Black Mariah

by stephen hastings-king

The Black Mariah pulls into the driveway. The next constellation of awareness finds me against the wall beneath the window.

The war they wage seeps beyond informality. The war they wage happens behind stories that say there is no war. The war they wage fills everything with holes.

They say the Black Mariah is an eraser descending. By the time you see it they have eliminated all your traces. You are vanished from amongst your neighbors. All documents have disappeared. The Black Mariah comes for those who were never born.

I imagine myself a spent reactor core in an anonymous railway car shuttled siding to siding. I imagine myself less than nothing blindfolded and handcuffed in a back seat. I imagine myself a character in countless movies and TV shows.

From outside comes the crunching of gravel and a vehicle pulling away. I exhale.

The Black Mariah pulls back into the driveway. The next constellation of awareness finds me against the wall beneath the window.

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