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Janusz Glowacki, Eva Zadrzynska & Susanna

INTERVIEW WITH JANUSZ GLOWACKI AND EVA ZADRZYNSKA

Anna Lillios

IT'S A BLUSTERY, rainy November day in Iowa City, Iowa. Outside the weather chills one to the bone; inside, on the eighth floor of the Mayflower Apartment Building where forty writers, members of the International Writing Program, live, there is a warm atmosphere. In the middle of a corridor, an apartment door stands open and from within emerge the sounds of laughter and lively discussion. Janusz and Eva Glowacki are at home, entertaining writers from Iceland, Ireland, India, and West Germany who wander in and out. An aromatic stew simmers on the stove, a bottle of wine is on the table, as well as their daughter's crayons. The interview begins. From this cozy, domestic scene, a real-life drama begins to unfold. . . .

Janusz Glowacki was born in Poland, in 1938, and educated at Warsaw University. He has published five books of short stories and two novels. His latest novel *Give Us This Day*, about the birth of the Solidarity Movement, was very successful in London and Paris. It will be published at the end of 1984 in New York. He has also written four collections of plays and twenty radio-plays. His play, *Cinders*, was produced in five theaters in Poland during the Solidarity Period and at the Royal Court Theater in London. This play opened at Joseph Papp's Public Theater on February 20, 1984, and received reviews, such as the following from Frank Rich in the *New York Times* (2/21/84): "One can only admire the author's will to make elegant Kafkaesque comedy out of his nation's ongoing nightmare of repression." The Yale Drama School recently produced Janusz Glowacki's one-act plays, *Journey to Gdansk* and *Flashback*. Four of his screenplays have been filmed; *Hunting Flies* was directed by Andre Wajda.

While in Poland, Janusz Glowacki was the Vice-President of the Warsaw Branch of the Polish Union of Writers and stood with Lech Walesa at the birthplace of the Solidarity Movement in the Gdansk-Lenin Shipyards.

Janusz Glowacki has been to Iowa three times. He was a member of the 1977 and 1982 International Writing Program, and returned to the University of Iowa in 1983, as an Ida Beam Visiting Lecturer.

Eva Zadrzynska was fired from her position as a journalist for *Politica*, the most important Polish weekly magazine, when martial law came to Poland. She tried for sixteen months to get out of the country before she was allowed to leave in April of 1983. She is a short story writer, has published in leading Polish journals, and is amused that one of her short stories is included in an anthology Polish schoolchildren read. She's also a radio-play producer, script writer, and the author of several children's books.

Janusz and Eva Glowacki live in New York City with their four-year-old daughter, Susanna.

ANNA: Janusz, you've just returned from a speaking tour of Iowa colleges and universities. What message did you give to your audiences and why did you feel compelled to give it knowing it would take you away from writing?

JANUSZ: I wanted to make people know about a very small part of the world, Eastern Europe; that inside this very small part, there is something smaller, like Poland.

ANNA: Were they interested in hearing more about Poland?

JANUSZ: I think they were interested. Poland sounds exotic to them. . . .

EVA: Tell about Grinnell with its surprising audience. . . .

JANUSZ: Sometimes I met students who asked if the U.S. had greater freedom than my country. This was rather sad. Maybe the Eastern Bloc is just so far away . . . it's like the perception of a Kafka novel. For the U.S. and Western Europe, Kafka is a symbolist; for us, he's a realist. This means that this sort of story could happen in Poland. You really can go to sleep a loyal citizen and awake a well-known Japanese spy. This surrealistic horror very often became realism. It's unimaginable for Americans. I tried to give some impression of what censorship means: how censorship determines Polish literature; why Polish literature is so allegorical; how political tension affects writing, affects people; how a writer as a human being is affected by a political situation. I mean, all writers (in Poland) still have to face the choice—to protest, to publish in the Underground Press, to smuggle books to the West, or to cooperate with the government. One thing more, Rilke said: Who is talking about victory, survival is enough. It is enough, but it is very difficult.

ANNA: Eva said you had a different reception at Grinnell. What happened there?

JANUSZ: I met students who knew very, very much and I was nicely surprised.

EVA: These students asked questions Poles would ask, with many details. They knew details and wanted to find out more.

