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Ashes and Blood

By Fanny Ardant

Come on, Mira. Come on.

Mira! Pashko! Ismal!

Run!

ASHES AND BLOOD:

My windows broken. Think it's funny?

Mrs Praquin, it isn't our fault!

It was the wind.

Sure, blame the wind!

I know what I see.

How did we break it?

No idea! But with all the noise
you Sikiases make...

So the problem's your ears,

Mrs Praquin, not your window.

You're a family of savages!

What did you say? Repeat that.

I know what I see.

Stop it!

Pashko! Ismal! Come inside.

You let that madwoman insult us?

She accuses us and you defend her.

We even mend her window too.

What are you talking about?

What is it?

Mrs Praquin...

Mrs Praquin?

The wind blew,

her window opened

and a pane of glass broke.

She says it was us.

So what? It's not true.

I know, but Mum's going

to mend it anyway.

Mum...

She forgets, she forgives

and she mends.

Personally, I'd ram the glass

into her throat.

Begin with violence

and you must use it until the end.

Pass me the small pan, please.

You'll out yourself with that knife.

You know that "blood is never lost".

Don't say that!
It's your favourite proverb!
I say it when necessary.
You don't believe it anymore?
Good night.
Pashko shouldn't work at night.
Let us help you.
I don't need your help.
Besides, I already set
those hoodlums straight.
Who?
The Dupr boy and another.
I saw them at the park with Mira
and...
Nothing...
What do you mean?
I don't want Mira being bothered
or disrespected.
I sent them packing.
I'll talk to them.
Forget it. It's settled now.
Don't look at my family again.
Never speak to them again.
Not to anyone.
My mother, my sister or my brother.
Or I'll kill you.
Why didn't you read us this letter?
Why?
Why this time and not the others?
What's the big deal with this letter?
Tell us!
Your father's brother, Anton, has asked
us to his daughter's wedding.
When?
In October.
- You don't want us to go?
- No.
Why not?
You never want
to see your family again?
I no longer have a family.
What?
You don't like that music?
What happened to you?

An old matter about a broken window...
No! Don't tell me it was you!
The wind was you?
Are you hurt?
We're going!
No fanfare.
No trumpets for the prodigal's return?
Is it the right place?
Look!
It's an eagle.
Never do that!
Here, shooting an eagle
gets you killed.
Calm down.
Be very careful.
Here, everything is different.
Don't act like foolish children.
Don't think you're smarter.
Pay attention!
To what?
We can't guess everything!
Your father could help us.
Our dear, mysterious grandfather.
You swore not to mention him.
What are you saying?
Nothing, dear.
I'm asking your brothers
to do us proud.
I don't want anyone here to...
For everyone, Mira isn't...
She's like all the others.
I'm your Uncle Anton.
Do you remember me?
It's exactly the way I imagined it.
It's green...
It's black... Gold...
You sound like our poet Balzemir.
You know him?
She knows dozens.
She recites them to us.
She keeps saying,
"Listen, listen... "
I know your poem by Victor Hugo
by heart.

"Those who live are those who fight. "
Do you still learn that one?
I've never travelled so far before.
We used to go to the seaside
on holiday.
Cassis, Bormes-les-Mimosas...
It's pretty,
but I prefer the country.
- You don't...
- Mountains are too high.
...like the sea?
Water's too dangerous.
I like the earth!
You can hold it in both hands.
I like trees.
Is there a lot of snow in winter?
Yes.
You're stopping here?
I hate going slowly.
I'd rather stop a while,
then race to catch up with my father.
Overtake him.
You're insane!
You'd upset him?
I'd offend him.
Ok, let's go.
Hold on tight!
Do you like it?
Let's see what's going on.
Be careful.
What the hell are you doing?
Moron!
Get off my back! You idiot!
I screwed up.
You wanted four anyway, didn't you?
What's the problem?
Come and get some ropes.
Don't tell anyone about this!
My son loves to go fast.
Rather than drive slowly behind me,
he's going to stop, have a chat
and then race to catch up with me.
Not too quickly, I hope.
You've changed!

