

## A Walk in the Park

Every day he passed her in the park coming back from lunch. She headed north, he south. Every day he saw her thin lips, pursed in the cold wind. He admired the way she could shine even though the sky was grey and dreary, even though the Manhattan skyline seemed to choke them in. Her slightly crooked teeth, the way she stood pigeon-toed, she was beautiful in all of her perfect imperfections. He would've loved to stay—to be with her—but the office called with its stacks of papers and chatter of well-dressed individuals.

Today felt different.

Looking at the ground, breathing hard into his scarf and grabbing his trench coat, he listened to her winter boots crunch the salt on the path. Closer and closer. His meeting called and his clients were waiting, but for her he would pause his day. Any day.

She was nearer now. He looked up. Their eyes met. She smiled at him, effortlessly. His heart skipped a beat. He smiled back.

Then she passed him, as she had done yesterday, and the day before, her slender stride brisk like the breeze. He turned around and reached an arm out to tap her shoulder. Words formed in his mind. Today he'd introduce himself. Time slowed.

Then it froze.

His hand hovered by her shoulder, refusing to move, his words, caught in his throat, wouldn't speak, and she didn't stop walking. She was oblivious.

His heart flapped like the wings of a hummingbird, then fell in disappointment. His mind cycled through the possibilities, the what ifs. What if he had spoken? His mind raced with

images of them holding gloved hands, walking through the snow filled park, bringing light to the bleak day.

One sigh, his breath rising like smoke into the frosty air, then he was back on his way.  
His feet dragged on the path towards his corporate cell.

There's always tomorrow, he told himself.

That's what he told himself yesterday.