



translator:Doina Ciochina

Splendid



Passion

Gabrielle Queen

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Gabrielle Queen
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Twilight was fast approaching. But Selena felt like the day was just starting for her. She still needed to socialize, to know people and to chitchat with friends. That night she did not go out. She stayed home, watching the shadows transformed by the sun light in grotesque darker figures on the wall. That night, Selene felt how life and memories were tickling her fingers.

Years were passing above the city cover with fallen leaves, thousands of rubies part of the city's hidden richness. Leaves and hearts. In this corner unknown by anyone, all the hearts once loved. In this grey and dusty city, love always bloomed as fragile and shy buds, warmed by a gentle and soft sun which protects them and helps them to bloom to life. Love's buds bloom even in the hidden and insignificant places on the earth. Someone gently mysterious is taking care of them up there, a dreamer god who keeps the world in a cupping of hands, sometimes blowing over her silvery powder. In some places, dreams spread less, swallowed by people's wish of increase, money and power. In others, dreams settle as a gentle snow of stars on houses windows, over dusty antennas, getting in the eyes and mouths of rushing and worried people about daily problems. In the city where the story is set, dreams give an eternity, finding, probably, here more hearts full of gentleness and benignity.

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I A boring class

Office life wasn't as she had always imagined it; always the same things to do, a lot of work and also hard, always the same people to go out with. At some point it becomes monotony. Walks in the park in summer, eating cotton candy and ice cream, going to restaurant and disco; during winter cinema, theater, and concerts. A dull love life too. Selena began to feel as if she had done everything you could do in a lifetime.

Her dream had always been to play in movies, so when she randomly found a course of theater and television on the Internet, she decided immediately to apply, especially as it was not so expensive and it was expected to be held by personalities from show business. At least I'll meet new people, she said to herself, without having any illusions.

At the office, her co-workers listened to her with scepticism, like all people do when they have a weirdo news:

What are you going to do there exactly?

I have no idea actually! we will film, I will act, I'm going to meet actors, directors! it is going to be nice, probably. I will see how is sitting behind the camera, how actors really are, I'm going to meet a lot of people! It is actually about being brave trying new things, avoiding the routine.

Maybe you are going to fall in love with an actor, one of her co-workers was joking. Like George Clooney or Jhonny Depp.

Oh, I don't think so; you know I don't trust them. Today they are dating someone and tomorrow is another one, they are always getting divorce, they get married again and again, I don't need something like that! I'm going to observe a lot, I will try to have some fun at least! To forget Adreea's face. They both smiled. Their boss was not the best person for them. She was too cold, too picky and she did not even tolerate the smallest transgression to the hundreds of rules that transform that firm into a firing squad. Who was not careful enough, was penalized or directly fired.

After a few weeks of emotions and impatience, where she dreamed about being a new Audrey Hepburn revolutionizing the cinema world or being a new Natalia Oreiro of telenovelas, the course's first class arrived. She's being told that they would have filmed most of the time. She was seeing herself on the stage, filming a hot sex scene with a handsome man, half naked! what if the director would want a compromise? She asked herself if she would accept it. Hmmm! it depends on the director, she giggled, turning on her heels in front of the mirror, admiring her curves that the dress showed up. It would not be wronged; she smiled, putting behind her ear a lock of hair. Who knows what waves could bring her this new occupation ... Anyway, her dream was Hollywood. Looking in the mirror, she felt she slightly resembled to Nicole Kidman! the same expression that makes go crazy all the men. A brunette variant with green eyes and some more kilograms. Despite that in her opinion there were enough men that considered her more that attractive! Selena was convinced that personality and charm are the most important things. Meh, she was not a star yet, but she knew she would have been one soon! What do stars have more than her? Less kilograms! And a lot of luck! At 23 years old she could still dream, she could still think that she can do something important in her life. She had not told it to anyone, but she was taking her dream really seriously.

If at 23 years old you are not taking yourself seriously, when will you? At 50 years old? Anyway, her opinion was that you can do whatever you want at any age, you just have to be brave enough! feeling that what are you doing is important and deserves to be done.

The first class was not such a big deal: the group was about twenty girls and JUST three guys; they introduced themselves a little bit, and the guy who was taking care of that class, Emilian a skinny dude, with weirdo mustaches that seemed to defeat every gravitational law start to talk about the class, schedules etc. Unfortunately, some schedules were not good for her, because they were during the day and she was a little bit pissed about that. She was already thinking about her boss face when she would have said: you know, 3 times per week I have to leave at 2 p.m. when she usually worked until 6 p.m.

