

The sadness comes out of nowhere and hits me like a winter wind. I would say “like a truck,” but I’ve never been hit by a truck. Honestly, nothing has ever happened to me physically that feels the same. All I can think of is falling when I was nine years old and scraping my knee on the pavement. But even that doesn’t match. That made me tense up, it made me anxious, stressed. It made me desperate to find a solution to a problem I created for myself.

But the sadness doesn’t feel like that at all. There’s no pain, no desperation, no sense of urgency. It doesn’t surge out of nowhere. It’s just numbing... and overwhelming. When you’ve been driving for long enough, you stop noticing the vibrations of your seat. The vibrations become part of your reality. That’s what the sadness feels like: vibrating indifference.

Yeah... pleasant things to think about while making hot chocolate. It feels apt, though. The warm, lonely air of my apartment seems to invite this mindset. I can hear my cheap tabletop fireplace crackling. If my landlord knew about it, I’d certainly get evicted. Fortunately for me, he and his booze don’t seem to care what I do with my place. I could have a Doberman and he wouldn’t know the difference between it and my sofa.

I make my way to the couch (that isn’t a dog) and sit at the corner closest to the window. I tuck my legs under my body and wrap a blanket around myself, cocooning away. It’s ridiculous, the idea that this blanket will protect me from the world. Yet, I believe it. The warmth makes me feel safe. I feel it, but I will never understand it. I guess depending on what you’re hiding from, the blanket could be a shield. Lord knows it wouldn’t stop a bullet, though.

Only once I’ve sat down do I realize I forgot my hot chocolate in the kitchen. *Fuck*. Being depressed and forgetful is *so fun*. I get up from the sofa. It’s not my fault I forget everything. I really do try to remember what I can. I think it’s a side effect of the sadness. My feet meet the cold tile of the kitchen. In high school, I tried to write things down on my hands, but I kept running out of room on my palms. I make the effort to remember, but I never do. I just ruin everything. I’m only capable of making my life harder than it has to be.

Take right now, for example. I was already comfortable on my couch, in my favorite, with my feet tucked away the way they always are, but I had to stand up to get my hot chocolate that I forgot in the kitchen.

*Jan, it's just a few steps to the kitchen.*

Yes, it's just a few steps, but if I had just remembered the hot chocolate in the first damn place, my feet wouldn't be cold right now.

*It'll only take a second.*

Yes, but when I come back, I'll run the risk of sitting down and not being able to get as comfortable as I was before. My sweatpants might be tugging somewhere. My bra might be digging at my side. It might never be quite right. My socks might turn or my sweater might get caught on the cushion behind me. It becomes so much more effort than was ever necessary.

*Fine, don't get the hot chocolate. Leave it there and stay on the couch if you want to be difficult about it.*

Ah, but now I'm going to be difficult about it in the opposite direction. If I don't get my hot chocolate, I will have spent the last five minutes of my life making a hot chocolate that I wanted to drink but not drinking it. That becomes five minutes of wasted effort. I had already made my peace with those five minutes of effort. I knew ahead of time that it was going to happen, and I was going to get hot chocolate out of it. The twenty seconds of getting the hot chocolate I forgot were not budgeted into the amount of energy I was expecting to spend.

I always end up getting the hot chocolate, though. I'm still going to be angry about it because I inconvenienced myself unnecessarily. But I want my fucking hot chocolate. I made that shit. I made it for myself and by God I am going to drink it.

If you're one of the lucky people that doesn't understand the spiraling frustration and self-judgment that I just went through, fuck you. I envy you. But you might be wondering why I went through all that back and forth. Well, my emotionally enlightened friend, there was no reason. There was no rationale behind the dreary mental gymnastics. That's how overthinking works. It's part of the sadness. I hate myself for everything I do, do more things anyways, and hate myself more later. I live

in a never-ending cycle of mistakes and frustration, where no amount of planning or preparing can save me. I know it's coming, and there's nothing I can do.

I finally have my hot chocolate. It's warm and sweet, but I'm bitter. I start back to the couch, but the doorbell rings. God, I hate that fucking doorbell. It's so loud that when I first moved in, I often thought my neighbor's doorbell was mine. But silver linings, that yelp means my fried rice is here. I walk to the door, I'm not aware of my feet moving beneath me. I somehow end up where I need to be. When I open the door, the delivery guy is taking a photo of the food placed by my door. We don't make eye contact. We don't say anything. We both know we don't need to speak. In fact, speaking would probably make it weird. It's the strange silent agreement exchanged between two people who've decided not to treat each other like people. He is just a tool to deliver my food and I am a source of his income. We serve a quick, measured purpose in each other's lives, but that purpose does not involve small talk. That costs extra.

The rain is hitting my window harder now. In the last few minutes, the downpour has shifted its behavior. The rain isn't just falling quickly now: the droplets are bigger, heavier. They're just as fast, but stronger too. The water sounds like it's pelting my window rather than tapping against it. It overpowers the sound of the faux fireplace. Not entirely, but almost.

I sit back down at my corner on the couch, this time with everything I need (and I checked before I sat). I have my hot chocolate, my fried rice, my phone, my sweater, and my soft, cotton, bullet-vulnerable shield. I am armed, equipped, and ready to do absolutely nothing.

I turn on the TV. My friends have been insisting that I take up a hobby or something. The late-night news plays in the background. I can't bring myself to process any of the words being said. My gaze unfocuses. I understand why my friends worry, none of them really understand how I feel. They treat me like some sad old woman. No matter how much I explain my desire to do things and my ability to do them being different, they still don't understand. If I tell them something doesn't help, they ask "Well, what does help? What can I do that will help you?" I don't know if I

have the answer to that question. Or the energy to find it.

My mug is empty now. I probably enjoyed that, but I can't remember a single sip. I feel sleepy. I could get up, brush my teeth, change into pj's, and crawl into bed. But I start to think about all the steps those things take; I'd have to take off my blanket, swing my legs off the couch, stand up, and start walking. And that's just getting up. It's so much to do.

Paralysis hits. Fucking hell. I'm doom scrolling now. Don't ask me when I got my phone out. My eyes and head feel heavy. Another video. Another post. I'm still awake, though. Like. Share. Not for long.

I think I'm going to fall asleep right here. I don't want to move. I just want to rest. I feel my head nod off. I can't do anything else today. I'm spent. I know I haven't done shit today, but I'm wiped. I'm so tired. I can't move. I'm so comfortable. I need to sleep. I need to rest. I'm so tired. I want to close my eyes. I want to fade away.

I turn off the TV. Everything feels far, dull, and faded. My arms aren't attached to me. *Please let tomorrow be better*, my thoughts whisper to no one.

Goodnight, I guess.