

Victoria (11 White)

Only one memory comes to mind.

Memories, he thought, are a treat best enjoyed alone. When one is virtually alone, he corrects himself. They are something that must be shared with others in the same way that a passing grin may; it provides temporary pleasure, but the love behind it will remain unknown. He was full of memories, old and fresh, young and elderly, pleasant and terrible. His recollections were not all that meaningful to him. He didn't want to dwell in his memories since it would make him miserable and pitiful, labelling him as someone who had nothing left to live for. He exhaled a sigh. It had taken every ounce of strength he had left to get here; to this park, to this bench.

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Love is sweet, but not in the same way that sweets or confectionery is sweet. Love is more colourful than the neon lights of frantic city streets as summer blooms. It allows us to fly so freely, returning gleefully when each heart yearns for the other's touch.

"I prefer London parks at night," she whispered, putting her head on his chest.

The depth of the sky's blue is similar to our love. It's as transparent as pure water up close, but when we see it from afar, it's the blue of storybook fantasies.

"I like the sky's blue tint." He murmured,

"I like the sound."

"Listen. It rumbles and purrs like a sleeping cat."

"I'm aware of that."

"Do you want to kiss me?"

"Not yet," she says.

As if they were lovers in an everlasting trance, the tree leans towards the sun's rays. They are the heart and soul of this early summer morning, and I'm curious how many different shades of green I'm seeing. I raise my arms up, fingers stretched toward the sun, and slowly begin to dance as they stretch upwards and outwards toward the light, taking in rays as pure as rain.

She cried as she continued, "Our tree, our park, our night. It reminds me of home."

"You gave yourself to me."

"I was hoping to."

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Underneath the tree, an old man stood. He'd been coming here every week for a year, at the same hour and he'd been alone every night. He had no idea why. The park caretakers had put a bench under the tree two weeks before. The bench was a peaceful wood daydream, snuggled in the peaceful park, dreaming upward to the sky of blue and grey woolly warmth. There was a plaque on it that read: "To our sweetheart. She was far too young." It made him feel frightened.

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The plaque had become worn, rubbed smooth by the backs of all those who had leaned against it over the past sixty years. He believed that memories were overrated. At the very least, the majority of them were. It was growing colder, and he was running out of energy. As the sun set, the orange lights of London warmed the sky. He closed his eyes and sat down on the bench.

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The man eyed the bench with sadness. When he was found, he had no identification, no way of knowing who he was or where he had come from. He was dressed nicely, unlike the usual

suspects you would encounter after a cold night in the park. A small piece of paper had been clutched in his hand. It was tied in a bow. Two words were written on it.

"I'm home."

(600 words)