

Prologue

...piano music playing, keyboards reciting a lonely melody...

“There’s a legend about this Cathedral...” - A ghostly voice calls out to the reader.

... melody keeps playing...

“That if you sing a song known in a tale, as you pass by Cathedral - you might be asked to give 5 ro.”

...tune playing...

“It’s said that if someone is out the window, asking you for these 5 ro - give them.”

...piano sounds more and more lonely...

“It might not be much of worth to you. But that might save another soul. Those 5 ro.”

...sound seems to tail off...

Feet heavily clashing onto the puddles, splashing loudly.

She’s out of breath, gasping as she turns around seeking for that couple which gave her 5 ro, but they’re nowhere to be seen.

Then she suddenly stops. Feeling, as if nailed to the old rocky pavement. Helplessly she falls to the ground. The realization kicks in.

Her face portrays utter terror.

“Whaaaaa!!!” - She screams out loud, tears running down her cheeks. She clutches her body, as she weeps.

The memories come back flooding. And horrors hitting hard. Though she just escaped hell - she is no longer among the living.

Rain keeps falling down. The pitter-patter of the drops on the pavement. The town seems at its pace. Late evening in summer.

The piano melody keeps on playing.

*note - “ro” is a type currency in this case. “5 ro” are a bill the size of 5 british pounds, but of thinner paper.

Chapter 1

Sun was shining and the birds were singing.

The chance of the lifetime had struck her to be able to come to the city area slightly 30 minutes from the town centre. Town by the name of Rene.

The hub for few great outstanding universities and establishments which provide the top education and information. The knowledge and the teachers of the magistrate are the best possible in the world.

The magister she pleaded to teach her was the most notorious and least likely candidate in the magistrate world. The human who says "no" to more than 97% of applicants who wish to study under him - magister Levin.

He had a preference to be called by name, as his surname was hard to pronounce to all who came to try and do so. He was over 50 years of age, with a slight curve in his back - as his endless writing desk work is all he tends to.

The thinning hair, the suit that lost its original colour, the briefcase and the peculiar type of face. The kind of face that gives you a cold shiver down the spine, as the sense of uneasiness sweeps over you.

"Ah! Aya! There you are!" - Levin exclaimed, being unusually jolly, as he walked towards his new student.

"I have made preparations, so we better haste, to be on time." - Levin took the suitcase Aya had with her.

Short walk to the parking lot and an old car resembling beetle was there to greet the owner and one more passenger.

The trip to the dormitory was quite interesting. Levin gave the info on the type of special deal he negotiated with the dorm for Aya, as her main work and study will be accompanying Levin most of the time - therefore the time schedule was not even. Mainly from early morning to late at night.

The studies consisted of helping and observing how Levin teaches his classes in cademy, helping him prepare for the classes, then go along to the research facility for the magisters and keep being alongside whilst the research and the writing is being conducted.

Main speciality of Levin was the study of the historical myths and legends that were brought up in the area of the country with the highest density of the academies and religious places created.

Well, his long research paper on the "Cathedral of the St.Laroix" was the biggest research done about that place. Even the historians were not aware of some information he dug out about the place.

As they approached dorms, Levin made sure to keep in check everything. He seemed to be the control insistent type of person.

Yes, the obsessive control freak, one might add, as the tendencies run from maintaining the right kind of pace of walk, to the items in briefcase, pens and papers on the desk.

Bringing luggage upstairs, then introductions with the dorm master. Levin then hurried Aya to come, as they were about to be late for lunch in the academy restaurant.

The high pace was way too unusual for Aya, not to mention - not expected from such a person as Levin.

Once at the table and waiting for the orders - Levin began to chat again.

He shyly brushed the side of his hair back, then looked aside as he spoke:
"This is the first time in a long time that I'm this excited and nervous, actually."

He cleared his throat, as he checked that Aya paid all the attention to him. He smiled awkwardly.

"Ahaha! Sorry to imply so much at the very beginning. Aya dear, this is my first time in 8 years that I took another student. And by all your credentials - you are the perfect candidate to study under my wing."

Aya smiled, as she made herself. The talk reminded of the awkward chat you get during the marriage negotiations when your parents put you with someone randomly.

