



Photographic documentation of the performance “In Another Country”
Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin, Italy, 2016

On the next pages: “In Another Country (Script)”
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They were already watching me.

I couldn't even imagine it, but they were, the judge and his wife.

But I was doing nothing, just on the balcony, enjoying the view.

I wasn't doing anything bad. I was just watering the plants, ironing, cleaning. I was very good at cleaning. That was my first job when I came to Germany, before they got me in trouble with the law of the Federal Republic of Germany.

I had this attic apartment with my wife. I was cleaning the stairway to my own apartment. When they noticed I was so good at cleaning they wanted me to clean their private apartment.

I was so good at cleaning jobs that the landlord approached me and offered me the job to clean his apartment too.

That man was openly gay. He molested me against my will.

Against my will. He molested me sexually more than once.

Even though he knew I had a wife.

I accepted the job of cleaning his apartment only because at that time my wife had only six or seven clients a week. It was a hard time for us, my cleaning jobs were not enough for all month payments.

It was a hard time, so I accepted the job.

My wife was often at home at that time.

When I was cleaning his apartment, I noticed that the landlord had pictures of naked men hanging on the wall and also naked sculptures in his apartment. Not pornographic, but a copy of David, like the one in Florence, India - no, Italy.

I assume he had hung those pictures only for me to see them.

To torment me.

Somehow they aroused me and I had to masturbate in front of them. I did so not because I was gay, but because I wanted to have something else than only the sexual life with my wife.

There was something strange about it.

I am very sensitive.

I was also very sensitive when I was a child.

I was one of those kids who played with dolls instead of hanging out with other boys. I was a girlie boy lets say.

When I came here from California I couldn't speak a word of German. I was terrified by this foreign tongue.

The walls of my apartment were very thin so I could hear all the sounds around me.

I first heard sounds of steps up and down the staircase. I was on the top floor, I heard steps all day and neighbors speaking this foreign tongue. I could understand nothing but *Hallo* and *Danke schön* but I knew they were talking about me.

I was not the only one feeling anxious about it. My little rabbit was also hearing them speak this horrific language, with its terrible threatening sounds, he was jumping with anxiety and I was taking him and stroking him to calm him down, but I had no one to stroke me to calm me down, except for my wife, who was most of the time at work at that time, I was most of the day alone.

It was hell, I couldn't even go downstairs to throw out the garbage I was so afraid of meeting someone on my way. I couldn't say a word, only *Hallo*, but I was afraid of that too. (*Words in German*) I don't even know why I am speaking in German now.

My wife had a wooden wardrobe, she had divided it so that her clothes were on the bottom, and mine on top. When I woke up in the morning I used to spend a lot of time in front of the wardrobe looking at my clothes, spending hours deciding how to dress before going out. Once I noticed that I could hear sounds of people through the wardrobe. So I went closer to the wardrobe and I found that I could hear my neighbors perfectly.

I didn't hear any sexual activity at that moment, just sounds from the kitchen of people chatting.

My neighbor living on the floor below used to have a girlfriend and she came to visit him every weekend. They usually had sex on Saturday morning and sometimes also on Sunday.

I am very sensitive. It is like that.

I am not sure if there are any sexual activities happening, when, or where exactly, but I can kind of feel them. It begins with a sensation. I can kind of feel it before it starts.

I noticed that they were not having sex in their bedroom (that was the room below my bedroom), nor even in their bathroom, but in some other room that was directly below my hallway.

I was masturbating once, and (I am sure) after I came (or maybe it was during the act, I am not sure) I heard the sound of a woman's orgasm. I used to hear sounds of a woman's orgasm after me coming.

In the apartment next to mine there lived an old woman. I don't know if she ever heard any of my compulsive masturbatory acts. I assume there were no sexual activities in that apartment.

At one point she died, it was 1994, my wife already left me, and a married couple took her place.

There was also another woman living some floors below.

She was 24, 25 years old at that time, and she had different boyfriends during that time, but she was also lesbian once.

My life in Germany was hell, but there was also independence and I had my wife's love.

When she came back from work she used to give me massages to calm me down. She had learned some technique (Ayurvedic? Reiki?) where if you touch some point on the stomach you can resolve some past conflicts. That was a period of my life when I really felt loved.

