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1. **ESTRANYS EN UN TREN**

El tren avançava a un ritme irregular, com si estigués enfurismat. Es veia obligat a fer parades freqüents en estacions cada cop més petites, on s'esperava amb impaciència una estona, i tot seguit escometia la praderia de nou. Però l'avenç era imperceptible. La praderia només formava ondes, com si fos una flassada immensa, de color torrat tirant rosa, que sacsegessin d'una manera casual. Com més ràpid corria el tren, més vigoroses semblaven les ondes, com si es burlessin dels passatgers.

Guy apartà els ulls de la finestra i va fer-se cap enrere al seu seient.

En el millor dels casos, Miriam ajornaria el divorci, pensava. Fins i tot, en comptes d'exigir-l'hi, fóra possible que tan sols volgués demanar-li diners. Li demanaria Miriam realment el divorci?

(Patricia Highsmith. *Estranys en un tren*. Trad. Joan Ayala. Barcelona, Columna, 1987, p. 9)

Versió original

The train tore along with an angry irregular rhythm. It was having to stop at smaller and more frequent stations, where it would wait impatiently for a moment, then attack the prairie again. But progress was imperceptible. The prairie only undulated, like a vast, pink-tan blanket being casually shaken. The faster the train went, the more buoyant and taunting the undulations.

Guy took his eyes from the window and hitched himself back against the seat.

Miriam would delay the divorce at best, he thought. She might not even want a a divorce, only money. Would there really ever be a divorce from her?

(Patricia Highsmith. *Strangers on a Train*. New York / London, Harper & Brothers / Cresset Press., 1950. Chapter one)

2. **L'AMIC AMERICÀ. EL JOC DE RIPLEY**

“28 de març de 19...

Benvolgut Reeves,

Tinc una idea per a tu, en cas que encara no hagi trobat el que busques... Es diu Jonathan Trevanny, trenta anys i escaig, anglès, emmarcador de quadres, casat amb una francesa i pare d'un nen petit. (En aquest punt, Tom donà a

Reeves l'adreça de la botiga i la casa de Trevanny, i el telèfon de la botiga). *Si hem de jutjar per l'aspecte, uns quants diners no li vindrien malament, i encara que pot no ser el tipus que vols, tot ell respira decència i innocència, i el que encara és més interessant per a tu, només li queden uns pocs mesos, potser setmanes, de vida. Ho he descobert. Té leucèmia, i acaba d'assabentar-se de les males notícies. Potser estigui disposat a acceptar un treball perillós per tal de guanyar diners ara.*

No el conec personalment, i no cal insistir que no m'interessa conèixer-lo, ni que li esmentis el meu nom. Un suggeriment: si és que el vols temptejar, vine a F'bleau, instal·la't en una deliciosa albergueria anomenada Hôtel de l'Aigle Noir un parell de dies, et poses en contacte amb Trevanny mitjançant una trucada a la seva botiga, us veieu i en parleu. Cal que et recomani que no empris el teu nom vertader?

De sobte Tom es va sentir optimista envers el projecte. La imatge de Reeves i el seu aire encisador d'incertesa i ansietat (que quasi suggeria probitat) exposant aquella idea davant de Trevanny, més honrat que un sant, féu esclafir Tom de riure. S'atreviria a ocupar una altra taula al menjador o al bar de l'Hôtel de l'Aigle Noir mentre Reeves s'entrevistés amb Trevanny? No, resultaria excessiu. Aleshores li vingué al cap una altra advertència, i afegí a la carta:

Si vens a F'bleau, sisplau no em truquis ni m'escriguis sota cap circumstància. I desfés-te d'aquestes lletres, fes-me el favor.

*Teu afectíssim,
Tom"*

(Patricia Highsmith. *L'amic americà. El joc de Ripley*. Trad. Lluís Massanet Galmés. Barcelona, Columna, 1992. Cap. 3, p. 36-37)

Versió original

March 28, 19—

Dear Reeves,

I have an idea for you, in case you have not yet found what you are looking for. His name is Jonathan Trevanny, early thirties, English, a picture-framer, married to Frenchwoman with small son. [Here Tom gave Trevanny's home and shop addresses and shop telephone number.] He looks as if he could use some money, and although he may not be the *type* you want, he looks the picture of decency and innocence, and what is more important for you, he has only a few more months or weeks to live, I have found out. He's got leukemia, and has just heard the bad news. He might be willing to take on a dangerous job to earn some money now.

