Bogowie
By Krzysztof Rak
On January 4th 1969
Professor Jan Moll was the first
to attempt a heart transplant
in Poland
The patient died
on the operating table

POLISH ATTEMPT HEART TRANSPLANT Prof. Moll was not prepared.
He decided to operate without
the necessary knowledge
to have success.

A Lukasz Palkowski film
MOLL KILLS PATIENT ON THE OPERATING TABLE

Prof. Moll, did you realize
that a procedure
on, such a vital organ as, the heart
may alter the recipient's personality?
Maybe it was a risky choice.
but the only one which
gave the patient a chance to survive.
- but leaving no chance for the donor...
- He was pronounced brain dead!
The Poles are jealous even
of one other's failures.
Based on a true story
Warsaw, 1983
35 minutes. Too long.

GODS:
- Religa.
- What do we have?
- 42, chest pain,
cold extremities.
pulse 115, pressure...
- Let me osculate.
- Blood pressure 72/40.
ECG with infarction signs.
Acute systolic murmur.
We're operating! Prepare the OR.
and call the perfusionist.
Let's go.
- The old man will have your balls.
- Have you seen his coronarography?
- We have to open him up.
- maybe we should take him in for observation?
Pulse is accelerating, the pressure's barely holding.
- Krysia, call the old man.
Krysia. Krysia! Someone has to finish after me in the pathology.
Zbyszek. What the fuck are we doing? He doesn't stand a chance.
Turn that beeper up!
Using the pump?
- Where is the perfusionist?
- He's changing. - Time.
- Where've you been?
- In the middle of the night? At home!
- What's this?
- Acute mitral regurgitation.
- Probably.
- And the boss?
Krysia's trying to reach him.
We can either try to help or wait till he dies.
I'll need a vein and a valve!
The valves are locked.
We can start the briefing.
Where is Dr. Religa?
The report from the night shift...
At 11.15 pm a patient brought in with a myocardial infarction,
- a distinct murmur at the heart apex.
- A valve.
He didn't operate. did he?
The professor wants to see you.
So he sends coffee?
- Check his hourly diuresis.
- Why did you decide to operate on your own?
I was on duty.
My dear colleague...
- In my clinic...
- He would have died.
- Don't interrupt!
- We couldn't reach you.
You've broken all the rules. Without my consent, in ECC. not to mention the break-in.
- I had to operate.
- Thank you.
So far. the patient is stable.
Go home and rest.
Someone will fill in for you.
What's up, Zbyszek? How was it?
- Ewa, what are you doing here?
- You lost your steloscope again.
It's called a stethoscope.
Tell me...
what would I do without you?
Don't smoke. you'll lose stamina.
Doctor, don't make passes
at our patient.
- Go to sleep.
- Hang on there.
- Walking or riding?
- Riding.
Hold on.
I've never heard anyone in Poland
share their professional insights.
- Jan Moll.
- Zbigniew Religa.
Our guest here, assisted his brother
during the first heart transplant in the World.
A year later, I did it here.
They made history...
And you almost got crucified!
- Have you been in the U.S. for long?
- In total...
- two years.
- It may be more difficult for you here.
- Were you bored?
- Only at the end.
Remember how many times the DA
asked us to open skulls
in order to certify death.
and a few days later
the patient would go home?
- Were those miracles?
- Surgeons don't wait for miracles.
We have no right to experiments
which, if unsuccessful.
could take even a week of life away.
Could you cope with that?
Let's go get a drink.
No one else wants to go
to that shithole?
Will you get
your own clinic in Warsaw?
Staszek. I've got a family.
I won't take your clinic.
- You could do what you want.
- I do it anyway.
That's why I'm talking to you.
I need some fresh air.
- Goodnight.
- Goodnight.
Zbyszek! Zabrze is beautiful!
Hello.
Good evening.
No. thanks. I don't smoke.
- Marian Zembala. Andrzej Bochenek.
- Religa. Zbyszek.
Good evening.
- We've seen you talking to Moll. sir.
- We're on first name basis.
Did you talk to Moll
about transplants?
About rejection.
We've been analyzing his operation.
- And you found it successful?
- We stopped at rejections.
But even that was too much.
They want to get rid of us so bad,
- they're sending us for internships.
- Where?
- England for me, Holland for him.
- Congratulations. I was in the US.
This is the way it is. The old are too scared.
and the young aren't allowed.
Just make sure you come back.
don't leave me alone with them.
How was the congress?
- We'll be done before your read it.
