

Remember
By Bridget Rappleyea

The room was dark aside from the gentle light of the moon outside. She sat quietly on the end of the bed with her hands in her lap. She turned and looked at the shell that lay behind her. "Before I go, can I ask you a question?"

Annoyance swept over him. They always wanted to know what came next, never even considering that his knowledge consisted of so much more than that; such self-absorbed creatures. He had appointments to keep, but he nodded nonetheless.

She turned to look him full in the face for the first time and asked, "What do you remember?"

His body went rigid, he found himself momentarily frozen in shock.

She let out a gasp. "Oh I'm sorry, I suppose that's too personal a question."

He shook his head, snapping out of the trance. He walked to the bed and sat down beside her. "No it's alright. It's simply not a question I've ever received." He paused as he thought. "I remember so much. With the first death of man I was brought into the world. Not yet fully aware of my purpose I struggled to understand what to do with the souls that had left their earthly shells. I am of course a being that can exist in many places all at once and my knowledge of the world at this point is practically unsurpassable. It is beyond anyone who treads the planet."

"Do you remember everyone you escort?"

He bobbed his head from side to side. "In part but so many passings are so similar in nature that they begin to run together. However if I was to sit still and concentrate, I'm positive I could recall each and every face. But then who would do my job?"

She smiled. "Will you remember me?"

He nodded with certainty. "Absolutely, you are the first to ask about more than where you are going."

"Well I know where I am going."

He felt the weight of a hand on his; she squeezed gently. "Do we have very far to go?"

He could tell there was no fear in her question, simply curiosity. "No," he responded. "But then again, it's a path I've taken many times. It may feel longer to you than I."

"Will you tell me of the places you've seen along the way? So much of my life has been spent here in this room."

He nodded. "I'll tell you anything you want to know."

Beaming, she stood. "It's a deal. I'm ready when you are."

He chuckled, stood, and placed her hand in the crook of his arm. He noted that she never looked back once they started. They walked together slowly and he spoke of far off lands and times she had only read of. And when they reached the gates, he placed a gentle kiss on the back of her hand. He stood, waiting for her to enter safely and the gates to close before leaving for his next engagement.

There was no doubt in his mind that her smiling face would remain etched in his memories for the remainder of the eternity that stood before him.