

Thinking of Sundown

by Aurora Hunt

I wanted to remember when the December snow was falling, covering me in flakes, and he called me a snow angel as we walked the aisle.

It is impossible to tell the time in this weather, as if the sky were covered in a layer of dust, unused for years. That's what I hate the most about it. It could be six in the morning or seven in the evening, and all that changes would be a slight shade of grey. Charcoal night isn't much better, and it's cold, so it comes even earlier now.

I wanted to remember how he felt about me, how our hearts were connected, how it hurt so terribly to watch him drift away on the Torpoint ferry. He was going to see family, he said. It was a business trip, he said. It was a friend's stag-do, he said. He twisted into mist as he crossed the river mouth, and I saw him as the silhouette of a man he had always been.

I wanted to remember running around the Guildhall at 2am that night, laughing and falling over each other in the echoes of Ker Street, the buildings watching with their dripping eyeshadow, bags of exhaustion.

It all feels painted: the air, the listless apartments, even the gulls overhead seem like still-life facades of the real thing. Reality fading on the canvas. Behind me, stones pile up like eyes. They glare until I feel naked, picked apart by their ferocity, and shiver in the chill. There isn't any wind, for once. There isn't a single leaf left to fall from the trees nearby, and I fall all the same.

I wanted to remember the text messages and the snide smiles and the laughing moments from the kitchen while I wasn't there. I wanted to remember the house alert and the early drive home and the clichéd, almost rehearsed, sounds of music coming from the bedroom, where ghosts of our past watched on the walls. I wanted it to be easier.

He said he was going to tell me after the cinema. But things kept getting in the way, he said, my birthday and her birthday and our anniversary and her dog died. Just kept running off to Torpoint - let him run. He let his golden promise wear into his fingers, rub raw his liar's skin and leave him itching for redemption.

He reached out his hand to me. I wanted to take it.

I wanted so much that I'm still waiting for him, because it aches to let go. His heart still beats so thoroughly with mine that to sever our link would be to die - I want to put on a brave face, for no-one, and stare down the road. I still don't know what time it is, but I know he is late. He won't ever arrive, likely already forgetting I ever kissed him, loved him, needed him, entwined in the arms of a second woman.

Now I want to forget, but, now, I can't.