- Thank you, doctor.
- How are you Ewka?
- I'm good, Zbyszek. - Ewka!
- How are you feeling?
- Poorly.
- Where are you going?
- To get cut.
Do you remember, I told about those operations.
They're easy.
- It's something else I'm worried about.
- What is it?
That I'll be naked in there.
Don't worry, I'll close my eyes.
- Watch him for me.
- Watch Teddy, got it.
Ewa...
- On stage, but doesn't speak?
- A mime.
I thought it was a dog.
Saw.
What's with the silence?
- We're going into circulation.
- Cooling.
- Suction.
- Ready.
- Let's open the heart.
Hook.
- Oh, Ewa...
- What is it?
- What is it?
- Fuck!
Take a look.
It's not your typical TOF.
- The ventricle is enlarged.
- Acquired atresia.
- We can't do it all.
- You want to leave it?
- Her heart won't make it.
- We've got no choice.
First let's close
the ventricular defect.
Then widen the pulmonary valve.
It has to work!
Tweezers.
36 degrees. After reperfusion.
- The patient is warm.
- Prepare to go out of ECC.
Reducing cardiac output.
- How much?
- 1.5... 1.5 litres.
Gently.
Breathing.
Stop circulation.
What's wrong? What is it?
Fuck... we've got hypoxia.
Keep working. girl. More oxygen.
Zbyszek... let's go back to ECC.
Asystole, again.
She has to manage on her own.
- More adrenaline!
- I can increase it, but it won't help.
- Do it!
- It won't help.
Work with me, girl!
Keep working!
Are you crazy? She could get infected.
put on new ones!
The missus?
- Excuse me?
- Did you mess up or your missus?
God.
Then let it go.
I can't.
You can't force anyone to stay.
The heart won't listen.
We'll see about that.
I didn't...
I didn't make any mistakes.
There was no other way to do it.
I had to try.
Having diagnosed pulmonary atresia,
Why didn't you stop the operation?
There was no other option.
What would you have done?
You had a variety
of options to choose from.
For example?
If you had stopped. would the patient
have survived?
No.
What was
the direct cause of death?
Electromechanical dissociation
caused by end-stage
heart damage in this disease.
We didn't overcome
the vascular resistance
due to the underdeveloped
pulmonary vessels.
The heart didn't start beating,
after the defects have been removed.
You've convinced me.
- But not me.
- Come on...
It was too late for the surgery...
Dr Religa didn't make any mistakes.
He had to try.
That girl's life
must have been unbearable.
The smallest effort
could have killed her.
Doctor, thank you for coming
to the Ethics Committee.
There was...
one solution
that could have saved her.
Care to enlighten us?
A heart transplant.
You must be joking.
You'd be willing
to experiment on a child?
I don't know why you,
cardiologists, think that you're gods.
Do you know any other way
we could've saved her?
I repeat'.
we are investigating
a child's death.
That's right.
It was also my child... dear colleague.
Thank you.
Wait...just a second...
I have to go to Warsaw.
I won't be long.
If you go. I'll divorce you.
I have to.
I'll be back in the evening.
A very interesting case.
Let's go.
Professor!
- Good to see you're enjoying your holiday.
- I know.
We must launch
a heart transplant program.
Continue gentlemen. I'll catch up in a minute.
We've got the gear.
the people, the technology...
The British have positive results
with cyclosporine.
Let's do this!
- Cutting a beating heart out of...
- A body.
A human being.
It's ethically vague.
The world has no doubts.
I know that, in our country,
the heart is a relic.
But we both know it's a muscle.
Also, the cost of one transplant
equals the cost of three other
operations.
Three lives for one?
Can we afford it?
Let's save them all. Professor!
We don't have enough data.
- We could give life to many people.
- Or false hope.
So you rather wait for a miracle?
Zbyszek... in my clinic
there are only two ways
in which you'd perform a transplant'.
Either after my retirement
Or after my death. Basically. the same thing.
Are the fish biting?
Yes, I'm waiting.
Staszek, straight to the point:
my favorite team is Gornik Zabrze...
I'll take that clinic.
- Excuse me ladies, this is a sudden emergency
I was offered my own clinic.
- By Sitkowski?
- No.
By Pasyk. in Zabrze.
You know what?
I don't like it here anymore.
I can't go with you.
We'll lose the apartment.
- I have to go.
- What about me?
My research, my students?
Doesn't that count?
You're saying I should say no?
- You could've asked. at least.
- I'm asking.
No, you're not.
