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Birthday girl haruki murakami pdf download

One rainy Tokyo night, a bumpy 20th birthday waitress takes a strange and fateful turn when she is asked to deliver dinner to the reclusive restaurant owner. Birthday girl beguiling, exquisitely satisfying taste master storytelling, published in honor of Murakami's 70th birthday. (From the penguin) I can't stop thinking about the story of Haruki Murakami, The Named Girl. The setting begins in an Italian restaurant and then it moves to room 604 of the same building. The room overlooks the steel frame of the Tokyo Tower, while outside the wind gushes raindrops that tap unevenly on the window pane. A waitress who had her 20th birthday was asked to bring dinner to the restaurant owner, a job usually reserved for a manager who suddenly fell ill. After she puts her food for him on a plastic laminate coffee table, the owner asks her to stay for a moment because he has something to tell her. Happy Birthday, he said. Let you live a rich and fruitful life, and let there be nothing to cast dark shadows on it. Let there be nothing to cast a dark shadow on it: she silently repeated her remark to herself. Why did he choose such unusual words for her birth wish? Maybe it's because the girl is so young, only twenty; perhaps she can be ingingling out desires that will not darken the years ahead of her. However, which of us can avoid the consequences of our desires without being able to see what they will bring? He then makes it clear that he wants to give her a gift, although this makes her uncomfortable. The look of the present I mean is not something tangible, not something with a price. Simply put -- he laid his hands on the table and made one long, slow breath - what I would do for such a beautiful young fairy as you, is a desire you could have to make your wish come true. No problem. All you want is assuming that you have such a desire. This girl had nothing special all day long, and no one even wished her a happy birthday, so she would make a wish. Although we are not told what she wants, we are told that this is not what an ordinary girl might wish. She didn't want to get prettier, smarter or richer. Whatever she wanted, she later tells the unnamed narrator that it did, and it didn't come true. I still have a long way to go, I guess. I haven't seen how things will work through. When this narrator asks her if she regrets what she wanted, she replies that she is married now, with two children, an Irish setter and an Audi with a crumpled bumper. Is this the answer to a desire? It could be. Or maybe desires can't be fulfilled after all. What I'm trying to tell you is that she said more gently, scratching her earlobe. beautiful-shaped earlobes. No matter what they want, no matter how far they go, people can never be anything but themselves. That's it. So, as you can see, this story is only seven pages long with many meanings. Once again, Murakami leaves us wide open to opportunity. But I like to think of the mysterious mood he was portraying, that a fastidious person can satisfy one's desire, and prevail over all of this, we can never be anything but ourselves. Since my birthday at the end of the month, I had to read his story, Birthday Girl. (It's available to read online here.) She was waiting on the tables, as usual, that day, her 20th birthday. She always worked on Fridays, but if everything went according to plan, that particular Friday, she'd have a day off. Another part-time girl agreed to switch shifts with her as a matter of course: yelling at an angry chef while lugging pumpkin gnocchi and seafood fritto to customers' tables wasn't a normal way to spend his 20th birthday. But another girl aggravated the cold and went to bed with irresistible diarrhea and fever 104, so she ended up running eventually in short order. She found that she was trying to comfort a sick girl who called to apologize. Don't worry, she said. I'm not going to do anything special anyway, even if it's my 20th birthday. And in fact she wasn't all that disappointed. One of the reasons was the terrible argument she had a few days ago with a guy who was supposed to be with her that night. They go along with high school, and the dispute started with nothing special. But he took an unexpected turn for the worse, until he became a long and bitter shout of a match-one bad enough, she was sure to cut off their long-standing bond once and for all. Something inside her turned rock-hard and died. He didn't call her after the explosion, and she wasn't going to call him. Her workplace was one of the most famous Italian restaurants in the Tony Roppongi district of Tokyo. He has been in business since the late sixties, and although his kitchen is hardly a leading edge, his high reputation was fully justified. He had a lot of repeat clients and they were never disappointed. The dining room had a calm, relaxed atmosphere with no hint of assertiveness. Instead of a young crowd, the restaurant drew older customers that included some famous stage people and writers. Two full-time waiters worked six days a week. She and another part-time waitress were students who took turns working three days each. Also, there was one floor manager and, in the register, a skinny middle-aged woman who had allegedly been there since the restaurant opened - literally sitting in one seemed like some grim old character from Little Dorrit. She's She exactly two functions: accept payment from guests and answer phone calls. She spoke only