

Memories

SJSU International House
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Table of Contents

Memories

Leann Cherkasky Makhni

Bicycle Built for Two

Cécile Branchu

Memory

Hiroki Morimoto

Tiger Tiger burning bright!

Varrun Varatharajan

Becoming Friends

Natasha Lamperti

The Dilemma of Death

Greg Kristian

Memories

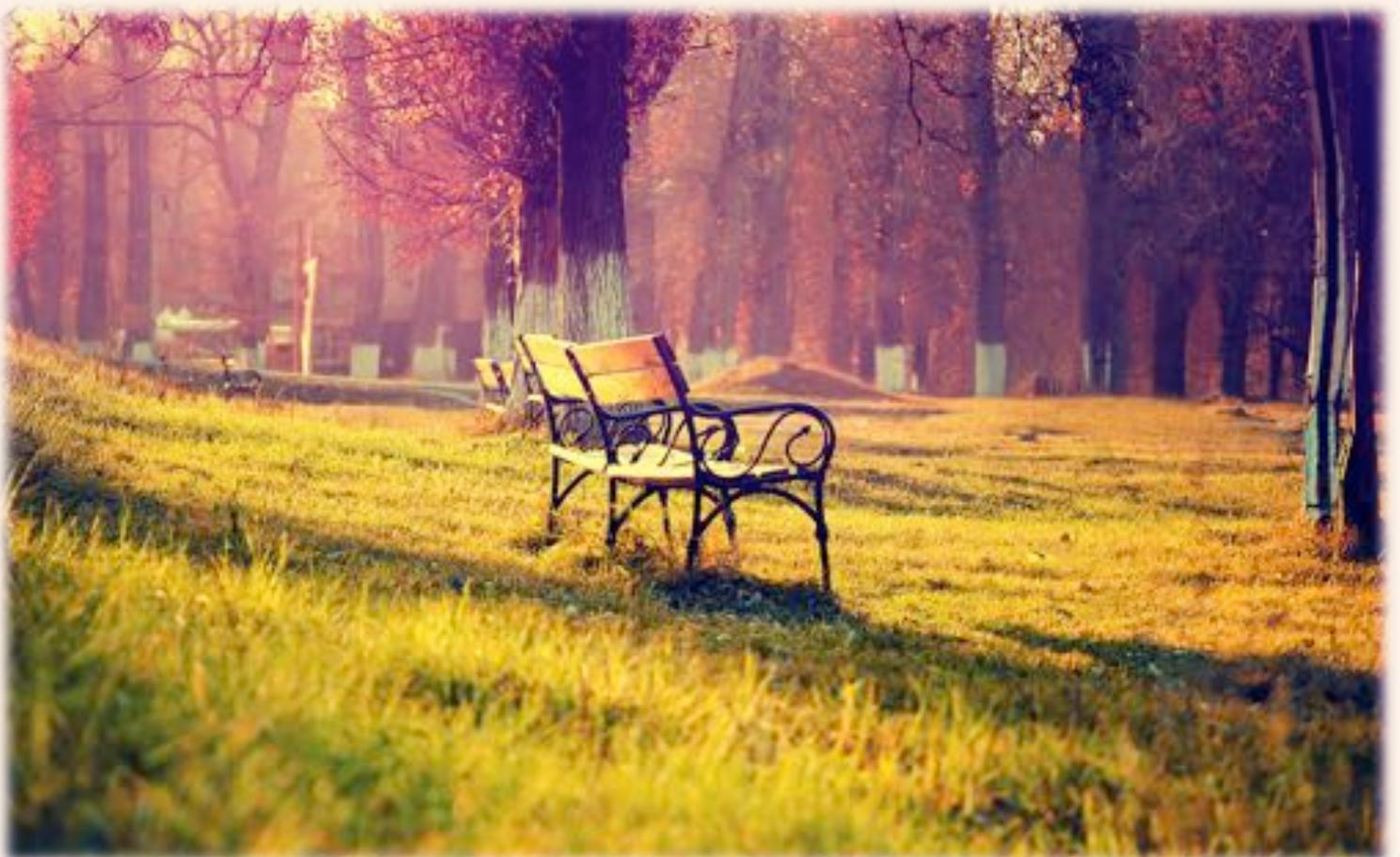
Enrique Padilla

The Old Crew

Melvin McElrath

I Remember it Clearly

Serena Organ



Memories – Leann Cherkasky Makhni

Memories swirl around me. They crowd my mind through busy days and dream-filled nights. Faces of those I've known in the past super-impose themselves over faces of those I am just meeting. Visits by former residents trigger a cascade of images. Cards, letters, e-mails, texts, messages, requests for connections, and phone calls bring to mind smiles, tears, frustrations, achievements, highs and lows, happy times and sad times. Memories of those far and near bring thoughts of those who are dear to me around the world. Nearly a quarter century of memories at I-House. I am told I should write a book. Where would I begin? What would I share? From the first day to the present, from morning 'til night, from January to December, memories of a rich, colorful, warm, wonderful life.



Bicycle Built for Two - Cécile Branchu



Memory – Hiroki Morimoto

My oldest memory is the scene where I was being carried by my great grandma on her back. I'm not sure how old I was at that time, the only clear thing is that it was a warm and sunny day. Yellow flowers were blooming; white tiny butterflies were flying around.

A few years later, she became bedridden. One summer day when I was 8, I was working on my diary homework. My family asked me to share what I had written with my great grandma. "Er... sure..." I was not willing, not because I didn't want to share, just because there was nothing to share. Literally nothing. All my diary pages were blank.