I don't know Trevanny personally, and need I emphasize that I don't wish to make his acquaintance, nor do I wish you to mention my name. My suggestion is, if you want to sound him out come to F'bleau, put yourself up at a charming hostelry called the Hôtel de L'Aigle Noir for a couple of days, contact Trevanny by ringing his shop, make an appointment and talk it over. And do I have to tell you to give another name besides your own?

Tom felt a sudden optimism about the project. The vision of Reeves with his disarming air of uncertainty and anxiety – almost suggestive of probity—laying such an idea before Trevanny who looked as upright as a saint, made Tom laugh. Did he dare occupy another table in the Hôtel de L'Aigle Noir's dining-room or bar when Reeves made his date with Trevanny? No, that would be too much. This reminded Tom of another point, and he added to his letter:

If you come to F'bleau, please don't telephone or write a note to me under any circumstances. Destroy my letter here, please.

Yours ever,

Tom

(Patricia Highsmith. *Ripley's game*. London, William Heinemann, 1974. Chapter 3)

3. TROBADA AL CARRER

– ¿Segur que no vol canviar d'opinió i comprar un bon bistec de vint dòlars pel seu gos? –Jack tragué un bitllet de vint.

– God? Ja menja prou bé, ell. Normalment carn fresca i no aquesta mena de porqueria per animals. Potser menja massa i tot. –Va estirar el ronsal–. God, saluda aquest senyor.

– Es diu God? –preguntà Jack, tot mirant el gos blanc i negre que li arribava als genolls. Les orelles li penjaven cap endavant, la cua se li corbava donant-li un aspecte de porc, si no fos pel morro, que era força punxegut.

– Es diu God perquè vol dir gos en anglès a l'inrevés –digué l'home–. Per cert, sóc ateu, per això li he tornat la cartera.

(Patricia Highsmith. *Trobada al carrer*. Trad. Josep-Lluís Castillo i Anna Jené Palat. Barcelona, Columna, 1986. Cap.2, p. 21)

Versió original

– “You won't change your mind and buy a nice twenty-dollar steak for your dog?” Jack pulled out a twenty.

– “God? He eats well enough, I think. Fresh meat most of the time and not this old fatty hamburger stuff for animals. Maybe he eats too much. He tugged at the leash. 'God, say hello to this gentleman.'”

– 'His name's God?' Jack asked, looking at the black and white dog who stood knee-high. The dog had ears that flopped forward, a tail with a curve, giving a pig-like impression, except that its nose was rather pointed.

– 'Dog spelt backwards, that's all,' said the man. 'I'm an atheist, by the way, so naturally I returned your wallet.’

(Patricia Highsmith. *Found in the Street*. UK, Hachette, 2016 [1986]. Chapter 2)

4. CAMINS QUE NO DUEN ENLLOC

— *¡La próxima parada, Accademia!* -crijà el cobrador.

Lliscaren suaument a l'arcada del pont de fusta d'Accademia. Inez es va aixecar i va anar cap a l'esquerra, on hi havia la porta de sortida. Ray va anar caminant per coberta al darrere d'una dotzena de passatgers. Quan va ser davant de l'Accademia di Belle Arti, Inez mirà amunt i avall com si no sabés cap on havia de tirar, després va aturar una persona que passava, la qual li indicà el carrer ample que travessa l'illa.

Ray la seguí a poc a poc. No calia precipitar-se ni observar gaire on tombava perquè ja sabia on anava. En un solar que semblava un gran pati al darrere de la Seguso, Ray tombà a l'esquerra, en un carreró que anava cap al canal que passava a tocar la pensió; però era un cul-de-sac, perquè no hi havia camí que voregés el canal. Inez havia desaparegut en un *sottoporto* que va fins a la casa de Ruskin. Ray va recular, va travessar en diagonal aquell solar i va trobar un altre carreró que anava fins al canal; però ja sabia que allí sí que hi havia vorera i també un pont. Va travessar el pont i va girar a la dreta. Tenia la Seguso a la dreta, a l'altre costat del canal. Un pont amb arcada travessava el canal al moll Zattere. Ray es va quedar a l'entrada del pont, a l'altra banda de la Seguso.

(Patricia Highsmith. *Camins que no duen enlloc*. Trad. Carme Geronès i Carles Urritz. Barcelona, Laia, 1986. Cap. 7, p. 73-74)

Versió original

— '*Accademia the next stop!*' shouted the conductor.

They chugged smoothly towards the arched wooden bridge at Accademia. Inez stood up, moved forward and to the left where the boat's door was. Ray walked along the port deck, keeping behind the ten or twelve debarking passengers. Inez, on the pavement in front of the Accademia di Belle Arti, looked all around her as if she did not know her way, and stopped a passer-by. The man pointed to the broad street that went across the island.

