

5:45 AM

RINGG-

Before his alarm clock could really even let out a single one ring, he had slammed his hand down on it. At this point, he wasn't even sure why he set it. He had gotten so used to waking up at this time, he felt like he barely even needed it. He took in a deep breath, sitting up and glancing at his roommate, hoping as usual that his alarm didn't wake him. It had been a problem with his last roommate, a big one.

He felt terrible, and his eyes went to his dresser right away, which he made his way over to. He could feel his hands shake as he brought the bottle out of the drawer, placing it down and pouring himself a glass. He downed the glass, before reaching for the flask in the drawer, filling it up and putting it aside as he put away his glass and bottle, he would clean it when he got back.

He got dressed, a pair of shorts and a tee shirt and with that, he left the dorm, and went out into the elevators.

6 AM

He didn't step out of the building yet, not until his watch read 6 am exactly. That was the time he started, it helped keep him on track. Once he did, he started out in a jog until he reached the path on the commons, where he picked up the pace and began his run. He liked going this early because almost no one was out, which meant he could run around the campus with few interruptions. No one to talk to or look at him.

The first time he had started his runs was in sophomore year, he had done so to stay fit while avoiding the gym and had quickly discovered he liked the feeling much more than he would have expected. He liked feeling as if all he had to do was run, it was easier to clear his usually busy mind when he ran. Think about what he saw, smelt, or heard. Sometimes he would name them off in his head, like bird, tree, grass, anything to keep his mind blank for a little while.

It felt nice outside, a little cold but other than that it was fairly nice. If there was one thing he disliked about his run it was how fast it felt like it ended, like he didn't have enough time before his day started. He knew he could get up earlier, but God, if he did, when would he sleep?

7 AM

By the time he got back to his dorm, it was 7:58. He cringed at the time, because it meant he would need to stand outside his dorm for another two minutes. Once the clock chimed 8, he took a step in, quietly making his way to the mini fridge in his dorm grabbing water and taking a big chug as he made his way into the bathroom, for a shower.

He washed off fairly quickly, and stepped out, looking at himself in the mirror for a moment. He stared at himself for a moment, and couldn't help but think that.. He wasn't unattractive. Sure, his skin could be better and he felt like his nose stuck out too far on his face, but it didn't take away from his looks too much, right? He was a good-looking guy, and he wondered what it would be like if his insides matched his outsides, how much easier would things come?

He decided he was wasting a bit too much time with that and made his way back into the dorm, slipping on his shirt and pants, before sitting down to enjoy his breakfast which consisted of a cold breakfast burrito that he had warmed up in the microwave, just not quite enough. He slipped into the bathroom again, to brush his teeth, and apply some makeup which mostly consisted of smearing a thick foundation across his face and rubbing some eyeliner around his eyes, before it was time to leave for class.

8 AM

Then there was class, there wasn't much to say about class. He understood it, and he liked it enough. If for no other reason than he was good at it. Katz liked doing things he was good at, who didn't? If his weakness was his emotional capability then his strength was his logical capability. The only days he didn't like were the group work. He knew how he came off; he knew what people thought of him.

He was rude know it all, even if he didn't mean to be. But luckily for him, today was not one of those days, it was a lecture day which meant that he was able to take his notes and keep to himself.

10 AM

Practicing was his other happy place, he honestly wished he had more time for it. He wished he could pluck away until his fingers bled. At this point thick calluses had formed on his fingers, which made it easier to practice for hours on end. There was something about instruments that calmed him, but then there was something about them that infuriated him. It was the mistakes, small here and there, that seemed to ring in his head over and over.

One out of tune note, one off beat measure that made him grit his teeth. Especially when he wasn't alone when he practiced. The mistake would play in his head over and over, he wondered If the other person had noticed. Were they thinking about it too? Were they thinking about how he had managed to make something designed to sound beautiful sound so wrong?

What was worse was when the other person didn't. When they played perfectly and he felt the heat rise in his cheeks. He didn't like to admit how angry it made him when someone was better at something than he was. Pride was a sin, after all, but then again, he was full of sin wasn't he? But even still the idea that someone could do what he loved better than him made him feel as if it were pointless to try sometimes. He would never be the best, someone would always be more impressive than him. Six instruments were a lot, and it was cool, it impressed most anyone he told but he knew out there somewhere there was someone younger who could do the same thing.

He wasn't sure if he was ever what you would call prodigious. Sure, he picked up things easily, and he had started from a young age, but so had many people. But he knew it was impressive, but when did it stop being so impressive? When did he go from a 'musical genius' to 'very talented'? Was it age? Was he not improving? When you peaked in your childhood, everything afterwards became a game of how can I do better? Only to find out that well... you couldn't.

