

## DANUBE PARK

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*A luxury apartment terrace with a view over the River Danube. An elegantly attired couple in their late thirties, she in a young-style fashionable dress and high-heeled shoes, sitting in stylish armchairs. Two glasses of wine on a couch table.*

SHE And then you started out in my direction. The ballroom was so huge, I had the impression you were coming from the moon.

HE You can see it from here.

*She gets up.*

SHE You're right, its actually such a small, insignificant building...

HE But what times we had there...

SHE If only just there, mainly outside...And afterwards...The view is really beautiful... Dinyub Park. *She speaks it with a bad accent.*

HE *He corrects her...* Danube Park.

SHE I'm sorry dear, but I didn't have the time to learn languages. I always had to look after myself. I had other things to worry about. How to earn my living. How to survive.

I do hope they don't chop down the wood on the other bank... There aren't many trees left there anyway. So the Danube Park replaced the bolshie Park of Culture except that its no park, just a pile of buildings.

HE That's just an advertising gimmick. You hear the word park and it grabs you. It was we who turned parks into parking lots. And after a while we'll have forgotten what a park ought to look like.

*Pause*

SHE I still remember that evening so vividly. I felt as if I were on fire, I'm sure I was red all over. And my hands were sweaty and I was afraid that you would find me obnoxious when you took me in your arms. Horrid, eh?

HE My hands were sweating too. And I felt dizzy. I wished that there were chains guiding me towards you like they have on difficult mountain paths. To tell the truth I hoped I would never reach you, that my way towards you would last for ever...

*It sounds cheap and he knows it.  
He gets up and walks towards her.*

HE Then I took you in my arms. If I remember we were learning the waltz.

*They perform a few dancing steps.*

HE I haven't danced the waltz since then. I wanted to take the lead but in the end it was you who led me. As you do now. I was really scared, then. *He laughs.*

Well not today any more. Things have changed. Maybe I should regret that.

SHE And I wore a green nylon dress which stuck to my legs. Can you imagine, a green dress to my blue eyes! But that was my mother all over. She bought it and I had to wear it and that was that.

HE You look really great now.

SHE Well I really work hard at it...Its really tough. Well you know...I really must. *Laughs.*

*She sits down. He remains standing.*

SHE Then, then things were different...But even then...When you said something like this was embarrassing or such, I knew you had been drinking. *Laughs.* Even now.

HE A couple of beers maybe...When I held you in my arms I could only think of one thing. That I've got to screw you. I was the only one in the whole class who hadn't. That is if the others hadn't been making things up and they could easily have done that too. Of course I knew the technique from films, even porn, my brother had got hold of some and we watched it together.

SHE Really? And so why did you disappear so suddenly?

HE I felt sick. And had cramps for the rest of the evening. But next time, as you can remember, I made up for it.

SHE I remember. You couldn't kiss, you slobbered all over me...

*She looks at him.*

SHE After that things got better.

HE Well, at least that. I wanted to tell you, that I...

SHE Don't be sentimental.

HE Sorry about that. I just like to remember that, I really do. When the lesson was over we all ran out, we all smoked and walked home along the river. Those were lovely evenings, perhaps the loveliest I ever recall. The two of us kept dawdling, the street lights were dim and sometimes were made then even dimmer, remember?

*He moves his arm as if he were throwing something.*

*He then picks up a glass of wine, sniffs it, gestures with his hand, puts it back on the table, takes a hip flask out of his back pocket and takes a sip.*

SHE Now I see it all so clearly. That was when it all started. That was when you began and never gave up. I remember to this day the time we went to the theatre and you suddenly disappeared just before the curtain went up and when you returned I smelled you had been drinking. You were just topping up. The fact is that you're a bit – well a bit of an alcoholic, dear.

HE What am I supposed to say? The truth is that I gave it up many times, but even because of you I ...

