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Personal Narrative Draft 1.0

Life never meant much to me. Looking back at my life now I still think nothing much of what I have done, who I have done it with, and what it would make me into in the future. I was always one to stand back and observe the details, formulate a plan, and prepare for the worst. But when my life was on the edge of continuation and an abrupt end I thought it to be the most exhilarating thing to happen to me within the eighteen years of life I had experienced beforehand. It happened over a year ago, only notes of the incident remind me of the intensity, with vague memories popping in and out of my mind as I recall what transpired. Looking back now all I can feel is the feeling of intense stupidity I had for not noticing all the signs beforehand.

Snow had fallen the night prior, causing school to be delayed. Despite the extra time to sleep I had barely any thanks to my dog waking me twice during the night, not that I got a good night's sleep anyways. I woke up as usual, thinking nothing of the day, once again hoping for something of interest to spice up my monotonous lifestyle. I checked my phone as usual, looking at the time, the weather, and my daily tarot card. Today I had the tower, sudden upheaval, pride, disaster. I took it to heart then, but only half so as all the days prior when I checked my tarot nothing happened related to the card of the day. That was my first mistake.

I grabbed my breakfast of three snickers, a breakfast shake, and a breakfast sandwich and decided to play games and waste some time. I had an hour or so to kill. Dying Light was my game of choice at the time. I had just gotten it recently and it held most of my attention when not doing anything important for school. I see this as my second sign looking back.

A few minutes before needing to leave I begin my preparations for the cold. I slung on my jacket, slid on my gloves, threw on my ten thousand pound backpack full of books, grabbed my guitar case, and waddled down the stairs to the kitchen. My mother had gotten up and was making herself a pot of coffee as per usual. We said good morning to one another, she asked me if it was a delay and contemplated the school's decision in letting students drive in.

Unbeknownst to me, she was worried. A dream of the night prior krept at her mind, her motherly instincts if you would. She worried that my car was not all wheel drive and lacked snow tires, and did not like the car so much as it was an old, falling apart piece of metal with over 400,000 miles to its name, but it was given to me for free so no one could complain. She warned me to take it slow before I left, my third sign. I thought nothing of it at the time, she always warned me to drive slow.

I rolled into my car, hooked my phone up to the bluetooth, and started the ignition. My usual choice of music began to play, picking the newest additions to my growing list of songs to listen to while driving to and from school. As usual, I started my day of school with ten minutes of music.

Our road had barely been plowed with my car sliding around as if it were on the ice rink, my fourth sign. I saw nothing of it. Once I got off of the private road and onto the main highway I saw how horribly the roads were plowed. As far as I remember the snow had stopped but the

yellow line was rarely visible, around three inches of clear pavement and sloshy sand-salt mix on either side of the yellow line, and to top it off a good two to three inches of snow over the white line. It was not the best day to be driving the speed limit in a front wheel drive 2001 Taurus. But the Taurus had been fine every other snow day prior so what could go wrong? I drove in complete downpours of rain at night, on a highway going fifty with a road half plowed, I held my door closed when it was frozen open - leaving me to drive one handed to school one morning. My arrogance and lack of foresight that day could be a fifth sign.

I was only around two minutes on the main road when a specific song began to play. Error. My sixth sign for the day. I thought nothing of it. Not until afterwards anyways.

The speed was 40 mph on a particular corner. After the accident I was told that the same corner had an accident the year prior, and looking back I can understand why. With a mix of horrible road conditions, a sprinkle of arrogance, and a lack of regard for multiple bad signs I began to drift.

I remember holding the wheel left, the sense of inertia shifting from the right to my center, my heart skipping a beat. My sense of time blanketed all my immediate senses as I slowly watched my car itch towards a tree. The sound of the crunching snow beneath my tires overwrote my music. Only a single thought crossed my mind.

Was I going to die?

This one thought bounced around my head with every skip of the vehicle, I was frozen. People normally say your life flashes before your eyes when you are about to die, or otherwise

have a life threatening experience. I had no such experience. Perhaps I subconsciously knew I would survive. Or perhaps my belief in numerology and a set plan kept me composed in the few seconds of uncontrolled events. I simply closed my eyes, and let whatever happens, happen.

I opened my eyes after everything was still. My mind was no longer on death and more on “Am I still alive.” Perhaps I had a quick and painless death as I had always wished for? Does death come with an upset stomach? I quickly observed the area, my vision blurry. A vapor was emanating from the vents and I questioned what it was. My animalistic instincts said danger so after ripping my seatbelt off I open the door and fumble out into the road. Looking around there was one car parked off to the side of the road, the person driving behind me when the event transpired. Other than that everything was quiet, completely quiet. Perhaps it was my adrenaline pumping causing me to withhold every sense other than ‘run’ during the time but I managed to scan my body for any injury and to some surprise I found a lack of any.

The woman from the following vehicle came over to check on me to which I replied with a fumbly “Yea, Can you call 911 while I call my mom?”

I can only remember the worry in my moms voice as I try to fumble out unintellectual caveman words as I try to explain the situation while trying to be composed. Along with the somewhat comical “Why can’t I see very far?” proceeding with a slap to my face only to realize my glasses were no longer present, but instead on top of the dashboard nice and pristine as if I had placed them there myself.

Everything after that could be seen as the usual events. Ambulance and police file the event and check up on my health. People doing their usual gawking as they drive by, almost getting into accidents themselves. I only then realised how insignificant my life was, feeling as

though I was a form of entertainment for the rest of the world, time only stopping for me but not the rest of society. The few moments I stood alone on the side of the road could have been the most terrifying part of the whole event for me. The sense of disbelief, anger, sadness, and the sense of being in a cage. I was alone. I realised then that my life was only what I could make of it. Perhaps the reason my life did not flash before my eyes is because I made no life for myself but instead went through the motions of having a life up until that point. In those moments I was immediately frustrated as I had only been driving for six months and felt like a newborn bird that had its wings clipped. But instead I was no bird, but instead a pebble on the side of the road. I thought my life was boring because I was making it boring. I was a pebble as I watched life go by me. I can say I was not always like this, but when the change from living to observing occurred I could not say. All I could say was that I learned the value of a life, my life, the life of others, and life in general. I knew that no matter what happened to me that I would not be some fissure in the wakes of the world but a simple blemish on a sheet of glass that would soon be buffed and cleaned out. I was insignificant, and that was because I subconsciously wanted to be. I didn't want to stand out and thus became average. I knew I was not the best at the things I did, but I tried not to be the worst. I simply existed. Now I am not much different. I exist but with slightly more purpose. I try harder to understand the things I see, and realise the amount of effort is weighted differently from person to person. Events come and go, and so do people, and as long as we live into tomorrow we can make some amount of change for ourselves, and with a little bit more the people around us. Everything has a purpose - for me - I just refused to accept it until highschool ended. Time had flown by me, and looking back I had little to say about myself. So now I know the weight of life, and the amount of effort it may take to make it interesting for me.