

Memories...

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Seems like I watched you there for hours. You returned my gaze with a quizzical kind of smile that slapped down my illusion of timelessness with an everyday sigh. You explained that a sense of personal past is somehow pointless in the mountains.

It must be cold up there now, without any kind of real heat in your cabin. I guess you'll do fine though; you're strong. I can still feel your strong hands on the back of my neck working the tension down while you hummed that old nursery rhyme, and how easy it was to get caught up in the refrain, *April, come she will* . . . It rather pointedly talked about change, did it not? Getting your note today made me stop

again with a sense of growing older, and apart. We're both feeling a little older, but it could be the weather or simply the lack of touch over the last few years that makes it so. I no longer have a keen grasp on the things you have to offer, your day to day certainly different from my own.

I understand the claustrophobia of spirit you talk about, some inkling of the darkness and alienation you feel. I understand, and yet I have lost track of your growth in my own. All I can do is tell you I care. And that my thoughts are with you.

Today, while you feed the last of your chopped wood into the fire, I throw a quilt of memories around your shoulders, bits of blue paisley and old flannel woven tightly together with fondness and respect. Memories, not to hand onto, but simply to remind you (as you once admonished me) that I want to be around to see you as an old woman, healthy and sane.

We may always be struggling to get the words to that Little Anthony song right, but as we grow apart, the background vocals are coming back stronger every day. It's always good to know that one shared moment out of the constant series of transitions is worth 20 of any other kind.

Be Well,
Mz

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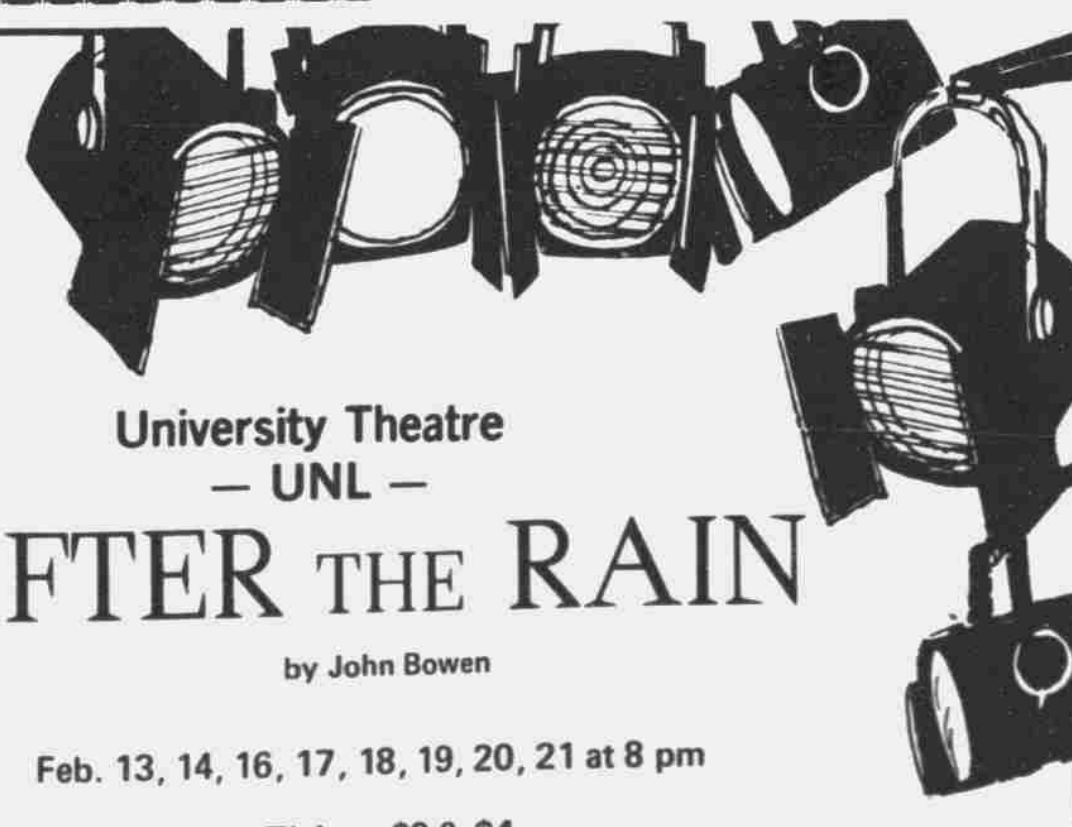
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