

Midnight Rendezvous

by Kevin Treaccar

A chilling breeze weaved through the alleys. Darkness filled all space left vacant by the streetlights. The sun had set hours earlier on the November sky. The air was silent.

A tall, slender detective relaxed on the sidewalk of Beatty Bridge. He leaned his back against the stone railing, standing in the shadow between two lampposts, still as a rock except for occasional drafts from his cigarette. His face hid under the brim of a grey fedora and his body hid under a long trench coat of the same color. The man tucked his right hand into the coat's pocket. It held a small revolver. He squeezed a manila folder under his left armpit while his left hand held the cigarette.

The man peered past the road and let his eyes stretch across the long, black, flowing river. He pondered. He waited.

A bell tolled twelve times in the distance.

The click of high heels approached from the east end of the bridge. He turned his head to face the sound. Moving through the beams of light along the sidewalk floated a beautiful blond wrapped in a dark fur coat. The detective surveyed the surroundings behind her.

She glided by the man before he stuck his arm out and grabbed her. She paused and turned her head.

"You weren't followed?" he inquired.

"I haven't seen anyone."

The man stepped off the railing, removed his hat, and sat it on the barrier. He handed the woman the folder before replacing that right hand in his coat pocket. He inhaled another draft from the cigarette.

The woman flipped through the photographs and papers in the folder. She stopped at one photograph and examined it for a long time.

"Can I keep this one?" she asked. The detective nodded.

The woman handed the folder back to the man as she tucked the photo into her coat. He placed the folder back under his armpit.

"Can I have a smoke?" she inquired.

The detective left his cigarette in his mouth and pulled a pack from his back pants pocket. He removed a cigarette from the pack, handed it to her, and she put it in her mouth. He then pulled a pack of matches from his coat pocket and lit a match.

As he held the match to the cigarette hanging from her mouth, he asked, "Is there anything else I can do for you, Miss Conti, or are you going to pay me now?"

The man dropped his hands and shook the match out before tossing it to the ground. She remained silent.

A shimmer caught his eye, pulling his vision down near her hip. The blond held a small revolver pointed at him. The detective's eyes bulged as the whole puzzle came together in his head.

The woman fired two shots through the man's stomach. She pushed him over the railing and he fell lifelessly into the water.

The woman placed the gun back in her coat and floated off the bridge in the direction she had come. She crossed the empty street and drifted around the corner. Out of site from the

bridge sat a Black Bentley. The male driver roared the engine to life when he saw the blond approaching. The woman climbed into the car and the pair raced down the street into the night. The fedora rested alone on the railing of Betty Bridge.