

You Know How This Ends I Didn't

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I hate to tell you a story that starts with me waking up. You've read enough of those and so have I but there literally is no other way.

Every day, I wake up at 8 a.m. and I either go to work or I go to university. The routine never changes. Why should it? Life isn't nearly as interesting as people on your Facebook newsfeed claim it to be.

I woke up next to my bed for a change. I don't know how I managed to sleep on the hard, tiled floor all night and not wake up with a sore body. It was 8:45 a.m. Too late for breakfast, too late for small talk. I somehow brushed and rushed out of my room.

My mother was crying on the prayer mat a bit harder than usual. It wasn't the sort of time you'd expect her to pray either, but she was. She didn't even have my breakfast on the table. No loss, I wasn't going to eat it anyway.

The bus ride to university was uneventful too. I found a seat at the very back and slowly, the bus filled up and as usual, the back had 4 people on it instead of the 5 it seated. The conductor didn't notice, quite unlike them.

I looked to my right, away from the window and asked the person to scoot a little. They frowned at my general direction and looked away. I sniffed myself to check if I stank. I shrugged and accepted my situation.

The best I could afford with my meagre salary and bad grades was a university near my house. Almost late for my only class of the day, I took my ID out and got in. The security mama didn't even bother looking at me apart from a scowl. Almost running, I was right ahead of the professor to get into my class. Taking one of the empty seats at the front, I sighed as I realised how I'll never make friends here—another day of grind.

I didn't feel like taking the bus back home. Today was my day off

and the sweltering heat meant that the buses would be less like a transport and more like an oven. Not to mention that the weekday traffic would mean I'd have to stand inside the bus. I'd rather walk.

I raised my hand and hailed a rickshaw. And another. And another. And another. None of them responded. I did have to walk after failing to get my 7th one. I sighed the 2nd time today; it's gonna be one of those days.

The door was wide open as I got into my house. My living room was filled to the brim with relatives and neighbours. Even a few of my friends were there, demure. Social anxiety kicking in, I slowly sidestepped towards my mother's room. She was still on the prayer mat where I left her, leaning against the bed and asleep. I

crouched down next to her and tried to stir her awake. I couldn't move her even a millimetre. My soft calls were ignored too. Gradually, I raised my voice and she stirred.

"Samir?" said my mother through fresh tears.

"Yes, it's me. What's wrong?"
"WHY DID YOU LEAVE? NO ONE TOLD YOU TO. NO ONE FORCED YOU TO. WHY DID YOU LEAVE US WITHOUT TELLING US?"

She broke down and started wailing. One of my aunts rushed to the room and began comforting her. Again, I was ignored.

I got up and took a deep breath. Time to get to the bottom of this, someone in the living room should be able to answer what's up and why everyone is mad at me. Upon entering the living room, I

had my answer.

Hell isn't a pyrokinetic dungeon run by devils with pitchforks punishing a line of fellow sinners in shackles.

It's actually here on Earth, where you can see but no matter what you do, you'll just be a fleeting voice in someone's head or a figure that appears for a nanosecond in the corner of someone's eyes. It's what drives you towards insanity that strengthens your will to break back into the material world.

But I don't mind it now. After all, I get to see you at your most vulnerable.

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