

PRAH

A Comedy by György Spiró (2004)

Translated from the Hungarian by Szilvia Naray-Davey

Day.

(A middle-aged woman wearing a housedress is peeling potatoes at the kitchen table. She throws the peeled potatoes into a pot full of water. From stage right, coming from the garden's side, a middle-aged man enters carrying a plastic bag.)

Man: Hi . . .

Woman: *(Looking up)* What time is it?

Man: Around two, maybe half past.

(Puts the plastic bag on the armchair, sits down onto the other kitchen stool, huffs.)

Woman: I thought I got the time wrong . . . What's the matter, are you sick?

Man: No.

Woman: Did you get fired?

Man: No.

Woman: Did the company go out of business?

Man: No.

Woman: What then?

Man: Nothing . . . I just thought, I've done enough for the day . . .

(Beat)

Woman: What do you mean enough?

Man: Just enough of everything.

(The woman gets up, fills a pot with water at the water fountain, and puts it on to the stove.)

Woman: *(Standing)* There aren't buses at this time. How did you get home? Did you get on the freight train?

Man: They got rid of the them things again, takes the corner so slowly it almost stops . . .

Woman: How many times have I begged you not to do that!

Man: Alright, I don't usually, I only did it today . . .

Woman: What sort of example is that to show the kids?

Man: They won't find out . . . Nobody saw me. Do we have anything to drink?

Woman: Like what?

Man: I don't know, wine, beer, brandy . . .

Woman: We don't, no. What's wrong with you?

Man: Nothing.

(Gets up, drinks from the tap)

Woman: *(Not liking it)* We do have glasses, you know!

Man: *(Sits back down.)* Look, . . . I need to talk about something . . . Sit down.

Woman: So, there is something wrong. *(Sits down.)*

Man: *(Voice trembling)* Well the thing is I—I've been playing the lottery.

Woman: What?

Woman: Well I get a ticket, tickets . . . and I fill them out . . .

Woman: Why?

Man: I don't know . . . just came up with the idea. I thought you can win tons of money.

(Beat)

Woman: When did you start playing?

Man: Since the repayments . . .

Woman: For three years?!

Man: Well . . .

Woman: You've gone mad, must have caught rabies?

Man: Why, did you actually notice? Was there any less money for food? I've been living on bread and dripping for years.

Woman: With your cholesterol?

Man: I eat cholesterol-free dripping! Alright?!

(Beat)

Woman: I'm speechless!

Man: OK. It doesn't matter anymore, it's over . . .

Woman: You take expensive pills, but you eat dripping.

Man: I'm telling you it's over! I'll never eat dripping again!

Woman: How much did you waste each month?

Man: Not much. Five or six thousand, but I saved it on my belly!

Woman: Why do I bother budgeting and being careful when you just—

Man: OK, it doesn't matter now, I'll never do it again . . .

Woman: They should publicly display you somewhere.

Man: We, we won! We've hit the jackpot!

(Beat)

All five numbers!

(The man starts to cry. The woman is staring. Beat)

(The man sniffles, grins, jumps up, walks around.)

The draw is on Saturdays, it's on TV, too, but I never watched it. Wouldn't have been possible, the kids watch other things, and you too. Anyway it would have been suspicious . . . I usually check it on Mondays in town. I don't buy the newspaper, really, I just flick through it at the stand and give it back . . . they're used to it . . . But today I forgot, didn't realise it was Monday . . . because I was on me shift yesterday. Only realised at noon, and as today's paper was just lying about on the table, in front of the loo, next to the ashtray . . . I looked and . . . oh my God!

(Beat)

Woman: How much?

Man: More than six hundred million forints!

(Beat)

Woman: It's usually double that.

Man: Only if it rolls over! A while back someone won two billion . . . Isn't six hundred million enough?

(Beat)

Woman: Six hundred million!

(Beat)

Show me!

Man: I didn't bring it with me. I just saw the front page . . .

Woman: The lottery ticket!

Man: Oh, that!

(Takes his wallet out from the inside pocket of his suit.)

I've put it in the inside pocket here . . . I buttoned it up just in case . . . the other button's missing, just noticed. I've been holding to it so tightly my left arm's gone numb . . . even on the train with them smelly sacks . . .

(Sniffs his suit, shakes his head, takes out the ticket from his wallet, puts it on the table, and flattens it out.)

Woman: Let me see it . . .

Man: Not with wet hands!

Woman: *(She jumps up, dries her hand with a tea towel, looks for glasses, puts them on, sits back down, carefully holds the ticket, looks at it.)* They give you six hundred million in exchange for this?

Man: Six hundred million, three hundred and forty thousand!

Woman: This shitty little thing is worth that much?

Man: Yep!

Woman: It's incredible . . .

Man: Why, money's also just paper, isn't it?

Woman: That's different, that's money.

Man: This is money, too.

Woman: Who's going to believe this is money?

Man: The bank people, them who hand it over . . .

(The woman jumps up, sits down, plays with her hair.)

I had just locked myself in the loo. They fixed the lock last week. I took out the ticket . . . I usually play the same numbers, on one of them I'd put down our birthdates, yours, mine, and the kids', and my father's . . . and it was the winning one . . . On this one!

Woman: Alright, don't get worked up. Not with your blood pressure!

Man: (*Huffs*) And I felt dizzy suddenly, I was scared I might flush the ticket down the loo . . . I put it in me wallet . . . lucky I bought this wallet . . .

Woman: A leather one.

Man: Yeah, leather! It's easier to fish out if I drop it in. I was standing in the cubicle, sweat dripping off me, my heart was thumping. Because if I drop it in, the writing rubs off and they don't accept it . . . I was laughing to myself: Is this really the moment to kick the bucket? A total heart attack, that's what I was feeling like . . . I put the seat down, I sat there for a while, taking deep breaths. I was afraid I wouldn't be able to unlock the toilet door and that no one would come for me, the space is too small up there, I won't be able to climb out, I'll die of hunger.

(Beat)

I came out of the toilet, but I had to run back with a bout of diarrhoea . . . I then managed to sort meself out somehow. They saw I wasn't going to be doing any packing. They said go home, that I'll be able to do overtime. I was petrified the whole time that they would nick it out of me pocket . . . Now, of all times! I saw thieves everywhere. They must have thought I was drunk, swaying like that. You don't know what I went through!

Woman: Give money away in exchange for this piece of paper!

Man: We have to hide it . . . It would be shite luck if we got robbed just now . . . Where should I put it? Got to put it somewhere they won't find, where it won't burn if there's a fire . . . Bloody hell . . . I can't think straight . . .

Woman: In the sugar pot, we never use it, it's empty . . .

Man: It's no good, no. Someone could knock it down and the ticket'll get damaged.

Woman: We'll wrap in cling film and hide it in the coffee box . . . We don't use it anyway, it's empty.

Man: OK, but we mustn't forget it's there . . .

(The woman tears off some cling film and carefully wraps the ticket up. She gets the coffee box from the bottom drawer, opens it, smells it, puts the ticket in it, and puts it up on the shelf.)

Man: Put it higher . . .

Woman: Why?

Man: Why not . . .

(Short pause. The woman places it onto a higher shelf.)

Woman: This alright for you?

Man: That'll do.

Woman: The kids'll notice it's somewhere else . . .

Man: They don't drink coffee, why would they notice?

(The woman sits back down. Watches the coffee box in silence.)

It's good it looks so used. Where's it from?

Woman: Poor Dad got it from Yugoslavia. In the seventies when he went there for a week with mum . . . It used to have cocoa in it . . . This is what he brought me back . . . I was the only one allowed to have some . . . It says cocoa on it, and Prah too . . . I asked him what Prah meant, but Daddy didn't know . . . Maybe cocoa powder? I've got rid of lots of stuff but not this, this . . .

(Beat)

If they break in, they start with boxes like these . . .

Man: No one ever breaks in here. Break in here! What would they find here?! Take the stove with the gas cylinder?

(Beat)

Woman: Are you sure you looked at it properly? Are they the right numbers?

Man: I've checked them twenty times!

Woman: They are this week's, right?

Man: Nothing to do with weeks. It's the five-number lottery draw. We've got all the right numbers on that!

Woman: No, I didn't mean that . . .

Man: It is this week's! Look for yourself if you don't believe me!

(The woman gets up and goes towards the shelf.)

Man: Check it on the telly. The numbers are listed on teletext, page eight hundred and seventy and eight hundred and seventy one . . .

Woman: Have you already looked?

Man: When could I have looked? I saw it in the newspaper . . .

(The woman runs out of the kitchen stage left. Short pause.)

Woman: How do you turn this thing on?

(The man gets up, exits stage left.)

Woman's voice: What's going on, then?

Man's voice: Wait, I'm turning the pages, this crap always goes back to the beginning . . . Not long now . . . Here it is . . .

Woman's voice: Here are the numbers! Bring it here, bring it here!

