

**ANDREA PASS**

**SUNFLOWER**

*Drama*

Mother (30, Janka's mother)

Teacher (30)

Janitor, Hairdresser, Doctor, Little Boy

Janka (10)

Erik (10, Janka's classmate)

Dzseni (12, Erik's sister, Janka's classmate)

Julcsi (10, Janka's classmate)

Father (35, Janka's father)

Clerk at the thrift shop, Woman in the mental ward

**Scene 4 – Evening**

*At Janka's, Erik and Janka draw a picture together. Dzseni plays on her telephone. We can hear the sound of the game.*

Dzseni: No TV?

Janka: Not now.

Dzseni: Why not?

Janka: The TV's in Mom's room.

Dzseni: That's not the living room?

Janka: Not anymore. Mom stays in there.

Erik:           *(to Janka)* What will you be for Farsang?

Janka:          UFO girl.

Erik:          UFO girl?

Janka:          Or Lady Gaga. And you two?

Dzseni:        Nothing.

Erik:          I'll be a Viking!

Janka:          That's awesome!

Erik:          Uh-huh. Did I tell you my ancestors are Vikings?

Dzseni:        Lord God...

Erik:          What? Yours are also Vikings. (We're brother and sister.) *(to Janka)* Do you know who your ancestors are?

Janka:          Of course. My father's family had nobles.

Erik:          What does that mean?

Janka:          That means we have a crest.

Erik:          And what's on it?

Janka:          ... An ostrich.

Erik:          That's not scary at all.

Janka:          Well, fine. Maybe it was bear. But that's not the point! King Mátyás wrote a letter of nobility on a dog skin for my father's great-great-great-grandfather, because he was his most faithful servant. From then on, my ancestors were really rich, until they socialized everything. They took away everything – our treasure and our castles. That's why his mother had to give birth to four children in a little run-down shack. She didn't want to give birth to my father, because they were starving.

Erik:          Who was starving?

Janka: His brothers and sisters. When my father was still in grandma's tummy, she looked for a doctor to undo it.

Dzseni: So Mr. Tony isn't your real father?

Janka: Course he is. She couldn't undo him, because daddy wanted to live.

Erik: Oh, so they wanted to kill him?

Janka: No! Only they'd socialized grandma, and she was afraid daddy would starve.

Dzseni: Wait a sec! *(switches off the game on her telephone)* And how did he outlive the doctor?

Janka: Well, it turned out she was expecting twins, and from the two of them, my dad survived. Then grandma started praying to St. Antal to forgive her and to make her little boy healthy. That's why my dad's name is Antal.

*Father enters.*

Father: Good evening.

Children: *(staring at Father)* Kisses, Mr. Tony...

*They continue to stare at him. Father does not understand what is wrong with them.*

Father: Is something wrong?

*Father crosses to the door of Mother's room and knocks.*

Father: *(loudly)* Can I come in? I need the laptop.

Mother: *(offstage)* Right now?

Father: Yes, now.

Mother: *(offstage)* Wait a minute!

Father: I need to send off an order.

Mother: *(offstage)* Right now?

Father: Yes, now!

*Pause*

Father: It'll only take a minute. Then you can get back on Facebook.

Dzseni: *(to Janka)* Your mom friended me.

Father: Anikó!

Mother: Just a sec. Don't rush me.

Dzseni: My page is full of her cutesy pictures.

Janka: Oh, they're adorable!

Erik: I always "like" your mom's pictures.

Janka: *(to Dzseni)* There, you see!

Erik: Well, one time she did post a two-headed turtle. I dreamed about it for days.

*Mother comes out of her room and gives the laptop to Father.*

Father: Thank you.

Mother: Jenny, shouldn't you be at home now? It's almost 8:30.

Dzseni: We thought we'd watch *For Better, For Worse* over here.

Mother: I think you should go home.

*Silence*

Janka: Good night...

*Dzseni and Erik rise reluctantly.*

Erik: Night, Janka! Kisses, Ms. Anikó!

Mother: Good night.

*They start to exit.*

Mother: *(more loudly)* Night, Jennifer!

Dzseni: *(barely audibly)* Kisses.

*Dzseni and Erik exit.*

Mother: The mind boggles...

Janka: Mom, can I ask you something?

Mother: Yes? *(while she talks, she eats a crescent roll)*

Janka: Should I be Lady Gaga?

Mother: What?

Janka: Lady Gaga. For Farsang.