"It's a great privilege to be in your graces and have this opportunity to study under your supervision. That's a dream-come-true!" - Calm and happy tone in which Aya said that got Levin beaming.

The next was seemingly going well.

After the lunch Levin showed the academy grounds and led Aya to see the magistrates research facility.

The old building looked like a very shabby made library. The old doors with the leather looking piece of cover over it, the entrance hall was that of very vintage movies.

The table right across from the entrance, with a massive vase on it and very peculiar stems of flowers in there.

"Look," - Levin smiled proudly, - "I maintain this island of perfection in here." - He pointed at the flowers. - "I bring here my dear flowers that take time to dry out in the most exceptional way. These are the only flowers that can be part dead and part alive for a long time."

Aya smiled, as she felt the gaze of her mentor. Another look at the flowers - they were those odd things you see in some horror movies. Seems like they'll almost fall apart, as they collect dust.

Further into the corridor was a huge opening that was with the staircase upwards, the shelves of endless books around and few rooms used for teachers lounge and the working rooms.

The introduction to Levin's friend at the table near the entrance to the library was short. Although it seemed like this person knew a lot about Levin.

"Phillip, this is my student. We'll go check the library." - Levin gestured at Aya, then as if hurriedly tried to go to the library.

"My great pleasure!" - Gentleman in his 40's stood up, looking more of a human that interacts with others. The casual jeans and sweater were of fine brands, maintained at high standard. Phillip stretched his hand to Aya, she took it in a handshake.

"Hope all will go well. Levin sure looks like he's enjoying it a lot. He even wears his best suit. Ha-ha!" - Phillip smiled, but that remark and the way his eyes were not showing any emotion were a bit bothersome to Aya.

The thanks were short and the library tour concluded in about an hour.

Then Levin had a call and he, apologetically looking, went to teach the class.

Days seemed to take a bit of interesting colours. Slowly.

Chapter 2

The schedule afterwards consisted of Aya spending a lot of time like a personal assistant. Paperwork, the calls, the reservations, the taking lunch or dinner to Levin in the magistrate library, taking care and helping with lesson plans.

Although the explanations along the way from Levin were absolutely helpful and new to Aya, but the awkward feeling lingering was not really going away.

Another late night and Aya comes to her room tired.

Throwing the bag on a bed, not even bothering to turn the lights on, she walks to her small kitchen in the apartment in the dorms - to make some tea.

She pulled out her phone, that is at the lowest brightness setting, as her eyes hurt from all that information intake throughout the day.

Few pokes at the contacts and she rings someone.

"Hey there," - She says, sounding exhausted, as the other end picks the receiver, - "I'm alive. How are you doing?"

"Missing my wife on this side of the world." - A warm voice filled with love and affection answers back. - "Have you seen her, by any chance? She's not tall, nor short, is very cute and does her best at work, and her name is Aya, have you seen her?"

Feeling of relaxation engulfed Aya as she made her tea, whilst listening to her husband on the phone.

She shared all worries, all the news and every bit that bothered her. He listened and spoke of his days, then he kept on saying how much he loves her and misses her.

"So, does that queasy feeling still persists around Levin?" - He asks.

"Can't put my finger on what exactly is off, but yes, the queasy does not stop. I actually found out that there were only three students throughout his career whom he picked by himself. I'm third. All the rest, assigned by the academy did not last even three days. As you know, I've been here for two months now." - Aya speaks.

"That sounds dodgy. Interesting how other students he picked went on in life." - Husband was kind of taking questions from the air.

Aya frowned.

"You are right, I have never actually thought of it. Maybe I should ask around about them. Thing is - I heard that there are other two picked by Levin, but have never heard names, nor heard anything about them. It's like that topic went taboo. Also, each time I ask Levin of

other students he had - he changes subjects at the speed of light. Not willing to talk about them." - Aya was now getting at that queasy feeling closer, poking at it's gut.

"Say, what if I do some digging for you. If the topic is quite as taboo as you say, then asking questions might be troublesome and giving the attention and worry that you do not need. So, gimme a day and tomorrow evening I'll let you know what I find." - The voice is so calming and reassuring.

