

- Why is there a corpse on the dining table?

The voice was from Rita and it came from the dining room where she had entered just a few seconds ago to pick up a glass of tap water. The question was so absurd that Mary did not even process it, the sentence entered by her wrinkled little ear and got lost in the wind storm that was her head, fell in the mud and sank, and died without a trace.

- Mary! Would you please answer me? Why is there a corpse on the dining table?

By repeating the question Rita made it become real, taking Mary out of her stupor. The old lady jumped faster than her seventy year old knees permitted and they soon made themselves be noticed by sending her cortex a sharp pain note, just a warning so she would never defy them in such a way again, even on the verge of such a unique event, therefore Mary slowly walked to the dining room, barely taking her feet from the floor.

By the frame of the door there she saw, and all the air left her lungs at once. Under the dim yellow light from the chandelier, right on the top of the dark cedar table was a man, dead, naked, covered only by a pair of shorts. A golden dagger pierced through his neck. Fresh, warm blood, dripping on the carpet that the housekeeper cleaned yesterday.

Mary turned to her sister in slow motion, forcing her sight away from the gruesome vision orbit, Rita seemed unconcerned about the dead man in their house. She just had the annoyed expression that she often showed when a waiter served her the wrong meal or the maiden didn't fold her clothes the way she liked. Mary watched while she tied her blonde dyed hair in a coque, the aquamarine robe she wore looked muddy green in the yellow light. They both stood in silence for a few minutes, Mary shaking like a puppy, wishing to all be a dream, Rita tapping her feet in annoyance, probably thinking how to get rid of that body unnoticed.

- So, Mary? Ain't gonna answer me?

Mary's eyes almost popped out of her face, she could not believe Rita. What was she expecting? Her sister has always been like this, impatient, obnoxious, mean, mean, mean. Always demanding an answer, and always throwing the blame on others. She would drop a glass on the floor, break it and shout "Who left it so close to the corner?". Would lose her own belongings and say "You all have to keep this house tidy, I can't find anything in this mess." Even now. With a dead man. A dead man for god's grace. A dead man in their house, right in the dining room, on their table, her sister was already finding someone to blame.

- Rita... You can't... You can't possibly believe that I am responsible for this!

Mary looked pathetic when mad, thought Rita, her face like a gigantic tomato, her little mole eyes squeezing under the weight of the wrinkles of her forehead, and her voice so high pitched, barely holding a cry. Her sister could not handle any sort of stressful situation that she would collapse into tears, it is impressive, truly, how Mary was managing till now. Obviously, she can not possibly believe that I would ever imagine that she has the guts to stab a man.

- Did I accuse you? - Said Rita, dryly.

- Yes! - Mary squeaked. How cynical is this Rita.

- I simply asked who did it, I never said it was you.

- There's only the two of us here! It is to assume that you would be referring to me... Right?

- So it was you?

- No!

Rita shrugged her shoulders. She was tired of her sister's grumble, Mary knew how to be annoying. Even being eight years older than Mary, and that was a lot considering their age, Rita was more agile and fast thinking. She was lean, stronger, and had better eyesight than her blind mole of a sister could ever possibly glimpse even during their youth.

The elegant, tall lady approached the corpse and slipped her hands on the dead man's skin, making Mary gasp in shock. He was a fine young man, probably around his twenties, his body was remarkable, purple veins adorned his arms like a marble stone, and the torso was not yet swollen by the putrefaction gasses so still exhibited a fine six-pack that ended in a v-shaped path guiding to an area covered by an oversized blue short, hiding his nudity. Rita's touch did not shy away from the area and to Mary's horror, Rita pushed the shorts away, revealing the man's erect member that jumped from his shorts like a clown of a music box, the ghost of a pleasure that never was. Mary glowed neon red, she gasped loudly, her limbs numb, and she felt like vomiting but held it.

- Rita! - Said her, like one would scold a small child. Touching the boy like that... an old lady like her.

- He's a gigolo. - Commented Rita, ignoring Mary's tantrum.

Without a comment, Rita very calmly walked to the kitchen, leaving Mary alone with the corpse for a few minutes. She came back holding an intricate glass filled with honey-colored whiskey with a square cut block of ice floating on top of it, the cracking of the ice and Mary's heartbeat were the only things to be heard.

- How... How do you know he is... - Mary could not bring herself to finish the question. She felt corned by that thing staring at her, almost at eye level, the bastard was big.

- Nice body, all worked out.

- Just because of that? - He is a very handsome gentleman. He was.

- He hasn't shat himself.

Indeed, agreed Mary in her own head, he even smelled good, not like the usual woody pungent men's colognes, more of a sweet, cranberry-like perfume. Mary had read her fair share of detective romances during her teens, and one of the first things to ever happen after a murder was the victim to excrete themselves, the insides get loosened or something like it, but Mary failed to see the

connection between one thing and what her sisters accused the boy to be.

- I don't get it, Rita.

- If he didn't, it was because he was clean.

Rita could see that her little sister still was not able to figure it out, but she was not going to insist and make any further questions, afraid of looking dumb, she couldn't avoid looking dumb, Mary this perpetual puny kid face, lost behind those glass-like black eyes, Rita wondered if there was single thought behind then, wondered if her sister ever had a significant experience beyond the walls of books that she surrounded herself, wondered if she ever even had an orgasm. Sometimes Rita wanted to ask her that, but Mary used to get so uncomfortable when the subject was sex or man in general. She was seventy and still closed her eyes when there was a sex scene in a movie, like a child.