Man's voice: It's in the coffee box, we've just put in there! Write down the numbers for yourself if you don't believe it. But I'm telling you—there are our birth dates . . .

Woman's voice: Where are my glasses?

Man's voice: You left them in the kitchen. Shall I get them?

Woman's voice: No need . . .

Woman:

(Runs into the kitchen, takes the coffee box down, and carefully takes out the wrapped ticket. She unwraps it and looks at it.)

Woman: Oh God! It's true . . . !

Man:

(Comes into the kitchen.)

I'll put it back . . .

(The man wraps up the ticket, puts it into the coffee box, closes the lid, puts it up onto the top shelf.)

(Beat)

Woman *(Sits down)*: We'll get new curtains.

Man: Why? There's nothing wrong with these.

Woman: And I'm getting rid of the bunk bed from the kids' room. Their feet have been hanging off it for years . . .

Man:

(Fidgets, runs with his feet.)

Hooray! Hooray!

Woman: You're going to break the lamp!

Man: I'm going to buy a hundred lamps, thousands, millions. I'm losing my mind. Lost my mind! *(He is out of breath, sits back down.)*

Woman: We'll go on holiday together!

Man: What for?

Woman: We've never been on holiday since having kids . . .

Man: They went to summer camp.

Woman: But never as a family. I went on holiday with my parents!

Man: Because it used to be free, the co-operatives paid.

Woman: It's been a big deal for me! We could never afford to go on holiday with the kids!

Man: They went to summer camps . . .

Woman: But never us together!

Man: We will now.

Woman: They're not small anymore! You can't bring that time back! That life!

Man: We won't go then—

Woman: Yes, we are going! You can take unpaid leave and we'll go for the whole summer!

Man: There is no such thing as an unpaid leave.

Woman: Then you can resign.

Man: Really? *(Beat, a little less enthusiastically)* Yeah, I could resign.

(Beat)

Woman: We'll buy a villa on the Yugoslavian coast!

Man: Yugoslavia doesn't even exist anymore!

Woman: Never mind that! It will exist just for us! Under, what's his name, under Tito. Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor were given an island as a gift! On the Adriatic coast! From Tito! They got an entire island . . . We'll buy that island!

Man: What island?

Woman: Theirs! It was in one of those Yugoslavian war movies, fantastic one, really long, lots of dead bodies. I saw it as a kid . . . Burton was Tito and Taylor played his wife, you know the one that's fat in real life, what was her real name?

Man: Alright, we'll buy something . . .

Woman: Who is their heir?

Man: What?

Woman: Who is Burton and Taylor's heir? Did they have kids? I don't think so, actually.

Man: I haven't got the faintest idea.

Woman: They're not alive anymore . . . It could be that it's owned by the state then. But what state is that now? Bosnia, or Croatia?

Man: It doesn't matter . . . You can't buy a whole island with this anyway . . .

Woman: I would like it, though . . . Haven't you seen it?

Man: We didn't have a TV.

Woman: It was in the movies.

Man: I haven't seen it. Well, I could ask actually.

Woman: Ask what?

Man: How much an island costs over there.

Woman: Who can you ask?

Man: Someone has to know. We'll go there and ask. Ask some kind of a lawyer . . .

Woman: That costs money!

Man: Like the island.

(Beat)

Woman: How much did you say it was?

Man: Six hundred million! It's more than two Nobel prizes. One prize for you, one for me! *(Laughs)* For having survived it! And it was survival! *(Short pause)* That's what I was thinking on the toilet. If anyone deserves it, it's us . . . I've always had this feeling . . . When I started to play the lottery, I already suspected it . . . It was such an intuition . . . That it'll work out . . . That there is justice after all . . . This was predestined! It had to be like that! All that shit we had to put up with was meant to make us happier now!

(Beat)

Woman: That palace over there is worth eighty million . . .

Man: We'll be able to buy seven of those with this. We can buy seven palaces!

(Beat)

Woman: But you'll also have to pay for the bodyguards, security cameras, for the help, everything . . .

Man: We'll pay for it. We may just have to go down to six palaces instead of seven.

Woman: Why do we need six palaces?

Man: We don't, I'm just saying . . . real estate . . . is the safest investment, even if money turns into shit . . . It does happen. Or invest in gold? I don't know. We'll see.

(Beat)

Woman: If we put it into the bank, how much interest will it get?

Man: I don't know . . . If you don't touch it for a year you get more . . . I used to have a savings account, that's how it was then. I'm sure it's the same now if you don't touch it for a year.

Woman: Yes, but how much is the interest?

Man: How much could it be now? Even if it's one percent—and it has to be more than that—then it's six million a year!

Woman: Six million per year.

(Beat)

But how much more could it be?

Man: How would I know? Just more.

Woman: Could it be two percent?

Man: It could be.

Woman: That would be twelve million forints per year?!

Man: Yes, that would be . . .

(Beat)

Woman: Jesus Christ.

(She is wiping her face and forehead.)

Man: No wonder I shat myself.

(Beat)

Woman: We have to ask!

Man: I will ask.

Woman: We could then buy a flat with just the interest. The one we looked at when we hoped to sell the house . . .

Man: OK, but it'd be too small now . . .

Woman: It's not small, three rooms . . . two and a half. Balcony, telephone line, Sky TV . . .

Man: It's not in a good location . . .

Woman: Until now it was your dream place. It's close to the school, to the doctor's. You said it yourself that it was a good location.

Man. But it's not good anymore . . . Was good enough for us then, but not anymore! No way. It's noisy! Close to the station. Actually it must have sold straightaway.

Woman: No, it hasn't been sold. When I went to the cemetery to renew the rent on the grave, I saw in the window that it's still up for sale . . .

(Beat)

Man: It can't be that good if they haven't managed to sell it since then!

(Beat)

On the train I decided I'm going to buy meself a helicopter. I'll fly it. You need a different kind of licence for that. And I'm buying the exact same Saab the boss had in Germany. I saw it once, it was silver . . .

Woman: Let's put it somewhere else, up there is too obvious.

Man: Put what?

Woman: The coffee box.

Man: You don't dare say "lottery ticket," do you?

Woman: They could hear it . . .

Man: Who? Evil ghosts?!

(Beat)

Where shall I put it, in the toilet?

Woman: I don't know . . . under the bed . . .

Man: That's where they look first.

Woman: Oh my God . . .

(Beat)

Man: You won't have to do cleaning jobs.

Woman: Why not? Don't knock it. It's good money.

Man: You've got A Levels. I won't have you cleaning up after those cretinous Austrians.

Woman: I earned more in two months than you did in a year.

Man: Yeah, while I was cooking, cleaning, washing up, doing laundry, doing homework—

Woman: Alright . . . anyway the Austrian job is unreliable. And I get taxed.

Man: We'll go to restaurants.

Woman: What for?

Man: The rich eat out.

Woman: You don't like my cooking?

Man: Yes. But we can still go out. Are you going to cook if we go on holiday?

Woman: We won't go on holidays.

Man: Won't we?

Woman: Why, if we have our own villa? We'll have one, won't we? If not an island, at least a villa on the Yugoslavian coast. We'll stay there the whole year. It'll be on the mains, and have plumbing. Look what happened here. We paid good money to be hooked up. They dug down five metres and disappeared. Twenty times we complained to the village council. And still nothing.

Man: We'll buy one in Florida too. We have enough.

Woman: That's miles away.

Man: We'll rent it out when we are not there. Do you remember Ferko? You know the one who inherited from the States . . . that stocky guy, tool-maker . . . He was dealing with them investors, getting rounds for everybody, and six months later, had nothing left apart from his undies. *(He laughs.)* Well, we're not going to be losers like that!

(Beat)

We'd need the holiday house to be somewhere else really, or not even a holiday house but a regular house, but not in Yugoslavia . . . The kids would need to learn a useful language . . . They need to learn English or German. That means moving somewhere for two years. They'll learn the language in a year and then we can send them to some posh school . . . Then off to university.

Woman: Abroad?

Man: Of course.

(Beat)

Woman: They'll forget Hungarian.

Man: Of course not!

Woman: And where are we going to be?

Man: Well, there . . .

Woman: We don't speak any foreign languages.

Man: But money speaks!

Woman: But if we needed something . . . We'd have to mime and gesticulate all over the place. How will I shop at the market?

(Beat)

Man: We've been meaning to sell the house and move to town, but it didn't sell—even though I repainted it. It's all because of this rotten mine. People get scared off as soon as they turn onto the road, they don't bother ringing the bell. I don't get the chance to explain that it's not a functioning one . . .

Woman: There's no need to sell it now. We'll buy that flat in town. The doctor and chemist will be nearby . . . And if we wanted to, we could come out here too. We'll turn this into our holiday home. We'll renovate it . . . We've never done anything to it.

(Beat)

Man: When would we have had the time?!

