



Chapter 7 An Invitation to the Dance

Kai paid the five Euro entry fee, and then ducked into the welcoming twilight of the auditorium, which had been turned into a disco for the Freshers' Week party. He looked around, and saw a few of his friends from school standing in the far corner. They always hung out together, and somehow he didn't feel like joining them – not here and now, at university. It should be the start of a new chapter, shouldn't it?

At the same time, the way things worked at university confused him. If Mudi hadn't sat down with and created a timetable of lectures and seminars for him, he would probably would have wandered randomly from one session to another for ever.

Stefan, who he knew from school, put an arm round his shoulder. "Hey, Kai. We're going to the *Wunderbar* after the party here. Do you want to come? Carlos is DJing."

"I'll see how it goes."

"After midnight, ok? Just keep an eye out for me. Then we can share cars. Then again, looking at all these hot philosophy girls, I might just stay here!"

Kai laughed. "Maybe see you later."

"Yup. Have fun."

He carried on walking. Was Mudi there already? He'd said he wanted to come. Or Selina? Faces blurred in the semi-darkness, and the music pulsed in his veins. He decided to get a bottle of beer first, if only to have something to hold onto while he waited.

"A Becks, please," he said to the blonde girl behind the bar, which had been set up between two pillars. She flashed him a brief smile, took his money, and a moment later he had the green bottle in his hand, so cold that condensation was collecting on it. He turned round and found Mudi, who was coming towards him through the growing crowd. Kai looked at his friend in surprise: he was holding hands with a girl, who wasn't looking right or left, just following him. Was that his girlfriend? He hadn't said anything about her before.

"Kai, there you are. Halva, this is Kai, the one I was telling you about. Kai, this is my sister, Halva."



Of course, Mudi's sister! For a moment, Kai looked at Halva more closely: she had the same light complexion as Mudi, and her hair was as thick as his. She greeted him with a smile, her lips closed, and then turned away to look around the auditorium. Wow, what eyes she had, thought Kai. He'd never seen a colour like that on a girl. They were light green, almond-shaped, and shone mysteriously in the coloured glare of the disco lights. He noticed her head of thick, dark curls, and her nose, which was very sharp in profile, and reminded him of *Asterix and Cleopatra*. "Oh, but her nose," Miraculix kept saying, as if that was an excuse for everything. Kai suppressed a laugh, took a swig of beer and clapped Mudi on the shoulder.

"I'm glad you're here. Do you guys want a drink?"

The music was now so loud that he had to yell into Mudi's ear. He nodded and pointed to Kai's beer. Kai turned round to order, but then turned back to Mudi again. "What about your sister?"

"Orange juice," said Mudi, without asking Halva. Kai glanced at Halva inquisitively, but she was looking around the room with interest, and didn't notice his eyes on her. Was she not allowed to order for herself? Or to drink alcohol? Maybe that's how it was in Iran. He eyed her with curiosity. She was as tall as his chest, and in her tight dark jeans, white top and long black boots she looked proud, but also fragile. There was an air of restraint about her that fascinated him. The way she wore her belt, it reminded him of a Ralph Lauren advert. Her whole look was classy and cool. Halva sensed Kai's gaze and gave him a glance, before her dainty foot began tapping in time with the music. She didn't smile again.

So that was Kai, thought Halva, looking at him inconspicuously as he walked to the bar. If Iranian men had a certain way of looking at things, then the women did too: Halva looked, without *inspecting* things. Discreet little sideways glances, which Kai completely missed. In the past few weeks, Mudi had talked about him constantly. It was odd, really, that they hadn't run into each other before. Augsburg was a one-horse town, and everyone knew everyone else. Perhaps it was because she didn't have any friends in Westheim, Halva thought: according to Mudi, that was where Kai lived.

Kai was now leaning over the counter and ordering something from a good-looking girl. Then he turned round and leant his elbows on the bar whilst he waited for the drinks. His blonde hair was tousled and his eyes made Halva think of molten caramel. He was taller and more broad-shouldered than Mudi and her father. The top buttons of his shirt were undone, and Halva could see his strong throat and the smooth skin at the top of his chest. Now the girl behind the bar was handing him two beers and an orange juice, and Kai came back over to her and Mudi.

"Here," he said, handing her the glass. He smiled, and she noticed a few freckles on his nose.

