

Ein bisschen hier von, etwas davon und das da auch bitte

Sammelsorium von Kurzgeschichten

Von Tak-lung

Kapitel 11: Beauty is in the eye of the beholder

The neighbour: "Annie? Oh she was sexy, a real babe I tell ya. That husband of hers was one lucky guy, having such a woman by his side. "

A colleague: "Oh yeah, Annie. She was mostly nice. Like... you know, like she smiled a lot and was always on time and never sick. She worked at the newspaper for... what was it? I guess seven years or so, after she moved here with her husband. She was, like, gorgeous, and Frank, her husband, as well, they were such a pretty couple... like, so sweet, like from TV or something."

The mother: "She always was such a cute child. The other parents always envied me. Don't know why though, I mean, look at me, right? And I was never slim or anything, never pretty. And my husband, well as much as I like him but he could use some exercise. But not Annie. Her dark brown hair, her bright blue eyes ... she was my little angel."

A friend: "Yeah, yeah, she did look good alright? Well up till then at least. But she also was getting old, you know, small wrinkles around the eyes and stuff like that. She said she didn't mind, but she did. Oh yeah she did, at least after that incident with her husband. "

Diary entry Annie Potter Date: 14. March

I look into the mirror in the bathroom. Sad blue eyes look at me, they are all red from the tears I shed this night, without even realizing it. I see the wrinkles that surround the eyes, the forehead... My dark brown hair seems to have lost all it's brightness, all its volume no matter what I try. No make-up seems to help. The mirror always shows the truth, and the truth is: I'm getting old.

I finally noticed it. I've never been so concerned with looks, never had to. I always looked fairly pretty. Girls would be jealous of my figure, of my soft and clear skin, of my intense blue eyes. Boys would stare at me, compliment me. Everyone envied me, but I never did something for it. It was just how things were. But now things have changed. I'm old.

Last Tuesday was the day I got to know the truth. Last Tuesday I saw him, with her. Frank, with this young student girl of his. Not even twenty. She had white skin, smooth red hair, a trained body, neither too big nor too small, neither too light nor too heavy. No wrinkles. No white hair. Not any trace of decay.

Now it's me envying, because she has got what I lost.

I loved Frank. I did everything for him, moved here, found work here, gave up my family back home, but it seems without my beauty I'm worthless. Without my beauty I'm nothing. Oh, what wouldn't I give to be beautiful, to be young again, like that girl. He wouldn't have left me. No he would have stayed with me and we'd have lived happily ever after.

The neighbour: "Well, you shouldn't talk about this kind of stuff, you know, but between you and me: this Frank cheated on her for quite some time. I always found it suspicious that guy left so late and stuff like that. Personally I would never have done that if I had a woman like that with me. And I tried telling her, but she believed in him... well, that was one of her good sides I guess... still I wished she would have believed me, it might not have ended, as it did."

Psychiatrist: "Well, you see: Seeing her husband with a younger woman was a shock for her, a trauma. She couldn't cope with this. After being advised to see me she came two or three times directly after what had happened. All I could see was her anger, her frustration with her life and herself, which in fact is nothing unusual in this kind of situation, nothing you wouldn't expect from someone in her condition. She stopped seeing me rather quickly, but I did not think of it as being strange, and I certainly did not anticipate what happened after that."

A friend: "Whether she changed after that? Oh, she did take more care of her looks, wearing make up and stuff. I really didn't get why I mean she did look great still, but she really tried showing off. I was half annoyed; half pitied her that she tried to be in the middle of the attention of everyone. But that was so like her. I guess she is just used to that, since High school she was always getting all the attention, I mean: she was cheerleader, always class representative, prom-night-queen... hello? Guess she couldn't cope with her husband giving someone else all his attention."

Diary entry Annie Potter Date: 26. March

Today I was in this antiquity shop near St. Michaels church. I liked it the minute I saw it, I literally couldn't take my eyes of it. It is round with a very artistic wooden frame in the colour of my hair. Maybe because of this frame I thought I looked better in it, like my skin seemed whiter and my eyes had their old glow back.