Then my wife left me.

My life then became horrible, I was mentally destroyed and emotionally devastated.

I had only my wife's love and my rabbit and I was left alone.

I had also my father in California.

I could have gone back to California, but I couldn't go back to work in his pig slaughter house, which reminded me of concentration camps.

Then he treated me so badly.

I remember when I was a child, he used to wake up every morning and go downstairs completely naked.

He did it every morning.

I was a very sensitive child.

You know when a child has nightmares during the night and just wants to go and sleep in his mom and dad's bed inbetween them. This is something normal. So I was permitted to do so, sometimes (I assume there were some sexual activities between my mother and father at that time, but I was too innocent to notice it). So I would just walk into their room sometimes at night.

I wanted to see how my father was made.

He had hairy chest.

I remember I just wanted to see how a man was made. I think this is something normal.

I wanted to see my father naked all the time when he went downstairs naked in the morning, but he used to cover himself up, putting his shorts on when he saw I was around.

Then I was very precocious, maybe, I don't know, I was only six, but I started reading the Bible by myself. I read all the Bible and I didn't know that a man wanting to watch another man naked was something bad. I was only a child. My mind was pure. It didn't seem bad to my innocent mind.

I remember at that time (it was the sixties) it was full of hippies everywhere, and I remember being with my friends watching these naked hippies on the beach, and police men watching them with binoculars. We found it bizarre that they were watching them with binoculars, we thought they wanted to control them, if they were having too much fun while playing naked, but my mind was too innocent to understand.

Then in California I wanted to study Human psychology to understand what was going on in my mind, so I enrolled at the University of Fresno, California (I am not sure about sexual activities in the Human Psychology department; actually I heard rumors about some orgy activity in New York).

I went to study Human psychology, but I had never thought my anxieties at that time could have led me to such depression, or about the consequences of how my father treated me. And this depression. I just didn't want to feel alone, but I was so alone, also when I was a child.

I always had social phobias, I was different (as I've already mentioned), I was a different child. The others didn't want to play with me, but I was such a good sensitive child, one of those who love to take care of others, who listen and are open to others, but I was always left alone, and all this social anxiety just got worst in Germany, and led me to have all these problems with my neighbors.

I couldn't go out of my door, I was so anxious, and then depressed. I was so depressed.

My wife left me and I don't even remember now when it was, maybe it was 1990, or not, yes it was 1994 when she left me.

I was good at cleaning, so the judge and his wife asked me to watch their plants while they were on holiday (as I've already mentioned). I accepted to be a good neighbor.

I remember the judge's wife did everything to make me go to the balcony through their bedroom. I could have perfectly well gone to the balcony through their living room, but she explicitly asked me to pass through their bedroom.

She shut the blinds so that the living room was dark while the bedroom was light.

I remember the first time I entered their apartment I noticed a weird strong chemical smell. They had this floor made from vinyl as well as their wardrobe.

It was a very strong chemical smell.

I and my wife had the same kind of flooring. I couldn't understand where this smell was really coming from, and I wanted to know more. I went close to their wardrobe, I opened it and smelt it everywhere, but found nothing. Then I also wanted to smell the tiles on the floor. I lay down to smell the glue inbetween the tiles to really understand where that chemical smell was coming from, but I couldn't find an explanation.

When they came back from their holidays, I told them I had noticed a weird chemical smell in their apartment, and I told them about the wardrobe.

They got very upset with me.

I didn't do anything bad. I just wanted to make them aware of the fact that they were living in such an unhealthy environment.

(I don't know anything about their sexual activities. But in the bedroom there were two twin beds. They slept in the same room but apart from each other).

I am sure they were all talking about me, and actually they were.

They wanted to kick me out of the apartment because of my voyeuristic attitude.

The judge and his wife (actually she had another man but the judge was there all the time) talked about me all the time, they were working to find a legal way to kick me out of my apartment.

There is this law in Germany that if you are the owner of the house and you have very good reasons, you can kick the tenant out, lawfully.

The newly married couple wrote me a letter saying that they wanted to have a child and so they needed my apartment.