when she needed to, and always wore the same black dress. There was something cold and difficult about her: if you set her afloat at night by the sea, she could probably sink any boat that happened to ram her. The floor manager was perhaps in his late forties. Tall and broad-shouldered, his build suggested that he was an athlete in his youth, but excess flesh is now starting to accumulate on his stomach and chin. His short, tight hair was thinning for the crown, and the special aging bachelor smell clung to him like a newspaper paper that was stored while in a drawer with cough drops. She had a bachelor uncle who smelled like that. The manager was always dressed in a black suit, a white shirt and a bow tie - not a bow tie, but a real thing tied by his hand. It was a proud moment for him that he could tie it perfectly without looking in the mirror. His job was to check the arrival and departure of guests, take into account the situation with reservations, know the names of regular customers, greet them with a smile, provide a respectful ear to complaints of any customers, provide expert advice on wines and oversee the work of waiters and waitresses. He deftly performed his duties day in and day out. It was also his special task to deliver dinner to the restaurant owner's room. The owner had his own room on the sixth floor of the same building where the restaurant was, she said. An apartment or an office or something. Somehow she and I stood up to the theme of our twenties birthdays - what a day it was for each of us. Most people remember the day they turned twenty. It happened more than a decade ago. He never, ever showed his face in a restaurant, however. The only one who saw him was the manager. It was strictly his job to deliver the owner's dinner to him. None of the other employees knew what he looked like. Thus, basically, the owner received home delivery from his own restaurant. That's right, she said. Every night at eight the manager had to bring dinner to the owner's room. It was the busiest restaurant time, so when the manager disappeared only then there was always a problem for us but there was no way around it because it was the way it was always done. They loaded dinner onto one of those carts that hotels use for room service, the manager pushes him onto the elevator, dressed in respectful glance on his face, and fifteen minutes later he returned empty-handed. Then, an hour later, he would come up again and knock down a trolley with empty plates and glasses. Like clocks, every day. I thought it was really weird when I first saw it happen. It was like some kind of religious ritual, After a while I got used to him, though, and never gave him him Thoughts. The owner always had chicken. The recipe and vegetable sides were a little different every day, but the main course was always chicken. A young chef once told her that he tried to send up the same exactly fried chicken every day for a week just to see what would happen, but there was never any complaint. Of course, the chef wants to try different ways of cooking things, and every new chef will challenge himself with every technique for chicken that he could think of. They'd make elegant sauces, they'd try chickens from different suppliers, but none of their efforts had any effect: they could just as well have thrown pebbles into an empty cave. Each of them gave up and sent the owner some really standard chicken dishes every day. That's all they've ever been asked to do. Work began, as usual, on her 20th birthday, November 17. It's been raining on and off since the afternoon, and it's been pouring since early evening. At five o'clock the manager brought the staff together to explain the special day. Servers had to memorize them word for word and not use cribs: Milanese pulp, pasta with sardines and cabbage, chestnut mousse. Sometimes the manager takes a part of the client and check them with questions. Then came the food staff: the waiters in this restaurant weren't going to have snarling stomachs as they stood there, taking customer orders! The restaurant opened its doors at six o'clock, but guests were in no hurry to arrive due to the downpour, and several reservations were simply cancelled. Women didn't want their dresses to be ruined by the rain. The manager walked tight-lly, and the waiters killed off the time polishing salt and pepper shakers or chatting with the chef about cooking. She toured the dining room with one couple at the table and listened to the harpsichord music streaming unnoticed from the ceiling speakers. The deep smell of late autumn rain worked its way into the restaurant. It was after seven or thirty, when the manager began to feel sick. He came across a chair and sat for a while and pressed against his stomach, as if he had been shot. Fat sweat clung to his forehead. I think I should go to the hospital, he muttered. For him, health problems were the most unusual phenomenon: he had never missed a single day since he started working at this restaurant more than a decade ago. It was another moment of pride for him that he had never been with illness or injury, but his painful grimace made it clear that he was in very bad shape. She went outside with an umbrella and welcomed a taxi. One of the waiters kept the manager steady and climbed into the car with him to take him to the nearest hospital. Before diving into the cockpit, the manager told her hoarsely: I want you to take dinner up to room 604 at eight o'clock. All need to do, is to ring the bell, say: Your dinner is here, and