

9 Who is knocking at the door to me

Don't come, don't bother

And don't knock, I open, and do not write.

William Burrows [42]

Someone knocked on the door. In the room at full volume included a stereo system – sounded "Sleeping beauty" by Tchaikovsky, but the knocking was still audible. Tian-Tian looked at me quizzically: Who is this?

- Hardly Madonna, do you think? I said. We have not so many friends. In this and our weakness, and charm.

I went to the door and looked through the peephole. There stood a stranger. I slightly opened the door and asked:

- Who do you want?

- If you'd be so kind and give me a minute, I would like to show you a new sample of the latest vacuum cleaner models. - He smiled warmly and straightened his tie just under the Adam's Apple. It seemed that he was waiting for my permission to break out persuasive speech.

Well... I had no idea what to do. Probably, you have to be absolutely thick-skinned to rude to keep a man in whom there is nothing unpleasant or threatening. His ability is underlined neatly wearing a cheap suit of European cut testified to the integrity of the character. The feeling of self-esteem involuntarily inspired respect. Besides, I had absolutely nothing to do.

Utterly surprised Tian-Tian watched silently as I let in the stranger. He pulled out a business card and elegantly handed it to Tian-Tian, and then opened a large bag and pulled out a sparkling new cleaner.

- What's he going to do? - whispered Tian-Tian.

- Let them show their wares. I felt bad to deny him, - I whispered in reply.

- If he will arrange a demonstration and you can't buy anything, you will be even more embarrassing.

- He still has already begun, - I said hesitantly.

Since moving into this apartment I first encountered something similar. In the early nineties the city was overflowed by a tsunami of kommivoyazhera, absolutely new phenomenon of the market economy. But then this trade began to decline, and the current case was rather the exception to the rule.

Leaning forward and holding the tube of a vacuum cleaner in hand, the stranger vigorously drove a brush on the same place on the carpet. The vacuum cleaner roared deafeningly. Tian-Tian fled to the next room.

This model has high power. With its help, you can even suck mites from the carpet, loudly commenting on their actions stranger.

I recoiled in horror:

- Mites?!

When you are finished vacuuming, the seller poured out of the dust a small handful of dark dust on the paper. I tried not to look in that direction, fearing to see crawling and sprawling in different directions insects.

- How much? - I asked.

- Fifteen thousand yuan, ' he replied.

The price seemed too high, although I confess I don't understand the real value of things.

Is a very good buy. Wait, when you have children, you will understand how such a device is necessary in the economy. With his help, the house is easy to keep clean.

I frowned at the mention of children.

- Sorry, but we don't need anything.

- We can offer discount, twenty per cent, not confused at all, he continued. - One year warranty. We have a solid, reputable firm.

- No, thank you. Sorry you wasted time on us, - with these words I opened the door.

Without blinking an eye, he quickly removed the vacuum cleaner bag and calmly stepped over the threshold.

- You have my card, ' he said, turning around. - If you change your mind, please contact us at any time.

Listen, Coco, your passion for experimentation will not lead you to good scolded me Tian-Tian.

- What actually happened so terrible? At least he vacuumed the carpet, we, - I sighed and sat down at the table, not realizing that it was meant Tian-Tian under the "passion for experimentation".

Again there was a knock at the door. I sharply opened it and this time saw on the verge of a complete woman - a neighbor from across the hall. She brought a whole stack of unpaid bills for water, electricity, gas and telephone, which was Packed Inbox hanging down in the stairwell. There were also two letters. I remembered that we've been not removed the mail from the box, thanked my neighbor, and she kindly expelling a 'Hmph', left to itself.

In this area of the city all the inhabitants were distinguished by kindness, inherent to indigenous Shanghainese. Almost no one here was not more or less decent income. Local Housewives were frugal and orderly existence. From the kitchen Windows was hanging cords strung on the string of small dried fish and dried turnip. From time to time in the sky rose blue smoke from coal stoves. Dressed in green uniforms and red scarves the children were playing in the war, it is somehow love to play with all the kids. And the old men were assembled in groups in a quiet corner of a small Park and spent time playing "Ghost" (in this card game involved two teams of three people). A light breeze occasionally fiddling with their snow-white beard.