Woman: Dad didn't have time either; he still managed to add this conservatory. Granddad didn't have time either, but built it anyway . . . And we did nothing . . . Just ruined it . . .

(Beat)

Man: I wanted to when we thought we had the money! The council guy said you can't just wing it like that . . . That you'd need plans and permits and whatnot, because of it being a protected nature reserve or something! Here—next to a mine! *(Laughs)* He wanted money or a job for his mate . . . You didn't want to go ahead with it!

Woman: Because you hate it.

Man: I don't hate it. It's just that I've never felt that it was ever my own.

Woman: This is where I grew up. As shabby as it is, to me it's—

Man: I married into wealth! *(Laughs)* I've inherited an armchair.

(Beat)

Woman: We'll take it. Take the armchair with us. Poor dad was sitting on it when his . . . foot was already bandaged.

Man: Yes, we'll take it. We'll take his nameplate too . . .

(The woman bursts into tears, beat)

Woman: Dad sat here and just kept repeating the same thing: "I'll slowly get used to being alive, so it will be strange." He kept saying it . . .

(Beat)

Man: Alright, we won't sell the house, wouldn't get anything for it anyway. We'll have our own wing built . . . We'll have our own train, a private train driver. A private train driver . . . *(Laughs)* I'll buy a hand-motored trolley.

Woman: What?

Man: A car that goes on rails . . . They used to have them in the olden days; you had to pull them by hand, with two stiff arms. It's only six kilometres.

(Beat)

We'll have a two-person one. It works like a tandem. I can design it. There'll be two seats in the back . . . and a boot . . .

Woman: Wouldn't we need a car instead?

Man: *(Joylessly)* Of course we would.

(Beat)

Woman: You'll take your test abroad . . . And get an international licence . . . It's valid here, right?

(Beat)

Man: I'll have a two-lane motorway built. Only six kilometres! They wrote somewhere that one kilometre's worth of motorway cost millions. The six hundred million will cover it, and no more worries. What else could we waste it on? *(Laughs)*

Woman: And what about the kids?

(Beat)

Man: Shall we tell them?

Woman: Let's. It's theirs too, isn't it?

Man: It's especially theirs . . . They'll have time to enjoy it . . . We'll sign them up for swimming, tennis, horse riding and golf . . .

Woman: We're not nobility!

Man: Of course we are. Prah or whatever it says with its three towers will be our crest . . .

Woman: They're the towers of Zagreb, it says on it.

Man: We'll be the Turkish-slaying victorious heroes, then. We can buy ourselves posh names (*laughs*). Sir Whatever, and you, Dame Whatever.

(Beat)

Woman: They've already been spoiled rotten and now this . . . Their only interest is money, now it will get worse . . . Can I get this gear or that . . . high heels, fake nails . . . branded t-shirts, trainers . . . Remember when we didn't get something for them, they threw a tantrum . . . It will be non-stop from now on . . . They are not interested in studying . . . They'll sit with a book if I yell at them long enough, but all they do is just stare outside . . . hang out, laze about, they're good for nothing.

Man: They won't make it anyway. Even if they went to university or something. They know it too. They're redundant—we are too—the whole country is redundant . . .

Woman: We'll live abroad and they'll get their luxury cars, and they'll crash one every week, we'll end up mending them . . . They'll be screwing around, going to prostitutes . . .

Man: Don't say that, they're good kids!

Woman: Because they don't have any money. But now they'll have some. They'll waste it on gambling . . . on drinking, drugs . . .

Man: Why are you saying these things?

(Beat)

You're destroying my will to live. Good timing!

(Beat)

Should we keep it a secret? There's no way people won't notice that we have new curtains, new beds . . . That we bought a villa by the sea . . .

(Beat)

Well, the truth actually is that I've already bought something . . . I borrowed from Joco. . . . It's ridiculously cheap now, it was on sale . . .

(He gets up, goes to the breaded straw chair, and takes a box out of his plastic bag. He puts in on the table, sits down proudly.)

Woman: A mobile? What do you need a mobile for?

Man: Just want to have one.

Woman: A mobile!

Man: Here's the phone number on the side. It'll need writing down; the box could be misplaced . . . The whole thing was ten thousand, but I bartered off three thousand so only cost seven thousand! I don't get why the kids are allowed it and not me? They'll be able to call me now!

Woman: They won't call you.

Man: Why not?

Woman: They've never called you.

Man: That's because we didn't have a phone!

Woman: They won't call us. No . . . They live in a different world . . .

Man: It's got a camera.

Woman: Have you lost your marbles! Borrow money for this?

Man: The batteries need charging . . . You've got to admit, it would've been handy to call the doctors with it.

Woman: You're overspending and I haven't bought as much as a skirt for myself! I bought one eleven years ago, eleven and a half years ago! I regretted it too!

Man: Why, have I ever bought something for myself?

Woman: The wallet for example. A leather one!

Man: Comes in handy now, doesn't it?

Woman: A wallet! Like you couldn't live without it. A wallet! You could have bought some shoes! I needed that skirt!

Man: You can buy yourself a thousand skirts! Ten thousand! We're rich, get it?

(Beat)

Woman: What happens if someone else got it right? What if they've ticked the same numbers? Others could get it right. More than one person, actually . . . What happens if they have to share it out? How much would we get then?

(Beat)

Man: That's almost impossible . . . We've got to check how many jackpot winners they have.

(Runs out stage left.)

(The woman is looking at the coffee box; she goes to it, takes it down, looks around and puts it behind the gas cylinder in the corner, sits back down.)

Man's voice: There's only one jackpot winner, only one. Come and see there's only one.

(Runs into the kitchen.)

Can you hear?

Woman: You sure you didn't win more?

Man: What?

Woman: You could have gone in and convinced them to say it was a smaller amount. So that I wouldn't have found out how much you've taken from it . . .

Man: You've gone barmy!

Woman: You kept quiet about your bonus too, we only found out by accident!

Man: Yes, because I wanted to buy you all a present! And it's not a bonus really, but an extra month's pay, because they were state owned!

Woman: Doesn't matter, you lied! And you didn't buy the present either!

Man: The bastards only paid ten out of the thirty days' that I was owed.

Woman: And what happened to that?!

Man: Who cares where a few hundred went when I just got six hundred million?!

(Looks up at the shelf, frightened.)

Where is it?

Woman: Somewhere else.

Man: What was wrong with over there?

Woman: It's already been there . . .

Man: Have you hidden it from me?! From me?!

Woman: I put it behind the cylinder . . .

(The man hurries to it, crouches down, looks at it.)

Man: But when we swap cylinders . . . it won't be hidden anymore!

(The woman goes to it, picks up the coffee box, exits left. The man follows her, stands in the doorway.)

Where are you taking it?

Woman's voice: I'll put it behind the telly . . . It's so crap that no one would steal it, they'd look at it and be repulsed by it.

(Comes in, sits down.)

Man: Lucky you didn't put it in the bed, which we'll get rid of . . .

(The man exits the kitchen left. The woman looks after him.)

Woman: What are you doing exactly?

Man's voice: Getting rid of the telly.

Woman: Why?

Man's voice: Because it's a piece of crap. We'll get a big one, one of those flat ones, the ones you could hang on the wall!

Woman: The football won't look any better.

Man: I'll get cable TV set up. While we're still here I'll be able to watch foreign matches!

Woman: And won't the kids notice the new telly?

(Pause, the man comes in empty handed, sits down at the table.)

Man: I'll get them a video player. DVD. Let them watch it.

(Beat)

Woman: They'll be here in a minute and I'm not done! I haven't finished peeling the spuds!

Man: *(Looks at the clock.)*

They won't be here yet, they'll have missed the bus. *(Laughs)* Or they're already here and waiting.

Woman: What?

Man: They get a free ride on the freight train too. They might even be here already but laying low somewhere until the next bus gets in . . . *(Laughs)*

Woman: Jesus Christ.

Man: Why, they're saving on the fare . . . They're not stupid. They think I don't know about it. I don't think they've ever bought a bus pass . . . *(Laughs)* Leave it, I'll peel them!

Woman: No need, this'll do.

(Gets up, pours the spuds into the pan, lights the gas stove.)

They'll start fussing over my food. They'll end up scoffing all sorts of crap in town. They'll buy chocolate by the kilo . . .

Man: We don't have to give them a bigger allowance.

Woman: You're telling me? You're constantly slipping them extra money. Two hundred for this and a five hundred for that! They can't even drink water anymore, just some concoction that corrodes their teeth and guts!

Man: Everybody else drinks that stuff; you can't always deny them everything . . .

Woman: They've got mobiles! We can't even afford a landline and they've got mobiles!

Man: We can't say no to everything!

Woman: You tried to hide the fact that she was thieving. Did you actually think I wouldn't find out?! You and that teacher you paid off have swept it under the carpet . . . She was barely out of my womb that she was already stealing. My daughter! My father has never stolen a thing in his life, even though he wasn't allowed to get an education for being a kulak's son. They took his two poor acres of vineyard off him.

