

A vibrant sunset scene with a gradient of orange, red, and yellow. The sun is visible in the bottom right corner, partially obscured by a dark horizon line. The text is overlaid on this background.

ONE DAY

You Won't

Be There

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One Day
You Will Be Gone

By
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Introduction

It's 4 a.m., I'm awake unusual because I just fought an air conditioning unit from 11:30 to 12:30. It won! I gave up and walked away.

Sleep seems so far away, my mind filled with images from the past, missing family members, my place in the universe, all I can thing to do is roll over and watch my wife sleep and think about holding her. Remembering the woman that I married, the mother whom care so graciously for our children and how it would feel if it all went away.

It's not the first time I have been awoken to the thought that it could all be gone in an instant. I'm not talking about losing someone else but the experience of my last bow. Sometimes I think, I think too much, the metaphysics of being or not being as disclosed in this case.

Maybe it's the strain of financial concerns, the broken air conditioners, the dancing images of our children playing on the beach or eating their first birthday cake, regardless, time; the past, present, and future collide and I wonder what is important. Where we are and where we could have been, where we are going and where we must end up. How it all adds up to a life.

Mothers, fathers, Grandparents, and father-in-law pass and that emptiness surfaces as a reminder; one day it will all be gone so, in the now, what is important.

For far to brief a moment, during a wedding, I was given a glimpse of time not just the physics but the texture, the form, the shape and state. It pasted so quickly that before I could find paper and pen it had become like a dream and disappeared. This along with various other events has led to these words. Far too many thoughts have been written about life, death, and living and nothing ever seems to be said even amongst the richness of experience. How does it all fit into our lives and how do we handle it.

What is important? Work, play, family, pain; how do you fathom these things in regard to your own demise? How can death be the source of life in an ever cynical world.

I don't have answers just a few more words for the argument.

Enjoy.

Time is passing with each breath, with each beat of our heart, and every blink of our eyes. Events disappear into the shadows as though they never were and we are left with vague notions of what was and is now gone. No footnotes, no sidebars, just fading images that without some recorder we will never see again. So few moments ever become part of our waking world, so few that we will see or hear of events, to which we were a party, and wonder; did that happen?

We don't dwell on the past too often because it is the reminder of wrong turns and potential missteps, depending of course on the choices that we have made, we want to find good in the days we live but often fall prey to the disaster that is living. Choose workaholic or family, choose farm on a hill or shack and squalor, choose and just be. That all we are a series of right or left turns on some road we can't afford to pave, that has no markers, no off ramps and fades into some distant invisible horizon. Life's choice become more than mundane they become muted and predictable. The duality of our lives as both dreamer and driver leaves us most often wanting and least likely pleased. This may seem harsh upon first glance but from continent to shore you see the menace that is often life saturated and commented like a child learning to color for the first time. More than blurred lines, less then clear image.

Consequences and implications, we revel in what we do not know and choose to ignore that which with each sunset is a little closer. The number of hours in front of us getting fewer and the number behind growing not measured in years but in what is missing or undone. Waning glory, as such, a image in the rearview mirror shrinking into the past even as we try to slap the vehicle in reverse without success. Disappearing into the path of the vehicles following us, we glance back, from time to time, shaking the impression that we missed a turn, should have stopped for a meal and chatter but we continue on, and on. Ever so often jarred by the unpredictable speed hump in the road shaking us out of the trance that the oncoming white stripes have caused.

Yet in all that traveling; turmoil and living we never truly see the end we hardly see the journey. Sure we are introduced to it as family members move on, as pet age and die, as life marches on. Day by day we continue on never giving another thought to it, always just a step away and filled with so much unknown that we ignore, shrink from it, and shiver at the thought- One day, I too, will be gone. We press it from our mind bathing it in light so bright that the shadow of its presence is washed away for deeds and doctrine; but it returns. It returns with every newscast, police report, and obituary.

We try to never face its glare. We never feel the price of life or the cost of its wares. We shun death hiding it behind tinted windows and beneath the soil or concrete doors, always aware but out of sight thinking, "we have no need for you but there you are again and again." Time mounts, time moves, we follow accepting the events that unfold before us and the people that are left behind. Time becomes the enemy speeding up as we slow down. Aging us all-without remorse, all the while lost on us those that will never know this now- this moment, this precious little moment that will never be felt by so many.

We are filled with turmoil, strife, and struggle as each new day brings more change, more uncertainty, and the unknown quantity of angst without remembering that others will never know that new day. Days of joy and bliss that we missed while living, in its stead, we slave and contrite to fetter away on some monetary mountain trail without tenderness of touch or softness of sight. Hands that will never touch again, ears that will never again hear the sound of a child's voice singing to the Sun.

The gift given to fewer now than yesterday is drawn and quartered. Divided amongst the mundane illusions we design and develop to express not the beauty and majesty of living the unknown limits of life but the dire gluttony of remorse for things never done whilst living.

Still, here we are hiding from the moment when we will no longer feel the wind or touch our own hand.

What then? What is it that we have? All be the cold that we will not feel and no blanket can cover? How then, the box that seals out permanently our world we ached to learn more of and yet we shrunk from and dare I say hated at times. Will it remember me?

No such illusions will ground you now. Time will now take pity on you but to who's remembrance? Will you, at that time, baste in the glow of freedom and peace, finally express your joy and contentment or will you simply cease.

