

Memories come back

By: Ander

_____I can't remember how it started and I don't know how it will end, if it ever does.

All I know is that I have to keep running. From who, what, or where I still don't know but for now I have to keep trudging, keep hiding, find myself before they find me.

I think I am in a building if that is what this is called. It is noisy, polluted filled with garbage and a horrible smell yet somehow there's a beauty in that that draws me in closer to it. No, wait no, it is not a building it's a city. It has tall square mountains, that is what buildings are. It is somehow familiar in some way even though I have never been here. Not to my knowledge at least. I see white powder everywhere. But when I touch it my body tells me to pull away. Cold I think is what it is called. But it's not only my hand. All of me is cold. As I look down I realize that what I think is my skin is very exposed. I have a light blue gown only partially covering me, why do I even have it on me if it's no use? I also see a bright red liquid slowly pouring from my leg and I realize it's also pouring from my face. It is so hard to breathe and every limb, every muscle is hurting, how long have I been running?

I don't think that I am ordinary or maybe I just am weird because every person I run by just keeps staring at me. Am I extravagant or crazy? So many questions I can keep asking but so few answers that I can get. For now, I have to keep running.

The next few hours are blurry. I have no recollection of them happening, all I know is that they did. The sun is now hiding behind the mountains, opposed to hiding behind the clouds and somehow, I am warm. I have some type of blue pants on my leg with some metal at the top, some black shoes, and a plaid red shirt behind my beige, synthetic jacket with badges and black trims around. The bleeding, nope, it is bleeding. Well either way it has finally stopped. I got treatment and I got clothes but

who did this? It is MADDENING. I feel like a child having to relearn to talk, having to relive my whole life. It's frustrating beyond belief and I don't know how long I can continue like this. If this is life, is it worth living?

Right there, another question I can ask and no answer I can get. I feel a drop running down my cheek, but the sky is clear, how odd. For now, I can feel my body asking me to stop, to close my eyes, to rest. I look for and find a place to sleep tonight. It is a narrow section of stinky wasteland between two of the mountains, but it has a roof. It had an old wasted mattress between a few boxes and crates. There's a crashed and unusable vehicle next to them. I managed to fit the mattress through the door and slept in the pale red volkswagen

The night was weird. I couldn't sleep through a good portion of it and when I finally did I had flashbacks to a life I never had. I heard a familiar, soothing yet authoritarian, gentle yet strict voice calling my name from downstairs. I get up and reach up for the door handle. I smelled the bolognese that my mom had made me and only me. It was one of those days that she worked late. For some reason mom liked to drink a lot of blood those days, saying a lot of no-no words, cursing my dad. She smiled at me though, I was the one constant in her chaos and she was everything to me. We ate together every afternoon and sometimes watch a movie past my bedtime. When I cuddled with her it sometimes rained even though we were inside. How can I feel nostalgia in a life I never lived? "Mommy, do you love daddy?" I had asked that night. "I-love-you," she said, bopping my nose and snorting her nose. I knew I hadn't lived this but it all felt so real. If that was my life what happened. How

had it gone so downhill? How could I forget such a moment? I got up and continued walking, without a real end, without anywhere to stop, and nowhere to call home.

I kept walking and walking 'till my legs begged me to stop. I stopped at an empty school, 'El Paso Elementary Educational'. There were supposed to be no kids in the whole school as there was a foot worth of snow everywhere. "Some of the kids would sink," I chuckled to myself. Nevertheless, under the timid sun that barely shone, I see two kids, a boy and a girl, dancing, playing, laughing in between the monkey bars, the rockable horse, the slides, but they look like a shadow from a long long time ago. I hear them talking "What do you mean of course I tagged you James" the girl cried out loud. "Well if you did, Is-a-bell-a then do it again" the boy. When I saw the boy's face, I knew I had seen that face before. It is the same boy that felt her mother cry and that is now aimlessly wandering the streets of the city. In fear and uncertainty, I run as far and as fast as I can. I am trying to escape what I'm looking for, my past. I'm finally getting answers but not to my questions. I am James.

I run and run my eyes starting to burn, starting to rain. I couldn't take it any more. My head was about to explode. Suddenly, it all just went away, it was no longer my problem. I was just not there.

This is where I take over. I am him, and he is me. At least from a third perspective view that is how it works. I live here this is my body, but most of the time James controls it. He has no idea I exist but I know he does a little too well. I have been here since the beginning, maybe even before him always watching his every move, breathing when he can't. I am his guardian angel. I got him first aid and choked a man to get him clothes. No blood though, that's uncivilized. You may call me a psychopath but I've heard it all before. I am just willing to do what it takes to live in this world,

this merciless world that took my mother and left me with nothing but emptiness and sorrow.

That's as far as I can remember so maybe there's where I started, but I like better to think I have been here before him, before time, before creation. I am the one true being. And yes I have been called a narcissist but I just don't care. I am here and there is nothing you or anyone can do about it without killing James. But who would kill James, he's just a lovable guy with some serious mental problems. Wait spoiler alert. He doesn't know that, yet.

I could ramble on and on about what I just made our body do last night but I'm gonna make it simple. I ran, walked into a bar, and got wasted. It was fun until I had to pull back for James to take over, that selfish bastard.

I woke up in a house I don't know, but this isn't 'I can't remember my past I don't know I have never been here before. There are red plastic cups and random pieces of clothing everywhere. The place was a total mess and smelled like it too. "Good morning." said a voice from the bathroom. "Sorry, where am I" I reply. "In my house why?" she says confused. "Why am I here?" I ask. "You came to the party I threw last night." "Do I know you?" I wonder "Not before tonight, you didn't." "Well sorry If I did something, I can't remember anything." "Yup, you were very wasted." she explained getting two beers out of the fridge, she gave me one. "No, it's not like that I have memory issues. Lagoons of time that I have no idea what happens" I explain. "Have you seen a doctor?". I pause to think "The first thing I remember is me running from the hospital two days ago. I haven't stopped." "Okay. Anyways if you ever want a lagoon that you *do* know how it's caused here's my number." She gave me a card "Thanks," I said. I read the card.

Isabella Ramirez

Party Ph.D

I wondered if it was the same Isabella from my childhood.

It has been a few weeks since then and I had random flashbacks from places I had visited. Through a damp red forest, I remembered a summer campsite and from a public pool, I remembered jumping into it. From the bowling, I remember my first strike and I remembered my college and my house. I was finally at peace not knowing, and too afraid to find out more. The lagoons had become fewer and farther between and I even got a job at retail. And when I'm at my lowest I can always go to Isabella, my one friend in this-

That was James who is at the moment unconscious and being taken to the hospital in a light blue gown. He was not paying attention, though I can't say that it was totally his fault, if I don't get to live my life, why does he. But even unconscious James is a magnificent being, will he again survive against better judgement? Will he finally stay in the Hospital?