What explanation she would have given? The acting class? No way! She asked herself if her boss had another dream in her life that is not being in front of a computer, continuously writing emails, sometimes even forgetting about lunch break. Was this a normal life? Would this kind of life was around the corner even for her, after the thirties? Now, she had the chance to avoid all this.

Unfortunately, the first acting class was not a big deal, not even the second one, and not even the third one. Her enthusiasm was going down: yes they were filmed when they introduced themselves, then they all had to read some news from the journal in front of the camera but nothing else special. Elimian talked to them a lot about journalism, how news are created for the television. They invited a news presenter to talk about the process of news research and creation, which would have been nice if Selene would have wanted to be a presenter or a journalist but this was not actually her dream. Probably I did not read well the information about this class, she told herself, but she was sure she heard about meeting directors and actors from telenovelas and even film these kind of scenes even if she was a wide awake dreamer, she knew that these details in the ad were absolutely real.

She was already thinking to give up or going less often, she did not like anyway the environment or the dark building where the classes were given. She was already thinking: The last hope taken away in this city where nothing happens and boredom is the only thing sure.

All this since!

Since the day she has met Mircea, one of the most famous actor and presenter. She did not really like him, because she knew him from television and she thought that he was super childish and not even a good actor. Selena liked serious men. He, instead, was the most famous presenter and his show was one of the most followed. If so, he would have known something at least, she thought. She had the possibility to convince herself that being him the guest of the day, other important people will follow at the next classes.

He did not seem the same man from the television, but she was impressed at the beginning about his personality he was definitely cuter than on the screen, his sense of humor was childish but in a cute way, he was very smart, and his charm was and his self-esteem was a surprise for Selena. What a thing, she thought, how much television can transform you. It was such a pity that he did not use this side for a large public but he preferred, instead, to act like an idiot.

Every time he was talking, she was listening very carefully at everything he was saying. He was not too tall, with brown hair and dark eyes full of joy, where you could read the sweetness but also the melancholy. He seemed a nice guy, the same opposite she would have thought about a celebrity. Suddenly, she asked herself if he was married, but she tried to banish this kind of thought. She read somewhere that he was married and he had a child but she thought faster something else: usually, nice guys are all taken.

At the end of the class, each one of them had to invent a show and present it shortly. Selena said that would have been nice a show where different celebrities meet regular people and see if they could fall in love. Shortly, the idea was to see if a celebrity could have a relationship with a non-celebrity. While she was talking, she was looking at Mircea. She was surprised when at the end he told her that was a great idea and it could have been nice to think seriously at this kind of project for the television.

Embarrassed, excited, with the head in clouds and with her heart full of dreams, Selena thanked him and smiled at him in a way that spoke for her! She told herself: I would like to film with you the

first episode. Unfortunately, Mircea could not read her thoughts. That night he left the class charged with lots of contradictory emotions: she liked him, but what she was going to do?

During the class, she had the impression that he looked at her often. Or she was just imagining this? Often she observed his melancholic look. In front of everyone he was joyful, but when nobody was looking, he had a sad expression such a dog without a master. Selena could not stop on asking herself why he was rich and famous, he had a family, everyone loved him, what could he miss? She wanted to ask him her phone number in a moment of impulsivity, but he was married, famous! She was intimidated by his status. Probably he would not even consider her, why was she even thinking about a love story? She had to limit herself just on looking at him. She had anyway to see him during the class that finally started to be interesting

II Curtains rise

Spring was coming, and the fresh and warm air seemed to announce a thousand of new and improvident meetings. Selena leaved her balcony door always open, so she could smell the breezing acacia's perfume that was over the little river in front of her work building. Very often, to take a break from the computer, she left herself transporting by the amazing view, and between the blooming flowers she was seeing Mircea's face.

He came two times at the class. Days were longer so she could observe him better, gestures, words and attitude. She liked him every day more and more. She liked even his childish appearance. She never imagined that a famous man could be so simple and modest. He was always doing his job very professionally and in a smart way, but she was always seeing that sadness in his eyes, a resignation mixed with a mute desperation. She would have wanted to ask him what's wrong, help him if possible and she decided to do this as soon as possible, because even she was ashamed, his friendly attitude made her to approach him without having the impression of disturbing. If she was trying to become friends, nothing was right, wasn't it?

Easter was coming, and Emilian told them that he had a surprise: a trip. He did not tell them the details, but he needed to know how many were available to come. Mircea was in, so Selena gave her answer right away. She thought that probably she would have had the chance to approach him more!

