

Nataly Baskanova

Ailey

Based on a true story



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The key problem of this story is schizophrenia, which effects the lives of hundreds of thousands of people around the world. It does not allow those affected to interact with society and prove themselves competent, especially in such situations such as a death of a loved one or the ability to persevere through times of trouble.

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<AILEY>
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*“I wonder how long you can stay alone with your memories.
They are like your favorite soft scarf around your neck which sooner
or later will strangle you.”*

They were sitting at a table with an almost finished bottle of wine.

“Okay, okay, maybe it’s not nice, but what should I do if I like neither of them?!” said one of the girls, tossing her long brown hair.

They laughed their heads off, getting on the manager’s nerves, who strolled back and forth, watching the clock and wishing to end his shift as soon as possible.

“Life is unfair; men are either rich or handsome!” said Olive, the blonde girl. “What?” Olive peered at the manager passing by.

“Watch this classical music hater. He is the poorest example: neither rich nor handsome.” Ailey whispered to her girlfriend, leaning on the edge of the table.

“You know, as long as I have you and Chloe I don’t need anyone else. Chicks before dicks, as they say. By the way, she is coming in five” said Olive, holding Ailey’s hand.

“Oh, good.” Ailey answered, looking not very pleased. “I have to leave you for a minute.” She proceeded toward the toilet to the sound of the music while Olive watched her.

“And one and two! Point your toes! Smoother!” she cried after the girl moving away.

Chloe noticed her as soon as she entered the bar. Olive was sitting at the table with a glass of semi-dry red wine, daydreaming, and gazing out of the window. Chloe had always wondered how she could stand the tart flavor. The light played on Olive’s hairclips, which she used to pin her locks to the back of her head, trying hard to hide the protruding ears she was so ashamed of. The scent of garlic croutons filled the air. The place was almost empty; only a few lonely customers were sipping their drinks and staring straight ahead. Two waiters strolled back and forth, searching for any work to do, and a bartender was rubbing the counter till it shined. The music was so quiet that you could easily hear the sound of the girl’s shuffling ballet shoes on the floor. Oh, how she loved those shoes! They reminded her of the concert tours of Europe that used to be so frequent.

“Chloe! You finally made it here! We were worried you’d never come!”

“How long have you been here?” Chloe asked.

“For two hours and counting, maybe,” Olive answered, playing with an empty glass. “Want some?” She poured another drink for herself.

“I’m fine. Thanks.”

“We’ve already discussed everything we could think of, even remembered some of the dance parts. Unfortunately, without music,” Olive continued, turning towards the manager, who pretended he didn’t hear her. “‘cause Mr.Douchebag downright refused to play Swan Lake, saying that it’s not the Bolshoi Theater.” Chloe’s friend chattered.

“By WE you mean who?” the girl said.

Chloe glanced at the table, and only saw her belongings: a bag, a coat, two glasses with a light-pink print of her lipstick, and a pack of cigarettes. She always smoked when she was drunk. With whom had she emptied the whole bottle?

Olive started singing along to the radio with all her lung power.

“Whenever I’m down, I call on you, my friend...”

The manager came up to them, trying to restrain himself.

“Ladies, we are closing up in 5 minutes. I highly recommend you proceed to the exit.”

“Sure, thank you, sir,” Chloe answered. “Darling, I’ll give you a lift home. You need some rest.”

“Hey, what about Ailey? We’ve got to wait for her. She’s in the bathroom. She’ll be back in a sec.”

Chloe’s heart gave a jump.

“I’ll order a taxi for her, don’t worry. Go wait in the car.” With her hands shaking, Chloe gave her the car keys and watched her go. Chloe took a wallet out of the bag; put a banknote on the table.

As soon as Chloe left the building, she heard a screeching sound. On the opposite side of the road, a taxi jammed on the brakes. The driver rushed out of the car, chopping at the air and giving somebody hell. Guess who that somebody was.

“Are you nuts?!” the man snarled at Olive.

“Sorry, sir,” Chloe yelled, running over. “She is a little tipsy! I will deal with it. Sorry...” Chloe helped Olive stand up from the pavement.

“Screw you! You almost sent me to the clink!” There was no calming the man as he got back into the vehicle still cursing the girls.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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