

you look quite pensive today. i wait, committing to memory the texture of your irises when they catch the light as you tilt your head, offer a smile that tastes wistful, and begin to say

*I feel as though I've been injected with a stranger's nostalgia. Has this happened to you before?*

i shrug, let you continue. youve died already, so im mostly just happy to see you again.

*It's in the songs, the poems, really any story. Even just to know that their favorite color is blue— isn't that just scandalous? How many months does that imply, of conversations along the overgrown path to the library, of pair study in their living room with assignments, of peaceful hideaways with whiteboards and HDMI cords, until the right shade of sky out the window draws their eyes up and they mention this is their favorite color?*

i miss you.

i think i may start crying soon, but i never did get rid of the bad habit of hiding it. i am a statue with invisibly watering eyes, and you take my stillness for a no.

*Well then, look at this. Look harder.*

you sit on a wrought iron railing three stories high,

*Yes, that one*

you say, stars in your eyes, kicking your feet between the bars.

*You see it now don't you? The drying paint as they daisy up the village center for the monthly fair, a chalkboard being wheeled outside as the teacher's assistant takes advantage of the good weather, the boulder at the top of that hill that's been there as long as anyone remembers, with a plaque that came after to mark our name.*

well, no i don't see that, exactly.

*But you see your own version of it. You receive a slice of a world from a memory in a stranger's mind, and all you know that it is sad, or wistful, or bittersweet, and your heart hurts to hear it because you cannot go beyond that slice, so you can imagine and substitute from your own.*

*Overall, that song was just really cool.*

you say, your smile a happy one now.

i return the smile and wave goodbye. i hope i'll get to see you again soon.