

New York City

The night was extremely cool out by the piers of New York City, facing the lighting strips of urbanism that were Jersey City and Hoboken. I walked along the path toward Battery Park. It was just like any other time I had been here—I got off 1 Train at World Trade Center Station, entering the spacious and luxurious Oculus Mall.

I headed toward the water with my AirPods Pro snuggled tightly into my ears. People along the path are packed to themselves, not noticing how the atmosphere around them was so windy and alive. The gentle waves from the river washed against the limestone wall while the moon that was stationed beyond the earth atmosphere casted its ambient rays of lights upon the rippling surface. Stars were proudly visible as if they were artificial to the human eye. The big red clock from Colgate stood glamorously among the effervescent lights.

“The Wall and I” by Nation of Language kicked in high gear, flooding me with a nostalgic feeling of growing up. In my blue plaid pattern jacket, the world around me seemed to rise into fiction as I walked among the dog walkers and late-night joggers. I kept my eyes focused on the other side of the river—it felt like a dream sequence.

I shifted my brain to envision myself walking along the path that was filled with wooden benches that were placed before the cold black handrails. I didn’t really get it; it was just automatic to see myself in a movie—the movie of my life.

Even with the soundtrack of my life blasting into my ears, I could still hear the gentle footsteps of everyone, including their dogs. They were walking toward me and passing me. When the guitar solo began, I found myself crossing my arms, holding them tightly onto my chest. Behind my eyes started to wet as they reflected the view of the city beyond. *What a view!*

As I walked along the path that featured patches of small gardens that set a few feet away from the benches, I imagined my life in those strips of cities, of noise, of life. Crowds of people in bars jumped for cheers while families shared a moment on the steps that looked out to the never-sleeping New York City.

I sat down midway, just to breathe in the cool light air. I let out a long exhale as I admired the beauty in front of me. The beauty that was sparkling and alive in the dark night.

All felt too romantic for reality. Then, I whispered to myself, *What a dream!*