

Answers Without Questions

by Timmothy Merath

My father did not die before I was born. That much I can cite as not only fact but an absolute necessity to my existence. However, my father is dead. You can wrap as much sentiment and emotion around it as you wish, but you can't get away from the blunt force of simplicity in that reality.

Before his passing, we lived on waves of dreams come true, strewn across the globe in wide, sweeping arcs. Just the two of us.

Airplane after airplane, continent after continent, never continent to just move along to the next place. We had to cover great distance in order to unravel our dreams fully. Each destination as seemingly far removed from the last as the earth from the stars.

The last trip, the last streak upon our already heavy canvas of time, was from Sydney to New Jersey. We had decided on the garden state quite by accident but with unforeseen providence. It was supposed to be a stop, transfer of planes, on the way to Calgary, but he'd forgotten to book the second flight at all. Or so he said.

Instead of trying to reassemble the original plan, we did what we always did—adapted and made the best of it. Off into the foothills we went. A few slow days of espresso and conversation, nestled in the shade of ancient trees. Then, to the beach.

The beach. One never forgets its draw, the lust it pulls from everyone. The beach where water and land dance and flirt in fits, without commitment but chained in inevitability.

The beach, where I last saw him. Walking away from me after a quiet nap in the sun. He rose slowly and just walked. Into the water. Up to his waist, his chin, over his head. All calmly until the last second, then a frenzied struggle before the weight of life took him under. Forever

Next to me, a note I hadn't seen him leave. A torn piece of paper from the menu of last night's feast. Simple words, a goodbye that would never end.

"My son, my heart, my future. Be well and take care of her. She will be your daughter, your heart, your future."

Knowledge too soon, a confusion if meaning, and tears. Through the haze of this thickening wall, there she was. Walking towards me on the sand. The other half of the future, my companion for all the rest of life's flights. She would become my wife.

"Are you alright? You look... lost."

