

Bodoni Meets Franklin

Chris Vermaas

She would see him after work. She really wanted to meet him after all those years. Right on time she showed up at the spot they had decided on, and there he was.

MR. GOTHIC? she asked.

YES, AND YOU'RE BODONI?

replied the big man without serifs.

IT'S SO GOOD TO

MEET YOU FINALLY.

said the gothic.

CALL ME FRANKLIN

THANKS, I KNEW IT, YOU'RE MY KIND OF GUY.

WHY?
WELL,

YOU KNOW, YOU HAVE THAT STRAIGHT-FORWARDNESS WE DON'T HAVE.

EXCUSE ME?

replied Franklin. I MEAN THAT NORTH

AMERICAN DIRECTNESS, IT'S SO TYPICAL, she replied.

UMM

she continues,

YOUR BUILD, FOR EXAMPLE, IT TELLS ME ABOUT THAT UTILITARIAN

APPROACH YOU HAVE IN YOUR COUNTRY, SOLVING PROBLEMS, DEALING WITH THE SCALE OF THAT VAST SPACE. LOOK

AT THE TALL SKYSCRAPERS, THE LONG BRIDGES, THE LARGE PRINT RUNS. REALLY, THE SIZES ARE DIFFERENT FROM

WHERE I'M FROM.

YES, BUT WAIT,

she says, NO, THERE IS MORE, interrupting the sans serif.

NO YOU WAIT, WE GOTHICS, THINK WE LACK GRACE AND SUBTLETY. WE JUST ENVY THAT

EUROPEAN THING, LIKE PRETTY FACES, ALTHOUGH SOME CALL IT STYLE.

YES, THAT STUPID PRETTINESS, "OLD OR NEW STYLE", OR WHATEVER. I KNOW IT DOESN'T WORK ALL

THE TIME. SO OFTEN IT'S ONLY ANNOYING INTELLECTUAL OR THAT POINTLESS ARTINESS. REALLY FRANKLIN, WHEN IT

COMES DOWN TO THE BIG SERIOUS JOBS WE NEED TYPES LIKE YOU.

UMM, SURE?

YES, SURE. YOU AMERICANS

ARE TOUGH, SO BASIC. AND THAT'S WHY I LIKE YOUR FACES.

OK, THANKS,^{he} I DIDN'T REALLY^{sighed,}

SEE MYSELF IN SUCH A WAY BEFORE. HOWEVER, I MUST SAY I ADMIRE YOUR DELICATE LOOKS, YOUR DELICATE SERIFS. TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, THEY ARE ACTUALLY KIND OF EXCITING. I'D LIKE YOU TO KNOW THAT.

After a moment of silence,

she replied,

THAT'S NICE OF YOU, AND STRANGE, OUR APPRECIATION FOR EACH

OTHER, BUT NOT LIKING OURSELVES AT THE SAME TIME. SHALL WE CALL IT OUR "TRANS ATLANTIC MISUNDER-

STANDING"?

YES, BODONI. YES, MAYBE.

For some more time both typfaces hung around, talked about their work, and after that, they each went their way. Bodoni, had to get her sleep; she had to look good for a fashion shoot the next day. Franklin, for his part, had to get up early to do heading for some scary front page news. Great character, both.