Mother: Choose someone the teachers also know.

Janka: Why?

Mother: Because you won't win anything if they don't know who you are.

Janka: But, Mom, everybody knows Lady Gaga. And it's not a contest.

Mother: What? Isn't that the point? What is it called? Costume Contest.

Janka: "Costume Ball!"

Mother: Whatever. They still have prizes and things like that.

Janka: I still wouldn't win...

Mother: Why not? What a poor attitude!

Janka: I didn't get anything last year.

Mother: Well, that's because no one knew Laika, the first dog in space. I told you it was a stupid idea.

Janka: No, it wasn't! Right, Papa?

Father: Right.

Mother: Okay, it wasn't... But why won't there be a contest? Again with this child-friendly bullshit?

Janka: Because Miss Gabi said winning is not important. Our costumes should reflect our personalities.

*Pause*

Mother: And you'd like to be Lady Gaga?

Janka: Yes.

Mother: Honey, you should dress as a princess.

Janka: But Lady Gaga *is* a princess!

Mother: Uh-huh. Well, you would know... *(starts to exit)*

Janka: Mom!

Mother: What?

Janka: *(about her drawing)* Won't you look?

*Janka shows Mother her drawing.*

Mother: Is that Bodza?

Janka: And me.

Mother: You can go to bed.

*Janka gives Father the drawing, then exits into her room.*

## **Scene 5 – Dinner**

*Mother puts a plate of pasta and potatoes in front of Father. At first, he just looks at it, then takes a bite.*

Mother: You like it?

Father: Very good.

*Pause*

Father: I'd like to talk to you about something, but please don't take it the wrong way.

Mother: Why? What is it?

*Pause*

Father: I've figured from my salary and our savings we can make payments for another year. (About a year.) Then, we'll have to move.

Mother: So we'll rent some place. You need salt?

Father: No.

*Father takes another bite.*

Father: We wouldn't have to move if you could help with the payments. We could find you a part-time job. Or you could work from home. Give English lessons. For little ones.

Mother: I'm doing what I can. The flat and the child are plenty.

Father: One English lesson a day.

*Pause*

Father: Forty-five minutes. Or is that "too straining"?

*Pause*

Father: Besides, lots of women work and keep house.

*Father continues eating. Mother extends a napkin to him. Father suddenly covers his face with his arm.*

Mother: Why react like that? Are you crazy?

If I had the strength, I'd work. You think it's a good feeling having to ask you for money if I see something at H&M?

Father: You need to see a doctor. And not just so he can prescribe Xanax.

Mother: Oh, so there's money for that?

*Pause*

Father: My mother offered to pay this lady for one session a month... And that's a very nice gesture (on her part).

Mother: You complain to your mother that I don't work?

Father: No way! She just asked why you don't visit anymore. She's worried about you.

Mother: Did you tell her I'm sick? *(raises her voice)* Do you two think I'm crazy?

Father: You'll wake the child.

Mother: What did you tell her about me? *(shouts)* What??

Father: We just want what's best for you!

Mother: You two think I'm insane?

*Janka appears in the doorway.*

Mother: What is it? Are you hungry?

Janka: I can't sleep.

Mother: Then go out in the courtyard.

Father: Now?? She can't go out to the courtyard!

Mother: Why? You think something bad will happen?

Father: Because it's after 9:30, Anikó!

*Janka exits into the courtyard.*

Father: We should see the doctor. It will be better for everyone.

Mother: If I got a little more love from you, I'd have got better long ago.

Father: But we love you! We want to help you! You just have to speak to this kind, old woman who's a doctor once a month.

Mother: Let's close the subject.

*Janka re-enters holding Bodza's ball.*

Mother: What's that?

Janka: It's raining. Can I bring in Bodza?



Mother: No.

Janka: Mother, please!

Mother: Not a word! Did you pet him?

Janka: Yes.

Mother: Wash your hands.

Janka: What for?

Mother: Wash your hands like I said!

Janka: But they're not dirty!

*Janka crosses to Mother to show her hands. Mother knocks the ball away and shoves the child. Janka falls.*

Mother: Get into that bathroom and don't touch anything until you wash your hands. Understand?

*Janka exits.*

Mother: That dog, too...

Father: You're crazy...

Mother: I'm crazy? (*screams*) Because I asked her to wash her hands??

*Father exits.*

Mother: You finished eating? You barely touched it.

*Mother remains onstage for a short time, dish in hand.*