

**The Stories We Tell Our Children**

Brown Doves/White Pigeons

She sat there. Waiting. She was alone.  
The curious eyes watched her every move as she sipped the tannin-laced liquid in her glass. The glass was too small. Her mouth was too wide. They talked of the weather, of the incessant rain, of the price of things, of the drinks menu the barmaid had just offered her. Nothing was real; nothing felt real. Their reality played out in docu-dramas and the football score. She knew there was something more.

He entered the crowd. Looking. She was sat,  
Alone at the table they'd shared glances. 6 weeks ago tomorrow.  
He smiled and her eyes smiled back - an invitation to join her in the wrongness of their right.  
The table was sticky with spilled words over spilt drinks and he couldn't help notice the amount left in her glass. She had to drink. He wanted to leave.

"I thought you'd be onto your second by now."  
"I'm taking my time."  
"Let me help you?"  
"Okay."

-----  
-----  
-----

Darkness. A fake, too-black darkness filled their eyes. The slighted touch; the brush of a sleeve, of

a finger, a hand was a delicious distraction from the swaying.

The drone enveloped them.

He took sips from his can and interlocked his fingers around the cylinder.

She crossed her legs and pretended not to feel the cold, or smell the damp.

Ten Boxes.

Ten chances to make things right. A million combinations of the wrong sequence. Availability was a misused word and she felt uncomfortable with the syllables.

“I like us on red wine. I think we’re beautiful to each other.”

The chemicals stained her lips; a tattoo. Of deceit. Of regret. Of sadness. Of hope. Of optimistic tendencies, turned to pessimism with the mention of her name. The contradiction of meanings left her desolate.

She sat there. Waiting. She was alone. Her expectations did not meet her reality.