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War Story

By Kristin Gore

- Buongiorno.

- Buongiorno.

I was here a little while ago.

I'd like to stay in the same room, please.

Do you speak English?

No. Not enough.

I was here a little while ago,
and I was hoping I could get
the same room upstairs, please.

Buongiorno.

Welcome back.

- Thank you. Thank you.

- Remember me? Fillipo.

- Of course, yes.

- You are...?

- Lee.

- Lee.

- Yes.

- Welcome back.

Thank you. I was here...
the last time I was here,
I wanted to stay in
the same room upstairs.

- No problem.

- It's 245.

245. No problem.

The corner room... very nice.

Thank you.

- It's all yours.

- Thank you.

Give me the passport and I'll
take care of everything else.

There you go. Thank you.

Is there anything else I can
do while you're staying here?

Do you think I could have
one cigarette, please? Just one?

- It's...

- Oh, yeah.

- Thank you.

- Of course.

Very much.

Fuck.

- Right.

- Morning or afternoon flight?
- I guess the afternoon flight.
- I'm booking it now.
- I need you back here.
- I know. I really do. I get it.
Well, then turn on your damn cellphone
and pick it up when I call you.
- I...
- You can't just disappear.
I know. And I want to talk to you. I do.
I'm not trying to scold you, Lee,
but we've been worried sick.
Tell me how you're doing.
Well, you know... Okay. I'm just...
I know you're not okay. Talk to me, Lee.
It's just so fucked up and it's just
so weird, you know? It's fucking weird.
Yeah. I'm sorry, Lee.
- Yeah. Thanks.
- I'm really sorry. I really...
How is everybody?
Everybody's in pretty
rough shape, to tell the truth.
Yeah.
And you know nobody can
hold their liquor around here,
not like you and I can, anyway. So...
Lee, nobody knows better than
me how much Mark meant to you
and how much the two of
you went through together.
You cannot be alone right now.
Mark's memorial service is on Thursday.
Get on that flight tomorrow,
come back here, and we'll get through this.
I'll call you back with
your flight info, okay?
- Lee?
- Yeah.
- Go to Albert's and stay with him tonight.
- Okay, I will.
Tell everybody I said hi, okay?
No, I'll just tell them
you're coming home.

- We love you, Lee.
- Okay, thanks. Bye.

Grazie.

Excuse me.

Buongiorno!

Yeah, I like it.

- Very best quality, good price.
- Oh, no. I can't. I can't.
- I give you a good price.
- I can't. I'm just walking. I'm... no car.
- Where you live? I bring to you.
- New York.

You walk from New York?

See, bring back the carpet to
New York and you think about me.

My name's Lee. Lee.

- It's a beautiful name.
- Thank you. Thank you.
- Nice to meet you. I am Wejdi.
- Wejdi.
- Where are you from, Wejdi?
- Tunisia.

Yeah.

I have more of my carpet
at home, even more beautiful.

No, I can't carry it.

I don't... I... I can't.

- Put your suitcase.
- No. I don't have a suitcase.
- I give you one.
- I don't want a suitcase, thank you.

Beautiful.

Yeah, yeah. Is your family
here or are they in Tunisia?

- In Tunisia.
- Oh. So it's just you?
- Yes. Myself. Just you?
- Yes.

You are beautiful and you
travel alone, no man?

No. Too many men.

Many men. Where are the men?

Show me. Where are the men?

Everywhere.

All right.

Five minutes.

Could I talk to your supervisor?

Okay. I'll come back with my documents.

Signorina, polizia.

- What?

- Bag.

Yeah.

- A camera?

- It's a camera, yes.

Yes, I'm just photographing. Yes.

I don't... I-I'm taking photographs
of a field, for trees.

Okay.

That's it. This. That.

No.

- I...

- No photo.

This is just personal photos for me.

Signorina, signorina...

- Delete all the photo, please.

- Okay? No photo.

- Please.

- We understand?

- Okay.

- Okay.

Grazie. Remember, no photo, okay?

You motherfuckers.

Thank you.

Fillipo.

Fillip!

- Excuse me one second.

- Sure.

Excuse me.

I just... no service
for my room, please?

245, no service.

My room down the hall... my room.

My room is 2-4-5.

No service.

Do you understand? I'll show you. This.

245. No service, okay?

Yes. Thank you. Okay.

How did this happen?

- I, I ran into something.

- What?

I ran into something.

- Yeah?

- Yeah.

- Does it hurt?

- Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah, th-that's where it is, yeah.

Yeah. Okay. I think you...

- I think your jaw has a slight fracture.

- Yeah.

And... you might have a rib broken.

- Right.

- So I want you to have the X-ray done.

- Oh, no, no, no.

- Yeah, yeah. You have to.

No, I... I... No. I just want
pain medication. That's what I need.

Thank you.

Should we go get something to eat?

No. Thanks, though. Maybe... maybe.

I'll let you know, okay?

- Yeah.

- Thanks.

The doctor is not here.

- Do you understand?

- They tell me 10 days.

In 10 days past, I come here
every day. There is no more time.

I'm sorry.