Man: She hasn't stolen since! She got scared shitless and didn't go out partying for two months! She'll never do anything like this again! And there's no need to.

Woman: We have a piece of paper. So what? And you too! You got yourself into debt right away! You didn't ask me!

(The man sighs, starts to peel the spuds. The woman snatches the knife out of his hands.)

That's not how you do it! You don't know how to do it thinly!

(The man jumps up, moves away, and angrily walks up and down. Beat)

I've been brought up to be frugal! If it wasn't for me, we would've died of hunger!

(Beat)

It's boiling already!

(Beat)

Man: Why, because I'll be squandering it all away! Oh, yes, I've always squandered everything away! I spent it on the races, women, and booze!

Woman: You're not capable of saving! It's a fact. You can't!

Man: Dear God!

Woman: They'll turn into human rags. All they ever think of is money anyway, but now it won't stop . . . I didn't mean to hurt you . . .

(Bursts into tears, pause.)

Man: It's from joy . . . Joy is like that . . .

(Beat)

Woman: They won't study anymore; they'll do less than now . . . If you threatened to beat them up they still wouldn't be bothered . . . They'll become trashy and rich . . . and won't give a shit about anything. They'll abandon us when we're old . . .

(Beat)

They'll speak some posh language, and we won't be able to understand a bloody word . . . They'll be friends with all kinds of foreigners . . . whores and pimps . . . They'll be tricked and robbed behind their backs. They won't be able to see that they're only being loved for their money . . . they're just a pair of wretched, provincial little pricks who will all of a sudden get a taste of the world . . . Oh God, it'll be a disaster!

(Beat)

They'll be involved with the Mafia, taken to casinos . . . They'll get robbed . . .

Man: They won't have money, because we won't give it to them! They'll get the same amount of pocket money as they do at home!

Woman: They'll hire assassins.

Man: Who?

Women: The kids.

Man: What for?

Woman: To get the rest of the money!

Man: They'll have us assassinated?

Woman: Who else?

(Beat)

They'll wish us to hell. Why haven't they got it all?! Why are we so useless that they have to be missing out?! Why don't we own a ludicrously posh house in the town centre with a pool and tennis courts? Why aren't you a barrister and why am I not a dentist? Why aren't we rich?

Man: But we are rich!

Woman: We were given a lollipop every other week and we were happy! I was OK with one every other month! I went to the movies twice a year! It was a massive treat for us! Nothing is enough for them! A new Barbie doll, new earrings or trainers, this T-shirt, that T-shirt, a mobile! And they don't enjoy them after the first day.

Man: Hire killers?! I wouldn't have thought . . .

Woman: You'll see. Trust me, it will cross their minds.

Man: I wouldn't have thought that you had so much filth in your heart.

(Beat)

Woman: You'll go to whores.

Man: Me?!

Woman: Aging, loaded bloke, with a nagging old wife . . . You're constantly checking women out. You do it in front of the newsagent's while I'm looking for change for the classified. You just stare at those pictures of women . . . You think I don't notice? You look at them sneakily from the side, cowardly, so I don't notice . . . Do you think I can't guess what you go on about with your stupid mates when you're out at the pub?

Man: They have four pints and I only have a half. I've always stopped at half pint, ask anyone! I'm not my mother! You didn't know her, but I did and I've seen her drunk far too often! If anyone is vaccinated against alcohol, it's me. I'm too scared to booze, that's why!

Woman: You'll be in trouble when they find out you've got money. You'll want to be cool with your mates . . . Soften them up with money and drinks . . . The whores will zone in on you . . . You won't be able to resist!

(Beat)

Man: If I wanted to screw around, I could have done it . . . When you were in Austria . . .

Woman: I wouldn't know what you were up to?! I wasn't at home!

Man: I had my tongue hanging out, I was so desperate! I couldn't wait for you to get home!

Woman: So that I'd cook.

Man: Whores can cook too.

Woman: Difference is you didn't have money then. If you had, they would have been cooking. One could have cooked a meatball soup, the other one a stuffed duck, the third one a pork roast. The second you think you've got money, you get in debt! You start buying mobiles!

Man: How many, my sweetheart, how many?

Woman: While I was away you bought yourself a dressing gown! That's the price of three dinners for the four of us, and you still had your old one!

Man: Buying a dressing gown and going to a whorehouse is not the same thing!

Woman: It is! You lose your sense of limits as soon as there isn't anyone looking after you! You too, all you ever think about is this rotten money again, just like your kids.

Man: That's not fair, I haven't been to a game for ages!

Woman: You said it's because they don't know how to play football.

Man: It's not about the football. It's a social thing! I still don't go!

Woman: You go out drinking with them!

Man: I get job leads through them. Don't I? They always let me know if there is any work. Where would we be without them, eh? What do you have against them?

Woman: You played the lottery, not me! It's you who wanted to win money, not me! It never mattered to me! I manage with nothing! I've never even played the lottery.

Man: Does it bother you that we've won? We've won . . . six hundred million. Why is this a problem for you?

Woman: Because it's dishonest! It's theft from the others who didn't win! Are you better than them? They're a miserable bunch too . . . You haven't worked for it!

Man: As if you could earn with work alone!

Woman: Why did you win it? It's not fair. My father would have deserved it too, he really would have done.

(Her voice gets muffled.)

(Beat)

Man: Your father didn't even play the lottery! How could he have won if he didn't even try?!

(Beat)

I was the one giving him lifts when he had to be taken in! We never fought! Even when I was dead knackered I played cards with him, I played chess while I couldn't keep my eyes open . . . I changed his bag . . . You did more, but when I was home, I fed him as well at the end . . . Didn't I?

Woman: Everybody abandoned him when he got sick, his friends, everyone . . . No one came to see him . . .

Man: I didn't abandon him!

Woman: You lived here. That helped.

(Beat)

I bought you that dressing gown seventeen years ago! And you just go and buy a new one! Why? No one could see the worn out elbow! It was perfectly good for home! Didn't we have everything we needed? What else would you have wanted? I don't need anything! Why did you play the lottery, if it's not money you always think about?!

(Beat. The man walks up and down, then sits down at the table.)

Man: Because we have debts. That's why.

Woman: I didn't make them.

Man: Don't start again. Four more months only, four more to go!

Woman: I've never gone into dept. I haven't even borrowed an egg, and flour only once. No, actually, twice.

Man: I couldn't watch us struggle anymore, struggle with the kids! I told you a hundred times how it happened!

Woman: You shouldn't have done it. An honest man doesn't do things like that.

Man: They shut the factory down, didn't they? I had a good trade, a radio parts engineer used to bring in a reliable income, used to be fantastic trade to have! You couldn't predict what's happened. I applied to loads of places. I've been selling myself like a whore . . . Put on clean shirts, polished my shoes . . . I wasn't offered retraining either . . . "You're too old for that," they said. That's what they said fifteen year ago! I tried my own business didn't I? We became partners in the clothes shop—the Chinese arrived. I slaved for that small dark Yugoslavian bloke—got himself shot over there. I became a school janitor—the school closed down. I was managing the sporting equipment—the club closed down. I dealt with bamboo roofs—the chalets took over. The moulding business worked best actually . . . I hated it but it paid well, you can't say it didn't pay well until the multinationals got their hands on it . . . Remember that scumbag, that twenty-year-old new manager, he wanted me to come up with five million forint to make sure I got orders . . . Right. Maybe I should have begged for it somehow, but I was still proud then . . . You, too—you said no way!

Woman: Yes. No way.

Man: Did I want to live on benefits?! I tried to learn computers, I got laughed at, and that I was too old . . . I went bag stuffing, with my back! I turned into a gypsy! The only thing I haven't done is dig a mortar. You weren't in demand either. You got fired too! God, I've had some shit jobs. And yes, the boss convinced me to accept my salary as a bonus. You get to keep a bigger net sum that way. He kept reassuring me it was completely legit . . . the accountant said so too . . . I know you've heard it a hundred times, but it's me who's speaking now!

(Beat)

It wasn't just me who went for it! After paying the boss his fifty percent, I still got twenty percent more! Didn't I get more? I brought it all home! Others went for it too, even the smart-arses. How is it my fault that the boss fell out with the director? He obviously didn't give him as much as they agreed and the director got found out. That's why they looked into the books! If they hadn't fallen out, it would have never been found out! I've said it a hundred times that you couldn't have known in advance! So it's me who wasn't careful, me?! I wired the money to the boss via postal check. I didn't just put it into his pocket. I paid a lot extra for it to be delivered, but that scumbag judge didn't accept it because he was paid off by the company! I had to pay it back, no way round it, I did get it unlawfully. The judge said the check isn't proof because I could've won it on the lottery—that's where the idea came from! Until then I never thought of it, not even as a kid. I've never been hooked on the lottery like others . . . I didn't buy lollipops either, bought nothing! I'm glad I didn't sue, some did and they had to pay the suing fees too . . .

