

THE QUARRY

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Yellow

You're nervous.

You've wiped the sweat from your palms three times now. Yet your hands still shake. A little tremor. Nothing too violent.

You choose the powder blue shirt over the others, matched with silver cufflinks. They're scratched, but they do just fine. They're your lucky pair.

You readjust your shirt as it sticks to your back, the scent of lemon seeping from your skin. She bought you that. You liked the smell.

I would've chosen the burgundy shirt. Gold cufflinks. But I am merely an observer. A silent spectator if you will. My favourite quote about me says

“the trouble is

you think you have Time.”

Buddha was correct. I am limited. I have no control, just as you do when you are born. And when you will die.

You look up, squinting against the fading light. The bruised sky watches you back. As do the trees, the cedar wood bench and the swings in the distance. A couple hurries past you, umbrellas swinging from their arms. You've chosen a good spot. You're proud.

The bruised sky grumbles and you reach for your own umbrella. Blue plastic fans out over you like a protective shield. The rain begins to fall, tapping lightly, like tiny excited feet. You wait.

But it wasn't always like this for you. You're happy. If I take you back, it won't be that far. Let's start off with four years, shall we? The shadows of your past are still a part of you, after all. Isn't that what you humans say about me?

It was cold. Dark. Damp. Mould clung to the air as cockroaches do to food. The wallpaper was peeling, curling over like long, overgrown toenails.

You hated it.

You didn't want to live there.

But you did it for her.

For the both of you.

You were moving the last of the boxes from the van. Beads of sweat rolled down your forehead, so you used your t-shirt to wipe it away.

Navy, with white edges.

She appeared at the back door, with gloved hands and grass stains on her golden, bare legs. A grin shone across her face. Your eyes slowly grazed her body as she walked towards you and took your hand. Her yellow dress melted into your blue. You smiled.

But remember the first time you fought? I know it's unpleasant to recall.

There was shouting.

Crying.

Puffy eyes.

You broke your favourite bowl. You'd made that together.

She stormed out.

You didn't follow her.

And then you did.

That was three years ago.

You got through it.

Now, what about that time when you performed on stage? I remember it clearly. It was dim and smoky. Hundreds of hunched eyes watched you.

You only did that because of her. Because she pushed you.

Believed in you.

Gave you the courage

to believe in yourself.

She squeezed your hand, her dark eyes sparkling as you went on stage.

And my, what a performance it was. You brought the house down, as you humans would say. I knew you had it in you. I always did.

That was two years ago. My, how you've grown.

We can go back further, you know. I may be limited for you, but for me, I am eternity.

I promise you this won't hurt. Only a little.

This was before all of it. Before her.

You were sitting at the back. You were slouching, with your feet slung over the seat in front of you. Arms folded. You wore a jumper, with the hood pulled over your face.

Cobalt, with frayed drawstrings.

The room began to fill up. People sat with their friends. Chatted. The air became thick with it. But you stayed back. Kept your arms folded.

You wanted to be alone.

It was better that way.

Everyone fell silent as someone approached the stand. You were having a guest lecturer that day. A student from another university.

You rolled your eyes, preparing to absorb yourself in your own thoughts. Your mind was not a bad place. It just hurt. Memories seared the edges.

But as you began to drift away, you stopped.

The guest lecturer.

Her pale, yellow blouse seemed to shimmer as she spoke. Her voice carried across the theatre. Powerful. Fiery.

You were hypnotised.

You'd never seen so much

passion

and beauty

from someone before.

As the lecture ended, people drowsily got to their feet. Some ran. Others stumbled out the door.

But not you.

You could have walked past like everyone else.

Out into the sunshine.

But you chose to wait.

You walked slowly down the stairs,

waiting for people to leave.

She gathered her things.

Smiled at other students.

And then you walked straight towards her.

My, were you brave.

You said you loved her lecture. You stuttered. She smiled.
And you walked out into the sunshine together.
It was that moment in Time that changed it all.
Changed everything for you.
For both of you.
You took a chance.
Lived in the moment.
Time changed. Your life shifted.
The rain thumps on your umbrella and it is now dark. A golden streetlamp glows
nearby. The lights of cars flicker behind the trees.
You're nervous.
You slide your hand into your pocket, pressing the outside of a small box to your skin.
You hope she likes it. Loves it.
And then you see her.
She rushes towards you, her dark curls tucked under her hood.
She laughs when she sees you. Saying how cold the rain is. She forgot her umbrella.
You cradle her against you, her wet cheek nestling against your blue shirt. You smile
and kiss her forehead.
You
are
yellow.