

RED ILLUSIONS

by
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What is that? The sunset? It could be a war. A person in love? Maybe... The woman? I was standing in front of this painting, in this empty room. There were colors. No lines, no faces. There was something familiar. Something interacting with me. Maybe I just needed to communicate. I went out of the museum lighting a cigarette. "I want to smoke less," I thought without throwing it away and kept walking. Walking and thinking. Nothing special. Combining the simplest things with the more philosophical one. "Oh! What a lovely red coat. I should buy one sometime. But the summer is coming, so maybe next year. I have to study more. I need more from my life. I want more from others." Where are we? At now, at present. Where were we? I remember me as a child. My feelings were as the painting's colors. Red illusions. Fear, anxiety, lust, questions. Questions. Questions. I used to know this woman who had the most beautiful tattoos on the top sides of both of her hands. On the right hand she had a tattoo of a nude girl, she claimed it is what God looked like? But on the left she had a mirrored image of the same female and this one she explained that looked like the devil. I entered the café. I sat down and ordered a coffee. A hot scented coffee. I needed sometime with my self. It was getting late. Who cares? Me as a child; I remember me. Did I change? Or do I think the same? I wish someone could tell me. I hear this voice in my head again telling me "Stop looking for the answer in others. *You* are the answer." Memories...floating...my parents, my friends. I picture them. I close my eyes and the evening sun is on them. Their figures seem like red illusions. I was never brave or popular enough. I didn't dare being one of them. But I always felt that change was needed, in me, in the world outside. "Changing yourself is enough for the world" mamma uses to say. Well mother is it like that? Is this the most revolutionary or the most conservative idea ever? Could it be both? I remember once I saw written on a wall in the university with red color "revolution is one step ahead of evolution." I believed that. "There's no evolution in everything," my dad used to say. I knew why. He was playing at a festival with his band in a place called "Red Rose" when Michael died. Their singer. His best friend. Their best night. He always crossed his legs and said, "It was our chance to make the difference, to take the big step that night. A manager came to us and left his number in order to call him, after we finished the concert. The next morning, after running a mile away from the hospital, I tore the card." He would always light a cigarette. "But dad you don't forget and move on?" "You don't forget my child. You never forget. You just learn to live with its memory. I want to smoke less" he said and started to croon softly "boys don't cry." I was just sitting there wondering? The sun was gone. The waiter lighted a candle. "How gloomy and powerful are the red illusions of the flame?" I have never had to deal with fire. Though I felt I was burning up inside many times. Because somebody took my turn, while waiting for a cab on the cold. Because a friendly cop shot to the sky and, guess what, murdered a child and I was there, I felt it, I was a drop in his blood. And I can't forget like you pretend to. Because we murder our lives. I was out with my friends, five days in Athens. I love Athens. Especially in the summer. There are not many people and it's unusually clean, though hot. We were strolling in Plaka, in Monasthraki. People walking carefree. And the sunset put colors on them. Red illusions, aren't they? I remember that boy. What was his name? Alex, yes...when he kissed me, on that summer night, it felt like I had put Pixies' songs on playing again

and again. And it was August. I remember the red illusions of the moonlight on the sea. I remember the red lipstick on his shirt. Will I always remember? Well, yes, five days in Athens with my friends. The café was closing. The waiter asked me to pay. I went out, I smelled the air. No sun, no clocks. It was getting late. I walked down the street to my hotel. I was in Athens again, but it wasn't summer yet. Walking in Plaka looking for the red illusions. No reason for bitterness, till tomorrow arrives; I heard a man singing in a language I couldn't understand, though it echoed familiar to my ears. And finally I could tell. I could scream. What I needed was my voice back. I'm not afraid any more. Or maybe I'm afraid more than before. But now I can scream it. I heard the song again. It was the sound of poisons, the secrets no one knows...Colorful, emotionless, painful thoughts. Rarely ending. Slower than death, faster than dawn. A man in the corner lighted a cigarette. "I want to smoke less," I thought and smiled. I was in front of the red door of my hotel.