Standing by her bed, holding my diary high up (so that nobody could see the blank pages), I slowly started to "read" it aloud.

It was the most beautiful diary I've ever written. The event was described very precisely, and my feeling was expressed vividly. The "diary" was so impressive that my parents asked me to read it again for them later in the night. "What the..."

The night turned into a nightmare. I was scolded so badly I cried. An innocent 8-year-old kid, who wished not to disappoint his dearest great grandma and tried his best to improvise his story of life, was accused of being a liar who intended to deceive a bedridden old woman. How unreasonable it is! So unfair is life! This was my first "life sucks" memory that occurred, even earlier than that of Santa's true identity.

Nevertheless, I never regretted what I have done to my great grandma. While listening to my story, she looked very happy and peaceful, just as I was on her back in my first memory. I loved her, and she loved me. That's all we needed.

In memory of Suzumi Morimoto, who lived 93 years and gave me the happiest memory of my childhood.



Tiger Tiger burning bright – Varrun Varatharajai



-- Central India

The wait in the blazing summer heat was worth it. We heard alarm calls of deer and decided to wait, and watched as the jungle unfolded her magic. He comes out from the bushes walking majestically. His presence alone makes the jungle eerily calm, for the predator is out to make his kill! He really is king of the jungle, and burning bright indeed!

Becoming Friends - Natasha Lamperti

When I found out a friend of mine passed away, the first thing that my brain did before I could even process the information was to remember him. I thought about a lot of different things. I thought about the last time I had seen him, the last words I had messaged him, drinking with him on his birthday, gossiping with him in the formal living room and so many other random moments. However, no matter how much I thought about it, I could not remember becoming friends. I had known him a year before we became close and in my mind it happened overnight, and maybe it did. However that is the part that I want to remember. While I cherish the random memories that I have of him, more important to me are the feelings that I had in the time that I knew him and the way that I changed. The extreme happiness, excitement, frustration, sadness, confidence, purpose, love, and sense of belonging that I felt at that time are feelings that I will always be grateful for and will never forget.



The Dilemma of Death – Greg Kristian

There are clock towers, grave markers, tombstones, statues, and memorials where the names of the dead are inscribed. These names are all that remain as we try to honor their lives, as we mourn their losses, as we try to remember their actions, as they slip from our memories.

Eventually in our lives, we all wish we could spend one last moment with them. We wish we could have one last coffee, one last car ride, one last dinner, one last goodbye.

But we can't.

Those people are gone now. And all that remains is us. Us and the future, never the past. Your friends, families, and loved ones as you knew them are gone. How far would you be willing to go to bring them back?

In order to obtain, something of equal value must be sacrificed. But resurrecting the dead or even the past is impossible, if not forbidden.

For what could possibly begin to equal a human life?



Memories – Enrique Padilla

I have always wondered how our brain processes memories. How does it determine what is important and how can someone say "I'll never forget this". My oldest memory is of my grandmother trying to force feed me long division when I was in kindergarten. A couple years later at the age of 8 I got into a fight with all my brothers because they called Barney stupid, and that was not acceptable. All these memories are the bits and pieces that make up who I am. The memories of people who have interacted with and influenced me are the stories I tell the people who currently surround me and who surely will be making my newest memories. Sometimes, memories are all that we have of someone dear to us. These memories are the ones we clutch really tightly, and we don't realize how valuable they are until we no longer have them anymore. Living at the I-House has made memories of people who I hope my brain puts at the top of priorities. I got the amazing opportunity to become a Residential Advisor, and this allowed me to interact with a huge number of people who in turn have made me a better person. Sadly, we will not always be near each other, but our memories are something that keeps us all linked together no matter how far away we are.



The Old Crew - Melvin McElrath



I Remember it Clearly – Serena Organ

For the longest time my memory had me convinced that my friend Hana had gone to the same middle school as I had. I could clearly remember her being in some of my classes and I was 100% sure that we had been in choir and gone on school trips together. Nope. I didn't meet Hana until high school. *What was she doing in my memories?* I don't know why it happened, and I'd be really interested in finding out how, but that's the way it is and I really enjoy being friends with her so it doesn't matter all that much to me what my memories were getting up to.

Fickle and unreliable, memory has its ups and downs as it helps us keep track of where we've been and what we've done. There are memories we want to hold onto for forever, also those we wish we could forget, and memory is not always on our side. We forget things all the time, be they inconsequential or incredibly important, especially as we continue to have new experiences throughout our lives. Be it horrifying or heartwarming, crushing or up-lifting, frustrating or exhilarating, if it made an impact you'll remember it. Memory is a great record of all the events and people that have shaped us into who we are today. Just remember that that doesn't mean we should always trust it. Examine your memories and try to see if you've added anything that wasn't there before or got rid of something that should be there. It's interesting to see what changes.

As for my own memories, I enjoy the good ones while trying to make many more to even out the bad ones, keeping in mind that without both I wouldn't be me, imagined or not.



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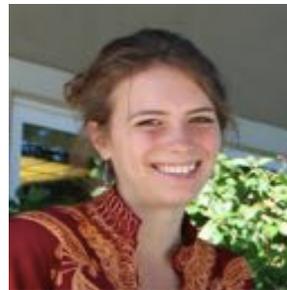
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“The best gifts in the world are not in the material objects one can buy from the store, but in the memories we make with people we love.”

-Amanda Boyarshinov