"Yeah, you're right. I should not do something that troublesome. So I'll leave the mystery solving to you."

The rest of that chat was about the nights getting colder, as the autumn becomes diverse.

Then shower and bed time.

Chapter 3

Aya was woken up at 6 in the morning by a knock on the door.

She opened the door to see Levin.

He gave a bouquet of flowers to Aya, along with some cakes. Said he's off today and would like them to spend some time in the town.

Not only was it unexpected, but rather unusual.

The smiling face of Levin was really getting frustrating, as Aya began to get more and more acquainted with the feeling that he's trying to start a relationship with her.

After asking for him to come in, then leaving him in the kitchen, as she walks over to her room, pushing the lock.

Even if this is just changing clothes, the sole knowledge that the man who's making her feel rather uneasy was really not in any way reassuring.

As she pulled the long skirt and the sweater out of the closet, she heard a knock on the door, accompanied with an attempt at opening it.

"Oh, apologies, I just wanted to know how long you'll take." - Levin's voice on the other end of the door.

It felt as if he was breathing on the damn door. The shivers went down the spine.

"Just 5 minutes please." - Aya replied in a nice tone and manner.

"You really are the control freak..." - She mumbled silently under her breath.

"Oh, alright." - He said nonchalantly and went off.

Aya got dressed and went out.

Levin had prepared the "special" sort of small trip in town.

They took a bus to the old part of the Rene, which was bordering the outskirts of the academic town. Where, the campuses ended around a kilometre away from the start of old stone pavements and narrow passages.

They had walked to Levin's favourite shop which sells dried flowers. He spoke to the owner for a while about the new types of chemicals that do a profound work at keeping flowers seem alive for longer, although they are fully dried.

Aya kept on smiling, looking around and did not pay so much attention to the compound of the chemical structure that Levin and owner were on about.

This small shop was really intriguing. They even had a few animal taxidermy exhibits. The two rabbits and a fox.

There was a frame with butterflies stuck on with needles and even dissected frog balsamated.

“Quite the taste in art...” - Thought Aya, as she checked these absolutely natural exhibits of still death.

A few minutes later Levin snapped back to the living and apologised to Aya for taking so much time.

“Oh, Levin, is that your girlfriend?” - The shop owner smiled as he barked at them, when Aya was about to be out the doors.

Instead of a proper reply Levin smiled and waved hand.

“This is absolutely not right. He’s showing me off.” - Aya thought to herself, but was unable to say anything to Levin.

Not because she was afraid for herself, but because the worries of a lifetime chance at learning from this magister was rare and really hard to acquire.

Then Levin took Aya to the old gelato place. The ice-cream and the frozen yogurt there were exceptionally tasty, but the cold weather was not really that welcoming and gave chills to anyone who consumed anything cold.

Levin told stories about how he was pacing here when he just arrived as a student with a referral. How he was absolutely swept off his feet when he saw the area, when he enjoyed the food and drinks, but most of all one certain place.

They reached the hilltop with a great structure of artistic architecture on it - Cathedral of Mortem.

They stood outside it, as the whole construction was to be taken in slowly. The grandeur at what it was, the magnificent and majestic look, the ridiculous grande size of it - it was purely the art of the architecture world.

“Is it possible to view inside?” - Aya asked, as her interest was piqued.

“Oh my dear Aya, I wish.” - Levin sighed, then sat down at the bench nearby.- “This Cathedral was a great masterpiece once. The people walked in to pray and to cleanse their souls, to hide and to find salvation, to dream and admire the place. But the owner had died

very long ago. The place fell in hands of some businessmen that had built it inside to fit a film theatre, chapel and the restaurant. They supposedly even had art exhibits there. The place boomed with people and buzz. But that was more than 20 years ago. Now it is closed for all and any, as each business built inside - ceased to exist. The popularity had died off and nothing made this place get back to what it was. Now it belongs to the local municipality. They don't have the funds to resurrect the place to its former glory. Restoration does cost a lot, you see."

Aya listened to Levin's words, but she had questions on how exactly this happened to flop a business if the place and the ideas were so great.