She thought about the trip all day long and how she could approach Mircea when a new teacher arrived.

She arrived super late once at the class. Andreea told her to finish all the work that she had in her office before leaving. Selena was doing that and cursing in her mind, she blamed herself for choosing this kind of life. She regretted for not choosing another field of study, she could have chosen an university career, being in contact with books and not standing in front of a computer doing the boring job that nobody wants to do. And now, to arrive at her acting class she had to take the metro and then a bus, outside was raining, she was all wet, full of mud, one of her shoe broke and to end she had her period. She arrived finally at the building and while she was trying to open the big wood door she was asking herself if she would have seen Mircea that day. She threw the umbrella in a corner and she run on the stairs to the second floor, grumping about the fact that there was not an elevator. She started running in the hall that was bringing to the class but there was nobody; probably she was really really late. While she was trying to look at the time on her watch, she hit someone she did not see in the dark. He arrived from nowhere. The hit almost made her fall but two strong arms caught her. The stranger supported her for a while, trying to make her find the equilibrium. Her head was spinning a little bit but she apologized as fast as possible and she looked at him.

He was a young man, brown hair, tall with a deep look. His eyes were so deep that Selena felt scared for a little and she felt like she had to beware, even if he saved her from falling. She murmured again some apologies and she run to the class, trembling over all her body. She hoped she had never have to meet the stranger again.

But her wish was not accomplished.

A new professor for movies and theater was announced. Emilian was talking in such a way about him that he had to be important and quite famous. Everyone, including Selena, was thrilled about the news. There were complaints from everyone in the last classes, because all the students wanted to do more acting than journalism and news presenter. So, Emilian, decided to hire a professional actor for a separate class so everyone could have the possibility to practice more. The class would have been more complex, mixing movie and theater elements; there would have been more meetings with professional and famous people and it sounded interesting. Selena was more and more surprised by Emilian. He was thinking about everything and he wanted to always to do more stuff. She underestimated him, she had to admit that.

Now, when she was waking up in the morning, the first thing she was thinking about was if that day she had the acting class. Slowly, her new obsession took over her mind almost all the time. Her coworkers, by seeing her distracted like that, stopped to mocking her and started to look at her as someone who had other thoughts than work in mind. Only Andreea did not know. Even if she would have known who cares. We are talking about the free time of an employer who could use that time without giving explanations. Selena regretted just the fact that she was missing a lot of classes because of work, her schedules made her stay at work most part of the day and Andreea gave her extra thing to do which she had to accomplish in the best way possible. She should have dated someone rich so she would not have these troubles, like make money for living. She thought about this very often but at the same time she liked her independence. She had to be a robot at work for nine hours, of course, but after that she was free like a bird to do whatever she wanted to. Selena was living in a small apartment that was hers, and that was making her almost happy. Independent. The fact that she was having her own place made her avoid to pay the rent or not sleeping a during a lot of nights because she had to share a small bathroom and a bedroom when she was a student. A real nightmare! At least now she could have her privacy, silence and a lot of free time that she used for: small shopping sessions walks in the parks (she loved nature, summer and green), and mostly restaurants and cinema. For someone who does not this kind of life, it could seem a little bit superficial, but Selena struggled during teenage: her parents' divorce, the sufferance caused by her dad leaving just like that without even calling since then, her mother leaving in another country and the moving in a new big city that made her feel abandoned between strangers. A city that seemed to her terrible, huge, tiring, where she was not able to find peace and sleep. Without hope, she often cried during the nights, but she was strong and she managed to finish university and to find a job after that helped her to become independent. And now, she had a chance to try something new, discovering that there was some fun in the world, she did not want to waste this occasion. She promised herself to enjoy youth without falling for superficiality seeking new pleasures like other girls. By taking her childhood as an example, she tried to add some optimism and enjoy life at its fullest.

And a new acting class seemed to her the perfect occasion to have fun and make new friends. And maybe also become a celebrity. Why not?

