

MARCIN BRZOSTOWSKI

# THE VENGEANCE OF WOMEN



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# **THE VENGEANCE OF WOMEN**

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## **Franco Fog's apartment**

**Saturday, 6.30 a.m.**

Around three hours ago inspector Franco Fog lay down on the sofa in his living room and, without realising when, he fell asleep. He deserved it. For three days and nights, he had incessantly been chasing the assassin or assassins of Jean-Pierre, a famous drag queen. Despite the earnest efforts of the police, the body of the deceased was found just last night in the city zoo in the lion enclosure. It was not hard to think that Jean-Pierre did not look like this beautiful boy, about whom half the Cabinet, national male badminton team, or even a well-known breakfast television presenter Roman Beetle, known as the Kissing Roman, were mad, anymore. The citizens of Warsaw had long been paralyzed with fear. Those who remained cool kept their fingers crossed for the police investigation to be successful. Jean-Pierre wasn't, however, the only victim of the nameless beast hunting in town. There were also Mr. Drabik, a Member of Parliament, Mr. Colorful, the stripper and Mr. Kushaty, the minister of medium heavy-light industry. To people's wonder, their bodies hadn't yet been found. The only proof that the beast devoured its victims were brief obituaries issued in women's

magazines informing of the death of those mentioned above signed with a mysterious signature 'WCDE'.

Inspector Franco Fog, or to be more precise mounted police inspector Franco Fog, headed the pursuit group appointed by the Police Commanding Officer. According to the official statement issued by the press department of Police Headquarters, inspector Franco Fog hadn't mounted his horse for years and now he worked in the homicide department. However, word had it that this forty-something-year-old cop did not accept his unexpected transfer a long time ago and still went round the most dangerous nooks and corners of the town. It was said that his partner was Veronica Blanca, a mare of uncommon beauty. They shacked up with each other before the baleful displacement. Only Franco Fog knew how much truth there was in these bits of gossip. He was now lost in sleep and uttered awkward noises resembling neighing. Between the irregular and uneven snorts, he heard the sound of a well-known voice. The inspector noticed, analysed the enemy and immediately opened his eyes. Still heavy with sleep, he did not recognise the person visiting him and uttered words he normally did after waking up:

- Where's my coffee, darling?
- What coffee, you jerk?
- Jerk? - the man instinctively reached for the gun.
- All right, calm down and wake up!

Shaken from the Land of Nod, the cop put his gun in the holster, rubbed his eyes and asked, completely taken aback:

- Luigi, is that you?
- Who else?
- I'd bet my life that it was here I last saw the sweet Maria.
- You mean the telegraphist from the KGB?
- Shut up! The walls have ears!
- That was last week, Sherlock.
- Are you serious?
- Sure, I am. You should give up drinking, my friend.

Franco Fog sat down on the sofa dejected, rubbed his week's worth of beard and said to Luigi:

- You're quivering, Luigi, or is it just my imagination?
- It's no good - the red Persian cat started shaking. - I guess I got mixed up in some real shit.
- I told you to settle down and start going out with some nice, decent girl.
- Look who's talking! - the cat started turning red. Anyway, it is not about some unhappy love affair or a betrayed husband eager for revenge.
- What then?
- I have an impression that my greed has spiked someone's guns. And most probably, they were aiming to destroy our town!

Surprised, the cop raised from the sofa and, with no hurry, moved towards a massive bar shaped like a globe. He realised that only a morning glass of whiskey could soothe his growing backache and get his mind to function properly. One second later, he decided to start the Asian part of the globe. He took out a brand new bottle of

Johnny Walker Black, twisted the cap and poured the dark golden liquid into the glass. On his face appeared a roguish smile he could send to some spinster lost in the depths of virginity. When he felt the alcohol start to warm up his sore body, he said:

- Maybe you'd like something for a good start to the day?

- I can't.

- What do you mean, you can't?

- Don't you remember anything any more?

- Frankly speaking, no, I don't.

- I have the Code implanted, Sherlock. Besides, I swore to the Holy Virgin to be off alcohol for a year.