Halva nodded her thanks, and hastily took a big gulp. Dammit - it made her cough! Ashamed, she put her hand over her mouth and tried to think what she should say to Kai. Something clever or funny - if only she could think of anything. Her brain was empty, and her heart was beating wildly. What was wrong with her?



She looked up again, but at that moment Kai turned away from her and Mudi and stared, spellbound, at the dance floor. What or who had he spotted there?

Selina was wearing a black dress with a very low neckline, and shoes with terrifyingly high heels. The sight of her sent a shudder through Kai. She was here!

“Sorry, I’ve just got to...” he said to Mudi, who followed his gaze, grinned and then nodded in understanding. Halva was looking over at Selina as well. Kai pressed past her, but turned around as he was going and caught her gaze. Had she wanted to say something else? It didn’t matter, she could tell him later.

Selina was on the dance floor, which was still almost empty, dancing unselfconsciously with two other girls. They had put their handbags down between them and were circling them with their eyes closed and their heads thrown back like they were dancing round a totem pole. Selina tossed back her blonde hair. She was moving with such abandon, and so provocatively, her whole body dissolved into the music. As Kai stepped onto the dance floor, another guy came out from the sidelines as well. One of Selina’s friends ventured over to him, slung her arms round his neck and kissed him. The blood pounded in Kai’s ears – there was something indecent about the kiss. It seemed careless and dishonest, though he couldn’t have said why.

“Selina,” he said, taking her by the elbow. She didn’t react, and just kept moving to the rhythm of the music.

“Selina!” Kai shouted louder, noticing Selina’s friend let go of the other guy just as suddenly as she had embraced him, and carry on dancing as if nothing had happened. Kai shook Selina gently, and she opened her eyes, which shone in the colourful glare of the lights.

“I thought you were in Rome,” he shouted in her ear. For God’s sake, couldn’t you have a proper conversation anywhere in here?

Selina started to laugh. Over the music, it sounded so bright and jarring: he had never heard anyone laugh like that. When he saw her tiny pupils, they gave him goose bumps: what had she taken? Of course, Kai had tried various things at parties before: he’d smoked the odd joint and once, at a friend’s party, taken ecstasy. The trip had been hellish, and when he’d finally made it to the bathroom to throw up, he’d sworn never to touch it again.

“What?” Selina asked. She came very close to him, and there was a mixture of chewing gum and alcopops on her breath.

“I thought you were in Rome.”

Instead of answering, she took his head in both hands and suddenly pulled him towards her. His mouth met hers forcefully, as she kissed him, and then bit his lower lip hard.

“Ow!” He pulled away in shock. He could feel the metallic taste of blood on his tongue. Selina laughed that high, unnatural laugh again. Kai turned his head away in disgust.



"But I *am* in Rome! Look! I'm in Rome," Selina screeched shrilly. Then she pressed herself to him and danced, using her whole body. She rubbed herself against him in a snake-like motion, letting her hands roam over his chest, pulling his shirt out of the waistband of his jeans and trying to slide her hands under his t-shirt. Kai gently pushed her away. He didn't want that: not here, and not like this.

What had got into her?

But she grabbed his arm. "Hey, come on, stay here. Everything's cool, yeah?" she tugged at his shirt again and let her pelvis circle his hips. Kai tore himself away. Selina glanced at him, as the lights started to strobe. She laughed, and all her movements became jerky, while her teeth glowed. Kai shook his head, and the dance floor began to fill up, so he didn't need to elaborate. Selina let herself be carried along with the dancers, and finally disappeared amongst them.

Kai was standing on the edge of the dance floor as if he'd been drugged, when Mudi laid a hand on his shoulder.

"Everything alright with you?" he shouted over the music. Kai just nodded and motioned Mudi to move further away from the dance floor. With every step his flustered, agitated thoughts grew calmer.

"So what was that?" Mudi asked.

Kai shook his head, helplessly. "I don't know either. Whatever it was, it was horrible."

Just then, a classmate came up, and immediately began chatting away to Mudi. Kai only caught fragments of words, as he stared at the dance floor again, lost in thought. Selina was now hanging round another guy's neck. Man, what was wrong with her?

Kai was getting hot. He shoved a hand into his trouser pocket and quickly finished his bottle of Becks. The auditorium was steadily filling up.

He turned to the bar to get another beer, and his gaze fell on Halva. She was standing one or two paces away from him at the bar, on her own. It didn't seem to bother her: she was watching what was going on around her.