It's one of the more disappointing
surprises in my career.
I don't know what I'd do
if I was offered a clinic.
Especially because I have one already.
- But I'm afraid your ambitions...
- The ambitions that you awoke
by sending me abroad.
I'm sick of answering questions whether we
operate people here or just dogs?
I've turned a blind eye
to many things...
But this is something
that might finish you off.
I'm officially inviting you to perform
the inaugural surgery
In my clinic, in Zabrze.
Hurry! Faster! Take him.
No pulse. we're losing him!
- What is it?
- A knife stab. the heart might be damaged.
Dark blood. Adrenaline. stat!
- Scalpel. - Here?
- Where else?
- To the OR. - Who are you?
- I was just passing by. Take my bag!
A stab wound.
I plugged it with my finger.
On the street?
- You're not going to leave me now are you?
- No, I'm not.
I'm not going with you.
I can't leave Krysia with the kids.
Romek...
I understand.
Dr Religa?
Yes. What's this about?
Are you the madman with the scalpel?
You can't do shit to me!
There was no other way!
I wanted to thank you.
You saved my son.
Thank you.
No problem.
Keep him away from knives.
- Good night.
- Good night.
- Are these the operating rooms?
- Will be. Work in progress.
Modern elevators...
it's all coming.
We're waiting.
There are some small delays.
We still have to wait.
And there, at the end,
there is...
there will be... your office.
- Equipment for the OR?
- What?
The equipment?
That's the biggest problem.
We'll discuss that later.
But everything else is here.
- Beds. closets.
- You mean we've only got beds?
Come on! We'll get it all somehow.
How much money have you got?
How much money have you got?
Nil.
They said no.
Fuck! With beds we can open
a bordello, not a cardiac surgery clinic!
Dr Bochenek!
Welcome.
Dr Pasyk.
- Andrzej Bochenek.
- Thank you,
we're waiting impatiently
for the supplies.
- Everything is going well.
- Goodbye.
Here we'll have the operating rooms.
Fast, modern lifts.
- And the equipment?
- On its way.
When will they finish this?
How was England?
- Have you named your deputy yet?
- No.
- Of course.
- Thank you.
Urology. Like me, before.
But you haven't operated a lot.
- It's no surprise. Who'd let you?
- I heard you would.
Doctor, the delegation.
- Fuck...
- Good morning.
We came to help.
From the Nowy Sacz Nursing School.
Good morning.
Welcome to the most modern
cardiac surgery clinic in this country.
- Morning.
- Hello.
Finally! Dr Zembala.
Hello.
- I'm at your disposal.
- Hi, Marian.
You took the shortcut. huh?
- This is the OR?
- That's right.
Great layout.
A perfect place for lifts.
- And who are they?
- Work force. To clear the rubble.
Our staff.
- Marian.
- Kalina. - Jolka.
Goska.
It takes 2 years to train
a cardiosurgical nurse.
So there's no time to waste.
Take care of the girls.
- Guess who's the deputy?
- Who?
- Doctor...
- Oh, I forgot. Welcome on board.
- Religa. we spoke on the phone.
- I remember...
Right, so... continue.
It's about the newest
cardiac surgery clinic.
Cardiac... right.
Heart diseases.
the most frequent cause of death.
All types of surgery. The first Polish
surgical heart attack
treatment program.
- The executive's disease.
- Yes. yes. I've heard.
So. how much do you need?
3 million.
Dollars.
Come on, doctor...
- What?
- Nothing.
Shallow breath. Obesity.
See you. sir.
Federation.
Unfortunately. the director can't help.
Try the unions.
Federation.
Yes, I told him.
You have to wait.
I don't know how long.
Call back,
or try the unions.
Fed... Oh. hi.
No, I'm not busy, I can talk.
I don't know who those guys were.
Connect me with the unions
And no more meetings for today.
- There's this doctor waiting.
- It won't take long.
Will you give me 3 mln USD
for a clinic in Zabrze?
No. But why?
Fuck!
You got me in some deep shit.
No, thanks.
I quit smoking.
We must go to the Regional
Party Committee. At least.
I won't go there.
- What are you afraid of?
- I'd rather die then go to the Party!
I'm glad you've turned to the Party.
- Jadwiga will help us.
- Jadwiga?
Jadwiga.
Comrade Jadwiga?
The "Jadwiga" cokery.
Located in the heart
of a beautiful city.
It is one the most polluting plants
in the region.
Officially we had it shut down.
But too many people
would lose their jobs.
Officially.
