

SUNDOWNING DIARY

PART 2

By Farhad Mammadov

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Chapter 5

Back to school

“De ja vu?”

“Not even close. Lets say its restarting the level from the beginning ”.

Again I was standing in front of the school entrance, but this time among crowd of annoying students. Second me or new part of mine with the name of Herman Avots, convinced me that, without kicking the hell out of previous terminator boy that was part of his bad memory, who used to give him bad time bullying him every day when he was kid - we both stumble in permanent limbo.

Before making another attempt on withholding that young savage, I was shocked to see him totally competent of killing this bastard and doing whatever he likes as a master of my nightmare.

“Ok! You’re asking me why you have to solve my past issues. Wait a moment, I’ll show you ”

Herman just flicked his finger. Out of woods emerged big orange cat on the loose, agitated Leopard stalking left-and right silently preparing for sudden attack. In a split second it sprinted and jumped with open claws on to bullying boy from the back, as he was approaching me to kick my ass for the second time today. As tip of sharp claws interacted with fragile kid skin, his white shirt went totally red, blood splattering all around like a hell fountain from sliced artery.

Gruesome scene made the crowd of young students go mad, most rushed on to frontdoors of the school, dozens of them injured as result of stampede, several fainted right away, others tried climb the trees or flee to the backyard as their only salvage. I stood their shocked unable to move my limbs an inch witnessing unreal school tragedy which could have made the headlines of breaking news if was real. Second time i just heard the sound of finger flicked and everything went back to normal, as if nothing just happened.

Twin sisters with long shiny hair curling around imaginary pole holding each other, fat pumpkin-head boy leaking Rooster shaped red lollipop, group of boys

and girls chasing each other playing in an attempt to touch the runner from the shoulder and tag them.

“Tag, you are it!” – sweet looking 8-9 year girl wearing round glasses said gently touching my hand, yet hesitating whether to run away or not.

She was confused to see me not responding and continued to chase nearby schoolmate to tag him as her next prey.

“So you see what I’m talking. If it was up to me to eradicate this bad memory, would have done it already without bothering your majesty. But its your dream, your call. You’ve to overcome him as myself, underage Herman who had been too weak during those years”.

I sat on the red plastic bench beside young pretty woman in her 30s, Korean style haircut and black sunglasses, holding small size backpack, constantly looking at her kid playing and never diverting her fixed stare from him. She wore casual work clothing, had a strict look, never smiling. I pressed my head between my arms, so all this nightmare stop. But it won’t go.

“Tural, you have to get your shit together, I mean it. We have to get you out of this limbo, otherwise it can damage your brain due to prolonged comma.”

“Out of millions of people, rich kids, poor kids, this damned ideocratic and the most unique and rare disease finds me. How is it fare?”

“You think you got the most unique and rare mental condition ha,? Have you ever heard of Steven La Pen, French architect?”

“Nop” – I said uninterested.

He came sat near me, pressing imaginary caring mother leftwards however surprisingly not making her uncomfortable.

“Being high –demand master of his work, he earned millions of euros in cash, could order and buy everything in one click of a button, only problem he had was his one and only grandchild same age as you. After his parents tragically died in a fire accident, Le Pen became his legal guardian. First couple of years, everything was just fine, pampered teenager spending his time in luxrourous restaurants, dance clubs and nightclubs of Europe, regularly loosing huge amount of money in a Monaco casino, without any limits and testing the patience of his grandfather, yet heir to his construction and design empire Artchitectures Futuristes.

The company was worth an estimated 4 billion euros, but had shrunk drastically after grandfather gave away control over his most bank accounts and safe deposit boxes. Even though he loved him very much and endured his mischievous behavior and lifestyle. But one day, after he caught a cold and got sick, staying couple of days indoors, at his grandfathers mansion, something had change drastically. He began to complain of presence of a stranger at home, some imposter he claimed who purportedly shared his physical appearance and

always hid in a bathroom. The stranger was his identical copy, he had the same height, same hair, same body shape and wore the same clothes as he did.

Eventually it became apparent that, mysterious double or imposter if you will, was only his mirror reflection. Medical examinations and tests revealed progressing dementia, he was diagnosed the unique type of Capgras syndrome - the belief that someone, often a spouse or family member, has been replaced by an exact double, in his case he was the one who'd been substituted" – he claimed.

"So what happened next?"

"He became pals with his own reflection, though prescribed strong medications, anti-depressants by physician in-charge, talking all day long with his imaginary double who knew too much about him, in bathroom, living room, any place where mirror had been available. "

I don't know whether he made it on purpose like previous Leopard rampage trick, but I was surprised to see pretty parent with fixed stare on his playing kid, now looking at him, with a face like, eager to hear all story, without missing any detail, so excited she was.

"Grandfather at first made huge effort to ignore his heir's spontaneous conversations with himself that seemed to have been conducted in a non-violent and friendly manner. But then?" – he made an intentional pause.

"Then?" – I asked demanding the continuation.

"Situation got out of control, after so called stranger became aggressive and they had a quarrel, he barely went to pee or take a dump on principle not to encounter his loathsome double, uninvited guest. Day-by-day things got worse, with broken mirrors and windows, he even damaged huge Tv mounted on the wall of living room, to avoid close encounter with him."