Kai took a step towards her. "Would you like another drink? A glass of wine, maybe?"

"No thanks," said Halva with a shake of her head. The spotlights cast multi-coloured flecks onto her thick, shiny hair.

"Would you like to dance?" Kai asked her, without really knowing why. He really hadn't intended to ask her that.

"No thanks."

"Is it always no with you?"

"No." She flashed a smile, and two dimples appeared in her cheeks, before she said: "But when it comes to dancing, I'm nobody's second choice. Or in general, actually." The put-down came from her lips as calmly as if she was saying: *Lovely weather today, isn't it Kai?* He was speechless, and at the same time still shaken by what Selina had done.



He shrugged. Oh, to hell with it then. The party was a dead loss, that much was clear. *Women!* They were impossible to understand. What a frustrating evening! And he couldn't even get drunk, as he was driving.

He nodded to Halva. "Sorry, I've just spotted a friend back there – if you could excuse me for a minute..." he said, turning to leave.

"Sure," smiled Halva. "See you in a bit." She folded her arms and looked at the dance floor.

Or never, hopefully, thought Kai, throwing himself into the faceless mass. If he couldn't drink, he could at least go and dance. At least that way he'd get something out of the evening.

As Kai headed off in the direction of the dance floor, Halva's heart was in her mouth.

Stupid cow, she said to herself. She would really have liked to dance with him, wouldn't she? The way he'd looked at that blonde girl – so intense. The very thought of it gave Halva goose bumps. His gaze had been like a touch. What would it be like if he looked at her that way?

Kai had disappeared from view. She had done the right thing, Halva decided. He didn't have to dance with her out of pity. He should come because he wanted to. Halva's gaze roamed the crowd, until she spotted Kai off to one side, at the other end of the auditorium, where he was moving to the rhythm of the music. She could wait.

The dance floor was heaving and, as always when he danced, Kai forgot everything around him. Dancing reminded him of diving, his favourite sport. First a blow, as he plunged head-first into the water. Then he'd be floating, and being at one with himself. A feeling of isolation that had nothing to do with loneliness. In the same way, he plunged into the music. The world around him became a multi-coloured whirl, whilst he grew more and more peaceful in the eye of the storm. Gradually all the tension, all the annoyance fell away from him. Now and again he looked at the clock, droplets of sweat beading his forehead.

It was almost midnight when the DJ played *I will survive* by Gloria Gaynor. Kai drew breath, and wiped his arm over his face. He had tied his jumper around his waist; his shirt was damp and unbuttoned to the chest. He didn't want to dance to this song: he could leave it to the girls. He went and positioned himself so that he had a good view of the dancers. As expected, more and more girls leapt onto the dance floor and began singing along with the song as if it was their very own personal hymn.

First I was afraid, I was petrified...

The girls screamed.

Kept thinking I could never live without you by my side...

Some of them were holding onto each other's shoulders, and forming a circle. To Kai, the crowd looked like a spineless, swirling animal. He could see Selina in the middle of the hall. She was staggering, and he watched her with nothing more than a



clinical interest. Had he ever liked her? He'd had enough. He might as well leave now, right?

Then he saw a girl dancing a little apart from the crowd. She kept her upper body almost still – but still *to the rhythm of the music*. Her arms were slightly bent, and her movements flowing and lithe. She was music and nothing else. Kai forgot to breathe as she rolled her hips in her tight jeans, and slid her feet forwards. Did she not have bones? He'd never seen anything like it. Her dancing was alluring, but it invited the viewer to worship rather than touch her. She was mystery and revelation, denial and permission, earth and air, fire and water. Who was she? Kai's mouth was dry.

He couldn't take his eyes off her. Turn round, he begged silently. Turn round. She obeyed, turned towards him, and Kai choked with shock.

It was Halva. Mudi's sister.

But she had been so reserved and restrained just now. Where did she learn to dance like that? He was hypnotised by her movements, and as her eyes met his, she smiled at him for a second. Kai gasped for air and found none. At that moment, somebody took him by the arm and freed him from the spell that Halva's dance had cast on him.

Mudi yelled: "Ah, crap. It's nearly midnight. I'd really like to stay, but I promised my father I'd take Halva home. If she's late, we'll both be in trouble."

"I was just about to leave anyway," Kai shouted over the music.

"Really? Already? It's just getting started."

Kai shrugged. "I've got to be up early tomorrow."

"Why?"

"I play the saxophone."

