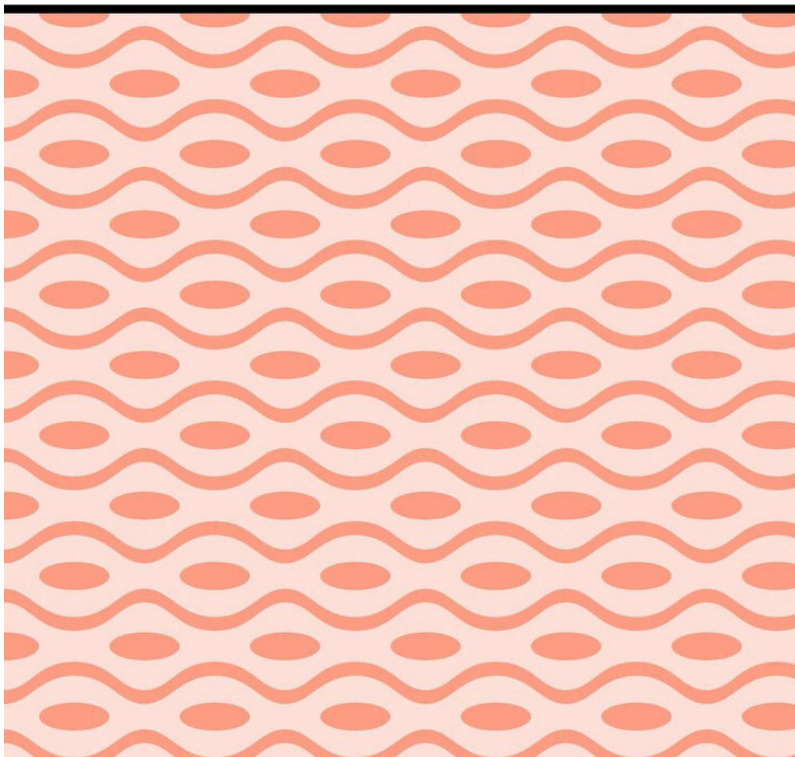


18+ SARDAANA KOKOLOVA

She loved autumn



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Аннотация

In a dialogue with your subconscious, you cannot be disingenuous. Only with faith in the truth of convictions you can break the false self-importance beliefs and stop the destructive process.

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Sardaana Kokolova

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Kokolova Sardaana
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Introduction

“You are a nobody. An empty space. There is nothing around you. Why pretend to be a victim? You are pathetic. You are beyond pity. How could you bring yourself to such a state? Who needs you now? A nobody. Kill yourself. Don’t suffer. People like you are not noticed by anyone and your absence will not be noticed by anyone. It’s simple. Just go ahead and do it. Kill yourself.”

She replayed this monologue in her head hundreds of times. And each time she tried to convince herself to stop. As her psychologist taught her. Find a rational answer. A logical one. Not a simple denial. But a life-affirming definition.

In a dialogue with your subconscious, you cannot be disingenuous. Only with faith in the truth of convictions you can break the false self-importance beliefs and stop the destructive process.

Chapter 1

— Mom, can I go to the competition?

— For which competition?

— Our ensemble is participating in a competition. Let me go.

I really want it. And I also want to become a choreographer.

— Who? Who put this into your head?

— I decided by myself.

Mom didn't answer. She turned away and continued smoking in the kitchen. She looked out the window and thought about something for a long time. The daughter decided that it was better not to argue with her now and went into the room.

Year after year, she lived dancing from childhood and the desire to become a choreographer was something natural. A logical next step in life. After all, there was nothing in her life except the stage.

She stood outside before entering the building. Autumn. The sun was still gentle. And the wind reminded that the long winter was coming.

— Why didn't you come to the rehearsal? You can't miss it now. We're getting ready for the contest, remember? Are you with us?

— I don't know. Mom hasn't answered yet. And you?

— Sure. It's a chance to get out of the house. It'll be fun.

— I've never traveled without my parents before.

— All the more reason to go. Tell the Teacher. He will help. He will talk to your mother. They are friends.

— Well, not exactly friends. He understands her well. I'll talk.

Returning from the rehearsal, she continued to think about why she decided to become a choreographer. She knows well how the Teacher works. From the first days in the ensemble, she was the closest to him. And she often stayed in his office to watch video recordings of concerts. When the time came and everyone was thinking about what speciality to choose, she was sure that wanted to be a choreographer. She asked the Teacher how to stage dances and what it was like to be a choreographer. She knew that liked dancing. All her free time she was either in the rehearsal room, or on stage, or in the costume room. From time to time, her mother started talking about the importance of useful work. And her phrases: "Dancing is only about poverty and loneliness. You can't earn much by dancing" firmly settled in her head. But she continued to dance and did not leave the stage.

It was always interesting to watch the Teacher at work. Especially when he began a new production. From his first step into the hall, she understood that today was not a simple rehearsal. There would be a new dance.

On such days he was collected. Even a little nervous. Sometimes he was intolerant of mistakes and demanding beyond measure. But she understood. She saw how important the moment was and tried to obey him in everything and not make mistakes.

The staging process was intense.

Gradually, the dance pattern emerged. At such moments, one of the dancers could get indignant and say that it was uncomfortable for him and that it should be done differently. The teacher listened to everyone attentively. But in the end, everyone did as he said. Everyone understood his idea and was imbued with the idea.

After the dance design was completed, they began to refine the movements. The most difficult, longest process. Often it took hours to analyze one movement or group performance until the synchronicity became perfect.

At such moments he was especially strict. And everyone was very tired. But no one argued from that moment on. There was no need to explain why he was so demanding. Everyone understood without words.

