

THE CITY REMEMBERS

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The moon was rarely seen in those days, always hidden by a layer of clouds and debris. Sometimes a sliver of silver would be caught by one of our windows, and something would be illuminated: a crack in the concrete, a tree branch crooked in benediction, the perpetually revolving doors of the mini-mall. That night, when we caught a piece of light and watched the beam haphazardly skip across the broken bones of the city, the last man in the world died.

He was nothing but dust and cobwebs and sadness. He was wearing a jacket with Greek letters sewn across the back. His right leg was broken.

We couldn't gather him up in our arms. We couldn't offer him up to the sky. The sea was too far away, and only Old Ned Towers had ever seen the water, anyway. So we just waited for the wind to carefully sweep up stone and soil and root and cover the man, the way mothers would cover a child in blankets. A dry leaf fell on his forehead like a kiss. We waited for the moon to set. When the darkness faded and he was gone, we realized that we didn't even know his name.

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