



CHAGUIDOULINE

text

393 SIE GEHÖRTE ZU JENEN LEUTEN, DIE DEN INHALT VON STÜCKEN ERZÄHLEN, UNAUFHALTSAM.

*Kurt Tucholsky*

## why I never became a singer

My parents thought a girl should dance. And play the piano. And learn how to draw. They had a very precise notion of what a girl should. And even a more precise one about what a girl shouldn't.

I never liked my dancing classes as a child. I experienced them as humiliating. Funnily enough, I always had to pee during my ballet classes. And my Russian teacher would never let me out. One day, it was in March and I was 6 years old, I peed my pants. I peed my pants and continued dancing, in my pink dancing suit. A little princess.

Later, I was always late for the dancing classes. After school I would hang out at the central station drinking, smoking, sniffing, having sex. All of which prevented me from being on time. But surprisingly, I was good, I was really good and it reminded me of how much I was not a dancer.

In fact I always pictured myself singing, next to my elderly father on that very big stage. This fantasy seemed like something forgiving, like if I would become a singer, I would stop being a sinner. I would be like my father. I would be with my father.

I always wanted to escape Luxembourg. I think escaping abroad is what a pathetic soul like mine is longing for. By the time I was 14 he disgraced me, he didn't want me to ever sing in his presence. He told me I am not singing properly. Still I came to his lessons, and he, he would accuse me of drinking and smoking and hanging around in the cold winter air until late. He said, he could hear it through my voice. My voice became a traitor. So I left Luxembourg, and became a dancer. But soon I came back to what I knew. Dancing always reminded me of my gender, of sex, of being less, being a woman. Dancing is creating objects out of people. At home after hours of training, I would remember how I felt when I was singing. Singing would take me to a place where I would become someone, myself, I guess. I felt I was.

One of my earliest memories, is being told to shut up. My mother pressing her hands on my lips, forcing me to become silent. I remember this now, every time I hear children. Years passed and I never gave up singing. I never gave up searching for my own voice. But every time I would, I heard it over and over again in my head: You are not enough, you are not enough, you are not enough. As time passed, the voice in my head became louder, and suddenly it was not only his voice but the many voices of men I knew: You are not enough. I am going to leave this place, singing.

zweitausendvierzehn

kätzchen

jammern

Traurig sein. Es ist ein Gefühl, was ich gerne umarme, in aller Stille, wenn jeder weg ist und diese berauschte Feierlustigkeit verschwunden ist. Oft umarmt sie mich, inmitten allen Trubels, all diesen Menschen und flüstert mir öde und sinnliche Worte zu. Sie will mich nicht hergeben, sagt sie mir dann, will nicht ewig warten bis ich sie rufe, sondern will ein stetiger und integrierter Teil meiner Wahrnehmung sein. Mehr als nur ein Filter: eine Notwendigkeit, eine Geliebte. Manchmal frage ich mich, was nur schief gelaufen ist, als ich diese Beziehung als kleines Mädchen einging. Ich wollte doch bloß eine Freundin. Später dachte ich, sie wäre imaginär, aber ihre Echtheit lernte ich bald kennen. Ob wohl oder übel brauche ich sie, mehr als sie mich.

Traurigkeit, sagen so manche zu mir, ist ein urrussischer Zustand. Klar, traurig sein anstatt irgendetwas anderes zu sein, zu leben, viel zu viel zu überdenken, sich nicht entscheiden können, trauern, überreagierend nochmals trauern, Tiefe suchen. Ich glaube Trauern erzählt eine viel ältere und schönere und grössere Geschichte, als die einer pathetischen Russischen Seele, die fast schon zufällig in eine klassisch Europäische Bildung gesteckt wurde, inklusive Nürnberger Trichter, Baude-laire und so weiter.

