

A short story "Pedicure-Pedigree"

Pedicure-Pedigree

"Beautiful... and what breed did you say it was?" Magda asked, snorting a bit and without lifting her eyes from what she was doing.

"Pekingese, my dear, Pekingese breed," Diana stressed the words on purpose and let her right foot rest on Magda's palm, who was rubbing it patiently while dipping it into hot water.

When the brownish dog understood that they were talking about it, goggled its eyes even more, proudly projected its exognathia and looked balefully at the basin. Then it lowered its head, sniffed it and jerked its face disgusted. Magda was rubbing the furrowed heels of her client with a special pumice and at the same time she was looking alternatively with the corner of her eye at the fat chords of her veins in her calves, which were about to burst any moment now from the heavy weight and fill the basin with their blue juice trickling down her legs, and the furry whirligig huffing like a bellows and filling with saliva whatever it could find, scattering hair and dust all over the place. She was allergic to animals and she had told her so. However, every twenty days, since Diana was a regular client, the same scene took place with the insensitive lady carrying the small furry devil with her to torture her, even though she knew her problem. And now her nose was itching unbearably, but since her hands were covered in soap it was impossible for her to scratch. She tried to think of something else, she remembered an article she had read on Sunday "Postman" about buddhists who during their meditation, nothing and nobody can distract their attention. She took the small bevel and started removing the unnecessary calluses, while sighs of relief could be heard from the one sitting on the armchair, and she was also shedding the frazzle from the skin and... how she wished she could scratch her nose... what a terrible itch! She started smalltalk again, so as to forget it.

"Pekingese, you said... very cute. And where did you find it?"

"Don't even mention it, those dogs cannot be found anywhere, my Lakis is not a plain Pekingese, it is an old and pure breed, from noble ancestors and he has a pedigree, that's why I don't trust anybody to leave him to and I always have him with me."

"Ah, OK," said Magda and stooped down over the basin again, while the little typhoon was jerking its tail right in front of her.

The deafening sneeze of the stooped Magda, created a slight tempest on the dirty water of the yellow basin and made the Pekingese hop up in the air and stay there hovering for a while like a furry ball, before it lands again all scared on the dirty mosaic floor and Diana eventually kick the basin along with her silver slipper to the other end of the store. Magda's fingers tightened around the bevel following the convulsion of her body. This was a spontaneous and very quick reaction and the right little toe of Mrs. Diana rocketed almost simultaneously with the droplets of saliva from her sneeze. Curious Lakis skidded on the soap water to see what exactly had happened and hungrily snatched the little toe and disappeared hurriedly from the open window door of the store.

Translated by Vassilis Manoussakis