

Thinking of You

by J. L. Owens

I lay in bed and think of the day before last when we drove down to the river and listened to the sound of trickling, splashing, and birds calling. We smiled, unaware of the hell back home. We could have left right then and there, no one would have ever known we were gone until nightfall. What kept us from leaving? What made us go home? It was beautiful, the long car ride up and around the hills to that small town tucked away. The restaurants and the trinket stores lining the road as if pointing the way to a better place. The wind blew into the cab of the car and your hair blew around your face but you did not care, instead, I felt one hand in mine and watched the other steer our way around the winding hills. How were we to know my mother knew I would be with you?

The ride home was difficult, it pulled my heart from my chest knowing I would have to be returned home and not see you again for a few days. Yes, we had the telephone but we had to be careful. Always having to run to the phone, making sure my mother or father would not answer it first, always whispering the important "I love you" or "I miss you" in secret was hard. The truth was hard.

Why? Why did it all have to happen this way? If I had known my mother was so cruel I would not have let you drop me off. I remember seeing those cop cars in the front driveway as we turned the corner. Your face told me everything, you would not run. I cried. I cried so hard as we drove up to the house and as they pulled me away from you. My mother's look of horror and her words hurt. "She can't hurt you now, honey. One day you will understand sweetheart." No, I will not understand. I will never understand why my mother took you away and why she read the most intimate details of my life through the pages of my diary. I will never understand why I am not allowed to love you.

They will not let me talk to you. They will not let me see you. Why does age have to matter? Love is stronger than age, you know, I was told that once. I was told that one night when we shared our souls and bared all to each other. You told me that. You told me age did not matter. So why should it matter now? No one understands. No one understands our love, our pain, and our desires. It happened like a fairy tale, first innocent and then it hit us like a ton of bricks. We denied, we lied, and then we

accepted. Now we pay a price for loving beyond the boundaries of everyone else's lives.

Why did you not run away? Why did you stop the car and let them take you away? You acted so full of guilt. Your head did not even turn my way as they handcuffed the sweet hands you once held me with. Who are you now? Have you given in to them yet? Do you think their way? I have not, I wish you could know that, I have not. If it all could be changed, I would run away, far away with you and be happy. Would you?

Tomorrow will be another day thinking about you. My mother will wake me up and the silence between us will be strikingly obvious. She will smile and say good morning but it is no good morning to me. She doesn't understand. She will never understand that I love you. They will never understand that I love you. Why is it so wrong anyway? I am young but I still feel, I still want. I lay here thinking about tomorrow and how lonely it will be. Do you feel alone in that cold cell? Are you thinking of me? I am thinking of you.