

T E R S E

By

Kiril Maksimoski

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Heavy rain outside. Sad, dim autumn day in Paris midtown.

Cafe is a somehow small and modest place. Several tables occupied - nonchalant talks.

Table by the window is occupied to. Two men sitting one across another. Their faces brightly lit by the whiteness from outside - on a contrast to all the other figures consumed by the darker inside.

One of them is AMERICAN, mid 30-ties, well build, casual look. No name needs to be attached to him.

Other one is milky pale, white hair, well known wrinkled face, light blue eyes - this is SAM. He's in his late 70-ties. Striking figure even at this poor table in this anonymous cafe.

Their talk is actually an interview, American's conducting.

Sam doesn't look pleased. He looks careless.

To our surprise, American is also not too impressed by the man across him. Still we see obliged respect in his look.

When they both speak, their voice is low and strict. Both act professional.

AMERICAN

(preparing his notebook,
completing previously started
subject)

One could say, you felt...sad of
the outcome of that project?

Sam is silent. He stares at the window as he's trying to recall some memories.

He light's a cigarette. Smokes.

SAM

(soft, grind voice with an
slight Irish accent)

You see, of all the failings I've
got...this one couldn't been my
favorite.

American writes in his notebook. Comes back to another question.

(CONTINUED)

AMERICAN

What...(hesitates)...can you
consider as your legacy at this
point?

Sam reacts as offended. American sees that, backs off.

AMERICAN (CONT'D)

Sir, shall I re-phrase the
question?

SAM

(soft)

Tell me...if one looks back at his
life...what can he see?

American's silent. He doesn't dare.

SAM(CONT'D)

(metaphorically)

Aren't there just a certain
points...a drops, a certain moments
one can think of, and sum it up
into what one would call
a...memory?

Sam looks away into outside, into his mind. We follow to...

2

EXT- SAM'S HOUSEHOLD - IRELAND, 1910

2

A dense meadow with the rural house in the background.

It's about to rain.

Sam, age 4 plays in the thick grass. He found a bug. He
picks it up and examines it.

A call out from the distance. Very loud, yet.

MOTHER (O.S.)

(in gaelic)

Kids, supper time! Get along
now!...Sammy, you too!

Sam stands up and runs toward the house. Halts, gets back
picks up the bug, put's it in his pocket and runs.

3 INT-CLASSROOM-IRELAND, 1930 3

Sam, older, mid 20-ties sits alone in an empty room.

He's behind the teachers desk. He stares at empty benches in front of him.

He's had enough.

4 INT-SAM'S FLAT - PARIS, 1932 4

Sam, 27 is working on a typewriting machine.

Around him, small space, things tossed around, no purpose.

He mouths the words he's about to put on paper.

He dislikes every combination.

He stares at the half-typed paper.

He stands up, toward the open window. He searches for inspiration.

5 EXT-COUNTRYSIDE - FRANCE, 1950'S 5

Sam, 47 bursts in driving an old pick up truck through the middle of nowhere.

Another man, younger sits on the back of the truck. This is ANDRE, early 20's, an unpleasant, muscular looking boy.

Sam halts the truck and gets out - same time as Andre jumps from the back.

They meet face to face, shake hands.

ANDRE
(in french)
Thank you, monsieur.

SAM
(in french)
You're very welcome, Andre. Keep it up, you hear?

ANDRE
(in french)
Understood, monsieur.

Andre, goes his way. Sam stays looking over him.

6 EXT-STREET-BELGRADE, 1959

6

Sam, 53 walks the half-empty street, bathing in the fierce of the afternoon sun.

A WOMAN REPORTER walks by him, no older then 35. Tape recorder on her shoulder, mike in hand.

Sam's all casual just examines the architecture. Or may we think so.

Woman tries hard to find exact pleasant moment to flash out a question. She believes she's got it.

They both speak English.

WOMAN REPORTER

(formally)

So, after the success of your latest play, could we have - and I say this just hypothetically - an aftermath?

SAM

Oh, we could. And further to it, I might guess it comes from this place around.

Woman reporter is overwhelmed.

7 INT-BROOKLYN, 1964

7

Late afternoon in a hotel lobby. BUSTER, late 70's is a wrinkled dried out looking man. Seems like all the weight of the world dropped right on his shoulders.

He's sitting right opposite of Sam, in his late 50's. They just stare at each other. An awkward moment of silence after a brief conversation that didn't turned up so well.

8 INT-CAFE SOMEWHERE IN PARIS, 1969

8

Sam, 60's is sitting alone writing something on a piece of napkin. He's all into it. Cup of black coffee and half burned out cigarette alongside.

He's done. Looks over it. Unidentified expression.

9 EXT-RESORT, COAST OF TUNISIA, 1969 9

Sam lies on a chair. He's view is full frontal of the sea.

Although warm, weather is not calm.

SUZANNE approaches. She's a mild looking woman, about Sam's age, his soul mate.

SUZANNE
(businesslike)
Receptionist says you got a call.

As message is passed, she sits right next to him.

Sam exiles. You can be sure this is a relief or worry he's putting on.

He stands up leaving the sea behind.

10 INT-STAGE, ROYAL COURT THEATER, LONDON 1973 10

BILLIE, charming, vigorous woman about 40's is standing up front on the stage. She's in the middle of the mise-en-scene instructions with the director below.

And there's Sam. Their talk is completely ad lib. Even pushed aside in favor of their gesticulations.

Sam, now close to 70's calms his words as his hands. Billie follows. They start another rehearsal. And...

11 INT-CAFE L'OTARIE - 1985 11

The American awes at Sam as if he heard most wonderful fairytale ever told.

Sam is through. He stands up, packing his cigarettes into pocket almost instinctive.

American rises as well putting his hand to a handshake.

AMERICAN
It's been a real pleasure, sir.

Sam just nods. They shake hands and Sam is out. Just as anonymously as he probably came in.

American remains watching the old man pass the cafe window.

12

EXT-PARIS STREET

12

Sam, already half wet is about to pass the zebra crossing when someone hurrying bumps right into him.

It's a YOUNG GIRL student like, maybe 23, she looks right up into the face of the striking figure that hardly moved.

GIRL
Pardon, monsieur...

Even now she recognizes the face, the striking blue eyes.

GIRL
(in french)
Oh, my God...you...you are...

As led by some instructions she takes out notepad and a pen from her bag.

GIRL (CONT'D)
(in french)
May...may I have an autograph. I'm
a big fan, sir.

Sam is motionless. He stares at the girl. Drops his view to the notepad.

And just in a split of a second there is or could be a something of a smile over that wrinkled face.

Then again, it might not.

He continues his walk saying nothing to the girl.

She stands there on the rain, watching him go, mixing with everyday people, another soaked soul.

And he's gone.

THE END