

Elizabeth Fogner

A Buried Realization

The white fold up chairs sit precisely lined up in the backyard of my childhood home. Red roses and yellow daffodils decorate the isles. The black tux fit snug and black tie tight as a noose around my neck. A drip of perspiration escapes my hairline and trickles down my neck. My best man pats my back and tells me everything will work out. If only he knew my feelings of uncertainty. He hands me a small journal and explains that he still recalls when I used to journal in high school. I thank him and tell him I will be right back.

I buried my journals in the woods when I graduated. I remember what I wrote in them and needed to read them before I went through with this. I walk out the house and see the last of the guests are arriving. My father in law sees me walk towards the woods and follows me. He approaches and questions what I'm doing. I describe that something for the wedding was left in the forest. He sternly expresses that I am not to abandon his daughter as he clutches my shoulder, digging into my collar bone. He releases with a shove and stomps away.

I continue into the woods and hear music starting to play over the speakers. My foot trips into a puddle of mud that pours into my shoe. The sock and pants leg are soaked. I push on the pine straw ground to get back up. The inseam of the left pants leg is split open, revealing a pale thigh. Looking up, a pale ripped flag that once was yellow marks the spot. I run to the spot and grab a stick. On my hands and knees, I shovel the ground in front of the flag. My heart starts to beat faster as my name is being called over the speakers. I begin remembering the letters I wrote to myself for the future. I hit metal in the ground with the stick and throw the stick to the side. Using my hand, I shove dirt away from the center revealing the metal banged-up lunchbox with a lock on the front.

I grab a rock and hit the lock once. Then I hit it again. Again, hitting my finger and cutting it on the rusted metal seam. I give out a wail and tears start to run down my cheeks. I take a broken breath and hit the lock again, slinging blood on the orange rusted lock. It breaks open and I unhinge it. Opening the latch reveals several stacked journals. I throw each journal to the side desperately hoping I find the one I'm looking for. I open the page of a speckled notebook and the top of the page reads My Dream Girl.