leave it. It's room 604, isn't it? She said. At eight o'clock, he repeated. On point. He grimaced again, climbed in, and the taxi took him. The rain showed no signs of putting in place after the manager left and customers arrived at long intervals. No more than one or two tables were occupied at the time, so if the manager and one waiter were to be absent, it was a good time for that to happen. Things could be so busy that it was not unusual even for full staff to have trouble coping. When the host's meal was ready at eight o'clock, she pushed the room service trolley onto the elevator and drove up to the sixth floor. It was standard food for him: half a bottle of red wine with a cork loosened, a thermal pot of coffee, a chicken dish with steamed vegetables, dinner rolls, and butter. The heavy aroma of the cooked chicken quickly filled the small elevator. It mingled with the smell of rain. Water droplets dotted the floor of the elevator, suggesting that someone with a wet umbrella had recently been on board. She pushed the trolley down the hallway, bringing it to a stop in front of the door marked 604. She double-checked her memory: 604. That's it. She cleared her throat and pressed the button at the door. There was no answer. She stood still for a good twenty seconds. Just as she was thinking of pushing the bell again, the door opened inside and a gaunt old man appeared. It was shorter than it was, about four or five inches. He was wearing a dark suit and tie. Against the backdrop of his white shirt, the tie stood out for its brown-and-yellow colouring, like a candlestick of leaves. He made a very clean impression, his clothes are perfectly pressed, his gray hair smoothed: he looked as if he was going to go out for a night at a meeting. The deep wrinkles that creased her forehead made her think of deep ravines in the aerial photograph. Your supper, sir, she said in a hoarse voice, and then quietly cleared her throat again. Her voice grew hoarse whenever she was tense. Dinner? Yes sir. The manager suddenly got sick. I had to take his place today. Your food, sir. Oh, I see, said the old man, almost as if talking to himself, his hand still sitting on the doorknob. He's sick, isn't he? You don't say. His stomach began to hurt him all of a sudden. He went to the hospital. He thinks he may have appendicitis. Oh, that's not good, said the old man, running his fingers through the wrinkles of his forehead. Not good at all. She cleared her throat again. Should I bring your food, sir? She asked. Yes, of course, said the old man. Yes, of course, if you like. That's fine with me. If I want to? she thought. What a strange way to say. What should I wish? Old man door the rest of the way, and she wheeled the cart inside. The floor was covered with a short gray carpet with no area to remove the shoes. The first room was a great study, as if the apartment was more of a workspace than a residence. The window looked out at the Tokyo Tower nearby, its steel skeleton laid out in the lights. A large table stood by the window, and next to the table was a compact sofa and a love seat. The old man pointed to a plastic laminate coffee table in front of the sofa. She arranged his meal on the table: a white napkin and silverware, a coffee pot and a cup, wine and a glass, bread and butter, and a plate of chicken and vegetables. If you were kind enough to set dishes in the hall as usual, sir, I'd come to get them in an hour. Her words seemed to snap him out of the grateful contemplation of his supper. Oh, yes, of course. I'll put them in the hallway. On a cart. In an hour. If you want to. Yes, she answered internally, at the moment that's exactly what I want. Is there anything else I can do for you, sir. No, I don't think so, he said after a minute's review. He was wearing black shoes that were polished to a high sheen. They were small and gorgeous. He's a stylish dresser, she thought. And he stands very straight for his age. Well, then, sir, I'll get back to work. No, wait a minute, he said. Sir? Do you think it might be possible for you to give me five minutes of your time, miss? I have something I'd like to tell you. He was so polite in his request that it made her blush. I am... think everything should be ok, she said. I mean, if it's really just five minutes. After all, he was her employer. He paid her hours. It was not a matter of giving her or taking it for time. And this old man didn't look like a man who would do something bad to her. By the way, how old are you? asked the old man, standing at the table with his hands folded and looking straight into her eyes. I'm in my twenties, she said. Twenty now, he repeated, narrowing his eyes, as if peering into some crack. Twenty now. On the other hand, when? Well, I just turned 20, she said. After a moment of hesitation, she added: Today is my birthday, sir. I can see that. He said, rubbing his chin as if it had explained a lot. Today, isn't it? Is today your 20th birthday? She nodded silently. Your life in this world began exactly twenty years ago today. Yes, sir, she said, it's true. I see it, he said. That's great. Well, then, happy birthday. Thank you very much, she said, and then it dawned on her that it was the first time all day that someone wished her a happy birthday. Of course, if her parents had called from Oita, she might have found a message from them on her machine when she got home after work. Well, well, that's certainly a cause for celebration,' he said. How about a little toast? We can drink this red wine. Thank