

A MINIMALIST LOVE STORY

"Today is a good day for this song," she says thinking of something long ago. It is raining and cold, as though it were still mid-November instead of early May. Outside, everything is green, extravagantly green; that is how much it has been raining. The song on the stereo is a soulful ballad with a Spanish guitar line. The singer's voice is rough, as though she has been crying. "Her voice sounds like rain," she says. "It's sad."

It is Sunday and they are lying on the living room floor, reading The New York Times and drinking coffee. She'd gone out in the gray drizzle and bought the paper, as he'd slept. They nibble on the dark squares of chocolate as they read the paper. He finishes reading Arts and Leisure, she Travel, and they trade.

"Remember that noisy apartment on Centre?" she asks, turning, laying the paper down.

"Remember how noisy the buses were?"

He nods his head. "Yes, I remember," he says. "Joey and Ethan climbed through the window from the fire escape, and we played guitars." Having finished the Travel section, he folds it, and picks up another. "It seems like a thousand years ago," he says scanning the page.

She tries to remember what it was like a thousand years ago, when everything was different, when they drank beer on Sunday in the park. She knows he has forgotten, and it makes her sad, like the song. He puts the paper down and curls up against her. He is warm.

"Do you remember what we used to fight about?" she asks.

"Yes," he mumbles sleepily.

"Tell me."

"I remember how I felt when I thought I'd lost you," he says. She takes his hand in hers, holding

it to her heart, and decides to let him off the hook.

"I remember champagne picnics in the park at midnight," she says. "And every fight we ever had." She turns around to face him and inhales deeply, enjoying the perfume of his body.

"I'm sorry I've forgotten," he says.

"Sometimes it doesn't seem real," she says, but she isn't sure what she means. He sighs and draws her closer.

"I'll remember everything," he promises.

She turns over again and watches the rain roll down the window.

"I swear," he says.

"Shut up," she says.

"No, I mean it." He says, on the verge of sleep.

His breath is warm against her neck, and she listens to the beating of her heart. The song fades, and another starts, less sad than the one before. She closes her eyes and listens to the rain knowing, somehow, that it will always be this way.