

"Ugghhhh...."

Sounds. I can hear them. The voice vibrates through my skull, my own throat, my teeth, my lips. Something flutters in front of my mouth, and I open my eyes to see green, fuzzy... green...

Grass? Grass. I'm on a... "lawn".

Words are the first thing to come back to me. But, not all of them. My mind, it seems, as my body begins to operate on auto-pilot, flutters. As I lay here, whoever I am, I feel like I was collecting breath inside of myself before releasing it out to dance with the infinite blades of grass spread out in the lawn before me. Now, I breathe effortlessly. In, out, in, out. I remember at one point I was able to do some breathing through my... nose, but that seems out of the question now. Oh well, this mouth breathing seems to work just fine.

The sun makes it hard to see. I blink the light away and try to focus on where I am- a small lawn that I barely fit on lengthwise. My right arm is outstretched above my head and my hand is palming a border of a garden made out of rocks. One individual rock in particular which seems light, perfectly rounded, and perfectly sized so that my fingers can be wrapped around it. The way I grip it, I wonder if I was being attacked before I fell asleep and this was to be my weapon. Not feeling attacked anymore, I let my death grip loosen and fall from the stone, every knuckle in my hand cracking as I do so.

My toes are almost touching the cement of the... "sidewalk". The sidewalk where people walk beside the road. Where nobody is walking currently. Where somebody might be

wandering about at some time and come across me and help me out. Should I be embarrassed I'm splayed out in the yard or should I be concerned?

Blades of grass that touch my skin are beginning to make me feel itchy, or ticklish, I can't remember which of those feelings I appreciate less, but it's the lesser of the two. Rolling my limbs side to side, I find it obvious I've been here awhile as my body has made an indent in the ground. Either being in this lawn has created a me-dent or I fell hard. I fell fast.

I don't remember falling...

I absolutely cannot remember anything.

I'm wet; soaked from the... "dew."

"Uuuuggggghhhh..." I groan again, unable to help myself. Waking up from a sleep you don't remember taking is quite the disorienting experience. Letting moans escape my chest is like pulling the cord of a lawnmower, trying to jumpstart my brain. "Uuuuggggghhhh...."

The questions come flooding in: Where am I? How did I get here? What happened? Why am I in so much pain? Who lies down in the middle of a yard anyway? Was this for a laugh? If so, why is nobody laughing? Why is nobody around? Was I drugged? Oh dear God, was I drugged?! What diseases or babies am I carrying now?

Who am I?

I continue to lay there for a couple more moments, seconds, minutes, hours... hoping that maybe everything just needs to catch up with me, and like a kid lost in a grocery store- if I just wait where I realize that I'm lost, somebody will be the wiser and come looking for me. They'll find me, and rescue me, and tell me all about me, and remind me of everything leading up to this moment, and we'll have a laugh about it over a chain restaurant's sampler platter.

Although, in my mind, the sampler platter is filled with red, uncooked meat, and for a moment, I can smell it, and my belly rumbles its approval of my brain's newfound ability to project images of "food".

There's a sound in the sky as if the Earth is breathing, and although I feel I should recognize this sound, as if the sound had once calmed me, it completely riles me up now. I mean, I'm breathing into the blades of grass, I can hear my breath, and the grass, and a soft murmur of a breeze pushing past all the man-made structures and the branches of a few sporadic trees planted about, but this sound is carried on the wind, and behind the wind, and there when the wind is not. Slow, rhythmic, but everywhere. It comes in and hushes its way out. Once I realize the sound is not going to attack me, I try to push it back to the far thoughts of my mind and discover more of my surroundings while lying on the cold, wet ground.

It is night. What I confused for the sun was actually a "street light." A light that lights the street. The brightest streetlight I feel I have ever seen in my life, although I can't recall a street light before this one. Beyond the street light above me, random sporadic clouds are blocking out any chance of seeing any stars or the one moon we have. Matching street lights that are tall, and black, and giving off orange artificial light line the street in the direction my head is currently facing.

The curiosity of whether or not the street lights are lining the street the opposite way gets the better of me, and all I want to do is turn my head to look that way. My first movement of lifting my head probably appeared like a small twitch to anybody watching, and my mind exploded into an immediate panic: *my head is stuck! Stuck to my body facing left forever! What a cruel world I have awoken to! I'd have to go for runs sideways!*

Another twitch of the neck and something grinds inside. A... "tendon" rubs against something else underneath the skin of my neck, and there's popping, and more grinding, and suddenly I'm moving my head up off the grass with all the strength I could possibly muster. I can feel wet blades of grass drop from my cheek as I hold my breath with concentration, and it escapes from my throat with short bursts and whimpers. With the force of a teeny-bopper trying to whip her hair, I force my head to the right, and have such an extreme pain from something tearing that I immediately collapse my heavy dome back onto the lawn and rest there; eyes clenched shut, breath coming out in short quick spurts, grass tickling the inside of my ear, as I wait for the pain to cease.

