

Rainy days

Von june-flower

You make me smile even if it rains

You make me smile even if it rains

Patiently, Marcus lit his second cigarette. It was funny, he thought. Standing in the rain and waiting for her to come was not half as bad as standing in the rain and waiting for her not to come. At least he could be sure that she would come. She had promised it, and she never had broken a promise before. Actually, Ellie had never promised him anything before.

The rain was pouring down from a grey sky, but it didn't bother Marcus. After all, this was London. And not to mention London and rain in one sentence was totally impossible at this time of the year. London was always connected to rain. Endless, falling, wet and heavy rain.

A tall figure emerged from nowhere, clad in a long, black rain coat. He knew immediately who it was.

„Marcus?“

„Ellie.“

It wasn't necessary to see her face. To be true, that would have been quite difficult, because the coat hid her features. Its dark colour seemed to drain out what was left of the colours of the day. The rain became, if possible, even worse, and Marcus dumped his cigarette in a garbage can somewhere on the street. „Let's go.“ Without a word, she took the lead, as she always had, and he followed her - as he always had followed her.

The restaurant was only a few metres from where he had been waiting, and yet they were completely wet at the time they entered it. It was small and comfortable, not too expensive but still elegant. One of the really rare number of restaurants that were like this, Ellie observed and stepped into the parlour. For that reason, he had probably chosen it. He knew she preferred silent, little restaurants instead of elegant four-star hotels or Pizza Hut. The time she had loved both were long gone. She waited while Marcus talked to the receptionist, who called for a waiter who would bring them to their table and finally he turned around and helped her out of her coat. That was the first time he had the chance to look at her in the dim, colourful light of the entrance hall.

Shiny, black hair fell from her hat as she took it off, a little bit curly and at shoulder-length. Her face was beautiful and she only had had to use a little bit make-up to achieve this effect. The rain hadn't done any damage neither to her face, nor to her hair nor to the dress she was wearing. It was a violet dress she never had worn before,

and she had combined it with black slippers. Marcus silently stared at her. She really was beautiful.

„Ellie?“ „Yes?“ Uncomfortable, she looked at the pictures at the wall. „What?“ Her voice was defensive – and a little bit aggressive. Marcus drew a long breath and shook his head. Then he handed over their coats to the receptionist and followed her to the table. He never stopped staring at her, which made her, for some unknown reasons, scared. Avoiding his eyes, she sat down and took in the place with one glance.

Their table was on the far left side of the restaurant and the window displayed the rainy features of an early evening London. A candle was lit in the middle of the table, the soft, heavy scent of the rose in the vase on her side made her feel dizzy. Quietly, she looked back and found Marcus still looking at her, and she shivered.

The waiter brought them their menus. After both had ordered some wine – neither Ellie nor Marcus paid attention what kind of wine it exactly was – they continued staring at each other.

Finally, Marcus gave up.

„Ellie... You are Ellie, aren't you?“ „What a stupid question. Of course I am.“ She was as moody as ever. He decided to ignore it. „You've got your hair cut. And you didn't do it yourself this time.“ „Yes.“ „And you went shopping.“ „Correct.“ „And you aren't wearing black nail polish and lipstick.“ „No.“ He continued to look at her and tried to find a sign of the old Ellie, the younger Ellie, in the face of this beautiful, grown-up woman. The girl with self-cut, untidy hair, clad mostly in black and always with the same old sweatshirt. She wouldn't even allow the headmistress to take it away from her... He found it was rather impossible. These two persons seemed to be two totally different people. So he only asked one question. „Why?“

Ellie moved her napkin nervously from the right to the left.