"Me and my wife were here, we met here. She loved the place and I loved watching her admire it. She's still part of it." - Levin spoke in a soft voice, filled with love and so much affection, that it hurt Aya.

"What happened to her?" - Aya asked.

"She died. No longer with us, but the memories she left are warming the hearts of many." - Levin's smile was so sincere, it was remarkable to witness.

Then Levin stood up, saying that this cold weather sure gets to the bones and hurried them both to go back to the academy.

Chapter 4

During the late evening the phone rang. Aya was staring out the window, as the darkness of the room surrounded her.

“Hey there hun.” - She answered the phone.

“Hey there my dear.” - Husbands voice was really the needed bit she ought for. - “How are you?”

“Absolutely tired. Mentally, not physically. Body seems to be quite energised, unlike my mind.”

“Poop honey.” - He let out a soft giggle. - “I’ve researched the mystery. Things don’t look well.”

“Um?” - Aya awoke a little from the hazy mind she had.

“The other students were also female. They really closely resemble you, or rather you resemble them.” - He breathed out. - “I’m concerned.”

“What do you mean I resemble them?” - Aya was puzzled.

“Well, your face looks close to how they look. And the thing is - they went missing. All of them. Not found. First one had disappeared 15 years ago. The next vanished in thin air four years after the first one. They both had studied under Levin for around eight months, then nothing. There are no police reports, no information. Just a missing person case that was never solved. Aya, I suggest you pack your stuff and head home. I’m no longer convinced that you’re safe there.” - Husband stern in decision and really concerned tone started to make Ayas heart fill with worry.

“Hun, I’m buying you tickets for the day after tomorrow. You just say there is an emergency at home. You’ll have tomorrow to prepare and pack.” - His voice was ringing in ears.

“I get it. I really get it. I’m here for a few months and you know how I really just wanted...” - Aya tried to find some words, but her husband cut her off.

“Aya, my dear wife, I care about your safety more than anything. I care about you, more than anything. If there was something to happen to you - I’ll kill.” - The cold dedication and worry were in his tone. She knows she has to agree, or this is not ending well.

“Alright. Send me the ticket details.” - She conceded.

“I will. Aya, if you won’t make the train - I’ll come in person. If you won’t answer the call - I’ll come in person. You better not be stupid, or...” - He sounded like the worrywart he is.

“Or you’ll come in person.” - Aya cut in. - “I know. I know. And I won’t do anything that would get me in trouble. Trust me.”

“I do.”

The rest of the conversation was easing out the situation. He spoke of the day at work and how he was drowning in papers, then how the office had a very strange customer.

Aya decided not to tell about her day. She felt that worrying her precious man would be a bit too much, on top of what already happened.

As the conversation was done, she looked out the window on her third floor.

The person who sat in the park opposite the dorms strangely reminded Levin. The person was facing the building, as he sat on the bench.

“Weirdo.” - Aya silently said.

Chapter 5

Not being sure how to say to people she was leaving was quite troublesome. In the morning Aya went to the main office, giving them the notice. Then asked not to tell anyone, and that she'll deliver the news to magister Levin herself.

She met him next to the magisters library, as they walked in the same direction towards it.

Once they walked in - the usual vase with flowers was looking different. Someone had cut off the flowers, leaving stems in the vase, from flowers that Levin put there. Plus the new living flowers were inserted.

Levin shook with fury.

"You cut my flowers?! I cut your flowers!" - He ranted as he took the scissors and cut the flowers in a vase.

Then he angrily in a rushed manner walked to Phillip.

"Who was that rascal?! Who dared to touch my flowers?" - Levin shouted.

This was the first time for Aya to see him this mad. This was fury. Pure fury. The way he was now - he could snap someone's head off.

She saw Levin getting mad when he taught classes a couple of times, but somehow due to her being present he would contain the anger. She even heard students mutter that due to her Levin is holding back his rants.

Levin went on to cut in half stems of flowers that someone else put. He then rampaged and went to the Phillip, shouting loudly about the fact that someone "molested" his precious flowers. Then Levin went off to the depths of the Library to cool off, and a few teachers came out from the lounge.

