

Double Cross

Janet pulled the page from her typewriter and looked nervously at her wrist—watch. It was almost time. From the inner—office came sounds of her boss preparing to leave. The sounds of doors opening and closing. These sounds were well—known to her after eight years as his secretary.

“Good—night, Janet. I'll see you Monday morning as usual. ” He was quick and friendly.

“Good—night, Mr. Mason, ” she said with a weak smile.

Perhaps she only imagined the look of concern in his eyes as he walked out. Janet covered her typewriter. She pulled a lipstick¹⁾ and a mirror from her purse. Her hands were cold and shaky when she began to redden her lips and run a comb through her hair. There would be no time to stop at the women's restroom this evening to do this. She felt a terror slowly rising up inside herself. How could she ever go through with it? But she knew she must. It was too late to retreat. She reached into a drawer and pulled out a knitting basket and a ball of wool with needles sticking out. At the bottom of the basket lay three microfilms²⁾, each in a metal case. She stared at them, feeling guilty. She felt a nervous shock as the whistle blew. She stuffed the wool back into the basket. She seized her purse and took a last look a round the office. Then she walked into the hall, filled with secretaries and clerks hurrying home. Click of high—heels made the pounding of Janet's heart seem louder, as she moved along with the crowd. It was like every Friday. There was a noisy excitement in the air.

Janet held her purse in one hand with the knitting basket hooked over her wrist. As she looked ahead down the long ramp leading to the guard's gate, her heart sank. Beside the regular guard Scotty there was a guard she never saw before. He was helping Scotty inspect the people moving through the gate. He looked at their passes and badges. He peered into their purses³⁾ and lunch—pails. More carefully than Scotty, it seemed. Janet retreated to the doorway of the building. As a rule, she did not leave so early and had forgotten that an extra guard was stationed at the gate at this hour. “Be calm, ” she said to herself. “Be natural. Everything depends on getting through that gate. ” Getting the microfilm had been easy enough with her security clearance. But getting them past the guard would be the test.

She remembered how she and her husband Charles had gone over, step by step, what she was to do. They had prepared for months. He had worked it all out even before he told her what he wanted her to do. It was well known that Janet was still a young bride. It seemed natural, therefore, to use a knitting basket to smuggle⁴⁾ the films out of the plant. They chose the night when her old friend Scotty, a senior guard on the force, took his turn at the gate. She had spent the whole past month working on him. She often left the plant late and stopped at the gate to chat with him. She talked a bout his boy who was in the navy. And she spoke about the little things she was knitting. A few times, she tested him by being chatty, saying nothing about the knitting, and then passing the knitting through without inspection.

The crowd at the gate got thin, and the extra guard waved to Scotty as he moved off

in the opposite direction. Janet closed her eyes a second and took a deep breath. Now. As naturally as possible, she moved down the ramp. She hoped the smile on her face did not appear as stiff as it felt. She swallowed twice before she greeted her friend, “Hello, Scooty, how are you?” She felt a rush of guilt as a smile broke across his face browned by the sun.

“Good evening, Mrs. Heath. You are early tonight.”

“Yes, my husband is meeting me, Scotty.” She held out her pass with her picture on it and pulled back her coat so he could see her badge pinned to her dress.

Scotty nodded, “How’s the knitting?”

This was it. She removed a baby’s woolen bootee⁵⁾ and held it out for his inspection. “I’ve finished this one but haven’t done much on the other.” A horn honked. “Oh, there’s my husband, I have to run. Good—night, Scotty.” She wondered if her voice sounded as shaky to him as it did to her own ears. She crushed the bootee back into the basket and squeezed past the guard house. She half ran along the sidewalk. She forced herself to remain calm and slowed down. She walked toward the green car parked at the curb. She was shaking so much that she could not turn the handle of the door. Charles reached over to open it for her and she slid into the seat beside him.

He looked at her. “Did you get them?” His voice was tense. He showed pressure he must have been feeling while sitting there waiting for her to come through the gate.

“Yes,” she nodded with a dead feeling.

“Good girl, I know you could do it.” The car moved off into the traffic. “Did you have any trouble getting the stuff?” Charles was pleasant again and gave her a cigarette. “Just try to relax,” he said. “Everything is all right.”

At last the car turned into a quiet street. Charles reached into the knitting basket and took the three shiny discs. He put them inside his coat pocket, then handed her the basket. He kissed her. “See you later.”