"Have you got a lesson or something?"

"Nah. My uncle's a session musician, and four or five years ago I started playing in a backing band for him. It's fun, and the money's pretty good."

"How cool."

"You can come to the studio with me if you want."

Mudi nodded and then looked around for Halva. Kai didn't want to miss this opportunity. "Shall I take your sister home?" Please say yes, he begged silently.

Mudi hesitated for a second. "Would you do that? I'd really like to stay."

"Of course." Halva drew Kai's gaze like a magnet. She was still dancing, but completely ignoring him. His heartbeat was saying: look at me. Look at me. But she kept her eyes down. His heart skipped a beat as he realised she was playing with him.

"Thanks," said Mudi. "You're a real friend."

Or not, thought Kai, not feeling guilty in the slightest. He nodded. "No worries," he said. His world shrank down to this girl in front of him, his friend's



sister. What had he been thinking before? That she looked like a Ralph-Lauren advert? Rubbish. She was classy, sure. But there was also something wild and strange that he wanted to explore.

They walked over to the dance floor and Mudi took Halva by the arm, pointed at his watch and shouted something in her ear. She threw a quick glance at Kai and then nodded, before following Mudi off the dance floor.

Kai didn't dare touch her. Instead, he forged a path for her through the crowd, and kept turning round to make sure she was still behind him.

"Did you have a jacket?" he asked her, as he got his coat from the cloakroom. His voice sounded hoarse, and he cleared his throat.

She nodded. "Yeah, a denim jacket."

He helped her into it, brushing her arm lightly.

"Thank you," she murmured, and turned towards one of the big windows, outside which the night hung like a dark curtain. Kai watched as she draped her pashmina round her neck, freed her hair from the scarf, threw it over her shoulder and then quickly turned her head to one side to look at her reflection in half-profile. Their eyes met, and Kai was filled with an unexpected feeling of tenderness.

(...)

Chapter 8

Wide-awake house

Beep-beep, went Halva's phone, as she crept up the stairs in the dark apartment.

Everything seemed quiet. Miryam was asleep on the fold-out sofa in the lounge, and Halva didn't want to wake her. Who was texting her this late at night? Her heart pounded as she guessed the answer. It was a number she hadn't saved yet. The phone gave off a weak blue light in the darkness, and the little clock on the display told her it was exactly midnight.

Halva bit her lip to suppress a smile. That must be Kai! She opened the message and read: *Let lips do what hands do. Romeo to Juliet. Kai to Halva. Goodnight!*

Halva swallowed, and it tasted of happiness. She sank onto the bottom step of the staircase and read the sentence through again. Her heart was beating in her mouth, and she stroked her fingers, which he had just been holding. How would Kai's lips feel on hers? Did Romeo really say that to Juliet: *Let lips do what hands do*? She had only seen the play once with her class, as a ballet, but the incredible intensity of it had made a deep impression on her, even without a single word being spoken. In the car, she had sensed that words weren't always necessary. She and Kai were just pulled towards one another, as if in a whirlpool. She thought about Iranian poems that dealt with the same theme as Shakespeare in *Romeo and Juliet*: "Vis o Ramin", for example, which was written in the tenth century, but was as modern as a novel written today. "Vis o Ramin" and *Romeo and Juliet* had put her in a thoughtful



mood: wasn't love and happiness allowed? Why did both stories end so tragically? Oh come on, it must be possible. Love was just tragic and unhappy in books, she decided, enjoying the tingling sensation that started when she thought about Kai. *Let lips do what hands do: Vis to Ramin, Romeo to Juliet – Kai to Halva.* She couldn't just close the message. The words, their unexpected intimacy, moved her deeply. She read them over and over. Why couldn't you print out text messages and hang them on the wall?!

There was a noise from the living room. Had she woken Miryam up?

Halva didn't want to see anyone. She stood up, crept up the stairs and sat down again on the top step, next to the open bathroom door. She had to keep reading the text, and thinking about how their hands had touched. There had been more emotion in it than he had wanted to show, much more. There were no words for it. She shook her head. What had just happened?

It made Halva think about her grandmother, who had put all her emotions into the halva when they said goodbye. *Liquorice: as black as my mood when I think about you leaving, but glistening like your future in a foreign land. As bitter as my tears when we say goodbye, but as sweet as my hope for you.*

What did Mamii always say? Women are the only prey that ambushes the hunter. Mamii. She would love a text like this: she talked about heart and soul, and everything else you should talk about in life.

