

# Chapter 1

## Dream sequence, while paralysed

The alarm bell rang.

Rring Rring! Rring Rring!

The ringing went on. The alarms giant arms and steel fists were cocked back like a revolver - ready to fire its empty rounds into empty space.

As the ringing continued a series of post-it notes, tacked to the wall, were sent fluttering to the floor. Then so did a row of glass beer bottles, clanking as they rolled past each other. And a glass picture frame. That too was hurled to the ground.

Rring Rring! Rring Rring!

The ringing continues and I feel each and every vibration creep its way up my spine. Rattling the ins and outs of my spry skull. *I needn't worry. Someone will rescue me.* My eyes were wide open but glued to the side. I lay that way, merely observing with a stone face.

Rring Rring! Rring Rring!

The ringing grew and my bedframe which sat at the far reaches

of my room soon gave into alarms demands.

Stretching.

Sinking.

And slumping to the alarms metronome. I to was to follow.

*The city's surrounded itself. Mute-grey skyrisers, clad with their concrete armour and windowless stares. Busy bodies with airbrushed face, brushing past you. Never to be seen again. The toot of a horn and a red lights been ignored. The sizzle of a grill as a hotdog is turned and the maze of streets - our one concern. My first day at the job, I hum to myself as I follow my phone's map.*

*Smokers lounge... tut anything but a lounge.*

*"Filthy, filthy, filthy" I mutter under my cold breath. All different walks of life in one big group all chummed up. Blue-collar, white-collar, red-collar. They're all here.*

*To each their own, I say. But if it wasn't for their wide-eyed smiles I would have made nothing of it.*

*This crowd... they're intermingling. Inhaling each others smoke and laughing... Laughing, they're laughing? Eye's shot open, like a camera. They seem so happy, so young, so yout-*

*Honk.*

*No. They have stained teeth, black lungs and a burning hole in their wallet. So disgusting... So disgusting... Their existence is gross, so stop thinking about them I mutter as I slip through closing glass doors.*

A ballad of branches lurking amidst the shadows crawled up into the air. Floating in the air they clattered their skeleton bones tearing away at the windowill.

Tip-tap tip-tap.

As if it was a signal, the wind was on cue. Weaving, its way through the rowdy crowd the wispy wind pushed past needle-like branches slipping an eerie lullaby inbetween the cracks.

Lurking amidst shadows, a ballad of branches begins to creep out from their hiding. Clattering, their skeleton bone gently float in the wind and gently tap away at my windowsill.

Tip-Tap. Tip-Tap.

Weaving its way inwards, the wispy wind pushed past needle-like branches only to slip an eerie lullaby through curtain gaps.

*“Pardon me sir, we’re here to search your belongings” comes a brawny voice.*

*“No, stop that tickles” a voice shrieks.*

*“Aaah no stop! stop! that’s my heart! my actual heart!”*

*“Sir, we’ll need to search your belongings”.*

*“Sure” I reply. He grabs it from my frail hands and unclasps it at once. He didn’t ask for the combination... He didn’t ask!*

*“Hey, that’s mine, that’s mine!” I watch in horror, blank face and all as I watch a black sketchbook adorned with childrens drawings float down the gutter.*

*“You asshole!” I curse raising my fists. Before I can finish, my eyes meet the gorilla faced security guard before me. He flashes a shark smile and grabs my collarbone*

An ordeal through hell itself; 10 rounds with the king of the nightmare world and an unstoppable alarm. “A silly smile snuck its way onto h-”. “What caught the eughh eye’s” he mumbled.

Thump!

Falling ever so gracefully onto the cold hardwood floor he remained. Oblivious to the sounds of the alarm, he remained. Still muttering those same lines.

I lie still for a while. Breathing in slowly. Breathing out slowly. “How long was I out for”. The shutters are drawn. Morning’s arrived. I can hear a faint clatter of dishes and a jingle of keys. Yonder and a ritual silence. I let out a deep moan. I can feel the stiffness building up in my neck. Rain. Rain. Training to make my entire life a misery but it only remains as frozen dew and it seems to have been an eternity since I’ve heard the birds chirp. I think to myself... as my mind wanders. “How long was I out for? And why am I on the floor?”. Last night at the bar... *How much did I fucking drink?* I presumed the others would be hungover from last nights rounds, guess I was wrong. Fuck. I know my rooms less shielded from the elements, it was built that way. Still, it feels like this weathers got a personal vendetta against me. Maybe that’s sums up why I’ve been struggling to get a full nights rest. Well that coupled with my: drinking habit, manga addiction and porno fix.