So, a new professor came in, a famous actor: his name was Mihai Bohalteanu. He was 30 and he was the star of the Romanian theater, considered the most talented of his generation. Tall, black hair, serious, charming like Johnny Depp, he was a heartbreaker. He was very handsome: when he was in the front of the camera was impossible to not stare at him. He was a powerful presence, and Selena had a little shock when she recognized him: he was the same guy that scared her in the hallway after she saved her from falling. She was intimidated now. The annoying thing was the girls around him. If he was moving, they were moving in the same direction. Selena have not seen one of his pieces (she did not go often to theater), she knew him because of his name and now she was able to meet him in person. She was a little bit attracted by his arrogant attitude. It seemed pretty clear that he was not used to talk to fangirls and who knows why he accepted to come at this class. All of them were there to learn something new, so his Mr Professor attitude did not like her so much, she just did not like bosses. Also because the first time he was meeting her, he basically insulted her by telling her that she seemed super distracted, arrogant and superficial. Nobody insulted her that way, not even her boss at her worst. As an answer she told him that he was arrogant without human heat, that if he was a little robot she would not even know her was an actor. Her colleagues were shocked. So what? Let him to understand that she was not a stupid fangirl he was used to.

But his words always returned to her like an echo. Arrogant, superficial was it really the first impression that men had about her? Was it really true?

III A hell class

April was almost gone. Trees were already green, spring was almost gone and summer was in the air. Selena was kind sick of her job, of her boss and she was not in the mood not even for her acting class. She was not in the mood to stay in a dark place, she wanted to see sun, green and butterflies, running in the parks and maybe someone to date. Soon she would have be 26 and she have not found her soul mate yet. This melancholy was deeper when the spring was arriving, when couples were everywhere. And yet, for her, the time did not arrive. The true is that she did not do so many efforts to find a soul mate. She always had the sensation that if it has to happen it will. She knew that the right man was out there and she will meet him eventually. Meanwhile she was trying to enjoy life and her class. At work she was already a little star:

Are you going to play in movies? Her colleagues always asked her
It is true that you take classes with Mircea Marin and Mihai Bohalteanu?
God, I should apply too.

Selena made some colleagues to apply for this class and this gave her a 25% off which was nice, but she did not care so much. She was more worried about the gossips about her at the office.

She started to enjoy more the classes and she had the impression that Mircea liked her. She knew very well that he was married and she should not think about him that way, but every time he looked at her, or talked to her she felt the butterflies in her stomach!

Even if she was trying to hide her embarrassment and her emotions, he seemed to understand and did not try to push her away! On the contrary, he was answering to her looks and her whispers, like they understood each other, like they knew their feelings. She was not convinced, he could not trust him, he could not trust men these days...She wanted to be able to speak with him in private but there was never the occasion to do it. They were never able to be alone.

Mihai classes became very practical. At the beginning he did a lot of theory about theater and cinema and what all that means, he was smart, she had to change her mind about him, and he was very handsome. Of course girls were always crazy about him and always behave like dumbs. She felt disgusted a little bit because she did not approve this kind of behaviour where you give up your dignity just for an autograph. And almost all the girls in the class were like that.

One day, he called her because was her turn to tell something:

Now it is your turn, girl with the moon name! and he smiled.

At the moment, Selena did not know how to behave: it was a compliment or irony the thing he said about her name? His look did not show anything. He was an actor, of course. Everything was easy to hide when you had that kind of talent.

Full of emotions, she sit on the chair in the middle of the room. 30 people were looking at her. What could she tell? Something funny, but what? She did not want to make fun of herself; mostly not in front of him! at the end she told a story that happened to her in a trip... something very embarrassing and terrible that made all the people laugh hard and Mihai answered her with a nice smile:

Nice, our beloved with moon look. Continue to go on trips. Trips are amazing and useful, I mean I just hope not all of them are going to be like your story but still, it is nice!

Everyone laughed. Oh God, she did not want to tell anything else in public like this. It was humiliating. Why did she need this class? So someone would just make fun of her?

Moon look??? What the hell does it even mean? And the commentaries about the trips? It was not her fault that someone indicated her the wrong airport and she had to cross all the city of Milan to

find the good one. It was not her fault, it was a terrible experience and she could have told something else, she could have invented an adventure or a lover!

She decided to not bother too much about this, and even if he is going to make her mad she will just avoid his classes. Anyway she was already giving up about being an actress. Everything seemed complicated mostly with these kind of teachers, cold, arrogant and critics. Even if she wasn't dying about the Mr Teacher, theater and cinema class became her favorite one. She liked it because she was free, she could express herself and live different situations, she could experiment new feelings and explore everything in a way she never did; but she didn't like Mihai and because of that she wanted to challenge him, to take down his ego.

Every time they had different little games: moving, synchronizing, attention etc. Apparently it was very important to be a team. Teamwork was the magical word that Mihai always used and he wanted everyone to understand that. It was important to communicate, to open up and to not be afraid to seem ridiculous. Not be afraid to express. Being creatives and originals.

