

Festival

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Lights swooped, dancing in every direction; reds and blues sweeping from the ground to the sky, yellows and purples streaking left and right, disappearing and reappearing. It was a summer night, cool winds blowing from the east, the heat from the day disappearing like an old memory, and the festival was in full swing. Everyone clamored toward the fair grounds where the festival was taking place while I stood there drinking everything in, wanting to know everything, not just experience it.

When she came up to me, I turned to her and smiled. She was wearing a red sun dress with a light brown hat; the lights reflected in her brown eyes as she took my hand, her white smile brightening the night further. We stepped toward the festival letting the crowds and noise take us.

All around the grounds we spied games, food carts, and rides, all with people barking at the crowds and dancing, trying to bring people in. I spotted a rifle game that had a giant rabbit prize and paid the booth runner for my attempts. It took me a few shots, but I managed to win the rabbit which I gave her, a smile spreading on my face. She hugged it tight and leaned on me as we continued down the festival taking in the sights.

We worked our way to the podium in the center of the festival where the mayor and some of the town’s dignitaries gathered. We were celebrating 150 years as a town, with people gathering from all over to celebrate with us. The mayor thanked everyone from all over as well as the various charitable folks who helped fund the festival. Our town wasn’t very big or rich, but the festival made us feel like we were among the grandest in the world. The speech came to an end with the mayor stepping from the podium. The crowd applauded him and even I felt compelled to clap for him.

I looked at her, wrapped my arm around her shoulder, and started walking toward some of the stands. We went through various ones trying on silly hats and glasses we found, laughing at the copyright offending spray on clothes, and just having a wonderful time. We stopped at one stand and got caricatures drawn of us. It was interesting how he made her taller than me, making her look like a tree with me as a kid climbing her. I thought it was silly and was intent on hanging it up when I got home.

We ran into some people we knew at one point and stood there for a few minutes, chatting idly. She held her rabbit in one arm with her hand squeezing mine. I felt as though I was in a dream or even heaven. The rich scent of fresh grass blew past us on the summer breeze as we made our way to one last spot in the festival, the giant Ferris wheel you could see from the other side of town. I paid for our seat and we climbed in with her sitting on one side of the carriage while I sat on the other.

I placed my hand over hers on the pole as we climbed up into the sky, coming to overlook the whole town. The Ferris wheel came to a halt with us near the top. The town looked beautiful and tiny from way up here and this moment felt perfect. I slid over to her and wrapped my arm around her; she leaned into me and nuzzled my neck as we looked out at the stars overhead.

Right at that moment a single scream split the night air followed by a flash and a loud boom. We looked over in delight as the Ferris wheel started moving again and fireworks filled the sky. I watched them with childlike wonder, feeling her hand squeeze mine tight. I turned towards her, placed my hand on her cheek, and turned her face towards mine before leaning in, kissing her.