Finally, I open my eyes to see the street is long and straight, and from my vantage point through the blades of grass, I can't see it where it ends. Where do the street lights end? I feel I'm quite visible from all directions because of this street light. Why didn't the street light protect me? Dang nabbit, I stayed in an obviously well-lit area and I still found my body dumped and abandoned and undiscovered in this lawn. Shouldn't I have awoken in an ambulance asking somebody "what happened?" Is this a normal occurrence in life? How many other people have completely blacked out and woken up dazed and confused and had to put their lives together? Is there amnesia of amnesia?

It seems I'm in a cookie cutter neighborhood meaning all the houses look the same. All of them are two stories with the same white, plastic railings around first and second floor balconies. Wooden stairs lead up to side doors on the side of the houses, so these must all be multi-family dwellings. Most of the lawns have been replaced by pebbles, except for a few. Except for the one I have woken up on. And obviously, everybody's houses were built by the

same construction company. Somehow, it seems, I've ended up in a completely alien neighborhood. One I don't recognize, not that I recognize much of anything else right now.

All right you, take notes. You don't know:

-Who you are

-Where you are

-Why you're here

-Why you were laying in the lawn

A British male voice enters my head: *"Why, Dr. Watson, it seems we have a mystery to solve!"*

Is that me? Is that my Dad? Who is Dr. Watson? I'm getting nowhere fast laying here.

Feeling every muscle in my shoulder and in the side of my body contract and ache from being stiff, I pull my limp hand from the rock and bring my arm down next to my body, slowly. My appendage slithers like a snake through the grass back to my side. The feeling of moving and working my muscles, my skin, and my bones feels similar to breaking down a cardboard box- finding the weak points where you can bend them and crease. The pain dissipates as I rest my arm and so there I stay- immobile. I'm afraid to move any more. Afraid to discover any more pain. Call me weak, I don't care.

So, here I lay. In an eight foot long lawn waiting for dawn. Waiting for someone to discover me, lift me up, and say:

"Hey! Your name is ____! And, you were _____ on _____ because _____!"

And, I'd breathe a sigh of relief. Not because I felt any safer or that there was no more pain, but for the fact that I finally knew. I knew the questions I was pondering laying in the

grass, staring at the street light, watching the street with no traffic, the sidewalk with no walkers, the Earth breathe rhythmically, feeling the dew soaking up into the cloth of my clothes, tickling my sides and arm pits.

You would think the owners of this lawn would discover me sooner or later. Maybe they are older, more elderly. Maybe they go to bed when the sun sets because they have no use in the night. Maybe it's still the early hours of the morning and I still have hours before anybody is going to find me. Maybe the cold of night mixed with the wet of the dew will slowly give me pneumonia and as I lay here waiting to be saved, I'm slowly allowing nature to kill me.

If I die, what will people think?

Maybe I should get up.

Or, at least, try to.

"Uuunnnnnnggggghhhh...."

My body no likey as I slowly push myself up off the grass. Simply putting my palms down on the ground bend and crease muscles in my side that I swear split and tear open upon any movement, almost as if my ribs are breaking out of my body. Pain screams through every nerve ending in my abdomen and lower back as I push myself up off the lawn and curl my spine. Once I get a little elevation, I rock back to my knees and bend my legs underneath me. A yoga pose. Child's pose? Random knowledge coming back to me just in time for me to take a break and reflect on it. I rest my forehead in the cool grass and breathe in between my knees that I'm too scared to move.

In, out, in, out.

Bbbuuuuurrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr...

A new sound comes from me but not out my mouth. No, this one came from my guts. My stomach. With my body bent like a "G" that fell forward, I can hear my stomach clearly as it tells me that I have been neglecting it for too long. That's good, right? People mortally wounded are not hungry, are they? Film scenes flash through my head of people dying in other people's arms, claiming that they are tired, and that they're cold.

Well, I'm tired. And, I'm cold.

But, I'm hungry.

I'm famished.

Never once in the movies does the crying woman who is overlooking her fallen hero, and asking: "What do I do? What can I get you?" does the dying man respond, "I could really use a blanket, some gauze, and a quarter pounder with cheese hold the pickles and mustard. I hate salt."

