

The indelible kiss.

Imagine the perfect lips

Imagine the perfect kiss

Imagine it lasting forever.

When he was fifteen, those words had spilled from the TV and radio in tones so seductive that no one could ignore them. If the advertisements we to be believed every woman in the world was desperate for this lip colour. On the school bus, rolling and bumping home the girls flicked through their fashion magazines. They certainly wanted it and the boys, pretending not to be interested, secretly all wanted a girlfriend who wore it. From full page adverts silver hued letters asked one and all to exercise their imaginations, promising that if you kissed those lips you would remember the moment forever and best of all, your lip colour would never fade and was almost impossible to smudge. It was all due to a revolution in nanotechnology, or so the advertisements claimed.

“What’s nanotechnology anyway?” one girl had blurted. He was good at science, and new the answer immediately. He explained it in great detail, and to his surprise the girl had listened. She was very beautiful he had thought.

“It’s true what this advert says” he told her “Because of these nano-particles this lipstick will really last forever”

“Forever?” She had said sounding intrigued. “Can a kiss really last forever?”

“We should put that to the test” he replied, trying to sound grown up and smooth “In the name of science of course”.

The bus finished its journey. They got off and the crowds of children drifted away, some to do homework, some to call on friends. They stayed sitting in the bus shelter until they were all alone. They talked for a little while then she leaned toward him and kissed him quickly on the lips. He was very surprised.

She laughed, stood up with a swift easy grace and from her pocket pulled out a lipstick. In the scuffed glass windows of the bus shelter she studied her reflection, applying the colour to her lips.

He walked around to the back of the shelter, studying her through the glass. When she was finished she beckoned to him, they put their lips to the glass, her on one side, him on the other and acted out a kiss so passionate it was worthy of Hollywood.

For the next couple of weeks they would meet after school and kiss. Then she was asked out by a boy who was a year older than him and learning to play the drums. He never spoke to her again.

When he was thirty two he happened to be back in his home town for a visit. It was remarkably unchanged. He saw the same faces on the same people only now they were stooped and grey but on the window of the bus shelter, remarkably untouched and still an astonishing vibrant red, was an imprint of a pair of full kissable lips.

He looked at them long and hard. He had not thought of that day for years. He found he could not remember what she had looked like.