

WINTER NIGHT

Kyle R. Martin—Admissions & Scholarships

Lonely. Serene. A good night for walking. For thinking. Clouds were thick and low—almost within reach if only he could climb one of the massive, hibernating elm trees standing guard over the sleeping park. Thick layers were suspended in the air, muffling sounds of the night. They insulated the sky and sealed him within a few city blocks, shielding him from the turbulent world, isolating him with his thoughts.

The landscape was slowly fading under large snowflakes, a silent, soft cascade. The cover of snow was nearly unblemished, only his footprints scarring the peaceful scene. The dim, orange glow of a street lamp revealed fading impressions of tires, formed long before his troubled thoughts traced a parallel groove. Tire tracks made, no doubt, by someone rushing home to the warmth of loved ones. He envied the loving reception the driver had received. He no longer took those moments for granted.

He watched as the snow swallowed and released his boots in a slow, steady rhythm. How had it happened? How had his perfect life ceased to exist? Deep down he had seen the impending conclusion from miles away. The thought of dealing with the inevitable anguish had made him sick with despair. It was easier to ignore reality, pretending not to see what was approaching. He had fooled himself wonderfully. So the shock seemed sudden and ran deep. It had hurt—as if crushed by a snowplow racing to throw the wintry mess from icy streets.

Where was his strength coming from now? How had he endured? It could not be his strength alone. Somewhere in the frost and silence the winter night held an answer. He walked and pondered. The storm that had clouded his mind began to give way. This strength seemed familiar; this power had sustained him before. He recognized it from other dark times. He had walked similar paths before. Past footprints seemed to sweep on ahead, as if to lead him rather than only temporarily mark his passage. He knew. He knew his inner strength was part of the wintry night around him, each delicate snowflake a reassurance from the author of this delicate scene. It was still hard. But he accepted it. He would move on.

Yes, it was a good night for thinking. For walking. Peaceful. Serene. ☺

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