Woman: An honest man doesn't do things like that.

Man: If I hadn't received my salary like that, I would've lost my job!

Woman: You lost it anyway!

Man: But a year later! Everybody has to work the system! Your dad, too, worked the system and your granddad must have—if he got this house out of nothing! My parents worked the system too by the very fact that I was born! Everybody who is alive today—they all had to work the system in some way. The ones that didn't ended up not having kids, because they starved from hunger before they could.

Woman: You were unemployed before and we survived it. Then you wouldn't have got into debt! But this way you worked for them for free! Benefits would have brought in more!

Man: An honest man?! The honest man is born rich and has a good job . . .

Woman: Did I ever bring it up against you? Have I ever blamed you? Didn't my relatives bail you out when you had to pay it back?

Man: Alright, yeah, they did. Because I am so bloody broke, I don't even have relatives. I didn't even have a mother—she drank and then walked out on me before I was ten years old . . . I saved you from a mother-in-law! Oh, yes, you've got relatives, you have indeed. Your precious relatives who let us borrow with twenty percent interest. *(Laughs)*

(Beat)

Woman: What are you saying?

Man: The truth.

Woman: It's not true; they gave it interest free!

Man: That's what they told you!

Woman: You did too!

Man: Because you would've had a wobbly and I wouldn't have been able to scrape it together from anywhere else!

Woman: Who asked for twenty percent? Who could've been such a shit?!

Man: Who? Sanyi and Joli, of course. Who else?

Woman: That's not true!

Man: They would've been stupid not to lend without interest. Actually, they did reduce it, to be fair. You know how much Joli wanted, the little darling? Thirty percent! *(He laughs.)* She dropped ten and Sanyi five . . .

Woman: I'm going to kill them!

Man: Won't make them give the interest back.

Woman: What shits!

(Beat)

Woman: Did Uncle Laci want interest?

Man: Nah . . . But he only gave a hundred thousand forints.

Woman: Sanyi and Joli. And after that they had the balls to come and stuff themselves on my food . . . If only you'd known about this . . . If only . . .

Man: I paid back two-third of it after six months! Didn't I?

Woman: It wasn't that urgent.

Man: Really? If I hadn't worked the system, we would've had to sweat out eighty thousand a month for three years. That's my whole net salary instead of thirty! But I'm knee-deep in shit, I know what to do.

Woman: I wish you hadn't done it.

Man: Hadn't done what? I got us the state's financial aid! That was completely legal! Financial help that you never have to pay back! They never check what you do with it! We've lived off it for two years! Anyway, they wouldn't bother checking whether we built a pigpen or a callous-removing cream factory with it, because we are in a period of overproduction. There is no fucking way that anyone is going to admit to that ever, so they don't bother checking . . . Anyway we've written evidence that we don't have to give it back. I've got the paperwork! The smart-arses won millions—compared to that we got pennies . . .

Woman: It shouldn't have happened. Those awful guys showing up . . .

Man: I warned you well in advance that they'll be back to get half of it. I have warned you. That was part of the deal! They could've awarded it to someone else. It was a blessing that they gave it to me. I made such a stink about it! And the other half was left for us. We've lived off it for two years!

Woman: I refuse to be put through this again, seeing them arrive with that big car. That bold bloke was the worst, the one who was joking and trying to be nice. He was patting the kids' heads and scratching that stupid cat's chin as she was whoring herself around and lying down on her back. I've hated her ever since. While the other two counted the money . . . That bloke was enjoying it! The two retarded morons were harmless, but the one trying to be nice . . . !

Man: I did warn you well in time that they would be back to collect it! I didn't go behind your back! I remember you saying, there isn't much we could do about it!

Woman: They were sitting here scoffing my làngos! I took some out to the chauffeur, he couldn't believe his luck, didn't want to accept them—thought I'd poisoned the bloody things. Those two bold fuckers were sitting here at this table, counting the money . . . and I tell you this table has repulsed me ever since, even though dad played cards on it . . . Jesus, I never want to be that scared, ever again! I dream about them and their big black car and how he eventually bit into my làngos!

Man: I've told you: Dream something else!

(Beat)

I've provided you with a good life, haven't I? Were we starving? We always had something around. We always had potato soup, and the kids always had sausage in theirs or something. Remember how they kept asking, about the sausage bush and how long they were at the start? When I married you, remember I told you we're not going to have—we won't have a war between us. Was there a war? No, there was not! Did the kids starve? No, they did not! I also told you I had a good trade . . . And it was a good trade too! For years! Who could've guessed people don't need repairs done, because they just chuck everything out?

(Beat)

Those men just did their job. They didn't take more than what was agreed. They could have shot me if they wanted to—These were honest Mafiosi because they worked for the Party and you have to be careful in those circles! Not like my boss and accountant and the judge, who were paid off by the multinationals! The corporations!

Woman: I'll never forget the way you were sitting there while they were counting the money . . . Your mouth was twitching when they were counting what you'd already counted five times because you wanted to be sure it was spot on . . . Your face was all red . . . You were sweating . . . The back of your neck was soaking wet. Disgusting it was . . .

(Beat)

Man: Are you telling me that you've never been upset?

Woman: It was my honour at stake!

Man: I've stood by you, haven't I? I recommended getting a graphologist, didn't I? You didn't have a clue what that was!

Woman: Well, anyone could have got confused! They were pointing at me, "Look at the informer walking over there!" I'd no idea what was going on, and by the time I got there, they'd stopped . . . I thought they were jealous of my studying opportunity. When they called me in to that what's-its-name place, that office—

Man: The People's Control Central Committee. PCCC.

Woman: What does it matter?!

(Beat)

They called me in, helped me with my coat . . . I thought it was regarding the Polytechnic . . . They sat me down and said that I should tell them in my own words what I'd written to them. I said I didn't write anything . . . Then, they put it in front of me . . . And there it was, my faked signature under an informer's report!

(Beat)

Man: You shouldn't have given up that education opportunity.

Woman: How long did we have to wait to hear that it was not my writing? By that time, everybody thought I was an informer! How could I have gone to school?

Man: You shouldn't have left school! By then we had the writing expert's opinion that it wasn't you who had signed it!

Woman: It was too late then.

(Beat)

If I bump into someone, I still get stared at. I barely dare go into town! It's bloody shameful.

(Beat)

Man: I've stood by you all the way through.

Woman: Every shopping trip was pure torture! It still is! Seventeen years ago it was and I still dread meeting people, in case they still think I'm an informer! How can I look them in the eye?

(Beat)

Man: Why aren't you happy? It's so weird that you can't be happy! I'm sprinting home, jumping onto moving freight trains! Why go on about the past? Be happy, for God's sake!

(Beat)

Tell you what . . . We'll pay off the drainage guys and they'll spray the whole courthouse with shit for us! They'll scaffold it so the roof can have some too! An overnight scaffolding job, and by morning shit will be pouring onto their heads!

Woman: What for?

Man: Why not?

(Beat)

The drainers will get what they deserve too . . . Weren't you raving about how you have to tip them to get them to empty the drains when it's actually their cushy public sector job? I'll get the whole road covered in glue, with a ton of it when they're due to get here. Not here, further up . . . Let them crawl out of it *(laughs)*, the fire brigade will have to pull them out!

Woman: I hope it's just your big mouth.

Man: We'll buy the mine!

(Beat)

I wrote down the lorries' number plates and reported to the police about their dumping rubbish here . . .

Woman: You're not starting up on this one again are you?

Man: They've been emptying their bins in front of our eyes, completely illegally ever since! The cops said that was no proof, but I took photos with Sanyi's camera, didn't I? Shoved it under their noses. They said that it wasn't proof, that nowadays you can manipulate images . . . They said that it's the guard's job to report them. The guards never see anything; a lorry to them is like a tiny mouse . . . I went to the council after that. "Move somewhere else." That's all that arsehole could find to say, "Move somewhere else." He got paid off, too, or he's just being lazy . . . Lazy, actually—I went to the parliament's representative, I've asked for an appointment five times, he said of course he'll look into it, absolutely he will. He's been looking into ever since in fucking Brussels or wherever . . . Who knows what's killing us here . . . What kind of poison we've been breathing in for years . . . But if we buy it! We can afford to! Do you get it? We can afford to buy it with guards, garbage, and everything! I'll plant figs. I'll bring in earth and heaters, solar panels, wind energy . . . I'll have them dig a private quarry lake! Who needs the sea? A Hungarian sea, a privately owned Hungarian sea we'll have here! I'll have a sign made with big letters saying Dire Mere—do you get it? Diar-rhoea I'll charge an entry fee . . . We can have a nudist beach and everything! We'll be in the tourist guidebooks! We can buy the whole neighbourhood! We'll get everything cleaned up, all the way up to the stream.