Why do you say that?
You were afraid of nothing once.
For ten years, with Val, I was afraid.
After Val's funeral,
I thought you'd come back here.
All that travelling,
all those cities...
This is your home here!
No, it's not my home anymore.
The children know nothing.
There...
Where's your jacket?
I was too hot. It's in the car.
You could have put it on!
What's that smell of smoke?
What smell?
Don't smoke in front of grandmother.
Let's put on a good front.
Remember what I told you.
Follow the ritual.
Remember, men embrace men,
women embrace women.
Look at this beauty!
My sister thinks I'm a beauty queen
because I'm getting married!
She'll learn that marriage
has nothing to do with beauty or love,
does it, Judith?
Val was beautiful and I loved him.
You can see the dress tomorrow.
V\fill you help us prepare everything?
Of course.
We'll all help you.
Can you ride, Mira?
She mustn't!
Mira is too light for the horses here.
When I fell, I was her age.
My father never forgave me.
What?
They had to kill his horse.
And I'll never find a husband!
Have you got a cigarette?
No, I'm sorry.
Ask one of my sons.

They smoke like chimneys.
You didn't tell anyone?
And Judith's sons?
They'll keep quiet.
You speak good French.
No, my accent is terrible.
You know,
words spoken with an accent
are always more interesting.
I've often dreamt of this house
at night.
White hair suits you.
Enough sweet stuff!
Leave us!
Leave us alone!
You didn't want to come back, did you?
The Drins scared you.
I hated them.
Your own family!
And you couldn't stop anything!
Val died!
I stopped time for a few years.
I was happy, I had three children.
- You think you've got them out of it?
- Yes.
Why?
Is there a threat?
Never precise,
always present.
Don't talk to my children about it.
- What do they know?
- Nothing.
I want to protect them.
What madness!
Don't worry,
Flora's marriage to the Pogrades clan
makes us safe.
Our two families against your father
is the end of the Drins.
I'll play my violin. Come.
You don't need me there.
I do.
I do.
Keep a tight rein on your sons.

Especially Pashko.
He's a lot like Louppos.
But does he have the same cool head?
He has instinct.
Like the dog!
And yet...
he lets the bitch lead him.
I could hear the river
from my room too.
- Ismal, do you want to ride?
- No, thank you.
Pashko! Want to come?
Your brother won't ride!
How about you?
I'll be right down!
Stop it!
I can't play!
Land... It's all that counts.
And dying for it means living twice.
Are you managing?
I keep slipping-
Your horse pushed out its belly.
Tighten the strap.
Is all this land yours?
No. Most of it belongs to the Drins.
They're the richest?
Go ahead, act innocent.
Do the Drins scare you?
No. Why? Should they?
Your mother's strong.
She reacts like a man.
- And that shocks you?
- Far from it.
Everyone crawls to the Drins here.
- And my grandfather?
- He's the worst!
My son Alban wished to offer you
his factory's finest carpets...
in tribute to the marriage
of our two children
and the union of our families.
My son, your property is safe
in your fiance's hands.
Each of us has a gift.

Really? What's yours?
You don't know my sons yet.
I'm Ismal.
And he's Pashko.
I know.
News travels fast.
Not all of it.
Thank you for the sheep.
We'll kill it
just before the wedding meal.
May it bring you luck.
By the way,
did you hear about the dead horse?
Dead? How?
Burned.
The shame of it!
Who could have done that?
Now then, miss,
what did you learn in France
that you can teach us?
Shall we play chess?
Chess?
Nothing could delight me more.
My grandsons
won't play with me anymore.
Let me invite you to my home
for a game, young lady.
Shall we play tomorrow?
Are you so eager to beat me?
You think I'm guilty?
No.
Why not?
You don't know me.
I know who you are.
Venera makes me laugh.
She's like an old samurai.
Besides, she's fond of me.
But when Aunt Agnes speaks to her,
it's like she's swallowing glass.
Coming to swim tomorrow?
No! The river's too cold.
What about you?
Aren't you going riding?
Louppos is a good instructor.

His horses are too wild.
They'll throw me off.
You knew the dead horse
belonged to your family?
To the Drins?
Not afraid to speak their name now?
They're not gods.
They're killers.
You may not want to see your father,
but calling him a killer...
I know what I'm saying.
You promised not to talk
about the Drins.
You said the name!
I said "your family".
Do you like it?
Is he going to play for long?
Once he starts, it can last all day.
Lend me your horse.
Are you lost?
Not anymore.
I thought you were Louppos.
You have the same gift.
So what is it? What is this gift?
You hide here to smoke?
I don't want anyone to spoil it for
me.
Who?
Venera?
Isn't it dangerous being alone
this far from home?
Anyone who touches me dies.
Your family solves problems
with violence.
Don't you?
I'd never hit a woman
as beautiful as you.
Afraid of your husband?
You're the one who should be afraid.
Why?
Ask your mother.
She understands all about life.
I wish I were like her... A free
woman.

