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Remember the Roses

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Remember the Roses

Cover Page Footnote

This piece was brought into workshop in progress. Because we operate under a workshop model, we see value in an unfinished piece.

Remember the Roses

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On Tuesday they found a bone. One of the Johnson kids had stepped on it in the river bed while swimming and the police identified it as human that afternoon. By Wednesday they'd found what seemed like a good bit of the rest of the body. By Thursday the whole town had thought it was the Miller's boy who'd disappeared from law school without so much as a note, but he was found smoking in the back of somebody's garage very alive and very stoned (there seemed to be a strict age limit to those that found this reveal funny).

Within a month, without any identification, most everybody had stopped talking about it. I mean, sure, it was unusual to find a body in the river, but it wasn't underneath the bridge where the kids play, and nobody had been reported missing, and no one else had died. I didn't see them carry it out, but Chris did. He said the skull was small and seemed like something he could've wrapped his fingers around. But Chris' research didn't amount to anything better than anybody else's and so the mysterious body drifted into the subconscious of a rainy March quickly turning into a hot southern summer.

I think it's only right to begin with the body. I think that's where I can draw everything back to. To the rains that unearthed the bones and everything else that year. I could keep going back, keep threading my needle through patches of memories until it's all the tangled mess I've been trying to parse through for years. But I don't think that can come to any good.

Now, I can't promise that this is a *good* story. I wouldn't dare do anything like that. But it is *a* story and I hope that'll be good enough. More than that, it is his story as much as it is mine and that's really all he wanted out of this whole tumultuous mess: a story. Whatever they say, this is not a story about death. This is a story about the bones of a dead boy and a frost that came too early that year. But it's as much a story of a number of long Southern evenings and a handful of roses. To say anything about life, I must first tell you about death. So we'll start with this one.

But this is not a story of death, I can promise you that. It can't be. It's got to come to some good.