Philosopher and theologians, alike, bang upon separate alters the ideas that we will never learn or accept. That we will never know. Possibilities of a new life, new hope, and new existence are the scattered words on pages that drip of feasts amongst the stars, of tabernacles that sing our praise. Or nothing, simply lights out never to hold that wife or husband, child or parent, simply gone.

Greater minds have pondered this shift in consciousness to no avail. We are neither privy nor posed to assert our misgivings. We hope above vain that we will get a second chance to achieve and do, to have and to hold that this is not the end but a beginning. Still, we will never know.

Some will have you believe that you shall be again, perhaps as a rock or tree or flea. Hidden within the world not as you were but as you might still receive. Others foster the image of old souls in new shoes with or without a new face, with or without new promise. Perhaps, then, we shall have and hold on time's trek once again. Perhaps, then, we can be free.

All this; we will never know.

In the present, we lay about our caves and watch as life passes by and hide from the world that is dangerous, cruel, and unmanageable. We quiver in corners pretending that nothing beyond our walls can touch us, can see us, can hurt us. We feel only within the confines of our own thoughts of family or more often between our own ears never willing knowing the size of the ball traveling about the Sun.

Of that neighbor or cousin that has no name and lives in another country, beneath another set of stars, how then will he meet his fate? At the hands of war, disease, or starvation- does he know me? Does he believe in the cold finish or warm start?

No, only in here do we see and only what we are willing to see often fed by the rambling of distance voices that want to reign apparent in your head, believe me, and believe this. Have you forgotten my words?

"This is not the end, it is a beginning." Is it? Do you know better than I? You would have me believe that my fate is dictated by your knowledge of things that no one shares un-submissive. No ancestral markers, no prove or qualifier, just your voice in words dated by age and countless hands to open the gate of ethereal bliss?

Faith?!

What if, all alone, I lay at the end of days and I see nothing, hear nothing, am approach by nothing. Will you resurrect me? Do you have that power? Or am I too buy you that power? Or am I to buy your book tomorrow?

What if my end is just that; close my eyes and I'm gone? Who is to say that would not be better? Who is to say that life now is not a curtain call but the main act? That the props and casts, orchestra and script are mere part of the beginning, middle, or end of the story; then the play ends. That's that! Take your bow.

Would that not make me a better person, knowing that tomorrow I would be no more, knowing that there is no promise or praise coming; just-the now and then the black. Would I not feel more inclined to sleep in peace in the knowledge that I lived my life complete?

Once again, greater minds than mine.

Here I lay as do you, in the dark, in the cold. What am I now? Beyond the food and nurtured feast of soil, returning to that which spawns us all, what have I become? Am I forgotten? How will I be remembered? Is there any awareness of time passing or loved ones following. Is there any redemption or prize for living? Am I still here?

Even in sleep my mind's eye plays and I relive the days and formulate new ones. Even in sleep I may feel the touch of my wife or husband and move towards it. Can it be said the same of the long goodbye? In the dark stretched towards dawn is the dream of days and hands warm a snap of the fingers without sound.

I hear the foot steps of my dog, feel the gentle pawing of our cat and I return to the darkness beneath my eyelids, still aware - still breathing. Still breathing. Still breathing. Rise and fall.

What of true darkness? What of that absence of thought and images, what of the lack of feeling and approach. Shrinking or approaching the touch beyond our own skin is welcomed by all but in death what is it that we will have?

Scene one, act two we know nothing about. We have only words in scrolls handed down for ages, tilted and slanted by passing hands and minds that beg to guide us. The reality beyond our windows no hint or judge of what is to come.

Trees fall, birds fell and I, we, shall never know again.

Comfort in words.

Live this day as there is no tomorrow. Do not fear what is or is not simply accept and cherish. Do not curse the struggle or sheath the pain of broken limbs and deeds, simply live.

Know this, now is your heart beating, now is your lungs heaving against your breast, now is the laugh from your child, and the toilet that won't flush, now is that moment you awake and feel the sun on your face and the hand of your husband or wife brush your skin. Now will never come again.

Know that your brother, cousin, distant enemy is facing there new day. Know that they actions shepherd their will but it does not resist the call of time. "This, too, shall pass."

Forgiveness in your heart is about you not them.

In this sequence, when all time ceases and you feel the call to sleep and sleep at last, will you carry the burden of life or the joy? Will you remember your life as follower or leader, did you make a difference? Did you share a smile, cure a tear, ease a pain? Did you grieve, suffer, or smite?

Did you love?

Only in your own mind can answers such of these be carved. Only through your own arms and legs can you say you have done before the gong and only in time will its true purpose be known to you.

What matters most is that the moments past and became part of you.

One day, you will be gone, and there will be no second chances. What luggage will you carry with you as you go? No clothes, no toiletries, no dreams just moments that have past and events that have defined.

Have you been worthy? Worthy of the price and cost of you ultimately being in and of this world?

Before the darkness covers you and you see through the tears a few faces that stood by you from morning till night, through riches and poverty, will you then know the value of your life. Where you are going, you have no need for cash, trinkets, or babbles. Where you go whether dimensional shift or still cold stew, whether pearly gates or eternal turnstile; you travel that road alone. As you came in so shall you exit.

Tick, tick; we know nothing of certainty beyond that edge of forever.

In the dark, as that last fading thump echoes through your head and vibrates through the hands that stand by you will you feel remorse or satisfaction for a life well lived? Grief or rejoice at the quality of the life you made and created for others. Will you be valued or dismissed?

Will you matter in the absence of yourself?

On day one of act two, assuming your beliefs holds true, whether returned to your mother or graced by the light will yours be a life lived right?