

































as they were in the shadow. He just knew there were two – one in front and one in back. Then the front door opened and the passenger stepped out on the pavement.

Maya!

Spread out on the lawn, Bobby froze. He dared not move at the risk her disappearing. She didn't. She stood by the car and smiled; then leaned forward, said something to the redhead, and stood up again. The back door now opened. A man came out. Smooth shaven, groomed, wearing an impeccable suit.

Bobby felt goose bumps. Who was this? The stranger now leaned forward as well, said something to the redhead, stood up. The car drove away. The man winked at Maya. Bobby's brain refused to accept that she looked like she was in love. They kissed.

He decided he couldn't take it anymore. He had to put an end to this nightmare. He lifted his head and hit the ground with it. The grass minimized the impact. He tried again, then again. No result. For the first time the nightmare routine let him down.

Maya, hugging the stranger, was walking away toward the house. Bobby tried once again to end this. This time his forehead hurt and his brain swung back and forth. No result.

Maya and pretty boy were close to the door of the house that had earlier caught Bobby's eye. Now he knew why – the second floor windows had curtains in the same color as the ones in their London home. Maya's favorite.

He jumped up.

The man opened the door and let Maya go in first.

Hesitating an instant, Bobby decided to interfere, and dashed forward. A sudden bad case of tunnel vision prevented him from seeing the redhead's car backing up at surprising speed. He crossed the sidewalk and flew out on the street. The couple at the end of the tunnel entered the house and closed the door. Just as Bobby was about to scream, he heard the abrupt whistle of the brakes. He turned back in the last moment, to see the back of the car on top of him. Terrified, he squeezed his eyes shut, all the muscles in his body tensed in anticipation of the collision. He didn't notice himself tumbling through the air and crashing down onto the pavement. His head made a numb sound. His brain switched off.

...and so on...

Pavel GONELSKI