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In Memory of Ezra

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In Memory of Ezra

Memory is a liar.

Not with malicious intent. Memory does a little hair and make up to take selfies and then applies 4 different filters so you can write captions that say “woke up like this” or hashtag “team natural.”

Memory wants to be seen in the best light is all, so when you pull out your phone to reminisce next week or a hundred years from now this will be the picture you see. This will be the beginning of a narrative you control.

You walk 6 blocks, climb 42 stairs to the platform, board and ride the train. You pass the time looking out the window as the scenery becomes a fast shutter, frame by frame blur, like the beginning of a movie shot on 35mm film.

Traveling through the subway tunnels is like being underwater. You are submerged into darkness holding your breath, eyes shut so tight they sting, your body weightless being propelled forward by motion. And then there is light, sudden and almost blinding. You gasp for air; you can breathe now.

You take inventory of what you have become, making sure all the pieces made it out of the tunnel intact:

mole skin notebook covered in ink from a failed attempt at fountain pen use, its pages filled with random thoughts;

a worn cordovan leather backpack found discarded in a thrift store on Broadway traded for a moss green pea coat made of itchy wool that smelled of mothballs;

a pair of Doc Martens (navy not black) broken in over the summer with an \$20-dollar bill tucked in the heel for emergencies;

a trendy sundress, new bought on clearance and worn for the very first time,

your mother’s eyes, your father’s hair...

You’re interesting... Ezra said on more than one occasion. Interesting was something he knew intimately.

Ezra, tall with an easy way of speaking in languid tones so round and deep, almost melodic like classic old school R&B tunes. He underdressed deliberately except for ridiculously expensive shoes. He said it was because he had size 15 feet, but you knew it was because he only liked playing poor.

Interesting...

More thoughtful than kind, Ezra gave you books you should read, music you had to hear, bought you pistachio shortbread dipped in white chocolate; And offered opinions on philosophy, politics, and art like gifts in large boxes, wrapped in beautiful foil embossed paper tied with silk ribbons and he found you of all people...

Interesting.

You had a vibe, a cool thing, soft and comforting that Ezra wrapped himself around enveloping, molding the two of you into something like the secret language of twins playing in warm tall summer grass, sharing gentle riptides of laughter between perfect silences.

Interesting...

You wonder sometimes what becomes of interesting girls. What do they grow up to be?

Ezra anticipates your arrival with 4 shots of hot espresso poured over ice. You sit together drinking coffee when Ezra spots an older couple across the street walking hand and hand. Tell me their story...

How long have they know each other, Ezra asks?

They just started dating last year. You say and Ezra smiles.

He loves this game.

You look at him now on yellow paper that smells of lavender and time. Deep perfect creases have formed from the tight folding of safe keeping, creating seams that are beginning to come undone from holding close a fading image of YOU as you were once.

This is Memory well loved.

Ronda L. Crawford