

Light

In one week, an asteroid is going to wipe humanity from existence. I have one more week as Sean Diaz, until it's all done. I've lived all twenty-one years of my life like I'm floating, re-watching the same lonely days loop over and over again, and time is running out for change.

The television casts blue light into the darkness of my living room. I barely process the images of meteors that flash on screen. The raw sounds of my own ragged breaths echo around my empty apartment. My heart beats impossibly fast yet slow at the same time. I lay trembling on the couch, alone.

The world is ending.

I fumble with my phone, frantically taking in the menus and blue glow, but I have no one to visit or to call. No one.

It's actually over.

My body tenses as reality punches me, hard. I feel my throat close-up. I have nothing and no one on my last week on Earth.

6

The weight of the inevitable settles in the form of dark grey clouds. I wonder if the beginnings of an asteroid may peek through. As I stare at the sky, I'm conscious of every wasted moment. The loneliness cripples me and consumes my mind.

5

The world's lights begin to flicker off. The sun dips below the horizon, painting the sky swipes of pink and red. I peer through the window of a convenience store and my breath fogs up the glass. It's completely empty and un-raided. My stomach lets out an obscene grumble, and I sigh and use all my strength to smash the glass with my elbow and amble in. The lights turn on with some effort, flickering weakly. A florescent purple sign reading "Open 24/7" reflects on the glass. I take in the strange emptiness of the aisles, all ghostly and surreal. I scoop food and some crosswords into my backpack.

Suddenly, I hear faint music playing. It's a light tune, something catchy I've probably heard on the radio before. It gets closer and my heart rate quickens. The song echoes in the street. People are dangerous when there aren't any consequences. Then again; I only have so many days anyway. Before I realise it, a tall, lanky figure steps through the broken window, humming.

"Hey." I yelp.

He snaps his head up to me, startled. "Hey." I inwardly sigh in relief that he isn't totally hostile.

"End of the worlds pretty crazy right?"

"Yeah," I sigh, "it really is." He nods and reaches to shake my hand.

"I'm Finn."

“Sean.”

Finn has a head of curly black hair, almost vampirically pale skin and seems about twenty. He speaks calmly, like we’re talking about the weather. Finn tells me he’s just looking for ice cream, and that he’s been road tripping around the states. I tell him I’ve been holed up at home lying on the ground for months. He just laughs and passes me a tub of half-melted vanilla ice cream from the freezers and a spoon. We sit against the freezers and they softly hum at my back as we eat. It’s nearly liquid, but it’s sweet on my tongue, and makes me forget about my limited time.

“This ice cream sucks.” Finn whines, as he drinks the cream like soup.

“That is wrong on so many levels. And what did you expect?” I say, and he just slurps loudly again. I laugh the hardest I have in months. Neon purple lights glow on our faces.

4

I spend the day climbing a tree with Finn. I feel like a kid again, being buried in a mountain of fallen Autumn leaves. The bark leaves callouses in my hands, and my throat burns from laughing.

3

We ride scooters around an empty mall, laughter bouncing off the walls. Then stuff our faces with the aisles of food left behind.

2

I sit in an instrument shop, dim light filters through the blinds. I strum a song, and feel the notes resonate in my bones. Finn sings along, and it’s almost like the world is normal.

1

Finn and I sit in a deserted park on the swings. Golden sun rays warm my face in the cold. Wind sweeps at the grass around us. I haven’t been this happy in a long time.

“Tomorrows our last day.” He murmurs.

“What do you mean?” I question.

Oh.

My lip quivers. I completely forgot the deadline. Suddenly, a tsunami of repressed thoughts explodes in my head all at once. My hands clench into fists and I start to shake.

“I-What was the point?! I make one friend. Find one person who means *something* to me.

And tomorrow you’ll be gone. “I whisper. My emotions boil, burn my insides like poison and spill over. I fall on my knees, scraping them on the concrete. Frustrated tears force their way out. Finn plants his hand firmly on my shoulder and forces me to look at him.

“We can’t stop the world from ending, Sean. I really wished we had time. But this stupid meteor made this week happen and... I’m just glad I had it at all.”

0

Finn and I sit in an empty field and watch the beginning of the end.

It's so frighteningly beautiful to watch, and I can't take my eyes away. The sky turns red as the meteor speeds forwards. It's like the sun, blinding, but I can't help but look. When I glance over at Finn, there are tears slipping down his face, but he remains silent, mesmerised. I am the same. He cracks a solemn smile at me, and we huddle closer together. The sky burns alive, melting into reds and blues. The meteor hurtles faster. It's ironic that this was the happiest week of my life. Then time pauses and the world explodes into blinding white, then dark. The colours of the Earth blend and fuse into nothingness yet everything all at once. And I am not lonely.