SHE Stop that. I know that then everybody drank, that was quite normal, one somehow had to survive "the totalitarian regime", but now things have changed, everybody drives, everyone is busy... The fashion now, dear, is still mineral water and non-alcoholic beer. Nobody drinks now anymore, only complete losers. How many people do you think are ready to take your place? What do you think, I take all that's offered, I can't afford to refuse. The mortgage is relentless. Its high time you did something for yourself.

Zolo won't be around to look after you all the time. I have heard he is seriously ill. Sooner or later he will have to stop drinking. And you know what that means in this racket... You're not bloated yet, but you soon will be.

HE Can I ask you something?

SHE Whether I once...

HE No, no...Are you happy?

SHE What's that for a question?

HE A simple question for a simple answer. Either you're happy or not. There's no other alternative.

SHE But one can't just...

HE Yes, or no?

SHE No.

HE No offence meant, but one can see that.

SHE A few minutes ago you said I looked swell. D'you want to say you were lying?

HE No, not lying, but one thing is you have nice clothes and hair and good makeup and the other is that you have the eyes of a dead fish.

SHE Why do you say such nasty things? Do you want to pay me back for the alcoholic? But I'm only telling the truth.

HE I'm also being truthful.

*Silence.*

HE Sorry, sorry goldfish, this is all so ridiculous, as if there were only one truth and we owned it. Its just words. Why are you unhappy? What's the matter with you?

*Silence.*

HE You can tell me. We haven't spoken together for a long time and who

knows when we'll do so again.

SHE Do you really want to know? Just think it over.

HE Why?

SHE Because it concerns you as well. Because it also concerns that small ballroom which we once thought was so huge, it concerns your moans with which you were first sick but then became something else. It concerns your mouth, your sweaty hands, your entire youthful body. I didn't want the result of all that to have anything to do with me, and when I was rid of it, I honestly erased it, the Danube washed it away as if it had never existed. But it still does. Do you understand? Its still with me like a nightmare.

Children are a luxury which I never allowed myself.

*Silence*

I've grown old, honey. I thought I would never tell you. Please, don't say a word.

*Silence*

SHE When I heard they were demolishing that ballroom and building more of those luxury apartments, it really came as a bit of a relief.

*Silence*

HE *Speaks very slowly* Apparently there were some protests against it all, some petitions, after all it was somewhere where generations of people had gone for decades to dancing lessons, concerts, it's a perfect location, we surely can't allow ourselves to be robbed of everything... This is all a terrible mistake, don't you see, that embankment belonged to us, it belonged to us all together with the smell of the river, with the piles of leaves in the autumn and those greasy cheap stalls we all used to complain about. Who'll be able to go for a stroll there now?

SHE Even if I had the money I wouldn't spend it on an apartment like this one we're in.

But there's no way I would, anyway.

HE Even if I lived here I would be ashamed inviting friends to visit me. The same as I would be ashamed of driving around in a BMW or Mercedes. I would feel like a mafioso. Can you imagine somebody we know living

here?

SHE What do I know...Who cares. They pay well...Besides, you're out of step, honey, the mafiosi now drive Jeeps.

*Silence.*

SHE Do you think we could still sign that petition? Its probably too late.

HE I'll check it in my mobile...

SHE Do you have an Iphone as well?

HE Its fantastic, you can record music and in addition...You know that I could never find my way...

*The telephone rings.*

HE Ah, so now we're starting...Finally.

*The start of a perfect Muzak tune.*

*Somebody claps and cries Danube Park seventh take!*

*Strobe lights are turned on. SHE and HE take their glasses of wine, get up, smile, they're terrific, beautiful, just great just like the new multi-functional Danube Park complex.*

*We hear other voices while these two only pretend to speak.*

HE Use the river  
Nowadays

SHE Use its beauty and  
Beautiful life

HE With people you love from your heart

SHE With family and friends

SHE+HE The world is beautiful from your terrace view

HE Your home is far from everyday sorrows

SHE Nothing could harm you

HE To be happy nowadays

SHE To be happy in the future

SHE+HE Dynamic happy and successful people  
live in the Danube Park