

EXTRACT 5 – Guide

Although Brett wanted to ask Adam many questions, there were so many unknowns, no power could make him break the connection established between them at that moment. He heard a train coming in the distance. He felt joy and anxiety at the same time. What if Kala wasn't on this one either? He only had hope. Hope, the support of all those who are at the end of their tether. How many people lived with it, how many secretly fell back on it? He disliked the bitch. It meant that he could not influence things, that things were not in his power. Although it was dangerous, now he did not want to abandon it, couldn't, even if he wanted to. Seemingly nothing was happening, but Brett knew this could be the terminal station for them. There might never be any "after" for them.

The train stopped, and scores of people began to pour out on to the platform. He read expectation in some faces. Others looked resigned, as if they did not really want to get off. They stood around the platform, clearly avoiding joining some of the groups that were forming. Brett saw couples holding hands. He would have liked to know whether they also found one another behind the door when they lost their memory. He was looking at them and thought of Kala. Once she had asked him when he thought people would stop holding hands. Now he sincerely believed that some never did. Then someone took his hand. It was Adam, standing next to him. He was a small boy again. Adam looked at the other side of the platform. Brett did too, and then he saw Kala. She was standing on the platform, looking around. His heart was pounding. Thank God!

Kala tried in vain to find Adam among the crowds of people. Perhaps he wasn't there this time, she thought and felt anxious. She felt lost in the crowds of people milling around. Suddenly it was as if the whole station lit up. She heard her name and her heart began to pound. She turned and met Brett's gaze. She felt relieved and grateful at the same time. She waved merrily and ran towards him. Although she did not know what was waiting for her, she felt safe now.

He embraced her. "Kal, I am no character from Symbolion. I really am here."

Only now she was surprised. "Darling, you have another card?"

"Oh no. Greta got me here."

"Why are you here? Has anything happened?" she asked and looked at him uneasily. "We are in the underground, darling."

"Yes. That's clear," he smiled and looked around for Adam. But the boy was gone. "Kal, I'm supposed to be here. Things are happening."

"But you could melt," she said quietly.

"That won't happen." He pressed her to himself and whispered in her ear: "Listen only to your feelings. We will pass. I know it."

People with luggage were relatively better off. At least they could sit on their suitcases. Some were even preparing soup on portable cookers. He did not know how much time had elapsed since Kala had told him that they were to wait for the guide.

Brett was running out of patience. “How long are we supposed to wait? I don’t know about those people there, but we do not have much time.”

“No, we must wait. We were told that the guide will come for us. We must believe and wait.”

“They can believe and wait for anything they like. I’m not waiting any longer.”

“Brett, but he knows the way. He will lead us.”

“Who is the guide anyway? Who’s this guy? Maybe he’s forgotten about us.” He looked at her kindly. “Kal, maybe nobody will come. We must go alone.”

“But where do you want to go?”

“We’ll go through the tunnel.”

“What tunnel?”

Brett pointed to the other side of the platform.

“But darling, there’s no tunnel,” Kala said slowly.

“Honey, look at the wide opening. An elephant could dance through it.”

Kala looked back at him and shook her head.

Brett froze for a moment. Then he looked at the people on the platform and sighed. Here it comes. I am the guide.