JANUSZ: It was a very exciting visit for me. I don't want to say that it wasn't good at different colleges, but it was better in comparison. Anyway, I feel that people in the U.S. are starting to have some information about Poland because of the Pope, because of Walesa, because of Solidarity. Mostly, it's just on the surface. Maybe also because of the jetliner that was shot down. It was a shock for Americans, that something like this could happen.

ANNA: Do you feel your activities in the U.S. on behalf of Solidarity will benefit or hurt writers in Poland?

JANUSZ: I'm not really sure. . . .

EVA: I think it'll help for sure, because the worst situation is when the whole world is silent and there is no word on behalf of the people who are in bad conditions right now. *But*, I'd be more careful about giving interviews with details, names, connections with the Underground, etc., etc. This happens very often, especially in France, where the people from Poland emigrate when they leave Poland for good. They give interviews, with names, mentioning "connections" in Poland. I know that the "connections" mentioned in these interviews can't find jobs.

ANNA: Does the news get back to them?

JANUSZ: Sure.

ANNA: In your play *Flashback* one of the characters describes how writers kept silent during the period of martial law because they felt it unethical to publish anything. But the writer in the story asserts: "If you can't write the whole truth, it's better to write half-truths than nothing at all." What do you think a writer can really do during a period of oppression? In Eva's case, what did Polish writers do?

JANUSZ: When I wrote the sentence my idea was its irony because I think the most dangerous thing is when half-truths replace the truth. Now the situation in Poland has changed because of the Underground. It's a big moral credit for all writers who publish in the Underground. It could help them a lot.

EVA: I'll tell you. This is really a very big, big problem. Because the pressure—the moral pressure—is not to write for the official press, especially for journalists. There are some monthly magazines which are recognized to be pretty okay. Laws are unwritten; they are just spoken. People know if the editor-in-chief is a Party member and a swine, sold-out. Then, you don't write for his magazine. So the safest position—from the moral point of

view—is to write for the Underground. But, the Underground pays little. You can't make a living on this money. Sometimes you can, if you publish abroad. But, then you can go to prison. Or you can use a pen name. So, if somebody acts according to moral pressure this means not writing for the officials. It means being idle. The brain gets weaker, and I think it's bad because it makes people soft and weak. I'm not in the position to blame people who try to write something. After all, I had some money. Janusz was abroad. He was helping me with food, etc. So, I could be an "honest" person who had no need to work.

Another thing, all my American friends can't understand why where you write is so important. They think *what* you are writing is more important—not *where* you are publishing. In Poland right now, the place is more important than the content. Very often an article or short story which could be published in the official newspaper is published in the Underground. Then, the message is different.

JANUSZ: The situation is so complicated; there are so many conditions. For example, the Union of Writers. It was, for the people, an honest—absolutely honest—union that protested from the beginning against martial law. So, the government dissolved it, and now it is trying to create a new one which will be a union of writers—without writers. But, if you are a member, you have free medical care, a hospital, grants, financial help, a place for writing, special houses, and so on. For many writers who are very poor, for example, and very old . . . they know they shouldn't join this union, but how can they survive? There are so many difficult choices. The best writers, those who are translated, are in a much better position. If someone is well known and published in Europe, is paid and can get money from the West, his economic situation is not so terrible. But he could be arrested any time.

ANNA: Eva, will you tell your story about the first day of martial law and your friends' reactions, as writers?

EVA: Well, my story is unusual because I was supposed to go to London on the first day of martial law. I talked to a friend of mine at 11 p.m. the night before martial law was declared and she promised to drive me to the airport in the morning. So, I said I'll call you at 6 a.m. to make sure you are coming and she said fine. It was my last telephone call. In the morning I picked up my telephone and there was nothing, no connection. I said, "Geez, probably my telephone is broken." I hung up. I had a really tough time waiting for her—will she come or not—because to get a taxi on Sunday morning was very difficult. At last I saw her car coming. It was dark, winter. December 13, 1981. When she arrived, she told me, "Oh, you know what? My telephone is broken." I said, "Mine, too!" "Probably, when I hung up with you, I put the receiver in the wrong position and they disconnected my telephone," she reasoned. But then I remembered I had another call at 11:30.

