**“Jazz port of call”**

*18th February, 1946, New Orleans*

Dear, I finally smell it. Yes, I do.

And it’s not about this winter air which has got its unique smell everyone knows and no one can really describe. I literally feel I’m at *home*.

Sir Tolkien is going to write *Not all those who wander are lost,* but you know best, you Little Piece of Dirty Brown Paper… I’ve been lost too long. Please, Dead Paper, can you let me stay in here?

*19th February, Still Stuck in 1946, Still in New Orleans (weather is wuthering-height, but I love it)*

All right, I’m deeply grateful. You did your work.

If the city of New Orleans is not another bridge in my endless vagabond track of my soul, then, please, we could stay. Me and you.

From now I could try to master my writing with pen. I know you prefer the pen, it hurts less. And looks better (forgive me, Dead Paper Friend if I fail again, I’m such an impatient person).

*20th February, Still-Here*

And I cannot believe I’m sitting in the same bar again.

Maybe it’s odour of the surrounding cigarettes or too heavy men’s perfume around but I still can’t help it but smell my *home feeling.* Can you believe it? Looks like I want to stay somewhere…!

Oh, wait a minute.

The band is coming onto the stage again. They’ve only grabbed some water (they don’t smoke, they know their lungs are gold and gold is what comes as very worthy nowadays) and starting the play.

The act.

Dear, I haven’t seen anything better.

As in my entire wandering, not only was the music played but it was embracing.

Every. Single. Inch. Of. The. Body.

Just look at them!

The Piano Man is leading the song at the beginning. He must be the eldest one of the musicians, I bet they sit around him after every concert and listen to every piece of the silently murmured advice he gives to them. He doesn’t have to play anyone, he looks as if he had learned enough that the only role he is the best at is that one of The Piano Man at old, New Orleans’ bar – *himself*.

I like contrasts, so I’m looking now at the drums.

Oh, how loud they’re wanting to become with every next tune of the hypnotising rhythm. Still, The Drum Head (as it is the only part of that member of band I can see, except for his magical hands) is winning the battle with his high ambitions successfully. He expresses the victory from time to time, sending a lenient smirk, probably sent only to his wanton hands.

All the members of the band know very well that despite the fact each of them follows own, individual jazz path they’re coming as an unity now.

Maybe it is a single week they’ll together, but the respect with which they control their out-of-control trances is more than admirable.

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I cannot precisely say how many hours I spent watching this band and dancing inside that night, when I suddenly spot that The Trumpet Man’s fallen asleep for a moment.

No. He can’t have gone to sleep. He’s in his trans, but has dived in it even more.

Maybe he’s dreaming about me? No, impossible.

Then maybe he’s missing his working wife who is waiting at *home* and fighting not to fall asleep before he comes back? Why couldn’t he invite her here? Maybe she got a scratch on her face which could cause too many tough questions and even more difficult answers?

And finally – why on earth I keep asking all of those questions about the people I will probably never meet again. And if I do, they will look different,
I won’t be even able to recognize them.

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Maybe he’s just thinking about the jazz he’s putting so much heart in.

And the gold lungs. They do their work as well.

*21st February, Thank You*

The owner of the club has started to observe me. The strange man, he doesn’t look as if he was happy. I’m afraid his poor soul has not escaped far enough from the war aura which everyone is still touching, bite by bite, and it will continue, probably for the rest of their lives.

Why have you, Dead Paper Friend, *never* sent me to see the World War?

I was around when they were discussing how to build the Great Pyramids
or when Columbus was setting off to discover America he regarded as India for the rest of his sailor life (greetings for you, Chris).

Never have I landed in the middle of a boom field, real blood, true problems. Why is it so?

I’ve just been wandering around, me and my poor, lonely soul, and only what I saw were the different people.

The places always came as a background, the frame of the painting.

Their faces, their emotions… yes… so many of them, we could write a separate diary about emotions only.

They always created the foreground of the painting and I couldn’t even *analyse* those feelings as deeply as I wanted because…

*Poof!*

*Light!*

*Dark!*

*Light again!*

And we lie somewhere else. *Always* on the ground.

Is it an ironic sign for the importance of my yet poor situation? (I won’t go through it as I can get depressed even more.)

 *22nd February, THE New Orleans*

Sadness and time stop really touch me here, but jazz keeps me better than any other kind of music I have ever heard before.

I look at these people around and I know it works for them the same way. Like balm. Like an escape. A comfort zone.

Who would like to worry if the jazz band can play the whole night and the others want to dance so much long?

The problems, yes, are waiting *just* outside the wooden door, but, hey – they will surely not leave so quickly. Then, they can wait a little.

Just one more song.

 *23rd February, Leave Me Here*

I mean, just do, you Stinky Paper Friend.

At 9.36 p.m. someone approached my sit at the bar and asked me gently whether I would like to dance.

* Excuse my confidence, but I think our feet are the similar size in here.

Come on, and his name was…

* Benjamin. I’ve always thought it sounds more elegant than simply “Ben”.
* Indeed.
* And what is your name, Lady?

Well, I got a huge lump in my throat at that moment. I quickly glanced at you, Dirty Paper, but as always you had been lying silent and mysterious at the bar wooden counter.

* I have got so many names, Sir.
* Give me one and I will guess two other ones.
* It’s ridiculous.
* Life is ridiculous.

But he hadn’t said it with sadness, it was true happiness and curiosity in his big, turquoise eyes instead. He just added some irony to that long sight he sent me, but I actually loved it.

Irony is definitely our friend, huh, Stinky Paper?

* *Amrita.*
* It doesn’t sound like the names I hear around. You don’t come from here, do you?
* I feel good here.
* Me too.
* That’s enough.

And we were dancing. Swing moves of course, which he taught me. I didn’t tell him what *Amrita* really meant for he didn’t ask afterwards.

We stopped our talk, actually, at that very moment. It was just jazz and us, who would interrupt that perfect combination?

Who would mind that I chose *Amrita (immortal from Hindi)* name to say aloud, because I just… liked it?

*24th February, What have I done wrong?*

It’s Benjamin, right? I shouldn’t have even exchanged a word with him, I know.

*Just observe, don’t talk.*

But how long, Dear Dead Paper? Couldn’t there be one, little exception for me if I politely pointed out this is *finally* a place I could be happy in?

Because, that’s what life is all about, you listen!

*To be happy.*

I’ve been wandering too long to discover it, but that is so simple.

People, thousands I saw, were rarely happy in simple ways. Like, they were taking too much care of *thinking how* to make the best of their lives than *doing* them like that.

Funnily enough, *I* was the true one to analyse their position, not *them*.

Their one, *easy,* task was to try being happy.

Is it so difficult?

To smile?

To dance swing (okay, it may be so sometimes)?

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They say life is so short.

Dear, but they don’t even imagine how they shorten their lives filling them only with empty emotions and plain situations.

Wanderings have their ends as well.

Mine stops here. In the jazz club.

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And where will You finally stop and *feel at home* again?