

Remember?

by Cheryl Chambers

We'd been talking about the baby, about what we would do, when the women began fighting after the wedding held in the church next to our apartment. Their fierce and piercing arguments crawled up the walls to the second story window we sat next to. We'd looked outside then to see them leaving in chartreuse, in aquamarine, in violet, wearing large hats with ribbons affixed and wound around the brim, or fascinators held in place with a comb. Then, just under the overhanging leaves, you said it, though I couldn't quite hear it clearly over the commotion outside. Your words caught in the leafy veins like a web, like a net that holds what shouldn't ever be allowed to escape. I love you. Your words held in the air like a limp body that could not be resuscitated, could not escape the precision of being overpowered, and now, now when I look at you and we speak about schooling and dates and scholarships and grades I want to say Remember? Remember? but the words stick in my throat like breath.

