

43 DAYS

Written by

Laila Alina Reischer

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Based on a true story

lailareischer@hotmail.com
+43 664 (0) 2464609

INT. DOCTOR`S ROOM - REHAB CENTRE - MORNING

Kind of distant, ISA (25) is rolling a cigarette. DR. BAUMGARTNER, a motivated, mid-aged psychological medic, is sitting in front of Isa, trying to reach her emphatically.

DR. BAUMGARTNER

It`s important for you to tell me the truth.

Isa keeps on rolling her cigarette, not reacting.

DR. BAUMGARNTER

What happened that night?

ISA

An accident.

DR. BAUMGARTNER

You crashed your car against a wall, going by 160 kilometers per hour.

ISA

That`s what the report says.

DR. BAUMGARTNER

Why did you want to kill yourself?

ISA

I did not. It was an accident.

The doctor stays patient. Again, she checks her files.

DR. BAUMGARTNER

That evening, you gave a concert. You`re a pianist?

ISA

Since I was 9 years old.

DR. BAUMGARTNER

You had a sold out hall, perfect reviews. A perfect night, seemingly.

ISA

(cheeky)

Yes. Perfect.

DR. BAUMGARTNER

And then you crashed your car against a concrete wall. Unbraked.

(pause)

According to report.

ISA
If the report says so.

DR. BAUMGARTNER
Why don't you tell what it doesn't say?

Isa is finished with rolling her cigarette. She drops it and immediately starts to do a new one. She seems to consider.

DR. BAUMGARTNER (CONT'D)
I'm on your side.

ISA
I've always been curious. I live by that. My music does. You get me? I am trying all kind of things. I want to know how they feel like...

DR. BAUMGARTNER
You like to live on the edge?

Isa nods. Dr. Baumgartner notes something.

DR. BAUMGARTNER (CONT'D)
Have there been any traumatic experiences in your life?

ISA
(irritated)
What?

DR. BAUMGARTNER
A severe violation, the death of a beloved person... Violence in any form?

ISA
I said I'm fine.

DR. BAUMGARTNER
Isn't it a high pressure? I can imagine... you, standing on a stage since you were a child... all that success... becoming that prodigy, but always being watched. And criticized. I can imagine... that wasn't easy. Not at all. Maybe it became too much, somewhen?

Isa starts smiling, sarcastically.

ISA
Yeah, all this pressure you have to face as an artist... electing left wing, vegan lifestyle, smoking electric cigarettes, and a little bit of bisexual shouldn't be missed, right?

DR. BAUMGARTNER
You know what's at stake.

Isa snorts.

DR. BAUMGARTNER (CONT'D)
You killed a person.

The doctor browses the report.

DR. BAUMGARTNER CONTD.
2.8 alcohol level and cocaine were found
in your blood.

ISA
If the report says so.

DR. BAUMGARTNER
Aren't you... caring at all? That young
girl, not even eighteen... had her whole
life still in front of her...

Isa checks her watch, quite nervously.

ISA
Time`s over. I hate to be late.

Dr. Baumgartner takes a file and hands it over to Isa.

DR. BAUMGARTNER
That`s your therapy schedule for the
upcoming 43 days.

INT. SEMINAR ROOM - REHAB CENTRE - MORNING

In a bright illuminated seminar room. Chairs are positioned
semicircular. In front of it there is a flipchart standing, blank. On
the walls, colorful timetables are hanging, showing the schedules of 8
therapy groups and 6 weeks.

Hesitating, more and more rookies are entering the room. Some of them
are chatting nervously, but others seem to be introverted, almost
exhausted and anxious.

Isa enters hesitantly. She stops, watching the others taking their
seats. Finally, one last seat is left free. It`s next to BURIM (35), a
tall, native Bosnian, hanging there like a sack of spuds.

Though curiously, he`s spotting her as she sits down next to him.
Senior medical MELLER (58) enters.

MELLER
I want you to reflect. Think of your
whole life. Think of the first time you
wanted to be helped. When have you been
at need? I want you to write down the
very first year of your distress.

Caregiver MARKUS (38) starts to hand out blank paper sheets and pencils
to the rookies. A woman, URSULA (about 40) raises her hand, excitedly.

URSULA
 (dialect of Salzburg, Austria)
 Well, I... I already would have needed
 help when I was a kid...

MELLER
 Note it down. What was the year? Things
 like that can already appear while being
 a child, even a baby!
 (to all of the group)
 Can you tell of the very first time you
 needed help, but didn't receive it?

Isa and the others start to think, their heads down towards the blank
 sheets.

MELLER (CONT'D)
 Start to count the years since your very
 first distress. When did you really get
 help, actually? Received help? Many
 times, 10, 20, 30 years are passing by
 before people apply themselves to their
 needs!

The group begins to write. Markus catches up to Meller back again,
 standing still next to him.

MELLER CONTD
 For every decade between your distress
 and the actually received help, expect a
 year of therapy.

URSULA
 (warily)
 I'm 43... that means, 40 years gone by.
 Does that mean, I need 4 years of
 therapy?

MELLER
 That's what you should expect.
 (pause)
 Now, consider your goal during your stay.
 What achievements are you hoping for, the
 next 43 days.

Again, everybody's head low-rises down, staring at their sheets.

MELLER (CONT'D)
 Now, I want you to come forward.
 Write your name down onto the flipchart
 and your goal next to it.

Everybody is looking up at Meller. Ursula is kind of rash, impulsive.

URSULA
 (maniac, confused)
 I want it to stop... all that play...I
 think I...all my life was just a stage!
 With me on it, having to perform.
 (MORE)

URSULA (CONT'D)

And I'm asking myself when...for god
sake...when will it stop?

Meller likes the answer.

MELLER

Write it down.

Obviously motivated, Ursula heads to the flipchart, noting down her name: URSULA PROKSCH. Next, she names her goal in big letters. STOPPING THE PLAY.

URSULA

(resolute)

I am Ursula Proksch, and I want it to
stop.

Ursula starts laughing, euphorically. Markus turns to her and shakes her hand, calmly. Reassuring.

MARKUS

Mrs. Proksch, I'm wishing you the best of
luck.

Ursula nods, walking back to her seat, quite determined. At the same moment, PETRA (38) rises, heading for the flipchart. She notes her name - PETRA MATHIS - and her goal. ENOUGH SPACE.

PETRA

(hesitating)

Hi, I'm Petra from Vorarlberg. And I wish
space! ... for me.

Petra starts laughing timidly. Markus turns to her, shaking her hand, being very calmly.

As before, Markus turns to the speaker for the handshake. Petra accepts hesitatingly. As well, quite like in a seasoned trance, Markus is repeating his words.

MARKUS

Mrs. Mathis, I'm wishing you the best of
luck.

Petra returns to her seat. Now, Burim stands up, coming forward sluggishly. His hands are shaking while noting down on the flipchart.

BURIM

I'm Burim. I come from war.
Soldier...since I was 19. I want peace.

Now, Meller spots Isa. She stands up, writing next to Burim's notes. The rest of the group is watching her curiously.

ISA

Fuck it. Fuck... No clue what that shit
means.

Markus, still kind of impersonal but professional, trying to ignore, repeats her "wish".

MARKUS

Ms. Isa, I`m wishing you the best of
luck.