„Well... One day I woke up and realized I was 30.“

„Of course you did... It's your birthday. That's why we are here.“

For a moment, the old Ellie shone through her eyes as she snapped at him. „Thanks for reminding me. Anyway, I thought I could grow up slowly. Only teenagers wear black clothes today, and nail polish isn't in any longer, especially black one. So I started with my hair. And after finishing that, I continued with my clothes... Any complaints?“ „Of course not. I'm just surprised, that's all.“

For a few moments, there was an awkward silence between them as both tried to find their way back into the relationship they had shared in their teenage years. It was unbelievable for Marcus that Ellie wore a normal haircut instead of her black sweatshirt with the picture of Curt Cobain on it... „Stopped listening to Nirvana, huh?“ Again, Ellie reacted angrily. „Of course not! Nirvana has nothing to do with getting older.“ „I didn't expect that much, either.“ „Who goes on listening to Mozart since he was 12 years old?“ „Mozart never grows old. You could listen to him all your life long.“ „Well, I can't. I'm not as weird as you are, Marcus.“ „At least I grew up at the right time, not 10 years too late.“ „See who's talking. You grew up 10 years too early.“ „Right.“

Ellie watched him closely. There he was, after five years: in London again. He had been working in a little town on the other side of the British Island, a town whose name she didn't remember and didn't even dare to try to spell. And all out of the blue, she had received a letter saying that he was coming back. They had written quite a bit, and he had invited her out for her birthday. After all, she wouldn't be 30 years again in her

whole life. He still was tall and lean, with handsome brown hair and grey eyes and a pair of glasses hovering on his nose. The little smile still was in his eyes, and seriousness still seemed to float around him. It suited him better now that he was in an age in which it was appropriate to be serious.

„How's your Mum?“, he suddenly asked. Ellie made a funny gesture. „As always. Fine, a little bit crazy, a little bit weird. But all in all, she behaves well.“ Her way of talking about her mother hadn't changed, either. „Nice to hear that.“ „And your Mum? Fiona?“ „Finally happy.“ „Great! I always knew there was somebody waiting for her behind the next door. Did you hear anything from Will lately?“ „Of course. Organizing a trip around the world for a senior soccer club.“ „Excuse me?“ „Organizing a trip around the world for a ...“ „I've understood perfectly well. How comes he suddenly engages in social life?“ „I don't know. Maybe because Rachel says so.“ „They're still together? Wow.“

A smile came up from nowhere, and both looked at each other. They were sharing a past only they could understand perfectly well. Nobody else could even attempt to try and understand what they shared. „Have you found a solution to all problems of mankind, Professor Marcus?“ „I'm sorry. It's going to take more than 5 years to discover such a miracle.“ „Well, you'd better hurry up. Life's not waiting for you.“ „I can see that, You are moving on as well, aren't you?“ „Yeah, somehow. 30 years, just imagine. I'm old.“ „I can't.“ „Wait three years and see, Idiot.“ „I know how old I am. No need telling me.“ „Never mind.“

They laughed and felt how the strange atmosphere was slowly swept away. They still couldn't stop looking at each other, either. Marcus and Ellie smiled and remembered their old school days: the outsider and the gothic girl. Not that Ellie hadn't been an outsider, it was just the fact that other pupils were too afraid to call her like that that they refrained from putting her on their to-bully-list. Ellie wasn't afraid of hitting someone who was that stupid to annoy her. Marcus was an outsider, the boy without modern shoes, clothes and school bag. The boy who was going mental because he started singing for no reason. The most amusing fact (seen from today's point of view) had been that he started singing in the middle of class. But after he made friends with Ellie, no one had dared to give him a hard time. She helped him... And kind of protected him. An unguidable missile, Marcus called her often. Ellie, the most crazy girl in Britain. „So you have come back from your trip to childhood, haven't you?“ „And you've come back from your trip to adulthood?“ He looked at her seriously. „I'll never come back. Even if you're grown up now, someone has to take the responsibility when you start bouncing off the walls again.“ „Care for yourself, you Idiot.“ „You're welcome, Ellie. Always polite. That's why I love you so much.“

The rain still continued to pour down from the cloudy sky. It packed London in a blanket of soft silence. Only the noise of the rain drops splashing against the windows could be heard.