

Bloodstains fugitiveness reminiscence

By Ella Wisniewski

I.

What an odd sight they were.

Short dark hair small dark eyes smooth dark skin
Sat across from
Clean gray suit cropped gray hair careful gray eyes
In a café in the city.

The two changed languages every sentence or so:
Hungarian Swahili Mandarin.
They knew six apiece
But only four of the same.

Short dark hair spoke of
Conspiracies death threats self-proclaimed vigilantes
In between sips of americano.
She was
Top notch inside circle important agent.
She smelled of
Blood secrecy dozens of pseudonyms
To her aging companion.

Clean gray suit recounted
Closed cases completed assassinations dead vigilantes
While refusing to drink his coffee.
He was
Old news on the run useless once-was.
He smelled of
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To his sprightly associate.

Short dark hair provided information.
New targets finished assignments murder methods:
To begin an infiltration.
Clean gray suit did so as well.
Her father's location her mother's location their rendezvous point:
To start a new life.

They parted ways
Having finished their
Plotting scheming devising
To bring ruin to the organization
That brought ruin to him.

II.

Six dark eyes before her
Six dark eyes six gloved hands rested on the steel
Of the metal table.
She wouldn't talk and they wouldn't make her.

Three short questions asked of her
Three short questions too hard to remember now
A memory that was forced out——

Unclear.
She remembers vaguely:
Who do you betray us for?
And the like
And the like
And the
And

Four cold eyes. Did someone
Leave?
Unclear.

She'd been forgetful.
Was that before, or was it after——?
A drop of sweat down the spine
Quick heartbeats felt in the throat
Repress. Repress. If you forget it
You can't tell them.

Two eyes before her
Two eyes two tough hands ungloved holding something she cannot see
And then
And then

III.

He was cold to her death,
mostly.

(Considering it's what he'd been trained to do.)

He was cold to the news that came from the mouth of a trusted aid
Along with his morning coffee
While he sat in the windowless room
In Belarus. Or Albania. Kosovo, even.

It's not something he wasn't expecting.
The line of work was dangerous.
The task he'd asked of her was even more so.
He fled when she failed.

He received the word with a nod
And as the aid left him
He thought of her dark eyes.

She couldn't have thought that she would make it out alive.
You don't leave jobs like hers.
He paused. Because he had.
Could I have—

No, he decided
As he stood up from his chair,
Collecting his cup
And drinking the dregs.

No. He held up his end of the bargain.
It was not his fault that she failed.
It wasn't.

As he left the room he felt a pain in his stomach.