Woman: They'll dump it somewhere else.

Man: Won't bother me.

Woman: You'll leave me for a younger woman.

(Beat)

Man: We'll go halves. Three hundred million isn't that much . . . Not enough for a stunner . . .

(Beat)

For fuck's sake, laugh!

(The woman gets up and exits stage left.)

What's the matter with you?

(The woman comes back, fussing with the coffee box.)

What's wrong with behind the telly?

Woman: It's already been there, that's what's wrong . . .

Man: What are you doing?

Woman: *(Puts it up onto the top shelf.)* I want to see it.

(The woman sits back, looks at the box, gets up, takes it down, and puts it on the lower shelf.)

Let's put it back to where it was. It's less suspicious there . . .

(Beat)

We should do it quickly.

Man: Do what?

Woman: Get it cashed in.

(Gets up, turns off the gas on the hob, sits back down.)

Man: What's going on now?

Woman: The gas cylinder could blow up.

Man: It's never blown up.

Woman: I'm scared of cooking while it's here.

Man: We'll eat raw spuds then. They ate raw potato skins in the war, my father told me. I'll get us horsemeat—they ate that too, and we'll eat that raw as well. The kids will be happy with a bit of change.

(Beat)

Woman: Won't buy a villa actually. We can't do it.

Man: Why? Why not?

Woman: We won't buy anything. I read you're not supposed to go on a spending spree—can't do anything that stands out . . . I read that you've got to keep it in smaller amounts, in different accounts. And you've got to keep it moving—move the money between accounts. That's what they recommended—I read it . . . They'll break in, destroy everything . . . I daydreamed about winning, too . . . I spend so much time on my own at home . . . My mind is constantly wondering . . . It's awful . . . That's why I read lots, to stop this bloody daydreaming, but I can't help it!

Man: What are you on about?

(Beat)

Woman: What did you say the interest will be on this?

Man: We'll look into it . . .

Woman: Just a year's interest is a fortune!

Man: Of course.

Woman: No . . . wait . . . Inflation is higher than the interest rate, right? We'll lose on it if we put it into the bank! We mustn't keep it in the bank!

Man: OK, we won't then!

Woman: Where will we keep it?

Man: We'll buy shares . . .

Woman: No, we won't! We won't become capitalists!

Man: If we have money, we will.

Woman: We won't buy shares. I won't have you play the stock market . . .

Man: It's not like the arcades—not that I go to the arcades, of course!

Woman: It's still a no!

Man: Alright, so I went there once. I just fired onto a screen, and it's not true that I lost two thousand, because it wasn't even five hundred—Ask anyone!

(Beat)

Woman: When do they give us the money?

Man: When we want it.

Woman: How do you get it?

Man: We'll show up with a few lorries . . .

Woman: It's that much money?

Man. It's many floors high if they pile it up . . . We can hire some storage place . . . Or if you want we can buy a bunch of good mattresses, a few hundred to bury the money into them . . .

Woman: Stop joking.

Man: Do I ever joke?

(Beat)

Woman: So we'll have to deposit it . . .

Man: Don't have to bother picking it up, they'd wire it straightaway. I'm sure they do that. We'll open an account.

Woman: More than one then.

Man: Yes. Lots. Six little accounts, with a few hundred thousand in each.

(Laughs. A beat)

Woman: Where do we get it?

Man: I don't know . . .

Woman: We've got to let them know we're coming to get it.

Man: There's a number at the newsagent's that you have to call if you win over twenty million forints. I used to stare at it sometimes, but didn't memorise it . . . Used to daydream we'd win twenty gazillion forints and I'd be ringing that number . . .

Woman: Why didn't you get it today straightaway?!

Man: Because I came running home with the news! I thought you'd be pleased.

(Beat)

Woman: Sometimes they can get it wrong . . . They print the numbers wrong.

Man: I've never heard of that.

Woman: Yes, it does happen. You said it yourself that the Germans got something called "one winner."

Man: They don't make mistakes like that, either. They screen this live, they pull the numbers out in front of notaries . . . They would've corrected anything in two days!

(Beat)

Woman: Did . . . did you play the lottery when you were there?!

Man: No.

Woman: Sure you did! One winner! How else would you know what it meant?! How much did you spend on gambling there?!

Man: Nothing at all.

Woman: You're lying.

Man: Ask anybody! Why don't you hire a detective, an expensive German one while you're at it. Go and look for the Pakistanis, Turks, and Arabs I lived with, they'll know for sure . . . You can buy yourself a translator . . . There was a Greek kid there who spoke Hungarian—they emigrated from here . . . I've got his address, but you can't make out the letters . . .

(Beat)

Woman: How much time do you have until you have to claim it?

Man: A few months I think . . . But a few weeks for sure.

Woman: We'd better hurry then, because I can't stand staring at the coffee box . . . Listen . . . We'll ring them . . . You go and check that number, write it down, we'll ring . . . Then we'll throw away the mobile . . .

Man: What do you mean throw it away?!

Woman: Actually, a mobile is no good; we need to call from a phone box! I'm sure they'll see the number displayed, or they'll track it and know right away that we're the winners—and they'll flood us with the media, and that'll be the end of us!

Man: What?

Woman: I bet you they'll pounce on us right away, we'd have barely put the phone down and the TV crews will be bugging us . . . They wait for the winners to call in and then they come out straightaway. They'll be able to locate you for sure! But the street phone's number is not good either. They can identify that too, street phones have numbers; they'll send their fingerprinting people out to take our fingerprints . . .

Man: So what? How will they know that it's mine?!

Woman: Can't call from the post office, either . . . They'll hear us . . . Someone is always eavesdropping—they got nothing better to do. Can't call from the town either, it's too close . . . Better to call from somewhere else . . . I got it; you'll go on a trip somewhere far away and call them from there . . .

Man: You watch too many cop shows.

Woman: Me? Are you sure? You're the one always watching shit cop shows. I am bloody fed up with them!

(Beat)

The ticket's got a serial number. They can find out it's been sold here . . .

Man: That doesn't matter. Someone travelling could have bought it . . .

Woman: They'll ask the lady who she sold it to. She'll remember.

Man: It was a man.

Woman: If you've always bought it from him, he'll remember.

Man: Fine, I'll go in and wring his neck. They don't usually find murderers.

Woman: You haven't told anyone at work, have you?

Man: No, I haven't.

Woman: No one must find out! Nobody!

Man: I haven't told anybody. I was just relieved to have dragged myself home! I'll have to have the boys over sometime.

Woman: No, you won't!

Man: Relax, I can afford to, just on my wages alone.

Woman: But you have never done it before, and they'll start getting suspicious!

Man: Give over, will you!

Woman: It's no coincidence they tell you to keep it secret! They actually advise you to move house too! For a good reason! Because of all the past bad experiences! People who suddenly come into money, they often get murdered, right? The Mafia kill each other off too. They'll get rid of us too if they find out!

Man: Banks have such things as confidentiality rules. Bank confidentiality!

Woman: But one bloke will know, the one sitting at the other end of the phone line, the one picking up . . . At least one bloke will know! And that one is too many! He's there picking up so he can report it!

Man: Who says you've got to introduce yourself? You only need to discuss when you're coming and if you're opening a bank account with them.

Woman: They'll record and identify your voice.

Man: Where on earth is my voice on record?!

Woman: It will be from then on!

Man: I'll whisper then.

Woman: But when we show it to them . . . They'll need to ask for proof of identity. But even if they don't . . . Anyway, we'll be standing there in front of them and be bloody stared at—

Man: They won't ask for anything, just the ticket!

Woman: They'll copy our fingerprints from it!

Man: For God's sakes!

Woman: But our faces will be filmed by the security cameras! They're packed with surveillance cameras! They'll look at them, get our pictures from the Ministry of Interior Affairs, and they'll know straightaway who won it!

Man: Read my lips: "Bank confidentiality!"

Woman: They'll still have to inform the Inland Revenue, they report all larger bank accounts . . . That's how it's done, because of the Mafia. I read it.

Man: But it's already the net amount!

Woman: You still have to report it and we'll be showing up on their computers in no time! It's there for anybody to see!

(Beat)

Man: Why does it matter if a few bank employees know about it? They aren't allowed to give out personal data!

Woman: If one or two blokes know about it, they'll sell the information for good money. Of course they'll rat us out, rat us out straight away, they will! They aren't allowed to give out personal data? What planet do you live on? And even if they're honest, by chance, still then . . . They can break the secret code and descend on us . . . blackmailing and threatening us . . .

Man: Who? Who are they?!

Woman: They'll kidnap the kids. Ask for a ransom, hundreds of thousands. They'll call every ten minutes to threaten us.

Man: We don't even have a phone! They can't get hold of the mobile number . . . And they won't be able to beat it out of me because I haven't memorised it yet!