Unofficially, we'd lose
too many dollars.
Because all of our coke is exported.
So the cookery pays the fines
and keeps on poisoning us.
It pays in zlotys, to make dollars.
I'll give you those zlotys.
And you'll be curing us
from the harm Jadwiga is causing.
Officially?
By all means.
You just have to change
zlotys to hard currency.
- Officially?
- Would you prefer to deal on the street?
- If I had to.
- Oh, come on... Take a seat.

We live in a civilized country.
It has to go through
the Ministry of Health.
I'll deposit it as a subsidy
grant-in-aid to the clinic in Zabrze.
And you'll receive bucks.
In 15 days we'll perform
the first procedure.
- We're getting to work.
- Doctor. you're losing it.

Look around!
We won't start in a month.
- Pigs will fly before we finish in 15 days.
- Don't get on my nerves
We're getting down to work.
I'm serious
I'm off to change. move it!
- It's an ambitious plan.
- It's a plan?
Professor...
I came a little earlier.
Did you order them to sleep here?
They love me.
- Transplants. with those youngsters?
- What's there to be afraid of?
Don't rush Zbyszek.
Let me show you the OR.
This way
We'd like to welcome you
in the clinic in Zabrze.
We're happy that the man
who founded Polish cardiac surgery
will be the first to operate
in our clinic. In Dr Religa's clinic.
You're all crazy. Where's the OR?
The inaugural surgery,
Zabrze, August 1985
If you ever open another clinic
and invite me
for inaugural surgery,
make sure it's a little more challenging.
This patient could operate himself.
- Suction.
- Suction.
It's not sucking.
- I hope you don't mind.
- I was in the Uprising.
You won't surprise me.
What's going on?
There we go...
The contractions are proper.
And at your end?
It's a success.
You can close up.
Thank you, congratulations.
Especially, to the patient, for surviving it.
- Quiet! You'll wake the patient!
- Tweezers.
You seem to be
the only sane person around.
Far from it.
Didn't you know
this was supposed to be an asylum,
before Pasyk and Religa
began this?
Maybe you'd come to Warsaw.
to have a look around?
Thank you. but...
Dr Religa needs me here.
I teach him to speak Silesian.
I can't help feeling that the patients
are the healthiest ones here.
Jolka. what are you doing?
Attention...
Everybody
Blood!!!
No, no...
I'm a cardiologist,
not a cardiac surgeon.
I know.
You're the boss.
And I also know we are all here
working for you.
- I understood this an hour ago.
- That's why you won't drink with me?
- Where's prof. Sitkowski?
- On his way to Warsaw. Excuse me.
Krysia. What have you got here?
Doctor. I was reflecting on today's operation.
With the proper training, it is possible
to train a cardio surgeon's nurse in 21 days.
Have you seen anyone make a snake
out of an aortic catheter?
Marian... pardon me. I mean Dr Zembala...
One can't even celebrate with you.
Go, dance!
Boss... a phone call.
The best clinic in the world.
Speaking. Go on.
What do you mean?
- What's this about?
- How should I know?
- We have to keep the pressure on them.
The money went to the Ministry...
- I know!
Do something!
- My staff won't wait...
- Don't worry. I know the director.
Thank you.
Good morning.
Good morning, gentlemen.
Good morning.
Please, take your seats.
I'm being told. You began operating.
Without waiting for the decision.
Right.
Obviously this is some sort of mistake.
We'll investigate it.
Your grant has been suspended.
It will be spent
on more important matters.
You have two weeks to clean up
after yourselves.
Two weeks should be enough.
Goodbye.
My arms are too short
to reach Warsaw.
Believe me.
Fuck.
Motherfucker.
Staszek. hi. I need a favor.
Don't tell anyone at the clinic we didn't receive the money.
Tweezers.
- Fuck.
- Blackjack.
- What?
- 21 "fucks".
Fuck!
- Stitches.
- Those two are loose.
What did you say?
I must've heard wrong.
Kid...
you were right. Thanks.
- Go on.
- A male. 52...
I can tell he's a male!
With ischemic cardiomyopathy.
4 infarcts,
last one 3 months ago with
ventricular fibrillation and asystole.
He needed 5 shocks, 300 J each,
to regain normal rhythm.
The last attack caused permanent
damage to the left ventricle.
Shortness of breath.
lower limbs edema.
no other medical problems.
His domestic situation..
Excuse me.
- He's stable but we're helpless!
- Spare me his personal details!
We'll get emotional
if he survives the transplant.