For most of old Shanghai is such a way of life was familiar, painfully reminiscent of times past. For the younger generation this quarter was a God-forsaken, miserable hole, the abode of hopelessness, which inevitably was destined to disappear from the face of the earth. However, having lived here for a while, you started to feel and appreciate the ease and inner power of this place.

One of the letters came from Spain.

Is from your mother, said I, Tian-Tian lying on the bed, and threw the letter to him.

He opened the envelope and glanced through a few lines.

- She's married... And she writes about you. Gripped by curiosity, I came closer.

- Can I read it?

He nodded, and I jumped on the bed. Tian-Tian hugged me from behind by the shoulders, holding the letter with both hands so that I could see.

"Son, how are you? In your last letter you mentioned that you now live together with a girl, however, you have not written anything about how she looks. (Unfortunately, you always write such short letters.) I think you really love her. I know what you mean. You're not easy to get close to people. I am very happy for you. You finally found a pair.

The first day of the next month I'm getting married. For Juan, of course. We have been together, and I'm sure I'll happy with him. Our Chinese restaurant is still thriving. In the near future we are thinking to open a restaurant in Shanghai. We cook authentic Spanish cuisine. I can't wait, when will see you again. Can not understand why you never came to me to Spain - the impression that you don't trust me, like we shared doom. And time flies so fast. Ten years have passed, and now you're all grown up. But whatever it is, you're my son and I love you."

- If all is OK, then you will soon be able to meet the mother. For ten years she never came to Shanghai to visit you, and you went to Spain. Oddly enough, - lowering the letter, I looked at Tian-Tian, who had an unhappy look. - I can not imagine what will happen when mother and son finally reunited.

I don't want to, she returned to Shanghai, said Tian-Tian, leaning back and sinking into a high, soft pillow. He stared up at the ceiling. In the family history, which he I once said the word "mother" has found a bizarre and mysterious meaning. It was clear that the attitude of the mother was still marred by the shadow of his father's death.

- My mother had long hair like fairies. And pleasant voice and she always smelled like perfume, he told Tian-Tian, addressing the ceiling. She had soft, extremely white hands. She was able to knit wonderful sweaters... So it was ten years ago. Then she sent me her photo, but I threw them away.

- How does she look now? - That woman in the far Spain has aroused my curiosity.

- The one in the pictures, I don't really know - he's in the irritation turned back to me. He had nothing against to communicate, sometimes sending her letters or postcards, but never imagined that one day she will stand before him in the flesh. It was no good. If that happens, he will be defenseless. The relationship between mothers and sons are rarely cloudless, but the few people they have developed as have Tian-Tian and his mother. Forever between them rose a wall of suspicion. And no maternal tenderness, nor instinct, nor the ties of kinship could not destroy her. In their hearts a love always struggled with hatred.

The other letter was from Mark and addressed to me. The envelope contained two prompts and a short note. "At that party you made a lasting impression on me. Hope to see you soon".

I waved the invitation, showing their Tian-Tian.

- Go to the art exhibition. This guy, the German mark, kept his promise.

Personally, I'm not going anywhere. You can go alone, Tian-Tian closed his eyes. He was an accident.

- Come on, you've always been a fan of the show! - I said incredulously. It was the absolute truth. Throwing a bag with a camera over his shoulder, he visited almost all the exhibitions indiscriminately - paintings, movies, books, sculpture, furniture, calligraphy, flowers, cars, even the exhibition of industrial equipment, - intently and peacefully walking around in the midst of all this monstrous heap of fantastic items. The exhibition attracted him like a drug. They served him a window to the outside world, through which he could secretly observe the real life. According to my psychoanalyst David, a notorious closed, people like to peep.

I don't want to go anywhere - head, said Tian-Tian and, suddenly, looking fixedly into my eyes, he added: - But the German is always so kind with other people's girlfriends?

- Ah, there you are! - I blurted out in response.

This has rarely happened. When, in the eyes of Tian-Tian was an expression of suspicion, they became slippery and cold as snails. And I was not myself. Perhaps the reason for my violent reaction was due to that extremely sensitive Tian-Tian instinctively felt my most vulnerable point and stirred up aching somewhere deep inside the wound.

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