

Prologue, 2013

Late night. Empty bar. Ben, Aniko, Mihály, Julia, Gizi are gathered around the bar. All are exhausted, drained. Ben plays them a voice memo recording, taken secretly on his phone.

D / POLICEMAN (RECORDED)

*

I just need the building cleared, that's the bottom line.

ANIKO (RECORDED)

Officer, with all due respect, we are exercising non-violent civil disobedience. We are not leaving our building.

D / POLICEMAN (RECORDED)

It's not your building.

Everyone listening to the recording reacts to this.

ANIKO (RECORDED)

BEN (RECORDED)

Wait a minute -

This again.

*

GIZI

*

Are you kidding me?

*

D / POLICEMAN (RECORDED)

This is a squat. The building belongs to the municipality. / I have a paper here that's an order for your removal.

BEN

(over the recording)

Bla bla bla bullshit.

ANIKO

(over Ben)

Shhhh.

ANIKO (RECORDED)

We have been legal in this location since 2010.

BEN (RECORDED)

We've paid three years of rent to the fucking city. We have the official receipts for the rent, every month, stamped "City of Budapest"

BEN

(over recording)

I'm skipping forward.

ANIKO

But -

JULIA
I want to hear.

GIZI
You should have let me go in there with you guys.

MIHALY
And do what? *

Ben presses play again. *

D / POLICEMAN (RECORDED)
Terminal violations. There's nothing you can do. *

ANIKO (RECORDED)
I really don't want to be difficult – but according to law,
we have sixty days to respond to health violations / to bring
things up to code.

BEN (RECORDED)
Why are you bothering? This has nothing to do with health.
It's because we organized the protest at Fidesz Headquarters. *

D / POLICEMAN (RECORDED)
That's not the reason.

BEN (RECORDED)
Of course it's the fucking reason, you fucking – *

BEN
I'm skipping this too.
He skips forward again.

D / POLICEMAN (RECORDED)
This city is changing, politically.

ANIKO
Wait – go back.

BEN
I just want to play them / the part where – *

ANIKO
Go back! They need to hear this. *

Ben rewinds. *

D / POLICEMAN (RECORDED)
You Jews use a lot of candles in your rituals. What if you
accidentally leave a candle burning all night, and it burns
down the building?

Beat. The people onstage react.

ANIKO (RECORDED)

Candles aren't a big part of Passover.

D / POLICEMAN (RECORDED)

This city is changing, politically. There are thugs in the streets these days. They know your place hosts events for Jews and gypsies and faggots,

BEN (RECORDED)

Nice.

D / POLICEMAN (RECORDED)

Even blacks -

ANIKO (RECORDED)

"Even" blacks?

BEN (RECORDED)

Why leave out communists?

D / POLICEMAN (RECORDED)

Exactly. IF you left here one night, and there were thugs outside, on the street, waiting to beat you bloody -

ANIKO (RECORDED)

Is this a... threat?

JULIA

Oh my god.

D / POLICEMAN (RECORDED)

No. I'm simply saying, if you did not follow our order to vacate the premises, if you decided to continue trespassing -

ANIKO (RECORDED)

It's not trespassing!

JULIA

It's not trespassing!

D / POLICEMAN (RECORDED)

If you deliberately went against our orders. Then naturally if you were attacked, say by skinheads, for instance. We would not be able to help you.

Beat.

MIHALY

Jesus.

He turns off the recording,
overwhelmed.

GIZI

They're bluffing.

MIHALY

Did you see Gyuri's leg?

BEN

And Katalin's arm.

GIZI

Who the fuck is Katalin?

MIHALY

Those weren't fucking accidents.

BEN

Ssssh. People are sleeping upstairs.

JULIA

I say we prosecute. Take them to Strasberg.

GIZI

We know, we know / you say that.

JULIA

They can't just walk in here and just shut us down and rough us up

MIHALY

Apparently they can, I mean

JULIA

Take their asses to Strasberg

MIHALY

They don't give a shit about Strasberg, I hate to break it to you. They don't care about Human Rights, they don't care what the EU thinks about them, they want to leave the EU.

GIZI

Hungary is not *leaving* the EU.

JULIA

Oh that's definitely their plan, are you kidding?

GIZI

Then what's the point of bringing them to Strasberg?

BEN

Do you want to hear the rest?

Beat. Ben presses play.

D / POLICEMAN (RECORDED)

If you deliberately went against our orders. Then naturally if you were attacked, say by skinheads, for instance. We would not be able to help you.