Ray followed her slowly. No need to rush now, to watch her turnings, because he knew where she was going. In the wide courtlike area behind the Seguso, Ray walked left, a direction that would bring him to the canal that went along the side of the pensione, but which was also a dead end, because no pavement bordered the canal just here. Inez also disappeared in the *sottoporto* which led to the Ruskin house. Ray retraced his steps quickly, crossed the open area diagonally, found another street which led to the little canal, but here, he knew, were pavements and also a bridge. He crossed the bridge over the canal, and turned right on the pavement. Now the Seguso lay on his right, across the canal from him. An arched stone bridge spanned the canal on the Zattere quay. Ray remained at the foot of the bridge, the end away from the Seguso.

(Patricia Highsmith. *Those who walk away*. London, Virago, 2014 [1967]. Chapter 7)

5. SMALL G: UN IDIL·LI D'ESTIU

Un jove que es deia Peter Ritter sortia d'un cinema, a Zuric, un dimecres al vespre al voltant de mitjanit. Era gener, feia fred, i es va cordar la jaqueta de cuir a corre-cuita mentre caminava. Peter anava cap a casa, on vivia amb els seus pares, i va decidir que era millor trucar a Rickie des d'allà que des d'un bar. Peter va agafar un carreró que feia dreuera. S'estava cenyint el cinturó de la jaqueta quan una figura, des de la foscor, va saltar a la seva esquerra i va dir:

—Ei! Dóna'ns els diners!

Peter va veure un ganivet a la mà dreta alçada del tipus, un ganivet de cacera força llarg.

—D'acord, tinc uns trenta francs! —va dir Peter, dret, tens, amb els punts preparats. A vegades els drogoaddictes eren fàcils d'espantar—. Ho voleu?

El segon tipus va saltar a la dreta de Peter.

—Trenta i aquesta jaqueta!

—balucejà l'home del ganivet, i va clavar una forta ganivetada sota les costelles de Peter, al costat esquerre.

Peter sabia que el ganivet havia travessat completament el cuir. Va buscar la cartera a la butxaca del darrere dels texans, sota la jaqueta.

—D'acord, ara va...

El segon home va deixar anar una rialla estrident i va apunyalar Peter al costat dret. Peter va vacil·lar, però ja s'havia tret la cartera. L'home de l'esquerra la va agafar. Més rialles, i ara un cop al coll de Peter; no un cop de puny, sinó una altra ganivetada.

—Ei! —va cridar Peter, recargolant-se de dolor i força espantat—. Auxili! Ajudeu-me!

—Peter va colpejar l'home de la seva esquerra amb els punys, ràpid, en un acte reflex.

El segon home colpejà Peter i l'envià cap a la foscor arran de la paret, on Peter es va donar un cop al cap. Les passes, al trot, van desaparèixer.

(Patricia Highsmith. *Small g: un idil·li d'estiu*. Trad. Elisabet Carreras. Barcelona, Columna, 1995, p. 9)

Versió original

A young man named Peter Ritter came out of a cinema in Zurich one Wednesday evening around midnight. It was January, cold, and he hurried to fasten his thigh-length leather jacket as he walked. Peter was heading for home, where he lived with his parents, and he had decided to ring Rickie from there rather than from a bar-café. Peter took an alley that was a shortcut. He was buckling the jacket belt, when a figure leapt out of the darkness on his left and said, 'Hey! Give us your money!'

Peter saw a knife in the fellow's raised right hand, a longish hunting knife. "OK, I've got about thirty francs!" Peter said, standing tense, fists at the ready. Sometimes drug addicts could be scared off, easily. "You want that?"

A second fellow had sprung up on Peter's right.

"Thirty with that jacket! mumbled the man with the knife, and struck—a hard stab under Peter's ribs on his left side.

Peter knew the knife had gone through the leather. He was reaching under the jacket for the wallet in the back pocket of his jeans. "OK, I'm *getting*—"

The second man gave a funny shrill laugh and stabbed Peter in his right side. Peter staggered, but he had the wallet out.

The man on the left snatched it. More laughter, and a blow to Peter's throat now – not a fist, but another stab.

'Hey!' Peter yelled, twisting, in pain and thoroughly scared. 'Help! Help me!' Peter hit the man on his left with his fist, fast as a reflexive gesture.

The second man bumped Peter, sending him toward the blackness of the house walls, where Peter hit his head. Trotting footsteps faded.

(Patricia Highsmith. *Small g: a Summer Idyll*. London, Bloomsbury, 1995. Chapter 1)