Imagine him sitting at his desk, hunched over, at 3 in the morning. He should be asleep, he knows, but he’d much rather make bad choices and stay up all night talking to people. I’ve tried lecturing him many times before, but he never listened. Sometimes he’d fall asleep in the middle of a sentence, which should only serve as proof of how much he needed it.

A thousand paper cranes held together with strings.

Imagine me sitting at my desk, hunched over, at 3 in the morning. I should be asleep, I know, but I’d much rather listen to a song on repeat and stare at my arms. I’ve been lectured for this many times before, but never really listened. Most nights I manage beat the sun to the morning, which only leaves me with the feeling of odd pride.

_I am Yearning and I come up crashing from below without warning, and every time I do you pretend you’re unhappy to see me._

He had a wide swath of hobbies. But even more than that, he was richly talented. The most talented person I’ve ever known. For everything he did, he was the best at it. He always had to be the best. Had to come out on top of everyone.

Whoever folds a thousand paper cranes will be granted a wish by a crane.

I limply watch my arms fold over one another. Elbows creaking, creases groaning as they take turns shielding each other from the hot light of the focused lamp, casting a shrouded form on the disappointed walls.

_My name is Wistful and I will draw your attention no matter how hard you fight it, as you stare off into the distance when you should be paying attention to those around you._

He had a black belt in karate. He could beat anyone in table tennis. The same goes with videogames. He played piano and saxophone like some kind of prodigy. He was a master juggler. And he was utterly fascinated by the things he could do with paper.

_Whether it’s a wish, eternal good luck, long life, or other granted blessing, a thousand paper cranes offer more than just a piece of folded paper._

There’s one of his infamous paper creations sitting on my desk. An intricately multi-layered dodecahedron structure. Its eminence is shoved to the back of the desk amongst other things that I’ve decided are best kept out of sight out of mind. Some nights it’s too painful to look at, and I’ve told myself to burn it many times. Curse it with my charred symbol and set it ablaze. But I’ve never gotten myself to do it.
I am Sentiment and I dig my way into the deep crevices of your dreams when you least expect it.

I imagine him sitting at his desk, folding paper cranes long into the night, collecting them in a box. Once he fulfilled his quota of the day, he would grant himself sleep. It might have been an excuse to be himself. It might have been so he could hear me try to lecture him.

Sometimes a thousand paper cranes are given as a wedding gift by the bride’s father, for thousands of years of happiness and prosperity. Sometimes a thousand paper cranes are given to the home of a newborn; may long life and good luck take them.

When I run my fingers along the edges of his work I can feel his sadistic smirks folded within the paper. And imagine the glint in his shielded eyes as I swore he was reading my mind. The one place I never wanted him to get. But he always had to come out on top of everyone.

My name is Loss and you don’t want to know who I am.

I imagine he’d planned long in advance for his project. To fold a thousand paper cranes in time, he would only have to fold a few each night. Soon he’d finish.

In temples, hundreds of strings of tattered cranes slowly dissolve into the wind as the wish is released.

Imagine me, finally granting myself sleep as the sky begins to brighten with the first signs of the sun and everything outside animates. Fold the blanket over my shoulders in an attempt to dissolve into the fabric.

I am Despondence, and you will grieve for me when I’m gone.

He had folded a thousand paper cranes for someone for their birthday. A tribute to how much he cared about them. But it wasn’t me.

Now, I walk past the cold hanging strings of paper cranes in the window. They are perfectly intact, and there are much fewer than a thousand. Different angled papers of countless colors and patterns. I see one folded out of a piece of sheet music. He would’ve liked that.

I am Reminiscence and I dive down from the sky to halt your steps every time.