drink. JERZY with trembling hands pours himself a shot of vodka.

JERZY

(to himself)

Maybe some kind of original
toast. No, no, it's too soon. I
need to relax more first.

He downs the vodka and immediately pours himself another.

KONRAD

(to FRANEK)

Have you read the interview
Dominique de Roux did with
Gombrowicz? It's really
wonderful. I don't remember
much, but the last question was
"What do you think about your
future?" And Witold asks "What
future? All that's left for me
is the grave."

FRANEK

I didn't read it.

KONRAD

Don't bring me down like that.
You've got to read it, it's
great.

JERZY

(overcoming his reluctance)
Gombrowicz is so behind the
times. We've already moved on.

KONRAD

(dismissively)

Yeah, yeah.

(to FRANEK)

You've got to swear to me that
you'll read that interview.
Here's to your film again. All
the best.

FRANEK

(quoting)

Youth is inferiority. Youth is beauty.

JERZY
(to himself)
Inferiority is beauty.

KONRAD
(overhearing)
Yeah, yeah.
(to the others)
Have you seen "The Verdict" by Lumet? What did you think of it?

FRANEK
Nothing special.

JERZY
Newman's wonderful.

KONRAD
It's a bad movie from start to finish. Newman is unconvincing.

KONRAD
Have you seen "Under the Volcano"?

JANUSZ
Houston can't hold a candle to Lowry.

JERZY raises his glass. No one notes that.

FRANEK
Fitzgerald?

KONRAD
Cheap romance. I can't read his stuff.

JERZY

Do you know Wharton? Great
stuff.

JANUSZ imitates an American accent with an air of superiority.

JANUSZ

John Irving.

FRANEK

Good stuff. Gentlemen, to
Singer's health.

They drink. The names of authors and books are mentioned more
and more rapidly.

They begin to overlap and the tempo reaches a fever pitch. All
that matters is to mention as many names as quickly as
possible

JANUSZ

Heller?

KONRAD

A classic. To Haszek.

JANUSZ

Vonnegut?

FRANEK

„Pulp” by Andrzejewski?

JANUSZ

A masterpiece.

KONRAD

Artistically speaking.

They drink another round.

KONRAD (CONT'D)

McCarthy's "The Group".

JANUSZ
(with contempt)
I don't read women.

JERZY
(to himself)
Oh, you bastard...

KONRAD
Milosz's „Captive Mind”.
Cheers.

JANUSZ
Grass?

FRANEK
Excellent. Fuentes.

KONRAD
Beautiful language.

JANUSZ
Hesse?

JERZY
(determined)
He's boring.

JANUSZ
(to JERZY)
He *is* a difficult author, not
for everyone.

(to everyone)

Cheers. And I say fuck 'em all.
Gide, Frisch, Sartre, Wilde,
Rilke. All of 'em. Isaac Babel,
you know? He *is it*.

(to JERZY)

For you, I'd suggest reading
some Hemmingway or maybe
Steinbeck.

JANUSZ has just deeply insulted JERZY and everyone present realizes it. There is a deep and terrible silence.

30 EXT. PARK BENCH - WINTER DAY

The DARK-HAIRED GIRL comes along the path and passes JERZY, 55.

JERZY
(as if to himself)
I'm shy... uh... really very shy.
But from time to time, maybe
once a year before the holidays
when the snow crunches
underfoot I manage to surprise
myself.

The DARK-HAIRED GIRL stops. JERZY goes in her direction holding out his hand.

JERZY (CONT'D)
Jerzy.

The DARK-HAIRED GIRL shakes his hand but doesn't say anything.

JERZY (CONT'D)
Have I offended you somehow?

The DARK-HAIRED GIRL smiles and shakes her head. JERZY puts his hands in his overcoat and waves them imitating a bird.

JERZY (CONT'D)
Craw... craw... there are such
places in the universe...

Jumps onto the bench.

JERZY (CONT'D)
... craw... craw... where you don't

have to worry.

DARK-HAIRED GIRL

What a clever crow! Would you like a slice of bread and butter?

JERZY

That's my dream - a slice of bread and butter... and coffee with cream.

They sit on the bench. The DARK-HAIRED GIRL takes a sandwich from her bag. JERZY takes a thermos out of a backpack on the bench. He hands her a cup of coffee and pours some for himself into the lid. He takes the sandwich from her.

JERZY

Good...

DARK-HAIRED GIRL

Nice coffee.

JERZY

It's gotten so warm.

DARK-HAIRED GIRL

My hands are even warmer now.

JERZY looks at her.

JERZY

It's so strange. I have the feeling I've seen you before...

DARK-HAIRED GIRL

The soul is always pure?

JERZY

The soul is always pure...

Drinking the coffee.

DARK-HAIRED GIRL
And our journey bittersweet...

JERZY takes a bite of the sandwich, which tastes very good.

JERZY
In the theater there are two rows of viewers. In the first are those who laugh out loud, stamp their feet and applaud. They look the actors straight in the eyes. That's how they deal with their fear. In the second row are the ones who are bothered by the actors' saliva in the spotlights. They contemplate their fear behind other people's backs.

DARK-HAIRED GIRL
Is there a third kind of viewer?

JERZY
Sometimes an actor takes over and they laugh or cry when he wants them to. People leave the theater happy then because they've been able to forget about themselves.

DARK-HAIRED GIRL
I love the snow.

JERZY
We don't look back because of the past, which is gone forever. We look back because we happened to be in love then. Time isn't measured in hours or years but in feelings. None of the rest is real. What a person loses, what he doesn't have is

a measure of GREATNESS.

JERZY stands and walks around the bench.

DARK-HAIRED GIRL

The coffee had just the right amount of sugar. I have to go now.

She stands up and he starts after her, becoming cheerful.

JERZY

Can I see you out? ... Oops, sorry, bad question.

They shake hands. She smiles and leaves. After several steps, he can hear her mimic his "craw... craw...". He starts to laugh.

31 INT. ON STAGE - NIGHT

JERZY, 45, is on an empty stage in a spotlight.

JERZY

But I've read them, I really have. It just seems like I haven't. Oh you prick... it's too bad I didn't think to ask what you'd recommend by Steinbeck. That "East of Eden" of yours, huh? And that's it? I'd wait a second and knock you off your high horse: "Tortilla Flat?" Please, if you can't think to recommend Steinbeck's best, then that means you only know his work superficially, so please keep your remarks to yourself, okay?" That's what I'd have said. Why do I always have my best ideas when it's too late, but it's nothing... nothing. I'll get even.