- I'm sorry, Luigi - Franco Fog took another sip of whiskey. - So what did you get into this time?

The frightened cat jumped onto the window sill, scrutinised the view behind the window and started telling his weird story. According to his testimony, it should be concluded that a few minutes before, he stuffed himself with some unknown, shiny substance he found inside some van in front of their house. When he jumped off the car, some bucks in black uniforms barred his way and they demanded the immediate return of the shining powder. Luigi gave up the idea of taking up a conversation with those gentlemen in a flash and resorted to flight. He also demonstrated a complete lack of common sense as instead of running towards some park or street, he decided to direct his paws home, thus showing his aggressors the appropriate way to trace him. As a result, he was sitting now by the



window, cringed and shaking with fear and he did not resemble the typical self-assured cat he normally was.

Franco Fog listened to the story intently, then, approached the window and, stroking Luigi's back, he uttered the judgement:

- I don't know what you swallowed and who those people are, but I know one thing for sure. This is the apartment of a police officer and nothing bad can happen to you here. Understand?

- But these guys didn't seem like schoolboys, believe me!

- It doesn't matter. I know what I'm saying.

Convinced he was right, the inspector flicked the cat in the ear and rushed towards the trolley to fill his glass with another portion of whiskey. However, before he reached it, a couple of black-dressed men burst into the flat and pointed the barrels of their Kalashnikovs at the occupants. After a second the shortest man came close to Franco Fog and said:

- We know you from TV. Don't even try to play those cheap tricks on us.

- What do you mean, amigo?

- Chiromancy, fortune telling and such stuff.

- All right. Then, with whom do I have a doubtful pleasure to greet a new day?

- I am Hans Kluge! - the rat-face man stamped his heels - Sturmbannfuhrer Kluge!

- How can I help you, Herr Kluge?

- Your cat swallowed our uranium and we insist on the immediate return of our property!

- Why do you need uranium, my friend?

- That's quite simple. Our secret Nazi organisation decided to mark its presence in the conscience of the Aryan part of society through perfect preparation and completion of the plan code-named 'Adolf in the Sky With Diamonds'. The aim of the foregoing venture is to detonate a nuclear bomb in a park in the centre of Warsaw.

- I see. Can't you do it without uranium?

- Unfortunately not. The instructions on how to construct a cheap, home-made atomic bomb clearly indicates that the uranium is indispensable in this case. And at this very moment our uranium is inside your cat.

- No kidding!

- Don't be ridiculous, Fog! We know your cat wolfed down our uranium. You'd better give it back or there'll be a real massacre in a minute! The choice is yours!

The inspector quickly realised that he has to deal with a group of insane, well-armed freaks and his duty was to foil the plan of terrorist attack and to help his only friend, Luigi. He remembered that the ginger Persian was the last tangible relic of his turbulent affair with Veronica Blanca. He couldn't let the group of emotionally unstable fascists tarnish the apple of his eye. When he felt a sweet sting of adrenaline in his heart, he stood in the middle of the living-room and, pointing at the remains of the door, he shouted:

- Look! A birdie!

Fortunately, he was so convincing that all the men turned en masse towards the door and started searching for the bird. Before

they caught on, inspector Franco Fog ran up to Luigi, grabbed him by the scruff of his neck and jumped out of the window. When they managed to land on the pavement successfully, they brushed away the glass. Luigi looked up and shouted:

- I hate Warsaw Nazis! I just hate them!

## **Chief Police Officer Bureau**

**Saturday, 9:00 a.m.**

At quarter to nine, Franco Fog received the following text message: ‘Sloths eat everything they find. They are stupid and malicious. The cultural revolution in China has collapsed.’ Having deciphered the cryptogram, he stopped feeding the swans and moved towards the street immediately. He sat in his car, put on the leather gloves and started the engine. He wanted to enjoy his drive so he was observing citizens of the town through the window of his Mustang. They were shopping, or getting ready for a weekend picnic. Looking at their smiling faces he suddenly realised they had no idea about the danger they were in. They didn’t know about the group of Nazis ready to detonate a home-made nuclear bomb as a tribute to their Great Leader. Moreover, Franco Fog knew that somewhere in the streets of Warsaw, there was a criminal, still on the loose and responsible for the deaths of four people! As a police officer, he couldn’t put up with such situation and he made a promise to himself that he would be persistent in restoring peace to the city. Determined to bring things to a happy ending, he speeded up and in a few seconds, he got to the place. He parked his Mustang next to the Commander’s tank and stepped briskly into the police headquarters. Without even looking at other policemen greeting him, he entered

