

Jady

Hookers from madrid.

After *The Large Man*, by Sara Cole

“Expensive! That’s the word!” she said pointing at Karl.

Karl was a professor of divinity. He spoke eruditely on the passionate progress of the wind and its delicate fragrance that carried through within. Upon arriving in Sicily, unfamiliar he became, for the musk now absent,

He was met with crisp new connotations and catholics.

Well he met a woman named Genevieve in Sicily—she spent her evening laughing at the wiry grey hairs that sprouted from Karl’s nose. At the cafe table they sat outside, the sky was purple above the cobbled streets and the weather was warm but Genevieve could feel the cool moisture in the air. Genevieve from Sicily she explains, “I had a husband once, a baby, and a house that looked out over the water, opuntia decorated our terrace...but one day Phalaris ruined me and devoured my daughter...now look at me.” So she went on laughing only ever solemn of when she talked of her daughter being a tyrant’s fodder. And the smells surrounding now in the air were compounding. The Arrosto D’Agnello was set on the table in front of Karl, this was leg of lamb roasted with seasonings, rosemary mostly. Genevieve, she says she is vegetarian, so she orders the calamari aglio. She is astounding but Karl is indifferent, his passion for the next minute is aroma. Halfway through the baby squid Genevieve lights a cigarette and says “My daughter was taken and my life ruined in a past life, this is the cause of my plight, in the year 565...565 BC...before the birth of your Jesus Christ.” She crosses herself.

Karl looks up from his food dabbing his napkin on his bottom lip to acknowledge his companion. He nods lifting his brow and manages “mhm”. His spectacles slide down over his nose, convex and bony, Genevieve laughed and wheedled for the cannoli di casa. New smells arrived outside with every changing shade of the skies velvet draped blinds and as tones saturated in open space through time so how did the coiled ashes in the ashtray remind the coffee cup be refilled and the subtle welcome of cafe lights. A large man two tables down smoked a cigar and was wearing his clerical collar. The large man, the father, he kept peering at Genevieve as she continued to engage Karl. Father large man was also having a coffee, father large man he is fingering prayer beads on top his fat stomach. “I want my daughter back, I want love, I want to have a nice life like a movie star, I want Prada shoes darling... I want, I want, I want. What is America like darling? Wouldn’t you take me with you?”

Karl listened and didn’t say anything. Father large man—he’s now rubbing himself, looking at Genevieve, in the other hand his cigar smolders pecking at the chair’s leg.

Back at the hotel Karl would be in the bathroom and Genevieve would be pouring out her purse of jewelry she stole. She picked through it on the bed. She opens a case containing a pair of twisted drop earrings, she says they are 14 karat white gold. She explains the significance of jewelry, that it's always more expensive and more valuable than the one wearing it. She explains that she could never leave this damned island of volcanos even if it kills her. She would not go to America even if she had the chance, she was Genevieve of Sicily. She asks Karl where he was before this and what business brings him. He was in Madrid the past two months, as to any business that brought him from anywhere to Spain and then to Italy and from those places to wherever else, as of what business that was he would not say. He sat on the corner of the bed and stared out the window while Genevieve undressed, streaks of red cut through the fading sky. Her skin pulled every adjacent side stretching herself over her bones every time she bent, reached, moved. Her eyes dead but her skin vernal. She was the type of woman that knew she was being naive every time she talked, it was intentional, it was flirtatious. Genevieve from Sicily, she smelled like honey... and Karl, like money.

"Madrid..." the words slurred out around a cigarette and collected in a pile of ash on the duvet.

"Hookers from Madrid, they wear all those silly bright colors...they're just that, without any class," Genevieve says while darting her eyes in open space. She says, "those hookers from Madrid, they like bright and ugly colors...me, I like black, I like white. Madrid hookers, they are...how you say... men women, with penis. I knew one, her name was Maria."

"So you've traveled?" remarked Karl.

"No dear, no. Maria just turned up here in Palermo on the circuit, disappeared just as quickly. Me, I have never left Sicily. I could not ever leave Sicily...though I think about leaving often. I have to be... I have to be... you know..."

"...prudent?" Karl inquired, turning toward her and away from the window. Her dull brown eyes became hopeless as she grasped his stare.

"No...no that's not the word." Genevieve says.