

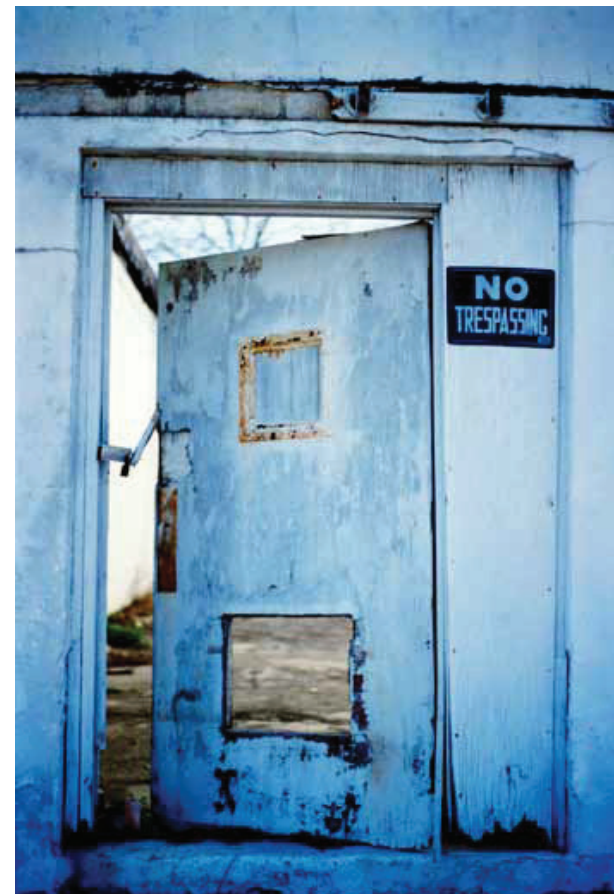


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"It's like kissing time itself,"
I say as I catch my breath.

When I Think of Texas

by Katherine Oktober Matthews



As lonesome bedfellows, it was never certain if we were loving each other or using each other, though we would grow drunk with the desire for something more, even if the more was intended for somebody else. Is there anything that marks the passage of time so well as the feeling of kissing an old lover? As the space between us closes, the time between then and now flattens. I kiss T. again after eight years, and in that contact is the reminder of the first time we kissed, and the last.

I don't know him now, so I kiss the man I knew, who now has greying temples and wrinkled eyes, and I know I must look the same way to him. Yet no matter how I change, there is always something there for a lover to recognise. Through him, I can see myself, the person from eight years ago, about to make all the choices that took me away from here. "It's like kissing time itself," I say as I catch my breath. He smiles. And I could live forever on the fumes of this time travel, but it won't last. It can't. Time has to pass away from one another for there to be something to return to.

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