

DISCORD

Written by

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INT. COCKTAIL BAR - DAY

JANE (early 30's) dressed plainly, places an Americano down on her chosen table. She hesitates on which chair to sit in and lands on the one facing the door. She sits, acutely aware each time it opens.

She closes her eyes and touches her locket. All the sounds fade out as she focuses on the Edith Piaf-like music that blares from the speaker above her.

A YOUNG WOMAN (20's) trendily dressed grabs and drags a chair from another table towards her FRIEND. It SHRIEKS across the floor. Jane covers her ears.

GIGGLES carry over from the women's table as sounds increase in intensity around Jane: the STEAM of the latte machine, the TAP of a heel, incessant CHATTER.

Jane paws at her locket. She stares at the items in front of her. She CLINKS a spoon to the salt shaker and listens to its pitch. She repeats with her empty water glass and starts into a melody of her own creation. The noise falls away until-

MAESTRO MANTELLO (O.S.)

Jane?

Jane opens her eyes and accepts an outstretched hand. She shakes it as MAESTRO MANTELLO (48) attractive in a classical way, takes a seat across from her.

MAESTRO MANTELLO (CONT'D)

Great choice in table. It's just.
Actually, would you mind?

He gestures for her to get up and switch seats with him. Jane obliges and gets up.

MAESTRO MANTELLO (CONT'D)

The acoustics on this side are just
right.

Jane nods as Maestro snaps his fingers and a SERVER (early 20's) comes running over. He hovers.

MAESTRO MANTELLO (CONT'D)

Americano?

She nods.

JANE

Yes?

MAESTRO MANTELLO
They have wine here.

JANE
Oh, I know. I'm good.

MAESTRO MANTELLO
You sure? It's award winning.
(to server)
Get me a bottle of this and two
glasses in case the young lady
changes her mind.

The Server nods and leaves them. Maestro winks at her. Jane smiles, uncomfortably.

MAESTRO MANTELLO (CONT'D)
Now, that performance of yours,
just wow.

JANE
Thank you.

MAESTRO MANTELLO
No, I mean it. Like, wow, you are
something of a Nadia Boulanger.

JANE
Well, thank you. Thanks for that.
I'm impressed you know of her.

MAESTRO MANTELLO
Of course, who do you think I am?

He CLINKS his cutlery as he re-aligns it to his liking on the table.

MAESTRO MANTELLO (CONT'D)
Listen Jane, this here, this is
just a formality. If it were up to
me you would've had it after your
first few chords.

JANE
Isn't it up to you?

He shrugs as the Server returns and unscrews the cork with a flourish.

MAESTRO MANTELLO
So tell me about yourself young
lady, why piano?

JANE

Well, it was my mother who-

The Server pours a small amount into the Maestro's glass and waits for approval.

JANE (CONT'D)

Uh-

MAESTRO MANTELLO

(re: the wine)

Duckhorn 2011, can be drunk alone
or with company of course.

Maestro waves the Server away, who leaves them.

JANE

Unfortunate name.

MAESTRO MANTELLO

(chuckles)

Indeed. Agreed.

He sniffs and swirls.

JANE

My mother. It was her dream that I-

MAESTRO MANTELLO

Is this corked? Is this? You try.

He reaches across and puts the glass up to Jane's lips. Jane hesitates, sips, awkwardly, trying not to spill.

JANE

It tastes, red, to me.

Amused, he pours her a glass and tops his up.

MAESTRO MANTELLO

Food.

JANE

Sorry?

Maestro snaps his fingers and the Server returns.

MAESTRO MANTELLO

Get us something to pair with this.
That olive tapenade with your house
bread.

The Server is off and running again.

MAESTRO MANTELLO (CONT'D)
 So, Jane. I can see you know how to provide orchestral 'color', you blend nicely. Very capable of not being heard.

JANE
 Oh thank you.
 (considering)
 Actually- I don't know if I like that.

MAESTRO MANTELLO
 This is the thing Jane, exactly, don't like it. I don't want you to like it. Because I am going to want to hear YOU when the time is right. I want to hear you Jane.

JANE
 Thank you.

MAESTRO MANTELLO
 Of course. There are obviously soloist opportunities further down the line.

JANE
 Thank you.

MAESTRO MANTELLO
 If you prove exceptional, of course

JANE
 Oh- Well, yes. Of course.

Jane toys with her locket. She grazes it across her chest for comfort, back and forth as if a lullaby has started in her mind. Maestro watches.

MAESTRO MANTELLO
 (re: her locket movement)
 See? You're a first for me, for this symphony even.

