

RIYO AMAYA

Prompt: Forever

Ayita can't believe in forever. What was forever once... died. James was forever. James had her heart in his palm. And when he drove away that night... when he left without a goodbye, he took it with him.

She tapped her pen lightly against her notebook, chewing on her lip and trying her best to shake the sorrow settling on her heart. It was three years to the day that James had driven away... and died on the cliff road to his house. He should have known the road like the back of his hand. But anger blinds even the most wise.

This paper, **this**, was important, she tried to remind herself and looked back at the word on her page. Forever. She thought about speaking to Tim Martin, the professor, about a different assignment. Something she could truly write about... and not be reminded of pain. Of being forced to choose between life with the boy she'd always loved and a career path that would've included him if he could only have seen.

Ayita looked up to see her son playing in the sandbox. Two and a half years old and not a care in the world.

"Darryl, baby. Come to Mommy."

"Okay." He waddled over and climbed into her lap.

"Baby, what's forever?"

"Fo-eva?"

She smiled softly. "Yeah, baby. Forever."

"Me and Mommy. Fo-eva." He smiled wide. "Go play?"

Ayita smiled back and hugged him tightly. "Go ahead, Darryl. Don't go to far away." He waddled back to the sandbox and began to play again, content with a shovel, sand and a toy truck. Was that all forever meant? Love and sand and constant playtime. Ayita looked down at her page, still blank of words but covered in sand. She smiled and began to write.

"I thought I knew what forever meant. It took my son and a sandbox to truly teach me what forever meant. My purpose in life..." She scraped all the sand into her palm and then into a tissue. That was forever. One moment, wrapped in tissue and treasured for the rest of your life.