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## Memories

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## Memories

Connie Padera

The air that night made her want to run. Silently, she slid open her window and crept into the darkness. She inhaled a scent so strong she swore that she could taste it. Everything about that night took her back to the summer. Rain and smoke, strawberries and vodka...memories. Shivers flew up her spine and goose bumps danced across her skin. Closing her eyes, she felt all rational thought leave her.

Her legs started to move without any knowledge of where they were going. The parking lot was empty, just as it was every night, but she could still see the place where his car had been. So many times she had made that same silent journey out her window and into his car. It never felt like sneaking out to her. They would spend the night driving around aimlessly; it felt so right to her. How could something that feels so right be so wrong? They had everything, and at the same time nothing. He was nothing...

As thoughts of him drifted in and out of her head, she made her way to the vacant street, illuminated by the dim lights overhead. She ran. With nowhere to go, she ran. Every so often a car would pass, breaking her trance. She turned off of the main road; the side streets were much darker, much more peaceful. She felt the wind in her hair, against her face—pushing her, pulling her, calling out to her—and then it stopped.

She found herself at a chain fence, staring into a pool of the most inviting water she had ever seen. Leaning against the cool metal of the fence, she thought of all the times she had spent in that water. Without thinking she started to climb, up and over into the night. She slipped out of her shoes and slid off her shorts in one swift motion, while hastily pulling off her shirt and tossing it to the side. Eyes closed tight she dove into the awaiting water. It felt like silk against her bare skin, but she knew she couldn't stay long. She pulled herself out of the water and sat on the rough cement for a moment. Never before had she felt so alone, yet so content with herself.

Before anyone could catch her she got dressed and climbed back over the fence. She stood for a few seconds, and then began to run again. Faster and faster she sprinted into the darkness until her legs couldn't carry her any further. She collapsed into the grass and stared up at the midnight sky. The stars sparkled like white diamonds, and she knew that night the stars were shining just for her.

She felt as if she were floating, untouchable to the world. Images started to fade as she drifted away into the beautiful darkness. Smiling, she opened her eyes, and realized that she had never left her window.