- Transplant.
- That's right.
- The transplant.
- Right.
From the second one,
every two.
From the second one. Up,
and twirl. Pull up. and twirl.
- What are you doing?
- A bypass.
Up... twirl...
- and let go.
- He wants to perform a transplant
on the guy from last night.
- The sternum must fold well.
- We're not ready.
- Everyone is in training.
- Keep your tools in order.
We haven't got a donor.
We don't know if we'll find one.
- Or how far away. - Tighten.
- We don't have proper transportation.
Compatibility testing
is only done in Warsaw.
The Brits are still testing cyclosporine.
Shit, we might kill the guy!
- You want to stop him?
- Sure! - How?
- I'm the deputy.
- So. by power of authority?
Now cut it.
Scissors?
Scissors!
- For wire.
- It's too early.
Give them to him.
- Let's make sure we are well prepared!
- We don't have donors!
- How is he treating you?
- We're operating. I am.
- We're looking for a donor.
- A donor?
- Heartdonor.
- That's not a typical request.
- We want to save a life.
- But a heart?
We're chasing the West.
What is your prognosis
for such patient?
We can prolong a man's life
by 10 years. Maybe 20.
Even if it was 2 months...
For a man who can die tomorrow.
or in the next couple of days.
a couple of months is eternity.
You know what...
I don't think so.
Jan Nielubowicz.
So you're doing it. I understand that
the decision has been made.
- We're ready.
- I need a favour.
We're preparing to do a liver transplant.
We've been working on this
for years.
If your heart transplantation
program fails.
we'll also get a red light.
Please, don't do it. Not yet.
A heart transplant is irreversible.
You can't put the old heart back in.
As opposed to other organs.
- How long have you been preparing your team?
- A long time.
What can I do?
You have my blessing.
- Thank you. We'll be careful.
- Good luck.
Maybe I'll cook you a decent meal?
Religa.
This better be important!
They've been calling for an hour.
Go.
- We've got a donor. Not far from here.
- Compliance?- Confirmed.
I'll go get the donor.
A committee
has to pronounce brain death.
Monitoring of the patient,
phone. blood.
- No one goes home tonight.
- Boss...
- My wife is in labour.
- And someone is dying there.
Prepare the patient.
What are you doing?
They are shutting us down!
- What's this?
- Mom. stop it.
I need your signature
to discharge the patient.
- The results?
- Perfect.
Thank you. doctor.
I don't know what to say.
I wouldn't know what to answer.
The nurse will walk you to the door.
- I don't like driving behind someone.
- So... how does it work?
We get there,
the committee certifies.
the DA allows an earlier autopsy.
- I meant the transplant.
- No idea.
Technically it seems easy,
but which moment during the procedure
is the most difficult?
I don't know.
- But you've seen it in the US.
- Nope.
- In Detroit. Kantrowitz wasn't doing it anymore.
- You haven't seen it?
- No, but I've practiced on dogs, cadavers.
- Oh. Good.
- Are you afraid?
- No.
Good morning.
Good morning. doctor.
- We came for the heart.
- For the donor.
- Where's the committee?
- They haven't arrived yet.
When will they arrive?
The district surgeon
is working on it.
- So they're on their way?
- Seating on the committee
- is voluntary, so...
- They'll make history! Is that hard to understand?
They're refusing to do it.
- What is it?
- He's fibrillating!
Give him adrenaline!
Defibrillation!
- Where is the phone?
- Over there.
The man's dead, what do you need him for?
- Clear...
- 200.
Go!
I can see it's an fucking infarct!
I'm calling Religa.
Give me the district surgeon right now!
How could they refuse?
It's all by the book!
They are summoned by the health department!
Harder!
It's busy.
Fucking long distance!
I have a dying man in my clinic.
Leave it.
Come in.
No one will see you here.
- Don't talk too long.
- Sure. Thank you.
Hello? Mom's asleep?
No. no...Let her sleep.
They're going to operate.
You're almost grown up.
I wanted to tell you that I love you very much. I know we haven't been getting along. but now, when I come back. that will change.
With Mom too.
Right. Sleep well.
- Should I call the police?
- People will die because of you!
Let her go!
Put it down!
I have to take the gear to Warsaw.
Are you the boss here?
- Breathe.
- Defibrillator!
Get the anesthesiologist.
- Loading.
Get the fuck out of my clinic!
- Clear.
- Go!
- No reaction. -400.
- Loading.
A day later and it would've been too late.
One day.
The funds haven't been allocated yet.
