

They say a stranger is a someone you don't know, someone you're not familiar with. I would say he's a stranger. I couldn't sit and tell you I knew him, that he knew me... The passing by in the hallways - it just stopped, like a fading echo. I'm not familiar with his hair, his deep, muddy eyes, that heartwarming smile. I'd love to describe them, to paint a picture of who he was, but alas, I can't. I don't know him. He's the only stranger I could lie and say I used to know, but that all depends on what you think it means to know someone.

When he first flashed me that smile in sophomore year, that is when I decided we were close. I felt an instant connection. It was like fireworks; in my head, we were friends. Was it because I struggled with making company? Well, yes, but aside from that, we were friends - just friends who didn't talk at all because I knew that, regardless of that, our friendship was just a silent understanding between the two of us, right?

High school is over, and with that, the chapter that held us together ended. People move on, high school ends. By the time the final bell rung, we were strangers. The quiet bond that once tied us together - the subtle glances and grins in the hallways - frayed and snapped. What happened to us?

I had searched for him at graduation, but he was somewhere in the throng, nowhere to be found. All I needed was one last glance, one last of those jovial looks that always made my day just slightly better. A part of me knows he wouldn't have spared me a passing glance even if I did find him that day. Maybe it was my fault for searching so desperately for someone I didn't really know much about. Did I even know his name? I mean, really know it? Yes, the letters were there on the program that everyone had, but the essence of who he was - the person behind the beaming face I would often see.

As time passed on, I started to realise that he was the only stranger that I had once known. Or perhaps, he's just the stranger I wanted to know – the one I want to say I know - the one I tried to hold on to when he was never truly there. And maybe, just maybe, that's the hardest part of all.