When they were young, Rita used to get home late with her girlfriends, body smelling like men, they talked till dawn, discussing the events of the parties they went to, gossiping about the boys they met, amusing themselves with the out-of-tone conversations narrating their often exaggerated encounters with their pairs, it was fun, it was so fun that time. Not for Mary tho, she would just lay on her bed, a blanket covering her face, pretending to be asleep. She was a true chump, always hiding her chubby fat face under a book and messy hair. No effort and the way she presented herself, clothes out of fashion, stained, crumpled. Mary was not even that ugly, just uneasy to the eyes, some boys even graced her with an invitation to a dance, a flattering compliment, it was rare, but it did happen, and when it happened Mary would giggle like a toddler, avoid eye contact, say something incomprehensible and run off like a stupid school girl.

When older and the affairs led to something serious Rita wanted to confess to her sister her experiences with the man she loved, it was no subject to confer about with other ladies, not even her close

friends, but to a sister only. Rita wanted to tell Mary about the french kisses, how spicy it could get when the kisses didn't stop at the mouth, she wanted to say how she loved him that would become her husband in the future, how handsome he was, how gentle he was, but Mary never bothered, it was as if she wanted to protect the virginity of her own ears. Even now, face to face with a dead man, Mary looked more shocked by his nudity than the blood dripping from his neck. Did she ever see one so close?

- He was going to be fucked, Mary. He was going to give his ass. - Said Rita, breaking up the silence.

A faggot! Mary would never have imagined it! She has never even seen one that close, only maybe in television, but they were different there, with all that make up, weird clothes, they were not that... handsome. She wanted to look away but could not, she was more fascinated than ever, and more aware of Rita's judgmental stare all over her, but him, his... thing... stared at her louder.

- What's that about, sister? Never seen one? - Rita was not referring to a homosexual. Or a corpse.

- Of course, I did! - Mary knew she answered too fast. She was lost now.

Rita gazed at her sister like she was transparent, eyes full of certainty. What can I say in my defense? Tough Mary, hiding from her sister, like her mere sight could pierce into Mary's skin like the dagger in the poor boy's throat. I've always been too shy, and too conscious about everything. The looks, the compliments, the posing, all the game, it was all too much for her. Every time she was near men she became completely aware of her entire body, from the stretch marks in her haunches that looked like scars from a big cat attack, from her crooked feet and, and mostly, her lady parts, she herself never gave it more than a few glances to it during her entire life. She was repulsed by it, by the weird shape that twisted and collapsed under a dark, wrinkled skin surrounded by a forest of thick black hair. She knew it was ugly as everything else on her.

And the smell, she sometimes feared everyone could smell it. Even tried to stick a bar of soap there once, to see if it would quiet the odor, it burned so bad she crouched in the shower and cried for a bit.

The opportunity to be with someone never lacked, man could be so depressed sometimes, but Mary ultimately tried with a woman. A hooker. Mary already felt old when that happened, and thought that with another woman it would be easier, but when the tongues touched during the kiss when the dim light contoured the soft curves of that lady's body, Mary became more aware than she ever was. The lady was beautiful, and Mary then saw how a woman's body should look, nothing like hers. She pushed the hooker away like a stray dog and never tried anything with anyone again.

- Why is he like this?

- Like this how?

Rita wanted Mary to say it. She was a devil, she knows I'm too shy to say it.

- Like this Rita! Like this!- Pointed Mary to the man's penis to which the sister only answered with a confused expression, pretending she didn't understand, she wanted Mary to say it.

- Hard! Why is he hard? - Mary was so purple it looked like she was going to explode.

Rita gave a strong laugh and then quietly left the room, without answering Mary's question, leaving Mary alone with the corpse, which stood there frozen for what seemed an eternity in her point of view, when she assumed that Rita was not returning, Mary's prudence was overpowered by the gravitational pull that the man's body exercised over her. She stood her hand millimeters against the body, still too afraid to touch it, with a deep breath Mary then let her hand rest over his chest. It was strong and cold, like a vinyl doll. The lady drove her fingers towards his stomach, feeling his abs and the sharp fur under his belly button. He shaved recently. His pelvis emanated a supernatural heat, contrasting with the icy cold

temperature of the rest of the body. Mary never had her hands so close to a man's shame before. It was pulling her, she could feel, and she didn't feel repulsed by it, it was a miracle she thought, of course, it was, there it was a cold, a blue corpse, cold, dead, but his member was still colorful, alive, pulsing. She searched for the man's glance, but his eyes were empty, glassy, and with no judgment. Mary jumped like she had touched hot iron when she heard Rita's footsteps approaching the dining room. Rita found Mary meters away from the man, avoiding looking at her, face covered with shame. The slim sister didn't acknowledge the shameful one, she carried a tiny white towel that she placed over the man's face, and as soon as Rita did that, she left. Mary once again heard her sister step on the stairs, then she heard the door of Rita's bedroom opening, and then she heard it closing, and then the sound of the door getting locked, the tv being turned on, and nothing else. Mary understood, they were alone now. Mary and the corpse on the dining table.

THE END