A few months later, the ensemble was ready to present a new composition. Thus, almost half a year of the Teacher's life was put into one sentence. And the audience could appreciate the many days of work in a few minutes of dancing on stage.

— So, attention, we have arrived for the competition. Today we are resting. And tomorrow and the day after tomorrow we are working. So now by rooms — everyone, rest.

— Why are you sitting?

— He told us to rest.

— You're coming with us!

— Me? Where?

— We won't leave you here alone.

— But...

— I don't know anything, get ready.

— What will happen? Where are we going?

— There you will see — the girls from the ensemble were giggling and looked pleased.

It was already dark. But she trusted them. They had danced together for a long time. And she was the youngest in the ensemble. So she obediently did everything they said. It was as if they had taken custody of her. And that evening they showed that the world could be different.

They rode the bus for a long time. They passed the center and found themselves somewhere near the park. Their excitement from approaching the goal of the evening grew. She, too, was infected with this excitement. She felt happy that they took her with them and maybe it would be fun. They walked for a long time through the park and found themselves near a lake. During the winter it froze to the bottom and locals used it as a natural skating rink. But after sunset, when the street lamps illuminated only one place on the lake, a game was taking place there.

The rules are very simple. A row was formed on both sides opposite each other. On one side were the girls, on the other the boys. Everyone had to hold hands tightly and stand opposite each other.

The girls did not run. They stood in place. And the young men

ran to meet them.

And they had to break the chain. That's what they told her. So she held on tightly to her hands and looked ahead with confidence. No one would be able to break the chain where she stood. She was confident in herself.

And so, on command, they rushed from their place. She watched as a line of young men ran towards her and then she realized that this was not the game she expected. They ran and laughed with delight. She noticed how one of them, a very large one, was heading straight for her. He was smiling, obviously so happy. But not at all handsome. She immediately realized that she did not like him. He was so huge and he was really running straight towards her. She squeezed her hands and legs tightly, as if she wanted to cling to the ice. But it was very slippery. He was rapidly approaching. And she did not understand: why is the rule so stupid? How could a fragile girl resist such a huge man? He would break the chain in any case.

A row of young men quickly ran up to the girls. She heard everyone laughing. Someone squealed in surprise. No one tried to hold the row.

“What's going on? I don't understand? How is this possible?”

He was there. Opposite her. He smiled widely and she remembered that gap-toothed smile.

“What is this?” he kissed her. And not just innocently. As is proper for a first kiss. But a real kiss of passion. Like it was a kiss of the Varangians. Those who are the first to enter the city. She

froze in surprise and did not understand how his tongue ended up in her mouth.

“What is this? Why is this happening to me?” He let her go and walked away satisfied. She wiped her lips and was in shock and could not speak.

“That was... What was that?” — she stood there in bewilderment and couldn’t believe what had happened to her. The girls from the ensemble found her and took her to the bus stop. They laughed and discussed something the whole way. And she was silent.

— Hey, what’s wrong? You’ve been silent the whole way.

— I’m...

— What are you talking about? Was that your first kiss?

— Yes. But I didn’t imagine it like that. I thought it would be like...

— To the movies? Poor girl. But now you know. Congratulations.

— It’s not funny. You knew from the beginning and didn’t tell me. Isn’t this the first time you’ve done this?

— Yes, every time we manage to be there at this time, we definitely come to the lake. It’s fun.

— I don’t think so.

— You are strange.

She couldn’t forget that smile for a long time. How he approached her. And she, instead of running away, stood there, firmly convinced that it was a game. She trusted them.

Chapter 2

The girls with whom she danced, studied, and went for walks in the evenings only talked about how they loved, how they liked someone, how they went on dates and after the concert someone was waiting with flowers. Every year, new couples and even young families appeared among the former and current members of the ensemble. The teacher not only choreographed dances, but also helped create families. He was secretly proud of this.

But despite her position as a soloist in the ensemble, she did not date anyone. Sometimes she noticed someone's intent to gaze on her. But she didn't pay attention to it. Even ignored it.

She believed that she wanted to become a choreographer. She did not think about the meetings after the concert. She thought only about the dance and the music, about the stage and the costumes. How the audience applauded. And the wave of approval picks her up and fills with such energy that she can run all night.

She clearly felt this connection with the audience and could understand from the first seconds how the audience was feeling. The most grateful and kind spectators were children and pensioners. They are the most spontaneous and honest. They sincerely supported the artists and did not skimp on the ovations.

She didn't understand it yet, but being on stage meant for her to live in full. Nowhere else did she feel such satisfaction as dancing

on stage. And she didn't know anyone who could understand her in this.

One day she was returning from a rehearsal very late. The only thing on her mind was the new composition. And the melody was so beautiful. She wanted to dance without stopping. Full of inspiration, she continued to repeat the movements with careful steps. There was no one on the street. It was already late and cold enough for a walk. Lately she often returned late and this evening was nothing special.

This time, the bus took a suspiciously long time to arrive. "Will it really not arrive again? I won't walk. It's too far and I'm very tired. I'll wait a little longer. It will arrive. It can't not arrive. I'm standing here. Waiting. Come on, bus, come. I really want to go home. I'm tired."

At some point, she heard men's voices on the opposite side of the street. Two of them were heading her way. One of them, the taller one, was noticeably drunk. He was staggering. His friend held him and tried to persuade him to walk straight.

She immediately realized that they would approach her with a question and start pestering her. Thoughts quickly flew through her head. The only thought that remained: "Fight back immediately. Impress him with your courage. Show your composure. Like an adult. Say something he doesn't expect. Something rude. He'll be surprised and won't pester you. It will work. For sure. Look, he can barely stand on his feet. Scare him like he is bear, which is scared of loud noises."

The staggering man headed towards her. His friend was clearly smaller than him and had difficulty handling him.

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