No, no, no. Wait. No.

Let's go. I'm getting a cab.

No, no, no, no!

Why did he hit you?

He is a thief. He stole my money.

He was supposed to take me to France.

I saw... I saw... I know you.

I know... I've taken your picture.

- What is your name?

- Hafsia.

Hafsia, I know you. I know you!

- I took your photograph.

- What?

- I... I took...

- I don't know you.
I'm a photographer. I took your
photograph with your brother in Libya.
- What?
- I was in Libya.
- I took a photo of you and your brother.
- How do you know about my brother?!
- What do you want? What?
- I took a photo of you in Libya.
- I'm a photographer.
- What do you want?!
- I saw you. I saw it.
- Please! Please, stop, stop, stop.
- I saw it. Hey, no, no, no. I saw...
- Stop, stop, please. You're crazy.
Wait! I'll be... Wait.
I saw you at the hospital.
You were talking to the nurse.
I... I want to help you.
- My friend is a doctor.
- What do you want?
- I just want... hold on a second. Yes, wait.
- Leave me alone.
I want to help you.
I know you from Libya. You know me!
Excuse me.
Don't go in my room.
Can you come here, please?
Please?
Okay? Okay?
Stop going in my room.
Okay? Just stop going in my room.
Lee, buongiorno.
The lady from New York called last
night and again this morning. You see?
- Yes.
- What do you want me to tell her?
Nothing.
Listen, could you talk to my housekeeper,
please? She keeps coming into my room
and I keep asking her not to and she does
it anyway. I don't want my room cleaned.
- Okay.
- Okay?

We will just give you fresh towels and change of sheet.

No. Nothing.

- Okay.

- Thank you.

Excuse me. I see my friend now. Take care.

No photo.

No photos.

Okay?

What do you want? You don't know me.

I know you need help.

I want to help you.

I don't need help.

I think you need help.

Okay.

Why?

Why you want to help me?

I don't know. I don't know.

It's just...

you remind me of someone.

Is that okay?

Not here. Doctor not here.

- You will have to wait.

- I wait again?

- Again?

- Yes. Yes. I am sorry.

Every day you're sorry?

Every day you don't know?

- Every day the doctor is not here!

- I'm sorry.

Hafsia. You're not gonna

do anything? Nothing?

- Nothing.

- Nothing? I'll be right back, okay?

- Hey! Hey, hey, hey.

- Hey.

Hi. Can I talk to you in private for a minute, please?

Excuse me. It's important.

I just need to talk to you. Sorry.

- Just give me two minutes.

- No, no. Just... just for a minute.

And if you can come with me, please?

- Are you okay?
- Yeah, I'm fine. I just... this...
I have a friend with me and I
just want you to talk to her out
- in the waiting room if that's okay.
- I'm sorry. I...
- I really don't have time.
- No. It's just for a minute, okay?
- What's the emergency about?
- What...

What's the emergency?

She's pregnant and she
needs an abortion now.

Just come talk to her
for two seconds, okay?

- Hi.
- Hi.
- I'm Dr. Vici.
- Hi.

Lee told me you have a problem.

Have you been downstairs in
the gynecologist department?

- Yes.
- Yeah? What did they say?

No, she... she's done everything
procedurally. She's had the...

I don't know.

Certified... the whole thing.

And she just... they keep telling her
that he's gonna come back and he...

I don't understand. What do you
want me to do? You know, I'm...

I'm not a gynecologist. You need a
different kind of doctor, you understand?

- I know. I understand.
- Yes... no, we want a different doctor.
- We just want you to call him please, okay?
- Okay, I call him.
- Okay, thank you.
- I'll call him later, in half an hour.
- Please, call him now. Fucking call him now.
- I gotta go now. I got patients.

I'm just gonna do it myself.

How was it when you came?

Not good.

- You don't want to stay here?

- They don't want people like me here.

I want to go to France.

- Oh, okay.

- I hope.

You will help me?

Yes.

Good.

No more time.

No. No more waiting.

We have to get the pills.

- I can get my pills.

- Why? Are you a doctor?

- Yes.

- Can you get me pills?

I can get you pills, too.

Are you... you're kidding.

I've been smoking since I got here.

- Y...

- What is your problem?

What do you want? Everybody...

no, no, no, no. Everybody smoking.

- What do you want? What do you want?

- Grazie.

- I'll put it out. I don't want to smoke anyway. - Grazie. Grazie.

I will come back later.

Okay.

Were there many people on the boat?

Yes. Many. Too many.

The captain came to us and said,

"as long as the wind
don't get any stronger,
then we... we will live.

But if the wind grows,

I will say I'm sorry

because for sure we will all die here."

I was so scared but so black...

nothing but black.

My brother sat with

me and I fell asleep.

And when I woke up, he was gone.

What happened?

He fell or he was pushed.

Five others, as well.

Maybe there was a fight, and...

he fell into the sea.

I'm so sorry.

- Oh, hey, Filippo.

- Buona sera.

How are you?

Listen.

I'm...

Sorry, I just took the key.

Nobody was behind the desk.

It's okay. By the way,

I spoke to the maid.