Mir kam meine Mutter oft vor wie jemand, der zu schwach ist, der seinen Platz hinter einem Mann gefunden hat, bequem und leise. Eine Heulsuse, doch es war sie, die mich gelehrt hat zu fühlen, zu lieben, an Liebe zu glauben. Wenn man mit so einer warmen, unendlich liebenden Frau aufwächst, kann man eben nicht anders als glauben und fühlen. Auch wenn ihre eigenen Gefühle mit der Zeit immer indirekter wurden, mehrheitlich von Angst dominiert. Sie sorgte sich eben zu sehr, und als unser Familienleben immer schwieriger wurde, durch Krankheit, Todesangst, Arbeitslosigkeit, Armutserwartung am Horizont, wurde sie krank vor Sorge. Sie lächelte immer weniger. Ihr Blick wurde strenger, unverzeihlich und versank in Erinnerungen. Sie war noch in ihren frühen Zwanzigern, als sie ihre beide Eltern verlor und sich um ihren 15 jährigen Bruder, der gerade seine Freundin geschwängert hatte, sorgen musste. Da fing also die Sorge an. Als sie meinen Vater kennenlernte, wurde sie unter ihren Kollegen als extrem ausdauerfähig und selbstlos geschätzt. Vielleicht war sie ja damals stark. Sie war Managerin in der Musikbranche in Moskau und lernte meinen Vater in der Mensa kennen. Ihr Lächeln überzeugte, und mit meinem Vater hätte sie sorglos sein können, nur konnte sie es leider nicht. Jeder fühlt anders und über Anderes; dennoch, um traurig zu sein über irgendetwas anderes als man selbst, brauch man Empathie. Das ist so gesagt die positive Kehrseite des Kummers.

Mein Vater hat mir das Zuhören beigebracht. Zuhören, direkt, präzise; Gefühl und Analyse. Ich habe seiner Stimme zugehört, seiner kalkulierten und involvierten Stimme, da war ich noch nicht mal geboren. Später habe ich gerne dem feierlichen Applaus der Zuhörer zugehört, in diesen königlichen, Resonanz überfluteten, fast schon heiligen Räumlichkeiten. Er ist ein Bariton, für mich die schönste männliche Stimme. Nicht zu hell, nicht zu dunkel. Sie funkelt goldig in der Mitte. Er war schon mit 24 bekannt im Westen. Seine Karriere ging steil bergauf seit er so alt war wie ich heute. Mit 24 also, war er erst im zweiten Semester im Moskauer Konservatorium eingeschrieben, und gewann einen internationalen Wettbewerb nach dem anderen. Er hatte daraufhin sogar ein spezielles langfristiges Visum von der Sowjet Union bekommen, um an westlichen Festspielen teilnehmen zu können. Mit 25 kam dann eine Festeinstellung bei der Hamburger Staatsoper. Bam. Die meisten Menschen die ich kenne, entscheiden sich mit 25 erst einmal zu studieren, oder zu reisen, oder für ein Zweitstudium. Erfolg, sagt mein Vater passiert durch eine Kombination aus Ausdauer, härterer Arbeit, als man sich vorzustellen vermag, guter Taktik und einem Fünkchen Glück. So zumindest in seinem Fall. Seine Stimme, stark und mächtig, versetzt mich heute noch in einen Zustand des „am Abgrund Tanzens“. Am Abgrund des Lebens, und keine Angst, bloß keine Angst, das Leben kann so schnell vorbei sein. Es gibt keine Beständigkeit, keine Lebensgarantie, keine Lebensversicherung, doch keine Angst, bloß wer am Abgrund tanzt, fühlt das echte Leben. Bloß der, der zerrissen ist von der ungeheuren Stärke des Lebensgefühls, der ist da, wo er sein soll. So ein Gefühl kriege ich wenn ich meinen eigenen Vater, diese perfekten, lauten Klänge hervorbringen sehe und höre. Ein Gefühl von Demut, Nichtigkeit vor einem Talent, das mich mit Stolz und Trauer erfüllt. Es scheint mir in diesen Momenten, er wäre unsterblich. Vielleicht ist er das auch. Talent als Ticket in die Unsterblichkeit, mit Überlegenheitsgarantie. Denn er riskiert alles, jederzeit, und ist deswegen überlegen, unsterblich, solange kein Fehler passiert. Eine falsche Bewegung, eine falsche Einschätzung, und es könnte das Ende sein. Es gibt keine Garantie, aber ohne Risiko, gibt es kein Lebensgefühl. Er erinnert mich immer wieder daran, dass man nur ohne Sicherheit wahrhaftig sein eigenes Leben leben kann. „Am Abgrund tanzen“, in diesen Momenten ist die Traurigkeit aktives Leben, nicht nur passives Empfinden.

