

A Roll of Film

Crislin Rosete

It has always been you, without a doubt in my mind. You're the one that I keep coming back to, the one that I can't seem to let go of. Our date at the beach replays in my mind as if I'm reliving it, each second of every minute of every hour. Part of it stings me, like a paper cut slicing me open. But then I get stitched up—ribbon tied around open wounds. What you don't know is that after that day, while you chose to forget, I chose to remember.

When I relive this memory of us, it always starts at the beginning from when you came to pick me up; the first of many favourites from this day. Your red hand-me-down Toyota parked in my paved driveway, while you stood at the front door with your hands in your pockets. I always loved how nervous you were around me; it made me feel like anything I did would add to the list of reasons why you had fallen for me. The way you said "Hey," as I opened the door to greet you, made my mind short circuit. You didn't have a fatal flaw, leaving me to wonder how many red flags you decided to paint green for me to love you.

As the romantic you taught yourself to play, you opened the car door for me and played the playlist I made you for your eighteenth birthday. The winding road and cold refreshing breeze that traced my skin left me grinning until we reached where the sea met the land. Even now, I still remember our little inside jokes about the beach and how I was like the ocean, pulling you into me with my otherworldly trance and how you were the land, dirty and old, yet there was so much history residing within you. It was when you said those things that made me believe you were born to be an artist. It's funny how you're an aspiring filmmaker and yet the movie in my mind is the one you don't want credit for. You always used to tell me, "My muse, the first step of creating a film is to be proud of every failure," and yet your name isn't seen within the credits. It's just a black screen with my name assigned to the role of 'Lover'.

The next scene would be me running into the water as soon as you parked the car. Barefoot on the sand as tiny shells and rocks imprinted on the soles of my feet, the salty air filled my lungs and coated my tongue the closer I got to the ocean. Dress and hair flew with the wind making me feel weightless. When my toes felt the freezing water push and pull, I knew I was in tune with my element. My head turned around to look at you and there you were... standing on the sand admiring me through the lens of your camera. The way your eyes would trail my body before finding mine, and your smile from ear to ear, convinced me that you had the power to stop time.

My second favourite thing about this day was the sun and the sky. Hues of clementine and peach danced around the remaining blue before overflowing and taking control of the atmosphere above. Clouds littered the sky in an attempt to hide its beauty, but the oranges and pinks were bold enough to care less about how many people were in awe of their embrace. The sun began to set, creating the illusion of it disappearing into the horizon. Its reflection sparked in the water making it feel like everything I was witnessing was a dream.

I felt like I was in a movie.

As the sky became dark and the stars came out to play, you held me tighter than you ever have before. Your lips eventually touched mine—soft and chapped, but filled to the brim with affection. I felt warm in the cold whispers of the night. This was the third and final thing; the way you showed me you loved me. This day, this excruciating painful love-filled day was the only time I felt like it was us against the world. Your arms, coiled around my waist, brought me back home and that nook in your neck was carved just for me. It felt like we were never-ending soulmates who would always find each other no matter how many times death greeted us and we were blessed once again by reincarnation.

Then... I make the movie stop and everything fades to black.

You're what's important to me even if it's unreciprocated. Even if you moved on to the next dazzling actress. You were the person that made me start to watch my life in an empty theatre through a projector without a hand to hold, a snack to eat or a drink to quench my thirst. You were the person that made memories more important than the present. I thank you for that, because now I can live through fantasy rather than reality.

Thank you for making me feel like you loved me for one hundred and twenty minutes.

Crislin Rosete is Year 10 student in the western suburbs of Melbourne. She has always been interested in the art of storytelling and practises various methods of doing so. As a writer, she represents the underrepresented to make minorities feel seen and heard in literature. Crislin is passionate about writing and strives to become a full-time author after she finishes university.