

The cool breeze flowed through my long hair. It floated along with the wind, as if it were dancing on its own. I looked up at the sky, it was sunny, with no clouds. Warm. My favorite kind of weather.

I leaned against the railing. I was standing on a busy bridge, watching the cars whiz by. My shirt lifted up from the wind a little and my skin touched the cold railing, I winced and took a step back.

After realizing how long I've probably been standing there, I decided it was time to head home.

9:42 pm

"Jeez, have you been getting sleep lately? I have to use extra concealer under your eyes today..." My makeup artist nagged me. Harriet stared at me intently, as she flicked some powder with a brush onto my face. In the corner of my eye, I could see my manager arguing with somebody I didn't know. Some intern had spilled her coffee, and some fans got in the tent somehow and was taking pictures of my face-in-progress with the brightest flash I have ever had to endure. Security sent them out soon enough though.

Outside I could hear people cheering. "Gracie! Gracie!" They were shouting my name. I had a headache. Harriet looked as if she were about to burst, her face was so red trying to finish my makeup in as little time as possible. Finally, she stepped back, admired it, and shouted "Finished!"

I stood up, feeling the sequins on my dress jiggle as I walk. My heels already hurt as I took my first step. I was questioning if my manager had bought the right size. My heartbeat began to grow faster, as the security guards lifted up the opening flaps of the tent.

A long, velvet red carpet lined the ground. Velvet ropes with shining gold poles bordered it. Huge crowds of people cheering and screaming my name were surrounding me. Kids, teens, middle aged, even some senior citizens made up the crowd. Their cameras flashed bright white lights in my face, like specks of glitter in the crowd.

I walked slowly down the carpet, smiling as naturally as I could, though it was hard to keep my eyes open with the cameras flashing. The long red velvet carpet led to more red velvet stairs, and then to a brown mahogany podium. My eyes were drawn to it, as I subconsciously tried to walk faster to get away from the screaming crowd.

Finally, which seemed like miles away, I reached the podium. I tapped the microphone and barely managed to croak a "hello". However, it didn't matter how small my voice was, the microphone made my sounds extend to the edge of town.

"I am so glad you all could be here today. It is such an honor to be here...tonight, receiving this award.."

I stopped and looked over at the crowd of people. My heart raced. I could feel the palms of my hands growing sweaty. I took a deep breath and continued.

"It was so wonderful working with this team, and to start the main role of "The Encounters Within"

Before I could finish, a man with a jet-black tuxedo approached me, and handed me a beautiful golden sculpture. It was glistening in the light, and my name "Gracie Davis" was engraved on the back. I held it to my chest and smiled at the cameras.

11:02 pm

I slumped in my chair as soon as I got home. My feet were aching, and I was still in my dress. I got up and headed over to my bedroom.

I passed by the kitchen and could already hear the whispers coming from the other rooms. I put my hands over my ears and walked faster. They weren't real, I knew that. But they kept..whispering my name..

I got to my closet and unzipped my dress. I changed into my pajamas, put my hair up, and walked to the restroom.

"Don't go there!" A small voice whispered as I neared the entrance to the bathroom. I looked around my apartment, but no one was there.

"Mmmmmm..mmmm....watch out!" Now it was a little louder. I turn on the faucet and stared into the mirror.

11:30 pm

The voices were growing louder and louder, there was more of them. It felt like I was in a room with a large amount of people in it all screaming at me, but no one was in my apartment but me.

I began to sweat. I could feel my heart beating out of my chest, I was hyperventilating. As I stared into the mirror, the voices began to nudge at what I was seeing. "No..that's not it.." "Everyone thinks you're ugly"

With a variety of voices.

"No one likes you, everyone agrees" with a tone that sounded like an old woman.

There was so many saying something all at once, I couldn't keep track of it all. I was doing my best to calm myself down. I decided to go to a different room, so I made my way to the kitchen.

"Why are you walking? Where?" A heard one shout over the others.

"Are you going to cook? You never cook. Tell me why"

"Hey! Where are you going?"

"I'm going to the kitchen. I want to eat food. I might cook something." I replied.

I know I might have sounded silly to someone else in the room, but I've learned I must be very straightforward and curt if I choose to reply to them. It's not like it will get them to stop, but if there is persistent on a subject it can make them focus on something else sometimes.

I took out some bread from the fridge along with some peanut butter and jelly. "Peanut butter? That's gross ``"Are you hungry?" "Your stupid."

An array of voices coming from an array of directions. I ignored most of it, as I was beginning to get less scared and more used to it. I've realized my medication has just worn off, which explains this. But it was nearly impossible to concentrate on anything at all.

I was finally finished with my sandwich. I headed over to the kitchen table, trying not to drop the plate. I placed the meal down, and went to find my medication.

"Turn left, go right, no, no, no.."

"Where is it? Is it lost?"

Again, they were persistent in gaining my attention.

I was stumbling up the steps to my room, my medication was in there. I tried so hard to ignore them, I wanted to scream at them. But I know well that that would only make it worse. The stairs began to spin..I gripped onto the railing, and pulled myself up onto the next step.

"Look at you, so stupid, so clumsy. Can't even climb stairs right."

"What if it's not in there? What happens?"

12:30 am

Finally, I made it to my room. I found the bottle next to my bed, and opened it so quickly that I almost spilled all of the pills. My heart was pounding.

As I swallowed them, the voices began to dim. They gradually became less loud, than less persistent, than silent....

I was alone again.

4:09 pm

The air had a slight chill to it. It felt nice flowing through my hair and onto my skin. I stared down at the water, it was moving so calmly. The small waves crashed onto the concrete poles that held the bridge up. I could feel my phone buzzing in my pocket. I picked it up and flipped it open, but quickly put it back when I saw it was only my manager trying to contact me.

“But..” I thought. “Today....is not the day.”

My hands slowly lost their grip on the railing. I backed away from the edge of the bridge and stared into the orange and purple sky.

After realizing how long I’ve probably been standing there, I decided it was time to head home.