

Rehearsal

The Way to Oz

By Mihaela Iancu

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I met him at a bar, on Friday night. I sat down next to him and ordered the same thing – a bottle of black Leffe. I asked him for a cigarette. He was smoking Marlboro Lights.

He watched me as I lit it and I raised the bottle in his honor.

He did this without saying a word, and then he looked away.

I drank my beer in silence, and smoked heartily. I noticed his nails were chewed to the quick.

After finishing that beer, I ordered another one. I propped my chin on my hand and I stared at him. He turned to me. He put his pack in front of me, so I took another one. He did the same. We had a drink and smoked, in silence.

On the third beer he took me by the hand. I continued to use just my right hand, him just the left one. I had no idea what he was thinking of or what he was seeing. Our palms had got all sweaty.

When I finished my last sip of beer, he got up and put the coat around my shoulders. I waited for him to get dressed, and then we went out holding hands. It was foggy. He looked about, and pulled me ahead.

We crossed Magheru Boulevard and Calea Victoriei, we went down General Berthelot Street, beyond Sfantu Sava Highschool. I was holding him tight. Suddenly he slowed down. He sighed. He looked around, and then he looked at me. I fastened the only button remained undone, the last one from the bottom. It was cold. The dogs were barking.

We went round the block in front of which we had stopped four times. The third time I realized I could easily find it again any other day. Near it there were birds and leftovers of bread.

On the third floor, he unlocked the door of the apartment right ahead. He did not turn on any lights.

At the end of the hallway, he opened the door to the room. He sat me down on the edge of the bed. He took my shoes off and I got scared.

We were looking at each other, we couldn't see a thing and I was about to say something.

Then, he got up, went out of the room and twisted the key in the lock. I heard him going into the next room. He locked himself from the inside.

I lay on the bed exhausted. I didn't think about tomorrow. I didn't say a word, not even in my mind.

But that's not what really happened. I cannot tell the truth.

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