

The Lady and her Violin

The grand concert hall was buzzing with anticipation as the audience settled once more into their seats after the pianist had walked off stage. Lights illuminated the stage, along with a large chandelier as its cold colors shined above the stage. Behind the heavy velvet curtain, a man sat nervously on a chair in a room with many others, waiting for his cue. Erik had dreamt of this moment for years, but now that it was here, the weight of it pressed down heavily on his shoulders. The thought of playing in front of a thousand pairs of eyes sent shivers down his back. He had practiced tirelessly, gliding his fingers on every note on his piano to perfection, but as the minutes on the clock ticked away, his heart raced faster and faster. His fingers were stiff and his left foot was jittering on the wooden floor.

“Please welcome to the stage, our next performer!” The crowd applauds as a woman with a pale, emotionless face and hair tied in a tight bun rises from her seat and walks past people wishing her luck. Taking a sip of water from a bottle and looking up at the screen in the room, Erik watches as everything becomes quiet and only the sound of the woman’s heels clicking on the floor can be heard as her white dress flows. In her hands is a violin, which she rests under her chin and on her right shoulder the moment she reaches the center of the stage. She stands before the audience with a tall, strong posture, as if she’s readying to face a strong wave from an unrelenting storm. She speaks not a single word as the bow in her left hand is raised and in position above her beautifully polished instrument. The silence around her is deafening as she stands motionless with her eyes closed, a peaceful expression resting on her face. The lights seem to focus upon only her as everything else is washed in darkness. Nothing matters but the violinist.

The silent chamber that was once filled with underlying tensions of expectations was pierced by the echoing voice of the violin. The lady dressed in white rocked her arm back and forth upon the strings, the way a bee would carry itself around the sky looking for flowers. Her body swayed like a calm ocean wave and her eyes remained closed. So many string players have come before her, so many musicians who played pieces with the force of a wildfire and others with the feeling of a calm ocean under the moonlight. So many people had come and gone with their music, and yet this is the piece that echoed the most. This is the piece that made Erik suck in his breath as he watched the performance.

The violin quivers in her grasp as if it were coming to life, and the sound vibrates throughout the grand room. The hauntingly beautiful melody spreads and embraces all within an eerily warm embrace. Erik watches it all, unable to look away. The bow in the woman's hand moved with increasing fervor as the music spiraled, and as it continued, so did the sway of her body. The spotlights move along the stage as she spins gracefully, taking long strides under the chandelier that gleams with warm tones of color—something odd—for it was decorated in blue and purple gems. The neck of the violin raises and lowers in the air as she bends, her hair untangled from its tight hold and moves as if she were running through a constant, strong gust of wind. Her chaotic movements can only be described as what sailors would describe a storm-struck ocean that held no mercy.

“FIRE!” A yell echoes out. Erik, eyes widening as he begins registering the shout, tries to evacuate as everyone scrambles towards the safest exit closest to them. He thinks he's going crazy, and though it may be from the panicked yells around him, he continues to hear a haunting melody. *The lady would have to be crazy to continue*, he thought. A loud crash within the theater, one that reminded him of glass shattering, almost made him stop in his tracks.

As everyone was safely brought outside, they gazed upon the burning building as only the crackling, roaring blaze could be heard; all else was quiet.