I bought it immediately and hung it into my bedroom. My husband Frank never wanted to have something like that in the bedroom. He always said he felt as if he was being watched when there was a mirror, well but now it doesn't matter anymore, at least not to me.

Shop owner: "Oh yeah dat lady widda mirror. I saw dat in da news, sad story really. So let me think... I remember de day she bought it, cloudy, always looked as if't was goin to rain and den dis woman came in, quiet attractive, I mean for her age ya know. Well she was very interested in it, but it also was- well she didn't just look at it, she really stared at it. I didn't think too much about it, just dat she was quite narcissistic, ya know?"

A friend: "Oh yes I saw the mirror. On the first day when she bought it I came over for a visit, you know, since her husband had left her alone I frequently came over to see whether she was all right. Well, I thought the mirror was creepy. Also it totally did not fit into her house I mean all she had was so modern and stylish, flat screen TV and

modern art paintings and that kind of thing, and then there was this old fashioned mirror. I don't know what she thought buying this thing. I found it rather creepy."

Diary entry Annie Potter Date: 29. March

Mirror, mirror on the wall, who is the prettiest of them all? "Not you, not yet.", the reflection replied "Look at you. You were once so beautiful, the most beautiful of them all. Once, when you were young, and fresh. Now you use make up, you do diets; you hide yourself behind a mask. That is no real beauty, that is not you, you don't need all this."

I keep looking at my reflection, and I see how true those words are. All I do is in vain, all those creams, those shampoos, the make-up. All that is no good. I stay old. I stay ugly. But this mirror will help. It will show me the truth, its reflection will guide me, and so I will regain all, which I've lost.

Local newspaper Date: 1.4

Slaughtering in the woods

Police clueless

This morning the 19 year old Angelina Martez was found dead in the forest. A ranger spotted her on his patrol through the woods "It was horrible", he reports as he explains how he had found the corpse lying naked in the floor. There were no traces of sexual abuse, a police officer informs us.

The breast was cleanly cut open, and her heart taken. Until now the motives remain uncertain, yet the murder was done in such a peculiar way, that the police suspects the culprit to be either a psychopath or some kind of religious sect. Whether Angelina had bad luck or if it was a planned murder is yet uncertain. Clear is that whoever was capable of something like that is mentally challenged and thus all inhabitants of this area are clearly warned and asked to be extra cautious.

Police officer: "I don't really know how to describe it. The least I can say is that I will never forget the sight of this body of her. I mean... you must imagine this you beautiful girl -I mean like Model-beautiful- lying there, split naked in the ground in the forest, but only very little blood around her... the breast... It was cleanly cut open, it was like there was this red, bloody hole right in the middle of the white skin. Everything else was still perfect, I mean her beautiful long and black hair, her white skin... except... Well we did not tell the newspaper and it was really a nasty sight... her face. Even more than the hole this still gives me nightmare: it was all scratched, totally disfigured. It was a nightmare."

Diary entry Annie Potter Date: 3.4

"Do you feel younger?" Yes indeed. Yes I feel younger. I look younger. I look into the mirror and see my true beauty. Only what I see in the mirror is the truth, not what others say or think, nothing but my very reflection. The blood of a young woman, the heart of a young woman, the soul of a young woman is inside of me and makes me what I am.

A colleague: "The day after this murder she didn't come to work. We were speculating naturally. Some, not me of course I thought this was, like totally rude and stuff. Anyway I happen to overhear some saying she might have killed herself. Well, like, most thought she was sick like I did, or maybe drunk, after what has happened to her that was at least possible, though I didn't think so...well... or... -what else was there?- Oh, I don't remember but most of it was not, like, serious and we all hoped she'd return quickly again."