JANE
 Oh? How so?

MAESTRO MANTELLO
 You just get it. You have it.

JANE
 I-I'm sorry? Have what?...

MAESTRO MANTELLO
An erotic charge...

Jane lets go of her locket.

MAESTRO MANTELLO (CONT'D)
To your work, of course.

JANE
Of course. Wow, I've never thought
of my work as-

MAESTRO MANTELLO
-I knew you were special the moment
I heard you. I knew you would get
it when you stepped on that stage
Hell! When you entered the theatre
I knew!

JANE
So then, you knew the moment you
saw me.

MAESTRO MANTELLO
Huh?

JANE
You said you knew it the moment you
heard me but then talked about my
entrance, which has nothing to do
with how I sound. So, it was the
moment you saw me then. Th-that you
knew, I mean.

MAESTRO MANTELLO
Mm, you see me Jane. You see me. I
like that. You see me and I see
you. I do. You don't think I do,
but I do.

He reaches a hand across the table and lightly places it on
top of hers.

The sounds of the cafe intensify like a train through a
tunnel until Jane pulls her hand away.

Maestro, with the same hand tops up her wine glass further
and gestures for her to drink. Jane obliges with a small sip.

MAESTRO MANTELLO (CONT'D)
Now. Jane, let's lighten it up.
Tell me this, what's your favorite
nursery rhyme?

Jane places a hand to her locket. She rocks it back and forth across her clavicle. She hums, 'Mary had a little lamb'...

JANE

'Mary Had a Little Lamb', Royal Philharmonic. A real triumph. Colorful orchestrations. Simple but strong with a unity to it, it's actually, personally a great comfort to me. I'm glad you asked that question. And yours?

He takes another sip of wine.

MAESTRO MANTELLO

'Ride a Cock Horse'.

Yet another sip. The girls GIGGLES from the other table spill over and invade Jane's ears for just a moment. She shakes them off, literally. He notices.

MAESTRO MANTELLO (CONT'D)

I need not tell you why.

JANE

Well, I assume it was the embellished use of horn off the top.

Jane takes a sip of wine now.

MAESTRO MANTELLO

Jane, may I caution you on something.

JANE

Of course.

MAESTRO MANTELLO

A life of an orchestral pianist is quite isolated at times. You'll have a lot more free time than your colleagues.

He smiles at the table of girls. They smile back.

MAESTRO MANTELLO (CONT'D)

You may need to build relationships outside of work. Interpersonal skills that musicians of your calibre are notoriously bad at.

JANE

Well, I compose, so that actually works really well. It's partly why I applied-

MAESTRO MANTELLO

-And a cat doesn't count young lady.

JANE

Wha-? I don't have a cat.

MAESTRO MANTELLO

You know what I mean.

JANE

No, I don't.

MAESTRO MANTELLO

Jane, focus.

Jane takes another sip of wine.

JANE

Maestro Mantello, I-

The server returns and places bread and tapenade on the table between them.

Jane sips again.

Maestro tucks his napkin under his chin and digs in.

The Server returns with olive oil. Mantello dips his bread.

MAESTRO MANTELLO

(mouth full, to Server)

I like this girl. This may be the one.

SERVER

Excellent, Sir.

The Server leaves the table again. Jane sips the wine, uncomfortable.

MAESTRO MANTELLO

(re: the wine)

Easy there. You could get us into trouble if you're not careful here.

JANE

I have referrals I provided earlier, references from my past collaborations, in particular my being a student of Tovsky at summertime's VSO, performing master-classes with Capudo Parks, Janelle Hammer, Daniel Graeme-

MAESTRO MANTELLO

Oh Dan, yes. What a joker.

JANE

Last summer I did performances with the orchestra in the Basilica di San Pietro at Music Fest Perugia...Italy and again with Tovsky-

MAESTRO MANTELLO

-Ah, yes, yes, yes, Tovsky. That doesn't surprise me at all, that he liked you I mean. He always has a way of sniffing out young talent. Do you find him handsome?

JANE

He was, is, a great influence, a true mentor. I wish him well at TSO.

MAESTRO MANTELLO

Well, it's obvious you grew out of him. That's why you're here.

The girls at the table laugh loudly and CLINK their glasses, it's too much for Jane's ears.

JANE

I- could you excuse me for a moment.

MAESTRO MANTELLO

Of course. I'll be here.

INT. COCKTAIL BAR - POWDER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

As Jane shuts the door, all ambient noise cuts out and she's left in silence. Jane considers her reflection. She opens her mouth wide into a silent scream, doubles over and releases her anger in the confines of the quiet.