You fought hard for that money.
Don't give me that look.
I had to check
what I was getting into.
Comrades from Zabrze were...
euphoric that you want
to make their town famous.
I want to cure people.
Sure. I know that.
But not everyone is happy
to see a new cardiac clinic.
I'll talk to the right people today.
Is it possible to get a decision
by the end of the day?
If I didn't know your line of work.
I'd think you're crazy.
However, If anyone is to treat us,
it should be you.
Good bye.
Religa, Zabrze clinic.
Right.
Right.
Thank you.
The Ministry.
We got the money.
- Boss...
- Thank everyone for yesterday.
but now we need new plans.
Two patients need a transplant,
and we are prepared.
We need a transplantation
program. Any ideas?
The committees are crucial.
We should make lists for all regions.
We need to work
on district surgeons.
- We have only 3 friendly centers.
- A week ago we had none.
True.
Compatibility.
- Good morning. May I?
- May you what?
My doctorate.
I'm Romuald Cichon,
this is my doctorate.
- They didn't want to let me in.
- Because of your clothes. Hi Romek.
- Take a look.
- I'd like to work with you Doctor.
But you know. it's tough here.
Sure it is.
- Two days ago I had a case...
- Hold on.
Welcome aboard.
Get yourself some scrubs.
- Marian.
- Romuald.
Congratulations.
- Marian. your bypass disappeared.
- What?
It got absorbed through the ventricle.
Kid, is that possible?
I don't think it is.
But seriously.
your patient disappeared.
- From the IC unit?
- Yes.
I knew it.
- Should we follow him?
- Great idea! Come on.
- Where's the patient?!
- He went for a beer.
For a... Then you ought to...
Call the police.
Call the police immediately!
I performed a bypass.
so that he could go for a beer?
My work is going to waste!
I'm going to kill him!
- You had your chance.
- Calm down. It's your great success.
Allow me to differ. I don't agree!
What do you think, kid?
- 2 days after the surgery? Impressive.
- We've got a new donor.
- Where?-In Warsaw.
- What else?
- A biker. instant brain death.
- We know what to do.
Get an anesthesiologist.
Kid. you're coming with me.
Move it!
- Come here.
- But doctor...
Not now!
Last night you let a patient
in my office for a phone call.
- Yes. because...
- And I heard it all.
Do you realize what you did to me?
You're fired.
I need to tell you something.
- Doctor...
- Where's the anesthesiologist?
- There's this thing...
- What?
That? They're bugging us because
we're actually doing something.
No... it's...
They're following me.
I was detained during martial law.
They ruined my father,
and me...no one would give me a job.
You're the first one.
Wait here.
My name's Religa,
you probably know that already.
I'm the boss of this clinic.
Tell your superiors
that I do the politics here,
and my doctors treat people.
I'm off to save a dying man,
and you get the fuck out.
- Listen...
- Someone has to treat you people!
Get in.
Motherfucker!
Drive my car.
Way to go, doctor.
- Pupillary reflex negative.
- I concur.
Corneal reflex. negative.
Lack of reaction to pain stimuli
in the cranial nerve area.
- So... that's it.
We can certify brain death.
- Are you taking the kidneys?
- The heart.
I'll have to check again.
From the top.
- Should I talk to the family?
- No.
- I have to.
- Then, you have to do it now.
Hello. Zbigniew Religa.
Are you familiar
with transplantation medicine?
Kidney transplants?
My son doesn't need no kidneys.
But I need your son's heart.
I do not give my consent.
- I understand.
- No, you don't.
Besides...
it's not my decision to make.
Please. sit down.
You'll save him, right?
Unfortunately.
we have diagnosed brain death.
But he still has a chance?
I'm afraid not.
The human dies with the brain.
- Your son is dead.
- But I saw him breathing.
The ventilator machine breathes
to keep his heart beating.
So he's alive?
Your son is dead.
I know you are in pain...
I am really sorry,
but I need to ask you...
Do we have your consent
to collect your son's heart?
I need it to save another man.
You're the first mother in Poland
who has been asked this question.
His heart can live in someone else?
Yes.
Who is that man?
I wouldn't know.
And what can you do?
I can save that man's life
thanks to your son's heart.
You have my consent.
Well?
He won't sell without talons.
- Don't you have them?
- Do you? - I don't.
Neither do I.
Start her up!
- Go!
We have the parent's. the committee's.
and the DA's consent.
- Tests?
- Compatibility OK.
- Kidneys are functioning.
- Doctor...
