She walked out of the coffee shop in a state of shock and surrealism, looking back once more to make sure her heart was still shattered on the floor. Before breaking down, before caving to her natural instinct to fall apart and let him ruin her, she closed her eyes and pictured what the realism in her would guide her to do. Heartbroken and abandoned in a strange city with nowhere to go and nothing to do, she had two options. One, walk back into the coffee shop and hold her pierced heart while she sobbed and drank coffee for the rest of the day, and probably for the next few months as well. This option seemed comforting and normal, what every romance movie taught her to do when you get broken up with. It also seemed like the most logical, because it took every ounce of fight left in her to hold back the tears.

The second option seemed like the choice her dad would tell her to do: hold your head, wipe the tears, buy a new sweater and some ice cream, and be okay. This feat seemed impossible, especially due to the fact her home was 500 miles away and the money situation was a little tight. But him leaving was a sign that she will be okay; she remembers her dad telling her sister, “If you were breathing before you met him, then you can breathe after he’s gone”. She’s still breathing, isn’t she?

She flipped her hair over her shoulder, chugged the remained of her overly sweet tea, and strutted down Telegraph Avenue like it was her path to success. She’s been training for this moment for years; choking down her emotions to the point of becoming numb, of becoming immortal. He revived her of all responsibility. She no longer had to be enough for two, all she had to do was be enough for herself. This end marked a new beginning in the life of Jackie Turner, a life where all she had to do was be happy with herself and it would end up okay. Yes, her heart was still smashed on the floor where he crushed it with just a ten second goodbye, and yes it would take a long time for her to trust someone, much less love someone. But this ending was all she needed to feel empowered, to be driven by the possibility of success. As she turned the corner onto Macarthur Street, her $15 booties clicking against the gum-ridden, paint stained ground, she was the most independent she’s ever felt. Jackie looked into the eyes of each person walking by, wondering if they have ever felt this way before. She also pondered if they would have hurt her the way Miles hurt her, but she stopped herself before dwelling too much on it. Even though less than twenty minutes ago, he was her light and future and entire universe just in one being, he was already in the past.

She silently applauded her realistic side always saving her from self-pity and impossible expectations. She looked to the sky to see the clouds rolling over the hills, like they too were headed towards the past.

*“ I’m going to become hot as hell, successful as hell, do whatever the hell I want, and make that boy regret every single second he isn’t spending with me”.*