

NEVER ENOUGH

Whatever he did in life. The pressure. No matter what he accomplished. Was always there. It was never enough. They wouldn't let him break away. For either of his parents. They always told him he wasn't successful enough. And he was too susceptible to their feelings. And as a result he had let them down. To separate. He was the only child. Without their permission. All that hadn't gone right in their lives. They never liked any of his girlfriends. They dumped on him. Nor could he allow himself to love his girlfriends. There were impossible expectations. Too much. All his childhood he worked and toiled. Because he was too focused. To achieve examination success. On his mother's feelings. The more he achieved. Even after they died. The more they asked of him. They were always there. They kept moving the target. Applying the pressure. So he could never hit it. Telling him that what he'd done wasn't good enough. Nothing he did was ever good enough.

FUTILITY

For. She'd made love to him. Hours. Because of her need to be close to someone. She. In a strange way. Watched. She'd felt grateful he'd wanted to. A moth. That he'd wanted her. Flinging. He'd made love savagely. Itself. Biting her until she'd screamed. Against. As he'd snored, she'd lain awake, looking at the ceiling. A bare light bulb.

FREE

All the time he'd been away he'd missed her terribly. He is very surprised. When his plane lands. After several months. He finds all his desire to see her again has drained from him. When she confronts him. After collecting his suitcase. Tells him. He finds himself walking slower and slower. He might as well leave. Why doesn't he want to meet up with her? As continue. She runs towards him. This sham. They kiss. He'd thought. Can she sense his reluctance, his ambivalence? He'd been concealing. In the next weeks. How he felt. Things return to normal. Now he realises. Except they don't. She had been able to intuit. Something inside him. His true feelings. Is insisting. Or lack of true feelings. He frees himself. And she had freed him.

THE REUNION

When the two old friends met up. They chose Tübingen. After forty years. As the venue. It was worse. For their reunion. Than embarrassing. The place had hardly changed. They had. They had. Nothing to say. However. To each other. In Jacomo's memory. Anymore. It was black and white. Had lost interest in each other. And now. The affection they once had. It was. Seemed to have gone for ever. In colour.

Sigi had grown. Jacomo felt. An absurd moustache. Disgust. Jacomo watched him slurp his beer. At meeting. Through the whiskers. His best friend from university. It didn't seem possible. He thought. He'd once been. About how. His closest friend. Things change. What had happened? They were ever so close.

THE MIDDLE

This descent into mediocrity. He knows. When did it start? He's a much better critic. Where will it end? Than he is an artist. The effort of getting himself to the studio. This means he's forever aware of how second rate his work is. He's not done anything different or original for years. But. But. Can do nothing about it. Is completely lost. He'd stop. When he tries to do something different. If he didn't need the income. Anyway, the tried and tested sells. There's a market for second rate art, which he exploits with a modicum of success.

When at the studio. He stares at the canvases. He doesn't want to leave. If he looks. And have to go back. Hard enough. To the empty apartment. Perhaps. It's three years and five months. They'll get better. Since she left. Instead. And the pain. They only look worse. Should be less intense. He's in the middle. No one else is right. Of his life. And he can't stop. Sinking further and further. Missing her. He knows what's wrong. But. But. Nor is he able. Doesn't know. To make use of these emotions. What to do. In his work. To change it.