

The Light in the Dust

An excerpt from the script by

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JAKOB

I am happy. It's you that's not happy and you're right not to be.

NATALIA

You know, son, in all I do find myself to be happy. What I said a moment ago isn't as funny as I made it sound...Dan was entertaining his friends - those liberalist documentarians - and I overheard a bit of talk *about what's to come*.

JAKOB

I'll try to listen above the roaring of my stomach but I can hardly think.

NATALIA

It seems we've reached a peak in our extraction of oil. In other words, oil, on which we depend, for you name it - anything - has nearly been exhausted (draws in the air a curve). They call it overshoot, when mankind continues to seek growth in spite of this and now we're on a decline. You and your children will have to learn to dig in the earth! There'll be quiet again, in the cities at midnight, we'll ride on horseback, and cycles; it'll be like Byzantium - people there could walk through towns and cities in silence, in the nighttime.

JAKOB

There wasn't any silence in Byzantium. In the night, there were prostitutes.

NATALIA

There were no prostitutes in Byzantium...There were no streetlights, how were they to be spotted.

JAKOB

Torchlight...The flames. There was never silence.

NATALIA

You and your women. Prostitutes in Byzantium! Some imagination. Some vulgarity.

JAKOB

It's your imagination, you're the one with the imagination. Give me one good reason why there would not be prostitutes then as now. There have always been beautiful women and passionate men.

NATALIA

Passionate men! I like that!
Beautiful women! I like that! You should make an effort to disguise your character - not for me, but for your soul, who will recognise its vulgarity and suffer.

JAKOB

And you should not be so honest with me. You should not say those things, which you think, to your son. You know what our problem is? We talk like we're in Chekhov. (laughs with pleasure) If only you'd speak in Russian!