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A Dream

by Vera Gajic

“A dream is what you wake up from Cathy not something you live your daily life in.”

“Mum, you say that because you lost your dream decades ago and your belief in yourself. Just because you didn’t achieve your dream doesn’t mean they don’t come true for some people.”

Mum pursed her lips to stop her saying something she might regret and looked out of the window at the garden she’d lovingly created for the two of them.

What was her dream at Cathy’s age – such an impressionable age, 16, you do think you can do anything; on the cusp of adulthood with the world and your whole life before you. She’d dreamt of being a singer, even writing her own songs maybe, which was a bit more problematic and she wasn’t a composer however hard she tried. She’d test out lyrics but they always seemed to sound like she’d got them from a soppy valentines card. When she’d first heard KD Lang on the radio she knew what she wanted to sound like, that was it, that was her.

She was surprised when she’d first seen her picture though and found out she was a lesbian. Maybe *she* was a lesbian, the idea appealed to her at first and she styled herself after her hero but wasn’t ready for getting chatted up by girls at bars and although she tried to like them that way it wasn’t going to work, particularly after she’d first set eyes on Tom. He was gorgeous but he didn’t like KD Lang, so her musical tastes changed quickly and it wasn’t long before she’d completely forgotten about KD Lang and her dreams of becoming a singer.

“Mum are you listening? You must have had dreams when you were my age, what happened to them? Still somewhere in the back of your mind gathering dust? I don’t want my dreams to be buried, I want to live my dream Mum. I need to do this.”

Mum looked at Cathy, she admired her determination, her willpower, drive and motivation. Where did she get it from? Not from her, how quickly she'd given up. She wished she was more like her but there was a distinct lack of realism in Cathy, was it just her age, would she grow out of it.

"Cathy darling I know you are following your dream but some dreams can't be followed, you have to wake up and get on with ordinary life, like I did. Smaller dreams like bringing up my daughter and having a home. And we can't fit any more animals in the garden, they are ruining it and we can't afford to buy them enough food, sorry darling but they have to go."

"Mum, I am starting my own zoo, it's my dream and you said you'd support me."

"But darling the neighbours are complaining about the peacocks and the Geese chase me every time I go out in the garden, my dream garden is turning into a mud bath."

"Mum, if the Durrells did it so can we."