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Differences in demolitions

In the country where I live
when a house has to be torn down
a few workers arrive with a contract,
tear down the house in a few days and leave
and later nobody remembers anymore the names of those
who lived there until yesterday.

In the country I came from
before the house is torn down
an armed police squad arrives
and an ambulance for someone who might want
to die grieving under the demolished roof
beneath which he was born long ago.
For months afterwards even the children avoid the place
where once there was a house
because of the ghosts of ancestors who moan
from the spiderwebs and weeds.
There the demolition ball is heavy as a curse.

In the country I came from
the chief of the demolition squad was a certain pauper Ivo,
the man without a family but with a pistol in his belt.
For thirty years as he gathered curses
he'd take a few bricks from each demolished house.
Later he built himself a house with those bricks.

The house is still in place
because nobody lives there anymore,
because the pauper Ivo is now a simple manual labourer
in a squad of people who build houses
in the country where I live
now.