I use my autobiography. I'm going to be honest here. I'm a product of cultural circumstances. I am a product of the fall of the East, a culture imploding. I am the result of two ideologies clashing into each other. An macro car crash, if you wish. I am the exponential rise of capitalism, I am youtube, youporn, h&m, and zara. I am war against terrorism, #blacklivesmatter, #queerrights, Putin, and iPhone 8. I am surrounded by screens, nomadic and mindful; eternal spectator of the 21st century.

A young woman, born in Germany, grown up elsewhere, speaking 7 languages, being tormented by my Russian origins and the decision to become a writer, I question origin, gender roles, culture, patriarchy and expectations. At the age of 24, I have lived in 5 countries and never visited Russia. I have been studying non-stop without taking detours or gap years, and yet I have travelled 20 countries in and outside of Europe. My health record is counting anorexia at the age of 20, burn out and panic disorder at the age of 22, heart rhythm disorder, muscular tissue disorder, chronicle pain and migraine, several allergies, chronicle eczema, hormonal and personality disorders and a whole lot of psychosomatic symptoms. I nearly died 5 times and I am insecure about my artistic abilities. Like I said, just a young woman, white, heterosexual, educated.

*Note:*

*Autobiography – A depiction of a specific, relatively short (bound to the time frame of an individual's life at most) time, in an immediate way. The subject is in control of telling its story and decides what to share and how to share it. The subject shapes the evidence of its contemporaneity.*

What you should know about me is that I dislike namedropping. I remain mostly uninformed about the agenda of the artworld. I like watching the news instead. My mother told me not to gossip, not to talk about people that are not present, so why should I bother remembering all of the fancy names? I profoundly believe in the power of honesty and art. Art is free, spiritual, when everything around is narrow. I am working in the first person narrative, because it allows me to work in a direct and frankly manner. I like typing letters as I'm thinking. I like telling stories out of my life and stories that I've heard and seen along. You see, the I is interchangeable. The I can be everyone. The I is me, yet also the other. As long as the I is not named officially, I remain universal.

My journey as a young Kurdish man, has led me from Irak through Turkey, Greece, the harbour of Athens to Berlin, where I live now (when I'm not travelling). I am a refugee. I miss my mother. My father, back in Irak, wanted me to become a calligrapher, just like him. But I loved to paint. I am an artist. Some call me a star. But I am a moon.

*Note:*

*Gaze – Autobiographies emerge from the inside, not the outside gaze; the outside gaze, voyeuristic and distanced, the men with the cameras. The format and the first person narrative urge the audience to place itself on the side of the storyteller.*

I bought my daughter a pack of cigarettes. I just had won four Euros in lottery, and we went to the kiosk because she wanted to buy cigarettes, so I payed with my lottery ticket and seventy cents extra. I told her not to tell her father. The last time I bought her cigarettes was nine years ago. She was fifteen then, and just returned from the boarding school her father decided to put her in. He was always so harsh on her. As if she was a boy. But she's a girl, sensitive and rebellious. I never saw her habits as such a problem. I went to pick her up at night, when she started to go out. I went outside with her, when she wanted to smoke in the evening. I am her mother, and there is no way of talking her out of her ideas anyway.

Today she will leave again, because she's always on the run. She doesn't live with us since she started uni. She's the only child, so I miss her terribly. I decided to learn how to trade stocks. I needed to do something. I couldn't stand sitting in the patisserie with the ladies every Friday, and listen to gossip.

Before I left the Soviet Union, as the perestroika crashed upon us, I was in the process of defending my PhD. What's left of a 5 year long research process, is paper with archaic findings from the era of the first computers, typed down. I was studying aeronautical weapon technology in Moscow, and writing a program to calculate and decide the trajectory of the atomic missile. Naturally, my faculty was closed, before I could defend my dissertation.