Free, I'm not so sure.
Her life hasn't been easy.
My father's death, Mira's illness...
What happened to Mira?
She saw them kill my father.
She was ill for a long time,
then went deaf.
I have to go back.
I'll come with you.
I'll go alone.
It's better.
This one?
I've never seen such a lovely veil!
Why did you do this?
Put the dog out!
Don't give the dog olives!
Put him out!
Hanna, the fool chopped down the tree
in front of the house!
He thought it was better,
it was old,
it could have fallen one day.
What an idiot!
Hanna,
everything's ready for the wedding.
I had to shake up Slater and Damien.
They don't obey me anymore.
I'm too old.
I'm going to play chess with Mira,
Val Sikias' daughter.
Ah, I forgot to tell you...
Scander is mad to marry Flora with such
a pretty Sikias cousin around.
Flora is very beautiful
and Mira is too young.
Poor Scander.
No one asked his opinion.
Still, he could have got unlucky
and married the...
What's the word?
The cripple!
Listening to you, I see no woman
is safe from marrying an idiot!
Do you want some cool water

from the fountain?

No.

Thank you.

Have you forgotten our rules?

Never refuse what is offered to you.

You think so?

Welcome!

Come along.

I've put the chessboard
in the living room.

We'll have some tea.

Well, Mira, ready to do battle?

I like all the trees
we see on the way here.

Forget this mummy's girl.

I'll stay a while.

Do you want to learn chess or French?

You should learn some manners!

The arrogance of the Drins!

Do you want black or white?

Do you prefer black or white?

You choose, sir.

Call me Timos.

I'll take white.

Men don't like black.

Why?

It depends who wears it.

I've nearly finished. Let's go.

Where?

I'll teach you to use a bow.

I've made special arrows.

What for?

To kill Damian and Slator.

They should be stabbed

but never mind.

My mother forbids us to use knives.

Why?

Knives are used just to kill animals.

Man deserves a bullet or an arrow.

If you use a knife,

you'll be doubly responsible.

There's a lot to die for here...

More than you think.

You should be careful.

Do you think my grandfather's a killer?

- Who told you that?

- My mother.

What else does she say?

Nothing. She won't tell us about her family.

And you'? What do you know'?

I know that killing for honour doesn't make you a killer.

- Wait!

- Forget it!

It's my turn.

At least let me try.

Try again. Draw. Fire.

Shit!

- My turn now?

- I can't do it.

Give it to me.

How about a tournament?

Give me your bow.

MY turn!

I'll show you!

Are you ready?

Useless!

Your turn, Louppos.

You show them.

There you go!

That's an archer!

Scared of losing?

I don't play just anyone.

Leave him.

He's chickening out.

Like father, like son.

Say that again.

- Give me the bow.

- Take that back.

I won at chess!

Mira is beautiful

and intelligent.

She's the ideal wife!

Don't even think about it!

- No misalliances for the Pogradeses.

- Nor for the Drins!

I'm a little rusty.
I saw you this afternoon.
What were you up to?
We were playing.
But the game's more complex
with Judith's sons.
You have to calm things down.
You promise me that?
I already promised!
I know you hate the twins.
You and your cousins,
keep away from them
until Flora's wedding.
You've broken it!
Another one!
I hope Venera likes fish.
There's one!
Look!
What?
Is that your gift?
You see things that aren't there?
I see before I'm seen
because no one hears me.
Those twins are real dickheads.
They think they can insult us?
That we won't react?
When will you use their horse scam?
Later.
You don't give a shit.
I want them dead!
Why do you say that?
The twins' father and a Drin
fought for land.
The Drin killed their father.
The twins knew
that on the spot where he died
the land belonged to them
where his blood had stained it.
So they dragged the body
to make it look as if he died
on the Drins' land.
They made a mistake.
They dragged him
onto the Sikiases' land.

Our land, not the Drins'.
So'?
I said what I had seen.
I defended our land.
We can't allow ourselves
to become enemies.
Keep the land.
Louppos is a child.
He made a mistake.
I didn't! It was them!
I saw them!
He's lying! It wasn't us!
I'm obliged to punish you...
for telling lies.
Did it happen long ago?
Time doesn't matter.
All three of us were seven.
Why were you so afraid of the Drins?
You've sworn not to tell?
We can keep a secret.
It's not a secret.
Except for you.
We want to know.
Really?
Your father died
because of your mother.
She betrayed her fianc,
dishonoured herself and fled.
Her father, old Drin, never forgave
her.
He had her husband killed.
He spared his daughter
but her fault put our family at risk.
You wanted to know?
You know.
Why?
The past is the past!
Not when it rots our lives!
Settle scores
and you side with the Drins!
I am a Drin!
No! You're a Sikias!
Your father paid for that!
- So what am I for them?

