

## Hidden

Dirt. There's nothing but dirt. Heavy. Wet. Shoving its way down your throat. Clinging to your skin. No one tells you this. About the clawing. The battle. That you have to fight your way back into the light. Break through the wood. Endure the bugs. Their legs, racing over your skin. Or what's left of it anyway. Because you're not really skin. Not even bones. Nor blood. Barely anything at all. Isn't death supposed to be a sort of sleep?

My brain turns to worms, spilling out of the holes in my head. Strength leaves my limbs as breath leaves my lungs. I don't know where I am. Maybe she decided on that old cemetery near that boring park I said I liked. I lied.

How could she not know I had not left yet? So impatient. It's my fault, I know it is. When I close my eyes, I see her. Golden hair, clear blue eyes, pouting lips. She is gentle. Words like feathers. An image I could never erase from my mind. *Come with me*, she says to me. *Let us walk towards the sun. The sky might seem far away, but I promise it is not too long.* My heart aches as I open my eyes... and she disappears.

My memory leaves me as I struggle to remember how I passed. Maybe it was the pills. Maybe my heart stopped from the profusion of desire for you that it just could not contain any longer. My decrepit body struggles to survive. Fighting against the encumbering force piled on top of me. A thunderous bellow builds inside me. But no sound is ever allowed to leave.

I wonder about the season. Is it winter? Is there dew in the grass? Is the night dense and humid, like a weighted blanket? If you can't answer such questions, is there a point in existing? Even if it's only halfway? Is there?

The silence is so loud now. I notice myself hearing the roots grow in my casket through the cracks in all sides. They crawl over me, taking over my motionless limbs. I find comfort in the warmth they bring. Like the blanket I never thought I could have again.

Break free from this prison. Ask for pardon. Wake up. The corner of my withered eye catches a break in the wood. Light. Faint but real. *Lift your arm*, she whispers. *Come back to me.* I try. The bone fades to dust. It is right there! Shout! Scream! Do *something... please.*

Death is the end to all beginnings. You feel no pain. You cry no tears. Right? No one shall hurt you. Even in death, my perishing heart still beats for her. Bring her back to me. But I cannot do that. Here I am trapped. Here I am hidden.