

Gjakmarrja (Blood Feud)

Elidijona Kurtolli

EXT. VILLAGE STREET. DAY

It's a sweltering day in the village. We see a disintegrating Mercedes Benz drive up and stop in the middle of the street. MR GASHI, Mid Forties, a heavy set man in a suit and tie with sweat dripping down his face exits the vehicle. He shuts the door, wipes his brow with the back of his hand and looks around for a street name before leaning over to the window of TAXI DRIVER, mid thirties.

MR GASHI

(Hands Taxi Driver ten euros from
his wallet.)

Here, go grab a coffee and something
to eat, I might be a while.

TAXI DRIVER

Thanks boss.

Taxi driver takes off leaving Mr Gashi looking around. He takes a folded piece of paper out his pocket and looks around once more before his eyes catch sight of a tiny, desolate home. That was his destination. He treks over and lightly knocks on the decrepit door, worrying that too much force will reduce it to ashes. The door is tightly opened by NENA FERIDE, Mid Eighties, kind eyes and a timid smile.

MR GASHI

Nena Feride?

NENA FERIDE

Yes? How can I help you?

MR GASHI

I'm Mr Gashi from the Shkoder
Reconciliation Committee. Your
grandson, Florent sent me a letter
about his situation. Is it okay if I
speak with him?

Mr Gashi shows Nena Feride the letter and his identification.

NENA FERIDE

(Opens door wider.)

Yes of course Mr Gashi. Thank you for
coming.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM. DAY.

Nena Feride leads Mr Gashi into the living room and offers him a seat which he gladly accepts. She notices his sweat and exhaustion and turns the air conditioning on discreetly before speaking up.

NENA FERIDE

Would you like something to drink Mr Gashi?

MR GASHI

A coffee please.

NENA FERIDE

No Problem, I'll call Florent down,
let him know you're here.

Nena Feride walks out into the corridor, leaving Mr Gashi alone. He gets up and begins to look at photos on the mantelpiece. He see's multiple pictures of a young boy. All in the same place, all in the same position, all with the same sad, desperate look in his eyes. Mr Gashi turns around as he hears footsteps approaching the living room. In walks FLORENT, Late teens, well built but that look in his eyes doesn't seem to have vanished.

MR GASHI

(smiles warmly.)

It's nice to finally meet you Florent.

Mr Gashi extends his hand for a greeting but Florent hesitates for a second before meeting him halfway.

FLORENT

Likewise sir.

MR GASHI

(points to the sofa.)

Shall we?

They both sit down and Mr Gashi pulls a notebook and pen from his bag.

MR GASHI

I read your letter and I want to help.
But I'll need some information from
you first. Clear?

FLORENT

Yes of course.

MR GASHI

(Nods.)

Okay. You stated in your letter that your father was killed in the blood feud? How about your mother?

FLORENT

She's okay, she works in the city. She's the only one who can leave without getting hurt by anyone.

MR GASHI

You have no siblings?

FLORENT

Fortunately, no.

MR GASHI

(Saddened by his answer.)

how about other family members?

FLORENT

(huffs in annoyance.)

Nah, they involved themselves in this mess. they're just as stuck as I am. except they asked for it.

MR GASHI

How so?

FLORENT

My father settled the debt with his life. It was painful knowing he would no longer be by my side but I was free. Til my uncle shot the man who killed him. There's no end to this feud!

MR GASHI

(Cocks his eyebrow amusingly)

Why the hell did you drag me all the way out here then? I was just fine in my sweat-free office.

The two look at each other and chuckle lightly. Just then, Nena Feride comes in with Mr Gashi's coffee. She smiles warmly, she hasn't heard her grandson laugh in years.

MR GASHI
(In-between chuckles.)
Thank you Nena Feride.

Nena Feride nods in acknowledgement and takes a seat across the room.

MR GASHI
Okay moving on, you said that your father's victim had a son. A, Niko Asllani?

FLORENT
Yes.

MR GASHI
Is he the same age as you?

FLORENT
No, I think he might be older. Around 21, 22 years old.

MR GASHI
Okay. Not too far apart. And is he also in hiding?

FLORENT
Last I heard he went into hiding after they killed my father. He must've seen the retaliation coming.

Mr Gashi scribbles his notes down intensely.

FLORENT
What are you thinking Mr Gashi?

MR GASHI
I'm thinking I know my starting point. Niko has only had a taste of what you've been through. However, he'll most likely want to end the feud like you do. The elders will be more difficult to persuade but we have to start somewhere right?

Florent nods. Mr Gashi pats Florent's back in comfort before packing his notebook away.

MR GASHI
Would you happen to know where Niko lives?

NENA FERIDE

The Asllani house is on Rruga
Albaniku. The big red one past the
Church.

MR GASHI

I'll set up a meeting with them in the
coming days and see what progress I
make with Niko.

(Puts his shoes on.)

I'll be sure to keep you updated on
negotiations.

FLORENT

Would I be allowed to pass on a
message? To Niko?

Mr Gashi looks at Florent with a thoughtful glance before
shrugging lightly.

MR GASHI

What would you like to say to him?

FLORENT

(Shyly.)

Could you. Could you tell him I've
thought about him a lot these last few
years. I've often wondered if what it
must've felt like for him being
dragged into this, if maybe we share
some common ground. This debt won't
ever be put to rest if we don't
reconcile. And killing each other
won't bring our fathers back. I just
want to be free. And I know deep down,
so does he.

Mr Gashi, all glassy eyed and holding back a few tears, walks
over and embraces Florent.

MR GASHI

Mark my words Florent. You will be
free.

Mr Gashi lets go of Florent and gives him a big gentle smile.
Mr Gash then picks up his things and heads out the door.

END.