He encouraged them to free themselves and be able also able to criticize.

One day, Mihai asked them to express their creativity with a song. It was a hard challenge.

Full of emotions, Selena sang like a star, she had fun and she surprised even the teacher. He looked at her with a less icy look, and for her was enough.

Another time, they had to dance on a song that was already chosen. Selena chose Umbrella of Rihanna. She danced in a sexy way and she even used an umbrella to do some moves. At the end she invited all her colleagues to dance with her and at the end of the song all of them applauded. Everyone looked at her with energy and in that moment she felt a genius. Selena felt wonderful. She liked improvising. Maybe was the only thing she actually liked. She was happy because she was feeling free.

One day, Mihai propose a game that Selena liked more than the others.

Now we are going to do something to concentrate. We will pretend that we are alone in the room during ten minutes. Nobody is in the room, nobody is listening to you. What are you doing ? How do you behave? Do whatever you want, but be careful: focus on being alone even it is not true. Be yourself, like you are chilling home!

Interesting, was thinking Selena. Pretending to be alone! simple but hard. What would she do if she was alone? She would look on the walls? How would she behave? She closed her eyes! she imagined herself home! She walked then to the desk and he opened the computer. All the others were still. Then someone sit on the ground. A boy started to speak out loud, but Selena didn't care what was that about. A girl was doing her manicure, another one started to sing then continued out loud. Someone was pretending to be in the shower. A girl started to act like she was in the kitchen. Interesting. That's how we behave when nobody is watching. But what was she doing when she was alone? It was very simple : she was watching a movie or listening to music! She laid on the chair, then she found a movie on the computer and she didn't do anything special. She tried to look as natural as possible. Her colleagues were more agitating, they were dancing and walking and she was just in a corner without doing anything. She was watching the movie and she started to not see any more the others around until she felt a hand taking down her feet from the desk. It was Mihai, on the other side of the desk looking at her with no expression on his face. Selena looked at her feet weirdly.

-This desk is so slippery; I can't even sit as I want!

She ignored Mihai. She put again her feet next to the computer but as soon as she did it, he pushed again her feet on the ground, in a brutal way. She almost felt.

Cursing him in her mind, she didn't say anything this time; she took her computer and sat on the floor, making noise with her foot. She sat next to the window, in a secure position. He couldn't

make her fall again. But her heart was fast beating, who knows what he was going to do again. He would touch her again? Her leg was hurting.

Mihai didn't want to let her alone, it was pretty clear. He came close to her, next to her face and he just stayed still. He was staring at her with intensity, who the hell knows what was in his mind. She was kinda scared but she tried not to move. She even tried to ignore him by watching her movie even if the action there was almost ending. Even if she was pretty mad she was trying to ignore him so badly, what else could she do? What if?

She took a facial tissue from her pocket and she pretended she was catching an annoying fly. She hit his face with the tissue and she had a good time doing that. After she came back on her computer, but he was still there. Damn!

Finally he went away.

The ten minutes are over. Thank you all!

You saw, he smiled, what does it mean being yourselves, pretending you are alone and do your normal things even if there are people around you. That happens too on the stage : you have to face yourself, you need to say a line or do something, avoiding the fact that someone in the audience is doing noises. You need to focus on the stuff you need to do even if you are aware of people around you. Then he turned to Selena:

Good job, moon name. You didn't let people know that I was in front of you. You even found a nice replica. I loved when you hit me; even if you wouldn't have shown the fact that I was upsetting you. Anyway, good job.

He did a short break and then he asked:

What was the movie about?

Selena froze. She opened her mouth to say something but nothing came out. She had no idea what the movie was about, she watched like ten minutes but she was too distracted about what was happening around her.

-Yeah, you were watching the movie, he said. Meanwhile everyone else was exaggerating the movements, you did the most natural thing ever: watching a movie. Only that people are very careful also to the action, don't you think? He smiled. But he didn't expect an answer from her so he leaved her alone. Finally.

One day, Mihai seemed more worried than ever. He was always thoughtful, not able to focus, he was elsewhere. She was getting used to see him in different moods every day. At the end of the class he asked Selena:

Darling, you with the moon name what about a role in a movie? Don't be scared, it's nothing special, but it could be a beginning.

He analysed every her move to see a reaction. Selena looked at him trying to understand if she heard well. She? In a movie?

Mihai continued:

I know you don't have experience! But sometimes is not so important. I don't know why, but I see you very well in a movie. You are made for the screen, but not for theater. I like how the light falls on your eyes!

