

THE LAST LESSON

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. SCHOOL/CORRIDOR - DAY

Aunt MASHA is a woman advanced in years, but she has a "square" hairstyle fashionable among the youth. She walks slowly but firmly, gazing at the walls lined with timetables and photos of sports award winners.

MASHA

(muttering)

I've always hated school. Those stupid teachers! Those damned tests! I'll skip the lessons. It's good that today I know how to do it. If they call me up to the chalkboard, I'll say I have to go to the restroom. And I won't come back.

She opens a door and steps into -

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

THREE OLD WOMEN sit at their desks, wearing mini-skirts and large ribbons that hang from the remnants of their hair. THREE OLD MEN look up at Masha with curiosity.

MASHA

(muttering)

Hmph. Them again. So painfully familiar. Only now they are so... so old. Oh, how I hate you all.

They all laugh heartily, as if glad to be in each other's company.

MASHA (CONT'D)

They said I have to come here and study for another year to graduate from high school. But I'm not going to do that. I already have two diplomas from the Academy of Music. And no one can take them away from me.

(after short reflection)

Besides, I no longer need them now. To hell with them!

The former classmates laugh again.

LEIA, a fat woman with brightly painted lips, beckons to her old friend.

LEIA
 Sit with me! Let's have fun like
 in the old days!

Masha comes over and sits down next to Leia.

A TEACHER, a handsome lad in his mid-20s, enters and takes a seat at his desk. Wearing glasses, he looks studious and introverted as a young philosopher.

Masha swoons histrionically, gasping for breath.

MASHA
 (loudly)
 Oh, my God!

LEIA
 Are you okay?

MASHA
 Yes, just...
 (winking at her)
 It was an accidental orgasm.

Everybody giggles.

The Teacher lowers his eyes and reads from his book. His lips move silently.

MASHA (CONT'D)
 (sotto)
 Why does he speak so softly?

LEIA
 (sotto)
 He wants to save his voice. After
 this class, he has two more.

MASHA
 (sotto)
 Well, everything is clear. I can't
 stand it anymore.
 (suddenly loudly)
 Oh! Oh!

She quivers, again gasping for breath.

LEIA
 Again?

MASHA

(winking at her)

The moment I look at the teacher, I
have these contractions.

Everybody giggles again. Miss GOODY-GOODY, wearing a tie
over her neatly starched shirt, intervenes.

MISS GOODY-GOODY

(looking seriously)

Stop it, girls! Did you forget you
gave lessons yourself?

Everyone looks at her with compassion.

TEACHER

Buddha Shakyamuni...

A BUSTY WOMAN, whose bra size is enormous, jumps up and
starts reciting the lesson in a loud and monotonous voice.

BUSTY WOMAN

Buddha Shakyamuni was born... long
before our time... if you count
from the birth of Christ. But if
you count from the birth of
Moses... according to the Jewish
calendar... then it would be...

She stops and looks reproachfully at an OLD MAN WITH GLASSES,
who is sitting next to her, apparently her husband. Then she
hits him on his bald head.

BUSTY WOMAN (CONT'D)

Come on, help me! You know the
Jewish religion well!

BALD MAN

I've already forgotten everything.
I have dementia.

TEACHER

(harshly)

Stop this! No more outbursts. Or
I'll have to punish you!

BUSTY WOMAN

(lasciviously)

Punish me, teacher! Oh, punish me!

The Teacher fixes his gaze on his book. Miss Goody-Goody
gets up.

MISS GOODY-GOODY
Shakyamuni...

Her mouth opens and closes - she speaks.

The teacher listens. His eyes get bigger and bigger. He finally looks at Miss Goody-Goody with admiration.

Miss Goody-Goody sits down. All the students start banging their books on their desks, shouting at her.

STUDENTS
Hey, brainiac! Whoo-oo! You
suckup! Brown-noser! Apple
polisher! Whoo-oo-oo!

The Teacher jumps up, lowers his head, and quickly leaves the room.

A hunched-over old man with glasses and a gray beard appears in the doorway. Wearing a black hat, he looks like a RABBI.

LEIA
Now you've done it! It will be a
lot more boring now. If you play a
prank on him, he might have a heart
attack.

The Rabbi sits down.

RABBI
Shakyamuni--

LEIA
We all know about Shakyamuni! And
the other religious leaders, as
well. Tell us what we don't know.

RABBI
(hoarsely)
Who are you all?

MAN #1
I'm a nuclear physicist.

BUSTY WOMAN
I'm a microbiologist.

MAN #2
I won the Nobel Prize for cellular
research.

BALD MAN

I won something, too. Only now I
can't remember what.

MISS GOODY-GOODY

I was a high official in the Obama
Administration.

MASHA

Always this "I" and "I"... What a
childish folk!

LEIA

Stop bragging! Let him tell what
he wants!

The Rabbi clears his throat and unfolds his Torah.

RABBI

Then... Let us pray. Elohim
adonai...

As he sings, eyes closed, everyone slowly walks away. After
a while, the Rabbi opens his eyes, but no one is there.

RABBI (CONT'D)

I didn't hear the call for a break.

Confused, he taps on his hearing aid. Then he rolls up the
Torah, puts it in a plastic bag, and treads slowly to the
door. Suddenly a loud bell RINGS. The Rabbi stops.

RABBI (CONT'D)

Ah. Now that I can hear well.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Masha opens her eyes and sees that she's lying in a hospital
bed. All her old classmates have gathered around.

CHILD (O.S.)

Look! Aunt Masha woke up!

MISS GOODY-GOODY

Masha, do you recognize us? We're
all your relatives here!

Masha looks at them one by one as if recognizing them from
her dream. Her expression conveys that she now sees them in
a different light.

MASHA

Ha!

(pause)

Ha-ha-ha!

(pause)

Ha-ha-ha-ha!

She laughs as if struck by how ridiculous they all behaved. The others look around, nudge each other, and start to laugh, as well.

Gradually everyone laughs themselves to tears, not understanding why.

FADE OUT.

THE END