

Display Case And Plaque Given in Memory of the Deceased

by Grace Potter

In late spring, Facebook told me she'd died.

She was a stunning Russian exchange student – high forehead, round cheekbones, freckles, a delicate smile. Her perfect winged eyeliner had earned her a spot on our drama club's makeup crew. In the dressing room before performances, I could always count on her to be in my periphery, daintily leaning over a chorus member while applying blush to the apples of their cheeks.

We didn't talk much. Sometimes, I'd ask her to pass me a mascara wand or blend out my eyeshadow. Sometimes, she'd ask me to pronounce a word or two of English. Our relationship was a casual symbiosis. It never stretched beyond our high school theater.

She left sometime in 2010, and we quickly lost touch. Aside from the occasional photo she'd post online, I had no reason to think about her. Things were busier. Our drama club was putting on another show. New exchange students filtered through our school.

Her death was marked by one "Rest In Peace" message on my Facebook news feed. It was wedged between pictures of new dogs, graduation caps and summer vacations. She was seventeen.

I called one of my friends as soon as I found out.

"Remember that exchange student? No, not Carol. The one from Russia.... No, not Katya, the one who worked crew for *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. No, not Kennet..."

We went back and forth for five minutes.

Her profile was deleted years ago. Now, I can barely remember her last name.