Anyway, we went to the airport. She drove for fifteen minutes and suddenly we noticed a lot of soldiers in big trucks. My friend said, "Oh, look!" I replied, "So what? I've seen them before." So we went on. Suddenly, the main street leading to the airport was blocked—this time by tanks. So we stopped and I said to the soldiers, "Listen, I have a ticket. My plane is leaving at 8 a.m. I have to be at the airport by 7. My husband . . . (the whole story) . . . I have to join him in London . . . he went there for an opening of his play. . . ." The soldier shouted, "No, no, you're not allowed. Leave, leave!" I asked him, "What's happening?" and he replied, "Don't you know?" I said, "No, I don't know." And he answered, "You're kidding. Go, go!"

I know the area around the Warsaw airport very well. I know the secret, small streets, so we managed to get to the airport. At the airport there was a crowd of people waiting for planes because all flights had been cancelled. The announcer was saying that it was because of the weather and technical difficulties. Two reasons—too many reasons always mean a lie. I went to the first telephone booth—silence. Okay, I knew that that was it. My friend got a little bit hysterical. She said, "You have to go, you have to. Somehow you have to get to London. We'll send your daughter to you later. You'll be with Janusz, so you'll survive. Go, go. . . ." You know, just crazy stuff. And then, we went back. I thought, let's go see our friends and bring this great news to everyone.

Anyway, I went to the husband of my friend. He used to be a Party member, but was very active in Solidarity. We went there and he almost fainted when he found out martial law had been declared.

JANUSZ: What was your reaction?

EVA: I still didn't believe it; it was just a hysterical reaction. I said, no, it couldn't happen. I didn't know what was going on. I said maybe tomorrow I'll be able to fly. I didn't believe that they were Polish soldiers. I looked at the uniforms. I felt it couldn't happen that Poles would stand up against Poles. The soldiers were completely naïve and young—nineteen or twenty. Knowing nothing. There was a command and they came. That is how it happened.

ANNA: What did the writers do?

EVA: There was a meeting at St. Anne's Church, an old, beautiful church in downtown Warsaw. They had lists of people who had been arrested.

JANUSZ: At the same time, there was the First International Congress of Culture in Poland. Many people from abroad came, such as the great teacher, writer, professor, Jan Kott from the U.S. Suddenly, some of the Polish scientists were interred immediately. People, like Eva, didn't know what was going on. They came just for the Congress and found in front of the door a notice: The Congress is cancelled. Let's meet at St. Anne's Church.

EVA: The first reaction was to go to church and find out what was going on.

JANUSZ: . . . because church is still the place where you feel safe; and the Church has real power.

EVA: And if you knew your neighbor had been arrested, you went to the church to give his name. The church was the center of information.

JANUSZ: People go to find out who has been arrested. For example, some wives came with the information: they took my husband, my son. . . . Telephone connections were cut. It was the only chance to get information about who was arrested. They arrested thousands of people during the night, after midnight, from the 12th to the 13th of December.

EVA: Then we went to the Journalists' Club. It was dark, afternoon, Sunday the 13th. I went with my friends through a beautiful Warsaw street called The New World. We noticed a big truck pulling a broken tank. It's like a metaphor of martial law. It was so funny because people were laughing, standing on both sides of The New World Street. They were laughing because the tank didn't work.

JANUSZ: But, anyway, the operation was a masterpiece.

EVA: It was incredible to see people in uniform with guns. And it was scary.

ANNA: What was your reaction, Janusz? Were you waiting at the airport in London?

JANUSZ: No. I was supposed to go at 8 a.m., but some friends of mine called me. It was 6 a.m. and they said martial law, military takeover. I didn't believe it at all. I thought it was a joke. Somebody just weeping into a telephone, "Everything's lost. . . ." I put the receiver down and after a minute said, "God." At first I wondered if Eva would come or not. She was supposed to come on the first plane, so my friend and I believed maybe the first plane would leave. We weren't sure what would happen—whether they would let people leave or not; whether the country was really blocked. We started to phone the airport, but it was impossible to get through. After an hour, we got the information that Eva's plane had not come. They couldn't tell us anything more. And afterwards, you know, trembling and hysteria about what was going on because from the beginning terrible information was coming out—mostly gossip, but really terrible news. And what to do? Go back now, stay. What's happening with them? What does it mean? What's happening to the leaders of Solidarity? All the people arrested? What will happen to Poland? Will there be a civil war? An invasion? And everybody in London was listening to broadcasts of very quiet music.

ANNA: So when did you get Eva out?

JANUSZ: A year and a half later. She was invited by Bennington College to teach a course.

