

Family Portrait

Enrique Ferrer-Corredor*

Madrid, 1799.

“I must set sail before Napoleon tries to conquer London, winter has been hard in Madrid. From the beginning of spring I have enlisted as a first gunner on a pirate ship. An old friend, a German Captain, has given me a map and a letter for some gentlemen in Memel. I have been serving among men of his Majesty Charles III. A betrayal has put my name among his enemies. In truth, my goal is to keep track of a beautiful woman, who seems an honest person. I have known her just by sight and hearsay, in the famous Klaipėda Castle during a trip by this port with English traders. She was discussing with master control, even too highly educated for my sword. She is a port that I do not know. Her eyes guide me, but also betray me. In a few centuries my children will be writing about this feat. Useless for history; perhaps even bloody. This is my logbook. The rest should be decided by the fury of the wind, my trusty sword and the unpredictable night. First of all, I must learn her language to smell her tracks in her own Russian language. I do not know if one day I will find her. I just know that she lives near the Baltic Sea. There will be only a few streets in these towns where they do not know about my search. Her eyes must find my voice. Now, I have just a face, a name, and I have seen that her eyes have strayed a dagger. That night in Memel her words founded more roads in my mind than all my adventures on the seas; even the women were silent, and her hands were distracting their humiliated eyes among adolescent flushes.”

I have inherited this letter from my grandparents, it is a family treasure found at the bottom of a trunk by our ancestors. History tells us that he found her.

Klaipėda, 2011.

Энрике Феррер (Enrique Ferrer)