Gently leaning to my side, I felt the smooth-cold touch of the hardwood floor against my bare skin. My eyes began to drift around vaguely as I recollected the events that transpired last night. I let out a sombre yawn and ponder as to what the time is. As I raise my arms triumphantly to mark the start of what was sure to be a busy day I feel a frail and long hand gently lower them. He turns my chin. I meet a pair of blackbird eyes

“Did you lose your sense of sight to, when you fell?” a familiar voice coldy inquires.

“No I can see just fine!” I reassure the voice, beaming back but squinting ever so slightly so I didn’t give away I had no idea who I was speaking to.

“Good, good”.

A minute passes. Then another. He sits and gently shifts thorough my wreckage of a bed. The floor, still cold beneath his feet. He's taller and his clothing much darker than mine. 30 seconds pass and he pivots to the side. Light seeps through shutter gaps alligning itself in perfect panels on my hardwood floor. He slips a smirk and gravitates towards me. Another 30 seconds go by and he taps at the floor. A smile crawls up the sides of his face and he quickly purses his lips.

“ Ermm sur-.

Before I can finish, I feel my phone screen being squished between my face. As I wrestle with the voice, I feel the shutters of my eyes go mad, as the glaring screen comes closer, burning the edges of my eyes

“Aaah fuck off” I yell.

“Read it!” he snaps back.

“Not until, you get of me”

Thump!

A fuzzy neon hue melts into my eye.

Seven. Fourty five. AM “HOLY SHIT”.



# Chapter 2

## School

It was a woeful early winter morning. The busy town of Solstice was mute-grey and void of all life; except for the scurry of morning delivery. As I trudged through heavy wades of snow I chuckled to myself.

*Why did Akbar have to be such an early bird? And why did it fuckign matter if I was late or not - its not like we go 2 class together*

Then again if he hadn't been my personal alarm I would have definetely missed my first class of semester and I didn't want to get in my teacher's bad books on the very first day either. Shame, he couldn't chauffer me to class though. I'll make it up to him. I'll buy him something from the convenience store, probably a cola or iced beer. But that thought would have to be put on hold.

A stalker. It'd been tailing me for long enough. It circled around my small frame in a figure of eight. desperate to break into my balloon lungs, it blew a huge gust of gritty gale into my mouth. I gagged involuntarily as I felt each and every corner of my lungs filling with shards of winter air.

*Less than a month. The cute weather girl said winter would be over in less than a month. I'm gonna write about it. Want something to remember it by*

As I was induced into a coughing fit, spluttering like a weak engine, I picked up enough conviction to want to leave this horrid weather. It wasn't the first forced kiss with the wind, but it was enough for me to want freedom. Burrowing my chin deep into mybrest, I made one last push to escape this gory wind. "Its just the usual forecast" I reassured myself, as I lunged for the closing door handle. As my skinny frame, slipped through the closing glass doors, my marble eyes took one last peak.

An army of one patrols the street. Smothering the unlit skies, it marches towards us. A carpet of thick black smog is soon to follow. Inch-by-inch. Inch-by-inch, thats what I told myself. The smog and the wind they seem to twirl heavenwards, like they're stealing souls of people caught out in this hellhole

"Just the usual forecast" I repeated, more firmly this time. The heated corridor air was far more palatable than the grit left in mouth and the hallways were illuminated by a streak of shining lights. My first day of college, yet I still felt like a highschooler who'd wondered onto campus. Its not that I hadn't been here before. I came on induction day, so the layout of the school was still vaguely familiar to me. Without wasting time, I headed to the library. As I navigated my way down the corridor I was halted by a large blockade.

"Huh, what's the hold up?" I inquired, conscious of time.

"Didn't you hear what happened at the printers?" replies an anonymous voice.

"Yeah, I couldn't believe someone like her could pull something like that off".

"You think she was set up".

"Could be, but I wouldn't shrug the idea she was behind it".

"Last time I heard someone did something that scale, they got a whole years worth of detention!"



“Shit dude, she’s totally gonna get expelled then”