Woman: In a letter then! Or they'll just show up at the gate with big black cars. Those shameless bastards. They'll kidnap the kids, cut their ears off first, then their pinkies, their noses, you'll have to remove them from the post box . . . No point telling the cops. They'd be in on it . . . They'll be tied together at the bottom of a hole, won't be fed, heads covered by some sack for weeks and months . . . Why did you have to play the lottery at all? You're really winding me up now . . . You always talk shit, such and such a mate or some dodgy business, and we always lose out at the end!

(Beat)

Man: People have been winning and they have always got their hands on it in secret! If you don't it public, your name doesn't get published!

Woman: How do you know? It could well be that none of them are alive!

(Short beat)

Man: That's crazy!

Woman: Maybe no one has ever won, maybe they lied to the population, so that the winnings don't increase . . . Get it? . . . They've saved millions for the state . . . They probably got some bonus for it, it would make it worth their while . . . Have you ever seen anyone on TV, somebody who raked in a lot? Have you? Because I haven't. Because they never existed!

Man: They didn't want to be bragging in public, it makes sense!

Woman: The whole thing is a con. No one has ever won anything!

Man: But we did win! Haven't you seen that they picked out our numbers?!

(Beat)

Woman: They'll deny it. We don't have the money in our hands yet. We'll go there and they'll tell us we've forged it.

Man: How could we have forged it? With what?

Woman: With a copier they'll say.

Man: Where do you see a copier here?

Woman: They'll make one appear, lie and say your fingerprints were on it . . . If I can make these things up, why couldn't they?! They won't want to pay it, or they could say that it was last week's or last year's ticket! It's not last year's, is it?

Man: No!

Woman: They'll come up with something else then. Whatever. They'll deny it. They always deny everything. They'll say that somebody has already claimed it, and they paid the cash to them . . . Good luck in suing them. No point. They could also ask to check your winning ticket, disappear behind a door, and never reappear again. Meanwhile they'll politely ask us why we're standing there, are we by any chance about to rob the bank? . . . You'll have no time to realise you are already handcuffed. They'll find a hundred witnesses who'll testify to seeing you whipping out a gun . . . They'll manage to find the weapon. They'll do a house search and find the heroin that they'll have planted there themselves . . .

(Beat)

Man: You never used to be like this, so . . . evil! You never used to be like this!

Woman: No, because until now I was poor . . . But now rich! And you've got to think like that!

(Beat)

Man: Why only remember all the bad stuff? Why now? When everything will change. Our whole life will . . . How come you only remember the bad stuff?!

Woman: That's what they're like though, aren't they? Like when your mate lied and said you were driving his car!

Man: He was never a mate!

Woman: Whatever, your colleague then. It was a massive speeding fine! You didn't even have a driver's licence! They weren't shits in your opinion? You went and told them that you don't even have a licence, they had actually taken it away and you never got it back because you didn't attend the course . . . You were a coward, got scared of not passing . . .

Man: There was no point; we'd just sold the car because we couldn't afford to run it!

Woman: Then they had the nerve to say that driving without a licence would be an extra hundred thousand forint fine . . . If I hadn't spent the whole night screaming under his window, they'd have made you pay one hundred and fifty thousand!

Man: Yes, and I had to do the begging to get you released from jail!

Woman: Doesn't matter, he shat himself and paid the fine! So, I remember only the bad stuff, do I? What else could I remember?!

Man: But I thought that we'd forgotten all this stuff ages ago! Really ages ago! Why choose to remember it now?

(Beat)

We'll ask someone . . . give them a bit of dosh and they'll open the account . . .

Woman: Have you lost your mind? They'll walk off with the ticket! And actually we don't know how much we'll have to deposit in the bank . . . Almost the whole lot! They'd be idiots to give us all that money!

(Beat)

Woman: Anyway, we need to get out of here . . . even if they give it to us.

Man: It's not exactly—

Woman: Not out of the house—get out of the country!

Man: Why would we have to do that?

Woman: Because everybody will be on our case! Everybody! Your mates, acquaintances, the whole country! How much did you say it was? Six hundred million?

Man: Six hundred and five million. *(Laughs)*. We could actually leave the five there, let them wipe their arses with it . . .

Woman: Won't leave anything! It's two years' good living money.

Man: OK, we won't then.

(Beat)

Woman: We'll be hunted down by everybody! We need to get out of here right away! Even if we don't want to!

(Beat)

Man: They won't find out. We'll live modestly. I'll keep working . . . Better to actually, I won't get bored . . .

Woman: They'll still find out. They'll know the second I start throwing out the beds. We need to leave straightaway! Remember how everybody started hating you when you got that bonus? You came crying to me that they didn't ask you to the pub!

Man: I wasn't crying. It felt crap, that's all!

Woman: How much did you get? It was enough for a few rounds? And look, they got on your case!

Man: Not great to leave just before their A Levels?

Woman: They'll get them abroad. Like you said, in a useful language—

(Beat)

I won't get anything for this shit house, anyway!

Man: What do you mean, shit house? Your granddad built it!

Woman: I despise it! My dad was unhappy here!

Man: We lived here alright!

Woman: We only went to the cinema once, just once in nineteen years!

Man: When I was working abroad I had to sleep in sheds and hostels with some dodgy people around. They were times when I was the only white one! And that's worse than being a gypsy here. I was too scared to fall asleep. You were living in a hotel at least, only sharing with four! And what about when I cut my hand and it got infected and they wanted to amputate it from the wrist down? I didn't let the fuckers do it, did I? And what about when the ladder broke under me and I couldn't go to the doctor's because I was working illegally on the black market—and I was in pain for months every time I took a breath. Of course, I couldn't see a doctor, I didn't have health insurance.

(Beat)

Woman: You've no idea what it was like weeks and months on my own with the kids! I had to learn bloody maths so that I could check their homework! And I had to learn physics and chemistry! I almost failed my maths in grade 7 because by then I was already helping mum!

Man: Don't you think I did exactly the same stuff when you were abroad!?

(Beat)

Woman: Let me tell you, Sanyi will be the first one to send his bouncers on us. He'll claim that as family he'll be entitled to such and such an amount. Oh yes, the family! Joli will be crying her eyes out all day long, whinging about how many thousands and thousands she needs for building materials. She'll bring up all that business about her mum giving money to Dad for his crutches . . . She'll make us a scene, Joli. She asked for the crutches back! She wanted them back because she paid for them. She didn't even need them! My dad's crutches, for God's sakes! *(Cries)*

Man: I thought he'd misplaced them . . .

Woman: *(Crying)*

I had to give them back . . .

Man: I am so lucky to have missed out on relatives!

Woman: Why didn't my dad win it? He could've had his operation abroad . . . *(Cries)*

(Beat)

Woman: The school will ask for donations for the gym, the Attila statue and God-knows-what.

Man: We can give a little. There'll be enough to go around.

Woman: You'd waste the whole lot, wouldn't you?

(Beat)

Man: On the train coming home I was thinking, why me? There're plenty worse off than me . . . I see them in Budapest on the street, sleeping rough. We should give the whole lot to the homeless. *(Laughs)* I was thinking that . . . Crazy stuff . . . I must be insane too . . . The whole lot! *(Laughs)*

Woman: You've lost the plot!

Man: Alright, we won't give it to homeless. Just a thought.

Woman: How much would each one of them get, did you work that out?

Man: No . . .

Woman: How many homeless are there? Sixty thousand I think.

Man: I don't know.

Man: Whatever, let's count with a hundred thousand. How much for each then?

Man: *(Counts for a while)*

Six hundred forints.

Woman: You see? Is it worth it?

(Beat)

Man: But I don't want to give it to them!

Woman: It'd be enough for one meal. They make more with one day's begging. Actually, they wouldn't even get hold of that six hundred. You can't just go up to each and put it into their hands. You'd have to give it to some organisation for distribution. How much do you think will be left? They'll steal half of it or . . . three quarters of it. No, they'll steal almost the whole lot. Best-case scenario is that each homeless ends up with a hundred forint. Is that what you want?

(Beat)

Man: What about . . . kids with cancer?

Woman: Oh, God no! They're a bunch of thieves, it was on telly. When they were collecting for their picnic trip, how much do you think was left, eh? Not even a tenth of it. They were fed bread with dripping and onions for two weeks and only twice a day. And they had three thousand for each day!

(Beat)

Take it away. Hold it and take it away. I won't get any rest until it's here.

(Beat)

I can't sleep with this crap being around.

Man: With what crap?

Woman: The coffee box.

Man: Put it under your pillow.

Woman: It would burn my neck.

Man: I'll put it under my pillow then.

Woman: It'd still burn my neck.

(Beat)

We're now arseholes just like that bold tosser with earrings in his open-top car who wanted to run me over on the pedestrian crossing. He even returned to kick me in the back when I was trying to get up! Everyone just stared and laughed while I was trying to pick up the surviving eggs. They just stood there laughing. Jesus Christ, no one moved a finger to help!