She entered her apartment like a person in a fog. She crossed to the wide window and looked out. Her husband’s green car was pulling away from the stop—light at the end of the street. She looked up and down the street then saw what she was looking for. A black car moved out from the driveway beyond the apartment house and followed her husband. Behind the black car was another one. Inside the car was her boss. “Well,” she said to the empty room, “That’s that.” But she continued standing, looking out into the street, long after the three cars had disappeared from sight.

She still felt numb⁶⁾, dead. She wondered when she would begin to feel something, the pain and guilt of a wife who had betrayed her husband. She thought back over every thing that led up to that betrayal— the night less than six weeks after their marriage. She lay with her head on his arm and his hand gently stroked her hair. He confessed to her his connections and told her what he expected her to do. She remembered the horror she felt over this terrible request, the shock and disbelief. Her instinct had been to cry out, to rebel. But some inner voice had warned her to be careful. This was something bigger than just herself and her marriage, a marriage now broken into little pieces. And it had been something bigger than herself which made her tell her boss the facts. His calmness quieted her. She was able later to listen to a plan he developed together with the FBI for her to go along with her husband’s plans.

It was almost dark outside when she turned from the window and reached for a table — lamp. She crossed the room and opened a door to the clothes — closet. She reached for a clothes hanger. Suddenly she stopped. One side of the closet was empty. All his clothes were gone. She looked around the room. All his things were gone, as if there never had been such a person as Charles Heath. She was sharply hit by the whole meaning of the situation. Charles had never meant to return. She had just been his tool — — he married her for his purpose. She wondered how many other tools there had been before her. She started to laugh. Then her laughter turned into sobs, great heaving sobs. And she threw herself across the bed. As she gave in to her misery⁷⁾, there was a fleeting thought: “I’ll cry tonight. Tomorrow, I’ll call my lawyer. ”

圈套

简尼特从她的打字机里抽出纸，紧张地看了看手表。差不多到时间了。从里面的办公室传来她的老板准备离开的声音。门一开一关的声音。给他做了8年的秘书，她很熟悉这些声音。

“再见，简尼特。星期一早上见。”他说话又快又友好。

“再见，梅森先生。”她回答说，脸上带着无力的笑容。

他走出去时眼中带着关切——这也许只是她的想像。简尼特盖好打字机，从钱夹里拿出口红和镜子。当她开始涂口红和梳理头发时，她的双手冰冷发抖。今晚没时间上洗手间去做这些了。她感到一种恐惧正慢慢地在心里升起。她怎么能够闯过这些？但她知道她必须这样做。要退缩已经来不及了。她把手伸进抽屉，拉出一个编织筐和一团带着针的毛线。在筐子底下藏着三卷微缩胶卷，都用铁盒子装着。她凝视着胶卷，深感愧疚。听到哨子声，她紧张地抖了一下，把毛线塞进筐子。紧抓着钱夹子，她最后环视了一下办公室。之后她走进大厅，厅里满是匆忙回家的秘书和职员。随着人群往外走，高跟鞋的嗒嗒声似乎使她的心跳声显得更大了。与每个星期五一样，空气中弥漫着喧闹和兴奋。

简尼特手里握着钱夹子，手腕上套着编织筐。低头看着前面通往安检门的坡道，她的心沉了下去。除了平常的保安员司各迪之外，还有一个她从没见过的保安员。他在帮着司各迪检查通过门口的人们。他看着人们的通行证和徽章，仔细看人们的钱夹子和午餐盒。看起来他比司各迪更仔细。简尼特退到房子的门边。她一般不会走这么早，忘了这个时候门口会另外布置一个保安员。“镇静点，”她对自己说。“自然点。一切都靠通过这扇门了。”凭着她的安全卡，微缩胶卷很容易就到手了。但把它们带过这扇门将是一个考验。

她想起她和丈夫如何一步一步练习她要做的事。他们准备了好几个月。在开口告诉她之前，他已经把一切都计划好了。大家都知道简尼特刚做新娘，所以用编织筐把胶卷从工厂里偷带出来显得是很自然的事。他们选择了她的老朋友司各迪，一个老资格的保安员当班的晚上。过去的一整个月她都为此在他身上费心思。她经常很晚离开工厂，并在门口停下来和他聊天。她和他谈他那当海军的儿子，谈她在编织的小东西。有几次，她试着和他闲聊，不提编织的事，然后未经检查就把编织的东西带了出来。

