

ARCHAEOLOGIST 2: So hot...! I can't take any more.

ANTHROPOLOGIST: Did you bring the court order?

ARCHAEOLOGIST 2: No matter how many times I come up here, I never get used to it. (*Takes a swig of water.*) No, I couldn't find the mayor. Everything ready for the documentation?

ARCHAEOLOGIST 1: Hadn't we arranged to meet him?

ARCHAEOLOGIST 2: Yes, but he wasn't in his office. I waited for a while, he never turned up.

ANTHROPOLOGIST: Really? I don't believe this.

ARCHAEOLOGIST 1: That doesn't sound good, him not being there.

ARCHAEOLOGIST 2: Don't worry; he'll turn up, or he'll come for the lunch. (*Pause.*) How goes it, Tomás? Enjoying the shade?

TOMÁS: Just pondering.

ARCHAEOLOGIST 2: Don't ponder too much... Look at these two: all this talk about the past, and all they do is project into the future, and negatively at that. It's not good for you.

TOMÁS: So what is good?

ARCHAEOLOGIST 2: (*Points to the grave. Takes a photo.*) This is good. What we're doing here is good.

*Pause.*

ANTHROPOLOGIST: We agreed you'd pick the mayor up now because the court order was due.

ARCHAEOLOGIST 2: I know, but I couldn't wait any longer.

ANTHROPOLOGIST: Where's Carmen?

ARCHAEOLOGIST 2: We left her in the car. She's coming up now.

ANTHROPOLOGIST: Why didn't she come up with you?

ARCHAEOLOGIST 2: She just said she needed a moment.

ARCHAEOLOGIST 1: It's not easy.

ARCHAEOLOGIST 2: I looked back halfway up; I think she was sort of getting ready.

ARCHAEOLOGIST 1: Getting ready?

ARCHAEOLOGIST 2: Yeah, sort of getting ready, fixing her hair...

ANTHROPOLOGIST: To come to the grave...?

ARCHAEOLOGIST 2: Yes.

ANTHROPOLOGIST: Will she know the way up?

ARCHAEOLOGIST 2: You can't get lost: there's only one path.

ARCHAEOLOGIST 1: Did you get chance to see the other graves?

TOMÁS: What graves? You can't see anything there. Just a wall and a patch of earth. Just like here. There used to be an elm tree and a slope here; now there's an elm tree, a slope and a grave.

ARCHAEOLOGIST 2: The grave was there before.

TOMÁS: I know; you don't always need to see something to feel it. Get it done quickly, that's what you need to do. Put everything back the way it was.

ARCHAEOLOGIST 2: You're a farmer. When you move the earth, it breathes; you ought to know that; and when something breathes, it comes back to life. And nothing's ever the same again.

*Silence.*

ARCHAEOLOGIST 1: Los Chorrillos are famous for their suckling lamb, aren't they?

ANTHROPOLOGIST: The suckling lamb at Los Chorrillos is famous throughout the region...

ARCHAEOLOGIST 1: Their trout's really good too.

TOMÁS: Wouldn't have trout at Los Chorrillos.

ANTHROPOLOGIST: Aren't they from the river?

TOMÁS: Exactly, they're from the river. There's an aluminium factory near here the mayor saddled us with. There's an outflow pipe hidden in the weeds. Some nights, when it rains or if there's a storm, they open the hatch and release who knows what into the river. Nothing good. That's for sure.

ANTHROPOLOGIST: I hope they'll keep the table for us.

ARCHAEOLOGIST 2: Did you book?

*They all look at each other.*

ARCHAEOLOGIST 2: Shit. No lunch for us today, then. There's always a queue of people; the summer 'round here... it's hell itself... They think they're coming to paradise, but paradise here is in the winter.

TOMÁS: Only the dead and the old left here now. Only be the dead before long.

ANTHROPOLOGIST: Tomás, you could come with us. And you know the mayor's coming?—

TOMÁS: That idiot? No. Never eaten there before. Don't plan to start now. My father and I used to eat out sometimes... But never in the village... Each to their own... You enjoy yourselves.

ARCHAEOLOGIST 2: Don't go, Tomás. Carmen'll be here soon, she really wants to meet you... And thank you for everything you've done—

TOMÁS: I've done nothing...! Have you people got that? Nothing, nothing, nothing... You hear me...? It was my father did all this... The one who's nightmare it was... It was his terror; he was the one who wanted to talk to you people; I just fulfilled his last wish. I've done nothing, nothing. But it all passes down to us, unfortunately. Parents leave their children everything: cholesterol, blood sugar, lumbago... and their nightmares.

ANTHROPOLOGIST: But you want this resolved more than anyone. You've been asking for justice more than anyone else.

TOMÁS: I killed a viper on the way to the farm yesterday... They like to come out at dawn, warm themselves up on the tarmac. *(Pause.)* They have black heads, triangle-shaped, and cats' eyes, and their heads are covered in little scales. Have to be very careful with them... not disturb them; they hide in the wheat, rest under the stones... Like these bones... My father's father died of a viper bite, reaping the wheatfields... But unlike the vipers, who work in summer and sleep in the winter, these poor souls never rest. Never. They tell me every day; I hear them every night; they repeat it to me every hour. They drill at me, hammer at me, stab at my thoughts, perforate my every day. Their voices are stuck inside me, here. All I want is to rest. I want them to rest, so I can rest too. Is that so hard to understand?