Halva put her head in her hands, leant her elbows on her knees and smiled into the darkness. She wanted to hum a song. Or cook herself a big portion of pasta. Who could go to sleep with all these glow-worms in their heart? Nobody.

The light on her phone went out, but the hallway to the bedrooms stayed lighter than usual.

Halva looked up in surprise. Had she forgotten to turn off the bedside light in her room?

Then she saw the strip of light shining into the darkness from under her parents' bedroom door. Were they still awake? That was unusual. Except on Sundays, they always had to get up very early to prepare all the dishes for the café. Tomorrow was Saturday, normally the busiest day of the week.

Halva got up, meaning to let them know that she had got home safely. More than safely, but her parents didn't need to know that. Suddenly she hesitated. Maybe her father had had another one of his nightmares? In that case she didn't want to disturb him and her mother. Only the two of them could drive away the harrowing memories of the week that Cyrus had spent in jail in Iran.

She was just about to slip away to her room when she heard the quiet words coming from her parents' bedroom. They were still talking, no doubt about it. Halva pricked up her ears.

"But it's so long ago..." her mother was saying. Her voice sounded strange. "A lifetime ago. How can he still insist on it after all these years?"

Her father sighed. "I know, I had forgotten too. Or I tried to forget."



A sob. Halva clutched the bannisters. Her mother was crying! For a little while she could hear nothing but this quiet, forlorn sound, and her father's calming murmurs. Halva stood in total silence. It was usually Raya who had to comfort Cyrus when he woke up screaming, bathed in sweat. What had happened? Halva hardly dared to breathe.

"I don't know what to do either, Raya," Halva finally heard her father say. His voice cracked as he spoke.

There was a short pause. Halva sensed her mother struggling to regain her composure. What was tormenting her? Her own chest grew tight: Raya's courage and lust for life kept the family going. When Raya wept, they all wept. When she laughed, they were all happy. Halva wanted to go into her parents' bedroom and put her arms round her mother, but she didn't dare.

"Can't we...I mean, can't we pretend we never got the letter?"

The letter, of course! What with meeting Kai, Halva had completely forgotten about it.

"I don't know..." said Cyrus. "I owe him so much, Raya. More than just our passage out, you know that. Without him I wouldn't have come back, when..."

"No, Cyrus, we can. We have to! It's for..."

"I *know* what's at stake. But I gave him my word. Just as he gave me his word he would help me. I relied on him. We all relied on him."

"It was an emergency. We had to leave. We just had to. If the police had picked you up again..." Halva heard her mother struggling for breath again, before saying, severely: "Well, I didn't get any letter. Did you?"

"Raya. Be sensible. We can't just ignore Bijan like this."

"I *am* sensible," she whispered, but Halva could hear the rage in her voice. Raya was normally very controlled, but when she was really angry, she never managed to hide it. "At least, of the two of us, I'm the sensible one here!"

Time ticked by, and then Cyrus said: "If I don't keep my word, my word of honour, my promise, what else do I have to give? How else can I thank Bijan, as a man of honour?"

Halva waited breathlessly, but her mother said nothing. She probably couldn't think of an answer to this except the obvious one: what remained of a man who didn't keep his word, emergency or no? Nothing. There was nothing left. Especially when it was a promise to a man who had saved his life. Anyone who did something like that in Iran put his own life at risk as well. Halva knew what this Bijan had done for her father. Without him, he might well have died in jail. But he was still alive, even if the scars on his temples and wrists spoke of his pain. Halva shuddered inwardly. What a horrible, oppressive debt. Did tragedies really only happen in books? She wasn't sure any more.

"Sleep now, Raya. Think today and speak tomorrow." Her father's voice sounded gentle. Halva's heart went out to them. Whatever had happened, and whatever was still to come, her parents stuck together. That gave her courage.



“How should I sleep with all these thoughts in my head?”

“Try to. Please.”

Click. The light went out in her parents’ room, and Halva stood motionless on the stairs, not wanting to give her presence away to her parents.

Her hand tightened around the phone: she had closed the message, but the very thought of Kai's words gave her strength.

Kai was sure to call her tomorrow, like he’d promised. Yes, tomorrow was Saturday. They could speak on the phone, she decided, even if she was really busy.

It was still quiet and dark in her parents’ room, so she climbed up the rest of the stairs and was about to go into the bathroom, when she heard a door open quietly on the floor below. Was that Mudi coming home already?

