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## **She Loved Wagner**

*by Akhmetzyanova Landysh*

I never knew I would ever hear that music once more. The music that could wake every nerve in my body, that could make me wander down the years that were gone forever. It was not just a combination of sounds, forceful and dreamy; it was like turning the page of a photograph album, where every sound, every subtle change in the tune possessed a great moment of trial. And once more I opened up a road into the past and that enchanting, full of live and vigor melody spanned the years like a bridge.

I was a law student and she was a beauty. I think that was her only occupation. It's beyond doubt that she could live without knowing any need solely because she could attract the opposite sex like a magnet (and that she could, my dear readers). She didn't have long legs, flat stomach or protruding collarbones: isn't it what's considered beautiful nowadays. Open FB and you'll see I'm not mistaken. The girl of my boldest dreams was sensual. A mop of flaming hair. Huge green eyes. And milk-white skin. The skin that seemed to have a texture of a finest cut of silk. I met her in the library. She was hiding between the rows of faceless books trying to find something or maybe trying to get away from something. I didn't care. My goodness me, how the world turned black and white the very moment her red hair burned the retina of my eyes. She was incredible. I think I even stopped breathing. The girl though preferred the company of books and by all the evidence thought me transparent or even non-existent. I was the wall, the shelves, the window, the other people. That was probably what infuriated me. I felt my intestines burn and bile make its way to the taste buds of my tongue. That was probably where it began. And she, to be honest, did not help the situation by ignoring my feeble and croaky "Hello, I'm Josh." Without even looking up, the witch closed the book and left me. What a bitch.

I recall these memories and in them we dance the blazing dance of tango. She knew what was to come. She played with me. At least she believed so. Did she presume I never noticed the gestures, nods and smiles? How she as if subconsciously ran white fingers through the copper river of her hair? The delicious movement of her thighs? The way she licked her lips when they got dry? Why all this if not to seduce me? In a month's time I knew her every gesture. I even think I could almost read her thoughts, so familiar was her body language to me. The girl occupied such an important place in my life, that I felt that I began to be her. And at times like these, when the person you love does not love you back (the traitor!), you stop loving them and you start wanting to be them. Not my words unfortunately. Some Japanese eccentric with homoerotic preferences wrote it a century ago. I only have lived through his wisdom. She never had breakfast. Almost every lunch was spent in a small French café 413,5 feet away from the girls dormitory. She loved coffee with three lumps of sugar in it. She had a flaky pastry that disintegrated between her fingers and disappeared within her lips. Most of the time her only companion was another freaking book. I found out she adored Americans, especially Kerouac and all the beatniks, and was getting bachelor degree in philosophy. And yes, she loved Wagner. I heard the melody so often every time she went past me, wearing tiny headphones – two black drops closing earholes and a thin wire disappearing in her pocket. The muffled melody that travelled through the air together with the soft smell of H&M Wildwood Flower and golden threats of hair. She was left-

handed and her left hand had three freckles between the thumb and the index finger that formed a perfect triangle. One of her eyebrows was shorter than the other. And she had an old scar right below her right buttock. The ingenious research revealed that she had received it at the age of nine falling on a piece of glass after her step-father pushed her down. Her smile was made unusual by one tooth sticking out a bit ruining an even row of pearls. She preferred to wear old-fashioned dresses and boots without high heels. And everywhere she went in those boots, Wagner followed her. And so did I.

I know what you're thinking reading this and looking around. Perhaps there're officers and maybe paparazzi. But don't worry, I made it perfect for her. I had bought the things she loved, I had prepared everything carefully beforehand so that she would feel nice and cozy and smiled. I made her smile, did you know that? Have you seen the gramophone? We danced, finally, just like I had imagined. She is not a good dancer. That's the only new thing I found out. A bit lifeless, I'd say. But she smiled. And danced to Wagner.

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