

Marta and the Blue Tiger

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Chapter 1

Introductions

Oh, yeh... that's Marta's way: "oh oh" – and she's beetled off.

"That's what I can't get my head around" – she was telling a bit out of breath to the Blue Tiger, who was walking grandly next to her. "Has the world turned upside down, or is it me standing on my head?"

The Blue Tiger squinted at her, without really turning his muzzle, grunted, stared blithely at the horizon, and continued wagging his behind in a soft cat trot.

"No, please understand," she persisted, jumping over yet another fallen tree, "I don't know what to choose: should I live without understanding the world or should I accept that the world doesn't understand me?! This is vital! Everything depends on it! Either I will have to learn the art of vanity and blame the whole world or learn to exist in depression and progress in self-flagellation. Can't you get it?"

"Why are you running, my dear?" asked the Blue Tiger without turning his muzzle and just jiggling his tail in displeasure.

"I'm running away."

"Yet no one is chasing you."

“True... Obviously...” Marta stopped abruptly.

The Blue Tiger also stopped. He sat down leaning against the tree. With his long, striped tail, he flapped on the fold of his beige trench coat, and with one deft movement of his paw, caught the joint that flew out of his pocket. He lit it and took a long lazy toke and offered the joint to Marta. Marta pulled on her shades, fixed her dress, and sat across.

“I really don’t understand,” continued the Blue Tiger, blowing the smoke out. “You are running away from a choice, aren’t you?”

“No, no! Of course, not. I’m running from the groom. I’m straight from the wedding.”

“Judging by the black veil, from your own wedding, as far as I understand.”

“Well, yes.”

“Then, you are selfish, my dear.”

“I beg your pardon? You are wrong here. In this case, I’m, quite on the contrary, making sacrifices for the good of society.”

“Well,” Blue Tiger relit the pot, “this is a completely different matter. Let’s go on, then.” He handed the joint to Marta.

“Thank you,” Marta responded politely and pressed her lips to the joint.

“I’ve heard, and please correct me if I’m wrong,” said the Tiger crossing his legs, “That people need ongoing communication with each other, and moreover, this connection is exclusively energetic. Is it true?”

“Right. There are several interpretations, though; some folks still talk about chemistry, instincts, or smell, but in general, you are absolutely right.”

“I’ve also heard that people are constantly craving for new energy, that you are addicted to the very process of searching and anticipation.”

“This is also true. People are narcomaniacs of their own illusions and vices. But what are you getting at?”

“I mean that I would call you, Marta, a human if it were not for your wing instead of your left arm. Therefore, most of your heart, where the quills of feathers do not reach, is human. So, you are more than infected with the humanity virus??”

Marta took off her glasses and stared at the Blue Tiger.

“That’s gibberish, my dear friend,” she answered defiantly. “Are you trying to convince me that I’m infected with feelings? Human feelings???”

“I wanted to, but I didn’t expect such an arrogant protest on your part.” The Tiger took offense at Marta’s tone, sprawled and stared at the sky.

“Don’t you know,” Marta continued authoritatively, crawling slowly on her knees, closer to the Blue Tiger, “in order to be able to feel, and I mean really feel, you have to give the other person your entire heart? Wholly.”

The Tiger turned his muzzle and brushed his nose in Marta’s face. He looked fearfully into her frightened eyes and hugged her with his huge fluffy paws.

“Marta, my darling, but you are wounded.”

“I know, - said Marta, - closing her eyes and trying to dive deeper into the wild cat’s embrace.”

“Maybe you should cry? I’ve heard this is a great illusion of panacea.”



Chapter 4

Honey Moon in the City of Dust.

Marta was sitting at the typewriter. With her wing (which, as we remember, she had instead of her left arm) she was warming up her bent legs while with her right arm she was hitting the keys incessantly. Writing.

The Blue Tiger gave Marta an invisibility cloak as a present. A special one, for the walks around the City of Dust, where he took her for the honeymoon.

Marta fell in love with the gift. She coveted it so badly that she couldn't even imagine it until the very moment she put it on for the first time. Now, she began wearing it every day. This has become her new ritual.

Every morning, at 5 o'clock, she slipped out of the house and headed wandering around the city. She managed to return when The Blue Tiger was just waking up.

And never once did she catch him sleeping, although she really wanted to.

Having returned, she settled herself down right on top of the blanket, across from The Blue Tiger, and began to tell him about everything she had found in the city.

-Good morning.

The Blue Tiger pulled himself up and sat down, leaning on his elbows

-Good morning.

Marta was waiting, wiggling impatiently. She needed The Blue Tiger to focus enough to listen to her.

The Blue Tiger reached for a glass of orange juice unhurriedly, and the for his pince-nez; threw his paws behind his head, and uttered:

-What do we have today? – he asked

-First, appreciation, -she rapped out long-awaited text, -I've found oxycodone berries you tossed into my cloak pocket. Thanks. It was very handy.

-Your thanks are accepted, - The Blue Tiger got a bit embarrassed.

- And now about the new, - she continued, a little disconcerted, on next inhale, - Today I've studied such a phenomenon as the impact of the sun on a human. The impact of a phenomenon has been transmuted into the phenomenon of impact, and it seems I've discovered a new kind of addiction. Addiction to the sun.

- Is it berries talking out? -The Blue Tiger adjusted the pince-nez on his nose.

- Rather, the consequences of berries. And some people who are capable of seeing me through the invisible cloak.

- Go on.

- So, Is it from the heat or from the light, I've not yet got it, but the human has a dependency on the sun's rays. Having been exposed to even a slight dose of the sun, they experience the pleasure differently. They begin to covet it. Want to smile, want a shorter dress. Want an ice cream. And ice cream, banana flavor, in particular, is a sure sign of a celebration.

- I'm not gonna argue, - The Blue Tiger agreed, licking his lips.

- At night, - Marta continued, - We are in withdrawal, green around the gills. That's why we create during the night. Make things up. Sometimes even get sick without sun. It is addiction. It is painful. Everyone knows that creating is possible only when it hurts.

- Well, your arguments are reasonable.

Marta stared motionlessly at The Blue Tiger for another second with burning, childlike eyes. The next instant, completely changing her facial expression, she climbed headlong under the blanket and barely legible demanded:

- Now, give me more of your oxycodone berries and I'll fall asleep. The city is very wearying. It's difficult, you know, to carry so much dust on.