

Notes on Losing Things

By Holland Morris

WHY WE LIKE IT: *We kind of had our hearts in our throats after reading this moving internal monologue about the special kind of loss that only a woman can know. As our curiosity as to its nature grew, the un-named mystery only deepened. It is at once a poignant meditation and a painful coming to terms. The gentle sermonizing voice embraces and the prose is so tenderly close to poetic reverie we're tempted to call it prosely. Quote: 'Many things will be said in passing to you. You will forget most of them—we both know you are still only thinking about that one lost thing. It is okay.' A masterful 'study in brown' on the heartache of loss.*

Sometimes it is difficult to recall when you first lost it: Was it when you were in line at the gas station to put ten on pump two, and suddenly something “wasn't right”? Or did the realization hit you just as you were falling asleep next to the boyfriend who was the love of your life that season? Did you sit up in bed, consider the possibility, and then take action? Did you wait – did you think everything was fine? (Everything wasn't fine. Why did you wait so long?)

Once it is gone, then it will all start to fall apart.

² You will find yourself tracing your steps, looking between crevices, muttering unintelligible things: *I remember leaving it over here, why is it gone now? This isn't fair. I need to find it. Where is it? This isn't fucking fair.*

It is okay. It didn't matter; you lost it before you even knew you had it.

³ People will question why you are so fixated on this lost thing. They will wonder why you can't seem to move on past it. Your best friend will tell you, "It was meant to be." Your older sister who turned into a religious fanatic will explain that "[some higher being that may or may not be real] had other plans for it." Your father will say nothing; you will not even tell him that you had this thing in the first place, let alone lost it. He never trusted you would hold on to much in your life.

⁴ Many things will be said in passing to you. You will forget most of them – we both know you are still only thinking about that one lost thing. It is okay.

⁵ When those select few tell you, however, "it isn't your fault," I need you to listen to them. I need you to believe them. This will help for the nights when you are lying in bed alone, hiding under that ratty, decimated quilt your mother gave you last winter when your apartment lost power for four days straight. It will be especially difficult when you let your mind wander to far-off places, places that make the idea of waking up seem mundane and overrated. It will be easy for you to think of the "What Ifs" and imagine a picturesque life with your lost thing, now found.

⁶ This idea will consume you.

It will infiltrate your thoughts.

You will forget what it is like to dream about anything else.

~~(What color eyes do you think he might have had?)~~

⁷ This thing won't find its way back to you; this much I promise you. It is still okay.

Your biggest fear will be that this won't be the only time you lose it.

⁸ Most music will make you cry – you will find a way to relate everything back to your lost thing. Some friends may start considering you to be selfish, concerned only of yourself. This is only slightly true.

⁹ You won't be able to talk to your new boyfriend about this lost thing; it is from an era of your life which holds little to no importance to him. He will assume that you have overcome this part of your past and come to terms with it. The histories which include the epics of old boyfriends and lost love will not interest him. When these feelings of isolation and fear come rushing back to you, he will not understand.

¹⁰ Please remember: this does not mean he does not love you. He might not like you, but he still cares. You'll feel alone though, and that will ultimately drive the wedge between the two of you. You will think he is jealous that he couldn't have lost this thing too. The dichotomy between pity and anger will be lost on you, as you cannot possibly fathom his lack of understanding, his callousness. Some things, you will think to yourself, deserve to be lost.

¹¹ Perhaps you will take lighter steps, eat less, caress your bare stomach, feeling for the slightest movement that gives an inkling of hope. (It will not move, though; it never really could.)

¹² When you understand, when you accept it, I will be here to remind you that some things will stay lost forever, but they won't ever leave you; they will choose to tiptoe past you, years later, in hope that you will catch some sort of scent like a bloodhound and tumble after it, barrel

through those doors you thought were sealed off and scramble to your feet, looking up, so far up that you become unsure of where exactly the sky ever started.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: *This piece has taken on many faces in terms of format and content. It is different from how it first looked when I wrote it, and I hate it and love it for how it has changed. It's also odd and doesn't necessarily have a place of its own. I have laughed with my Creative Writing class as I showed them just how many times it has been rejected, just to help them understand that sometimes things don't fit. Some writing doesn't belong in certain journals, some lost things are meant never to be found and some people don't get what they didn't know they even wanted.*

BIO: Holland Morris is a high school English teacher in rural New Hampshire as well as a part time bartender and a wannabe slumlord. With a pink living room and a full heart, she's got a good thing going.