

A Lost Memory

by Daniel Resnick

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The wind plays with the flaps of my coat as I move down the street. It's dark out, night-time, though an occasional flickering lampost lights my way. I catch a glimpse of my face in a puddle: Haggard, grim, five-o'clock-shadow; deep-set brown eyes, thick eyebrows, thick unruly hair.

Of course, most of these details are drawn from memory. I always did trust my memory more than my senses anyway.

A voice calls out. "I know why you're here."

I turn around, slowly. She'd already got the drop on me, best not to antagonize her.

She's pretty, but not like a model. More natural. Dark curly hair, flecked with red; small pointed nose, small pointed mouth; bright blue eyes under delicate glasses.

All from memory again. But the flowing red robes are new.

"I won't answer your questions," she said. "Leave now."

"Aw, but I came all the way to the middle of nowhere in Argentina just to see you."

"Yes. And I came here to get away from the constant questioning."

"Look, I'll tell you what. I'll buy you dinner, and then when you're feeling more relaxed, we can have a chat. About magic."

She starts, and looks right and left for any eavesdroppers. There aren't any. I've been keeping track.

"Are you crazy?! Just blurting that out? Why can't you just leave me be?"

Her voice rises in pitch at the end. An endearing trait of hers when she's flustered, I've always thought.

I shiver. I put my hands in my pockets.

"Can't do that. You know I can't let the truth go, certainly not something quite this big. It's not my fault you showed me a whole new world and then took off when I started getting curious.

"And I didn't come directly here anyway. After you left, I tracked you down, but I took the scenic route. To give you time to cool off, and try and learn about the mystic stuff from sources other than you. Found some too."

She looks surprised... and maybe a bit hurt?

"But, of course, you're the best source. And my personal favourite, too."

She starts to speak, and her voice cracks. She tries again.

"I *know* we're... friends, but I can't have everyone knowing my secret. And you won't be able to keep this to yourself. You can't So you have to go."

I take a few steps closer to her.

"You know I won't."

She sighs, closes the remaining distance, and embraces me. She stares straight into my eyes.

"Then I'm sorry, Danny," she whispers.

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My desk. In front of me. What am I doing here?

Wait - what was I doing?

I remember... a trip? But I've got work. Why would I leave? I must have nodded off and dreamed of vacation, I guess. But...

My pocket vibrates. I reach in, and my hand closes around polished stone. Wha...

And then I remember. All of it. The trek through Central America, The Amazon, the whole trip. Magic, and weird artifacts like this cute memory stone gizmo. And, of course, Marcella. She thinks she can make me forget, and that that will make me give up.

Well, I'm not forgetting. I won't. She can't take away the wonderful world she showed me. And she *had* chosen to show me, back then.

I grinned.

"Alright then, Marcella. Time to give this another go."