

## SCATTERED AMNESIA

My feet buried themselves into the sand, and I let the waves at the shore wash over them in a spiritual cleansing I so desperately longed for. I hadn't been to the beach in years, but your absence forced me to distract myself with a vacation of sorts, if you could call it that. There wasn't a drop of relaxation in sight, only the sound of sea whistling and my silent pleas for one more heart-settling hug.

I thought about the boy who came before you, who broke my heart the first time around. I hadn't thought about him in years, either, until that moment. I had forgotten the smile I once etched into the crevices of my brain, along with his favorite color, birthday, even his family - and I loved his family, probably more than I loved him. I thought about the impermanence of not only how I felt, but what I remembered. It instilled a new fear in me.

What if I start to forget you? What if one day I wake up and my soul can't conjure up a recreation of your laugh, your smile, or the way your fingertips felt against my chin. What if I bring someone new home, and he lays on your side of the bed, and I forget that it's yours? What if I forget your mom's birthday, even though I always called her that morning before you? What if I forget the way it felt to untangle your curly hair while you laid in my lap on the steps of the old abandoned building we spent our evenings? What if I sit on the bench to do my homework and I forget that's where we met? What if I take someone else to the booth at the pizza place where we went on our first date?

I could go on for days about everything you made better, then turned around to ruin, but I won't. The memories you left me with are cauterized into the back of my mind, somewhere, wherever is tethered closest to my heart. Nothing about you is merely etched.

I'm not forgettable. I'm sure the first boy still thinks about me sometimes, when the moon is high enough in the sky that he thinks back to the night I snuck out with him for the first time. I don't think about him often, but when I do, it's in the moments where I'm reminded of what I've let go. It's when the salt water droplets have splashed onto my tongue and remind me of the taste of his lips. I think of him when the tide washes the sand off of my feet.

I think about you all the time. You aren't washed away in the water; you are the waves that my body can still feel, even long after I've come home.