门口的人越来越少了，另外那个保安员朝司各迪挥了挥手往相反的方向走了。简尼特把眼闭了一秒钟，深呼吸了一口气。好了。尽量装出一副自然的样子，她朝坡道走下去。她希望自己脸上的笑容看起来不像她感到的那样的僵硬。她咽了两口唾沫，然后才向她的老朋友打招呼。“你好，司各迪，你好吗？”看着他那被太阳晒成了棕色的脸上绽开的笑容，她感到一股强烈的愧疚之情。

“晚上好，西斯夫人。你今晚比平常早。”

“是的，我丈夫在等着我，司各迪。”她拿出贴着她照片的通行证，把大衣往后拉了拉让他看别在身上的徽章。

司各迪点了点头。“东西织得怎么样啦？”

考验的时候到了。她拿出一个婴儿的毛线靴，递过去让他检查。“这个织完了，另一个还没织多少。”车喇叭响了。“噢，那是我丈夫。我得赶紧走了。再见，司各迪。”她听到自己的声音在发抖，不知道司各迪听出来没有。她把毛线靴塞进筐子，从安检所挤了出去。她半跑着走过人行道。她强迫自己保持镇定，放慢步伐。她走向停在路边的绿色小车。她全身抖得太厉害了，连车门的把手都打不开。查尔斯侧过身来给她打开门，她在他旁边的座位上坐了下来。

他看着她。“拿到了吗？”他的声音很紧张，显露出他坐在这里等她通过安检门时所感受到的压力。

“对。”她点了点头，带着怕得要死的神情。

“好，我知道你行的。”车驶入正道。“拿东西时碰到什么麻烦了吗？”查尔斯又变得高兴起来，递给她一支香烟。“尽量放松一点，一切正常。”

最后车开到一条僻静的街上。查尔斯把手伸进编织筐拿出三个闪亮的碟。他把碟放进大衣口袋，然后把编织筐递给她。他吻了吻她，说“再见”。

她回到公寓，像置身云雾之中。她穿过房间走到大窗子前朝外看。她丈夫的绿色小车正从街道尽头的停车灯处往外开。上下巡视街头，她看到了自己在寻找的东西。一辆黑色的小车从公寓楼外的车道开了出来，尾随着她丈夫。黑色的车后还有一辆车，里面坐着她的老板。

“好了，”她对着空空的房间说，“就这样了。”但她继续站着，凝视着街头，那三辆车早已消失不见了。

她还是觉得死一般的麻木。她不知道自己什么时候才会恢复感觉，感觉到一个妻子背叛她丈夫的痛苦和愧疚。她回忆着那些导致这个背叛的点点滴滴。结婚不到6个星期的一个晚上，她躺着，头枕在他的手臂上，他的手温柔地抚弄着她的头发。他向她讲述了他的身份，并告诉她自己对她的期望。还记得听到那个可怕的要求时她感到的恐惧、震惊和难以置信。她本能地想大哭、抗议，但某个内在的声音警告她要谨慎从事。这件事比她本人、比她的婚姻要重要得多，而她的婚姻现在已支离破碎。正是因为这事要比她本人更重要她才告诉了她的老板。老板的镇静使她也平静了下来。她还听取了老板和联邦调查局共同策划的来对付她丈夫的计划。

外面天几乎黑了，她从窗口转回来，去找台灯。她走过房间打开衣柜的一扇门，想取一个衣架。突然她停了下来。衣柜有一边是空的。他所有的衣服都不见了。她环视着房间，他所有的东西都不见了，好像查尔斯·西斯这个人从来就未存在过。眼前的一切使她恍然大悟。查尔斯根本没打算再回来。她只是他的工具---他是出于他的需要才和她结婚的。她不知道在她之前还有多少别的工具，她开始大笑起来。随后这笑变成了呜咽，一阵一阵痛苦的呜咽。她趴在床上，悲痛不已的她脑子里闪过一个想法：“我今晚要痛哭一场。明天，我要找我的律师。”

NOTE 注释：

1. lipstick [ˈlɪpstɪk] n. <美> 口红，唇膏
2. microfilm [ˈmaɪkrəʊfɪlm] n. [摄]缩影胶片
3. purse [pɜ:s] n. 钱包
4. smuggle [ˈsmʌɡl] vt. 走私，偷带

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- 5. bootee ['bu:ti:] n. 毛线鞋, 女人的短靴
- 6. numb [nʌm] adj. 麻木的, 失去知觉的
- 7. misery ['mizəri] n. 痛苦, 苦恼, 悲惨