

Untitled, 2018



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To whom it may concern,
A pencil bag was found in the examination hall no. 3 on Sunday. It is the standard school-issued jute bag, with no identifiable label. It contains 3 pens, a CASIO fx991-ES, and a rather large sheet of paper folded a number of times. Upon further examination, the contents were as follows:

Even while numbed by the fringes of anaesthesia-induced sleep, he remembers being afraid. Afraid of what, he doesn't know. Just fear, stretched taut across his skin.

1.

Even while numbed by the fire that December nights bring in tow, igniting a sickly blue tinge across fingers nursing Arabica blends, even then, he remembers being afraid of opening his eyes. Unafraid of the winds, but there was this fear he had had; that this little ember he had found in a Starbucks one December night was just a flicker of his imagination; that she would've had faded out, dissolved into the sea of all that is ordinary when his eyes met light again. It had been cold, unbearably so, and with snow weighing down his lashes with dew drop kisses, he had even less incentive to do so. But it was snow, and it was wet beneath his skin, and with his mind steadily clearing of intoxicating smog, common sense had dawned.

It had been snowing, it had been three nights before the New Year's Eve, his glasses gone, and his chest burning with the effulgence of a critical overload of emotions.

Oh, and so did his stomach.

Lying there below the steadily falling card stock snippets, his senses had registered a faint splash of watermelon, a whiff

of red; decidedly feminine. She had been stirring against his chest, and all notions of how stupid his inebriated self was to follow her slurred form into the snow with an exaggerated fall sailed off on a reindeer sleigh into the bespeckled Styx.

Did you know the actual colour of the universe is actually beige? It's called the cosmic latte.

He just stared.

Her; she hadn't been here a sunset ago. And then she was there, walking in with a flurry of words, a scalded chest, and a penchant for sunflowers. And had him wishing that she would never leave.

2.

Even while dreams shone like celluloid silver screens above his eyes, mind running on the remnants of throngs of passion, he remembers a faint apprehension dotting his skin. His arm stretching out across a vast plane, sank into a void wherein her figure existed in his mind, white cotton searing his skin with unfamiliar iciness.

Weightless.

Such was the dip in the space to the left of his chest that light forced itself between his lids, pouring white hot luminescence into his consciousness.

His mind screamed; curtains pulled wide.

Ah, there she was.

It was chilly, a not-so-random autumnal Sunday, a friend's wedding, and a trip to the countryside. Her hasty decision to dye her hair brown.

Just brown?

Just brown.

But to him, it was the colour of freshly brewed tea, the soft shards of sunlight making the red shine through. It was like her sunflower heart, always drawn to light.

Like a stained glass painting, standing at the window, legs a sharp contrast to the burgundy couch. Her silhouette played out from behind his shirt, a half-moon birthmark standing out like a stain across her shoulder blades.

His heart stretched beneath his ribs, straining to accommodate this surge of euphoria coursing through every inch of his being. He was falling apart; he knew that. Infatuation leaked through the crevices axed in with every laugh, every moment they had spent together.

Did he love her?

It wasn't long ago that he associated this warmth with her. A feeling that made him laugh, because smiles were not enough to contain his joy. He had felt the flowers she planted in his heart burst into spring, and maybe, that's when he knew.

Oh no. I love her.

His soliloquy came to a halt when she turned, his mind being noisy enough to draw her eyes from the scenes behind the glass. Letting the organza in her grip follow the trail to the veined marble of the floor. Her lips parted, but it wasn't until the fourth syllable that he registered her words.

-jumped off the building opposite ours. They're taking him to the hospital.

3.

It's neither cold nor warm, but as shivers underline his skin, he's briefly aware of a metronome-like tick marking his perception of time. It slows down, like a clock running out of breath, before his senses begin to clock in for a Monday morning. Undertones of metallic scents weave in with antiseptic-Hospital. I'm in a hospital.

Pain ringing through his synapses, he

discovers faint traces of a watermelon lingering like a homeless person in rain. He lusts after it, violently chasing with hopes that the dead weight on his chest was her, all of her. Unhurt.

He was going to propose; he wanted it to be perfect. But perfect wouldn't mean all those nights she bled through wounds he couldn't see; all the words they had shared in fits of red and scarlet; the time she had locked herself in her room for days when she got to know what he did for a living. Perfect wasn't in her burnt mushrooms and coffee rings.

No, they weren't perfect. Nor does he want them to be.

But her smile, with indents that look like apostrophes, was as close to perfection as he would ever see.

He had pirouetted into love with her, to the melody of a song he hadn't heard. He believed she was here, digits slotted between his, like they're perfect.

(We felt like we had the world)

With extreme effort, he opens his eyes. White walls, white spreads. Cold. Speeding up of the metronome attached to him. Two more ticks. He can breathe. One. He tastes blood behind his teeth.

One.

But no red.

She isn't here.

(but in the end it was a kid's craft of a blue ball.)

Please contact the exam coordinator on the third floor if this is your pencil bag, in the third or fourth break.

– School Authority

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