"So..."

"So within a week delusion had disappeared, he cured the hell out of himself, and his double left the house once and for all."

"Let me guess experimental medicine made from stem cells?"

"Wrong, ancient and traditional remedy, a business class ticket to the hell if you will - suicide."

CHAPTER 6

Unforeseen circumstances

She reached canal footpath looking for the keys his half-drunk husband had lost whilst doing "Number one". Where he might have lost them- she wondered,

looking all around among the bushes, on the ground, everywhere for a half an hour except, the running water which was out of reach. Her husband – Herman stooped and aggressively continued the search without a success, 15-20 meters away from her, checking the lawn in the dark with his dirty fingers and swearing in Latvian, each time his hands touched something palpable and badly smelling.

“Shit! I Cant do it anymore.” – he stood up and shouted at hour wife tired of searching, like it was Flora, to blame for lost keys. It had been in his nature to always to shift the responsibility to someone else.

An hour ago Herman and Flora were on their way to home, after birthday party in suburban district of Jurmala, driving as fast as a rocket, alongside the canal, which was old and rarely used by residents of capital city, but most frequently used by pik-nikers and late time lovers. 2-3 km to the north of highway juncture, he had spotted a traffic police car and therefore decided to park the car behind the high rising tree, for not drawing attention and eventually get busted for intoxicated driving.

“Ok..There always must be solution. I have an idea. I have 2 spare keys, one of which is in my office, on my desk, behind family picture frame, another one in the house. I’ve expensive equipment inside trunk, so one of us goes, one of us stays. Your call”

“I’d rather stay. You go take a cab nearby and rush to your office before I get killed from exposure. Hurry. I’ll stay inside the car. Its getting cold out here.”

“Ok... 30 minutes tops. Sorry for inconvenience darling.”

He had his hood on, pulled the laces of dark black inspector boots until the knot is tight, gave himself good slap on right and left cheek, as to somehow curb the pressure of alcohol and hit the road running - to the surprise of his own wife – who had known him for almost a decade and never seen him so resilient.

“Don’t turn the lights on cos I don’t wanna see you in the dark...” - he sang his favorite song by Cromea as he was running alongside dark and vacant road with no lights inside, to cheer himself.

Running to fast took his breath away, but he was satisfied with distance he closed so far, after he turned back to check the progress. He wished he had ultimate running sneakers instead of black classic boots he wore for the party. His ears caught hardly audible dim noise within surrounding woods, sounds of young blood joy rather than a scream or outcry for help, as he stopped to give his overheated lungs a break. Some kind of late time orgy or something his thought, *“freaken young generation,, no taste in music... no good way for passing time. Just chatting-cheating-fu...ing- with all its supplements”*

His eyes blistered as he saw a car with headlights on coming towards him .

God, let it be a tax, let it be a taxi, let it be a taxi.

Monday is not so unlucky day after all. Pale yellow color made him so optimistic that day.

“45 Soborsky street, please hurry. I lost my car keys so wife waits inside the car, near the canal.”

He was standing at the window quietly but angrily staring at the laserlight billboard advertising useless toothpaste, with its tricky subliminal messages hidden behind toothbrush curves similar to female sexual organ, then shifting his gaze on to a Afghan migrant merchant selling various fallalery or junk jewelry in the alley, yet unable to forgive himself for a mistake made a year ago, that eventually lead unforeseen circumstances and breaking of love bonds between Flora and himself. He longed to be in bed, to close his eyes, leep off all bad memories related to night his wife was gang-raped, after he had left her alone near the irrigation canal.

“Is it your final decision, ha. You cannot take that horrible day, out of your mind, can you? But I love you Herman, you know it. I wish we had a child, so to somehow relieve this pain of ours. It is neither your nor mine fault, for God’s sake stop blaming yourself. All those freaks are now behind the bars.”

He tried many times, but felt so humiliated for himself and her wife who’d been stigmatized by local community like she was some kind of prostitute rather than gang rape victim. They moved to another street, another block, but all was in vain. He felt like his personality diminished to microscopic ranges for failing as man to protect his woman.

“Nop, Flora. I did my best, you did your best. Lets not deceive ourselves, its stalemate situation, that I can’t let go on. You were right saying “if we had a child”. But unfortunately we haven’t, ‘cos I’m f...en infertile shooting blanks, I’m no man, I’m fu..en loser and moron, - he hit his forehead on to the window pane. God, what was I thinking that night leaving you alone. God damn that day, God damn Mondays.”

Flora stood up from the edge of bed, approached him to somehow comfort his husband, but after her lips landed on his right cheek, out of a sudden sustain massive slap from Herman that hit her nose, made her bleed. They both were standing numb, unable to move and not seeing but hearing every drop of blood fall onto floor, giving out irritating noise.

When he returned his face to the window, and apologized silently, Flora was already on her way to the door, wiping her nose with blood soaked dollar, as she could not find any napkin or cloth.

He saw her downstairs hastily running toward taxi on the other side of street, his heart pumping harder with every step she take. After cab vanished from view, something caught his eye that he could not ignore. It was another billboard, no

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