Agata Walkusz

**Anne of the Black Basement**

*Monday, 6th February 2017*

Finally got a notebook. I’ve begged Mike for it since I came here but he said it wasn’t safe. Mike told me he would buy me one if he was sure he can trust me. And I’ve just got it. I’m so happy! The notebook is extremely beautiful! Its cover is grey, full of roses on it and an Eiffel Tower in the middle.

‘This’ said Mike, showing the tower ‘was built in 1889. My ancestor helped Mr. Eiffel in building. He was one of helping-engineers. But, you see, people like this are never mentioned in history books and even websites like Wikipedia. Anyway. I hope the notebook will remind you about me because now I have to leave for a few days. I left for you salads in the fridge and some sweets and your favourite orange juice in a cupboard. Okay?’

‘Yeah, of course! You’re so good to me Mike!’

‘No problem, Anne. Just remember not to try escaping. You know I’ll notice and it won’t be nice to you. Right?’

‘Yes, Mike’ And then he left. Just like I didn’t matter anymore.

*Tuesday, 7th February 2017*

I’m sitting alone and doing nothing. Well, what could I do in a small black basement? I remember the first night in here. I was terribly frightened, shaking and crying. I don’t really know how old I was but I think I couldn’t have been older than ten years old. I don’t even know my age now but it’s been years since I saw my parents and my little brother. My brother… He’s the only one I really miss but I can’t remind myself his face or his hilarious laugh. I just know it was comic. And I know I love him.

My brother, Charlie, is two years younger than me. I played with him, I taught him a lot. And now I don’t even know if he’s alive. But Mike promised me that if I was good and I didn’t try to escape he would find Charlie and I would be able to see him. I haven’t been outside since I’ve been abducted. In my tiny basement, there are no windows so I almost can’t remember how a fresh air smells like.

Sadness is slowly taking over happiness that I felt while thinking about seeing my brother soon. But I can’t be sad. I’m fine with Mike. He’s giving me all he can, right?

Tears are already in my eyes showing how sorrowful I am. I feel like there’s a storm coming. And I’m terribly afraid of it. I can’t imagine more happiness than while I’m going back to my loving family but I’m still terrified when I think about leaving Mike. I couldn’t stop seeing him.

*Friday, 10th February 2017*

My heart has been completely damaged. I’ve known it’s coming, I’ve known it will be bad. And it is. But… I don’t really know what happened.

I’m sitting on a floor in my small basement. MY basement, not hers, that’s why I needed to do what I did. But what was it? I can’t remind myself what, the hell, I did. My hands are shaking so I hardly write. I want to shout, call Mike, help myself. But then I see her. She’s lying on the floor, white as snow on a pillow of her brown, glossy hair. She still looks beautiful, just as the Sleeping Beauty. Suddenly I realise I feel angry. I’m annoyed by her look because I know she’s much more attractive than me.

But still I don’t know what I did. I hurt her – that’s what I found out. But how? Maybe it was self-defence? Did I even know her name?

*Friday, 24th February 2017*

I finally got my notebook back. Mike was angry at me when he saw the girl (Marica, I think) lying there dead. He told me I strangled her. The weird thing was that when he took the body and I stayed alone again I was happy. I was the winner.

After that I had nothing to do again. I had no notebook to write in (my punishment) so I was thinking. Before that, in moments like this, I thought a lot about my family, my house, my room, my brother. But now I’ve already known that the most important thing for me is Mike. He’s the one who saved me from being a loser at school and at home. Thanks to him I have no homework to do (only sometimes I read some magazines or books, when I’m a “good girl”), no housework too. I’m free. And, well, he doesn’t leave me for a long time as my parents did.

When I first got here I hoped that they would come. I held my breath every time I heard someone walking down the stairs. I was sure they will find me but they didn’t. They didn’t want me. I wasn’t talented and even pretty. I was the girl that nobody wanted. Nobody’s happy with a child like this. Now I understand it but I’m not really mad. Mike has already explained it all to me. I would probably do the same.

*Saturday, 25th February 2017*

Something’s wrong. I have no idea what is it but Mike is coming to the basement frequently. It means he’s worried and so do I. He doesn’t want to tell me what happened but he is thinking too much and acting a bit nervous. He even forgot to give me some water last evening. He always remembered to do that. It was the first time.

I’m afraid he’s angry with me because I was so jealous of Marica. Maybe he wants to punish me more?

*Tuesday, 28th February 2017*

I spent whole two days talking to Mike. Or just to myself in my imagination. Since I killed Marica I haven’t been sure if anything is real. Even the word “killed” sounds for me so weirdly, like it is something impossible.

Yesterday I told Mike about my feelings.

‘…and I have no idea what to do now. Can you help me somehow?’ I ended.

‘Oh, Anne, Anne, Anne… You have no reason to be afraid of. You’re completely normal and we both know it, okay? I will protect you from every evil on this world. Do you believe me?’

‘Yes, of course’

‘So now stop feeling blue because if you don’t, you’ll be a Smurf in a moment. Do you want a tea?’

‘Yeah, please’

And he left.

*Wednesday, 1st March 2017*

Today is quite a normal day. Lazy as always, I’m just lying and doing nothing. Funny, isn’t it? Before I came here I‘d been an annoying child. I shouted, I ran a lot. But Mike made me quieter, more serious. Every time I did something stupid, talked too much (what I loved to do) or jumped across the basement, he looked at me disgusted and said ‘don’t be ridiculous’. That’s how I’ve learnt how to behave.

All I can, is what Mike taught me. I owe nothing to my parents.

*Thursday, 2nd March 2017*

I saw her. I saw Marica in my dream today. She was looking at me with her beautiful brown eyes, just staring and looking. Suddenly she opened her mouth to say ‘I’m here, Annie. I’ll always be.’ I woke up, drowning in my own sweat mixed with tears. I couldn’t breathe. I was paralysed. Think, I’ve gone mad.

*Friday, 3rd March 2017*

A strange noise has just woken me up. Like something has jumped just above my head. I have no idea what was it and I’m a bit scared. I hope Mike isn’t hurt because I can’t help him from here. How? I’m locked inside my basement and I have no phone. No possibility to call for help.

‘Don’t be ridiculous’ I tell myself on and on, just like he did when I was younger. It helps a bit but I’m still disturbed.

Now I’ve just heard another noise. And people’s shouting. Is it just in my head? Please, please, please! Stop!! I can’t focus, I can’t move, I don’t want anyone to be here. Mike!!!! Is he okay? I don’t know what’s happening there but I’m not that stupid to believe it’s nothing. ‘There are two options’ I try to think logically ‘there’s something wrong with Mike and he’s in a really big trouble or you, Anne, gone completely mad.’ I hope it’s my mind because then Mike can help. As he always does.

Three shots and silence. Now I’m in a panic, trying to hide somewhere but in my basement there is no such place. It’s noisy again but all the noise seems to be behind glass. It’s indistinct. But out of all this there’s one voice I hear clearly. It’s the one belonging to my brother. ‘Don’t be afraid, sister’ he says. ‘Don’t close your eyes. I’m coming to you, Anne of the Black Basement’.