Selena was scared.

Mihai! Do you have any idea what are you saying? Me, in a movie? In a real movie? Not even in my wildest dreams I saw this coming.

She didn't expect that in real life, not from him at least.

Selena darling, he said with a soft voice, I'm sure this is surprising for you. But don't be scared. It is just my idea, and maybe I'm wrong. If you accept though, you have to do the casting, and from there we will see.

She was shaking; she felt she needed to sit.

Good! good Mihai, and what is the movie about?

The name of the movie is Lorelei. It is a modern variant of the legend.

Do you know this legend?

Selena sad yes, still thinking that she was dreaming. She had idea what was about but she wasn't sure. It was a sad legend about a blond girl and I tragic love.

Mihai was walking with his hands behind his back telling her about the movie:

It's a fantastic story but with realism in it; the love blooms between Lorelei, the princess of Rein Valley, and a poor guy. At the beginning he is charmed by the blond and fascinating Lorelei, but then he is intimidating by her beauty and richness and he abandon her for a village girl, poor as him. Lorelei full of suffer is passing her days next to the lake singing about her pain. One day, when her lover was passing on the boat next to that lake, he sees her and he gets distracted. He loses the control of the boat and he dies in the lake. This time, Lorelei is suffering way more and she decides to suicide herself to kill the pain. I know, Mihai said, the story is really tragic maybe too much for you, but you should go anyway at the casting.

Okay Mihai, I'll audition for which role?

Lorelei's one, of course!

Lo! Lorelei? You mean the protagonist??? But why do you think I could be good for this role?

I don't even know myself, he said preparing to go. Sorry, but I don't have time. He took his coat and other stuff and before he left he said to her:

Maybe because you have a lot of interesting and contradictory things! Like attraction, a dreamer look and you have a femme fatal in you! Please tell Emilian if you're going to the casting. Maybe you'll be famous! And then he left.

At night, in her bed, she wasn't able to sleep. She just keep thinking about the movie. The protagonist? What if Mihai was just joking? She had no idea how acting in a movie was about.

Two days have passed and she was still thinking about it. To go or not to go? Anyway she will not be chosen. And with this thoughts she went to the casting, full of emotions.

Despite she thought, the crew was very nice to her. She didn't have to do so many acting stuff. They just asked her to walk, to sit, do adopt some melancholic gesture, and be dreamy ecc. She read some lines from Lorelei and she liked it. The only thing was that the movie was not a big budget movie: the director and all the actors were debutants. The interesting thing was that the movie was going to be filmed in the Rein Valley. The other girls were normal girls like her, and others more famous. She was happy it wasn't a super production because she didn't feel ready for something so important.

After one hour she finished and she came back to work. The casting was easier that she thought she did a great job. She didn't say anything at work to her coworkers. In a few weeks she would have had the answer. They will not chose her, that's sure. She liked the story though. And she felt happy because Mihai pushed her to do this.

More the days passed, more Selena was thinking about Mihai. At work she was more distracted than ever. One time she realized she was assisting to the wrong conference. Another day she almost felt and with two glasses of water on her boss. She had to apologize a lot and she stayed more at work that night hoping that her boss will notice that. Another time she did so many photocopies that they

had to buy it new. Headaches and fights with Andreea. She felt so clumsy. She didn't know what to do anymore. She had to be more careful. She started the day by asking herself what would happen to her again. All this time she wasn't able to not think about Mihai and his crazy decision on proposing her the leading role in a movie. Why did he do that? For him, she was just a stranger at classes. He could have recommended a million of actresses with experience, why her??

When she went at her class, it seemed that something changed: her colleagues knew something? Selena felt a little bit like crap because she was the only one to know about the casting. And now everyone will hate her.

Two weeks later and still no news about the movie, like it didn't even exist. Selena returned to reality and to her office job life. But she was still thinking about the casting. The crew liked her. She did pretty well there. If they would have given her a chance, what she will do? Will she have time to go filming? Mihai gave her already the solution: she would have asked pay free vacation. But Selena thought about her boss reaction and she was already feeling sick.

Days were passing and Selena was thinking if she would ever know the result about the casting. One day the phone rang:

Selena? Hi!

Emilian, that's you? Hi!

Selena, I hope you have champagne next to you. Lorelei's role it's yours.

Selena couldn't speak. She lost her word and instead of happiness she felt scare. She couldn't believe it. It was even real?

She went to class scared as hell, hoping that everything was a joke. She needed a lot of courage to get in the classroom, and next to the door Emilian greeted her and all her colleagues started to applaud her.