12 PM

After a couple hours of practice, it was back to class. This time he was in a group which made him groan in frustration at the amount it was announced. Had he doomed himself to the groupwork by thinking about how much he detested it? Jinxed himself? It was possible he supposed though, Katz struggled with superstition. Part of him believed in things like that, the universe working either in his favor or against him at different times, but other times he convinced himself that none of that was possible. How could the universe have any say in the way his life turned out when he had free will?

Luckily, the group work was a lot easier this time, mostly independent study along with some comparing of results. That was always easier because he didn't have to talk to them as much. He used to like group work, it was like a form of socialization without commitment, something that he struggled with, but that had all changed when he would see how they would interact with him. It wasn't clear at first but the more he got used to it the more he would notice the little things. The glances with each other but not him, the body language of their shoulders pivoting towards their neighbor even when he was the one talking. He hadn't understood at first, he didn't get why he was exactly so annoying to them, but eventually he got it. He still didn't totally understand why he was different, but he knew he was.

3 PM

The classes between noon and three were always the hardest, because about halfway through he got hungry. He used to try and rush between classes to eat something but the idea of having to walk and eat instead of being able to sit down and take a break stressed him out. In the end he decided it was better to just wait.

For Katz, food was not an enjoyable activity. He rarely got things he craved or made himself any kind of meal that filled any kind of need outside of basic nutrition. He wanted it to be easy, heat something up and eat it while he worked, save him some time so maybe he would have a longer break at the end of the day. He combined his lunch hour into a study hour, as a way to save time. That was another reason, it was a lot easier to simply eat something that was quick and easy if you were reading the whole time too.

What he had chosen today was a salad he had picked up the other day and stored away for this very occasion. The lettuce was a bit wilted and the chicken was obviously very unseasoned but it filled him up and that was what mattered. Sometimes he thought about going out to eat lunch, sitting down somewhere and ordering something greasy and delicious but he thought about sitting at that table alone and what it would look like.

Logically nothing. No one would pay attention to him and there was nothing abnormal about a student eating alone on his lunch break, but his mind didn't let him. It told him they would stare at him, look at him and laugh. He couldn't get anyone to go to lunch with him, he was a loser, he was always there alone. So, in the end, he decided that his dorm was the best option. That also meant he could refill his flask which had taken a couple hits during the day.

4 PM

After lunch it was straight back to class. He had loaded up his classes this semester, trying his best to get through the hell of double majors and minors he had given himself. He didn't want to be there any longer than he had to be, and he knew that if he only took the minimum credits he would be there forever.

There was always the option that he could have taken one minor, or one major but then how would he prove how good he was? The more he did, the more impressive he was. The more effort he put into this, the more value he had. Class was fine, it was nothing too bad. It was mostly notes, which he appreciated having spent all his social battery within his last set of classes which had been heavy on the group work.

5 PM

After class it was a youth group. He had been going to youth group since freshman year, but it was not until the end of sophomore year that he realized he wasn't totally sure why. Sure, he had always been religious, but he never really spoke much there. He went in, he listened to whatever everyone had to say but for the most part he kept to himself. He didn't go out of his way to make comments or to bond with people. He had made a couple friends in a group, but no one that he thought would want to hang out with him outside of this situation. He was itching for a drink, but he didn't think this was an appropriate time, so he stopped himself.

He had slowly figured out over the years that if the thing you had in common with the person you were hanging out with was religion, it generally wasn't enough to enjoy your time. Every time he came here he almost felt guilty, as if he was somewhere he didn't really belong. He wondered if any of them ever questioned everything or if they knew exactly what they felt.

If God was real, Katz kind of had a feeling that maybe he didn't like him too much. Maybe it was because of his doubts, but God never seemed to answer him. Nor did he ever really seem to make any prayer Katz had ever asked for come true. He knew God wasn't just for asking things, but if he could answer the prayers of people asking for miracles was it so hard to handle his?

6 PM

The youth group ending meant it was time to practice again. This time was better, this time he didn't make mistakes. But it was possible because he had decided to spend the entire two hours practicing the harp. It was kind of a cheat, you know? Practicing the one instrument that you knew like the back of your hand? He was a perfectionist with all of his instruments and there was almost none that he didn't feel very confident on but harp, now that was his. That was the one that he rarely found anyone better than himself on, so he played that.

For two hours his fingers plucked the strings completely satisfied with the noises it produced, all of them in tune. Now that relaxed him, the idea that he was perfect. Even if he knew he wasn't, it was nice to pretend for a while. Not to hear any sour notes and nothing offbeat, just the melody he was trying to play. He needed to work on that, he couldn't only practice what he was already good at.