"Was that Levin with a rant?" - Walked out the lady in the floral dress, one of the Literature Major Magisters of Academy.

Then she laughed, as Phillip nodded with a concerned look.

"He never changes." - She muttered and laughed. - "Oh, Marianna must come soon."

Phillip looked with a little distress, then quietly added:

"Levin will be furious. He really has 'that' towards her."

Aya observed the scenery then added that she is going off, as the family emergency is requesting her immediate aid. The others nodded in understanding and sighed, as having such a prominent person with a bright brain leave - quite the saddening thing.

Levin returned, once he felt a little better. Then he received the news.

“Oh my,” - He gasped. - “I’m so sorry for you leaving. Such a treachery.”

He thought for a moment, scratching his forehead. Then he exclaimed:

“We must arrange for a leaving party. We can’t let you go off with no biscuits and tea!”

Levin stormed off chatting with lecturers and then went off to get some sweets. Phillip was rather amused by the pro-active Levin. Quite the rare sight.

Lecturers put out the table, the tea was done, the whiskey was out, the shot glasses too. The biscuits and cakes were on the table. This small leaving party of Aya, Phillip, Levin and three more lecturers was a fine lunch.

The doors swung open and a very chubby lady walked in. She beamed with positivity and mischief. Once she saw flowers at the entrance - she laughed hard, making the party notice her.

Once Levin saw her, he stood up, his face covered in shadow, being really on edge. Phillip saw the scene and tried to hush Levin.

“Aaaa! Lellaaa!” - Lady went to the floral dress madam and hugged her, then other lecturer ladies. Avoiding men, yet sarcastically and with a bit of evil remark watching them.

“Marianna. What brought you here?” - Solemn voice of Levin was quite the chill driving tone.

She looked at him, placing her hands on her hips.

“Ha! Like I’m telling the likes of you!” - Marianna looked at Aya, - “And you, my sweet child?”

“I’m Aya Litatio. Here I am studying under Magister Levin, but unfortunate events make me leave the gracious side of a great teacher.” - Aya smiled.

“Litatio... Litatio... Is the Dima Litatio your relative by any chance?” - Marianna pointed her finger at Aya, she nodded.

“Oh wait! Wait-wait-wait! Oh my lord! You’re Aya! How could I forget! He told me all about you. So proud and so happy about it. He literally beamed. But he was the best student and top of the university, so you should be proud of your husband!” - Marianna went on rambling with other ladies then.

Aya just smiled.

The moment the word “husband” was spoken, the air about Levin and Phillip changed in a moment. They were darker than the night, more ominous than anything.

They walked out of the table for about ten minutes.

During that moment Aya pulled out her phone to ask her friend for the money to travel ASAP out of here. She felt like now, right now, she needs to get out. She felt in danger.

The voice of Phillip snapped her out, she turned off the phone screen.

“What are you checking there?” - His tone was no longer sounding friendly, more like the inquiry from the prosecutor.

“Ah, just checking time before the plane.” - Aya spoke, her voice slightly higher pitched.

Levin sat on the left from Aya, blocking her from getting out or away.

“So, before you leave, let’s have a drink.” - He pushed her a shot of whiskey. - “For the great students and lecturers.”

“I don’t drink alcohol.” - Aya politely declined.

“Oh come on. Only one shot. For the sake of respect.” - Levin smiled.

A smile that sent shivers, cold shivers and the need to run.

Aya took the shot, after the “cheers” she downed it.

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Chapter 6

Aya was walking around the party. The new faces and known faces of famous influencers were all around the venue.

It was a premiere and the launching of the restaurant in this Cathedral. The cinema inside and the art gallery with the restaurant were the great place with picturesque pieces of architectural art.

Aya walked over to her friend Olga, a lady of exquisite elegance and one of the great influencers she ever faced.

"I see that Irina has four people around her. What is that about?" - Olga asked.

"Oh, Irina got a crew that films her and takes pictures all the time for the online streams. She now has around 8 hours 'live' online. And these guys film her doing the work, eating in restaurants and all her mad schedule she nowadays has. So she just talks around, walks around and does her thing, whilst they help with the content." - Aya smiled, then touched Olga's shoulder. - "You should get a few crew members like that to film you and have your streams online. You're worth it. And you'd be a million times better looking on camera than her."