Then, I see a black-and-white plaid coat detective with leather patches on the arm of his jacket, and a long, bent pipe turn to a shorter man and say, "Well, Dr. Watson, it seems we have a mystery to solve." And I know, I remember- this man is Sherlock Holmes. Who, I hope, is not my Dad. The voice I heard earlier was a TV show. Television is-... shows. My favorite television show is-...

Note #5

-Find out your favorite television show.

My list is simply getting longer and longer...

Suddenly, the thought that maybe I'm on my own lawn invades my head, and if that's the case- I'm very close to my own food. My own refrigerator filled with things that I probably don't

mind eating should the need arise. The thought of hunger salvation invigorates me to continue my ascent to my feet, and as I peel my arms back to ninety degree angles at my side. I hardly feel the excruciating pain of muscle contractions.

I quickly ignore the one moment of hesitation I could have, the one thought of how badly this might hurt, before I push up and off the ground. It's been so long since I've stood up, (forever, actually with my memory) that I feel like a rocket ship bursting five feet into space before my knees creak, crack, and fail and I go crashing back to the grass. I see bright lights as my butt acquaints itself with the dewy grass, soaking a new body part. I see stars as my hands and arms move back to brace myself in a sitting upright position and my shoulders remind me they're there with a wicked internal pinch, and I feel new minuscule tears in the muscles around my neck. I hold my knees close to my chest, and find no noise in my body to convey how much pain I'm currently in.

Whimper, I think but I don't. I have no idea how or why I should cry.

That's it. I figured one thing out: whatever happened to me tonight- my knees got the worst of it. They practically throb in pain as the rest of my body remains sore.

Using my fingers, I probe around the knee bone. The placenta? No. That's something else. It doesn't matter now as I try to make sure the cap of my knee won't move if I attempt to walk again. I massage down the calf, not feeling any pain even as I get to the skinny part of my ankle and shake the snap, crackle, and pops out of that foot joint. No. It seemed the only dissension I have in my legs is my knees. Maybe I just have bad knees.

Maybe I'm old. Much older than my skin suggests.

Maybe I'm just being a baby.

I try again, rolling forward so one leg is beneath me, and one leg is set to push myself up. "Genuflecting". And, with the gentle reminder that everything will be fine in the end, I push up on that one knee. It appears the worst was yet to come as something *snaps* in my leg joint, but as soon as it does- like a rapidly peeled bandage- the pain immediately ceases, and I find my strength. I stand like that for awhile, a flamingo in the grass, one leg cocked behind me, while I balance on the leg I had just broken in.

Can't be scared forever, I tell myself, and I swing the other leg down underneath me.

CRACK!

Good Golly Miss Molly!

But then- nothing. No pain. I am a new being. I evolved from being a slithering creature in the grass to a "homosapien", a walker of two-feet, in just a couple of hours. Proud of myself, I look down at the grass angel that I've been creating for who-knows-how-long, and then down at my outfit that is probably five shades darker than what it's supposed to be due to the moisture of the grass and my willingness to lie in it for so long.

No shoes.

Well manicured toes.

Grass-stained, dirty, tight-fitting blue jeans.

No purse- which will come to be a problem.

Tight-fitting, wrinkled, dirty, drenched purple tank top with a stain at the bottom of it...

I grab the bottom of my shirt and fold it up for a better look in the street light. Saliva escapes my lower lip, and I try to slurp it up, but I'm too tired.

Reminding my body of mobility, I find it difficult to balance at first, but soon figure out how to stand without wobbling. I finger the stain, and the dark spot smudges more into the fabric. It's fresh and it grows bigger the farther up my shirt it goes. The stain leaves the tips of my fingers red, and I'm finding it more and more difficult to figure out just what it is all over my clothing. I crane my neck to see more of it as it looks to grow exceptionally bigger the farther up toward my shoulder. Did someone throw a cherry slushie at me? I place my hand on my shoulder, pressing down into the fabric so whatever the stain is seeps out around my fingers. I bring my hand back out from my body so I can see it in the light of the street lamp.

"Bloo-oooood."

No doubting it.

That light red that turns dark red in every line in my hand, which are exceptionally line-y and crack-y and prune-y from being in the wet grass all night.

A handful of blood.

There's blood all over my shirt. Why is there blood all over my shirt?!

As I wonder who I killed, or if this is Halloween, my hands fumble at the strap of my tank top, moving it aside to check and make sure my skin has been unmarred by violence. I run my fingers down the smooth skin of my shoulder, and I touch something gooey. Something hard and something gooey. There's a weird texture on my shoulder that I reach past and...

I reach into my shoulder...

I see stars.

I feel like I swallow my tongue.

Then everything goes black.