you, sir, but I couldn't. I'm working now. Oh, what's the harm in a little sip? No one's going to blame you if I say it's all right. Just a symbolic drink to celebrate. The old man slipped the cork out of the bottle and dripped some wine into his glass for her. Then he took a regular glass from a glass cupboard and poured some wine for himself. Happy Birthday, he said. Let you live a rich and fruitful life, and let there be nothing to cast dark shadows on it. Let there be nothing to cast a dark shadow on it: she silently repeated her remark to herself. Why did he choose such unusual words for her birth wish? Your 20th birthday comes only once in your life, Miss. It's an irreplaceable day. Yes, sir, I know, she said, taking one cautious sip of wine. And here, on your special day, you took it upon yourself to deliver my dinner to me as a kind-hearted fairy. Just doing my job, sir. But still, said the old man with a few quick shakes of his head. But still, a lovely young miss. The old man sat down in a leather chair at his desk and pointed to her on the sofa. She gently lowered herself to the edge of the sofa, with a glass in her hand. Knees aligned, she pulled the skirt, clearing her throat again. She saw raindrops tracking lines down the window pane. The room was strangely quiet. Today just happens to be your 20th birthday, and on top of that, you brought me this wonderful warm meal, the old man said, as if to confirm the situation. He then put his glass on his desktop with a slight stroke. It's got to be some kind of special rapprochement, isn't it? Not quite convinced she managed to nod. That's why, he said, touching the knot of a tie withered, I feel that it's important for me to give you a birthday present. A special birthday requires a special commemorative gift. Excited, she shook her head and said, No, please, sir, don't give him a second thought. All I did was bring your food the way they ordered me. The old man raised both hands, palms to her. No, miss, don't give him a second thought. The look of the present I mean is not something tangible, not something with a price. Simply put -- he laid his hands on the table and made one long, slow breath - what I would do for such a beautiful young fairy as you, is a desire you could have to make your wish come true. No problem. All you want is assuming that you have such a desire. Wish? She asked, her throat dry. Something you'd like to have Miss. If you have a desire, one wish, I will make it come true. It's the kind of birthday present I can give you. But you better think about it very carefully, because I can only give you one . He lifted one finger into the air. Just one. You can't change your mind after that and take it back. She was a loser because of words. One wish? Whipped by the wind, raindrops knocked unevenly on the window pane. While she was silent, the old man looked into her eyes without saying anything. Time marked his irregular pulse in his ears. I have to wish for something, and will it be provided? Instead of answering her question, the old man, his hands still side by side on the table, just smiled. He did it in the most natural and amiable way. Do you have a wish, miss or not? He asked softly. It really happened,' she said, looking directly at me. I don't make it up. Of course not, I said. So... Do you have a desire? She kept looking at me for a while and then let out a tiny sigh. Don't get me wrong, she said. I didn't take it 100 percent seriously myself. I mean, at twenty, you don't live in a fairytale world anymore. If it was his idea of a joke though, I had to pass it on to him for coming up with it on the spot. He was a dapper old man with a twinkle in his eye, so I decided to play along with him. It was my 20th birthday, after all: I realized that I must have something wrong usually happening to me that day. It wasn't about faith or faith. I nodded without saying anything. You can understand how I felt, I'm sure. My 20th birthday is coming to an end with nothing special going on, no one wishes me a happy birthday, and all I do is holding a tortellini with anchovies sauce to people's tables. I nodded again. Don't worry, I said. So I'm in charge. The old man kept his eyes fixed on her, saying nothing, his hands still on the table. Also on the table were a few thick folders that may have been book accounts, as well as a written implementation, a calendar, and a green-hued lamp. Lying among them, his little hands looked like another set of table furniture. The rain kept beating on the glass, the lights of the Tokyo Tower filtering through the shattered drops. The wrinkles on the old man's forehead deepened slightly. Is that your wish? Yes, she said. That's my wish. A little unusual for a girl your age, he said. I was expecting something different. If it's not good, I'll wish for something different,' she said, clearing her throat. I don't mind. I'll think of something else. No, no, said the old man, raising his hands and waving them like flags. There's nothing wrong with that. it's not at all. It's just a little amazing, miss. You don't have anything else? For example, do you want to be prettier, smarter or richer? Are you okay, not wanting something like this the ordinary girl would ask for? She took advantage of some moments to look for the right words. The old man was just waiting, without saying anything, his hands resting together on the table again. Of course, I would like to be prettier or smarter or richer. But I really can't imagine what would happen to me if any of these things