

## Things I Need to Remember

I sat at the head of the boat. The wood was gnarled, rough, yet comforting to the touch. Behind me sat an old man. In his dry cracked lips sat a large glowing cigar which smelled of old couches and grandfather clocks. His captain's hat was tipped down below his eyes, allowing me only a glance at his wrinkled features. I turned around fully to watch him row, studying the smooth movement of his tired body as he manipulated the boat through the dark lake. As I looked to his hands I found they seemed to meld with the oars. They too were gnarled rough, and faded with age. They moved with the rhythmic pattern of a machine, yet still held onto a drop of human familiarity. A sort of warmth that only the living could produce.

This sentiment provoked me to jerk back my hand which had started creeping towards the black waters surrounding the boat. As I peered into the inky waves a part of me began to panic at the thought that even the sun could not penetrate its depths. If I were to stumble into its suffocating tides there would be no hand reaching, clawing me back to safety. In that moment I made sure to secure myself on the roughed wooden bench, and drew myself towards lighter thoughts. This was neither the time nor place for this type of thinking, and if I wasn't careful I might get us lost. Here, I assumed, even your own head could betray you.

"Here" is unfortunately an unknown variable. Whether direction exists is a question that will go unanswered. I pondered over how my unknown guide had managed all these years. Experience and guesswork mostly, I assumed. Even as we came to the shore his brittle bones still managed to drag the boat up to the dock with ease, and as I jockeyed my way out he managed to still the boat in seconds, a sight which to me resembled most the image of a man comforting an old friend. I paid my fee and waved goodbye (to which I got no response), hoping one day the man might be a passenger himself, given the opportunity.