Olga and Aya laughed.

"You sure are flattering me. Thank you." - Olga still checked Irina and her group walking round the venue.

"I'll go check the VIP section." - Aya smiled.

Olga was surprised to see Aya go check the VIPs, as even with the great influence Olga has, she was not invited over to the VIP section.

The stairs went up, the people sat all around and the place for the VIP guests was limited to around ten tables.

Aya went to check where the middle stairs lead. They end just at the level of the next floor, mid air, with no continuation. Like a broken staircase to heaven.

One lady tried walking up, then she thumped her foot at the end - having the stairs shake. With a sad look she came down.

Aya went down as well.

The stairs that lead to the art hall from the restaurant had no handrail. So the whole venture was quite the challenge. At the top of the stairs Aya stood, holding onto a column that was by the start of the stairs.

It would not be so scary, if the construction would not be in open space, with the height around the third floor, the stairs metallic, in a squiggly line down, nothing to hold on, not to mention the construction was slightly tilted - so the fear of suddenly just falling down was there.

The stairs she did take were different. She walked towards the entrance, where the great hall was hosting the incoming guests, the stars of the film and the actors, the photographers, journalists and many interested people.

Aya looked at how one guy was pestering a girl for the autograph.

“But you play the Assassin, right?” - He kept on going, as he pushed the pen and the paper to her face.

“I’m telling you no.” - The girl was puzzled.

Aya picked up the plastic magical wand and threw it in the backpack of the boy. The stick went in like a dagger, getting stuck inside. The guy turned around, looking at Aya.

“Oh my god! It’s you! Assassin! Wait!” - He dashed towards Aya, but the crowd got in the way.

He kept on shouting for her to wait. But the joy and the mischief Aya felt, made her slightly want to play the game of tag.

“Indeed, I am that Assassin in the movie, you so desperately seek for.” - She giggled to herself, acknowledging how fantastic it was to act that role.

She turned the corner and went to the platform with a lever, right opposite the entrance, near the staff door.

“This must be going to the car park..” - Aya thought as she stood on the platform, pushed the button on the lever and pulled it.

And the platform went down, at incredible speed.

“What the...?” - Shot through Aya's head as she saw the same place repeat itself over and over. The scenery changed, but as if the time went back or forth.

Then as she stopped, she saw her friend who she studied with - Raphael. Some security people were pushing from the corner that she came from. She knew instantly - they were after her.

Aya pulled Raphael onto the platform and pulled the lever.

“What the heck?” - Raphael was about to have some opposing issue, but Aya shushed him.

He turned to see the same changing of scenery - as they descended down the same Cathedral was showing itself at different time periods.

At some level they noticed guards.

“Duck, cover the head with the jacket.” - Aya urged Raphael to action, as she pulled her shirt over her head. That kind of made them less noticeable. As it descended level by level there were more and more people, with every level it looked like some office, or the production line, or the atelier, or some other office or business buzzing with people or customers.

Once arriving at some new deserted level, Aya noticed that Raphael was no longer beside her.

It was empty all around. Then suddenly some girl fell into the arms of Aya.

“I was looking for you.” - Said the beauty. She was rather short of height.

The way this girl acted made Aya feel that they were on set. That the filming is being conducted.

“Ah, we must go...” - Aya said in a theatrical tone.

They stood up and went around to see the inside of the Cathedral.

The gallery gone, the cinema, the restaurant. There was only the Cathedral, with rows and rows of sitting space and the high ceiling above. Covered in freska, with statues and icons to pray to. The candles were lit.

But the “infinity” stairs were just inside. The massive construction coming from one side of the Cathedral, then twisting and turning inside and the end going through the wall to outside.

They met a young man, who got up at the sight of the two.

“I’ve got just the right new ribbons, look!” - He pulled out two long, sky blue in colour, ribbons. They were reminding more of a really long scarves. The length was astonishing.

Somehow the three of them felt like their childhood swooped over, making them run around, making the ribbons fly. They laughed and felt happy.