*Note:*

*Space – in relation to storytelling refers to temporality and location. A story can describe a specific date and place. The story can / has the intention to share this space with the audience. Autobiographic storytelling can thus bring the audience closer to a space, because of its honest and shameless format. The audience might thus experience political realities far removed from its own understanding of reality.*

*Note:*

*Evidence – Apart from creating real evidence of socio-political conditions, autobiography shares the story of a human: painful or funny, monotonous or dramatic. It is not fiction; it happened, it was a moment in time, it was reality. That moment was contemporaneity for the subject at the very time the work was created. The artistic work thus becomes a container, a capsule for a / one moment of contemporaneity, and can be put in relation to its future and future public.*

# evidences

# Winter mezzo

## Why Paris is charming

They were silent in the train that took us back from Paris. When we arrived in this blossoming city that Spring, I had the size of a Parisian model, an arrogance and distance about myself. They were distant towards me as well, ignorant of what I'm doing. They felt weak.

We walked through the streets that were so known to us. I even had breakfast at my favourite cafe. So pink and beautiful, filled with the smell of sugar and perfume.

The day went on, we hang out, enjoying the French ways and wine. I would talk to the waiters, ordering my mum's lunch. They were frustrated that I wouldn't eat.

After hours of enjoyment, a sudden fight occurred. In front of a bookshop, selling art books and journals. She said something which was wrong. He said that it didn't matter. They said that I am disrespectful. He said that I am unthankful. I heard only lies.

I know exactly which feeling is unbearable to me : disappointment.

Disappointing them after struggling to earn their respect all my life. Struggling to be like him. Struggling to show my love to her. Struggling to not lose myself in between, disrespecting my body and my needs.

Unbearable. I ran away and went to the first place around I knew. Before I would die, I wanted to get myself make-uped in the

fanciest gallery in town. I guess that shows my narcissistic ways. I wiped off my tears and let my face be coloured under the glittering light of the enormous chandelier.

Determined not to return to the hotel, I went on with my journey through the cafes of the quartier latin. I sat down in my favourite spot, in which the great minds and hearts of the past golden century have been smoking, gazing, drinking, hallucinating and creating.

The overpriced kir royal that I've ordered was nearly finished. So was the side of crisps. I was looking through a catalogue of bridal jewellery.

"Are you serious ?", I heard, "Do you really want to get married?"

I looked at the table to my left, a middle aged Parisian was addressing me. "I don't recommend you to do so. It will get you buried alive."

Wait, I thought, I recognised him from some cheesy movie about pot smokers. He was a famous Parisian actor. Next to him a rather fat guy was sipping on his Merlot. They invited me for a drink, or two. I found out that they were both teaching at the Sorbonne arts department. The big old man was a music teacher and we spent the evening talking about literature, music, languages. So very Paris of the past, which I often dreamed about. I don't precisely remember, how this charming round ended.

The next thing I remember is feeling lonely. Feeling as lonely as when I was younger, and my parents just wouldn't call for weeks. Another desperate cry for love.

I got up from a comfortable chair on a terrace, leaving a precise amount of coins on the bill. I walked towards the big boulevard. The cars in front of me were driving fast. From high-school, I remembered that a French poet has killed himself on these crossroads.

I am not a poet and I can't remember his name. I walked slowly towards the middle of the street.

And I heard noise. It was very loud and shiny and dark. Until I fell. Somebody tried to salvage me.

Somebody was successful in dragging me, in my little black dress, to the middle of the street.

And don't remember any more.

I went to their hotel room and fell asleep on the couch.

zweitausendsechzehn



you just kinda wasted my precious time.

I remember the game we played, when I still was a child. The game where you have to sink the boats of your adversary. Do you remember? Now I wonder, why did I want to grow up so fast, as I was feeling so good in your arms. I am sad. Mum and Dad I love you. Nastia. I am sad. Why did I want to grow up? We're playing that game that we were playing all together with dad when I was a child. Mum and Dad. I love you. To sink the boats. We were playing that game. Do you remember?

Your father said you are really growing up.  
Mum and Dad.

