

k - @ANON_USER@

Short description of this text:storeigh

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The truth is a difficult bit of information. My mind makes truth-shaped words and my fingers try to speak them to you. You see these words, but the shape of your eyes is far, far different from the shape of my fingers. The shape of your mind too, is wildly different from the shape of mine; you need to break corners off my words and scrape them with sandpaper before you can fit them into yourself. We both know the same truth, but we know it differently.

The city was mine until yesterday. I knew its roads better than I knew the veins at the back of my hand. I still do, but lately, I've spent more time with my own nerves than I have with these roads. I remember them in the rain and I remember them in winter; I remember it when they were blue. I remember the bookstore on the road that I saw to my right, every morning, on the way to your house. I remember the road in the rain, and I remember coming out of the rain, to warmth and to you. We would sit in the balcony, and when I think about it now, it's a blur, like the one in the films where the people stay constant and everything around them moves. We stayed and the people around changed and shifted just like the temperature of the winds that met us every single day. I couldn't wait to leave the city but I hadn't truly anticipated what it meant. The city is in my veins now, and when I close my eyes, it runs its reel on the tiny projector screens at the back of my eyelids.

But let's expand it, for a moment. Let's come back to daylight and let the rain recede. We can talk about the sea. We were sitting by the sea, under the sun and above the jigsaw rocks under our feet, that separated the ocean from the sea of people that had come to see it. I stretched my feet and observed the ocean below my them. You asked me how I'd describe the ocean as it looked at that moment, but I'd couldn't do it. I'm glad I didn't because I couldn't have anticipated that the moment would grow larger in my head as the time passed-- larger than the ocean itself. The ocean would fold itself countless times into a neat little square, tucked away at the corner of this memory, until I chose to unfold it. We sat by the sea, squinted at the sun and smoked our mint cigarettes. We spoke about studious Hindoos and Red witches, as we read our books. I thought about the sea many times, and I thought about our sea too, my attentions ate away at it and it shrunk into a tiny speck. The frame remained the same, but we know my mind and we know it's never empty. I chased the receding ocean and I never looked back. If I had, I would have realised we had grown bigger and bigger, and we now occupied the entirety of the memory. The ocean was relegated to the post of a very beguiling door-keeper.

The ocean of the night is a swallower of streetlights, camera flashes and ocaasionally, lovers. There's a man to our right, who is fanning a pile of coals and releasing firefly embers and a curtain of smoke into the air. The embers crackle and the smoke hangs like a curtain in the thick air, in our vision, against the backdrop of the black sea-screen. The smoke likes the attention of streetlights and camera flashes. It lights up when the lights

shine, and dances around shadows of people walking in the night. It's fascinating. We try to join forces with the smokescreen but the tiny wisps of smoke that escape our lips are no match for the ocean breeze; we are content to lie back and look at the blank ocean and listen to its overwhelming sounds. We watch the jagged rocks lose an age-old feud with the tide and eventually, we leave.

We go home. There's a park in a tiny lane in the outskirts of my city. There's long blades of grass that is the green of grass from children's picture books. To the right, there is a raised platform, like a tiny oasis from the green expanse below our feet. We sit on the platform, we talk and we laugh and we smoke. It starts raining, but we don't want to leave. You've just been reacquainted with an old friend and I'm listening to Foals. There's a third who makes us happier than we would ever admit to him. He's necessary, and he belongs where we do, but my city isn't his city. He leaves. It's just us now. We thought about roads, and late-night chai at the canteen, torpid afternoons with smoke, momos and sitcoms. We realise it's always been us, but never just us. We don't know what to do.

We can run away. The roads at night are as black as the ocean, and the lights are like blown speakers, spent from screaming hoarse to an inattentive audience that seems to have deserted them. I suppose they are happy to see us, but I can see them moan in dismay as we speed across the familiar concrete in the unfamiliar light. We don't stop to look. We move away so fast, that they all meld into a continuous streak of luminosity. When we stop, the night feels hostile. We weren't supposed to be here and if we were, we were supposed to be alone. We sit across a streetlight who preens itself to catch our attention, but you're all I can trust. I listen to you and I wait for you until you can take me back home.

The city was my home until yesterday. We wrote stories on its streets and punctuated them on the pavements. I see stray sentences and discarded characters wherever I go, and I want to ask you where they lead, and I know you'd know. I don't know where the story goes now but I know it took my out of the city. It left me with more memories and ephemera than I had anticipated, and with just enough words to turn them into a synecdoche, for you.