

The Jacket by Peggy Denimal

There is day and there is night. There is duty and there is freedom.

In the day, the jacket was heavy, too hot, clammy. It signified to the guests of the Beach Hotel that they were now staying in a grand, opulent place. A place where they would be treated like royalty.

But to William it signified hard work and oppression. He wore it like a tether, its heaviness tying him to the place. He was like a dog on a long leash. Every movement was an effort, in the heat of bubbling stews and welcoming fires.

William would never be able to escape very far. In the day he stood out, like a dark blue exclamation mark.

But at night!

At night, William would disappear in the night sky, protected from winter frost, unheard in his silent smothering wool jacket, its smell of sheep and teenage sweat mingling with the sea salt air.

After sweeping the floors, washing the plates, refilling the salt and sugar pots, William would go on long walks by the sea, smoke two cigarettes, look at the stars and dream. Finally free.