(Beat)

You'll have to get the same car and the same sunshades and shirt. You'll have to shave your hair off . . . You'll have to run over pedestrians at the crossings . . . Because if you don't, they'll figure out that you are not one of them. Course, they'll suss it out, you're a bastard like them. They'll always be able to push you around.

Man: That's not true!

Woman: You're a fathead, you are! A dawdling sloth. A big cowardly blabbermouth. A phoney. All you can think of is your spree. You could never grow up.

Man: That's why you fell in love with me.

Woman: They'll love you for your money from now on. I was the only one who didn't love you for your money. Your kids only loved you for the money they could milk you for.

(Beat)

Woman: You should have won less. Like three hundred or six hundred thousand, an amount that they wouldn't want to take off you . . .

Man: Well, I'm so sorry it's too much. But even the three hundred or six hundred thousand is too much. They broke into Jani's for only two thousand, beat up and crippled his mum . . .

(Beat)

Woman: Let's give it back.

Man: What?

Woman: Take it back.

Man: To who?

(Beat)

Woman: This came too late for us and too soon for the kids.

Man: Why would it have been any better twenty years ago when we got married? Or in twenty years' time when we won't be around? When is better?

Woman: Take it. I know that you want to steal the whole lot. Of course you do!

(Takes the coffee box down, puts it on the table.)

Here you are. The coffee box is yours. Prah.

(Beat)

Man: Let's give it all to the kids, they can decide what to spend it on.

Woman: That's the perfect way to completely destroy them.

Man: Why, is being poor good for them? I can't look them in the eye, I'm so ashamed. They come home and what's for tea? Cabbage or potato soup . . . What did I, their dad, provide for them? I'm so embarrassed at parties, other kids smiling, running around, and ours just standing there broken . . .

Woman: It's been fine like that. They can learn how to fight in life. If they don't want to, then it's their business. If they want to steal, let them—that takes some effort too. But if they're rolling in it, they'll never fight for anything.

(Beat)

Man: You're afraid that they'll grow up and leave you. But they're going to grow up and they'll leave the nest, they will. That's your problem, that's what's scaring you!

Woman: The whole thing is artificial . . . With you it's been like that for ages and same with them. The whole thing is a lie . . .

Man: What are you on about?

(Beat)

What's hurting you is that I managed to do this! Yeah, that I got this for us on my own! I was the one who stuck with it. Yes, I stuck to it, me! I wasn't a loser after all, that's what's bothering you! My success gets to you!

(Beat)

Woman: What do you get for it?

Man: For what?

Woman: For the money. You can't exchange the past. A big pile of misery is what it was. You can't take it back now. What's the point?

(Beat)

Man: We're not that old . . . We've got twenty good years left in us. A hundred thousand for each year! They won't let you die properly nowadays anyway. In top hospitals, they plug you into some tubes, you don't even have to bother chewing, and you get fed from underneath. *(Laughs)* It won't be us waiting this time. It'll be a bunch of doctors waiting for us to hire them. And it'll be us telling them stuff. *(Laughs)*

Woman: *(Shouting)* What do you want to say to them?

Man: Whatever I feel like.

Woman: What do you want to say? Tell me what! *(Cries)* I hate it! I hate my whole life. You included! It was bearable until now . . . but now that you've become rich, *(sobs)* I can't bear it!

(Beat)

Man: But why? We were doing fine, you and I. Weren't we? We were OK. Don't ever say stuff like this . . . Why now? What's happening? What have I done?

(Beat)

Woman: *(Calms down, wipes her tears.)*

Who will you hang out with when you're abroad? In what language? Who will you go to the pub with? You'll be lurking around ports, hunting for Hungarian mates. You're not the type to be alone and they'll fleece you, just as your mates do.

Man: They don't and I won't hang out there then!

Woman: You'll be clinging to me all day long. You'll stare at the telly and go crazy.

(Beat)

My father died here . . . Where else can I feel at home after that? We'll have to watch all this from somewhere . . . You want me staring at them while they're washing up, cleaning up after me? They're slaves just like I was. *(Shivers)*

Man: I am sure you'll get used to it.

Woman: I can just imagine you bossing them about, shouting.

Man: *(Shouting)* When have I ever shouted?

(Beat)

It's you who wanted the Adriatic island!

Woman: Of course I didn't! I'm not that daft. Take this crap away from me. I don't want it! You won it, so get out of here with it!

Man: Is this paper cursed? For God's sake! Is this some punishment, or what? How can you reject such luck? It's a sin.

(Beat)

What about the kids?

Woman: I'll raise them myself.

Man: With what?

Woman: With cleaning jobs and child benefit . . . We'll manage. Take it then! It's yours! I don't want it!!

(Beat)

Man: *(Stands up decisively, a short beat)*

OK. I'll take it with me. I'll start a new life without you all. On the train I'd already imagined myself flying the helicopter, and you weren't on it. I was flying alone! You were nowhere to be seen! I saw myself landing with staff fussing over me and it was me bossing them about . . . That's what I've been seeing in my mind then and now. And I also saw that if only I hadn't let my father go out that day, he wouldn't have got knifed. I could've hidden his uniform, and he would still be alive today!

Woman: Go, now—

Man: Wonder what it would be like if my parents were together. They couldn't possibly drink more than what they drank . . . Just better booze, maybe.

Woman: How many times have you promised to fix the roof? But you were too scared to fall off it! Wouldn't let me call a specialist because you would always do it. You're a coward loser!

Man: I painted it on my own!

Woman: But it was me on the ladder. You get vertigo!

Man: I had knee troubles at the time!

Woman: Be brave just for once in your life. You've got money for it . . . Go, go!

Man: I AM going! *(Goes to the wicker chair and picks up a bag.)* What can I take with me?

Woman: Anything

(He is a bit aimless.)

Did you buy any yeast?

Man: What?

Woman: Yeast. I asked you this morning.

Man: I forgot.

(Beat)

Woman: And bring the telly back in. It's too heavy for me.

Man: In here?

Woman: In the room, of course!

Man: I never took it out!

Woman: Yes, you did. You threw it out.

Man: Only talked about doing it!

(Beat)

(Goes to the table, picks up the coffee box. Stands there.)

If I wire you some money from it, you will use it, right? . . . *(Beat)*

Look, you do with it what you want, I won't get involved. You can spend it on what you want . . . just let me stay . . . If you could put up with me all this time, why not now? You said, when you went nuts that time and took off, that you came back because you'd got used to me . . . You didn't mention the kids' smell, but mine! So how come you're used to it now?! It doesn't work like that!

Woman: Take it to hell!

(Beat)

Man: I'll leave the box here. Prah . . .

Woman: OK.

(Beat)

I'll take the bathrobe, the old one . . .

(Beat)

Let's wait for the kids, see what they say . . .

Woman: Will you go now?

(Beat. The man opens the box, unwraps the ticket, puts it on the table, and sits down. They look at the ticket.)

Man: Where will I sleep tonight?

Woman: Go get the money and get a room . . .

Man: They don't give it to you so quickly!

Woman: I have seven thousand in my purse. Take it.

(Beat)

Man: Why do you want to get rid of me? What have I done?! I was allowed to live here until now. Why am I not allowed to anymore?!

(Beat)

Woman: You can't pity a rich man.

(Beat)

Man: Let's burn it. Let's burn this crap. If we burn it, can I stay?

(Beat. Man gets up, gets the matches from the cooker, goes back to the table, sits down)

I'm lighting it. Shall I light it?

(Beat)

Woman: Could we just keep a little bit of it? Not much, just enough to get a tombstone for dad . . .

Man: It's not possible.

(Beat)

You seem to like your dad a bit more now.

(Beat)

Woman: You'll take the mobile phone back.

Man: I won't take it back.

Woman: You won't have enough money to use it anyway.

Man: I'll put in on my bedside table and admire its beauty!

(Beat)

Man: I'll light it. Shall I light it?

Woman: Not at the table! By the sink!

(They get up. The woman is holding the ticket, the man the match, they're walking to the sink.)

(Beat)

Man: We'll regret this. It'll drive us mad right after we do it.

Woman: Doesn't matter.

(Beat)

Man : Oh God, make them catch AIDS, cancer, bird flu. Have bailiffs descend on them—have their electricity cut off—make them eat fat dripping morning day and night. Don't let them enjoy a good footie game ever again—contaminate their water—let their balls rot off—make them go blind—take away their paid holidays—bury them alive—make their guts, ball sacks, and feet blow up—let terrorists kill them—bury them in a hole up to their necks—make them get diarrhoea and give them constipation at the same time—take their driving licences away—let their mother tongue die out—don't let them sleep . . . If I had money, I'd buy a machine gun and shoot, shoot, shoot!

(Beat)

I am going to light it.

Woman: Light it.

(The man lights the match. The woman holds the ticket, which catches fire. Darkness, with only the burning ticket. The flames slowly die out. Darkness.)

THE END