

I'LL BE THERE. IN THE NAME OF LOVE

This afternoon the sky looks different, it's like a fresh and blue canvas spread over my head. The sun is bright too, in spite of some clouds. However, I don't understand where this wind is coming from. I'm ready for the presentation of my novel. I'm excited and nervous at the same time: I'm afraid of people's judgment.

The audience has arrived. I'll start reading the part of the novel dearest to me. It is about the myth of the Phoenix and the Albatross. It tells of a meaningful part of my life. In addition to being a bird with large wings, the albatross always travels in a couple and to me it stands for an important male figure. On the other side, I can mirror myself in the Phoenix. As the bird was able to be reborn from its own ashes of emerald, I am desperately trying to come out of my long dark period. That is why I would really like to behave like the phoenix.

I can feel tears break my voice, I am melancholic and I have nostalgia of the past I lived with Can. I am pushed towards an imaginary reality. My feeling for him is so deep and still too involving. I wonder if I can keep on reading without losing control. It is a hard matter, indeed. I can perceive it at any line I read. Now, the page I am reading recalls a happy moment in our past. It tells of the evening when Can and I were having dinner with our friends, Alper and Arzu. Ahh, those wonderful moments seem so far away and gone forever! We used to be happy and cheerful. We loved each other and our story was going on really well. Now, I am falling in the deep.

Fortunately, there is Higit here who brings me back to real life. Look, the audience is so intrigued. They are going to ask me questions now. I have to be ready even if I feel so tired. Hopefully, my novel is appreciated. To tell the truth so it seems.

Oh my God, I cannot believe it! I think I have seen Can standing behind the audience! Is that true? Or is it a game of my imagination again? Who knows? Am I going mad again? God, help me please!!!

I feel like closing the page. My attention shifts to the ring Can gave me. So many people surround me and all the same, I feel the emptiness inside is devouring me. I am afraid I can no longer breathe. Loneliness has inhabited my heart for too long a time. I do not feel like reading on. I will conclude in a few minutes. I will answer the questions, sign some books and then, yes, I will tell Higit I want to be alone and go for a walk: I like to be on my own and think. Am I real or have I been caught by the thought of my bad King again. Oh, Can, Can where have you disappeared? I am lost, alone and powerless.

Finally, I was able to take a walk through the narrow streets of this cosy village.

What is the meaning of my life? To be or not to be? W. Shakespeare was right; I believe one must find a meaning on his own. This walk is painful: it makes me think of past, unforgotten times. I shiver and feel unstable. Oh, Gosh, look at the sky. It getting cloudier and cloudier, grey like my mood. What is this thunder? I must walk faster but it is not easy. There are so many sideways in this small town as if you were walking through twisted village streets. Oh, it's raining! My God, I haven't got an umbrella. I must find a shelter. Look, there is a cinema over there. Oh, what a coincidence *The Bad King* is on. That is where I can go. I have so many hours before my flight.

I am lucky. There's no queue. I feel relieved. Well, I go into the cinema hall and take a breath. The movie is stunning: it reminds my love story. Its melancholy perfectly suits my mood. I feel invaded by flames. How can I forget the sense of solitude that has been with me for a year? God only knows. But, wait, there is also passion in some scenes, a kind of liberation. They make me cry but possibly, I can get rid of the burden I am carrying with me. What is happening? What noise is the one disturbing my thoughts. Let's look around and find out! That shape looks familiar. I may be wrong; it is so dark inside here. Oh, no! Is that Can? I am not

sure. Do I hallucinate again? Oh my goodness, I am panicking. I feel powerless. I would better go outside and look for some fresh air. Oh, that's a nice place over there. I can sit and have coffee. And, what is more? I need the support of a friendly voice, too, one able of honest advice. I'll call friend Merve and tell her all that has just happened to me. Hi, Merve!. I tell her everything: my fears, my hopes my uncertainty about Can being real or rather the product of my hallucinations. Once again, I can feel how reassuring she is. A real friend. She suggests I should consider the positive aspects of the situation rather than the negative ones. And, for once I believe she is right.