the lift and just a moment later, he was standing in front of the right door. He wiped the shoes clean, brushed the dust from his suit and knocked at the door. As usual, he waited the formal five seconds and went into the secretary's office but no one was there. Slightly confused, only after a moment did he see there was some mysterious person hiding behind the curtain. His experience told him that the enemy is everywhere and can even be hidden in the form of a beautiful woman who can cook dinner. That's why, unmoved, he focused his eyes on a waving curtain and reached for the gun. When he was just about to pull the trigger, the secretary of General Barrel jumped from behind the curtain and shouted:

- Surprise! Are you happy?

- Sure - replied the inspector with visible relief.

- I know a couple more jokes. Wanna find out?

- No, thanks - the man put his gun back in the holster. - I'm a bit busy.

- You're always busy, Franco.

- That's just me, baby.

- So how long should I wait?

- Wait for what?

- Until you finally pity me and ask me out to the cinema or take me dancing!

- Well... I don't know... - the inspector started to scratch his beard. - Maybe next week?

- Promise?

- Of course.

- For sure?

- Yeah.

Totally satisfied, last year's runner-up beauty queen of the Police sent the grey-haired inspector the hottest of her smiles and finally announced the arrival of Franco Fog to her principal. Franco returned the beauty a bow and entered his commander's office. He saluted to an empty head and said what he would normally say:

- Inspector Franco Fog, Sir!

- Sit down, Franco - General Barrel pointed at the chair opposite a huge desk. – How are our things going?

The inspector sat down, pulled out a crumpled packet of Camels from his jacket and finally said:

- Frankly, not too good, General. But I'm doing my best!

- It's not about your efforts, Franco, but about results.

- I know, sir.

- So, where are we?

- For now, we've got one body and three people missing.

- And that's it?

- There's also a group of Nazis who want to detonate a nuclear bomb in the centre of Warsaw.

- Is that something serious?

- I guess so.

- So what do you want to do about it?

- I'll try to find something out in the capital's demimonde. Someone must have heard something about the bunch of freaks who

have somehow managed to get enough uranium to set off an atomic bomb.

- What? - General Barrel scrutinised his subordinate. - You mean you can buy uranium in town?

- Yes, General. And not just this.

- That's revolting! - General Barrel moved in his armchair. - Why did I only find out about this now?

- I didn't want to upset you with unnecessary information.

- Oh, if that's so... - the man sighed with relief. - So, what are your plans?

- I'm not sure yet. I've been thinking about a holiday in the country or a sailing course.

- I'm asking about the investigation, Franco.

- I see. Then, I have to look through the files of the four people, locate and neutralise the Nazis. Fortunately, the uranium is in my cat's stomach.

- Right! What's new with my godson? - General Barrel's face brightened visibly.

- Everything's fine, thank you.

- Is it really?

- Yes. Luigi hasn't had any problems since he got the Code.

- Good to hear that. How are things with you going? If it's not a secret.

Franco Fog didn't say a word, lit up a cigarette and breathing out the smoke in the shape of triangles and trapeziums, he answered:

- Guys like me don't have private life. Women come and go and an empty fridge is haunting me like a deadly ghost.

- And spits hell-fire. I know exactly what you mean.

- But you did it, General.

- Oh, yes. Since I got married, my life has gained colour!

- You're a lucky man, General. And please, give my best regards to your wife.

- Thank you, Franco. But for now - General Barrel suddenly became cross - you have to keep on working. You know what I mean, don't you?

- I understand they are pushing.

- From the very top! The Prime Minister gave us only 24 hours!



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