Good job Lorelei!

Success in your new career!

Mihai came to congratulate too.

I told you so!

Thank you. She felt on fire. I think I owe you a lot, she said low voice. He pretended to not hear her.

Actually you don't have the role yet. There are other three girls for Lorelei's role. Soon filming will start and you will have to understand the role, the character ecc.. Just then they will decide who is better for this role.

She felt better after this news.

About that! the rehearsals! Do you know how it's going to work? It's going to be a busy program? I work, you know!

Mihai looked at her quite serious

I know you work. You will have to call the crew about that but I'm sure they're going to find a solution. Plus, you will rehearse here during classes, because I have news: Lorelei's love it's going to be me.

This time Selena didn't know what to say. Him? She looked at him like he was an alien. So! this meant that they will have to act play together??? She, an anonymous, next to the great Mihai Bohalteanu? She felt she couldn't breathe. She was going to end at the hospital in these conditions.

I see that you're more freaked than I thought. You didn't get used with me, did you? I'm your teacher but I'm going to be also your co-worker now.

Don't freak out, I may seem severe but I don't bite. Are you okay??? Open the windows please!

No, no, everything is okay. I just have to realize that I'm going to play in a movie next to a famous actor. I don't know if I can handle all that. For me it's something big!

Uh, don't worry, moon name, he said trying to calm her down. Don't forget, you didn't get the role yet. You still have to get it. Do you think though that you will find time to rehearse with me? You will have to study the role, to inform yourself, to see how Lorelei is and understand her character. Do you think you will find time for that? And you will have to get used with me too. It is too much pressure for you?

Now he was provoking her. And he was doing it well.

It depends. Selena said. My program is really full, if they're going to ask me additional rehearsals I don't know how I'm going to do that. I could just in the late afternoon and not until late or during weekends!

And during night, right? Selena blocked.

Oh..no. I sleep during the night or I'll be a mess.

We will see! He said. We will decide the program soon.

Selena didn't want to think about it. Her free time will be soon zero. This man would have tiring her so much and she wasn't even able to think clear because she was feeling like a doll in his hands.

Meanwhile she saw again Mircea. He was still giving a class about television. He congratulated her with enthusiasm:

Good job, Sel, you are super! I didn't expect you to obtain a role so soon, but you're very talented and I always knew it.

Selena blushed. She didn't expect that but she knew that he was being friendly and nice, nothing else. But he warned her:

But be careful, Sel. Be yourself, always. Even if you get the role, you could find difficulties on your way, this job it's not easy, you know? If you'll ever need something don't hesitate to search me.

She thanked him. She felt her heart melting about his kindness, she admired him so much and she was very happy with his words.

The problem now was Lorelei's role and Mr Superstar. Rehearsals started the next day. He wanted her to be ready for filming.

Even if you're not going to get the role, I want this to be high quality, he said without a shade of a smile. He sees me like an object, she thought.

They started with some relaxing games. In the room they were alone, but she was feeling more stressed than being in front of all her colleagues. Probably because she knew they would have played together and she didn't feel comfortable about it.

Selena, what moment of the day you feel the best? Mihai asked.

Best moment? mmmm

Yes, when do you feel more relaxed? For me it's the morning. When I wake up, I go on the balcony. I breathe the fresh air and I plan my day. I drink my coffee; I read the newspaper and my emails. I just pass time with myself. That is a quiet moment. Do you have something like that?

She thought about it but no. She didn't have something like that.

Maybe the night, she said. Before I go to sleep. I think what I did during the day and what I'm going to do next day.

Perfect, Mihai said. Imagine that it's that time of the day. You finished everything you had to do, you can relax.

The rehearsals continued. Selena was reading the script. Her character intrigued her. But mostly, he was intrigued by another character: Mihai's one. Since they had to spend a lot of time together, she was fascinated by him. His authorial attitude disappeared and at his place there was a relaxed young man with a hot sense of humor. Selena didn't know what to think anymore. He let her to take breaks all the time. A lot of time they talked about arguments that hadn't any connection with the movie. They talked a lot about anything like childhood, dreams and about how she always wanted to play in a movie. He encouraged her so much. They they laughed a lot about her clumsiness at work. Selena almost forgot sometimes where she was. It felt like at a picnic in a nice park looking at the sky. She started to think that he was playing a game.

So, one night, before bed she had an idea.

IV Nocturnal Adventures

She watched an action movie about some thieves that entered in the house of a rich guy. In the movie they showed how they get away with alarms and bodyguards until the room where they have stolen values objects and no one saw them.