- You did. Okay.

- And I told her not to bother you anymore.

- Thank you.

- And...

- I heard you had a visitor today.

- Yeah.

I wanted to ask you, please,

I hope you will not bring an undesirable
guest into the dining room again.

It's just upsetting for the other guests
to have these kind of
people in the restaurant.

I advise you to be more careful
about the company you choose.

Have I made myself clear?

Yeah. Thank you.

- Good.

- Okay.

I'll get the car...

she'll get the pills. Go to France.

I'll get the car, take the pills,

we'll go to France.

Get the car, we take the pills,

we go to France.

I thought you were

waiting for my call back.

Hi, Albert.

I want... I'm planning to come see you.

I want to, I want to

come see you. And I will.

Will you please tell everybody to stop fucking leaving me messages?

I'm not calling anybody back.

No!

It's Hafsia! Stop!

It's Hafsia.

Is there something

fucking wrong with you?!

You stupid...

Fuck.

- I'm sorry.

- I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

It's okay.

I'm sorry.

Okay.

Let's go.

You want some wine?

- Okay.

- Thank you.

- Sit down.

- No, no. I don't sit. Thank you.

You don't have to sit.

Thank you.

- Is she gonna be long, Hafsia?

- She will soon be here.

Thank you.

It's okay.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Let's go.

Okay. I'm tired. I'm gonna go to bed.

It's okay?

- It's okay.

- Does it feel like it's it?

- I think.

- It's okay, then.

Why do you take the pills?

- Because I need them.

- Why?

Because, I...

Where is the girl that I remind you?

Libya. You look like her.

- How do you know her?

- I took her photo.

- With her brother?
- Yeah, with her brother.
Can I see the photo?
Yeah, later. After. Okay?
But who was she?
She was the girl in
the photo. I don't know.
Why do you think you
know people you don't know?
I need to go get the car. I'll be back.
Where'd you find that?
I was clearing out old files.
That was my first assignment
without you, on my own.
I was bloody angry with you,
for leaving me.
But fucking proud.
Look how scared I was.
I was scared shitless.
Bella.
Could say things have worked
out pretty well for you there.
I guess that's one way to look at it.
Have a cookie.
- I'm sure it's been difficult.
- Yeah.
How so?
I mean, aside from all
the obvious reasons.
Oh, I guess...
I guess just from all
the obvious reasons.
You're angry. Of course you are.
It was hateful, what was done to you.
What was done to me?
What?
What was done to me?
I'll get the car, we'll take
the pills, we'll go to France.
I'll get the car, we'll take
the pills, we'll go to France.
What needs to be
done is to keep shooting.
That's the only thing you can do.

You know that.
Yeah, I know that. Yes. I know that.
Will you tell me what happened?
Was it the same as before?
In Afghanistan?
They put a rifle to the back of Mark's
head and blew his brains out.
You'll get through this.
You'll be back soon, to work.
I hate to say these things happen,
but they do. And too often.
When we were together,
we were protected,
or at the very least,
I would look after you.
You're a woman.
An amazing woman who has decided
to go into war zones and take pictures.
You're a bit crazy to want to do that.
And I think now you're too crazy to stop.
Yeah.
I'm an animal.
Where are they keys to your car?
- Sit back down, Lee.
- Where are the keys to the car?
In the kitchen. On the counter,
next to the fridge.
But please, sit back down.
The most fucked up thing about
this is that I keep wishing...
that it was one of the
other guys, the Italians.
Either one. I don't care.
I just... I would feel bad,
but I wouldn't feel this.
It's just so fucking weird, Bert.
Wh... why are you smiling?
- Nothing to your scorn.
- No. What are you smiling about?
- I was remembering.
- What?
When I came back from Nicaragua.
The way you looked at me, your mouth
hanging open like you were seeing a ghost.

I thought you were dead.
Hopefully sooner than later,
you'll realize there's a bit of luck in this
and not just because you got out of
there alive, but because you got this story.
That's what we want... to be there
when it breaks. That's what we do.
When did the story break?
Was it before or after Mark
got shot in the head?
Oh, I'm sorry about Mark!
But it's the reality of this.
And you know that full well. It's...
clich and bad judgment
to be as attached as the two of you were.
You were too attached to him.
You mean like us.
What did they do to you?
Open this fucking gate. Fuck! Fuck!
Fucking...
It's just...
It's just all of a sudden...
just turned really fast.
I don't think so.
I don't think so at all.
He just was talking about normal things.
He didn't seem scared.
No.
The food.
What we were gonna eat...
when we got out.
You know, that Indian
restaurant you guys go to.
He just... kept talking about
you and the girls and...
The, you know,
what he put you through and...
He was really lucky to have you, Jean.
He kept calling for you.
They shot him.
H-h-he... he was trying...
I was talking, talking, talking,
and he tried to get me to stop,
and I wouldn't stop.

So he...

So they shot him. They just...

Come.

My... my friend!

I don't want to! I don't want to!

I love you.

I love you.

Hey.

I'm back.

Back in New York.

I'll see you at the service.

We have to leave soon.

I'll go to the bathroom.