She is also curious; she has never seen Can, I only showed her some photos. She wants to know if he has changed in time and I must tell he has. He looks more like one coming from a distant wild and magic world I cannot even imagine where from. I feel confused and full of contradictory feelings. On the one hand, I am afraid; on the other, I think things can still get right. Back at home, in the country side, as usual in the evening I'll go to the harbor and sit on the pier: There, lulled by the warm waves of the sea at late sunset, I can recollect my confused thoughts and be truly honest to my real soul. But I am also afraid I might also feel like an insect, tiny and insignificant in front of a never-ending sea so that once more solitude takes me over. I'll take my pill and continue my every afternoon ritual, one that has been going on since I could no longer reach Can. So many months have gone and I have not yet learned how to express my pain, to free myself from the feelings of nostalgia that constantly oppresses me. I suddenly decide to put all that crosses my mind on a small note. Writing as a therapy. I take my pen and my sheet of paper out of my bag and I start writing. I write what I would like to tell Can and have never had the courage to say.

My hand is moving fast and keeps on writing, line after line the page fills up. Each letter is like a shot hitting the center of my chest and smashing everything it meets. It is as if I were able to get rid of my innermost burdens. I put the note into the empty medicine bottle and throw it to the sea. Will I feel better now? I cannot say. I really do not know.

The day after I am again to the pier again. Unfortunately, what I did yesterday did not change my feelings. I am still sad, confused, lonely, and lost. Only the sound of the waves gives me a little relief. I feel lulled as if I were still a child. But, all of a sudden I am caught by panic. I can see Can walking towards me. He looks self-confident while I have become rigid. I cannot control my body and keep shaking. I am quivering. Instinctively I stand up and want to go away, to escape from Can. And, even worse I can hear him calling me. I want to avoid him: I don't want to listen to him. I am still very angry. But, he keeps calling me. Sanem, Sanem for three times and then I stop and I slowly down the pace. I have lost my energy for a long time now. As he gets closer, he reaches out to me. I can feel his hand on my wrist. I quiver and, if on one hand I would like to run away, on the other hand I would like him to hug and protect me. Also, I would like to listen to what he wants to tell me and find out why he left me alone. Did he not suffer as well? How could he cope with that long distance in space and time? I cannot understand. I ask him why he has come but he does not answer my questions and so I go away.

Back home I feel safe, far from an unbearable reality. My home has now become my nest. What can I do not to think about all that haunts me? What can I do to take distances from that obsessive image? I will go to my laboratory and work on my scents and creams.

There is a sense of peace and an intoxicating smell here. It calms me and reminds me of better moments. Suddenly I can hear the sound of footsteps slowly descending the stairs. Can is again near me. Once more, I feel confused almost paralysed. My anger does not help me. I collect all my energy to work fast and I press all the flowers inside the pestel as strong as I can. The task becomes a way out to my uneasiness and fear.

I can perfectly feel he is looking for physical contact but I cannot help remaining indifferent. He asks me if he can have a little bottle of perfume and on my nodding, he takes the one I always wear. I feel nothing has changed, not even for him. Pride and pain together prevent me from talking to him and that makes me go even madder.

I have no words left. In front of my silence, he resigns and goes away. I can feel his distress from the way he walks. I know he is heartbroken like me but I was not able of doing anything different.

I feel exhausted. I think back to all the sharp and cold answers I gave him every time he tried to talk to me and suddenly feel sick and sorry for my behaviour. I feel somehow guilty for his new departure. Now all I can do is chasing him to set things right. I run as fast as I can but it is too late. I can only see him in the distance leaving the pier on his boat.

Destroyed and devastated I am aware I have lost him one more time. What can I do now? Only his ring remains of our love story. I touch it with care and smell it at the same time.

And, after all I feel we are very close even in the distance. My God, if he only knew how much I wish I could find rest to my suffering in his arms