Take Me Far Away

The sound of glass shattering fills my ears as the shards rain down on me. I stay quiet, knowing that things will be much, much worse for me if I make a noise. A sharp pain on my cheek causes me to gasp; blood dripping down my face. My father left the room without a word soon after throwing the empty beer bottle at my head. I was quick enough to dodge the bottle but not the glass shards. I walk to my room and shut the door barricading it with my dresser. My father took the lock off my door a long time ago.

I change into my pyjamas and lie in bed. I toss and turn for hours before I eventually give up trying to sleep and just stare blankly at the ceiling. The only time I can get a good night's sleep is when I completely collapse from exhaustion. I think back to a time when we were a loving family, happy. It was years ago. My mother died in a car accident years ago, leaving me alone with my father. It was then he became abusive and fell off the rails. He lost the love of his life. I can barely remember what his laugh sounds like, I haven’t heard it since my mom died.

I was still thinking about it when the sun rose. Dragging myself from my bed, I walk over to the bathroom connected to my bedroom and looking in the reflection, I gasp. I barely recognise myself, my once vibrant blonde hair had become dull and my face had paper-thin cuts all over it from the glass. I had lost a lot of weight in the past months, my once tan skin was sickly pale, my freckles were long gone. The only thing that was the same was my eyes, still a light hazel, though a little sunken in due to the weight loss.

I close my eyes and look away before I strip and turn on the shower. I took multiple showers a day. It was my safe place, the only thing you can hear and feel is the falling water. The sound and feel allow me to think about anything and everything, or even nothing at all. I look down and watch as the water washes over the many scars and cuts I had collected over the years, the bruises all over my body because of my father’s daily beatings.

At first, he just ignored me, left me alone for days while he was on a bender. There was hardly a moment of the day when he stopped drinking. But after a few months, he began to get physical. He hasn’t stopped since. But I found that I could never bring myself to hate him, I had so many good memories of him, and Mum. He loved me. Even if it didn’t show anymore.

I think what scares me the most is the fact that I have always been told that I take after him, I look like him, a long time ago I acted like him. What about now? Oh god what about now?

I punch the wall, and erase that thought from my mind.

I am not him.

I never will be.

After I finish in the shower I get changed, grab my suitcase and backpack, and all the money I have saved over the years- a few thousand dollars- from under the loose floorboard.

I’m leaving.

I walk to the nearest bus stop and wait.

The bus arrives 10 minutes later and I get on. I don’t bother telling the driver where I plan on getting off and if i’m honest I don’t know. Nowhere. Anywhere. Anywhere but here.

I take a seat at the back and stare out the window.

I watch the world go by, so fast, yet so slow. A journey so long and yet so short.

Theodore Roosevelt National Park comes in and then out of view. My parents took me there once, when I was ten. We were so happy then. I remember seeing Mt Rushmore, I wanted to climb it, to sit on the top of George Washington’s head, and pick Thomas Jefferson’s nose. It was one of the best days of my life. We hadn’t the slightest clue that in a few days all of that would change.

I’ve changed so much since then, I’m no longer a little kid. A kid that loves and that was loved. I no longer laugh, or smile or scream in delight. I can’t no matter how many times I look in the mirror and try. I can never smile. Even the funniest joke couldn’t get me to laugh, and the only time I scream, it’s of absolute pain or terror.

North Dakota. It was where I was born, where I was named after. Dakoda North is my name. Mum thought it was funny. She had always called me ‘Koda’. Back then it was embarrassing, now I want to be called that more than anything, just one more time.

I don’t look like her, she had curly brown hair and the greenest eyes I had ever seen. She was short, I was tall. She was an optimist, I was a pessimist. She loved animals, I hated them. But most of all she was the kindest woman you could ever meet. She found beauty in everything.

Now she was gone.

And I was still here.

Now, alone.

I can feel a silent, stray tear as it slides down my face. I don’t bother wiping it away.

I put on my headphones and wash away the noise of society. I then slowly fade, into the world of black.

Morning becomes afternoon, and afternoon becomes night. The bus driver gently shakes me awake and I realise I am the only one left. The bus has reached its final destination, and I get off. I turn and watch as the bus drives away, and then I start walking. I don’t know if I will ever go back.

Maybe one day, maybe never. Only time will tell.

Perhaps I will catch another bus tomorrow, or maybe I could just stay here. Rent an apartment. Go to College, get a job. Live a life worth living.

Be happy.

I don’t know what tomorrow will bring. But I’m ready for whatever it is.

POV Father

Dakoda’s gone.

As much as I wish they didn’t, it’s probably for the best.

I’ll miss our times together. They were always so much fun.

Dakoda thinks I’m someone else, and that’s alright.

Dakoda is so much like they’re mother, it’s terrifying. I do love them, both of them. But I wonder if they would still love me; especially after what I did.

To my beautiful wife.

What would happen if people found out?

If Dakoda found out.

It wasn’t the car.

It was me.

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