

## TWO POPES

BERGOGLIO

I'm still seen as a divisive figure in Argentina.

RATZINGER

Yesterday you told me that Life is never static?

(slight pause)

You lead, not by power, not by intellect, but by how you live or the way you HAVE lived.

(slight pause)

You have changed.

BERGOGLIO

That man is still inside me. That doubt still exists.

RATZINGER

You think your sins disqualify you but we are all sinners. Now please, hear my confession. Well, would you deny me a confession, Bergoglio?

(begins to kneel)

BERGOGLIO

No, no. Don't kneel. Please, Holy Father. Sit, please.

BERGOGLIO

What should I say?

RATZINGER

I don't know...What do you usually say?

BERGOGLIO

How long since your last confession?

RATZINGER

Eight, seven, eight days.

BERGOGLIO

And have you sinned greatly in that . . . ? I'm sorry, I don't mean to imply that you...

RATZINGER

Of course I've sinned-several numerous venial sins. But I'm getting too old and forgetful to remember what they are.

BERGOGLIO

Can you say that?

RATZINGER

Yeah.

BERGOGLIO

I didn't know you could say that. That's . . . that's useful.

RATZINGER

I have sinned against You, Lord, whom I should love above all things.

(pause)

As a child I failed you first—by not having the bravery to taste life. Instead, I hid away in books and then in study. I know now that this left me empty and void of the world for which the church is meant to help.

BERGOGLIO

Go on.

RATZINGER

Remember Father Maciel? There were claims twelve years ago that his molesting of boys continued for decades. I did not give sufficient attention to the duties assigned to this one priest.

(pause)

Then in war I joined the Hitler Youth. Every fourteen year old was ordered to. I deserted. But within the church, I took part in the enforcement-enforcement of the truth.

BERGOGLIO

“Sufficient attention”?!

(silence)

Village after village?

RATZINGER

Yeah.

BERGOGLIO

BUT YOU KNEW?

RATZINGER

Yes, I should have known. I should have known. The facts were sent to me.

BERGOGLIO

You said there was more.

RATZINGER

Evidence was placed on my desk, but . . .

BERGOGLIO

You forgot the people you are meant to protect.

RATZINGER

Yes. I ask forgiveness.

BERGOGLIO

Father . . . If this is the sole reason you wish to resign, then it's even more important you stay and heal the wound.

RATZINGER

Listen to me.

BERGOGLIO

Complete the work you have begun.

RATZINGER

You see, every reason I give you is not enough. So let me tell you again. I can no longer sit on the chair of St. Peter.

BERGOGLIO

You're mistaken.

RATZINGER

I cannot feel the presence of God. I do not hear his voice. Do you understand me?

BERGOGLIO

No. No, you are mistaken. You are mistaken.

RATZINGER

I believe in God. I pray to God! Silence! I cannot play this role anymore.

BERGOGLIO

I'm so sorry.

RATZINGER

Since I was a child, as a boy, I always felt his presence with me, at my side. For my entire life, I have been alone, but never lonely, until now.

BERGOGLIO

I'm so sorry.

RATZINGER

Yeah. But now I can hear his voice. These last two days. I've heard his voice again.

BERGOGLIO

I'm glad.

RATZINGER

Yes. And the voice is the last one I expected to hear him speak with. It was your voice.

BERGOGLIO

No.

RATZINGER

Yeah. I think perhaps I could not hear Him, not because He is withdrawing from me, but because He is saying, “go my faithful servant.”

BERGOGLIO

God, the father of mercies, has sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins; May God grant you His pardon and peace and I absolve you of your sins ...

And I remind you that truth may be vital but without love it is unbearable – “Caritas in Veritate,” your book. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

RATZINGER

Amen. You have lifted a great burden from my shoulders.

BERGOGLIO

You have placed a heavy one on mine.

They prepare to leave but there is a crowd of tourists in the next room.

BERGOGLIO

Shall I call security?

RATZINGER

No. I’ve hidden behind my security for too long. These are still my people, for now.

They exit.