

Her Name Was TURABDIN

It was Monday. The day after a beautiful, drizzling, first autumn rain. Saying hello to the day on a morning that was washed with the bright clear radiance of the sun makes one feel alive. It was an extremely clear, pure, and fresh morning. The sun and Mother Nature were spreading their smiles upon the surroundings in an enviable love and oneness.

The beauty, purity, and freshness of this vision aroused in me feelings of inexplicable excitement and joy. Despite it all, I could not yet free myself from feelings and wasted expectations about life. The longings and expectations worried me. I was telling my self, I wish that my life was also so clear, beautiful, and fresh.

All of a sudden I was transported away in my thoughts rising like a flock of birds. Another day was hanging on the poplar trees of the past. At the setting of the sun a great stillness set upon the surroundings. This quiet was not ordinary. Thinking of a reason for this I threw myself into the bosom of the night, feeling exhausted. I quickly fell into a deep sleep. It must have been because of the tiring day I spent in routine work. I was so deep in sleep that it left no trace of exhaustion in me the next day.

In the mysterious and peculiar dark of that quiet night, I was seized with a terrible feeling. I was set face to face in my dream with a well known and lovely figure who was a familiar friend.

I asked her: Why are you angry all of a sudden? What is this suffering I see in you that is making you so wild and excessive? How long has it been since I have last seen you? What is it that weakens you through this trouble? You seem to me like a stranger. You almost make me ill being in such a state.

She replied to me:

It is you who should know the reason for this. The answer lies in you and in those who have lost themselves to other whims. It is you who brought me to this state. In spite of my many warnings I was never able to get this trouble across to you. You did not want to understand me. Do not look at my grey hair. I may be old but my spirit is young. I am tired of trying to get my trouble across to you. I am finished. It is a terrible feeling for one to be abandoned and left on her own. It has destroyed my self-respect. I cannot do much about it though. I am not happy about my situation. I do not know if I can restore the state of my health again like in days past. If the situation does not improve at all, then I would prefer to chose death. But what is to happen will happen and is happening now...

I told her:

Of course, the situation has been a sad one but we have come to know that it is terrible to live without you. How about if we do something to help you regain your previous state of health.? Don't we stand a chance? What should we do to save you?

With a questioning and judgemental manner she told me:

A very difficult question. I am fighting against a ruthless, chronic disease. I do not know how I can get my health back or yours. To tell the truth I do not trust you. You have no ideals that connect you to life. Living without ideals astranges a human being from humanity. You continue with a desperate struggle in the bosom of a terrible callousness. What you say is different from what you practice. Such worthlessness does not suit you. You lost the values that made you yourself. Do not be resentful. Do not be offended. If you ponder for a bit you will observe this truth better than myself...

I told her:

Well, what will happen? How long will we live like this, staying away from each other and be apart everyday? While this indifference treats you badly, it wastes a lot of energy. The situation is rather bad. How much more will we be pressed under the pressure of this truth. As you yourself also do not fully understand that there must be a way out of this. It is said that every sickness has a remedy. Or are we the only ones who have run out of medicine?

She told me:

There is a way as well as the medicine. There is nothing I can do any more. It is you who must find the way and the cure. Perhaps then...

I told her:

Perhaps then everything will be as before. While restored to health like a spring flower, you will be revived and proud of your immortal values again. We will find life in your holy values. We will praise and chant the hymns of the Lord of the Universe. We will gain a new spirit from your glorious spiritual dimension. We will be pleased with your smiles. With your smiles we will stop being depressed and will gather spiritual strength for ourselves. Then you will not be angry with us. You will not overwhelm us by your profound thoughts. The trust and love we have towards one another will be revived, grow up, and gain new meaning. We will be ourselves. We will work to preserve you and seek you more for what we will come to understand. For we are nothing without you.

She told me:

Alas, I wish I could trust you. Then the exhaustion from the illness would vanish. I would not have jotted down these bitter words that come from my heart. I can no longer stop. I have no strength. The abandonment has broken my back. This is why you are not pleased with my state and I fell into this situation that makes you sick. All my memories are full of sorrow. I have been telling you about myself for a long time but you did not listen. You did not understand me as though my words are different from yours. You left me weak and alone. You forgot when you lost me. You have done away with yourselves as well. And my current and spirit state...

And then in a deathly state of agony all of a sudden she was wrapped up in a mournful dark silence. I however tried to touch her. I stroked her. She was miserable. Due to a lack of care and poor nourishment she was just skin and bones. I leaned back on her bountious body. I tried to percieve and understand her spirit which was about to leave for good. Her spirit was strong enough to keep her alive. She was full of love and tender. I felt very embarrassed and ashamed when my eyes were caught looking at that beautiful spirit full of life. In the face of our concrete reality I felt like sinking into the ground.

While I wanted to breathe fully her spirit and look at her completely, I was awakened by a distant sound I heard from afar. I was broken and angry. I was awakened before we made peace and came to an agreement. I closed my eyes hoping that I would see her again. I had forgotten to ask her name. I shouted, I cried out. I pleaded. What ever I did, it did not help. The familiar friend, that joyful spirit of old, did not hear me.

Then I heard a whisper in the wind, Turabdin. Her name was Turabdin.

Yusuf Beğtaş

Translated from Turkish by Isa Doğdu