

no title

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well, this is just a very short story for the Bath Literature Festival, but sadly i missed the deadline for the competition.

its very short because it had to be less than 1500 words.

i had no idea what catagory to put it in...so i put it in men...

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Chapter 1 - no title

2

1 - no title

I gently picked out one of the giant daisies. The air around me was still, and the landscape was clear of all signs of life except for my gently beating pulse. It felt so strange to be here again, alone. Though I had been here a million times before, it suddenly felt like foreign territory. The once blinding blue sky looked to me a melancholy grey, even though in the back of my tortured mind, I knew it was the same colour as it had always been. The flowers that coated the grass seemed to wilt slightly, though I knew somewhere in my head that they were wilting no less than when I had last been here, a year ago. But somehow alone, everything looked so dismal.

I could see the briefcase in my hand, though I couldn't really feel it. I didn't want to feel it. I didn't want to know that the things inside there belonged solely to me, I didn't want to know that I was really about to do what I had been doing for so long. But for the last year I had been punishing myself, and now I felt I needed some sense of relief from that. Some sense of having a life again, and as much as it hurt to have to have a life that was only mine, that was not shared, I needed it so badly that it was a sacrifice I was going to have to make.

I sat down on the grass silently, squashing several flowers on my way down. I pried open the lid of the briefcase nervously, even though I knew exactly what was inside. I didn't want to know. It was hard to know.

A necklace.

A ring.

A letter.

A CD.

A photograph.

All the things that reminded me of Diana - well, all the remaining things - all the material things. Most had been destroyed in the fire... Along with Diana herself.

Every time I walked down a street, looked in a mirror, moved, thought, breathed, I thought of her; of her hair tickling my cheek as she leaned into me, of her soft laugh, like a bell playing through my mind, of her eyes, deeper than the ocean.

I took each item in my hands. The pendant I had bought her for our first anniversary, her wedding ring, a letter she had written me when we were apart for the first time, a Laura Pausini - her favourite singer - CD, a photograph of me and her, with her head tilted back, laughing, and me, just looking at her adoringly - the last one I owned.

I know it seems like I was trying to eliminate her from my life. But I wasn't - that would be impossible. I was trying to make it hurt less than it did. It hurt to feel so much every moment of every day. Time does not heal the wounds on the inside. Not mine. I was just trying to make it easier. I was trying to be a real person, instead of a shadow, drifting from day to day with no real purpose. I was SICK of not knowing what was real and what was just being fantasised in my demented mind, and I couldn't stand another morning of waking, expecting to see her, turning over, and finding next to me an empty spot beside me in my bed. My bed. It was `our' bed no longer. There was no `our' or `we' or `us', just me.

I slowly dug a hole in the soft ground with my hands. I knew it would take a long time to make one large enough to contain all my sadness and fear and loneliness, but I was willing to wait. I had waited over a year, I could wait a little longer.

An hour later I felt the hole I had made was large enough to hold these few things. First I put in the CD. That, I knew would be the easiest. Then the letter - I kissed the last words I would ever have from her, and then I gently placed it on top of the CD. I held the necklace in my hands for a moment, letting the silver slide through my fingers. My eyes closed and my breath deepened. I had never thought it would be easy, but I had no idea I would feel this way. I slipped it in beside Diana's precious handwriting. This was our place - this was what she would've wanted, or at least, that was what I kept telling myself.

I thought deeply of sliding the photograph into my pocket, of then sliding it under my pillow, sliding Diana into my dreams. I quickly ripped it up before I could give it another thought. Then I allowed the first tears to slide carefully down my cheek. As hard as it was to let all these memories go, it was harder to live with them.

The ring rolled gently around my hand, and I shuddered at the cold metals touch. Did I have to bury this? Did I have to leave everything behind me?

With that thought, I knew if I ever wanted a life again, I had to.

But for some reason, I didn't.

Instead, I covered the few remaining items, walked down the field to the river, and then I threw it as hard as I could into the river bed.

Then I allowed myself to truly cry. The kind of crying you do before and after the funeral, but never during. The kind of crying where you know it's just you and your emotions going against each other and you're fighting a losing battle.

I never thought I could feel this strongly about someone, and then lose them. I never thought the universe would let that happen. I never thought that I would be able to float through life after experiencing it as fully as I did when I was with Diana.

But I was. And that was what mattered right now. One year on, and I was still alone. No matter where I was, who I was with, I was completely alone.

My friends had tried to help me, but they were fighting against a strong current, and that current was dragging me under. I saw the ring crumple and wave with the shine of the water.

I don't know how long I sat in that place, watching the sun rise and set. It could have been a few minutes - it could have been a few days. But at this moment, all that mattered were the memories - Me and Diana - Diana and me, running, laughing, kissing, just staring into each others.

I had enough memories for the rest of my life.

But for now? I would just sit here, and remember her. Just remember.