

Eismitte/Atlantic Nights

Feeling like the ultimate anti-american, Anita Pablo rode her bike through the wintery air of Manhattan, single snowflakes dancing through the mist rising from Metro stations and car exhausts as she was on her way to the tiny apartment that she called home. Half a year ago, she had finally demanded the raise from her boss that allowed her to move into the miniscule assortment of rooms that was all she could afford in Manhattan. This had been one of the final stages of fulfilling her dream: Working as a journalist in New York, living in a Manhattan apartment, going to the shiny parties of the upper-class New Yorkers, sipping champagne for breakfast...well, at least the first two parts had worked fairly well. Now, all she was waiting for was one of those golden invitations to a party by her chief editor, a rooftop soiree where only the richest would gracefully glide along in their flamboyant evening dresses, the lights of passing helicopters and Manhattan skyscrapers glinting in the background, leaving their shining nimbus against the pitch black sky. Perhaps, she thought, her invitation would be sitting on her desk, awaiting her return, once she got back from her trip to Europe. Her editor had decided to send her, his most dedicated reporter, on a trip across the pond, where she was to report a hot story. So, her editor had booked her a seat on Concorde, and tomorrow around this time she was going to be in Reykjavik, Iceland. Leaving the screaming road behind, she half walked, half jumped up the old crumbling staircase, using the metal handrail with green paint peeling of as propulsion rather than stabilization.

Growing up in a Brooklyn neighborhood, her family poverty-ridden, she had never been to Europe. In fact, she had never really gone far from the New York area. Still, she had managed to work her way up through the education system, until she had first gotten a job as a sports reporter for a small local newspaper. Fighting against irate editors, prejudice, and gender inequality, she had managed to rise through the ranks (and newspapers) to secure her first international job, coupled, of course, with the appropriate salary.

So, it was with great excitement that she was looking forward to her trip. Whirling through her apartment, she threw her clothes into large suitcases, checking the weather on her laptop computer, analyzing what she would require in order to "survive" Icelandic weather, packing reading material and her recording devices.

After a few hours of hectic packing, she finally finished filling the suitcases with what she required. She weighed each of them, and sent an E-Mail to her editor with the exact weights of her suitcases and herself, which he had requested her to do for some reason yet unbeknownst to her. Stepping to the window in her long sleeved sweater, cradling her coffee, she stepped closer to the window, peering past the fire ladders running down the building side. Just overhead, she heard the familiar hiss of Concorde departing, the alien glow of her afterburners streaking across the corners of her vision, accelerating the aircraft past New York, soon leaving land behind, climbing and accelerating to a speed higher than twice the speed of sound. In just a few hours' time, she would be on board one of those planes, straining her eyes out the window, hoping to catch one last glimpse of her tiny apartment building whisking past as the crackling afterburner hastily pushed them away from residential areas, turning northeast, directly towards London. It felt weird, knowing that she was soon going to be leaving the places she had spent all her life, even if it was only for a short period of time. Up until now, her life had been a flurry of activity, beginning with her childhood, her parents constantly struggling to make ends meet, then her secondary schooling, working hard to get into a good university, studying, and then, finally, working for the local newspapers until she had accumulated enough experience to apply for the big jobs. For the next week or so, her constantly goal oriented life was going to come to a halt, with her trundling along the North Atlantic. This in itself was not really going to be much of an issue, after all, she had been on time-intensive stories before. But, she could still feel that a bigger break was coming: She was going on thirty and she knew

that something was going to change in the next few weeks. She had almost achieved everything she had set her mind to, but no new goals were looming in the distance. It felt as if she was a climber, about to reach the top of her ridge, with nowhere to attach the rope that she pulled herself along with to go higher.

Pushing away thoughts of life goals and ridges, she turned back to her apartment, leaving the whine of the street below behind, walking towards her sofa. It felt weird to go to sleep this early. Usually, she would work deep into the night, writing, researching and phoning around the world for the next hot topic. For now, she needed to get some sleep, after all, she had a big day ahead of her.

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