8 PM

7:58 was the time he got to his dorm again, which meant he had to stand there again. Sometimes people would pass by him when he was doing this. People who didn't pay much attention to him would assume he was waiting for a friend to answer the door, but others who knew this was his dorm well.. Sometimes they would give him an odd look or two. He wondered what they were thinking. He assumed it was probably just them wondering what he was waiting for, but he also hoped maybe they would just assume he had forgotten his keys. That is what he hoped for anyway. He didn't want to look like a freak, but he also wanted to stick to his schedule. To them it might seem like two minutes but to him it threw off the balance of everything.

Once it was finally time for him to go inside, he made his way in and took a deep breath. He made his way over to the mini fridge again, this time producing a day old burger he had picked up the day before which he popped into the microwave, watching it as it spun. Once he heard that beep, he took it out and made his way over to his bed, pouring himself what was left of his flask, which was not much before topping it off from the bottle and sitting down to eat. He chewed slowly, now that his way was over, he liked to enjoy his dinner.

Headphones on as he listened to music while he ate, chewing slowly and looking down at whatever book he was reading. A lot of people found it hard to listen to music and read but Katz liked it, he found it was easier to tune out the noise of his own head if he was hearing someone else's voice.

9 PM

By 9, he was already studying anyway, so he just didn't stop. He read through the hour, occasionally switching materials. Working on homework, something that came easy to him. With the amount he studied every night he usually was able to get ahead, which always felt good. Even with his insane schedule, four hours of studying a day tended to put him a little ahead. It all felt mostly easy at this point. That was one thing he liked about being ahead was that he could struggle with concepts on his own so when they came up in an assignment, a group or in class he knew it. No one ever had to know he struggled with anything because he had already shown himself how to do the basics.

He hated being wrong in front of people more than almost anything. He knew they were waiting for him to slip up, to say something stupid. Waiting to jump at the chance to prove he wasn't as smart as he claimed to be. For that reason, all the studying was necessary.

11 PM

Finally. It was all over. 11 pm meant that it was finally time for him to do what he wanted. That was generally the same most nights, it involved him getting up and heading to the bathroom, washing his face, brushing his teeth, getting ready for bed. He looked at himself in the mirror for a moment, squinting. Sometimes he felt like the person looking back at him was not the same person he saw, like there was another version of him looking back at him.

He used to not like the way he looked, that was one thing the make up helped. Sure, it didn't really help with the acne, it barely covered it, always seeming to slip through but he liked how he looked in it. It made him look cooler, it felt more like him. In high school, he didn't really dress like that, or wear makeup, too nervous and afraid, but when he got to college things changed. By his sophomore year he had realized people didn't care what he did or how he looked so he had decided to dress for himself.

Once he made his way back to the room, it was time for another drink. This time he didn't bother to pour himself a glass, this time bringing the bottle over to his bed which he set on his table. He grabbed his journal from within the bedside table, unlocking it and setting it in front of himself.

'Dear Diary,

Today was about the same as yesterday. Most days are and I wonder why? I see other people's days change but mine tend to stay the same. Sure, they make plans they go out, but it's not just as

simple as that. I see people find things on the ground, a dollar or something, trip down the stairs, or bump into someone. Things like that don't happen to me. Sometimes I wonder if I'm even real, or if I am a figment of my own imagination or someone else's. The only thing that grounds me is that I cannot imagine why someone would think me up. I don't impact anyone, I barely impact my own life.

Today was okay, today I ate a breakfast burrito, a salad, and a burger. All of them were okay. Tomorrow is Saturday so I might order it out and bring it back to my dorm, that will be nice. I think I might also go out. I don't know where to, but it might be nice, right? I might even meet people.

Today someone tried to talk to me between classes, I think they were trying to have a conversation, but I like an idiot shut it down. I always do, I don't understand why everyone else can talk with no problem but I can't?

Who knows?

The mood for today is from Disorder by Joy Division; "I've been waiting for a guide to come and take me by the hand. Could these sensations make me feel the pleasures of a normal man?"

His journal was something he did most nights, he had filled up several by now. After he had finished he laid down, and turned on his side so that he could read again, this time a book of choice rather than for studying as he took a few sips off his bottle. Time always passed faster when he was reading and before he knew it the clock read 12:45. That meant it was time to head to bed if he wanted to be asleep by 1 am.

12:45 AM

The day was over, and it was almost no different from the day before. As he closed his eyes the world melted away and he imagined himself in different situations. Situations where he was different, where he could be who he thought he was. He imagined going to a club, one of those clubs that played goth music. He imagined himself walking up to a boy and asking him to dance and-

His eyes shot open and he looked over to his bottle taking another swig or two. Maybe he was done daydreaming, he turned on his side, and pulled his pillow closer to him, as he tried to push any day dreams away in favor of his dreams, something he couldn't control, but then again, if he had no control over them surely he couldn't be blamed for them either.