

“Dedicated to our first love: ourselves”

CHAPTER 1.

I found in him my soulmate.

I used to think about different things when I was alone, especially the problem of saying “I love you”. How can some people say these powerful words dozens of times as if they had no consequences? How can I believe in love or even expect it if we live in a world of wars, of girls being raped and women being abused by their husbands? How could I say "I love you" to another person if perhaps I am not even able to love myself first. I've always been looking for someone to love me because I haven't been able to. This is the truth: everyone wants to be loved. But only a few know how or want to love. Oscar Wild once said:”To love oneself is the beginning of a lifelong romance”, maybe I'm just too afraid to start this love story.

I don't know what love is but I really wish wholeheartedly for you to find someone who understands your thoughts, not making them feel wrong, so that you won't have to spend the rest of your life translating your soul.

CHAPTER 2.

One morning, I was particularly tired and sleepy, so I decided to take a nice bath to clear my head. "Good morning, meet me in Central Park in an hour".

It was a message from Helio, a guy I had started dating, he wanted to see me. I got out of the bath and started to get ready, a little excited as I had always had a little crush on him.

"Let's go, are you ready?"

I approached him and he handed me another helmet.

"Wow it's...it's astonishing." while looking at his cool motorcycle.

"I'm glad we're on the same page, get on, I'll take you somewhere."

"Where are we going?"

"You'll see."

After about an hour or so we arrived at a wonderful and very famous beach, Coney Island in lower Brooklyn. Helio gave me a beautiful shell, took my hand and slowly got closer. My breathing grew faster, as did my heartbeat, with a small smile he kissed me, gently, sweetly, he was looking for my mouth and I for his, then he hugged me and stroked my hair, I smiled as I leaned my head against his chest and he kissed me on the forehead. Maybe at that very moment I understood a bit about what love was, that feeling that made me immensely afraid but that, in his arms, made me feel part of something magical. It was not a matter of the heart: my soul had fallen madly in love with his.

The day after, I got dressed in a hurry because I had some errands to run: I went to open the door when....I felt my eyes about to pop out of their sockets, I couldn't breathe, suddenly I felt a chill seep into my bones, I was motionless. It was him, it was back, it was Axel, my boyfriend who had left to study in London six months ago .

"Hi, sorry, I wasn't expecting you... I didn't think you'd be back yet."

"No, indeed, I should have stayed away a few more weeks but the truth is that I couldn't, not anymore. Would you like to talk a bit?"

"Yes, sure...but I have somewhere to go. Will you come with me?"

“We can meet up as soon as you are back, I'm going to visit my mother. Love you!”

CHAPTER 3.

My heart felt heavy and my mind was so fractious with thoughts that it seemed like there were only scribbles inside. How could I tell him that I was deeply in love with another ? I had to deliver some papers to my professor at his private office, which was located in one of the tallest skyscrapers in New York City. The stairs seemed to have an infinite number of steps, it would take me a lifetime, therefore I decided to take the elevator to reach the prearranged floor. As I watched the numbers increase the higher it went; I thought about how elevators were a bit like life; going up and down until you reach the final destination. I was there but my life, unfortunately, no longer existed. It was 8.45 a.m., there was a huge noise, the whole building shook, collapsed, I could hear people screaming, I was confused; at a certain point I felt emptiness: suddenly the elevator was in free fall.

September, 11th, 2001

I remembered a wonderful sentence a high school teacher once said: "What would you do if you had sixty seconds left to live?". At that time I was just over seventeen years old, I hadn't ever given any thought to the meaning of that statement but then, only when I actually had those sixty seconds of life left, I understood its importance: I simply thanked myself. I know that perhaps in your eyes this could seem selfish, but I vehemently believe that this is sometimes the difficulty of human beings: we live in a world and a society where we are forced to wear masks in order to appear what we are not, we are actors in our lives and no longer authors, is there anything sadder than that? So yes, I thanked myself: thank you for persevering in love even though you were aware that this would make you feel vulnerable, which doesn't mean being weak but just accepting to feel pain for something we believe in. Hence, dear readers, you can allow yourself to be wrong, you can fall in love as many times

as you want. There will be days when we look back on these kinds of problems and you'll have a laugh! Never forget that the love you feel for yourself is unconditional, it will never change so be brave enough to fall in love with who you really are.

Dear me, you're my soulmate.