

Kila

It was the beginning of the twentieth century. Since I was little, I had pictured my life as a future queen. I used to go to the park, pick up trunks and fallen dead sticks, and design my own dresses. As our old emperor once ordered, everyone needed to have a different outfit each time of the day, therefore I made up my owns, from what Mother Nature gave me. Money was an issue and that wasn't a doubt. My mom had raised me with the objective of basing my social behavior and relationships for a future interest, in order to succeed. "What about my education?" I thought, "My dignity?" Nothing mattered, just the resemblance of appearances, and competition among those, that just like me, didn't have anything to succeed. My country was a mess. While I walked on Champs Elysee or the St. Germain de Pres streets, I heard the melancholic voices crying for their absences of their sons or husbands, and as they cried, others were being shocked by rifles and machine guns, bleeding till death, sacrificing their families for the ambition of gaining power.

I lived in a small room at the first floor of a pension, Mom and I had settled down after my father passed away three years ago. My brother Enzo, was studying Law in a near town name Eghton. His conditions there weren't as my family desired, but at least he was working to be a future entrepreneur, or for those who like discrimination a "burgoise". My life was pretty upside down. I had no education, my house had been half burned due to a rifle attack few months ago, and the absence of my father had made

a deep hole in my heart that no one had been able to knit. I used to have thin sunny blond hair. People from the neighborhood used to call me Elozel, as saying Eloise and Rapunzel, and loved coiling my ends making perfect little curls. Sad thing was my hair was gone after my house accident, and it didn't feel like me anymore. My curves were lost, my eyes constantly had dark circles beneath them, and my tiny straight pig little nose was swollen, by the amount of dust from the streets where I lived.

But everything change, and started in the resolution of my dreams, in my unconsciousness. I remember the sounds of drums symbolizing freedom and liberty, and the joy of my nation happily celebrating the end of war, but then way beyond my dreams I heard a slight cry of anguish and desperation. It was a cry for help, it was such a high and itchy cry that I woke up in the count of three. That was when, I first saw Kila. I opened my window and saw her lying against huge bags of trash, smelling and scrabbling for something to get distracted. I quietly got out of the room, tiptoed down the stairs to avoid the neighbors from hearing and picked her up. The old and bad maintained wood made that typical horror movie sound, as I walked down, making the atmosphere a bit creepy, besides it was two in the morning. I got out of the pension and started to rub my hands side by side to feel a cozy warmth that contrasted with the icy cold parisian climate. My auditory skills helped me search for I was looking for. I stepped on banana peels thrown from the pension, bottles of wine from Mr. Rastignac, who was an alcoholic, and the wastes of cats and dogs that no one had

the modesty of cleaning it up. Then I found her. She cried as a newborn seeking desperately to understand where she was.

She was about thirty centimeters tall, grey main (which by the way was white but she was dirty), had brownish and caramel spots all over her face, making me think she was a Dalmatian. Her eyes where huge and highlighted from her face, which then made me think she was a pug, and she had picky straight tail that moved side by side hurting everyone and throwing all kinds of things around.

Her name was Kila, or I named her Kila. It was like finding my soul mate. Correction, not like. It was basically finding another me. Except for some few brownish spots on her ears, a moist nose and a repugnant breathe that killed me. She didn't talk, but I understood every word she meant. I could see her smiles, her cries, or every tiny expression in her face. Her barks had different tones and I surely recognized all of them. Kila would shrink her tiny dark brownish nose when she knew something was wrong. Her ears would raise still when a stranger was around, and she would close round Chihuahua style eyes, and sigh when someone was being rude.

She liked when I played the piano, especially that twenty minute Mozart piece, where at second thirty she was already snoring, making my music seem completely foolish. Though I could only play the piano once every two weeks, when the owner of the pension wasn't seeing or sneaking around, she enjoyed it each time more and more.

The funny part of this whole story was that Kila wasn't even mine. She came four times a week, at 4 pm and left again at eight in the morning. What was Kila doing alone during that time? I had no idea, and it was something I had questioned a lot. Mom and I bought a special bell for dogs. Kila was used to it now. Every day at four pm, she licked the bell moving it side by side, and everyone at the pension knew Kila had arrived. Usually she came full of new scars, dirt all around her whiskers, and her footprints full of dust from the streets, marked my house's wood floor, letting us know where she walked and the many caches she had, that not even the owner knew.

In such time of my life, getting to know Kila was my salvation. She would lay down on my feet when I was cold, lick my face when I wanted laugh, and barked when something was really happening. Every day she left, I knew by heart she would come again. Kila was there for me in the hardest times of my life. My brother was living to the war.

News caught my mom, as shocking as the death of my father, it was like saying goodbye again to another dear member of our family. He came by to the pension one week ago and announced his will of saving the country, and his nationalistic view among the whole issue. Mom, with her caring and compassionate way of being, hugged my brother as if she would not see him again. I spread some few tears over my blushed cheeks, and hugged him as well, but deep in my heart I knew he would come back, I had something that my mom had lost years ago, and that was faith.

Kila, which was now one of us, just looked at my brother like a hero, and started running around his legs, while her soft Maine stroked her feet. She then ran to the main door, disturbing other people's rooms and laid still. When my brother got there, she wouldn't move, just stayed there. Enzo, kicked her softly on her belly and asked her to move pleasantly, but she wouldn't react. She continue in the same direction until Mom had to pick her up. Enzo left with his uniform now on. He looked so handsome I thought. I just wished him the best.

Mom and I got inside the pension once again. We stayed all morning, seeing the rain falling, and thinking of Enzo. She cried while sitting down on her rocking chair, as she weaved some new things, she willed to sell. The cold weather limiting the rays of sun to illuminate our view, made us feel depressed and unworthy, the smell of moistened wood gave me constant nauseous. I had forgotten what cheers were. Silence became my enemy and not even Kila was there to fight against it.

The absence of Kila after Enzo's departure, weaken my heart even more. I missed her smell, her licks, her cries and her will of making me happy. Where was she? I had no idea, but I felt her supportive presence near me, making me feel that Enzo was safe, but after I while I noticed that my feelings where creations of pure imagination and positive attitude. Enzo was gone. He would be no longer with us. Eight months had pass, and Enzo hadn't arrived. We went to the central station and looked at that list. That bolded dark list that everyone since the war started was afraid of. That

list, that list at the end of the hall, that as people walked by, the tremble, praying to our lord that the name will not be there. That list, from the ones that had passed the way. The list, of what the other morons called as "The hero's list". There it was. Enzo Bickens. Written at the second column, third name, and bold letters with fresh ink from the typewriter. Mom and I read it once, twice, three times, and the fourth one, we knew for a fact it was real.

My mom screams of desperation and madness, made her be the central of attention at the station. Everyone started to help her, but then, Mom's cries weren't the only ones. Families from the 57 deceased were there, expressing their anger, making the room seem like those scenes from burials that made me sick.

Besides me I felt Kila's presence. I had recognized her before seeing her image, once she started licking my right toe as she tends to do. I look down, and it was her. She was biting a letter, that though it was full of mud and dust, had Enzo's signature at the right corner. And she held on her neck Enzo's gold chain of Virgin Mary. Truth was, Kila had been all the time with Enzo, and she brought everything we lost from him again to our place. I knew Enzo was smiling up in the sky as I read the letter, all of us felt safe now. Mom looked up to the ceiling and swept a tear.

The End