

Transaction
L. Mulligan

Clouds were visible, yet covering the whole of the sky in the downtown region. He peered into a coffee shop window as a woman, out of focus, appeared from the far end of the sidewalk corner. Startled, he turned to notice her and exchanged greetings.

“Hi...!”

“Sarah.”

“Sarah! Fantastic. Shall we...?”

They began strolling around, people passed by chatting to their respective companions or themselves, aimlessly taking in the scene of a bustling fall day. A moment of silence passed between them as they walked the streets gradually shifting into a different space, unseen by passersby.

“Oh wow...”

“What is it?”

“Sarah, look...” He pointed to a tree in front of an old building several blocks down the road.

“Do you remember that tree? Weren’t we like...”

“Twelve! And you broke the branch off when you climbed it, you jerk!” Sarah lightly pushed his arm playfully as he laughed.

“I got in so much trouble... I begged them not to call my mom.” He smiled to himself.

They continued to walk.

“What about you??” He prodded at her teasingly, “And your stunt over at the ramen shop?”

She looked confused in the general area they had entered, an old arcade full of small shops. As she noticed the ‘CAPTAIN NOODLE’ sign hung high above her.

“Oh.. yes! Of course, I...I...”

“Thought you were supposed to put away your own dishes and when Mr. Chen walked out, you took off running thinking you were in trouble-”

“And I tripped over Mrs. Smith’s fence and landed in her flower bed!” Sarah’s eyes widened, sparkling with comic disbelief. He found amusement in her reaction and looked ahead as they ventured forward leaving the arcade. Time passed and they grew quiet, the sun reaching its resting place in the sky.

“It’s about time then?” He breathed with finality as a visible fog exited his mouth.

“Yes...” Sarah looked down at the ground quietly as they continued to walk.

Silence.

“How much do I owe you?” She reached into her purse, rifling around.

“Sixty.” He responded quietly. Sarah gave him several bills and smiled, averting her gaze.

“Well, thanks. For being my childhood friend for a few hours. You have a great imagination.” Sarah gave him one final glance and disappeared down the street.