- My son!

You hid for a long time.

I waited for you.

- Did my father send you?

- No.

Have this back.

Take it!

And you?

What will you give back to me?

I hope it will hurt me

as much as I hurt you.

Are you afraid?

You're wrong.

Never let your guard down.

I thought he was sleeping...

But the wolf bit these off!

Check!

I'd rather lose my rook

than my bishop.

We all have our secret weapon, dear.

I'll go now.

Mother will be worried.

This was a lovely surprise.

At my age, the days are so empty.

I can find my own way back.

No, I'll go with you.

I would never get over it

if anything were to happen

to my favourite chess player.

I invent, but mostly I guess.

I like people talking to me,

even if I can't hear.

Mum!

I'm late. Forgive me!

I didn't want to disturb you.

Thank you.

Everything's all right.

We were gossiping like two old women.

Thank you, Timos!

And bravo!

- Wait for me!

- Leave her!

Don't be afraid,

she manages just fine.

I suspect her of having let me win.

She has your gaiety.

Hanna, my wife,

locked herself away

at the death of our son.

She doesn't speak anymore.

We can see them pass by from up here.

We're more likely to see wolves
than girls.

- Don't make a sound.

- By the way...

what are the girls like here?

- There are no girls here.

- What?

There are only mothers,

sisters and wives.

You'd be wise to remember that.

What?

I'm not stupid.

And Samir isn't either.

He'll kill you.

He's just her uncle.

All the more reason.

Look over there!

What the hell are they up to now?

I'd like to know.

Shall we get them?

No!

I can't do anything.

Not yet at least.

I gave Venera my word.

They must take back what they said.

No!

In any case, you...

They'll never respect you.

Oh yeah?

There's a child with them!

Come back!

There's a man!

Lost something?

- I'm here to warn you.

- What about?

Watch how you speak to me.

Here's the little brother...

I knew you didn't have
the balls
to take such a big risk alone.
Do we have to insult each other?
- I don't waste time on guys like you.
- Me neither.
Not another word about my mother,
sister, brother or me.
Or else?
Just try it.
Threats?
You're getting out of your depth.
And Mummy isn't here with her big
mouth.
Cut it out!
Stop! You'll kill him!
Eat your dead!
Who is that?
Alexander Drin.
Your grandfather.
You wanted to see wolves?
The bride's car won't take
the same route as the official cortege.
It will make a detour.
You're smiling, Father?
Why bother
with such outdated rituals?
You, a man of the cloth,
you don't believe in rites?
I believe in those
that elevate the spirit.
And me in those
that ward off misfortune.
It's about time!
You know I wanted the whole family
here on the eve of Flora's wedding.
Where are your sons, Judith?
They're coming.
They're changing their wet clothes.
You love going fast
but you're always late!
Tomorrow,
you'll drive Flora.
If you'd been here,

you'd know about the detour.
I've planned it all.
You haven't planned a thing!
You read my mind now?
What happened, Pashko?
The candles are in the chest
under the stairs.
The bridal veil will get soaked.
I'll fetch it. Don't worry.
Where's the meter?
Don't talk nonsense.
That's a man's job.
Are you ok'?
You have to join us.
I'm coming.
- You're mad!
- Yes, I'm mad!
Well done, Mum!
You did it!
You did it!
Go away.
You're more gifted for electricity
than raising children.
Children! You raise them
by feeling your way in the dark!
Your son is in danger
and you laugh about it?
Yes, Pashko! Send him away!
He must leave after the wedding.
You won't tell me?
Who did you fight with?
- At least say if you hurt someone!
- No.
You swear?
Yes.
We'll leave after the wedding.
Why?
You know very well why!
Flora and Scander's wedding
has to go smoothly.
For Venera, for the whole family.
We fill you wear it in a bun tomorrow?
Wait till you see
how pretty Flora's veil is.

I loved your father
as soon as I saw him.
He looked at me...
His smile...
His voice...
I forgot everything.
Everything-
My family, my duty,
our laws, the fear...
I knew.
There was no else but him.
I was ready to pay the price,
to be with him, even in the dark.
- No! Stop!
- What?
- I can't follow the beat.
- Who cares?
It's so hot!
- I'll get you some water.
- Thank you.
One more dance.
Please!
Yes, all right.
Get some water.
Water... From the fountain.
Hey, girl!
Who are you?
Costa, what are you doing?
Slator is waiting for us.
What's your name?
Answer when we speak to you.
Tell me your name and I'll help you.
I came to get a glass for Mr Pogrades.
It's hot.
I'm taking him some water.
What the hell is this?
You think I understand anything?
You know what I do to little minxes?
I'm clumsy.
You're pulling my leg?
She wants to play with me,
the hussy.
I don't mind.
Leave her alone!

