

Kelsey Mooney

Untitled

Once again, I sat next to the window in my room. Up on my bed, I looked out the large window next to me, with the long, dark purple drapes that framed each side like hair framing a face. My bed was colder somehow. The quilt that lay at the end of the bed, where I was sitting, was worn and weathered where you used to accompany me. This is the only spot which has never neglected to be the one place I could count on to be as comforting today as it was the day you left. This was our spot. This is where we spent most of our time and have built most of our favorite memories. Today, it is where I noticed it was raining again. I took a deep breath and allowed my imagination to wander. Through my window, I could see lightning light up the dark grey sky as if to silently announce the performance that was about to unveil. Thunder followed shortly after, using its booming instrument to draw attention towards a direction I assumed it had intended my eyes to follow. Next, the wind began to whistle a familiar, happy tune, rattling the glass into a harmonious chorus. Each droplet of water from the rain then danced across the pane in what appeared to be a performance just for me. Though it was beautiful, it wasn't enough to help fade the pain that lingered deep within me.

I often imagined such things, on days like this, in an attempt to distract myself from the memories of you. It's hard not to want to pretend on rainy days, especially like this one. Today it is raining just as hard, and storming just as it was the day you left; there is even a light, eerie fog hovering just about the grass in my front yard. The last time a day like this happened, I became so miserable that I locked myself in my room, and vowed never to eat or drink again until you returned. The pretending seems to have helped with such dark days since then.

To be honest, I don't know why I bother distracting myself when I know I'm waiting at the very spot that reminds me the most of you. There's not a day that goes by that I don't spend the majority of my time by this window, hugging my legs tightly, hoping today is going to be the day that, finally,

you will return. I know mother worries about me. I try to reassure her that I'm fine, but she hates how I glue myself to the window, day after day. "It's not healthy," she reminds me. I can't count the number of times she has urged me to move on – assured me that there will be others. "*Others*," she says – as if you could ever be replaced. I don't care what mother says. I know it's only a matter of time now before I can hold you in my arms again. We've come too far and spent too much time with one another to give up hope now. I know, deep down inside, that you love me. And I know, that you know, that I love you too. Every time I was with you I could see it in your big, dark brown eyes. They are one of the things I have always loved most about you. You could always say more to me with your eyes than you ever could speaking.

These nights have been colder since you left. I can't tell you how much I miss never having to say anything when I was cold. You always knew exactly when I needed you to scoot in just a little bit closer to get me warm again. I remember how you never cared how close you got to me when I was sick, or how silly I looked surrounded by the castle I had built of wadded up tissues and toilet paper rolls. You were always the first one in line, even then, to give me a kiss. So many nights I have cried on your shoulder, and you always took the time to listen to every word I had to say, without judging – a courtesy I have never received from any of my friends. These sorts of memories are the ones that keep me waiting for you – every day. I know you want to come back. Honestly, I don't think you ever meant to leave. You couldn't have intentionally known what you were doing, or you would never have left me here.

Suddenly, I felt something warm and wet drag across my foot. Startled, I jumped up. I must've zoned out because the sun was out now, and the dampness from the rain had been almost completely dried away – that is, everywhere except for my foot. I looked down to find the culprit, who had accidentally been knocked over in my surprise, on his back on the floor. All four legs were up in the air, kicking frantically, and his unusually large tongue was dangling freely out the side of his wide open mouth. His normally floppy ears were laying open, flat against the floor as his body was twisted into a ridiculous "C"-shape. He squirmed left and right at least five times before figuring out how to get up. But once he did, he nearly knocked me completely over. "Buddy!" I squealed, as I buried my face in his coarse, brown and black coat.

As I finally raised my head, I found his fur had been drenched with my tears.

“Who found you?” I asked, as if actually believing he would answer.

My mother interjected, explaining that he had just shown up on the front porch this morning. Buddy escaped from the yard one day, about a week ago, while I was attending my first day of classes at my community college. Someone forgot to lock the gate to the fence. Buddy and I are so close that I think he went looking for me, and finally returned when he couldn't find me. I know it hasn't been long since he left home, but I could tell my parents had already given up hope that he would return. Once my parents had vanished from my doorway, I jumped back up on my bed and inched my way over towards the window, once more. This time, I called Buddy up with me. Buddy curled up next to me, just as he had always done every day before he left. He stared up at me with his big brown eyes, as if to tell me that he has missed me. “I've missed you too, Buddy,” I say, then give him a kiss on the head.