See You!

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When her husband received an unexpected job offer abroad, she decided not to go. He rushed to pack without her. To say she was stunned would be an understatement. It threw her completely off course, feeling like a mythical end of life. An invisible but powerful volcanic lava engulfed her, dragging her into the very depths of despair. How am I supposed to stay here without him?! Was it her heart truly weeping out of love, or was it just emotions and ambitions screaming inside her head? Whatever the reason, Olesya felt betrayed and utterly miserable. Women react differently to life lessons, and Olesya's first instinct was to contemplate an end, simply to spite him. To exit this foreign life she had so intimately wrapped herself into, like glasses in a case.

In her mind, she could still see the two foreign passports on his table, and she suspected whom the second one was for, but she lacked the courage to open it and look. “Coward!” her distressed soul chided her once again, urging her to take a step forward. "Look at it!” To her silent question, "Why?" he sharply replied, "It's necessary..." She didn't understand any of it, but her resentment towards him and anger at herself battled so intensely that she had to rush out of the room to avoid breaking into tears right in front of him: unpredictable and relentless. “How did I get to this point?” she asked herself, chiding herself for being too soft and compliant.

The day of his packing passed sometimes quickly, at other times unbearably slowly. Olesya calmed herself with the thought that as soon as his footsteps faded, she would relax, drink some coffee (maybe even wine!), and finally spend the summer finishing everything she had been writing for years. She would pull out her dusty notes, now yellowed with time: letters, sonnets, and that unreal book about karmic connections and boundless female happiness. She would spread out all her scattered thoughts on paper, without fear or regard, on his sturdy but even old couch. In his room, where she was often forbidden to enter. Her room—a bedroom—was half the size and devoid of full sunlight. Most importantly, she wouldn't even touch the long list of tasks he had left for her, his press assistant. Yet, the moment he stepped outside their apartment, she had a breakdown—as if the sky had cracked open and a deluge poured down, flooding the entire world!

Thankfully, her workplace wasn’t expecting her, as she had sensibly arranged a leave of absence for the much-dreamed-of and long-anticipated trip... Her husband had often shared plans whereby she, Olesya, seemed almost central. Of course, after him...

“And what now? How will I explain this to the editor? Some of our acquaintances will be overjoyed at my ‘big fall,’ recalling my futile preparations…” Such and similar thoughts swung like pendulums in her agitated mind for hours. They shook the floor, walls, ceiling, giving her no peace, mocking and constantly reminding her of the past.

And so it was, as if on a large cinema screen, her dazzling first acquaintance with him appeared and flickered—energetic, charming, magical... She remembered his shining eyes, his enchanting smile, and phrases like “I’ll love you forever,” “we are soulmates,” and “you are my destiny.” Also, his convincing explanations that his first wife didn’t support him at all, on the contrary—scorned him as a man and a skilled doctor... Whereas she, Olesya, was completely different!

The shared life of the lovers began not only in joy, embraces, and kisses, but with Olesya suddenly turning into “the other woman” thanks to his first wife. "My son is my hope," said the husband, who had only recently hinted, lowering his voice, that his son didn’t carry his genes and resembled neither parent.

Despite everything, Olesya lived with hope that the situation would pass and things wouldn't stay the same. She created affirmations for herself, which, like living beings, lulled and soothed her, like a child. Her husband’s favorite pursuits gained recognition. The halo she had drawn over his head lent her an air of divinity, the scent of which Olesya spread around like the finest perfumes. She tried to live his life with such dedication and sacrifice that she didn’t even realize when she became no one.

And him?! Only now did she understand that he never intended to love her. All the words were just a brilliant act, empty sounds, and even worse, she, Olesya, was a rugby ball, oblong with pointed ends, directed harshly by a man's hand at the first wife. To prove through Olesya who he really was.

Only now, when she was finally alone, did the picture of life with him open up from a different perspective. Everything became unexpectedly clear and sharp. This urged her to seek any way out. She attempted to support herself with a wise thought from a book—whatever came to hand. Play around...

“Search for the solution in your heart,” were the words of a psychologist that first caught her eye. Olesya clung to them, trying to repeat them, imagining that everything would return to its place now. Back to where she had grown accustomed. The longer it lasted, the more she was angry at herself: "The heart cannot accept all this, and one cannot continue living like this."

A bright and somber hopelessness, like an endless desert, spread before her vastness. She understood that the advantage of his first family was obvious, and that they all together had won a great victory over her, this naive fool. Simultaneously, she knew him well enough to sense his unwavering confidence that Olesya wouldn’t go anywhere, that he alone controlled the situation and indeed—life: his and others.

Now, looking back, Olesya saw her past in golden hues. It seemed much better than it actually was. "And what about the desire for crazy love?" her soul suddenly intervened, as if waiting for the moment to prick the grand dreamer. “But what a yearning there was for womanly happiness!” “Yes, yes," agreed Olesya, “a great and romantic love! One that whirls you in a vortex of feelings and carries you away like the wind... When you dance under the high vault of heaven and quietly listen to God’s song...”

She didn’t want to think about the pain, yet she noticed that such love hadn’t existed in their past life. That kind—penetrating, burning, alive... And now the air was filled with it, every cell in her body breathed it: “This is how real love feels—it constrains like ice locks on shores, or shackles placed on legs… if unrequited.” “And the plan of your soul?” a tiny drumming like Morse code beat in her temples.—“And the karmic lessons, the path of your own... And self-love!”

Pulling herself together a bit, the young woman admitted that, indeed, her love was born within her soul, and this world didn’t always share the feelings of someone madly in love. Just as soon as the soul begins to sing, something intervenes, compelling it to cry, striking deeply: “He convinced me that only I could make him happy!” “And I did indeed,” Olesya marveled at her own thoughts. “He’s happy!”

The husband called Olesya only a few weeks later, knowing that her most negative emotions had subsided. If positivity hadn’t yet returned, at least equilibrium might be restored... He didn’t know that for the first time in her life, Olesya had tried to draw any conclusions. He saw her, as always, soft, supple, obedient, and patient. Sometimes all of this even annoyed him, because he couldn’t believe someone could act so masterfully. Mentally he had long given her an appropriate nickname. Sometimes he even said it directly: “Write! Continue with your poems, books... That's your thing, you do well. I’m allowing you!”

And now, in a cheerful and ringing voice, he inquired about her health, mood, and reminded her of the tasks to complete in his absence. She listened and remained silent, because she couldn’t say anything good, and didn’t want to say anything bad. It was as if she didn’t even hear his impressions about the successful start of work in that foreign country, about the son who went along with him—as his right hand. Her thoughts were now focused solely on herself: “...to continue living, I must accept that I potentially imagined my life with him. All of this was just my subconscious. A man who belongs only to me doesn’t exist. I need to move forward.”

Lost deeply in thought, Olesya didn’t notice when the phone became silent. Looking at the display, she saw it was cold and distant. She knew this unattainable dream—of traveling—meant nothing to her anymore. Everything that needed revealing had unveiled itself. She would never again say to him: “See you!” And that’s just.