EVA: I had been applying for a passport for a year and a half. It's very funny. When relations between the U.S. and Poland were getting better, then people got passports. Actually, this is important. Somebody makes a decision—I don't know who. Maybe, it goes like this: now it's better; okay, we can let our people go visit America, maybe this morning. Lucky for me. Anyway, I came too late for the course at Bennington.

JANUSZ: Telephone connections were cut. We had no communications by telephone for a year. All the letters were opened and censored. It was very difficult. We had some friends who came and gave information about what was going on. My mother—who is still in Poland—would one day write, please come back. Next day, don't come, don't come back. It was absolutely great.

ANNA: This experience has obviously colored the world view you portray in your works. *Cinders* takes place behind bars, in a girls' reform school, and is a parody of the Cinderella story in which the girls turn into monsters.

Eva's stories have a mood of paranoia. There is a system out there ready to trap you, much like the one in Kafka's *The Trial*. You both seem obsessed with this theme of entrapment versus freedom. Do you think you will continue to write about it, now that you are out of the place of oppression? What is happening to your writing now that you're in the U.S.?

JANUSZ: I don't know, to be honest, how my writing will go, how strong I am under the influence of new circumstances. I think the things which I was writing about were somewhat universal, I mean, people being terrorized by a totalitarian system. *Cinders* is an allegory about totalitarianism, about the right of people to fight, to defend their personal integrity even in prison. It's very hard to say.

Now I'm writing something in which the action takes place in the U.S. The Polish hero with American experience is obsessed with fear. I'm writing this in answer to some of my problems—how people are totally determined by their system, people who spend most of their lives in Poland. In these circumstances, how they are determined by censorship, by dirty games, by political conditions, all the problems with choices—to collaborate, not to collaborate; to fight, not to fight—how they work, and how they find themselves in difficult situations, how the new situation and new sort of obsessions determine them, change them. I'm looking for answers to the questions: How does my hero from Poland, transferred to the U.S., work? Is he a normal person or a Frankenstein? What it means to be normal in Poland is absolutely different from what it means to be normal here.

ANNA: Eva, what about your work?

EVA: When Solidarity was proclaimed it took four months for people to believe it was a free country.

JANUSZ: Sort of free.

EVA: . . . that you could say what you thought, etc. This is what I noticed. People started to speak a new language—a language with meaning. You could understand the workers; you could understand the newspapers. When martial law was declared, it took just five minutes, and fear was back.

ANNA: And the language changed?

JANUSZ: Definitely.

EVA: When I'm in the States here, sometimes I refer to the Solidarity Party or sometimes to the period before. It's like a swing. . . .

ANNA: Schizophrenia?

EVA: Yes, schizophrenia. Here I am in a free country and sometimes I don't know really how to deal with my fear. Sometimes, I feel I can say whatever I think. Sometimes, I say, no, maybe not. In this state of mind, I write about a person in a free country who still remembers the fear. For example, at the International Writing Program I talked with somebody who comes from a totalitarian country and it took two months for her to give an open, frank speech. She started to wonder who would hear her, who would inform on her, what would happen to her. Then, one day, she didn't receive a letter from home. She went downstairs to the mailbox, saw a letter. Minutes later, the letter had disappeared. She was sure that somehow secret agents, or whoever, evil powers, took away letters and this was the punishment.

I said, "Listen. This is incredible. In the Mayflower Apartment Building for sure there are no agents from your country. Relax. Maybe your roommate took the letter. Maybe it was for her."

And she replied, "Oh. Yes."

It is a paranoid state of mind. At first I was at the point of scorn. I mean, I felt superior. Then I said to myself, slow down. I remember. Fear really makes you paranoid. And it takes time to get rid of fear. I think I'm doing it. . . .

JANUSZ: The problem is for both of us. We'll work, we'll become interesting to American readers. I mean, we'll see if it's possible to create from this experience, good literature which will be interesting, and in some way understandable.

ANNA: It seems as if you're getting a good response, especially with *Cinders*.

JANUSZ: Yes. Fortunately. I feel much better because my book about the Lenin Shipyards has been translated into many languages. *Cinders* is going to be produced, as well as the next play, the play I wrote in the U.S. But I wrote it still fighting with censorship—self-censorship now, you know (laughing). In some ways, this is a danger, too—to be obsessed with our details,

our politics. You must find the way to feel really free with what you're writing. Being free of censorship and the police doesn't mean you are really free. You think you should write about it because you didn't have a chance to write about it in Poland. Now, at least, we can write the truth, but truth doesn't always mean it's literature.

