

clothes back on over wet skin and shivering limbs. Blue-shirt-and-trainers resists the urge to go for his pen.

'...like birds...'

The street children run off towards the side streets by the cathedral and the crowd disperses. All over in about two minutes. He thinks about notions of economy in story-telling; no acting required!

'But what was funny,' jacket-and-shirt is still talking, oblivious to the scene playing out behind him, 'was that he generally referred to him as Daddy, even in front of us. It was an open secret, I suppose.'

Blue-shirt-and-trainers is thinking about camera angles, but says: 'Daddy?'

'Yes.'

'And this wasn't... You didn't all call him that?'

'No, of course not. We just called him "Boss."'

They continue talking as another tram passes and draws to a halt. Other things happening in the square. A man in red overalls hoses down a section of the pavement. Two backpackers stroll

The Scene

Tony White

Two men are sitting in the autumn sunshine on a concrete bench at one end of a city square. Neither speaks for a moment. They both watch as a blue and yellow tram passes and draws to a halt in the centre of the square; the sudden appearance and disappearance of a turbulent knot of people, boarding and alighting. One of them is rosily-cheeked with smartly-cut hair. He is dressed anonymously; a blue shirt tucked into jeans and trainers, one leg crossed over the other, notebook and pen balanced on his lap. The other, a native of the city, is dressed more formally in a shirt and jacket and looks ten years older, even though he isn't. He has a long fringe and a slightly pained expression. As the tram disappears off on its short journey to the suburbs he shakes his head: 'You want to know about my relationship with him?' As he says this he thinks of a lovely summer's day in 1992, of rhododendrons by a lake, of marble-steps leading to a small beach... 'Well, you don't have to. I don't know.'

...murmured apologies.

'But not for the movie, right?'

'No, I'm just curious. I want to get a flavour of the time but without the usual clichés. I thought...'

In a second, the boy strips off his grubby clothes and jumps in the water. He takes deep breaths and dives in, coming up spluttering and each time tipping a few coins into the girls cupped hands.

'...waters of the lake...really beautiful...like a holiday...the introduction of duty...'

Blue-shirt-and-trainers is so shocked and captivated that he is no longer listening to jacket-and-shirt. He's thinking of the film. This is exactly the kind of thing he wants it's almost Dickensian; what a great juxtaposition.

'...separate command...lakeside...unexpectedly...'

Great! A crowd gathers to watch the cheeky yet picturesque display of abject poverty.

'...to embrace him...'

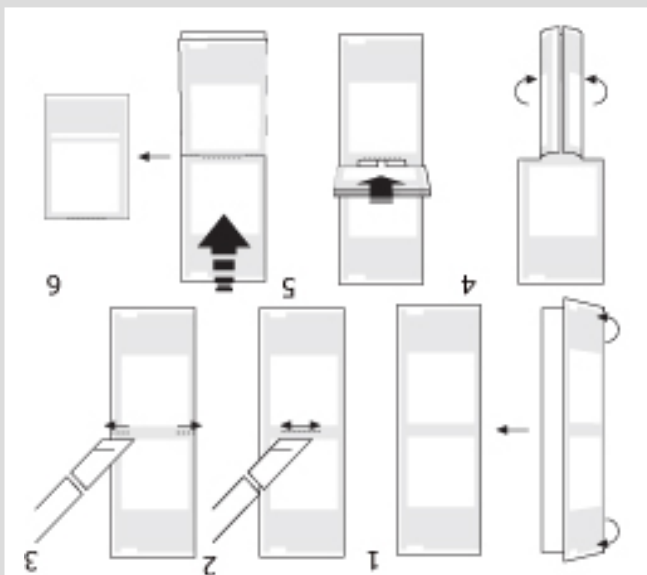
This is excellent.

'...buckling his holster...'

Everyone smiling in the sun.

'...happens when two men ... perhaps overnight ... the bathing room ... inseparable...'