The crack then showed itself - the door opened and the people started to walk in - prayer time. Making the three rascals dash to the inventory side of the hall, hiding behind curtains.

“I’ll get some bread.” - Whispered the boy, as he left.

“So, just the two of us now...” - The sweet girl softly said, as she pulled Aya in, leaning towards her.

Their lips touched, Aya felt how cold hers are. Then as tongue pushed in and they deeply kissed, Aya felt like her tongue just went to feel the sour cream that went really bad, past the “use by” date.

She waited until the girl went out, then spat out the thing that reminded her of the crumbled cheese.

“Tastes horrible.” - She thought to herself. - “But is that supposed to be love?”

She no longer felt like there was filming, she felt like she needed to find the girl.

Once Aya left the inventory room, she passed on the side, walking out - that’s when the guards appeared again.

Aya dashed towards the platform with a lever.

Managed to get on it on time, and push the lever to descend again.

Now the platform stopped at the lowest level, as Aya felt in her gut.

There were people around and the small office. Inside that office - some man was scolding the girl that kissed Aya. He slapped her across the face. That girl cupped her cheek. It looked like she was no longer able to go see her. Aya felt like her despair and rage boiled over.

Around her - the people were looking like they came to the municipality event, a meeting or a gathering for the locals.

The ones beside her were looking at her in surprise, trying to figure out how she appeared there.

Aya stood up, in a decisive stride towards the office to get that girl out, but the people began gathering around her, encircling her.

From farther parts of the room people began coming closer, few of them were the “leaders” of the community.

Aya shook in fear, but the rage gave adrenaline.

She chanted some spells that somehow came out of nowhere. Binding the people to the spot - as if freezing them. Some dark veins spreading over their bodies - the visual representation of the binding spell.

Chapter 7

The leaders went onto crushing the spell, to start moving again - to capture Aya.

She ran, but the office was out of reach. People broke out of the spell and started to chase her. She was running away, from corner to corner, then up the infinity stairs. On and on, to the outer wall where the stairs lead.

Outer wall - cornered to the wall, standing on the stairs, the three people had her on that edge.

Aya began humming the melody - the piano tune was insistently playing in her head. Then she saw the people on the sun lit street, it was sunset time, evening in summer.

The boy and girl walked. He held a small flute, playing the tune on it.

Raphael managed to squeeze out the window.

“Hey you!” - Raphael shouted to the boy. - “Do you have 5 ro? Can you give me?”

The boy shrugged, then smiled and pulled out a piece of paper - 5 ro.

“Thanks.” - Said Raphael, as he grabbed the paper. Then he threw the 5 ro to Aya, she grabbed it and stuffed it in her mouth - eating it.

Then the chasers stepped aside, having her way to run.

And she ran to the main entrance - the halls were now looking more and more grey, the dust and the endless rubbish everywhere began emerging.

She ran towards the ticket office, the windows of the office covered in dust and yellow marks. She pushed open the side shelf unit, pulling out the guest pillows and curtains that were falling apart, she pulled out the shelves, throwing them aside, then pushed the back of the unit - it gave her way towards the entrance hall.

She pushed the door and was out on the street, she ran towards the area where the boy had to be with the girl.

But then the rain caught her off guard. It was raining. She stopped.

Her abrupt breathing, her eyes darting from thing to thing, her heart thumping in her chest.

Then as she listened into the rain, as she observed how things had changed, and how the same street was no longer the same - the time somehow stopped for her.

Just her eyes, tracing the rainy streets. Her bare feet in the puddle.

Then it dawned on her. The tears poured endlessly, she cried out, shouting and weeping in her weakness.

The memories came flooding.

From the moment she was abducted, how she got strapped inside the Chapel, how she was raped and abused days and days, over and over, lack of food, drinks, how her voice withered and how she was surrounded by the leftovers of once living humans. The bones of people around, the bloodied curtains, the stabbings and shouts of Levin.

Shaking in cold rain - she knew she no longer was alive. A ghost, spirit, freed by a random human for 5 ro...

She looked back at Chapel...

"The endless victims who died here, the killers who were murdered in these walls - they were all there... Still bound to this hell place." - Her voice now sounded only in her head.

"What now?"

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