INT. COCKTAIL BAR - POWDER ROOM DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Outside the powder room ambient noise over french music carries on. Women line up, oblivious to the breakdown behind the door.

INT. COCKTAIL BAR - POWDER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jane continues to silently rage in the tight space. She leans over the sink, exhausted. She touches her locket and stares at various items. She TAPS the soap dish, listens to its pitch and 'tunes' more items until a rhythm's begun. Jane lightly hums and sways to her creation as the cafe's French music swells back in perfect harmony.

Jane calmly opens the door to the bar and the disjointed noises: CLANKS, WHIRS, LAUGHTER are now composed, she exits.

INT. COCKTAIL BAR - TABLE - CONTINUOUS

Jane returns to her chair. Maestro is on his phone. Her wine glass is gone. In its place is a fresh Americano which he pushes across to her.

MAESTRO MANTELLO

(into the phone)

Of course, but for Christ Sake Mitchell, it's never just the parts, it's the labor...and the parts...

(to Jane re: the Americano)

It's hot now. I had him refill.

(back to phone)

Sure, sure, I want it back in the water by Labor Day.

(to Jane)

You take cream?

(to phone)

You owe me before I crack open my checkbook for that. Okay, cheers to Labor Day.

He hangs up.

MAESTRO MANTELLO (CONT'D)

Sailing. My mechanic thinks he owns me. Wind is free, but the vessel will cost you.

He pours fresh cream into her Americano and stirs it.

MAESTRO MANTELLO (CONT'D)

Got you a fresh pour but couldn't
part with that lovely lipstick
stain. Felt too much like
disturbing art.

He reaches over, lifts the cup from its saucer and turns the
lipstick stain to meet his own lips. He takes a sip, replaces
the cup in its saucer then rubs his thumb across his mouth to
wipe the lipstick off. He contemplates the stain.

JANE

What are you doing?

MAESTRO MANTELLO

Nothing?

Jane pushes the Americano slightly away from her.

JANE

Where is the line here?

MAESTRO MANTELLO

Excuse me?

Maestro shifts uncomfortably.

JANE

The line with this? Where is it?

MAESTRO MANTELLO

What line?

JANE

The one I'm not sure if you're
crossing or not with me.

MAESTRO MANTELLO

I'm afraid you've lost me, Jane.

Maestro motions for the bill.

JANE

Wait. No, do I have the job or not?

The Server scurries over. The Maestro gives over his card
before Jane can get to her wallet.

JANE (CONT'D)

Wait. Are-are we done?

MAESTRO MANTELLO

Well, I do run a symphony, Jane.

JANE

I know.

MAESTRO MANTELLO

I can't spend all my time with you.

JANE

I know.

Maestro goes to stand.

JANE (CONT'D)

I love Karen's work.

He stops.

MAESTRO MANTELLO

Excuse me?

JANE

Karen? She's in New York, right?
That's why you're interviewing? To
replace her?

He looks at her blankly.

JANE (CONT'D)

I was just curious what happened?

He swigs the remainder of his wine.

MAESTRO MANTELLO

Times up, young lady.

Jane sits straight up and forward.

JANE

Just please. Let me just say this.
Regardless of any of this your work
means a lot to me. I've seen you
bring out the best in your
musicians and all I want is a place
where I can contribute something of
substance. I know that sounds- I
don't think I'm one of the greats,
or anything. I just want to write
something real while I'm here. I
want to do something that matters,
that's larger than you or I. My
mother never had that and I need
that for her and for me.
An-and I know the VSO wants the
same, so I think, maybe, this is a
good match because of that.

(MORE)

JANE (CONT'D)
Oh God, I've blown it. I've blown
this, haven't I?

Maestro Mantello smiles.

MAESTRO MANTELLO
I'm not God Jane. Maybe Jesus on a
good day but not God.

He bends over her and touches her locket.

MAESTRO MANTELLO (CONT'D)
This here. Your mother?

Jane nods. He nods, understanding.

MAESTRO MANTELLO (CONT'D)
You touch it like a twitch. We
can't have that on stage. Lose it.

JANE
Does that mean? Did I get the-?

He brushes strands of hair from her face and considers her,
then heads for the door.

A YOUNG WOMAN (early 20's) walks out, Mantello insists on
holding the door for her and strikes up a conversation.

Jane takes up her locket in hand as the door closes and the
sounds of the restaurant return with a mighty volume, a
fierce attacking crescendo before cutting out into painful
silence.

FADE OUT.