

Barefooted

Short Stories

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It is an autumn day with big rusty leaves that waltz with the wind. Ceaikovski playing in her head and her heart beating so fast, so very fast...seemingly without any reason. She walks quickly and the earrings jangle in her ears like Christmas bells. She does not find the entry. An old short-sighted cleaning lady points her in the right direction (the one *she thinks* is the right direction). She needs about twenty seconds to figure out which is right and which is left.

She arrives in front of the intercom and rings. He answers in the same voice she was familiar with and which she knew would trouble her being if she were to hear it again. She wanted to say "It's me", but it was stupid. They had met face to face just once and talked a couple of times on the phone. But luckily, after answering "Yes?", he opened without waiting for an answer.

The elevator was old, just perfect for her claustrophobia. One, two, three, four. She was there. He was waiting with the door opened, dressed in black. He smelled of perfume, proof that he had been preoccupied enough to wish to impress her (maybe?). He allowed her to enter (barefooted) in his tiny apartment and search every corner, look at all that she wanted, study everything her heart desired.

At one point, he wished to show her something in particular: a mirror that connected two rooms. You just had to push it into the wall and could see in the other room. Everything was in complete order. The bedroom bed was tidy, with light coloured sheets, dried flowers slept in well positioned vases and the curtains were raised just as much as they had to be. Not the slightest untidiness, not even a glass out of place.



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She sat on a chair in front of him with her legs curled beneath her and listened. She listened to him recollect, narrate, joke, desire, sing, recite and smile. She listened to his game and took part in it, aware that it will all finish soon. That him, the courteous, attractive and flattering man will become one with the space in which he had taken shelter at the exact moment she would have left.

Although interesting and inviting, the perspective of having a game partner is in the same time dangerous. What if he will get bored before everything ends?

She was reading his mind and no matter how much she wanted to caress his temples and tell him not to be afraid, she put her shoes on, let him hold her jacket and faced him. He kissed her on the forehead, pillowed her head a short moment (a very short moment) on his chest and walked away without looking back.

She heard the door close and felt him become one with the secluded space he had willingly created.

The elevator and the way back, the fall and Ceaikovski were all forgotten. She returned with the shadow of his kiss on her forehead, in her small septic apartment, in which all was perfect, nothing was untidy and where she walked barefooted.

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