came true. They could be more than I could handle. I still don't know what life is. I don't know how it works. I see, said the old man, twisting his fingers and dividing them again. I can see that. So, is my wish okay? Of course, he said. Of course. It's not a problem for me. The old man suddenly fixed his eyes on the spot in the air. Wrinkles on his forehead deepened: they may have been the wrinkles of the brain itself as he focused on his thoughts. He seemed to be staring at something, perhaps all but invisible bits down, floating in the air. He opened his arms wide, rose slightly from his chair and whipped his palms along with a dry smack. Settling into the chair again, he slowly ran with his fingertips on his wrinkled forehead, as if to soften them, and then turned to her with a gentle smile. It did it, he said. Your wish has been granted. Already have? Yes, it wasn't any problem at all. Your wish was granted, lovely miss. Happy birthday. You can go back to work now: Don't worry, I'll put the trolley in the hall. She took the elevator to the restaurant. Empty-handed now, she felt almost anxious light, as if she were walking on some mysterious fluff. Are you okay? You look in space, the younger waiter told her. She gave him an ambiguous smile and shook his head. Oh, really? No I'm fine. Tell me about the owner. What's he like? I don't know, I didn't get a very good look at it,' she said, shortening the conversation short. An hour later she went to bring the basket down. It was in the lobby, the dishes in place. She lifted the lid to find the chicken and vegetables gone. The bottle of wine and the carafe of coffee were empty. The door to room 604 stood there closed and inexpressive. She looked at him for a while, feeling as if he might open at any moment, but he did not open. She pulled the trolley down the elevator and put it in the dishwasher. The chef looked at the plate, empty as always, and nodded blankly. I never saw my owner again, she said. Not once. The manager turned out to have a common stomach pain and returned to deliver the owner's food again himself the next day. I quit my job after the New Year, and I never went back to my place. I am know, I just felt it was better not to go near, kind of like a foreboding. She played with a paper coaster, thinking that her own thoughts. Sometimes I feel like everything that happened to me on my 20th birthday was some kind of illusion. As if something had happened to make me think that things had happened that never happened. But I do know that they did happen. I can still return vivid images of every piece of furniture and every trinket in room 604. What happened to me there really happened, and it was important to me as well. We were silent for a long time, drinking drinks and thinking about our individual thoughts. Do you mind if I ask you one thing? I asked. Or, more precisely, two things. Go straight, she said. I think you're going to ask me what I wanted for that time. This is the first thing you want to know. But it looks as if you don't want to talk about it. Don't you? I nodded. She put down the coaster and narrowed her eyes, as if looking at something in the distance. You don't have to tell anyone what you like, you know. I'm not going to try to get him out of you, I said. And also - whatever the desire itself - whether you regretted later what you decided to wish for. Do you ever wish you wanted something different? The answer to the first question is yes, and also no. I haven't seen how things will work through. So it was a desire that took time to come true? You could say that. Time will play an important role. How do you prepare certain dishes? She nodded. I thought about it for a moment, but the only thing that came to mind was the image of a giant pie slowly cooking in the oven over low heat. And the answer to my second question? What was it again? Whether you ever regretted choosing what you wanted. A few minutes of silence ensued. The eyes she turned to me seemed to lack depth. A dried-up shadow of smile flickered over her wishing mouth, giving me a sort of muffled sense of resignation. I'm married now,' she said. For CPA, three years older than me. And I have two children, a boy and a girl. We have an Irish setter. I drive an Audi and I play tennis with my girlfriends twice a week. This is the life I live now. Sounds very good to me, I said. Hey, the bumpers are made for a dent. It could be a big bumper sticker,' she said. Bumpers for a dent. I looked at her mouth when she said it. What I'm trying to tell you is, she softer, scratching the earlobe. It was a beautiful earlobe. No matter what they want, no matter how far they go, people can never be anything but themselves. That's it. There's another good bumper sticker, I said. No matter how far they go, people can never be anything but themselves. She laughed aloud, with a real show of pleasure, and the shadow disappeared. She put her elbow on the bar and looked at me. Tell me, she said. What would you like if you were in my position? On the night of my 20th birthday, you mean? Ah, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, It took me a while to think about it, but I couldn't think of a single wish. I can't think of anything, I confessed. You really can't think of anything? I nodded. Not a single thing? Not a single thing. She looked me in the eye again and said, It's because you've already put your wish in your own way. Wish. birthday girl haruki murakami pdf download

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