ANNA: In *Journey to Gdansk* the basic trust between people has broken down. The wife urges her journalist husband to witness the birth of Solidarity at the Gdansk Shipyards and he equivocates. The complications in their marriage mirror the complicated historical situation. What happens to the family when the reality outside is so terrible?

JANUSZ: It depends on the family.

ANNA: Do you ever work together? Do you read each other's work? What do you do to help each other? And how do you see your differences, in tone, voice, style?

JANUSZ: I read Eva's short stories, because she asked me to.

EVA: Not all of them. I'm sorry, not all of them (laughing).

JANUSZ: . . . but Eva never read my stories. . . .

EVA: No, that's not true. Not really. I had some difficulties reading one of your novels because I knew by heart why you were writing it. I knew this while you were producing it.

JANUSZ: You had no patience to read it afterwards.

EVA: That's true. This, I have to confess. But I'm fond of your writing. As you know, everybody in Poland is. It's just that I don't want to be influenced by your style and your way of viewing things.

JANUSZ: I think it's a substantial problem, as Eva says. I'm older. I've written much more than Eva. I have a very personal style, and I present all things by irony, with a moral theme, a sort of tragicomedy with a sense of bitter humor, black humor.

I'm afraid, really, that when Eva shows me something I will change it to make it more funny, but that could be very dangerous for her because she should have—and she does have—her personal style.

EVA: So we're very careful about advising each other.

ANNA: How do you see your style, Eva?

EVA: I'm more interested in self deception, cheating yourself. This is the thing that interests me the most because I come from a country where freedom does not exist. But you can't *say* this, because it is humiliating in a way. Somehow, you want to feel free. This is the thing which interests me the most, and the way you try to be happy in a situation which is unbearable.

ANNA: And your style?

EVA: It is a little bit sarcastic . . . ironic, but also very compassionate to people because I don't feel superior to my heroes. I try to understand them.

JANUSZ: I try to present people who are manipulated, who are victims of big manipulation and who don't even know about it, who have no consciousness about what's going on with them, who don't even know what they're doing wrong because any sort of moral category doesn't exist for them. They are just in a big machine. They don't know why. They *feel* something is wrong, but they really don't know what. They've lost the sense of words, such as dignity, freedom, love, honor, history. In some ways they are very tragic—and very funny, too.

ANNA: Like the writer from *Flashback*?

JANUSZ: More like my hero in *Give Us This Day*, the police confidant, who during the strike is suddenly involved in the Solidarity movement, doesn't know it, and absolutely doesn't understand what's going on. He's trying to find his place and he cannot. He's still a victim of the big political game going on over him. It's much too difficult for him to understand. If he discovers it, he knows it will be wrong, for example, as it was in *Give Us This Day* when, suddenly, the hero decides to join the workers. He's going to confess that he's a secret police agent to one of the Solidarity leaders in the strike who for him is the most honest of all, and he goes to tell him. But he turns out to be a secret police agent, too, but on a very high level.

So, again, people in this terribly complicated, crazy, and dirty world are going on in darkness, trying to find out something, losing, waiting, having some dreams, hopes, which turn out to have some tragic end. This is what I try to write.

ANNA: You are writers and, at the same time, the parents of a beautiful child, Susanna. How do you manage to be a parent and write?

JANUSZ: Impossible (laughing). My answer is: impossible.

EVA: This is the reason I've stopped writing. I keep a diary—I've always kept one. In America, I have no time to write a whole sentence. I mark down parts of sentences just to keep ideas for the future. This is the biggest problem for me in the States.

JANUSZ: In Poland there were a lot of people around—my mother, family and I had a studio where I could write all day. Here, it's impossible. After all, it's not that she really disturbs me, but I like to spend time with her when she's been here because I missed her for a year and a half and I was really waiting for her. She's so nice that it's a bigger pleasure to talk to her than write. And we have a very small apartment.

EVA: We're still changing places. First, we were in New York, then Connecticut, and now Iowa. So we're still moving. We have to organize our lives first, then I have to find a nursery school for her, and *then* I think it'll be much easier and better.

JANUSZ: All my writing stops when Susanna arrives.