The recipient's wife
Is waiting in your office.
I know her. I'll talk to her.
And with this new heart
will he be different?
- He'll be better.
- So he'll change?
I mean he'll be healthier.
He'll be fit.
He'll be able to walk. to work.
I'm afraid he might become...
weird...
That he won't recognize me, or...
he won't love me anymore.
I know it might sound strange,
but in our times
a transplant is a routine operation.
But the heart holds feelings.
- I think they're in the head.
- What about love?
- You're religious, right?
- Of course.
We just fix bodies here.
You're talking about the soul.
We won't change your husband.
He'll be healthier.
So nothing from this heart
will pass onto him?
The heart is a pump.
A wonderful one, but just a pump.
- Where are you going?
- What? You fired me.
Don't be stupid,
Go back to the OR.
And these people
want nothing in return?
- They want...
- How much?
They want their son
to save someone's life.
Andrzej... we've got a donor.
- Who is it?
- I don't know.
Young?
- You realize it's a risky operation.
- It's always risky.
But it's no faggot or a Jew?
Or, even worse. a woman?
It's a man.
Gornik needs me on the bleachers.
Then there's the wife
and kids.
And if it won't work with me, will you keep on trying?
The first transplant, Zabrze, October 1985
Are we ready?
Godspeed.
- Andrzej. how are you feeling?
- All right.
- A little nervous?
- Wouldn't you be?
- Did you have breakfast?
- No.
A shot of cognac?
We'll give you a shot. it won't hurt.
Was it you who stole the cabbage?
We're ready.
The patient is stable.
We can begin collecting.
Aortic clamps.
Suction.
The guy is heartless.
Last stitches.
- The heart is in.
- 52 minutes.
Stable.
Moment of truth.
Fibrillating.
Defibrillator, 20.
Clear...
Go!
- Once again, 20.
- Set.
You got it? Clear...
Going out of the ECC.
ECC stopped.
OK. Let's close.
Take the swab out.
- We need to call the media.
- Why?
What does a hen do when it lays an egg?
- It clucks?
- Exactly. Call them.
- Reports. boss.
- It's the middle of the night.
In our world, the night is a day at work.
Adrenaline!
Defibrillation!
Charge.
Clear!
Epinephrine. again.
Clear!
Go!

**Time of death:**
6th day after the transplant.
Find a new donor.
He risked the life of both patients,
for fame.
He went outside the box...
so off with his head?
Without the courage to go forward
you'll never get anywhere.
The second transplant.
Zabrze. November 1985
Yesterday, in Dr Religa's clinic
in Zabrze,
30 days after the surgery,
the second heart recipient died.
Will Dr Religa solve the problem?
And, more importantly, should he try again?
How should I know?
- Don't shout.
- The patient is ready.
- Where is Romek?—Absent.
- Marian?—Operating.
We need a decision
about the patient in 3.
- Is he stable?—He was earlier.
- Dr Religa has arrived.
- Thank God.
- I don't know...
- What's going on?
- Take care of him. I'll operate.
- You?
- Will you?
Don't I have a right?
Can't I have lunch?
Give me the keys!
Sorry. boss. but no way.
Then pack your stuff,
I don't want to see you here.
Understand? You're fired!
Get out.
Please, don't let him drive.
Oh. my sweet honey...
You. come with me.
Give me the keys.
I want to go my home.
to Warsaw. for lunch.
No way, boss.
Come here.
It's an opportunity of a lifetime.
In honor of your merits,
I give you all my surgeries.
- Sure. boss.
- Get to work.
- Give me the keys!
- Boss...
Do you really think
I won't start my car without the keys?
- Maybe I should drive you.
- You're a lousy driver!
- Wanna bet?
- That you can't drive?
Or that I'll fire you?
That no car will overtake me.
I guess I'll take the train back.
Romek...
what was the bet about?
If I win.
I'll perform my first surgery.
Right.
When you get back,
hire Krysia again.
Everyone wrote this patient off.
so I thought we could try.
I was clear'. we're taking a break
from transplants.
There's so much to be done
in cardiac surgery.
that you're just being a pain in the ass!
No one else will take him.
He knows where he came.
What are his chances?
10 percent? 15?
Less.
Let me see.
Motherfucker.
- Are we closing? The heart is weak.
The 3d transplant, April 1986.
- The left ventricle is distending.
- The venous pressure is too high.
- Something is wrong.
- We shouldn't have taken him.
Are you saying we shouldn't save his life?
I'm saying that some cases are hopeless!
