

a quiet love affair –*priska mohunsingh*

I watched him leave. He was walking away, dressed in all black. His black zip-up jacket hung off his left shoulder. The footprints of his black boots stuck to the snow like a tattoo. I can see his hands almost forming a heart above his head as he pulled his hood over his dark brown hair. A god in disguise, he had the power to create chaos all around him. The snow poured harder, the sky got gloomier, the traffic got crazier that evening—this was not a normal blizzard, but everything would eventually end. The last thing he told me before he started his journey to the block ahead of me was hazy. As he spoke, I felt his warm breath form a bubble of smoke in the frigid air. His dark tan skin paled up as he spoke, *‘it’s best if...’* he continued. Mumbled some more words that sounded like sadness. Sadness to me, not to him.

But right now, I’m watching him leave. Why can’t I think of the word *leave*? Why am I admiring his presence as he leaves me here, frozen in literal and metaphorical sense? Maybe the word *leave*, the action *leave*, the feeling *leave* have become religion to me. I have practiced my reaction and emotions every single day to this word, in case someone decides to wake up and leave. I have made love to the word *leave*. *Go ahead and leave me*, I jokingly dared him. So watching him leave was like watching a pre-recorded episode from television; one that I couldn’t catch up to.

Look back one time, one would be enough. As he waited for the crosswalk sign, he lowered his gaze and dug his boots into the snow as he unnoticeably danced. I’m sure he loved the snow as a kid; he was probably one who always made snow angels—hoping they’d come to life. He looked to his right, perhaps debating if he should grab some food before he boards the train. Maybe pizza, or maybe something heavy...a sandwich. I wondered, *how much would I regret this in the future?* Words were left unsaid from my part.

Although I would never know if he had even a little bit of affection for me, it is hard to believe that someone in this universe fell for me. I might have pushed people away unknowingly, only because I couldn’t believe that someone even saw me in a different light. And here I am, stepping on his footprints as I carelessly watch him cross over to her. He, the one person who had the ability to turn my cold heart into a beating one. His index finger spins his keys and sings like a musical box as he crosses the street. She is walking towards him, grinning and holding her arms out to embrace him the way he should be.