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Short Story:

Simplistic

Can you believe the simplicity of it all? She wonders as she stares at the winding blades of the plastic ceiling fan rotating above her carpet. It's about 4:00 pm, and the sun has nearly reached its golden hour, columns of light spilling in through crumpled curtains, scattering the room with shadows and warmth. The ceiling fan rotates slowly, a slight breeze rippling a crumpled piece of paper by her arm as she lays there on the floor, staring up at the otherwise blank ceiling.

“Can you believe it?” she asks aloud, not that there's anyone home to hear it. Both mum and dad would be out about now anyhow. “Everyone thinks life is so complicated. With the politics and the social justice and the everyday things like picking a pair of shoes out,” she says. She lazily lifts an arm into the air, sleeve sliding down her wrist slightly as she balls her hand into a loose fist, fan still circling above her. She closes her eyes, inhaling, exhaling, listening… to what? There were some birds outside somewhere, she supposed. It was early spring after all and many were eager to begin their normal routine.

“I don't get it. What does it matter?” She sighs, a deep and empty sound that echoes through the barren house… through the pipes and through the vents. She shifts slightly, fabric ruffling as she does so, and she lets her fist fall to the floor lifeless. “Three months huh…” she says with a glance towards the left wall. Propped up among the clothes and clutter, there's a calendar pinned to the wall. She considers sitting up, only to fall to the floor once again, still staring at the fan. It was its 42nd rotation, she had been keeping track. One of the few things she could do.

Three months.

Three months left and for what? To finish a step in life and move on? To grow up? Cry? To never see people again no matter how many promises you make? She groans hands coming up to her face and dragging down, muffling the frustrated sound. “I don't want to,” she says, hands still enclosed over her head. “How does anyone have time for politics when we’re too busy trying to figure out how taxes work,” and she grabs the crumpled paper at her side, crushing it and flinging it at the fan. It bounces off a blade and flies into the calendar, knocking the thing off the nail it had been balanced on. It falls to the floor with a thump, making her turn to look at it.

Three months.

Three months until goodbyes, and hellos, and new people, and new things, and a door. A huge door looming overhead with the promise of great things, but shadowed by the burdens of many others. She realizes how funny it is, and stifles a giggle as she reaches out with one hand, brushing the pages of the calendar idly. It was funny. Only 10 years ago she would’ve been dreaming of this day. Where she could control her life, and do whatever she wanted.

Oh how blind she was... What she wouldn't give to be a child again. To play and laugh... and not worry about how the rest of the world is going to see her. Not worry about the impact her mere existence is going to have now that she will be acknowledged by the rest of society as ready. Who were they to decide if she was ready? It was too soon, too fast. It was all too fast.

Three months.

Three months until binders were thrown across rooms and cheers would reverberate throughout the massive halls as students stormed from doorways. Three months until she had to know who she wanted to be...or at least...know how to find out who she wanted to be. She had no clue. Rising slowly, easing her way into a sitting position in front of the fallen calendar, she picks it up. She flips through the pages, all the marked events that wouldn't matter. Dances and sports events she hadn’t bothered to see that she’d never see again. She had never been to a game in support of her class, was that a bad thing? Too late to wonder now, homecoming had passed a while ago anyways. She traces the dates with a finger. So many years of missed opportunities.

So many people she wanted to get to know that she’d likely never know now. So many familiar faces that would fade into memory, then to nothing. “What's the point? How can I be expected to grow up, when I feel so small?” She whispers. She closes the calendar and stands, placing it on the floor as she began to rise. She flicks a switch and the fan slows to a stop, creaking as it does so, and she opens the door to her room and steps out. The house was empty… right. The house was empty. She wanders into the kitchen, grabbing a glass of water and downing it, glancing at the stove clock. 4:45pm. She had been on the floor for that long? No time to dwell on it though. No time for anything. Not nearly enough time.