

Everything has beauty, but not everyone can see.

From the small blade of grass to the perfect lives reflected in water, that are easily broken from the smallest movement.

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Seeing the lives walk past me as I walk forward through the crowd, I wonder if their lives are as complex and dull as mine. Their wandering eyes revealing the hidden depths of their souls. I would never get to know any life completely, but beneath their well kept facade, a tired and battle worn face pulls the strings. The streets are lined with garbage and desperate people whose desperate eyes search the crowd for anyone to spare a second of their life for chance to hear theirs.

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I walked into a waiting room where a pervading sense of doom awaits. Hope took many forms this room, however no one could see her. I sat down and took out my notebook.

I glance over the years scribed onto these pages, all the memories, all the lives I've seen pass and the lives still to arrive. Flipping through the pages, I see the millions of names crossed until I glimpse the first uncrossed name.

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I glance around the waiting room observing the busy receptionists at their desks and the impatient people entranced by the digital realm in their hands. Both milling away their lives by missing the beauty of waiting. The beauty of calmness and remaining still, breathing in your surroundings. Breathing out to realize that this is life. You are alive. And this is life.

This is life. And Life is ephemeral. And many people are wasting it living somewhere else. From the receptionists buried in their work, too busy to notice the gentle blessing of the air conditioning on their face to the people drowning in their fantasy digital world blind to its real counterpart.

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I heard my name reverberating from the hallways and arriving into the waiting room. No one acknowledges my name, but they feel my presence. Gently holding my notebook and pen in my hand, I walked toward the origin of my name.

The hallway was empty but you felt the people in each room from their mechanical lifelines constantly beeping. I faintly heard my name from behind a door.

I went through the door and heard the artificial beeping of a heart. People, what I assumed was family, were surrounding an old man lying on the hospital bed.

The old man lain on his bed with tubes growing from his body as if they had been inside him his entire life. Each breath painful. Each breath leading him closer to his end.

The family took no notice of me. As I walked closer to the bed, I noticed the chart with the patient's info.

"Average life expectancy" I whispered to myself. The old man's eyes followed me as I walked closer to his bed. Still his family took no notice.

In his eyes, I saw everything. His entire life spanned before me. Each decision, each regret, each mistake. I felt the despair in his eyes as he felt his breath slipping away. He didn't look away from me. I sat in the chair in the corner of the room just within sight of the old man, so he would not have to turn his head.

"Another one", I thought.

In his eyes, I saw the outcomes of his choices, the ones he made and didn't make. All choices lead him to dying in this hospital bed at this moment, but he lived very different lives before this moment. I saw the pain and struggle he went through for his family. I began to open my notebook.

Using his eye, the old man ushered to his family. I followed his gaze to his family and saw vivacious lives full of potential. The man was showing me what he had accomplished though his life was painful.

I nodded. Not in agreement, but in understand. I knew what the old man wanted to tell me before he thought it.

"They have hope yet.", I thought.

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The old man's eyes changed into hope and nostalgia. He did not regret his choices that lead him and his family to this moment as they stand solemnly with him as he went into a deep and dreamless slumber. He understood at the end of his life what many people never understand.

The old man smiled slightly. And I smiled with him. In his final moments, with his family clutching his hands, the old man was swept away, never to return. In his final moments, the old man saw the beauty. And in that beauty, he found hope.

As the sound of the flatline filled the room, I opened my notebook and crossed his name. I stood and left the room.

I did nothing to the old man, yet I will be blamed for ending him. I have no choice over my role. Yet I am blamed for causing the end of everything. I am no mercenary. I am no messenger. I am a witness to the causality of events. A powerless being unjustly punished to bare witness to the doom of reality and be convicted as its impetus.

There are many stories about my being. Each story suggests that I enjoy watching the end of everything. And perhaps that's how they'll remember me. As a being lurking in the darkness to whisk them away to a land from which no traveler returns.

Despite my futile attempts to change their fate, I remain hopeful. Not for me, but for the people that walk past me everyday. People like the old man give me hope that one day they will find beauty before the end.

In the pain and joy of life, the birth and death, the beginning and end.

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