Her mother: I had come over, since I was sure my little angel must feel bad all alone in that house, like any loving mother would have done. When she opened the door I was, mildly said shocked. She was... I don't know... I hardly recognised her. What had happened to my beautiful, dear child? Oh I was so angry at the guy who had taken her from us and done that to her, I even went over to his house and ... What? Oh yes, pardon me, you wanted to know about the house? Well let me think... she was redecorating. At least all the mirrors were taken from the walls, even in the bathroom. Also she wanted me to stay in a hotel, rather than in her house, telling me she didn't want any old people near her. Can you imagine that? Saying something like that to you mother who came all the way to help you? I just thought she was simply overworked and psychologically broken to have said so, so I remained calm, yet it hurt. And it was so unlike her.

A friend: "I met her like a week after that murder case and was shocked what she looked like. I guess she couldn't bear losing her husband and stopped eating properly or something. Her skin was nearly greyish, her eyes kind of dark, and the lips ... I don't know it was weird, like she was really sick or something. I tried talking her into going to a doctor, just to check, but she just smiled this creepy smile at me saying: "What do you mean? I didn't feel better in years." That really freaked me out a little because... I just wasn't like her, I don't know..."

A neighbour: "I did visit her quite often in that time, to help her overcome the thing with her husband. She also began to look skinnier, I think she did some diet or was just so... well you know just couldn't eat. So I tried my best to be there for her and help her and in the beginning I thought she... well but I gave up after some time. She always kept asking me how beautiful she was, and how anyone would leave her, and how young she was and stuff like that. I mean, I understand she thought about it and stuff but... jeez it was the only thing she was capable talking about. She didn't even talk about Frank or anything just how she looked. In the end I couldn't stand it any more, I mean, I also had own problems at that time with the car, and at the job and stuff.

Diary entry Annie Potter Date: 10.4

"They are jealous at you my darling" Yes indeed, jealous, of my beauty, my youth "Yes, but it is not perfect yet." And I looked up as saw a grey hair. Me: a grey hair, a single grey hair, a symbol of decay, of old age. "No, no!" I pleaded, "It can't be, I have it all, I have the heart, the blood." "Yes, but not the best. You know whose to get" and yes, I knew. I knew all along.

Frank: "I know what you think. Like her mother that came to me the other day, or her old friend, they all think it's my fault. But it's not! You see, I just wanted a small adventure, nothing big. Ok, she discovered it but, be honest most people had some kind of affair in their life right? It's not that unusual, right? I can't be blamed. She kicked me out on the street! She stopped our relation ship, not me. "

Local Newspaper Date: 13.4.

Murderer strikes again
New Jack the Ripper?

The young student Lilly Meyer (18) was found dead this morning in the woods. According to the police everything indicates a serial killer in the town, since this is the second case in only ten days. After the murder of Angelina Martez, also this student was found naked and without hair not blood, the police is still clueless.

Together with her current boy friend Frank Potter (35) she lived near the woods. According to Mr. Potter she was called that evening by a friend, she went out and told him that she would be back in no time. "But when she wasn't back at midnight", he tells us "I went looking for her." Yet he couldn't find anything. After waiting until morning he again went looking for her, and finally found her in the woods. He instantly called an ambulance and the police but there was nothing he could have done to help her.

The police are convinced that it is the work of the same killer and they are working on the case. Yet they remind everyone, especially young student girls, to stay away from the forest and be especially cautious.

A friend: "Well the second case was the little bitch Frank had gone out with... I didn't particularly think 'oh it must have been Annie', of course not, she is my friend after all. It was more like 'well she got what she deserved'. After all it was her fault what happened to Annie, right?"

A colleague: "Annie was looking sicker and sicker, but she'd insist she felt fine. We were all, like, so worried on the one hand, on the other hand most people started avoiding her. It was kinda sad, like, she used to be so nice and charming but now she gave of this... creepy feeling, I mean except for looking just awful and sick. Most started avoiding her that time, and she'd freak out, like, always. It was somehow scary, like she was someone totally different.

Psychiatrist: "She became obsessed with looks, and started hallucinating. It is a common phenomenon to see yourself in the mirror not objective, as you might think. It's a common mental issue many people with eating disorders have to see themselves differently. Additionally she must have developed a kind of schizophrenia, hearing voices which told her to do what she has done, that's probably the most plausible explanation."

