

Beethoven in Bielefeld!

(magic realism short story)

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That splendid spring day started not so splendid for me. Together with my wife, we went outdoors somewhere in the morning and after inspiring jogging journey and a set of breathing and stretching exercises on a magic park lawn with two Avatar-looking old trees embracing each other, I found a horizontal bar and unexpectedly bumped into it with my head being plunged into

the reflections about the beauty of the surrounding nature...

I did not want to disappoint my wife, so I said that nothing serious happened and it was just a minor contact, but not a heavy hit. Actually, I felt dizzy almost the whole day...

Besides this unpleasant moment, that day, in the evening, we planned to go to the symphony concert and to listen to the symphonies of Beethoven and the fugues of Bach.

In principle, I like classical music, especially the sublime and noble music of the European giants of the 18th and 19th centuries. It relates to Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Franz Schubert, Frederic Schopen and Johan Sebastian Bach, Ludwig van Beethoven and Giuseppe Verdi... However, to go to the concert hall with a heavy headache... It was a real challenge for me. Though, what wouldn't you do for your beloved wife who learnt the masterpieces of all these composers all her childhood at some music school...

As if on autopilot, we came to the Bielefeld Concert Hall, took our places, and plunged gradually into the highly harmonious and nature-inspired music of Ludwig van Beethoven. Slowly but steadily in my head appeared the images of a spring field with fine flowers and singing

birds, playful puffs of pure breeze and fast rain flashes, soft splashes of a rippling river and something else, barely blinking, but high and harmonious.

I opened my eyes and noticed that, on the one hand, my headache vanished into thin air. On the other hand, not far from us, some slightly flaring figure in the clothes of the 18th or 19th century was standing at a column, thoughtfully crossing the arms and keeping one leg behind the other. It was a thoughtful middle-aged man with a haircut resembling a curly lion mane.

“Some actor from a nearby theater,” the first idea flashed in my head. “However, why is he so...schining?” This thought started circling in my brain until I managed to approach this unusual man to satisfy my curiosity 10 minutes later during the break.

“Excuse me, my name is Alex, and you look so uncommon, who are you?”

The man turned his head and gave me a once-over, “Do you really see me?”

“Why not? You look like a performer playing some aristocratic man from the local theater...”

“So what?” The man looked around the hall casually.

“You shine as...”

“As a Saint?”

I silently nodded my head.

“But I am not a saint. In your opinion, whom do I look like?”

After running through pictures of many famous people of the past, I suddenly pronounced, “You are Ludwig van Beethoven...”

My conversational partner smiled with the tips of his lips, “Some people still remember my appearance. It sounds excellent. In this city, I was noticed by just only two people. One old composer, after noticing me, arranged an appointment with a doctor, and one incredibly talented girl, after seeing me, chased me with her violin through the whole of Bielefeld. You are the third one. Will you annoy me the whole day too?”

“No, I just came to show my respect and to honor your musical achievements. Your music is deep and highly harmonious. Besides, it

has a healing effect. While listening to it, I feel a close connection with Nature and all its five elements: Sky, Earth, Wind, Water, and Universe...”

“You forgot about God...”

“God goes without saying...”

“Keep on listening to it, especially my favourite composers: George Frideric Handel, with his dramatic melodies created with simple means; Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, who mixed lively elegance and emotional coloring; and The Well-Tempered Clavier by Johann Sebastian Bach...I don't even know how much time I need to describe this masterpiece of the true genius...”

“I see that you are going to leave this concert hall... Could you say something for your present-day fans?”

“Aren't you a journalist who can twist everything and place everything upside down?” The man who introduced himself as Ludwig van Beethoven smirked a bit.

“I am just an amateur who sometimes writes when cats fly.”

“In my time we said, ‘When dogs with their tails backed’.” On reflection, he added, “Classical music is the entrance into the higher world of enlightenment which fathoms and feels the people but which people cannot feel and fathom. The classic music notes are the keys to health and happiness, wisdom and revelation... So good by, Alex, my fleeting friend with horrid hash pronunciation from...” The man looked at me with curiosity.

“Ukraine...”

In a while, the man in 18th century aristocratic clothes joined the audience and disappeared.