

I Remember Before the Wall

When traffic would flow through streets with the ease that fish slip through water. It was a time after darkness, when one sun pierced the sky in the East and one in the West. Under their fiery glow, our people lived in both halves of our heart, breathing and beating as one, in time and in tune to the steady marching on of the seasons, as stable as the ground beneath our feet.

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Peter lived in the East. The cock's crow would sound through his open window, far beyond the edges of the city and far beyond where anything could stand between the migration of animals. He toiled on the land, coaxing life out of it, nursing its six year old wounds, hoping sixteen years were worms to be born and bred who don't remember the taste of human flesh. I would drive out to him, my Ford a sore thumb against the Trabants, roll up my Levi's, dig my Chucks into the mud, and plow the field, grain tumbling to the dirt to grow and feed a party I don't belong to.

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Peter and I sat up late and dreamed of escape, circus animals staring at the yawning flap of the big top. We made ourselves proud, proud enough to withstand the blows of uprooting, proud enough to think we could do it, hopeful enough to dream and believe it possible. He would forsake the Eastern sun and together we would forsake the twin suns all together. Like owls, we would chase a new light in a new direction.

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The drive across the street insignificant as any other, the asphalt dead, the vibrance and bounce beaten out of the ground until, in submission, it yielded a path as separate as the earth from the sea and sky— fundamentally separate, but intrinsically tied together. As I turned right, the road severed, capped with wood and barbed wire, police and rifles, hope and desperate faith. At each pass, the road continued on and on until suddenly and miraculously ending in The Wall, a great and famished figure that imposed as much of its weight as it could, relying on bullets where it could not.

I Don't Want to Remember The Wall

When the divide was stark as night and day, when the night was made day by searchlights, when day was made night with the crack of a single bullet. Or more often, a hail of them. Where the land was returned to death and decay, The Spree became clogged and muddied with hopeful bodies, empty of their hopeful inhabitants. The screams and pitter-patter decorated the night like stars in the sky. I held my eyes closed, dreamed of Peter far away in the East, alone but alive and that much was enough. Even if it wasn't true.

I Don't Want to Remember The Wall

—*Ian Dorbu*