

Memoir Piece  
Maggie Bermudes

I was looking at him outside through the window on the door. I was holding a bottle of floor cleaner and a roll of paper towels. I looked up at him, how tall he was, and his tussled waxed hair, and I remembered the man that had haunted my dreams off and on the year before. The boy I would time travel with. The boy that stood a foot taller than me on the bottom stair of my favorite bar. Sitting next to me in his truck driving down the hill on Poli into downtown on a Sunday afternoon, listening to the Eagles. And it was him. It was his face outside my window.

I opened the door.

"My cat just puked." I said and I let him in.

After I finished cleaning the floor, he sat on my couch and I sat on the floor next to my roommate's pink speaker system, putting on some of my favorite songs, maybe trying to vet him through the music. The songs that I loved, many of them I found the year before with my ex-boyfriend.

"Red" by Okkervil River

"Tonight" by Sibylle Baier

"I Just Do" by Dear in the Headlights

*"At this rate if you stay with me,  
I'll go to bed at 23  
And wake up 65.  
Next to you that would be alright."*

*I like your profile.* It was the first thing I wrote to him.

*Haha, I'm glad you're the sort to read it. I appreciate yours as well, you paint a pleasant picture of yourself.* It was the first thing he said back.

Ziggy came in while we were listening to the music. "Your dog is adorable!" He said

"She's my roommate's dog. But she's a cutie for sure."

"I'm going to steal her." He threatened

"You can't steal her! She's my familiar. Plus my roommates would be so sad."

"They didn't even take her with them."

“The music would be too loud! She would be so scared.”

“Ah, so they’re at the festival?” He asked

“Yeah, Skull and Roses. That’s where you are working right?”

“Yepp. That’s where I’m working.”

“Where are you staying?”

“At the vagabond.”

“Do you have your own room?” I wondered

“No, one of my friends who I am working with is sharing it with me.”

“You could stay here tonight,” I said

And he smiled but “I can’t tonight. I have to get up early again tomorrow.” is what he said, “Maybe soon.” He added.

“So what do we do now?”

“I don’t know.” he said, “This is your town.”

“Yes, it is. Let’s go to the liquor store. That’s the next step, right?”

We drove to the liquor store, the one farther away with the people I knew, and he smiled while I caught up with the clerk.

When I went to pay, he took out his credit card and I took his wallet from him and looked over his ID.

“You can’t steal our dog now.” I said, “I know where you live.”

“You would drive all the way out to Fullerton to get her back?”

“I would drive all the way out there anyways.”

When we got back to the house, we both sat on the living room floor. He took the cork out of both bottles and we started to drink them.

“Can I try yours?” I said

He handed me the bottle and I tasted it, “I like yours better.”

“Have it.” he said, and switched bottles with me.

"I'm an idiot." I said

"Well, sure." He said, "But why?"

"I didn't get snacks from the store."

"I might be able to remedy that." He said, and left for his truck, and when he returned he was holding an opened bag of Starburst all red jelly beans.

He sat behind me on the floor and I sat in his lap and he started feeding them to me.

"I don't think anyones ever fed me before." i said and laughed

"How very Greek of us." he said

And I looked back at him, up into his eyes, pushed away his hand when he went to give me more jelly beans and I leaned into him and he kissed me.

"Are you sure you can't stay tonight?" I asked when he was leaving.

"I can't." He said, "But I'll come back soon."

He left and I went and laid down in my bed but before I could fall asleep I had to spew red and white wine.

When I fell asleep I dreamt of him.

I was escaping from a hospital of some sort, and when I got on the street he was there, and he stole my phone. First I was really scared, but then I was annoyed. He finally agreed to give it back to me but I had to kiss him.

I texted him about it when I woke up.

"What do you think it means?" He wrote back.

"That I lost my phone while I was sleeping. It took me half an hour to find it again."

He came back that Wednesday. I opened the door holding the floor cleaner. "The cat puked again." I said

We went onto the patio as the sun was starting to go down. I had a cigarette and he played me a song he had written on my little black guitar. I was surprised. He had the most beautiful singing voice I had ever heard in person.

When we went back inside we got on the couch and Ziggy, and Wednesday, the cat cuddled with us.

"Oh, it's back!" I exclaimed searching through movies, "They haven't had it on in years. Possibly since I first saw it when I was sixteen! Have you seen it?"

"I haven't" he said

"Usually I wouldn't watch my favorite movie with someone as new as you but I'll make an exception."

And so I put on Bonnie and Clyde and the sun went the rest of the way down and he held me and started stroking my arm and as I sat there close to him I thought about how he just drove all the way back to be with me, just a few days later, and I realized he must really like me. And then I realized I liked him too.

"Who do you think is hotter?" I asked him

"That's a tough one. Warren Beaty and Faye Dunaway are both stunning."

When the movie was over I realized we hadn't eaten and it was already so late.

"Well, so much for a fancy date" I said, "Seems like our only option is Denny's"

He ordered a burger and I ordered a milkshake. I went outside to have a cigarette while he was waiting for his food. I realized the moon was full, my phone playing music on my shoulder, and I saw how sad he looked that I had left. He didn't realize I was watching him through the window.

That night we fell asleep in my little twin bed and when we woke up in the morning he showed me his favorite crime movie: Hell or Highwater.

We decided to go on a better date for breakfast but I ordered fish tacos. I was looking at him some way because he asked me when I was finished eating "Why are you looking at me like that?"

"Because I'm in love with you dummy." I responded

Before he left he restrung my guitars.

"Come back." I told him on the phone.

"I was about to get on the freeway when you called." He said

He hugged me and kissed me again. I went to my bed and took an ativan I was so sad and fell asleep. When I woke up I wrote the best song I had ever written.

*Kneeling in your underwear  
With silence on your knee  
The way you look at me it breaks my heart*

*Stringing up my guitar  
Only ever strung by my daddy  
But now I'm twenty-three and strings are sharp...*