What if she would have tried that?

She was aware of the crazy idea, but during her childhood she felt in love with an older guy. He was living next door. He was very mysterious, he didn't talk to anyone, nobody knew anything about him, he just smiled sometimes to her. She decided then that she wanted to know him better, to see how was he in private, how his home was. In her child mind, enter in his house meant discovering his mystery she didn't had difficulties to go up until the window of the mysterious neighbour. The window was open she went in without making any noise. She admired him sleeping and she let him a letter where she confessed her love and she sign: your neighbour.

The next morning she was waiting with impatience for him but he never came. She learned later that the neighbours moved. The young guy left, his very first love. She tried to inform about the letter but she never found anything. She learned in that moment that love it's not just nice things and pinky heart, but it's also pain.

Inspired by these childhood memories, Selena decided that also now the feelings for Mihai wasn't love she didn't feel butterflies in her stomach when she was thinking about him. It was mostly curiosity; she needed to know more about the man she was spending time daily. She didn't know so many things about him, just that he was cold and bossy, a good actor and also a good friend to pass time with. She felt that seeing his house, she would have discovered his dirty secrets that media would have paid a lot to have. Like that she would have had him in his hands.

She found easily his address; she looked in Emilian's office where he was keeping the dossier of each teacher.

Mihai's house was in city center it wouldn't be easy. She was wondering if his house was a huge expensive one or a classic and simple one. She wasn't far from the truth; it was a one floor house, modern and simple. He had a huge garden though full of grass, flowers and trees. Selena thought it was a perfect place for children and a dog. She was thinking that should have been nice to live in a house with garden. Mostly in city center, next to everything.

Pretending that she was looking for an address, she did a couple of tours around the house. At that time of the day there was no one. She just was a little old man around that probably was the concierge of the house. She also saw the balcony that Mihai was talking about it was very beautiful. That would have been the point of her mission.

She decided to do it that same night.

It wasn't easy. She needed all the courage in the world.

Dressed like a ninja or like a secret agent in special mission, in the middle of the night she was in front of his house. The backyard of the house was less illuminated so she decided she would have entered by there. She didn't see anyone. Selena tried to stay in the shadow succeeding on passing unobserved.

All the windows were in the dark. She was just hearing the wind's noise. Perfect to attack.

It was very easy to cross the yard. She felt like a thief from movies. She passed next to the silent trees and she was expecting to fall in a trap because she was in enemy territory. Just like in the movies. She managed to get on the balcony. From there you were able to have a nice view of the city, a perfect place to meditate. She understood why Mihai liked to stay there in the morning drinking his coffee.

But there was no time for meditation. She took a thing from her backpack and she placed it on the iron table next to the fresh flowers. He would have seen this the next morning.

Then she heard some noises. She froze. Earlier there were no lights and zero noises! She stuck on the wall and she slid in the garden. She heard steps. Someone woke up, probably Mihai and he was going to the balcony. Omg, he was going to catch her and she would have been ashamed all her life.

She started to run. She felt and hurt her knee but she didn't want to scream even she would have wanted to. She turned her head a lot of times because she had the impression that Mihai was following her. She took the taxi that was passing there. Perfect timing. Finally she was home after a while and she felt on her bed exhausted.

The next days, nothing happened. Mihai didn't really realize that someone entered in his house? Or her adventure was just a dream and never happened? That couldn't be because her knee hurt like hell. She felt like a hero from action movies! she managed to enter in a celebrity's house without being caught. She was already thinking to tell Mihai that was pretty easy to get in his house and that he would improve his security.

Nervously, she went to Mihai's class. She blathered more and she was red all the time, but everything seemed the same. Mihai didn't seem to have something to say.

The answer wasn't arriving. She checked her email every day. Nothing. The message didn't arrive? She risked her life for nothing? She was frustrated a little bit.

Even if she didn't want to, she had to concentrate on her work.

The next days she studied the script of the movie. Mihai was one of the producers of the movie and still he chose her for the role. Such an honor! She was still thrilled. He intrigued her more and more.

She was trying to feel deeply the sad love story that could be anyone's love story. She was scared by the role, but most of the time she felt thrilled and she couldn't wait to play in this movie. The movie was going to be emotional and she was going to play next to a famous actor; but she was also feeling sad thinking about the tragic Lorelei's role. She didn't expect someone like Mihai to contribute to this kind of project. She didn't know him at all! If she would have seen his place that night maybe she would have known more about him.

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