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Four stages of Anneliese Saison

Bill Chan

Anneliese Saison was in stage four now. A relentless and inescapable mess of unresolved history, a downpour of emotional energy crippling the final walls that held his sanity together.

‘Anna, there’s no unconditional love, no idyllic love.’

‘Please don’t say that. How about forever? How about always?’

‘There are only stages Anna, no heroism nor romance inherited. There is only a fool, a fool that sails against the currents to save the disorientated remnants of an ignorant imagination.’

Anneliese Saison was now just part of a meaningless and ambivalent rage belted across a room, sometimes in anger and other times beseeching, but always with a blunt emptiness and senseless resentment. The very word *Saison* may as well have been cast under an ancient witchery that gorged on the essence of love. For as far as Tom was concerned, it had amalgamated into a fabrication of deceit and broken promises, intertwined into the very raiment of Loki himself. After a while, Anna became more of an entity that traversed his mind. She waltzed around, instilled with a sort of pathetic childish ignorance, and reverberated a cacophony of an unintelligible disagreement, moving with gusto in the corners of his mind with no regard to the array of finely instilled crescendos and diminuendos.

Anneliese Saison in stage three was a dreary grey, a turbulent wash of feculence you would associate with the rampant runs through the gutters of a July morning. Even their conversations lacked the high-spirited effervescence they once shared. Anything they talked about eventually led back to Tom making up a comedic tale of what happened at Birchen Bank with either Billy or John, in a pathetic attempt to add a peculiar hue to their conversations. He didn't have to call her tonight because it was her turn to call him. He sat under the artificial, bleached candescent light with his phone placed on his right, near the drawer, as it had always been. Then, as he had so routinely done, he would take one last look at the parts of Anna that he had embellished his wall with before her name flashed on his phone screen. But recently, there was a pressing feeling of blunt emptiness at the end of his mind that irritated him. A dull thud of a door. The funny flick she would put on her 'Gs' in 'Saison' when she signed off her letters never quite grew on Tom. Perhaps it was the faded polaroid of Anna in the plain yellow dress donning an attempted country-looking fish plait, lying dead centre on his wall. Somehow it took on a more and more miserable appearance with each passing day. Tom was at the end of his tether now, despising how conversations always ended up in dead-end arguments and how Anna's voice imitated the high nasally voice of a deputy principal, or how she benightedly linked back the conversation to the time he had to cancel for the Innenstadt work conference. The phone started to ring now, vibrating against the rosewood like the sound of a summer evening. He left it there for a brief moment, then was compelled to pick it up.

Anneliese Saison's sturdy five-syllable name seemed to hold so much base and character in stage two. However, it had never occurred to Tom that he would see their colours clash, to see this opaque blue cascade of worry and ruin painted across her face. For the first time, this little piece of perfection seemed to be stripped away from him.

‘Anna you’re really running up my wall now. The boss called and I have to be at Innenstadt. We can’t go to Monastic Island. That’s final.’

‘You’re so pathetic Tom, You made a promise to me.’

‘I’m sorry Anneliese Saison — *Leichter gesagt als getan.*’

But against all the odds, Anna came back, sprawled across the front of his apartment block on a Thursday evening that in a way made some resemblance to last week’s laundry. Anneliese Saison’s mascara smeared across her face, just as the American Indians were similarly adorned in spectacular stories that adults would tell their children, of dark-skinned men who learnt how to stand on horses and women whose hair was as glossy and black as magpies’ feathers. As she attempted to pull herself up she immediately fell back, with a clumsy step that transitioned into a lazy pirouette. She tumbled around in a half conscious state till he caught her in his arms. And for a moment there, as he felt the bleak coldness of her skin against his, their chests heaved in a melodic rhythmic unison.

Anneliese Saison arrived on a clear night, unaware of stage one. She wore a sheepish smile, twirling her country-looking fish plait with one finger, the other arm arched protectively behind her back. She was vulnerable and disposed, similarly to Tom, who stumbled over every sentence that took more than a heartbeat and an exhaled breath to get out. But, as the evening took on a more mature undertone, it left behind a lingering, sporadic smell of *Schwedleri Maples*, an essence of earth and wilderness. Their pockets and shoes began to fill with a strange and rich energy, sapping the splendour of the argent halo that hung so perfectly still by a thread among the dark canvas of blue and beguile. Tom’s mind tried to string together a collection of words in an attempt to illustrate the beauty he saw within Anna. But all he managed to do was part his lips ever so slightly and just enough for a slight wisp of air to escape. He followed this wisp of air as it found its way towards Anna. They began to speak in an uncommunicable language of

their own, a frenzy of fluorescent yellows and muted salmons
unable to escape this trance of immortality.

‘Forever’s a long time.’

‘How about always?’

‘Tom, that means exactly the same thing’

‘Then I want to be in this dream state, forever and always.’



Bill Chan wrote this in 2014 when he was in Year 11 at North
Sydney Boys High School in New South Wales.