Mira!
Scum!
Get out of here!
She provoked us!
You'll pay for this!
Get out of here!
You touched her, you filthy wretch!
This time, I'll kill you!
Don't touch him!
Do not seek consolation
in the blood of the guilty.
Seek it in these words.
"Love your neighbour
as you love yourself,
"for the love of God. "
Go that far.
It is in forgiveness
that you will find peace.
Through your fault,
you've endangered us all!
Killing him at their home...
When you were a guest!
They offended my sister!
How could you believe that?
I saw her crying.
Crying! What did he do to you?
Answer me!
I forgot, she's deaf.
Leave Mira be!
Shut up!
Respect your grandmother!
I wanted to defend my sister,
but I didn't mean to kill Slator.
Slator got what he deserved.
Who are you
to decide who deserves to die?
What's done is done.
We'll sort this out.
Pashko,
you must go
to the Pogrades funeral meal
this evening.
You cannot back out.
Your shame would tarnish us.

What shame?

I said I'll go and I will!

Mr Sikias?

- Can you come to the gate?

- Later.

Aren't we going to find out
what really happened?

Pashko said it was an accident!

The truth doesn't count.

Only your code and blood laws count.

You follow them like sheep
shitting on each other in fear!

Anton, leave him!

Ismal,

it's no use. I'll go.

I'll go with you.

No, I'll go alone.

It's not your place, Judith.

I don't care!

You and I are powerless.

Nothing will stop the blood.

Even

Don't worry, Mum.

I'll try to do things right.

My son wasn't a coward.

Neither is yours, Judith.

Don't go there.

His bravery

may spare him from death.

He knows nothing about this ritual.

If the murderer

attends the funeral meal,

he is ready to die to pay his debt.

Louppos!

Go and close the garden gates.

We need help with the horses.

Let's go.

Come on, Samir!

Louppos, get your cousins!

I need you, Ilaria.

Look after Mira. Don't leave her
alone. She mustn't worry.

I have to go there.

I'm counting on you.

Let's go the Pogradeses'.
I'm afraid for Pashko.
Nothing will happen to him.
The blood debt would become theirs.
But I don't trust Damian.
Something could happen on the way
back.
Let's go then!
Let me go alone.
You're mad!
It's my fault Slator is dead.
Why do you say that?
Because it's the truth.
I have to go. Leave me!
Hanna,
I'm angry because of all this blood.
The blood I've taken,
the blood taken from me.
I'm tired.
What must I do?
Take young Pashko's blood as payment?
What will happen then
to our alliance with the Sikias
family?
Answer me, Hanna!
Answer me, please!
What must I do?
I knew he wouldn't come.
He's a coward.
I'll kill him anyway.
You'll do nothing. I decide!
I'm Pashko Sikias.
Do you know where Mum is?
At the Pogradeses'?
Has she gone to get Pashko?
Where's her mother?
Over there?
She hasn't done enough harm?
She's an unworthy woman
and an incompetent.
Don't talk like that.
You give me orders now?
She's a very good mother.
She has raised them like her,

fearing neither God nor man.

- You can't be a father...

- Shut your mouth!

- You're the incompetent one!

- Shut up!

Incompetent at making a woman happy.

Shut your mouth, you whore!

Open this gate.

Open this gate!

I have to come in!

Timos!

Let me in!

Take your place.

Not opposite me.

It's the rule. Respect it.

Then let me sit elsewhere,

not opposite this killer!

- Shut up!

- I'm not a killer.

Your lies won't wash here!

Don't answer him.

I didn't kill Slator.

Give me the gun!

I'll kill the first

who curses the other.

I didn't kill Slator.

- Kill me, but I'll shut him up.

- I didn't kill Slater!

Let me in!

I want to see Pashko!

I'm his mother!

Who's there?

It's me, Louppos Sikias.

I've come to make amends.

I'm the one who killed Slator.

It was my hatred.

The law of blood!

I grew up with it.

I loved it. I respected it.

I believed in the nobility of revenge!

But today I have lost my honour.

I have become a liar.

I lied to you, Pashko.

I told you

Slator dishonoured your sister.

It was a lie.

I'm the one who killed Slator.

Timos, do what you must with me.

And, if you can, forgive me.

Give me time.