A policeman strolls past and, seeing this, the boy leaps from the fountain and drags his too small



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Tony White
The Scene

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'Well, I always found him to be a pleasant, well-educated... Grouchy though, I don't know.'

Blue-shirt-and-trainers looks away; pretends to be less interested than he is; picks up the packet from the bench beside him and lights a cigarette then drops the lighter back in his shirt pocket.

'What can I tell you? This order came through. Maybe more of a request, if you like. That each of the sectors would send maybe a hundred men... They were expecting a big demonstration.' He pauses, 'Tell me more about the script what kind of thing, then, if not the usual clich?' A pause, and then an afterthought, 'You know there's nothing but clich. I mean, that's the problem: it's all one big fucking clich.'

'Well, exactly. No, but a kind of a picaresque thing some familiar situations, but kind of satirical and much more about relationships, flawed characters crazy stuff!' Pause, 'But not all crazy you know, honest. I want it to be honest. But with lots going on in every frame in the background as well. This network of relationships playing out, influencing the bigger events... So you were one of them, these hundred men? Was this when...'

'Yeah, we stopped on the way and had to get out of the coaches just outside the city and put on these other uniforms. So we were all larking around in the carpark there. Throwing our clothes in with the suitcases, and putting on these new ones, like proper police would wear. Obviously we were making up the numbers. Big guys, too. All of us. No one under six two. The bigger the better, I think that was the plan.' A wry half-laugh, 'Looking back this is some serious shit, no? It's probably criminal impersonating the police. But we were all hyped up I suppose, laughing at the prospect of bashing some heads together. He didn't laugh.'

'I don't know. Maybe I'll set it in Africa. Um, so this was when you met him?'

'Yes, in the car park there. Then after that I had to deal with him on a daily basis during my stay. But he was moody I told you this.'

'And...'

'We stayed there for months in his unit. Then I suppose we got talking one time. When things were heating up and we were confined to barracks for maybe a week. He was coming out with all this romantic nonsense about his lost

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love. I was surprised, you know. Lamenting that they couldn't be together. He was in love; crazy in love. Anyway, I guess maybe I'm a good listener. We ended up getting very drunk he'd been preparing some lamb, some really beautiful meat. God knows where he got it from. So he invited me and a couple of the other guys to share it. He grilled the meat, we ate, we drank more. Then I had an idea and said, "Look, you should just run away together when all this is over. Like in the movies when they elope. Go to Italy, London, where ever!" I looked at the other guys, "Listen, we are all very loyal to you: we could help you. It's the least we can do for our captain!" Everyone was nodding and encouraging him. He liked this. I suppose we became kind of friends after that night. No not friends exactly he was much older than me, then there is the question of rank. But it must have taken his mind off things to share those dreams of his with me. Is this the kind of thing?'

Blue-shirt-and-trainers nods, 'Yes, exactly go on.' But his attention is wandering. Something is happening by a fountain that he can see over jacket-and-shirt's shoulder. A teacher shepherding a group of children they all make

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sources to create a completely new story:

and re-narrativising fragments from the following

'The Scene' was created by cutting up, remixing

--

them carrying a tray of flowers.

and smoke. An elderly woman walks towards

lunchbreak sit on the sun-warmed stone to chat

past in t-shirts. A group of students on their

know it?'

mountains. It's really beautiful there. Do you

'Anyway that was when we got moved to the

not in uniform.

young children standing by the fountain. They are

The school party has gone, but there are still two

constant round of tantrums and sulks.'

other, neither of them really enjoying it. A

anyway. Lot of arguments, being horrible to each

one of those, you know, fiery relationships

were even very happy. From what he said it was

not going anywhere now, but I don't think they

'No, well, we know this. I mean, obviously, he's

'But he never did....'

something!'

out-dated postcards from a newsagents or

quiffs. Like he'd bought an entire stock of

know, really cheesy postcards of young men with

they were always on the backs of these, I don't

send me these notes. But the funny thing was

'He said I was like a son to him, and he used to

contact and nods again.

wishes. It's idyllic. He looks back, makes eye