She leant over the bannisters, but it was Miryam, not, Mudi, coming into the hall. She looked up, but Halva retreated into the shadows, catching a glimpse as she did so of the rumpled sofa where her aunt slept. Miryam had left the little lamp burning, and a thin beam of light shone out into the hall, down which Miryam was creeping in the direction of the coat closet. She took Halva's denim jacket and her scarf from the hook and put them on, before shuffling into Raya's boots. Halva frowned. It was almost half past midnight. Where on earth was Miryam going? She didn’t even know anybody here, did she? And why wasn’t she wearing her own clothes? After all, she had brought a winter coat and boots with her from Tehran.

Halva was just opening her mouth to say something when Miryam quickly turned to the mirror next to the front door. She leant her forehead on the cool glass and gave a deep sigh. Something about the sound stuck in Halva’s throat.

Why was Miryam so troubled? Where was she going? Would she be safe there? And what was giving her mother sleepless nights? What the hell was going on here?

Halva held her breath as Miryam took her face from the mirror. Her aunt opened the apartment door and slipped, silent as a shadow, out onto the landing. The door swung shut with a gentle, almost imperceptible noise.

Halva didn’t hesitate: she leapt down the stairs two at a time, grabbed her key, which was in the bowl on the little sideboard in the hall, and followed Miryam out of the apartment. It was cold even on the landing, but when she opened the entry door, the icy wind hit her like a slap. Damp, heavy snowflakes blew into her face, and Halva took a sharp gasp of breath.

In the distance, she could see Miryam, alone, walking along the pavement – and then she quickened her pace. Her aunt's dark outline grew increasingly unclear in the night, a silhouette in the white, whirling distance. Halva screwed up her eyes as Miryam crossed the road, and now, in spite of the cold night air, which must be hurting her lungs, she began to run. Miryam ran along the Friedberg road, where there were no more cars. For a while Halva followed her, until she got a painful stitch in her side. But Miryam didn’t slow down, and finally the darkness of the tree-lined road, which led to the Eiskanal, swallowed her completely. She wasn’t going anywhere, Halva realised. The only appointment she was keeping was with herself,



and all those she had run away from in Iran. We had to rescue her, Raya had said. *Rescue*. Halva shivered, but now the cold came from deep within her.

Back in her room, Halva snuggled under her warm duvet and turned out the light. She looked up at the ceiling, on which she had stuck glowing neon stars, and thought about her young aunt, running through the snowflakes. Miryam was still out there in the cold night. Was it the first time she had hurried through the darkness like this?

Maybe she could ask Kai for advice – what did he think about Miryam and her night-time stroll? Better not, she decided. Family matters should stay in the family.

But how could she help Miryam? She thought it over, slowly, step by step. Now that Halva was so happy, nobody she knew should have to suffer. Her thoughts turned back to Kai. She started to feel warm, and her heart beat faster. She put her fingertips to her lips.

“Let lips do what hands do,” she whispered into the silent darkness of her room.

Kai was sure to call her tomorrow. Definitely. He had wanted to see her, even if she was leading a workshop in Oriental Dance. Belly-dancing was actually not that common in Iran, but at twelve or thirteen she had started with ballet, then learnt jazz dance, and then explored lots of other things - from Flamenco to belly-dancing. She was really too thin to be a good belly-dancer. It wasn't any good if nothing wobbled, she knew that. But she really enjoyed the workshops she led at the dance school.

You must be mad, her heart whispered. Dropping everything for Kai! She swallowed. What if he didn't call? What if he was just saying that?

Then he wasn't worth it, she reminded herself, thinking about what Mamii had said, in Tehran, when she had showed her how to make halva. *In love, as in halva, you mustn't force anything*. It had to stay light and pliant. All in good time.

And that's why it was better to do her workshop tomorrow, and fill her body and soul with music. Plus there were ten students waiting for her, including two of her school friends.

Of course Kai would call her. Kai with his tousled blonde hair and luminous brown eyes. Kai, whose shirt was unbuttoned at the neck, so you could see his strong throat and imagine his muscular chest.

The neon stars twinkled at the memory of him. They shone into her heart, which only beat faster. Kai-Kai-Kai. With this rhythm pulsing through her veins, she fell asleep and forgot her parents' conversation, and Miryam's walk in the night. There was nothing but lips, doing what hands do.

(...)