Frank: "I did see her again after Lilly died. I wanted to return, I really did but, man you don't believe what I saw. It was disgusting really. When I saw her I did not think that way my wife anymore and talking to her made it even worse. I really would have returned to her, I would have dealt with what I had done and all that, I know it would have been work and so on but I was ready. I changed my mind immediately and I swear, had you seen her would've done the same. Anyone with their mind in the right place would've done so. "

Diary entry Annie Potter Date: 10.4

"It's not enough. You need more, more." The reflection told me. I already look so beautiful. My dark brown hairs shining, my red voluptuous lips, the bright blue eyes, my round and firm breasts. Looking at my naked reflection there was hardly anything wrong. Everything I had done made me more and more beautiful. Yet, why is it he

refused me?

"It's alright, darling, it's alright. He will see what he missed, he will see..."

Passerby: Yo, I jus did wha' I always did, listen music and jog down da road, not thinking no bad thing when I saw him, oh you know that guy. Then –wham – something attacked 'im from the forest and dragged him in these. I was like 'Yo, gotta help' thought a dog attacked him and called the police before following them into the woods.

Police officer: "Well I did not think of the murder case when I got the call of a wild dog having attacked someone near the woods, who would have right? It's nothing that happens a lot... I don't think I have ever heard of a wild dog attacking someone in this area, but there is a first time for everything right?

Where was I? Oh right, so my partner, and me we drove there, the one who had called had marked where they had entered the forest so we were able to follow them.
Passerby: "So, I totally ran through the forest - yeah? - as fast as I could to help that poor guy. It was so damn dark I swear it sometimes were jus' inches I woulda run straight –wham- into a tree. So, I ran and I ran and I thought 'Wow, this dog is pretty fast' and then I thought: 'Wait... why would a dog drag a man all this way instead of killing him instantly?' and that's when I thought: "Yo man, maybe 'tis no dog.'"

Note to Frank: "Beloved Frank. Come out side this evening to the forest. I will show you all you will miss if you don't stay with me. I need you, and I know you want me. So come."

Record, police radio 1.4

Officer 1: "We're on the Winston-street, where did he say was it? Over."

Central: "Near corner Victoria-street. Over."

Officer 1: "Roger. Over and out."

Officer 1: "Ok, we got it. ... Here is quite some blood, must've been a nasty dog. Sent an ambulance over. Over."

Officer 1: "I heard something, we head east. (hearing foot steps, the strong breathing of someone)

Oh my god! What is that?

Officer 2 (background, same time): Oh my god! That's no dog! What is it? (screaming of a man)

Central: "What's wrong?"

Officer 1: "I think ... it's a human! A woman. But she just threw this guy against the next tree! Holy shit..." (hearing hectic breathing, a kind of 'shhhh' sound)

Central: "Stay calm. I'll send reinforcement."

Officer 2 (background): "Sir are you alright?"

Officer 1: "Put your hands up... slowly. Madame, are you listening? I said to put your hands!"

Woman voice: "Leave us alone!"

Officer 1 (cries): Ahhhh shit, ahhhhh (hear cloth being ripped, angry woman cries, words not understandable)

Officer 2 (background): "SCOTT!" (two shots, a long cry)

Officer 1: "Central, culprit is wounded at the leg. I repeat, she was shot in the leg and

is now taken captive. Victim is unconscious...

Officer 2 (background): "He's alive."

Officer 1: "... but alive. Witness also alive but hurt. Jeez...

Central: "Wh-what happened?"

Officer 1: "I don't know. I mean ... she just jumped at me and she was so strong... Milly shot her, luckily for me. Honestly...."

A friend: "I visited Annie in the psychiatry she was put in. She did not talk, nor did she look at me. I was told she hardly eats and what she eats has to be fed to her. She does not look into any mirrors, when she sees one she starts screaming and panicking. It is, as if she had lost every part of her personality... I'm sorry for her. She does not deserve that..."

What happened to the mirror? Oh, I don't know... I guess Frank sold it or something.

The End