

A Young Woman

In the small coffee shop, I faced the window and sipped my afternoon tea. I pulled out my notebook, rereading my notes about the Maslow's pyramid law. Hey, I have always found that subject interesting, on how some people continue to progress while others seem to be in the basic survival mode.

I was deep into my notes when I looked up and saw this young woman. I watched as she sat down on the green bench across the street from the coffee shop. I thought: she would be an interesting person to paint. I did a quick sketch of this woman whose head was clean shaven, a large red heart tattoo just above her right ear. She was pale and wore a tattered white, muscle T-shirt and tattered jeans to match.

Finishing my tea, I tucked the sketch of her into my notebook, glancing at it one more time. Yes, It looked like her; it was good.

I stepped outside and seemed to notice for the first time that Spring was truly here with the petite, lime green leaves quivering in the soft breeze of the young trees that lined the boulevard. I walked across the street toward her, keeping my head down. I did not look directly at her, but felt drawn toward this young woman and wanted to stop as I passed her sitting on that bench; not to talk to her but to feel her presence. Really, what was it inside of me that drew her near me? Who was she? Questions but no answers.

I knew it was going to be a busy day so I went early the following day to have my tea and read the morning newspaper. Though sitting at the window I watched her, there sitting on the bench. The young woman was reading a book. The warm damp mist from the fog appeared to go unnoticed by her as she turned the pages.

What was the book about? What was the title? I wanted to read it and I wanted to talk to her about the words it held, the

meaning. I watched her turn the book sideways, writing in the margins.

Everyday I was drawn back to that little coffee shop, not for the tea, but for her. No one came to join her. She never talked to anyone. So many questions would wander in and out of my brain. It was driving me crazy.

That last afternoon was dark from the overcast clouds and raining. She was not sitting on the bench and I felt despondent but I smiled when the bell above the door seemed to sing out, as the young woman came in. She sat across from me, at my table; uninvited but sitting there, rain water dripping from her skin. I sipped my tea and watched her. No words were spoken.

She opened her book and wrote something on the last page then turning the book over so the title was away from me. She stood and with an intense look at me, opened the book again, returning to the last page, writing with a flourish. She hesitated, closed the book, placed it face down in front of me and decided to walk through the door, out into the rain. She was gone.

The sunlight spread across the table toward me as I picked up the book and turned it over. It had a simple title called IT IS YOUR BOOK. I opened and read the last page:

I too am a seeker of wisdom and knowledge.

It was signed Self Actualization. The young woman's post script...*learn forgiveness.*

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