

Kites

The first time she flew a kite it was a pale yellow, the same colour as her daddy's favourite mug. She flew it in the spring, in the chilling breeze, a worn jumper within reach. The wind picked up, her grip loosened, the kite erratic, and her dad rushed to help her keep hold. The wind began to slow, her kite began to fall, but she did not care, for she was wrapped in a warmth of pure love. They laughed together, his presence loved. Her kite landed next to her that day, mud covered, but cherished all the same.



The next time she flew a kite, it was that same pale yellow, stained from the mud, tarnished but loved, just like her daddy's favourite mug. The spring had grown warmer, the breeze gentle but stubborn, a jumper no longer needed, the grass no longer sodden. A blanket lay on the floor, a small basket sitting beside her dad. The kite a steady float in the sky, she looked at him with a smile on her face, he grinned back. Her kite continued to fly that day, late into the afternoon, secure with her father.



The seventh time she flew a kite, it was that same pale yellow one, muddied and turning grey, resembling less of her dad's mug and more like the colour of his favourite chair. The spring was beginning to turn to summer, the days began to lengthen, the wind beginning to slow. She released her kite, watching it perform. She glanced at her dad. He was no longer watching, only looking up occasionally. He was sitting on his phone, distracted and dense. She called for him, and was rewarded with a glance and a grin. She felt uneasy, a small pocket of worry forming. She brushed it off. He was her dad. She knew he loved her.



The twelfth time it was flown, her kite was ripping at the seams from use, the pale yellow turned grey. The wind that day was strong, her grip tightening, her father glancing less and less throughout the afternoon. The wind slowed whenever he'd look, a strange coincidence. Watching his phone, a video playing. The kite swirling, her father wasn't watching. The need to beg and demand for him to watch overflowed. Irritation growing, he snapped, the sound of thunder in the distance. He rounded her up, she felt like screaming. He cared only when he needed to. She realised this now.



She thought it was the seventeenth time flying her kite; her father wasn't watching. She was begging, demanding for him to watch her. He didn't. She watched him grow irritated. Stress, that's what it was, at least that's what she was telling herself. There was no way that he could no longer be interested in her kite, he was the one who bought it, promising her that he would take her everytime she wished to fly it. The revelation that he couldn't hold a promise dawning on her. He was everything she didn't want to believe, everything he told her that he wouldn't be. He was no longer a dad interested in his daughter, he was now just a man.



She was flying her kite; she had lost count how many times it was now. The kite was grey and on the verge of falling apart. The wind slowed, her kite barely taking flight; she was begging. Wishing for

normalcy, her father, the man, a desire for him to be interested, a want for him to love her like he loves his games. No longer interested, sat in a room, a dark room at their house. She was alone, she'd begged and pleaded for him to bring her to the lake. The weather was warm and the wind slow, she knew her kite wouldn't fly high, she knew there was a chance that it wouldn't even fly. She knew it was selfish, but she longed for the familiarity of her fathers hug, his loving warmth, the smokey smell of faded cigarettes, and the feeling of ratty old cloth. The wind picked up, too strong for her old kite to withstand. The seams ripped, her kite falling in pieces. It felt ironic, her life falling apart just as the wind began to pick up.



She no longer bothered to count, for all she knew it was the last time she'd fly. The kite, a pale yellow one, like the first she ever flew, was bought for her as a resemblance of when things were alright. The wind was weak, the weather hot. Why had she even bothered to bring her kite? The summer wind, the weakest of the year, hot and humid. He had not followed, he had left, at first he came and went just like the storms of the season, then he began to slow, and he finally stopped. She wished for him now, reflecting on what she had taken for granted as a kid. No longer having him, but missing him felt all too wrong.



The last time she flew a kite, the man was not there, her kite now pink, a colour with no resemblance to him. Her mother had bought it in an attempt to bring her back. Instead of the man watching her, it was her mother, her mum, the one who loved her unconditionally. The season turned cold, autumn approaching, the wind picking up. Almost perfect.