Doctor. leave the OR, please.
You are fired.
Now.
Good luck, Marian.
Marian. you're my deputy now.
Kid. scrub up!
Does anyone else question the point of this clinic?
There's no point in going back to the pump.
It would be best to support this heart with another heart.
We'd need a new donor.
but... I don't know...
Maybe a xenogenic transplant?
- What would be the best?
- A monkey.
Not many of them around, but...
Go, hire Dr Bochenek back, and send him for a pig.
You go with him. Kicka will take over. Are you up to it?
I am.
You'll call the Wroclaw zoo and ask them for a baboon.
Tell them a man's life's at stake.
We'll hook him up
to a pig's or monkey's heart.
and try to find a new donor.
Let's do it!
It stinks like a human inside.
18. That's it.
A fine specimen.
Now you have to put it to sleep.
- How much does it weigh?
- How should I know? You're the anesthesiologist.
I need to know its weight.
For the dosage.
- Then fucking ask her!
- I wouldn't know how to intubate it:
    orally. or just cut it's throat.
Cut it's throat?
Through the snout.
Run! We have a patient on the table.
Sorry. boss. It died in transport.
Who? The pig!
I don't know!
What do you want me to do? An autopsy?
We gave it valium,
and it got a heart attack.
Pigs are sensitive.
What?
Another one?
Yes. of course.
Take it out. We're closing.
I found a donor.
Just don't tell Religa.
Why?
The guy died 2 hours ago.
Not a word to the DA
about this circus.
Good morning.

**Time of death:**
Direct cause'. asystole
due to right ventricular failure.
CPR was performed
for about an hour.
Any more questions. sir?
Do you have the autopsy results?
During the autopsy
no signs of rejection were found.
The transplanted heart infarcted,
probably right before the transplant.
You transplanted a heart
with an infarction?
The collected organs not tested like it
Would be on a healthy individual. It's impossible.
We couldn't have known
about the infarction.
We won't trouble you anymore.
I'm shutting down
- the transplantation program.
- Hold on, doctor.
I'm not done yet!
Who is Dr Religa's deputy?
It's 3 am!
- Where is my home?
- Boss...
Where is my home?
The Doctor couldn't make it.
he sent me instead.
We have tons of work,
a lot of surgeries...
and he... it's amazing
that you have such a husband.
- You think?
- Yes. He...
The Doctor is completely
devoted to his work.
I can tell.
- You're a saint.
- I'm pissed, not a saint, professor.
- Doctor.
- Give this to me.
"Religa. you're not God."
"Quit killing people,
ambition has eaten your conscience."
Poznan Health Dept.
We have to go back to the clinic.
I guess I'm going to quit.
Don't you see he won't let go?
Don't you all see it?
Feeling happy is a game changer.
I was happy when we persuaded
the Dutch to treat our kids.
- You told me.
- Yes. but then I thought'.
why take our kids there
if it's easier...
if it's easier for me
to come back here.
True.
- Here?
- Yes.
Go. I can handle from here
- What time is it?
- Quarter to.
I told you not to call me
when I'm on holiday!
Excuse me? In what condition?
OK, I'm on my way.
I've got a show to play!
That's right. I'm off.
You deserted your team.
They are lost without you.
What are you doing?
what's the biggest problem?
- Qualifying patients for surgery?
- No.
- Cyclosporine dosage?
- No.
- The time span?
- Those are not real problems.
The mother's eyes after
a failed attempt to save her child?
It's about humility.
Failure and success
can be equally hard for a doctor.
One needs a large dose of humility.
Morning.
- You came for the apples?
- That's right.
I've sold them all.
There's nothing left?
Too bad.
Maybe the neighbors have some?
You'd have to ask around.
What kind?
Kosztela.
I want to apologize.
It was Gods plan.
- Full mouth sanitation.
- Throat swab?
- Isn't that obvious?
- Good morning. Follow me.
Thank you.
There.
Fuck! Sorry.
"Fuck" it is.
Our cyclosporine dosage was too high
The Brits and Germans
have been making the same mistake
Daddy's back.
The fourth transplant,
Zabrze, May 1986
How are you feeling, director?
- I'm worried about one thing.
- What is it?
- That I'll be heartless again.
- Just for 15 minutes.
I hope nothing stupid
comes to my mind at that time.
You'll tell us tomorrow.
The patient of the 4th transplant
lived 7 years with the new heart
Until today more than 1000
heart transplants
have been performed in Zabrze
Prof. Religa
died on March 8th 2009