ANNA: When Janusz was here a year ago, we talked about how difficult it was for a foreign writer to break into the New York literary scene. It must be especially difficult for a well-known writer—Janusz was called by *The New York Times*, “one of Poland’s finest playwrights,”—to come to a country where he’s virtually unknown and to make a name for himself. How did you do it, Janusz?

JANUSZ: As you know, I have an opening at the Public Theater on February 20, 1984, which will be the most important thing for me. Afterwards, I can tell you more about it. Last year was a terrible time because I was looking for a production, I was looking for theaters, I was sending out hundreds of letters and copies of my manuscripts. I had many problems with translations and translators, which is *very* important. As you know, I have a sense of black humor which is very hard to understand and translate. People helped me. Paul Engle helped me a lot, gave me some contacts with his friends. For example, Paul Engle wrote to Arthur Miller about me. Arthur Miller read my play and liked it. He sent my play to two theaters with his recommendation and both of these theaters began to be interested.

EVA: Janusz’s agent—a very good agent—sent the same play to both of these theaters, but nobody read it for a year, because they receive a lot of plays every day.

JANUSZ: My play, *Cinders*, was very successful in London at one of the most prestigious theaters—the Royal Court Theater. I was sure after this, it would be easy, but that has not been true. I was sure this play could work for Western audiences because it worked in London very well. Here you have no problems with censorship and so on, but you must find some people who will decide to spend some money on a production. The problem is that it is a risk with a Polish writer who is unknown in the U.S. A magazine published my one short play, another a short story, four one-act plays were on off-off-Broadway, and two one-act plays were at the Yale Drama School. Slowly, slowly, slowly, during very, very, very nervous times, some things are starting—a *little bit*—to work. And let’s see. I think this opening will be very, very important because it will be my first big chance. It’s probably the most prestigious theater in New York.

ANNA: Eva, what are you working on now?

EVA: Right now, I’ve been working on the translations while here. I’ve

corrected the English in my short stories. As I told you, I wrote, in a sketchy way, brief notes. I took some notes for three short stories—two of them connected with Polish refugees in the States and one completely different, about children contra adults—two worlds which I think is an international topic and is probably understandable.

ANNA: And what are your plans?

EVA: As a writer, I don't know. I have some short stories in English. I have my children's book in English. I think the easiest thing would be to do something with it because already some editors seem to be interested in it. But, still, it's very, very hard, and, of course, it doesn't change a lot. Plus, I have to find a job. We have to survive. So, maybe I'll manage to find a good job and still have time to write.

JANUSZ: The sort of help we've received from Paul and Hualing Engle is priceless.

EVA: It's just incredible.

JANUSZ: A year ago I was invited to the International Writing Program for four months and got money and time for writing, without thinking about money or the future. It's great. I wrote a new play only because of this. I'm not sure about the future. Let's see if we survive or not. If yes, you can write the second part of this interview. If no, you can write our obituary.

ANNA: Iowa is a very special place for you. What has it meant to you, in terms of your writing—besides the help the Engles have given you—in terms of landscape, local color?

JANUSZ: After being in New York, I come to Iowa, really as if I were coming home. I've been here twice before. I know people. I come to a place which I really know and which I really like and so right from the beginning, I feel comfortable. Iowa is for me like a second home. I like the streets in front of the window, the beautiful trees changing color. After New York, with all the noise, the fights, the people hurrying, it's like paradise for a couple of months. I can concentrate here and work, so I'm very happy here.

EVA: For me, it's the same. I couldn't find a nursery school for my daughter which was bad, but the public library made my life easier because there was the children's room. I could go to the library and I went there almost every day. Susanna played in the children's room with the toys and looked at books. I could go and do some reading somewhere else. This helped a lot. Also, I could set up a movie for her in the library and do some work. And I'm surprised they don't charge anything. They lend the video films and even equipment and they don't charge anything—just like in the Communist Bloc (laughing). I never saw a library like that in my life. It's incredible and I'm grateful.

JANUSZ: The trees here really look like the trees in front of my house in Poland which makes me feel very nostalgic and familiar, at the same time. But after being here almost two years, I still have the sort of life that almost every night I have a dream of Poland and I awaken in the U.S. It's some sort of schizophrenia.

EVA: But, sometimes, you're afraid that you're in Poland and you're quite relieved when you awaken and see that it's Iowa.

JANUSZ: It's very, very hard to live and write outside of your country.