

Memories are a funny thing.

I remember the feel of the grass beneath my feet, the sky bustling with clouds, the flowers that wooshed in the wind that could lift me off the ground at any moment. I remember the smell of grass. The colors seemed so much more lively before than they did now. Life was not a dream, life was a painting. I remember my grandmother's dress, how it flowed again with the wind that could carry me away, they had flowers on it that she had stitched together like how she stitched the overalls that were dirtied by the dirt. I look back.

I do not remember Grandma's face.

I do not remember her voice.

I do not remember if she told me she loved me.

I assume she did.

I would believe her if she did.

I wonder if her voice was sweet like honey, I wonder if she had a lisp like me, I wonder if she said it a lot. Maybe she beat around the bush, maybe she was direct.

But I can't remember.

All I remember is the goddamn landscape.

I know what Grandma looks like. Now atleast, it's hard for her to chew. It's hard for her to speak. She moans her responses. I know she's in good hands.

Mom says that she's happy.

Mom says that it's better for her.

I want to hear her say it.

I want to remember Grandma's voice again.

I can't look at her anymore. I don't want my mom to end up like that, where she forgets me and I forget her face.

I should have taken pictures, captured her smile, captured her features, I started hoarding images of my mom, of my dad, of everything.

I don't want to cry in front of Grandma. I want to bring her to the hills again, the mountains that protected the hill in the middle. She needs to look at me and tell me she loves me.

But she won't. I know she won't.

The mountains still felt comforting when I visited again. Nothing really changed, now like Grandma. But I have shoes now. It was more annoying to climb the hill than I remember. I haven't really been walking around too much since I was little, but it felt like my legs were going to rot off. It isn't even that steep, but I needed to climb that little hill, feel the grass again, and look up. I looked up during the climb, the sky is as blue as I remember, but it's hard to focus on clouds when your legs ache and you can't breathe.

I underestimated how cold it was going to be. But the grass is still green. The flowers are still the same yellow, the clouds are still floating through the sky.

But I can't make out the shapes as anything else anymore. I don't see rabbits, faces, anything in the moving things. All I see are clouds.

Small things changed of course, Someone left some trash on the ground, candy wrappers, used needles. It's disgusting that they took something so beautiful and destroyed it. But maybe the trash always existed. But it still annoys me. I step on broken glass. And yell a swear to no one in particular. I bet grandma would laugh at me for saying that, or maybe she would yell at me.

I noticed the new mountain.

The mountain is strange, It stretches higher than anything that surrounds it. It touches the clouds.

I feel like I'm looking at a drawing of a mountain. There aren't any trees on it, It looks more steep than the other mountains around it, there aren't any trees on it, and it's texture is... off. Not quite felt, but like fake grass on a soccer field, it's bright green.

There was a mountain here before. A small one that you couldn't see over from the hill, but it was still small compared to the others.

Why would someone tear it down?

But the more weird thing about the "mountain" was the door. Well, the hole is shaped like a door on the mountain. It looked like a black dot in the disgusting bright green that stood out like a sore thumb.

I am curious.

I do realize that there is a good chance that I would die if I go through that hole. I don't read horror stories but I do know the tropes.

I am not compelled by some feeling deep inside me. I expected some form of feeling at all about it. But I just feel numb.

It's not that I want to die in this hole neither am I brave. But when I look at that mountain I see my mother. I see a grave. I don't want to be there.

It's selfish.

Down the hill, I feel an ache in my chest. I think I'm crying. I don't want to think of walking away from grandma. I don't want to think of anything and this is how I will get out.

I don't even reach a valley. The "Mountain" is nudged right next to the hill.

I step from the beautiful lush flowery hill, to the artificial bright green thing.

I go up. It's steep, but walkable. What an odd angle it is at. When I look up at it, it looks like it stretches forever. I feel like the more I walk the further I get from the door. I look

to my side and see the trees of the other mountains that feel so very far away. I look up and see the clouds move along with me. They are my only comfort here.

Out of breath.

I hesitate. I don't think I've accepted that if I walk through this door that I will probably not walk out again in one piece. I think I will die if I walk through there. If I die, I don't have to see my mother age. If I die, Goddamn it—It's funny— people won't have to see me grow old.

I am in a chapel now. Something is wrong. I am disorientated. I can feel bile fill my throat. The roof feels elusive, I look up and feel like I am falling. When I look up I can not tell if the ground ever existed. There are chairs, rows of them. The chairs that filled the hall of that church my mom forced me to go to every Sunday until I annoyed her enough to let me stay home. These chairs are knocked over, nothing inhabits them but dust. Not even spider webs, for that needs something living. Spiders should coil up and shrivel down here, I think. Their bodies disintegrate and should step on one, big dead things. But there was nothing. I was all alone, not even the corpses of things I hate can comfort me now.

The smell of candles, the gospel songs, all the things chapels should have, are absent. There are no windows, no stained glass windows. I shouldn't know what it is. I don't know how I know. It's like second nature.

I think I hear something like computer static, somewhere, off in the distance, but that might be my brain playing tricks on me.

There is a spiral staircase in the middle of the church, leading up and up and up. I do not dare look where it leads because goddamn it I'm scared. This is all I know. I do not want to go up that staircase, because I am afraid of it. My stomach does not twist, it sinks. I shake, I have been doing that the whole time. I am terrified. There are no guardrails on the staircase, I know that if I fell I would surely trip and break my neck. I would hear a snap like a gun and feel something I can't even comprehend right now. The stairs are a white, new marble. It's like no one has even touched it since it has been built. There is a thin layer of dust covering the steps. I swear that there is light surrounding it, even though I do not know where the light source could possibly be from.

I did not decide to climb the staircase.

I needed to.

Time bended.

The stairs are growing steeper.

I am not tired. I don't know how I feel. I feel like I should be seeing things—Anything.

But how to see has escaped me now. I don't understand it— I think.

I am unraveling.

I am unraveling.

Goddamn it, I don't remember where I am.

Light fills my vision. Something close to mother's love makes it close to a warm embrace. The hold of comfort like when someone held me close when I cried for some reason. Maybe it was because they scraped their leg as a child. Maybe it was because they got rejected from their prom date as a kid. Maybe it was because their grandma looks so different, grandma doesn't remember what you look like. Grandma doesn't remember who you are. And you are starting to forget too.

Love dies out.

That is all I know.

Holding one close as the world looks different. Different in the way that the day passes by before there is a noticing of it.

Before there is a thought of it.

But nothing will fucking change.

Nothing will change if someone notices it.

At the top of the staircase is an impossibly small room that is only getting smaller.

Thinking, seeing, hearing, there is nothing you can really do up down here.

They are unraveling like something and are falling apart at the seams. They laugh in something close to computer static and choke on something close to blood that leaves their throat like a vile phlegm. Disgusting it is. Disgusting? Gross?

You decide.

They think they are outside. They might be outside.

The grass wooshes in the wind ever so often. There are yellow flowers, yellow like creativity.

The sky is blue like a warning.

The Clouds are running around like clouds.

Someone doesn't remember their name.